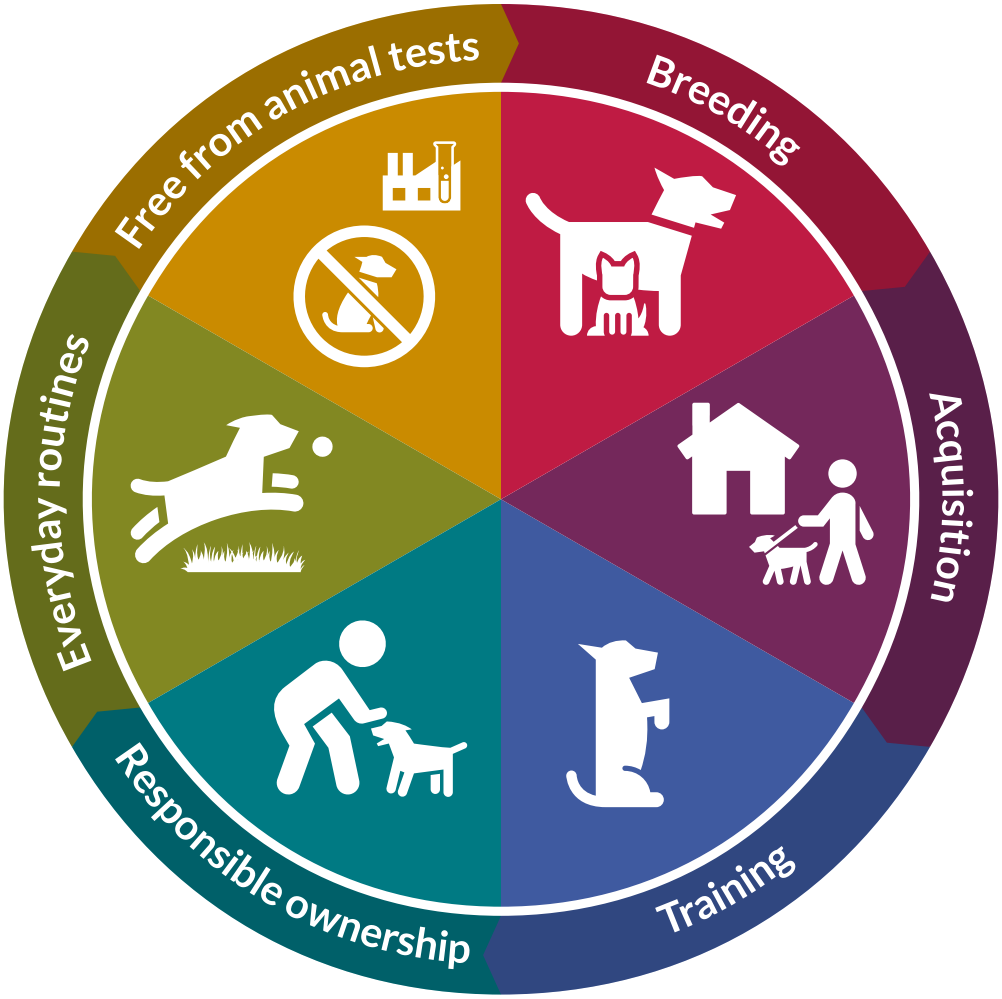

A DOG'S LIFE MANIFESTO

Improving dog welfare at every stage of life

THE KENNEL CLUB
Making a difference for dogs

The Kennel Club is the UK's largest organisation dedicated to protecting and promoting the health and welfare of all dogs. Besides being a voluntary register for pedigree dogs and crossbreed dogs, we offer dog owners and those working with dogs an unparalleled source of education, experience and advice on puppy buying, dog health, dog training and dog breeding.

The Kennel Club Charitable Trust (KCCT) is a dog charity that looks after the health and welfare of all dogs. It makes a difference by funding a wide variety of work ranging from supporting research into canine diseases, dog welfare organisations and the promotion of support dogs, all of which give dogs a healthier, happier life.

The Kennel Club Charitable Trust is now registered on easyfundraising.org.uk. For further information please visit www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/kennelclub and simply click 'support us now' to sign up.

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#DogsLifeManifesto

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INTRODUCTION FROM STEVE DEAN, KENNEL CLUB CHAIRMAN

As a nation of dog lovers, approximately a quarter of households[1] include a dog – and issues surrounding dog welfare capture their attention as a great many consider their dogs a part of their family.

The results of a recent YouGov poll[2] on the importance of animal welfare to the electorate showed that when voters were asked to name issues determining how they will cast their vote, 14 percent named animal welfare – more than HS2 or equal marriage. However the mass of voters are in the 29 percent who said none of the parties are committed to animal welfare or the 42 percent who said they didn't know.[3]

It is for this reason we have written a 'Dog's Life' manifesto, to guide the next government on issues pertinent to those passionate about dogs and what more can be done to improve the lot of the UK's approximately 9 million[4] dogs.

