

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".)

Academic with expertise in a relevant subject

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following:

I would like this response to be published anonymously

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.

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.

This proposal would definitely reduce breeding, however this would also significantly increase workload on a local authority. Numbers of licensed dog breeding establishments under the current regime are low but this proposal could cause a sharp increase. Costs for breeding licences currently vary widely between authorities, but all will require a Vet's inspection. Vet's fees are charged on top of the licence fee, so this would financially impact current hobby breeders - although it is not unknown for hobby breeders to make up to £20000 per year. Any proposed legislation could follow the framework in other recent consultations on animal establishments' legislation, and prescribe fees in statute. As with other proposed fee structures, these could be increased dependent on the number of dogs and/or size of the facility. A clear definition on a commercial breeder (3 or more litters per year) would be welcomed.

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 opposed

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

If commercial breeding requires to be licensed (and is defined as being 3 or more litters per year), then it follows that the transfer of ownership of puppies on a non-commercial basis should not be a licensable activity. Legislation already exists to protect animal welfare in such circumstances. The introduction of a licensing scheme for non-commercial breeders would not be supported by current evidence. We are not aware of any cases where owners/breeders are producing multiple litters per year for no payment - on a hobby basis or a commercial basis.

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 opposed

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

There is a lack of evidence to suggest that hobby breeders pose a significant welfare problem at present. This could cause a dramatic increase in workload for the Local Authority, without an appropriate level of tangible gain. Further exploration of the impact of this proposal would be helpful. Existing microchipping legislation allows for traceability, should there be a reason to have to investigate the origin of a puppy.

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 opposed

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

Existing microchipping legislation allows for traceability, should there be a reason to have to investigate the origin of a puppy. Further regulation should be avoided.

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.

Owners should not underestimate the impact an irresponsible dog owner has on a community. Dog Fouling is on the increase according to the Keep Scotland Beautiful LEAMS benchmarking report. Dog fouling directly contributes to increased health inequalities and the highest levels of fouling are often found in our most deprived areas. Fear of dogs have been shown to discourage use of public parks. Noise issues when barking dogs are left alone for hours causes further nuisance for residents and authorities. A bank of a few key questions and recorded responses, similar to a pledge, may encourage owners to consider more fully the responsibility placed on them.

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

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?

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

A document such as the Puppy Contract referenced, which both parties answer and sign would be supported. Any reputable seller will want to make sure that the puppy they are selling is going to be well looked after. This approach ensures each new owner's responses are captured. It is a simple way of ensuring every owner, from a set date, has considered the important issues contained in the questions.

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?

Neutral (neither support nor oppose)

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

In order to be fully effective, Scottish and English/Welsh legislation should mirror one another as far as possible, so as to close any loopholes around crossing the border to make a purchase.

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.

The proposals as they stand create a significant financial burden on both local authorities and breeders/owners. Funding would have to be made available to recruit staff to undertake this activity, should all proposals go ahead as stated in the proposed Bill. There do not appear to be any savings to be made, which is appropriate as the main aim of this legislation is better welfare protection for puppies.

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

Yes

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

Please explain the reasons for your response.

A centralised database for the registration of less than 3 litters of puppies could be considered, which would be more cost effective than local authorities bearing the burden of this activity. That would allow a better focus on licensed breeders, where issues are more likely to occur.

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?

No Response

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