

The Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme Standard

This Standard includes all of the rules, requirements and expectations necessary for Assured Breeders to operate under the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme. These are set out below under seven sections: Application, Assured Breeders, Facilities, Dogs Kept, Breeding, Sale of Dogs and Puppies and Lifetime care.

An essential action or commitment is shown in bold and any explanation that may be useful will surround or follow the bold text.

Text in italics indicates the way in which compliance is checked.

Terms

“Assured Breeder” refers to any person, who has been accepted as a member of the Scheme.

“Buyer” refers to anyone purchasing or receiving a dog or puppy from an Assured Breeder.

“Standards Assessor” refers to a trained official working on behalf of the Kennel Club to carry out assessments of facilities.

“Assessment Visit” refers to an assessment inspection visit to confirm compliance with this standard.

“Puppy” refers to any puppy or dog sold by a member of the Scheme.

“ABS” refers to the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme.

“Breed” or “Type” refers to the likely combination of physical and behavioural characteristics and features that can reasonably be expected or are likely to commonly appear in the dogs owned or bred by the member

Further information on how to comply with the ABS Standard can be found in the Guidance to Assured Breeder Scheme which is available on the Kennel Club website www.assuredbreeders.org.uk or by contacting the ABS department.

Helpful references to the ABS Guidance to Assured Breeder Scheme are provided throughout, e.g. G1.2, G3.4 etc.

1) Application

In order to be eligible for Scheme membership and to remain an Assured Breeder, Applicants must:

1.1) Complete the application form and sign the declaration/tick the box in the case of an online application. Applicants must read and familiarise themselves with all the rules of the Scheme, as contained in this standard, and be comfortable that they will be able to fulfil the criteria before submitting an application. By signing the declaration (or ticking the box in the case of an online application) the applicant is committing to abide by the Scheme rules and requirements. Any breach or non-compliance of Scheme rules and regulations may result in rejection, suspension or withdrawal of membership^{G7}.

Applicants must note the Scheme disclaimer printed on the application form and if the applicant is under 18 years old, then a parent/guardian must countersign the application, by way of guarantee, for the young person's obligations. The parent or guardian will become fully responsible for all obligations under the terms of the Scheme either legal or financial.

All applications will be fully considered. Further information to ensure that the applicant is capable of meeting the Scheme requirements may be required and an Assessment Visit will be carried out to ensure that the Kennel Club is satisfied the applicant is fully capable of meeting the requirements of the Scheme. An application may be subject to Committee approval and the Kennel Club reserves the right to refuse an application.

All applications must be accompanied by the current application fee. For current application fees please visit www.assuredbreeders.org.uk or contact the ABS.

Application forms will not be passed for processing unless the Declaration is signed (or ticked online) and the correct fee is submitted.

1.2) Supply a brief written statement for publication^{G3.4}, accurately outlining their experience and involvement in the breed(s) or type of dogs that they produce.

Statements of experience are updated during an Assessment visit or may be updated by the Kennel Club at the Assured Breeder's request.

Registration and awards records are checked to verify whether the Assured Breeder qualifies for a Breeding Experience and/or Kennel Club Stud Book accolade. It is the Assured Breeder's responsibility to inform the Kennel Club which registered breed club they belong to so that records may be checked with regard to the Breed Club Accolade. The Accolade of Excellence is awarded, after nominations are considered, by the KC General Committee, and may be removed at any time. Information is shared with breed club secretaries to confirm breed club membership.

1.3) Undertake to give the KC opportunity to review compliance procedures and to investigate any anomalies or complaints by means of an Assessment Visit or other methods. Assessment Visits will be conducted by suitably trained personnel employed or working on behalf of the Kennel Club who may be accompanied by observers. Visits will also occur on a routine basis and an absolute minimum of once every three years prior to renewal of membership, and may also be carried out additionally and randomly upon reasonable notice. Additional visits will be carried out upon notification that the member has moved to, or is using, alternative or additional premises, or if the Kennel Club has reasonable cause for concern that there may be breaches of the Scheme rules or its standard. At any time during the investigation of a complaint, an Assured Breeder may be suspended from using or operating under the Scheme, pending the conclusion of such an investigation. During suspension, puppies must not be sold under the Scheme. There is a complaints procedure which will be followed in the case of a complaint by a buyer of a puppy under the Scheme. A copy of this procedure is available from the Kennel Club. Further information on Assessment Visits can be found at www.assuredbreeders.org.uk or by contacting the ABS department.

