

Proposed Responsible Breeding and Ownership of Dogs (Scotland) Bill

Page 1: Introduction

A Proposal for a Bill to improve the health and wellbeing of dogs throughout their lives by strengthening the regulation of the activity of breeding, and of selling or transferring puppies, and by establishing a more responsible and informed approach to acquiring and owning a puppy or dog. The consultation runs from 4 May 2018 to 30 July 2018 All those wishing to respond to the consultation are strongly encouraged to enter their responses electronically through this survey. This makes collation of responses much simpler and quicker. However, the option also exists of sending in a separate response (in hard copy or by other electronic means such as e-mail), and details of how to do so are included in the member's consultation document. Questions marked with an asterisk (*) require an answer All responses must include a name and contact details. Names will only be published if you give us permission, and contact details are never published – but we may use them to contact you if there is a query about your response. If you do not include a name and/or contact details, we may have to disregard your response. Please note that you must complete the survey in order for your response to be accepted. If you don't wish to complete the survey in a single session, you can choose "Save and Continue later" at any point. Whilst you have the option to skip particular questions, you must continue to the end of the survey and press "Submit" to have your response fully recorded. Please ensure you have read the consultation document before responding to any of the questions that follow. In particular, you should read the information contained in the document about how your response will be handled. The consultation document is available here: [Consultation document Privacy Notice](#)

I confirm that I have read and understood the Privacy Notice attached to this consultation which explains how my personal data will be used

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

on behalf of an organisation

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

No Response

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Third sector (charitable, campaigning, social enterprise, voluntary, non-profit)

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what the organisation does, its experience and expertise in the subject-matter of the consultation, and how the view expressed in the response was arrived at (e.g. whether it is the view of particular office-holders or has been approved by the membership as a whole). Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home works directly with the public, Police and Local Authority services by welcoming hundreds of stray and unwanted animals from Edinburgh and the Lothians. In many cases Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home is the penultimate destination for a dog that has been a victim of unscrupulous breeding activities, multiple online sales, or simply a home environment where the owner is too overwhelmed to cope with their care. We are proud in the knowledge that we can put an end to this difficult journey and offer these animals the

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

love and care they need. People will always make mistakes when it comes to taking on a new dog into their lives, but by responding to this consultation, Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home hopes to contribute its knowledge to legislation that could offer better protection to both dogs and consumers during the purchase process. We would like to show the public how to equip themselves with knowledge when going through the dog purchase process, and show that rescue centres like Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home can be a source of that knowledge. Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home always encourages the public to consider rehoming a dog or cat instead. By doing so, they are not only giving a dog or cat a second chance at life, but also getting full disclosure on any medical or behavioural issues that an animal may be suffering from. Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home provides a safety net for its customers throughout the rehoming process, and works to make the best possible match between pet and human. This consultation response has been compiled by the Home's Senior Management Team.

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be published and attributed to me or my organisation

Please provide your name or the name of your organisation. This will not be published if you have asked for the response to be anonymous or "not for publication". Otherwise this is the name that will be published with your response.

Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

Page 8: A - Reducing the threshold for a breeding licence to three litters a year

Q1. Which of the following best describes your view of reducing the threshold for a breeding licence from five to three litters in a twelve month period?

Partially supportive

Please explain the reasons for your response, including any advantages or disadvantages.

Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home would welcome the reduction in the threshold for breeding licenses but we believe that it could go further. We would not recommend that any bitch be subjected to having more one litter per year.

Page 9: B - Extending the breeding licence regime to any form of transfer, not only sale

Q2. Which of the following best describes your view of requiring people to be licensed as breeders even if they do not sell their puppies, but transfer them/give them away?

Partially supportive

Please give reasons for your answer, including any advantages or disadvantages.

We would welcome the proposal for licensing those breeders who transfer / give their puppies away, in order to tackle instances where puppies are taken and sold by unlicensed third parties. However, we would like to ensure that legislation makes allowance for dog owners who find themselves unwittingly dealing with pets who have a litter, and would like to gift these to their local rehoming centre. We would therefore like to see those gifting animals to licensed rehoming centre / charity to be exempt from licensing. Enforcement will be key to success here, as we would be concerned that those who are engaged in puppy farming would be unlikely to register, and as with microchipping, it would just end up being conscientious members of the public who would comply.

