

**Animal Breeding Establishments
Guidance Document**

For ease of reference, sub sections (a) to (i) of Section 1(4) the 1973 Act ('BDA 1973') are quoted in **bold type** in the left-hand column. The remaining conditions contained in the left-hand column reflects best practice.

The notes in italics situated in the right-hand column contain additional explanatory advice. These notes occasionally refer to legislation other than the Breeding of Dogs Acts. Reference to this other relevant legislation are made simply to alert the reader to other issues, such as those relating to health and safety matters, as well as environmental protection, which should also be considered in the operation of a breeding establishment.

References to legislation should not be taken as a detailed explanation of the law, and this publication may not refer to all legislation that may be relevant depending on the circumstances.

It should be borne in mind that laws change and expert advice should always be sought as to the current legal position.

DOMESTIC BREEDERS

1. Accommodation

1.1 GENERAL

Dogs will at all times be kept in accommodation suitable as respects construction, size of quarters, numbers of occupants, exercising facilities, temperature, lighting, ventilation and cleanliness; BDA 1973 S.1(4)(a)

*Where dogs are maintained in cages within the house, as happens with many small breeds (terriers, toys, and so on) these must be of sufficient size for the dog to lie down, stand up and turn around comfortably, and allow the dog to defecate away from the sleeping area. Local authorities may wish to refer to the International Air Transport Association Regulations (IATA), which provide useful guidelines for **minimum** cage sizes. It should be remembered that these size guidelines are adequate for **short** periods only and should **not** be regarded as suitable for permanent accommodation. Such cages should be used principally for sleeping quarters and animals should not be confined to them for long periods of the day. All dogs require adequate exercise space should be provided. How much space is a matter for discretion by the authorised inspector and will depend upon the size of the dog as well as the circumstances of each breeding establishments.*

Thought should be given to the maximum likely litter size. There should be effective housing to care for the maximum number of puppies. To avoid crushing puppies, crush bars can be useful when breeding large or giant dogs or if the bitch is particularly clumsy.

The general assessment of domestic arrangements should be considered. If there are children in the house, there should be separate facilities because of public health concerns. In particular, during whelping the risk of Toxocara is increased. Food preparation should be carried out in hygienic conditions and there should be adequate refrigeration to keep food fresh. To avoid cross-contamination, there should be separate facilities for washing dishes and bedding. Inspectors should compare the size and use of the property with the proposed breeding activity to ensure that the operation of the breeding establishment is not compromised. In addition, the construction of the proposed licensed premises should be safe and well maintained.

The applicant should understand how to achieve the required standards of hygiene and disease control set by the conditions to which the licence is subject.

When bitches are whelping every effort should be made to maintain adequate standards of hygiene. Where whelping actually takes place is probably the most controversial aspect of dog breeding, both for domestic and non-domestic breeders.

Whelping should not take place in a domestic kitchen for public health reasons.

Impermeable floor coverings should be provided to prevent fluids and discharges from fouling wooden floors and similar surfaces.

An adequate quantity of absorbent disposable material, e.g. newspapers, should be available and properly disposed of after use. Waste arising from the breeding establishment should be disposed of without harm to human health or the environment. Certain waste may only be passed to registered carriers or appropriate licensed or authorised disposal facilities. Those wishing to dispose of waste on their premises must seek advice from the Environment Agency or local authority. (See Environmental Protection under Other Relevant Legislation at page 28.)

Whether or not the bedding is adequate will be a matter for the inspector. Proprietary bedding materials are available in a range of materials that are easily cleaned and hard wearing. Suitable bedding should be chosen according to the size, coat density, heating and comfort factors needed the dogs and puppies.

The Condition of the dogs with regard to cleanliness of skin, bodyweight in relation to breed, and other well recognised signs of health will form the best evidence of the suitability of the breeder to carry on an establishment within the meaning of the 1973 Act. The inspector's opinions of the breeding establishment will be based on intelligent assessment of the answers provided by the applicant to questions asked by the local authority, as well as what is revealed by an inspection. Veterinary advice should be sought if there is any concern about the health and welfare of the dogs.

1.2 TEMPERATURE

There must be some part of the sleeping area where the dog is able to enjoy a minimum temperature of 10°C (50°F) and a maximum temperature of 26°C (79°F).

The difficulty of maintaining the ideal temperature is acknowledged, however these are realistic temperatures and should not be exceeded in normal circumstances. Puppies under two weeks of age should be kept at a temperature between 26°C (79°F) to 28°C (82°F). Temperatures should be monitored and recorded. (See Record-keeping section at paragraph 6.4)

1.3 LIGHTING

- 1.3.1 During daylight hours, light must be provided to exercise and sleeping areas so that all parts are clearly visible. Where practicable this should be natural light.

Lighting must be of sufficient standard to enable efficient working both during and after daylight hours.