If an Assured Breeder refuses or cancels an Assessment Visit from a Standards Assessor, without providing a reasonable explanation and arranging a further date,

their membership is suspended until such time as a satisfactory visit is completed. A detailed indication of what an Assessment visit entails is available from the Kennel Club at any time and will be sent to each Assured Breeder when an Assessment Visit date has been confirmed.

1.4) Renew their membership on or prior to expiry. Membership of the Scheme will be for three years, or for periods of three years. Renewal fees are payable to ensure continued membership. Litter Registration applications are not accepted by the Kennel Club from Assured Breeders unless their membership is either maintained or is resigned.

Assured Breeders must not advertise or describe themselves as an Assured Breeder, use any Assured Breeder literature or hold themselves out in any way as an Assured Breeder, unless their membership is current and valid. Any Assured Breeder that is lapsed, suspended or whose membership is expired, or where a fee is overdue will have their name removed from the current membership list.

Membership renewal notices are sent out well before membership is due to expire and if payment is not received, membership status becomes inactive. Assured Breeders whose membership payments are not up to date are issued with a choice to renew or resign upon submission of an application to register a litter. Any outstanding fees are payable immediately. Members whose payments have lapsed will not be permitted to re-join the Scheme until any arrears have been cleared.

1.5) Not reapply to join the Scheme for three years if their application is rejected. An application may be rejected if it does not meet with the strict criteria laid out in this Standard. Applications with minor non-conformities may have their initial application refused and may be given an opportunity to rectify these shortfalls.

1.6) Not use the Assured Breeder Scheme or associated logos prior to receiving confirmation of acceptance onto the Scheme. Only Assured Breeders are entitled to use the Scheme logos, as set out in the logo use agreement (available at www.assuredbreeders.org.uk or by contacting the ABS), provided that they are active members of the ABS. If any logo is used inappropriately, the individual will be asked to remove the logo and may be prevented from joining the Scheme or their membership suspended or rejected. Any documentation relating to membership that is reproduced for others must be produced in its entirety.

2) Assured Breeders

In order to be eligible for Scheme membership and to remain an Assured Breeder, applicants/members must:

2.1) Ensure all breeding stock and puppies are recorded or registered in the United Kingdom with a registration organisation recognised by the Kennel Club. Such organisations must be compliant with British Standard ISO 9001 and must make available record of parentage or lineage, including a coefficient of inbreeding, to a minimum of 3 generations, and a record of health screening test results, or the record of a DNA homozygosity test where it can be demonstrated this is able to support or fulfil the above requirements.^{G2.9}

Registration may be with the Kennel Club on its Breed Register or Activity Register. The Scheme recognises good breeding practice and registration with other bodies is acceptable providing they fulfil the above requirements.

2.2) As a minimum, to have bred a litter in the last ten years, or to be planning on breeding a litter in the near future AND to own a bitch, or dog, of breeding age. Upon completion of a successful Breeder Assessment Visit, if the applicant has not previously registered a litter, the applicant's yearly payment will be activated, but the membership will remain in a pending state until the applicant applies to register a litter that meets all the requirements of the Assured Breeder Scheme. If the applicant has previously registered a litter, the applicant's last registered litter will be checked for compliance with the Scheme requirements and if the litter meets the requirements of the Scheme, the applicant's membership will be activated. If the applicant has previous bred a litter but the last registered litter does not meet the requirements of the Scheme, the applicant's yearly payment will be activated, but the membership will remain in a pending state until the applicant applies to register a litter that meets all the requirements of the Assured Breeder Scheme.

For reference, the breeding age for a bitch is considered to be between 1 and 8 years old, and for a stud dog from 1 year old, at the time of mating. The applicant joining who has a stud dog only, and does not intend to breed litters, must have a stud dog of breeding age who has previously sired a registered litter. They are also required to list all current breeding stock upon application, to ensure any breed or type specific requirements are in place before being accepted as an Assured Breeder.