As the UK's largest organisation dedicated to improving the welfare, health and general wellbeing of all dogs throughout every stage of their lives, we offer all dog owners and those working with dogs an unparalleled source of education, experience and advice on dog breeding, dog health, dog acquisition, dog training and responsible dog ownership.

We register around a quarter of a million purebred dogs each year as well as approximately 3,500 crossbreed dogs on our companion and activity registers, and hold the details of over 5 million dogs on Petlog, our microchipped pets database. Around 2,000 dog trainers and behaviourists work under the Kennel Club Accredited Instructor scheme, and with accreditation by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) we also effectively self-regulate almost 8,000 Kennel Club Assured Breeders.

However, a great many dog breeders, dog owners and prospective dog owners are outside of the reach of the immediate influence of the Kennel Club, and without powers of enforcement, we believe that in some instances government intervention is necessary in order to ensure that healthy dogs are bred, and that dogs are treated properly throughout every stage of their lives.

A DOG'S LIFE

BREEDING

How a dog is bred and reared (particularly in its early weeks), influences its health, welfare and socialisation throughout its life, which is why raising the standard and quality of breeding practices is a priority for the Kennel Club. We introduced our Assured Breeder Scheme (ABS) to help achieve this. However, the requirements of the ABS are not mandatory for those who are not scheme members, and nor can the Kennel Club directly influence those who do not register with us, so it remains the case that puppy farming continues, and in some instances is even licensed by local authorities.

Current dog breeding legislation is outdated, often unworkable and poorly enforced, which is why we believe an incoming government should introduce measures to improve breeding practices in order that even before a dog's life begins, its health and welfare has been considered.

BREEDING STANDARDS FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE – THE ASSURED BREEDER SCHEME

The Kennel Club established its Assured Breeder Scheme in 2004, which sets standards to ensure that breeders improve the health and welfare of puppies. The scheme effectively self-regulates almost 8,000 members and has achieved UKAS accreditation. The standards of the Assured Breeder Scheme include making use of health screening schemes relevant to all breeding stock. These schemes include DNA testing for a range of inherited conditions and screening for hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia and inherited eye conditions, all of which we operate in collaboration with the British Veterinary Association.

DNA tests are developed as a result of research by the Kennel Club Genetics Centre at the Animal Health Trust, and other institutions, funded primarily by the Kennel Club Charitable Trust. The test results are available to *all* breeders as part of the Kennel Club Mate Select program, which helps breeders to select suitable mating pairs to avoid breeding puppies with inherited conditions. The hip and elbow schemes include an online resource using 'estimated breeding values' (based on extensive pedigree histories) to help breeders to calculate the genetic risk of either condition causing clinical lameness in dogs.

As well as carrying out relevant health screening, other requirements of the Assured Breeder Scheme are the permanent identification of breeding stock, keeping animals in good conditions, making use of preventative health measures such as worming and immunisation, and effective socialisation of puppies. The standards for Assured Breeders therefore go beyond the requirements of current breeding legislation and make use of modern advances in veterinary science.

Regrettably the current number of Assured Breeders cannot fulfil the demand for puppies in the UK, meaning there is still a significant market demand for puppies, which is often met by puppy farmers and puppy dealers operating within the UK and illegally importing puppies.

HIGH VOLUME COMMERCIAL BREEDING – PUPPY FARMING

Puppy farmers are defined as high volume breeders who breed puppies with little or no regard for the health and welfare of the puppies or their parents. A puppy farmer's main objective is profit. To maximise their profit, puppy farmers typically separate puppies from their mothers too early, keep their dogs and the puppies they breed in insanitary conditions, and fail to follow breed specific health schemes or to apply basic, routine health measures such as immunisation and worming.

As a result, puppies bred by puppy farmers are more likely to suffer from common, preventable, infectious diseases, painful or chronic inherited conditions, behavioural issues (because of poor early socialisation) and shorter life spans. Puppy farmed puppies are sold through third parties, typically in pet shops or advertised by puppy dealers via the internet. Our most recent survey data shows that 20 percent of puppies bought from pet shops or directly via internet websites will suffer from parvovirus (four times more than those from other breeders) and other potentially fatal diseases, which can cost up to £4,000 to treat.[5]

CURRENT BREEDING LEGISLATION

Existing breeding legislation (the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 and the Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999), setting out the licensing regime for local authorities to enforce, does not contain all of the provisions necessary to meet the welfare needs of dogs in accordance

with the Animal Welfare Act. As a result, some puppy farmers are able to operate with a local authority breeding licence giving a false impression that they are meeting the required welfare standards.