Page 10: C - Introducing a temporary registration scheme for those that breed fewer than three litters a year

Q3. Which of the following best describes your view of introducing a temporary registration scheme for those breeding one or two litters in a 12 month period who wish to sell or transfer their puppies?

Partially supportive

Please explain the reasons for your answer, including any advantages or disadvantages.

As per B, we want to ensure that transfers to rehoming centres are exempt from this. We would not like to see any scheme that mean breeders are holding on to pets that they can't care for any longer than necessary.

Q4. Under the proposal, someone with only one or two litters in a 12 month period found to be selling or transferring puppies without completing an online temporary registration would be committing an offence and may be liable to pay a fine. Which of the following best describes your view on this?

Fully supportive

Please give reasons for your answer, including any advantages or disadvantages.

Enforcement will be key to making this legislation work.

Page 11: D - Ensuring future health and welfare needs of dogs through a more responsible and informed approach to acquiring and owning a puppy/dog

Q5. Which of the following best describes your view of creating an obligation on prospective owners to consider carefully a set of questions related to their capacity to take on a puppy/dog?

Fully supportive

Please give reasons for your answer, including any advantages or disadvantages.

Q5. Which of the following best describes your view of creating an obligation on prospective owners to consider carefully a set of questions related to their capacity to take on a puppy/dog?

We would welcome the implementation of checklists that allows prospective owners to make informed decision about the purchase of dogs. This is something practised as a matter of routine for many rehoming centres, including Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home. We would hope that by considering key questions about how an animal will fit with a person's family and lifestyle would reduce instances of unwanted pets.

Q6. Which of the following best describes your view of placing an obligation on the breeder/keeper of a dog to check that any prospective owner is aware that they should have considered these questions?

Fully supportive

Q7. Which of the following best describes your view of obliging anyone acquiring a puppy from a breeder in Scotland to check that the breeder is licensed or registered?

Unsure

Please give reasons for your answer, including any advantages or disadvantages

We are unsure about how this could practically be managed.

Page 12: Financial impact

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

| | Significant increase in cost | Some increase in cost | Broadly cost neutral | Some reduction in cost | Significant reduction in cost | Unsure |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| (a) Local authorities | | | | | | X |
| (b) Dog breeders | | | | | | X |
| (c) General public (including dog owners) | | | | | | X |
| (d) Police and animal welfare organisations | | | | | | X |

Please explain the reasons for your response.

If local authorities are taking on the administration of this scheme and policing it properly they will need a lot of extra resources, however if successful, it could reduce the cost of services around unwanted animals.

Breeders may see a small increase in costs due to new requirements for licensing and extra time with customers to meeting the standards outlined in Section D, however if the scheme is successful, we would see a reduction in the dogs available to market so their costs could increase. The general public may see some increase in cost when illicit breeding practices reduce and the demand / cost for puppies from reputable breeders increases, however this may be balanced by fewer owners taking on dogs that they can't afford.

These variables make the financial implications unclear at this stage. We are equally unsure about the effect on police and animal welfare organisations, if the legislation works effectively we could see a reduction in the

Q8. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

number of dogs coming into rehoming centres, with an increase in demand for dogs for rehoming.

Q9. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

Unsure

Page 13: Equalities

Q10. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected characteristics (under the Equality Act 2010): age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

Page 14: Sustainability

Q11. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Unsure

Page 15: General

Q12. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal?

This would be a fantastic piece of legislation, but it must reflect lessons that we have learnt from microchipping. Despite now being obligatory to have your dog microchipped, we have not seen any improvement in the numbers of animals coming to our door unmicrochipped. Responsible pet owners will always follow the rules, but those who don't want to comply with it know that they won't be followed up upon due to lack of enforcement. There is currently not enough done to resource and enforce animal welfare legislation, and we hope that this Bill will be different. A monetary fine, followed by sentencing and breeding bans for repeat offenders is essential.

Q13. Could the aims of the Bill be better delivered in another way (rather than by means of a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

Unsure