Checks on breeding history are done at the time of submission of application.

2.3) Bring to the attention of the Kennel Club anything which may affect their application or continuation on the Scheme and not act in any manner that would bring the Scheme into disrepute. It is the Assured Breeders' responsibility to bring to the attention of the Kennel Club any change to their circumstances which affects their activities. This includes events such as change of address, change of environment, significant changes to staff or care arrangements. Any person with a conviction involving an animal welfare offence, or subject to disciplinary penalties under Kennel Club Rule A11/A12, will be ineligible to join the Scheme and any existing member will be suspended from the Scheme for the duration of any sentence imposed by a court (including any conditional or suspended sentence) or for the duration of the period of disqualification set by the Kennel Club Disciplinary Sub-Committee, whichever is the longer. After such time, any application to join the Scheme would need to include satisfactory written reassurances and undertakings that the applicant has appropriate resources in place to meet the welfare requirements of the dogs then in his/her care and control and will require a satisfactory kennel inspection before acceptance of the application.

Any conduct considered to be incompatible with membership under the Assured Breeder Scheme or contrary to the spirit of the Scheme, or likely to undermine the

Scheme, may result in an application for membership being rejected or the Assured Breeder's removal from the Scheme.

System records are checked at the time of application and on an on-going basis. The Kennel Club reserves the right to share information with other organisations to ensure compliance.

2.4) Commit to operate to high standards and duty of care and comply with all relevant local^{G1.2} and national regulatory requirements^{G1.1}, including, but not limited to, The Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1973, 1991 and 1999, The Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014, and the Animal Welfare Act 2006. These include provisions to address an animal's:

- (a) need for a suitable environment,
- (b) need for a suitable diet,
- (c) need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns,
- (d) need to be housed with, or apart from, other animals, and
- (e) need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

Local authorities have varying regulations and it is the responsibility of each Assured Breeder to check that they operate in accordance with local regulations.

Operating standards and compliance with relevant codes of practice and local authority requirements will be verified during an Assessment visit.

2.5) Participate in any canine health survey or reasonable health initiative in their breed(s). Collection of health data in all breeds of dog is an urgent priority and the expectation is that any Assured Breeder will assist in this process.

2.6) Keep, for a minimum of 10 years, a record of all dogs^{G3.3}, matings^{G3.1} and puppies up until the point of transfer. Records must include, as a minimum, all dogs' and puppies':

- Registration details including breed or description of type, registration number, name, sex, date of birth, date of ownership and evidence of parentage
- Date of transfer (change of ownership)
- Mating details (dates, matings performed)
- Details of puppies produced
- Health screening test results
- Permanent identification details
- Date (and cause) of death (if known)
- Date of sale of puppies and contact details of buyers
- Any veterinary treatment
- Details of puppies at birth e.g. number, any dead and cause of death if known, any abnormalities noted, e.g. date of birth, sex, colour and any other identifying marks
- A record of any complaints received
- A record of any exceptional events or breeding decisions that have the potential to result in a failure to meet the Scheme standard.

A Standards Assessor will confirm this during an Assessment Visit.

2.7) Not use ABS membership to promote the breeding of crossbreeds or mixed breeds. Those who choose to breed crossbreeds are eligible to join the Scheme, providing that they fulfil all other requirements, but must not make claims that they are unable to substantiate regarding the outcome of puppies and therefore must not use their status as an Assured Breeder to promote the breeding of dogs that may be an unknown quantity. The Assured Breeder Scheme is designed to promote good breeding practice, which includes encouraging the breeding of dogs of suitable temperament, type and physical characteristics, to enable buyers to select a suitable dog. Where different Breeds or types of dog are mixed, the temperament and physical traits may be more difficult to predict and therefore it can be more challenging to achieve the aims of the Assured Breeder Scheme.

Buyers are asked for feedback. A Standards Assessor will also confirm this during an Assessment Visit.