Guidance on licensing thresholds is often misunderstood – and a direct result of this is that there is a widely held belief by local authorities that breeders do not require a licence if they breed fewer than five litters per year. However, the legislation requires *all* commercial breeders to operate with a licence regardless of how many litters they breed annually. In addition, many puppy farmers continue to breed puppies illegally by simply covering up the number of litters they produce by failing to declare the correct breeder of the puppies.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO RAISE BREEDING STANDARDS AND CURB PUPPY FARMING

Although legislation on breeding already exists, it was enacted before scientific advances in health screening breeding stock were made available. As a result it does not make reference to health screening (or many other requirements of the Assured Breeder Scheme). Given this, we would call on an incoming government to update current legislation on dog breeding to make the principles of the Assured Breeder Scheme mandatory and ensure it enshrines the principles of the Animal Welfare Act.

In order to make the improvement of the health and welfare of puppies an achievable goal, and especially in the face of the limitations of resources at the local authority level, we would recommend an incoming government endorses the Assured Breeder Scheme as a suitable model for any inspection regime. By this simple means the Kennel Club can further seek to extend and expand the Assured Breeder Scheme and utilise its UKAS trained assessors to inspect all those that join the Assured Breeder Scheme and thereby lessen the burden on local authority inspectors.

It is important to note that the Kennel Club is a not-for-profit organisation which includes a Charitable Trust. Therefore profit made by the Kennel Club goes directly back into charitable, educational and training schemes, to the benefit of dogs. The Assured Breeder Scheme is currently subsidised by the Kennel Club at a rate of over

£200 per breeder over a three year period. Therefore increased membership of the Assured Breeder Scheme will not profit the Kennel Club, but will ensure funds continue to be spent on improving and policing the scheme.

Furthermore, there is an inconsistent approach to licensing and enforcement across the country and this should be rectified as soon as possible. Therefore we would ask an incoming government to give priority to considering how improved guidance and training can be provided to local authorities to aid consistent and effective enforcement of dog breeding legislation in order to improve breeding practices generally.

The Kennel Club, in conjunction with an ex-local authority dog warden manager, will be developing a training programme for local authorities in Wales in response to proposed changes to legislation on breeding establishments and we would recommend government encourages all local authorities to work with the Kennel Club, to develop training for local authorities on dog breeding legislation across the UK.

IN SUMMARY, TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF PUPPIES BEING BRED THE KENNEL CLUB CALLS ON AN INCOMING GOVERNMENT TO:

- Review legislation on dog breeding to make the principles of the Assured Breeder Scheme mandatory and ensure it enshrines the principles of the Animal Welfare Act
- Endorse the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme
- Issue effective guidance and training to local authorities detailing dog breeding requirements so that a more consistent and effective approach to licensing and enforcement is achieved
- Reduce the burden on local authorities and central government by working collaboratively with the Kennel Club to deliver training programmes for local authorities.

A DOG'S LIFE

ACQUISITION

How a dog is acquired marks an important stage in a dog's life as often the decision to take responsibility for a dog is one that is often taken without sufficient thought, which is a major source of the burden dealt with by dog rescue organisations. It is important that people acquire dogs sensibly, and with sufficient knowledge and forethought. Educating the puppy buying public is key to not only improving the welfare of pet dogs and the standards in breeding, but also in lessening the demand for poorly bred puppies. The Kennel Club supports rescue centres and subsidises its own Assured Breeder Scheme to try and ensure that those who wish to buy puppies do so from reputable breeders.

However, many people remain outside the reach of the Kennel Club, which is why we would recommend some intervention from an incoming government to encourage the purchase of healthy, well-socialised dogs from responsible breeders, and assist in dramatically reducing the demand for poorly bred puppy farmed dogs.

PET SHOPS, OVERSEAS PUPPY TRADERS AND ONLINE PUPPY DEALERS

Puppy farmers will most likely sell puppies away from their home environment via a puppy dealer or pet shop. Although the vast majority of people claim that they would not buy a puppy from a puppy farmer, recent survey statistics indicate that many unwittingly do so. Although only two percent of pet shops sell puppies (around 70 UK outlets), of the current dog population of around 9 million, 16 percent were sold via pet shops equating to approximately 1.5 million (approximately 150,000 puppies per annum).[6] In total 31 percent of people who have bought a puppy in the last year did not see the puppy with its mother and 53 percent did not see its breeding environment, meaning those puppies are highly likely to have been sold by puppy dealers, and bred by puppy farmers.[7]

The unintended consequence of the relaxation of the Pet Travel Scheme was that there was a 400 percent increase in illegal entries of puppies into the UK between 2011 and 2012. Since 2012, there has also been a 25 percent decrease in the number of dogs being *recorded* as imported for commercial purposes, which suggests that puppy traffickers are exploiting the loopholes in pet travel rules by

disguising imported puppies to be sold, as pet dogs in order to avoid port of entry controls. Even when new regulations to strengthen enforcement regimes come into effect on 29 December 2014, concerns remain that changes will not have the desired impact as commercial traders could still evade border controls by simply declaring puppies to be sold as 'non-commercial'.

