



NEWS RELEASE

KENNEL CLUB WELCOMES REVISED DOG BREEDING REGULATIONS FOR WALES

But remains concerned that local authorities will face extra strain

The Kennel Club has welcomed revised regulations on dog breeding in Wales as the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) (Wales) Regulations 2014 is debated today (9 December) by the Welsh government. However, the organisation remains concerned that by setting a lower licencing threshold, local authorities will struggle to inspect breeding premises with their already stretched resources and that 'hobby breeders' will be targeted rather than the focus being on larger scale puppy farmers.

The Kennel Club supports the strengthening of licensing requirements in order that breeders will need to demonstrate how they will provide environmental enrichment for the dogs they keep and how they socialise puppies, which is expected of responsible breeders and is a key part of the Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme.

Within the conditions of a licence, the holder must ensure that a breeding bitch does not give birth to more than one litter within a twelve month period and does not give birth to more than six litters in total.

Whilst the Kennel Club welcomes the tightening up of dog breeding regulations in Wales, the regulations, which are set to come into force on **30 April 2015**, will make it a legal requirement for anyone who breeds three or more litters within any twelve month period and/or those keeping three or more breeding bitches on their premises, to hold a breeding license from their local authority. This reduction in the existing legal threshold for breeding is likely to put additional pressure on already strained local authorities, which is why the Kennel Club has offered to train local authority inspectors to the standard of its own UKAS-accredited Assured Breeder Scheme, or for local authorities to employ Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme assessors to inspect on their behalf. The Kennel Club will continue to engage with the Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh local authorities regarding this.

Caroline Kisko, Kennel Club Secretary, said: "Wales has long had a poor reputation when it comes to dog breeding so we are pleased that the Welsh government has showed commitment to improving breeding standards within its legal framework.

"We are concerned however that reducing the legal threshold for the number of litters a breeder can produce without a licence, from five to three, may result in local authorities being overwhelmed with additional work and could see the new regulations becoming a burdensome task for local authorities rather than a useful tool. Furthermore, we do not want to see things being made difficult for responsible hobby breeders simply because they are 'visible', whilst large scale puppy farmers who hide their activities continue to flout the law and avoid restrictions.

"In order to assist local authorities, the Kennel Club has offered to train local authority inspectors, which would enable Kennel Club Assured Breeder Scheme assessors to pass on best practice and ensure that inspectors are most effectively inspecting breeding premises, and we look forward to progressing this."

The full version of the regulations can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/n37c8mr>.

More information on the Kennel Club's campaign to tackle puppy farming can be found at www.thekennelclub.org.uk/stopuppyfarming.

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