2.8) Only sell, or advertise for sale, dogs bred by themselves. Assured Breeders will sell only puppies bred by themselves and raised in their own environment, which will meet all the requirements of the Assured Breeder Scheme. They are also expected to select from breeding stock that is known to them and where they are able to provide assurances of every aspect of the puppy's upbringing. Commercial interests are expected to be secondary and the selling of puppies bred by third parties strictly for commercial gain is not accepted. Membership of the Scheme must be the same as the recorded registered ownership of any breeding stock. Where multiple memberships or partnership arrangements are maintained, the contract of sale and any accompanying documentation must clearly record this and it is the members' responsibility to confirm in writing absolute clarity with the buyer^{G1}. Under exceptional circumstances, and on written permission from the Kennel Club, the Assured Breeder may be allowed to sell puppies not bred by themselves, on condition that the circumstances and reasons for the sale are made clear, in writing, to the buyer. The conditions of sale and the rules and responsibilities under the ABS will still apply.

Buyers are asked for feedback. A Standards Assessor will also confirm this during an Assessment Visit.

2.9) Inform the Kennel Club in writing prior to the registration application, if a litter does not meet all of the current requirements or recommendations of the Scheme. Also inform, in writing, each of the buyers or whoever takes ownership at the earliest opportunity and prior to any sale taking place. Requirements and recommendations are subject to change from time to time and it is the responsibility of the Assured Breeder to ensure that they comply with these. It is accepted that under exceptional circumstances (such as an accidental mating, or due to the availability of suitable breeding stock) a litter may not meet all of the requirements of the Assured Breeder Scheme. This may be due to matters outside the Assured Breeders' control or where they have not been made completely aware of current circumstances. Any such event will be considered by the Kennel Club on its own merit and these occasions are expected to be limited and continual requests for exceptions will not be tolerated and may result in suspension^{G7}. Where these exceptional events occur, the Assured Breeder must keep a record of why and how

the event occurred, any mitigating points and a plan to reduce such incidents going forward,

Buyers are asked for feedback. A Standards Assessor will also confirm this during an Assessment Visit.

2.10) Adhere to Kennel Club rules, such as are applicable as set out in the Kennel Club Year Book. The Kennel Club rules are set out in the Kennel Club year book which is issued annually, and is available upon request. Existing members are updated annually of any rule changes such as are applicable and are given 6 months' grace to fully comply.

2.11) Ensure that he/she has a clear understanding of the Kennel Club's ethos and values associated with the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme objectives. Members must, at all times, act in accordance with the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme requirements and recommendations, Code of Practices as amended from time to time, applicable laws (particularly Consumer protection legislation), and good industry practice and will ensure that all personnel and any associated or connected person also complies with all such requirements, and not do or omit to do anything which may be prejudicial to or denigrate, defame or cause damage to the reputation of the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme^{G7}.

3) Facilities

In order to be eligible for Scheme membership and to remain an Assured Breeder, applicants/members must:

3.1) Ensure that facilities where dogs are kept, including whelping facilities^{G4.8}, are constructed to a reasonable standard, kept in a good state of repair and in accordance with good practice^{G4} and health and safety requirements, including provisions for emergencies^{G5}.

Consideration must be given to the suitable construction of facilities, including kennel buildings where appropriate, or within the Assured Breeder's home. Facilities must be of good construction, made from materials that are able to be kept clean and free of infectious disease. Particular consideration must be given to materials used in the construction of floors and other areas liable to soiling. Consideration must be given to the wellbeing of the dogs and also of neighbouring facilities and must include consideration to minimise noise.

If an Assured Breeder uses more than one location for keeping and/or breeding dogs, then the Kennel Club must be informed of this, so that adequate time may be allocated when assigning Assessment Visits and all premises must form part of the visit. If there are issues of concern arising from an Assessment Visit and it is considered that the facilities fall short of the standards expected for an Assured Breeder, then this may result in removal from the Scheme or an application being rejected. It is a condition of the Scheme that Assured Breeders agree to the Kennel Club referring any area of concern relating to the welfare of dogs to the appropriate authority.

A Standards Assessor will check all facilities.

3.2) Provide a safe and secure^{G5.7} environment for each dog which is spacious and in proportion to the number of dogs kept^{G4.6}. The environment must be comfortable and such that dogs are not exposed to situations which result in repeated or prolonged signs of anxiety or fear. An adequate number of staff/ individuals must be available to care for the number of dogs kept^{G5.4}.