Often the puppies being imported are kept and transported in poor conditions and are sold by puppy dealers via the internet, meeting the demand for popular breeds and designer crossbreeds. Legislation on the sale of animals has not kept up with the advent of online selling, a major medium through which puppy dealers advertise and sell puppies.

It is for this reason that the Kennel Club is a leading member of the Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG). PAAG has developed standards for online advertisers to utilise to help ensure that reliable and detailed information exists about puppies for sale, in order that potential puppy buyers can determine whether the puppies have been bred responsibly. The standards also empower the advertisers to exclude adverts where there is a reasonable concern for the health and welfare of an animal involved or where commercial vendors cannot provide a suitable licence.

SOURCING A DOG RESPONSIBLY

Kennel Club breed rescue organisations re-home approximately 24,000 dogs each year throughout the UK and our commitment to rescue continues to grow as we work ever more closely with breed rescue organisations to support their charitable work aimed at finding the right homes for purebred dogs in the UK.

For those who want to buy a young dog, the Kennel Club recommends buying healthy and well-socialised puppies from responsible breeders. There are almost 8,000 Kennel Club Assured Breeders, and in 2013 Assured Breeders bred over 31,000 puppies. However, Assured Breeders currently cannot meet the annual demand for puppies. Many will have waiting lists (as they do not breed frequently) and will be selective as to where their puppies go. Our advice is that this is the right approach to dog breeding and rehoming but messages about how

to responsibly source a healthy dog require further support in order to have the desired impact on public behaviour and to support the development of the assured breeder concept.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROMOTE THE RESPONSIBLE SALE OF DOGS AND CURB PUPPY FARMING AND POOR BREEDING PRACTICES

As many potential puppy buyers and breeders are outside of the Kennel Club umbrella, we are looking to an incoming government to help tackle the issue of puppy farming by decreasing the demand for puppy farmed puppies and making it more difficult for poorly bred puppies to be sold. To this end, we would recommend that guidance under the Animal Welfare Act be updated to a) prohibit the sale of puppies in retail outlets and b) promote those breeding to the standard of Kennel Club Assured Breeders.

We further believe that government should clamp down on those illegally importing puppies for commercial purposes by transferring responsibility to conduct checks on passengers from ferry companies to border control agencies, increasing spot checks at ports and targeting enforcement regimes based on data showing where the illegal trade of puppies comes from (i.e. Holyhead, Dover and the Eurotunnel).

In line with this, an incoming government should work with the Kennel Club and other dog welfare organisations to deliver a wider public education programme promoting advice about the 'do's and don'ts' of puppy buying – for example, highlighting the potential pitfalls of buying a puppy online or from a pet shop. The better informed the public are about where puppy farmers sell their puppies, the less likely they are to buy them.

IN SUMMARY, TO IMPROVE THE WAY DOGS ARE ACQUIRED THE KENNEL CLUB CALLS ON AN INCOMING GOVERNMENT TO:

- Prohibit the sale of puppies in pet shops
- Promote breeders breeding to the standards of Kennel Club Assured Breeders
- Clamp down on those illegally importing puppies for commercial sale and target enforcement to the 95 percent of trade that comes through Holyhead, Dover and the Eurotunnel
- Work with the Kennel Club and dog welfare organisations on a public education campaign on the 'do's and don'ts' of puppy buying.

A DOG'S LIFE

TRAINING

Training should be an important part of every dog's life as it provides the vital physical and mental stimulation needed to ensure a dog's wellbeing and welfare – poor training or a lack of training has implications for both animal welfare and human safety. The Kennel Club encourages and promotes positive, reward-based training to strengthen the bond between a dog and its owner.

However, there are many 'mixed messages' with regards to dog training with some 'professional' dog trainers and behaviourists using outdated practices and techniques, and a range of extreme negative dog training devices on the market for use by the general dog owning public.

This lack of consistent messaging on the correct way to train a dog, to ensure dog welfare and human safety, needs to be addressed by a future government.

IMPLICATIONS OF POOR TRAINING

Human understanding of dog welfare and behaviour has advanced significantly in the past ten to fifteen years and is now a well-established science and discipline. Some previously accepted aversive theories and techniques, based on the principle of applying something painful or frightening to reduce the likelihood of an unwanted behaviour occurring, are no longer considered necessary or acceptable to train dogs.

