

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?

an individual

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".)

Professional with experience in a relevant subject

Optional: You may wish to explain briefly what expertise or experience you have that is relevant to the subject-matter of the consultation:

I provide dog training and dog behaviour consultations. In particular I run Puppy School classes, basic classes for adolescent dogs and recall classes. I also do 1-2-1 work with dogs that have behaviour issues, ranging from 'naughty dog' behaviour to aggression issues. I have also done some work in connection with the SBC Dog Wardens and work with rescue 'street dogs' from abroad. In addition, I provide advice on choosing a puppy. I am the UK Representative for Pet Dog Trainers of Europe and have actively participated in providing information to One Kind in their proposal on banning the use of shock collars in Scotland. Locally, I have been involved with Borders Pet Rescue for a number of years including as a Trustee (now retired) and in the conception and development Bramble's Field for the rehabilitation of rescue dogs. I am also a consultant on dog behaviour and children's safety around dogs for Dog Friendly Newtown.

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

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No Response

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.

Laura Aitken and my business is Braw Puppy

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?

Fully supportive

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

Limiting the number of puppies bred will discourage people from simply breeding for financial gain and will also reduce the pressure on breeding bitches.

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?

Fully supportive

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

It is far too easy for irresponsible breeders to claim they have not bred for money, when they have, so this might help to control this. Also, it will stop the unnecessary breeding of too many dogs and will encourage

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people to think more about if breeding is actually such a good idea. I do not always advocate neutering, but all my girls have been spayed because I do not intend to breed and I believe it is better for both myself and my dogs. Too many people think breeding their dog will mean lots of lovely puppies without realising how much responsibility comes with breeding and have no idea about how early socialisation (prior to going to the new owner) is crucial in a puppy's development. Even more concerning, with whom do the puppies end up?

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?

Fully supportive

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

I do know very responsible people who are not KC registered but who occasionally breed their dogs and are very careful with bringing the puppies on and who the new owners will be. I am also aware of KC registered breeders who I feel do not have their dog's best interest at heart but who comply with all current KC regulations. I think this would be a good option for responsible home breeders.

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.

My hope is that this would help to see a decline in irresponsible 'back yard' breeders and possibly help to identify dogs being bred for fighting (though this is a very difficult area to control). I think it would also discourage people wanting to breed solely for financial gain because they would have to pay for the privilege. However, to be fair to people with good intentions, this change would require very comprehensive advertising of the new regulations.

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.

I fully support new owners of dogs of all ages, having to demonstrate that they have the knowledge and time to

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?

have a dog. I have actually had pups coming to my class which the owners have had to sign a contract with the breeder that they must take their puppy to socialisation and early training classes. I think this is a great idea and good on the breeders! In my work and in my association with Borders Pet Rescue, I too often see people who have gotten a dog without investigating the breed and suitability to their lifestyle. People seem to think that puppies come without having to put in the work it takes to bring up a dog. Labrador Retrievers are a good example of this. Someone meets a very calm and well behaved adult Lab and thinks, "That's the dog for me!" but doesn't realise how much work has been done to create a nice adult dog and that many Lab pups are crazy puppies! So they end up in shelters or worse, spend their lives in the backyard being ignored.

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

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

Any good breeder will very carefully select who their pups will go to. I always say to people if the breeder isn't asking questions and will just let you walk away with a pup - run in the opposite direction! This goes for rescues as well. A good breeder has their pups interest at heart and will want to know if it will have a good home. Formalising this into standard questions for all breeders is a good idea and I can't imagine responsible breeders would object.

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?

Fully supportive

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

Totally supportive of this. I'm sure some folks will hate the idea of more bureaucracy but we must do something to identify and stop puppy farming. In my puppy classes, I can usually spot the puppies that have been farmed and when I ask the owner where they got them, it's clear I was right. Even though they know that a puppy has been farmed, they will still buy it (often at great cost), because they want to rescue it. If we require licensing of all breeders and make it obligatory in buying a puppy, this will help stop people buying dogs they know are farmed because of emotional reactions. People in the puppy farming trade rely on these types of emotional responses and simply don't care about puppy welfare. On another point, our licensing of commercial breeders is pretty inadequate. It simply isn't good enough to licence from a Council office or to do one inspection a year. I personally feel that large operations shouldn't exist full stop and that those that do, should be intensively investigated and watched like a hawk!

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		x				

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

authorities						
(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.

Some cost will likely rise but could decrease over a period of time as systems are in place and operational. Local authorities will probably see a rise in costs simply because they will be required to spend more time and resources. Dog breeders may see additional costs in complying with new licensing and others a decrease in income as they are required to breed less, so less financial turnover. However, I suspect that many reputable breeders will see little difference. General Public without dogs probably will see no difference but dog owners may pay more as costs by breeders increase. Since the charges for dogs is so variable difficult to see a definitive answer! Initially I think there will be an increase in police and animal welfare costs as puppy farms and bad breeders get closed down and prosecuted. However if changes are successful, over time we should hopefully see a decrease in costs. Of course this depends on animal cruelty being taken seriously by local authorities.

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

Unsure

Please explain the reasons for your response.

I would need to know more about what is currently allocated but big fines regarding puppy farming and bad breeders will help!

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?

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Yes

Page 15: General

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

I am delighted to see this bill being proposed and hope that it will be successful. We need to stop the cruel treatment of dogs for financial gain and the indiscriminate breeding and selling of dogs that is creating suffering and adding to already over-crowded rescues. Scientific research has clearly shown that dogs share many of our complex emotions including suffering, pain, trauma and depression, and that these negative emotions can create the inability to function as a socially competent adult, especially if linked with the lack of early socialisation. Society needs to realise that farmed dogs, both puppies and adults, suffer lasting behavioural problems. This can also be the case with dogs obtained by people with no understanding of what it means to own and raise a dog. Even if we don't care about dogs, how they are treated affects us all. Dogs are social animals and those which are traumatised, lack socialisation and which are denied their basic need of social interaction are more likely to show aggressive behaviours. Breed and bring up a dog well and you have a lovely sociable creature, don't and you may have a dangerous entity at large in society.

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

No

Please explain the reasons for your response

Self regulation seldom works!