A Standards Assessor will expect to see that this appears to be true.

3.3) Provide clean^{G5.2, G5.3} and comfortable accommodation with adequate heat^{G4.4}, light^{G4.3} and ventilation^{G4.5}, with particular regard for the animal's health, age and breed or type. All dogs must be kept in an environment which enables them to display normal behavioural characteristics, such as social behaviour, Breed and or Type specific behavioural requirements must also be taken into account, for example through the provision of sufficient enrichment and exercise appropriate to the individual breed or type.

Accommodation must be cleaned daily and waste removed as appropriate and at least twice daily. Appropriate and clean bedding^{G4.7} material must be available. Adequate routine cleaning procedures must be in place to ensure that the environment remains clean and free from infectious diseases. A standard operating procedure to administer this must be in place. Where dogs are kept within a domestic home environment this must be suitable for the number of dogs present. Where accommodation that has been specifically designed for the keeping of dogs is provided, such as a kennel, all internal surfaces used in the construction of walls, floors, partitions, doors and door frames must be durable, smooth, impervious or easily cleansed. Where dogs kept for breeding are living in domestic premises, such as a family home, adequate and appropriate measures must be taken to ensure adequate hygiene. In all cases adequate space must be available for the dogs to exhibit normal behaviour patterns and sleeping areas and bedding facilities must be available for each dog^{G4}. Facilities must be available to securely separate bitches when in season.

A Standards Assessor will check all facilities, procedures and practices.

3.4) Provide suitable and adequate diet^{G6.1}. Dogs must be able to satisfy their thirst and normally have access to clean drinking water at all times. Suitable facilities, hygienically constructed and maintained, must be provided for the storage and preparation of food for the dogs^{G5.1}.

A Standards Assessor will note the condition of the dogs and will expect to see adequate drinking water and a supply of food available for the dogs kept.

3.5) Take reasonable precautions to prevent the spread of infectious diseases^{G5.2, G5.3} and facilities must be available for the treatment of dogs in an emergency^{G3.2, G5.5}. Adequate arrangements or plans must be available for the isolation of sick or injured animals^{G5.2} and for the transportation of animals to and from the Assured Breeder's establishment for veterinary treatment.

Assured Breeders will be asked to outline their contingency plans during an Assessment Visit.

3.6) Ensure that all medications are used as per manufacturer's instructions, are within their expiry date and have a current marketing authorisation for sale in the UK. Medications must be kept in a suitable storage area, inaccessible to dogs and children and must be protected from light and extremes of temperature where relevant. Dogs must not normally be given human medications, unless otherwise advised by a veterinary surgeon. Prescribed medicines must be used only for the specific animals to which they are prescribed, unless otherwise advised by a veterinary surgeon.

Arrangements must be in place to deal with any minor injuries that can be treated at home^{G5.6}.

A Standards Assessor will confirm this during an Assessment Visit.

4) Dogs kept

In order to be eligible for Scheme membership and to remain an Assured Breeder, applicants/members must:

4.1) Ensure that all dogs used for breeding are selected for temperament characteristics suitable for their intended purpose. Dogs must also be reasonably typical of their breed or Type in terms of appearance and characteristics ^{G6.3}. Breed descriptions and breed standards are widely available and are accessible via the online KC Breed Information Centre (www.thekennelclub.org.uk/dogbreedinformation).

A Standards Assessor will confirm this during an Assessment Visit.

4.2) Ensure that a veterinary health plan, as agreed with their veterinary surgeon, is in place^{G6.4}. This must provide for the treatment of any signs of disease or illness, in a timely manner.

Records of any clinical veterinary treatment provided to dogs during any time whilst in the member's care, must be easily accessible and will be viewed during an Assessment visit. A Standards Assessor will ask for the name and address of the Assured Breeder's usual veterinary practice.

4.3) Ensure that all breeding stock is protected, as far as is reasonably possible, by routine immunisation^{G6.4} against current common infectious diseases, unless advised otherwise by a veterinary surgeon. All dogs must be examined and treated for internal and external parasites on a routine basis. Details of immunisation and any other treatments must be kept for each dog and be up to date^{G3.3}.