In particular, the Kennel Club opposes the use of electronic shock training devices (ESTDs) which have a proven negative impact on animal welfare, and in some cases make problems worse. A ban on the sale and use of ESTDs is widely supported by nearly three quarters of the public according to a recent Kennel Club survey[8] and the sale and use of ESTDs has already been outlawed in Wales by regulations introduced under the Animal Welfare Act. It is worth noting that even when these regulations were challenged under Judicial Review instigated by the Electronic Collar Manufacturers Association (ECMA), the Royal Courts of Justice found in favour of the Welsh Assembly. We believe the rest of the UK should follow suit based on extensive evidence based research.

Recent research commissioned by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) showed that there were significant long term negative welfare consequences for a proportion of the dogs that were trained with ESTDs – namely electronic shock collars. 1 in 4 dogs showed signs of stress compared to less than 5 percent of dogs reacting to positive training methods. Furthermore, 1 in 3 dogs yelped at the first use of an electric shock collar and 1 in 4 yelped at subsequent uses.

The studies concluded that even when electronic shock collars were used by professionals following an industry set standard of training approved by the ECMA, there were still long term negative impacts on dog welfare. Lastly, the studies also demonstrated that positive reinforcement methods were effective in treating livestock chasing, which is the most commonly cited justification of their use, and where they are unnecessary given farmers' advice to keep dogs on leads around sheep.

PROPOSED STANDARDS FOR DOG TRAINING – THE KENNEL CLUB ACCREDITED INSTRUCTOR SCHEME

The problem of the availability of extreme negative training devices is compounded by the fact that there are still practitioners that use aversive theories and techniques. The dog training industry is unregulated and anyone can set up a business training dogs without appropriate qualifications, knowledge and skills.

However, standards for those in the behaviour and training industry do exist and are embodied in the Kennel Club Accredited Instructor scheme (KCAI) which we believe delivers a high standard of education, guidance and support for all those who work with dogs. The scheme assesses and accredits trainers who comply with appropriate standards which we believe all dog trainers and behaviourists should be required to adhere to across the globe, and we have worked with LANTRA to develop National Occupational Standards.

The KCAI scheme is now the only scheme in the UK which is approved by City & Guilds NPTC which ensures its members have a nationally recognised, credible and externally verified qualification. With a growing membership of 2,000 trainers and behaviourists

working under the Kennel Club code of practice for Accredited Instructors, the Kennel Club is well positioned to be the leading canine organisation for dog training and behaviour. To demonstrate this, we already have a partnership in place with Battersea Cats and Dogs Home in order that they offer KCAI as a training programme to a selection of their staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING DOG TRAINING

Given the mounting evidence that exists on the welfare implications of ESTDs, we believe an incoming government should review the Codes of Practice under the Animal Welfare Act at the earliest opportunity to include a prohibition on the use and sale of ESTDs.

With a wide range of positive training tools and methods available, as well as extensive research on the welfare implications of ESTDs, we do not believe it is necessary to train dogs using fear or pain as inducement. Neither is it worth potentially damaging the relationship between dog and handler.

In order to ensure that dog trainers and behaviourists are qualified to provide the most reliable, up-to-date training techniques, we believe that government should develop an industry standard based on the Kennel Club Accredited Instructor programme.

IN SUMMARY, TO IMPROVE HOW DOGS ARE TRAINED THE KENNEL CLUB CALLS ON AN INCOMING GOVERNMENT TO:

- Prohibit the sale and use of electronic shock training devices
- Adopt the KCAI requirements as an industry based standard that all dog trainers and behaviourists must comply with.

A DOG'S LIFE

RESPONSIBLE OWNERSHIP

Although responsible ownership should be a permanent feature in every dog's life, some will have irresponsible owners, or owners that train their dogs to behave aggressively. The Kennel Club runs the Good Citizen Dog Training Scheme which provides training from a basic to an advanced level and works to strengthen the bond between people and dogs. However, the influence of human behaviour on dogs is largely ignored by current legislation which instead defines certain types of dogs as inherently dangerous.

We believe that to better address the issue of dangerous dogs, an incoming government should focus on the 'deed not breed' of the dog, and target those persons responsible for of any type of dog that behaves aggressively.

'DANGEROUS' DOGS

There is currently a plethora of legislation addressing 'dangerous' dogs, with at least nine pieces of legislation dating back to 1871. This causes confusion amongst enforcers and courts about which legislation to use and when.

Currently the law on dangerous dogs refers to specific breeds of dogs as 'dangerous'. The Kennel Club believes breed specific legislation ignores the most important factors that contribute to biting incidents – primarily anti-social behaviour by irresponsible dog owners who train their dogs to be aggressive or do not train their dogs adequately. All dog owners must take responsibility for their dogs as any dog in the wrong hands has the potential to be dangerous – as is demonstrated by the number of biting incidents involving types of dogs that are not classified as dangerous under current legislation.