It is recommended that breeding establishments should have low-level night-light for a 12-hour period for after daylight hours.

2. Management

2.1 GENERAL

**Dogs will be adequately supplied with suitable food, drink and bedding material, adequately exercised, and visited at suitable intervals;
BDA 1973 S.1(4)(b)**

The 1999 Act strengthens the requirements for dogs to be visited at suitable intervals

2.2 SUPERVISION

- 2.2.1 A fit and proper person should always be present to exercise supervision and deal with emergencies.
- 2.2.2 Dogs must be checked on regularly throughout the day.

Consideration should be given to the number of dogs being kept at the breeding establishment and the ratio of persons supervising.

Dogs should not be left alone for long periods of the day. It is recommended that dogs should be checked regularly at least every four hours between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

Checks should be more frequent when bitches are whelping and puppies are not yet weaned.

2.3 FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES

- 2.3.1 All dogs must be adequately supplied with suitable food. Clean water must be available at all times and changed daily.
- 2.3.2 Eating and drinking vessels must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected to prevent cross-contamination. They must be maintained in a clean condition and cleansed or disposed of after each meal.

Dogs must be fed sufficiently well to maintain health. Inspectors should observe the general nutrition of the dogs and check on the quantity of food in store and the process of preparation. If necessary, the veterinary surgeon should be consulted to advise.

Special dietary consideration should be given to young and old dogs and to whelping and nursing bitches.

Nutrition is particularly important during pregnancy and lactation. It is recommended that a requirement of about 1.5 times the non-pregnant state is necessary for the last few (say three) weeks of pregnancy.

Lactation will last until the puppies are weaned. During lactation, the bitch must have sufficient food to satisfy the demands of being made upon her. Consideration should also be given to how many puppies the bitch is nursing.

During lactation the bitch should be closely monitored for signs of complication (e.g. eclampsia).

The feeding level required for the bitch after weaning will depend upon her body condition.

Where a proprietary food source is used the manufacturer's guide should be followed.

Veterinary advice should be sought if in doubt.

3. Disease control, vaccination and worming

3.1 GENERAL

**All reasonable precautions will be taken to prevent and control the spread among dogs of infectious or contagious diseases;
BDA 1973 S.1(4)©**

Adequate precautions should be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious and contagious diseases and parasites among dogs and zoonoses among dogs and visitors. Records should be kept of all vaccinations and worming regimes. (See Record-keeping Section at paragraph 6.4).

3.1.1 All dogs should be vaccinated against Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis (Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis (Canine Adenovirus), Leptospirosis (*Leptospira canicola* and *Leptospira icterohaemorrhagiae*) and Canine Parvovirus. It may be necessary to vaccinate against other diseases and veterinary advice should be sought.

Infectious bronchitis ('Kennel Cough') can be problematic in kennels, and staff should be aware of the symptoms. However, because vaccination will depend on the local level of infection, it is recommended that the advice of the veterinary surgeon is sought.

For the control of roundworms, pregnant and nursing bitches should be given additional worming treatment. Breeding bitches require particular attention and veterinary advice should always be sought. However, as a rule of thumb, it is suggested that bitches are wormed before mating and then again after the 41st day of pregnancy with a broad spectrum anthelmintic.

The bitch should also be wormed at the same time as the puppies, which should be when the puppies are at two, four and six weeks of age.

Thereafter it is recommended that puppies should be wormed at regular intervals, according to manufacturer's instructions.

From 16 weeks of age into adulthood, worming should be carried out routinely two to four times per year.

Advice concerning dogs with tapeworms should be sought from the veterinary surgeon.

Fleas, lice, ticks and harvest mites are common ectoparasites of dogs. Appropriate treatment must be carried out if they are found on any of the dogs. When treating these infestations it is important to take account of the life cycle of the parasite in order to achieve maximum control or even eradication. For instance, simply killing the adult flea is unlikely to provide adequate control.

Several mange mites affect dogs, including Demodex folliculorum, Sarcoptes scabiei and Cheyletiella, all of which attack the skin, and Otodectes, which is most commonly seen in the ears. Any of these infestations can cause severe illness in puppies and older dogs.

Some of these parasites can cause disease in humans.

Ringworm can be passed to humans. Early diagnosis and thorough treatment is essential if the disease is to be controlled.

The veterinary surgeon should be consulted if any of these conditions is suspected or known. Particular care is required with pregnant bitches and suckling puppies when using treatment for these infestations.

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- 3.1.2 Advice from the veterinary surgeon must be sought where a dog shows signs of disease, injury or illness. A competent person must ensure this advice is followed
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3.2 FIRST-AID KIT FOR DOGS

A fully maintained first-aid kit suitable for use on dogs and puppies should be available and accessible on the premises.

The first-aid kit for use on dogs and puppies must be kept fully stocked at all times. A veterinary surgeon should be consulted concerning its contents and a competent member of staff should be in charge of its maintenance.