A Standards Assessor will confirm this during an Assessment Visit.

4.4) Permanently identify breeding stock (owned or offered at stud) by microchip. This is checked automatically when litters are registered. Puppies must be permanently identified by microchip prior to sale or by 8 weeks,

whichever is the sooner, unless otherwise advised in writing by a veterinary surgeon. Microchipping of dogs must be carried out by a trained implanter. Where dogs or puppies are microchipped, the relevant number must be registered on a national database in accordance with the law.

A Standards Assessor will ask to see evidence of this and records of a method of permanent identification are checked at the time of application to register a litter.

4.5) Adequately socialise^{G6.8} and habituate^{G6.9} puppies prior to sale. Habituation and socialisation must be commenced by the Assured Breeder and continued until sale.

Buyers are asked for feedback. A Standards Assessor will also confirm this during an Assessment visit.

4.6) Make reasonable efforts to ensure that dogs are adequately trained^{G6.10}, are kept under control and do not cause unreasonable nuisance to neighbours or visitors to the property.

A Standards Assessor will confirm this during an Assessment Visit.

4.7) Ensure that all dogs kept have regular contact with other dogs and people^{G6.7, G6.8} and are provided with adequate exercise^{G6.6} at suitable intervals. Exercise must be given in the care of a fit and responsible person and be adequate enough to ensure the dogs' physical and mental wellbeing.

A detailed outline of a daily routine will be required during an Assessment visit.

4.8) Ensure that all dogs kept benefit from adequate routine grooming^{G6.12}.

A detailed outline of a grooming routine will be required during an Assessment visit.

5) Breeding

In order to remain an Assured Breeder, members must:

5.1) Make health of breeding stock and puppies produced a particular priority^{G6.4}. Assured Breeders must take all reasonable steps to ensure that breeding stock is of good physical and genetic health, of acceptable temperament and fit for function (e.g. be able to see, breathe normally, be physically fit and able to exercise freely).

Individual dogs with proven health related issues caused by over-exaggeration of physical features must not be used in a breeding programme if there is overwhelming evidence that it would be inadvisable in the sense that it is likely to produce health or welfare problems in the offspring and/or it is inadvisable in the context of a relevant breeding strategy. If any doubt exists, or if an animal has encountered previous problems, either with whelping or with the puppies produced, then suitable veterinary or genetic advice must be sought and appropriate steps taken.

Use of required breed-specific health-screening is checked automatically at the time of litter registration.

5.2) Make use of scientifically validated health screening schemes relevant to their breed or type, on all breeding stock owned or offered at stud (many of these will be recognised by the Kennel Club). Assured Breeders must carefully evaluate any test results as well as follow any breeding advice issued under each scheme, prior to breeding.

Most health screening schemes are relevant to potential sires or dams, but in some cases they are relevant to puppies bred and these must be performed prior to sale. Some health schemes require testing throughout the dog's life. The Kennel Club publishes detailed information and relevant links on the various screening schemes on the Health Pages of the KC website. A separate schedule lists breed-specific health screening requirements and recommendations and is available from www.assuredbreeders.org.uk or by contacting the ABS department. This list is regularly updated and Assured Breeders must be familiar with their own breed's screening processes and evaluation well in advance of each mating.

No mating must take place if the test results indicate that it would be inadvisable in the sense that it is likely to produce health or welfare problems in the offspring and/or it is inadvisable in the context of a relevant breeding strategy. Where a DNA test is listed as a requirement for the breed, at least one parent must be confirmed as being clear by way of a validated test or by being evidenced as being hereditarily clear of the condition. If any doubt exists, or if an animal has encountered previous problems, either with whelping or with the puppies produced, then suitable veterinary or genetic advice must be sought and appropriate steps taken. This is particularly important where caesareans or difficult births are considered, or when consecutive litters are considered.

This is checked whenever litter applications are received. Any non-conformity at this point results in the litter application being held in abeyance and the Assured Breeder is contacted until a resolution is found.

A Standards Assessor will ask to see evidence of health screening and will discuss breed specific interpretation.