Consequently, current legislation based on assumed breed traits that ignores the influence of the dog's keeper in training and socialising their dog has failed to prevent a significant number of dog attacks or dog related incidents (there were 6,740 admissions for dog bites and strikes in 2013)[9] and kenneling costs associated with breed specific legislation have been described as 'considerable'.[10] Furthermore, it has made banned breeds fashionable and attractive to people who want to flout the law and use dogs to be aggressive and intimidating. This contributes to the problem of creating so called 'status dogs'. The Kennel Club

firmly believes that repealing breed specific legislation would lessen the appeal of these dogs and also reduce cases of animal cruelty.

RECOMMENDATIONS

At present there is a lack of detailed data in to explain why dog bite related incidents may occur in order that prevention measures can be put in place. In order to aid this understanding, more data would need to exist – for example, on the medical and behavioural history of the individual dog involved, what those involved did at the time of the incident, and the connection between dog behaviour and the severity of bite inflicted. Research suggests there are a range of factors that may contribute to dog biting incidents and dog-related fatalities, though each incident is specific to the circumstances. Better investigation of dog bite incidents would result in greater understanding of the potential triggers which could assist in preventing such incidents occurring. At present there is little incentive to gather data relating to dog biting incidents.

With 71 percent of respondents to a Defra consultation agreeing that breed specific legislation should be repealed,[11] we believe that all relevant dog control legislation should be updated and consolidated and replaced with preventative legislation based on current scientific understanding of dog behaviour, instead of stereotypes regarding specific breeds.

In the meantime, if breed specific legislation cannot be removed it should be time-limited with a 'sunset clause' commitment from the government to reassess the issue at a specified period.

IN SUMMARY, TO IMPROVE DOG CONTROL THE KENNEL CLUB CALLS ON AN INCOMING GOVERNMENT TO:

- Update, consolidate and, where necessary, replace existing legislation on dog control with preventative legislation and measures based on the principle of 'deed not breed'
- Investigate all serious and fatal dog bite incidents using the services of a suitable behaviourist to understand the causes, and aid effective preventative measures
- Support education programmes such as the Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Training Scheme, which teaches people about responsible dog ownership
- As a minimum, time-limit breed specific legislation with a 'sunset clause'.

A DOG'S LIFE

ROUTINES IN EVERYDAY LIVING

For the majority of dogs kept as companions, exercise will be an important part of their life. Others may also bond with their owners through work, and through activities such as agility, heelwork to music and dog showing.

Providing a dog with physical exercise is important for a dog's health and wellbeing, with some evidence suggesting that dog walking is associated with reducing dog behaviour-related problems including destructiveness and barking.[12] In addition to this in the UK, only 39 percent of men and 29 percent of women meet the government's recommended amount of physical daily activity, but evidence suggests that if all dog owners briskly walked their dogs for at least 30 minutes each day they would easily reach the target.[13] In order to achieve this goal, studies show that people are more likely to walk their dogs if they are able to do so off-lead and access public open space.[14]

ACCESS TO DOG WALKING AREAS

The Kennel Club believes that all dogs should be able to enjoy the UK's open spaces with responsible owners. However, we do not oppose restrictions on access that are evidence-based and proportionate, provided that in such cases, where access is restricted, suitable alternative space is provided for dog walkers.

In recent years, local authorities have had the power to introduce measures to prevent dogs accessing areas that were commonly used for dog walking. In response to this, the Kennel Club established a dog owners' group, KC Dog, to keep dog owners up to date about restrictions being consulted on in their local areas.

Through KC Dog we engage with local authorities to discuss problems and possible solutions to avoid the introduction of restrictions. Detailed studies have shown that greater compliance can be achieved by engaging positively with dog owners through themes that are important to them. These positive alternatives embody the principle of integrated access management, and succeed in achieving a balance between supporting the welfare needs of dogs and recognising the many benefits they bring to society, whilst addressing dog associated issues.

The number of implemented dog control orders is not recorded, but anecdotal evidence suggests that access officers in different local authorities have noted an increase in the amount of restrictions placed on dog owners. This trend has a negative impact upon dog walkers, some of whom have been dispersed onto sensitive land which has caused wider negative effects to both plant and animal life, thereby causing further restrictions being placed on dogs and their owners.

Since October 2014, Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) have replaced Dog Control Orders. Local authorities have similar powers to introduce orders, except there is no requirement for them to advertise PSPO consultations in local newspapers. However, according to guidance they should consult, for example, with dog owners groups such as KC Dog.

Given requirements under the Animal Welfare Act for dogs to be regularly exercised, the increasing prevalence of restrictions on where dogs can be walked is an important issue for dog owners. In order to keep abreast of restrictions on where dog walkers can go with their dogs, we believe central government should monitor and record information relating to the Public Spaces Protection Orders from local authorities, including what Orders are consulted on, what level of response was achieved and what Orders were introduced as a result.