3.3 ISOLATION FACILITIES

- 3.3.1 Facilities for isolation should be available when required.

The requirement for 5 m distance between isolation facilities and the other dogs is based upon consideration of the distance that airborne infection can carry. Intervening buildings and construction detail (i.e., window and door positions) should be taken into account because individual circumstances may significantly affect the recommended distance.

- 3.3.2 Isolation facilities must be in compliance with the other licence conditions but must be physically isolated from other dogs ideally at a distance of at least 5 m (15ft).

Isolation facilities must be used where the presence of infectious disease is suspected or known.

- 3.3.3 Adequate facilities to prevent the spread of infectious disease between the isolation case and any other dogs must be provided.

Protective clothing and equipment, for use only in the isolation facility, must be used to reduce the spread of infection.

- 3.3.4 Hands must be washed after leaving the isolation facilities before handling other dogs.

A management regime should be followed where and isolation case is being handled. For example, isolation cases must be cared for after all other dogs have been attended to. Records of the isolation cases and the management regime to be followed should be kept. (See Record-keeping section at paragraph 6.4).

Complete disinfection of the isolation facilities and equipment must be carried out once vacated.

4. Emergencies/Fire prevention

GENERAL

That all appropriate steps will be taken for the protection of the dogs in case of fire or other emergency;
BDA 173. S. 1(4)(d)

The domestic breeder must be able to protect the dogs in case of fire or other emergency and have in place an emergency evacuation plan, which should be practised at least annually. Smoke detectors are recommended and should be regularly tested.

5. Transport

GENERAL

That all appropriate steps will be taken to secure that the dogs will be provided with suitable food, drink and bedding material and adequately exercise when being transported to or from the breeding establishment;
BDA 1973 S. 1(4)(e)

Section 1(4)(e) of the 1973 Act is concerned with safeguarding the welfare of dogs 'when being transported to or from the breeding establishment'. Dogs and puppies being transported to and from breeding establishments should be properly supervised to ensure compliance with the obligations under the 1973 Act. It is recommended that records are kept of the vehicles used when dogs are transported, as well as details of journeys undertaken (see Record-keeping section below at paragraph 6;.4). (See also the Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997 under other Relevant Legislation at page 28).

6. Health and welfare of the breeding bitch

6.1 MATING

**That bitches are not mated if they are less than one year old;
BDA 1973 S. 1(4) (f)**

6.2 MAXIMUM NUMBER OF LITTERS

**That bitches do not give birth to more than six litters of puppies each;
BDA 1973 S. 1(4) (g)**

6.3 TWELVE MONTHS BETWEEN LITTERS

**That bitches do not give birth to puppies before the end of the period of twelve months beginning with the day on which they last gave birth to puppies;
BDA 1973 S. 1(4) (h)**

Although the sub-section does not provide any scope for flexibility, the Home Office and the Scottish Executive guidelines to local authorities expect local authorities to take into account any difficulties in relation to factors beyond the breeder's control, such as when a bitch whelps prematurely. Accurate records showing mating and whelpings will be essential.

6.4 RECORD-KEEPING

**That accurate records in a form prescribed by regulations are kept at the premises and made available for inspection there by any officer of the local authority, or any veterinary surgeon or veterinary practitioner, authorised by the local authority to inspect the premises;
BDA 1973 S. 1(4) (i)**

6.4.1. The Breeding of Dogs (Licensing Records) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999 No 3192) prescribe the form of records to be kept by licensed breeding establishments. These records must be accurate and kept on the premises and made available to local authority inspectors or any veterinary surgeon or veterinary practitioner authorised by the local authority.

6.4.2. A record must be kept by every licensed dog breeder for each breeding bitch providing the name of the bitch, date of birth, address where she is kept, breed, description, date of mating and details of sire. Licensed dog breeders must also keep a record of any litters, including the sex of the puppies, date of birth, weight, description and total number in the litter. The record must also show the details of sale, namely the date of sale, name and address of who was supplied and the status of the purchaser (i.e., private owner or pet shop).

Additional records will provide useful information to the local authority inspectors should problems arise. It is suggested that this information should include:

- *The details and number of all dogs owned by the licensed breeder and their whereabouts;*
- *oestrus dates of breeding bitches;*
- *microchip and tattoo numbers or other suitable form of identification. If the dogs are KC registered, these numbers should also be recorded;*
- *where dogs are under a breeding arrangement, the details of such dogs, together with their whereabouts;*
- *vaccination and worming records and details of other veterinary treatment given;*
- *cleaning and disinfecting regimes;*
- *feeding and exercise regimes;*
- *accommodation temperatures;*
- *details of any isolation cases and the management regime in place;*
- *details of vehicles used for transporting dogs, as well as time, length of journeys taken and destination.*

This list is by no means exhaustive.