5.3) Ensure that the genealogical relationship between animals is a consideration when selecting breeding stock. Where relevant, Assured Breeders are invited to make use of the inbreeding co-efficient tool, on the Mate Select section of the Kennel Club website, to aid in the decision on which dogs to breed from. Inbreeding may increase the likelihood of either an exaggerated conformation, or puppies affected by specific inherited defects and may contribute to a narrowing of the breed gene pool.

A Standards Assessor will ask to see evidence of this and will discuss breed specific interpretation.

5.4) Specifically ensure that all breeding stock does not contravene Kennel Club Rules (B22) and advice relating to the health and welfare of breeding bitches and puppies, which state:

The Kennel Club General Committee will not accept an application to register a litter when:

- (1) The dam has already whelped four litters, save in exceptional circumstances and only provided the application is made prior to the mating and with veterinary evidence, as to the suitability of the bitch involved in the proposed whelping and permission has been received, or
- (2) The dam has already reached the age of 8 years at the date of whelping, save in exceptional circumstances and only provided application is made prior to the mating, and the proposed dam has previously whelped at least one other registered litter and permission has been received. Any such application must be supported by veterinary evidence as to the suitability of the bitch involved in the proposed whelping, or
- (3) The dam was under one year old at the time of mating, or
- (4) The offspring are the result of any mating between father and daughter, mother and son or brother and sister, save in exceptional circumstances or for scientifically proven welfare reasons and permission has been received, or
- (5) The dam has already had two litters delivered by caesarean section, save for scientifically proven welfare reasons and this only provided the application is made prior to the mating.

Bitches should not normally be allowed to produce more than one litter, within a 12 month period, or on consecutive seasons, and never without veterinary guidance.

Checks on breeding history are done at the time of registering a litter.

5.5) Follow Scheme rules for every litter bred. It is essential that every litter bred, irrespective of the breed, accords with Scheme requirements. An Assured Breeder cannot opt to breed one breed in a responsible way and another less responsibly.

Every time an Assured Breeder applies to register a litter, fulfilment of ABS requirements is checked. A Standards Assessor will want to see all dogs kept.

5.6) When offering the use of a stud dog, draw up and retain a copy of any Contract of Stud Dog Service for each service performed. This must include details of the conditions of that service and results of all relevant health tests performed in accordance with the Assured Breeder Scheme.

A document containing guidance for drawing up a stud service contract is available at www.assuredbreeders.org.uk or by contacting the ABS department.

A Standards Assessor will ask to see a copy of contracts during an Assessment Visit.

6) Sale of dogs and puppies

In order to be eligible for Scheme membership and to remain an Assured Breeder, members must:

6.1) Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the buyer is able to provide a suitable home and that they are committed to caring for the dog for the whole of its life^{G6.11}.

A Standards Assessor will consult during an Assessment Visit on the re-homing of both puppies and adults, which may include ex-breeding stock. Buyers are also asked for feedback.

6.2) Ensure that the puppy has been inspected by a veterinary surgeon prior to sale, and pass any record of veterinary treatment or examination to the new owner. Confirmation of veterinary examination or evidence of a vet check must be passed to the new owner. The Assured Breeder must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the owner also takes the puppy to a vet shortly after sale, by way of a requirement to fulfil this obligation within the contract of sale.

6.3) Not sell puppies before the age of 8 weeks old unless certified as being suitable for sale and re-homing by a veterinary surgeon and never before the age of 6 weeks.

A Standards Assessor will consult on this during an Assessment Visit.

6.4) Issue relevant information in a Puppy Sales Wallet for each dog sold (Puppy Pack). The Puppy Pack is central to the Scheme and must contain all of the up-to-date written information that Assured Breeders are required to give to buyers or new puppy owners. This must include advice on: **socialisation^{G2.1}, grooming^{G2.5}, feeding^{G2.6}, worming regime^{G2.7}, exercise^{G2.2}, training^{G2.4}** (early and later), **features and characteristics** likely to appear in the puppies, particularly those which may be considered to be specific to the type or breed of dog^{G2.3}, **immunisation regime^{G2.8}**, and details of **identification** and there is capacity in the wallet for copies of health screening certificates. The wallets are sent to Scheme members automatically when puppies are registered with the Kennel Club and are also available upon request. The information must be appropriate and specific to the breed, type and age of each dog. The Assured Breeder must also provide their contact details to all buyers.