DOG SHOWING

As the governing body of dog showing in the UK, the Kennel Club encourages dog showing as a rewarding, healthy hobby, which helps keep dog owners fit and active, and ensures good dog behaviour and training.

More importantly dog showing plays a fundamental role in improving the health and welfare of dogs – in particular of 'Category Three' breeds – defined as those who have had a history of being bred for exaggerated features that are detrimental to their health and welfare. With very few health tests and no legislation to prevent the breeding of dogs for physical exaggerations, which are very subjectively defined and difficult to quantify, dog shows are the only way of visibly monitoring dogs' conformation.

Kennel Club licensed dog shows reward dogs for meeting the Breed Standards – all of which explicitly state that exaggerations that are in any way detrimental to health are not acceptable – and dog show judges are trained to only reward healthy dogs, which is backed up by veterinary checks at Kennel Club licensed shows.

The Kennel Club agrees with the conclusion of Professor Sir Patrick Bateson's 'Independent Inquiry into Dog Breeding' in January 2010, which highlighted dog shows as being 'a powerful lever for change'. This is because they educate those participating, and the public watching them, about what a healthy example of the breed should look like. In the case of Crufts this is particularly powerful as viewing figures are 4.6 million.

WORKING DOGS

Many people who work their dogs will choose to have them docked as puppies in order to prevent injury whilst working. With recent research from the University of Glasgow showing that undocked working dogs are more likely to suffer tail injury and amputation (with more than half of undocked spaniels experiencing a tail injury in the last year),[15] we believe that prevention of injury is a sensible course of action for breeders of working dogs. However, under the Animal Welfare Act, the decision to dock a puppy's tail if it is likely to be used for working purposes (or have it amputated for medical reasons) does mean that their owners are unable to show them at any dog show where the general public are required to pay an entrance fee.

This restriction impacts dog owners who have docked or amputated their dog's tail legally and to safeguard their health and welfare.

Despite the past controversies surrounding tail docking, the Kennel Club is of the opinion that this restriction has achieved no benefit for the health and welfare of dogs generally and, in order to increase the visibility of healthy working dogs at dog shows (as dog shows are a positive influence for change), and to educate potential dog owners about the conformation of healthy examples of those breeds, such dogs should be allowed to be shown at all dog shows. We will therefore look to an incoming government to amend the Animal Welfare Act which

bans legally docked working dogs and dogs with amputated tails from being shown at shows with a paying gate.

IN SUMMARY, TO IMPROVE HOW DOGS LIVE THEIR DAY TO DAY LIVES THE KENNEL CLUB CALLS ON AN INCOMING GOVERNMENT TO:

- Record information relating to Public Spaces Protection Orders from local authorities
- Require local authorities to positively engage with local dog owners when introducing Public Spaces Protection Orders
- Amend the Animal Welfare Act to allow legally docked working dogs and dogs with surgically amputated tails (for medical reasons) to be shown at all dog shows.

A DOG'S LIFE

FREE FROM ANIMAL TESTING

For the thousands of dogs who spend their everyday lives in laboratories, the Kennel Club strongly supports the principles of the three Rs (Refinement, Reduction and Replacement), as the guiding principles which underpin the humane use of animals in scientific research.

The Kennel Club supports the work of FRAME (Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments) and is opposed to the use of dogs in all forms of toxicity testing (whether that is for chemicals, pesticides or medicines). Whilst we acknowledge that such testing is sometimes required by national and international regulators, we believe it should be kept to an absolute minimum and be used only when alternative testing is not possible.

We are increasingly concerned about regulations requiring animal testing on a second species (i.e. in addition to rodents), as dogs (Beagles) are commonly used. Given the limited usefulness of testing on dogs and the alternatives available, we believe government should take further action to reduce the number of dogs being used for toxicity tests.

LIMITED USE OF TESTING ON DOGS

According to research undertaken by FRAME and the BUAV, with funding from the Kennel Club, on the use of dogs in human toxicology, the predictive success of testing on dogs is often little better than chance. The study re-analysed past drug testing data and found that dogs are an unreliable indicator of whether substances will be safe for humans.[16] Yet in the UK approximately 3,000 dogs are used annually, 80 percent of these in 'second species' toxicity tests,[17] even though many in the pharmaceutical industry say they would prefer not to use them.

The use of two species in these types of tests is a worldwide requirement and primates and dogs are the usual species chosen as the second species for the testing, to check the first species results, which are usually done on rodents. Yet 95 percent of drugs that pass preclinical tests fail in human clinical trials.[18] Around half of those that do pass are later withdrawn or re-labelled because of adverse effects not predicted by animal tests.[19]

The failure rate is costly, both to the pharmaceutical industry and in terms of human safety and animal welfare. The BUAV and FRAME study ultimately concludes that canine models are highly inconsistent predictors of toxic responses in humans.

The reason for this is because the absence of toxicity in dogs provides essentially no insight into the likelihood of toxicity in humans. These findings mean that, for example, if a new drug has a 70 percent chance of not being toxic in humans, then a negative test in dogs will increase this probability to an average of just 72 percent.[20] The dog tests therefore provide no additional confidence in the outcome for humans, but at great ethical – and financial – expense.

PRINCIPLES OF ANIMAL TESTING

The Kennel Club strongly supports the principles of the three Rs (Refinement, Reduction and Replacement), as the guiding principles which underpin the humane use of animals in scientific research:

- Refinement: improving scientific procedures and husbandry to minimise potential pain and suffering and improve animal welfare in situations where the use of animals is unavoidable.

- Reduction: improving test methods to enable researchers to obtain comparable levels of information from fewer animals or more information from the same number of animals.

- Replacement: finding and using replacements to animal testing e.g. computer modelling.

Dogs' welfare can be severely comprised during testing. Dogs may be force fed or injected with chemicals or drugs on a daily basis. They are kept in the laboratory environment for several months whilst being observed for signs of adverse effects. These may include seizures, organ damage, internal bleeding and even death. The laboratory environment is detrimental to good dog welfare as the animals are kept in restricted spaces in small groups, often do not have access to the outdoors and have limited, positive contact with humans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In spite of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act of 1986, which insists that no animal experiments be conducted if there is a realistic alternative, and various other animal welfare legislation, evidence suggests more needs to be done to ensure dogs are not used in testing unnecessarily, that more resources are made available for alternative testing methods; and that the highest possible standards of animal welfare are adhered to by animal testing establishments.

IN SUMMARY, TO HELP REDUCE THE USE OF DOGS IN ANIMAL TESTS THE KENNEL CLUB CALLS ON AN INCOMING GOVERNMENT TO:

- Review the use of dogs as a second species for toxicity testing in human drug development in light of new research on the lack of usefulness of this practice
- Make it compulsory for establishments to have a positive homing policy to ensure that as many dogs as possible can be released into loving homes
- Review the welfare of dogs in laboratories including breeding, transportation, housing, nutrition, health, handling and euthanasia, to ensure that all efforts to reduce suffering are being implemented
- Increase funding to develop alternatives to animal testing.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO AN INCOMING GOVERNMENT TO IMPROVE DOGS' LIVES

BREEDING

- Review legislation on dog breeding to make the principles of the Assured Breeder Scheme mandatory and ensure it enshrines the principles of the Animal Welfare Act
- Endorse the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme
- Issue effective guidance and training to local authorities detailing dog breeding requirements so that a more consistent and effective approach to licensing and enforcement is achieved
- Reduce the burden on local authorities and central government by working collaboratively with the Kennel Club to deliver training programmes for local authorities.

ACQUISITION

- Prohibit the sale of puppies in pet shops
- Promote breeders breeding to the standards of Kennel Club Assured Breeders
- Clamp down on those illegally importing puppies for commercial sale and target enforcement to the 95 percent of trade that comes through Holyhead, Dover and the Eurotunnel
- Work with the Kennel Club and dog welfare organisations on a public education campaign on the 'do's and don'ts' of puppy buying.

TRAINING

- Prohibit the sale and use of electronic shock training devices
- Adopt the KCAI requirements as an industry based standard that all dog trainers and behaviourists must comply with.

RESPONSIBLE OWNERSHIP

- Update, consolidate and, where necessary, replace existing legislation on dog control with preventative legislation and measures based on the principle of 'deed not breed'
- Investigate all serious and fatal dog bite incidents using the services of a suitable behaviourist to understand the causes, and aid effective preventative measures
- Support education programmes such as the Kennel Club Good Citizen Dog Training Scheme, which teaches people about responsible dog ownership
- As a minimum, time-limit breed specific legislation with a 'sunset clause'.

ROUTINES IN EVERYDAY LIVING

- Record information relating to Public Spaces Protection Orders from local authorities
- Require local authorities to positively engage with local dog owners when introducing Public Spaces Protection Orders
- Amend the Animal Welfare Act to allow legally docked working dogs and dogs with surgically amputated tails (for medical reasons) to be shown at all dog shows.

FREE FROM ANIMAL TESTS

- Review the use of dogs as a second species for toxicity testing in human drug development in light of new research on the lack of usefulness of this practice
- Make it compulsory for establishments to have a positive homing policy to ensure that as many dogs as possible can be released into loving homes
- Review the welfare of dogs in laboratories including breeding, transportation, housing, nutrition, health, handling and euthanasia, to ensure that all efforts to reduce suffering are being implemented
- Increase funding to develop alternatives to animal testing.

ENDNOTES

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