A New Owner Questionnaire is included with each Puppy Sales Wallet and buyers are asked to complete them and send them back to the Kennel Club. From these completed forms, it is possible to get a clear indication of which Assured Breeders are not providing the information that they are required to. Occasionally, new owners are contacted directly and asked to complete a questionnaire. A record is kept of the wallets that are supplied and any discrepancies are taken up with the Assured Breeder. Advice sheet templates, which must be adapted to assist members in producing suitable information, are available at www.assuredbreeders.com, or by contacting the ABS department.

6.5) Provide a copy of a Contract of Sale^{G1.3} in the Puppy Sales Wallet for each puppy sold, and keep a copy of each contract issued. This must be dated and signed by both parties and must include contact details of both Assured Breeder and buyer. A document containing Guidance for drawing up a Puppy Sales Contract is available from www.assuredbreeders.com or by contacting the ABS department.

The Contract of Sale must clearly lay out the nature and details of any guarantee given, e.g. time limit and/or any provisions for refund or return and replacement of the puppy.

A Standards Assessor will ask to see a copy of contracts during an Assessment Visit.

6.6) Hand over a signed registration certificate at the time of sale, or forward it to the new owner as soon as possible.

Puppy buyers are asked for feedback.

6.7) Explain any endorsements or restrictions that might pertain. Written and signed confirmation must be obtained from the new owner at, or before, the date on which the dog is physically transferred. Assured Breeders must ensure that the new owner is aware of the endorsement(s), regardless of whether or not the endorsed registration certificate is available. If registration endorsements are being used, the contract must also explain why these have been placed and under what circumstances they would be removed (if any).

Puppy buyers are asked for feedback.

6.8) Provide reasonable after-sales advice and endeavour to deal with any issues arising in good faith.

Puppy buyers are asked for feedback.

6.9) Inform buyers of the requirements and recommendations that apply to KC Assured Breeders, as well as the existence of the complaints procedure.

Puppy buyers are asked for feedback.

6.10) Allow any buyer to be able to view the puppies with their mother, unless an exceptional and documented reason is provided.

A Standards Assessor will consult on this during an Assessment Visit. Puppy buyers are also asked for feedback.

6.11) Ensure that each puppy is accompanied by written details of any veterinary treatment carried out prior to sale^{G2.8}, together with any health test results for the puppy, sire and dam, identification and immunisation certificates (where appropriate). All documentation must include each puppy's identification number.

A Standards Assessor will consult on this during an Assessment Visit. Puppy buyers are also asked for feedback.

7) Lifetime care

In order to be eligible for Scheme membership and to remain an Assured Breeder, members must:

7.1) Commit to help, if necessary, with the re-homing^{G6.11} of any dog that they provide within the Scheme, throughout the dog's lifetime, for whatever reason.

Puppy buyers are asked for feedback.

7.2) Euthanase dogs and puppies only for health or welfare reasons, and upon veterinary advice, where it is deemed that no reasonable alternative is available. Euthanasia must only be carried out under the direction of a Veterinary Surgeon.

Puppies that do not conform to aesthetic ideals and older dogs formerly used as part of a breeding programme must not be euthanased other than for the reasons described above.

A Standards Assessor will consult on this during an Assessment Visit.

7.3) Provide suitable care for the number of dogs in their ownership for the duration of their lifetime, including dogs no longer required for breeding purposes. Neutering of ex-breeding dogs must be considered. Sufficient carers and/or staff must be available ^{G5.4} to provide the levels of care outlined within this Standard.

A Standards Assessor will consult on this during an Assessment Visit.

This Standard, which includes all Scheme requirements and recommendations, is subject to improvements according to feedback and the need for the Scheme to develop. It is the responsibility of the Assured Breeder to ensure that they understand these requirements, are aware of any changes and are referring to the latest Standard which is available on the Kennel Club website www.assuredbreeders.org.uk or by contacting the ABS department.