



## **THE ANIMAL WELFARE REGULATIONS 2018: THE BREEDING AND SELLING OF YOUR LITTERS AND HOW IT AFFECTS YOU**

From October 2018 new Regulations are in force around a number of activities involving pet animals in England. These include Dog Breeding, Dog and Cat Boarding, Selling Animals as Pets and Keeping or Training Animals for Exhibition.

FOR DOG BREEDING, there will be a Schedule of conditions for breeders to meet to obtain a licence and Guidance Notes on how they will be measured in doing this. The scope will widen meaning more breeders will need a licence. This will result in significant changes to the way that breeders and local authorities operate with a requirement to meet set welfare conditions. Here are the key changes which BGV Club breeders need to be aware of:

**1. The new Regulations require that a licence is obtained by anyone “breeding three or more litters of puppies in any 12-month period.”** The threshold for requiring a licence is reduced from 5 litters to 3. The only exclusion to this is on documentary evidence that none have been sold (whether as puppies or adults).

**2. The new Regulations require that anyone breeding dogs and advertising a business of selling dogs must obtain a licence.** Three litters are not the only reason why a licence could be required. The new Regulations set out that a licence will be required if there is any commercial selling of puppies and kittens. It states that a licence will be applicable if the subject:

- (a) Makes any sale by, or otherwise carries on, the activity with a view to making a profit; or
- (b) Earns any commission or fee from the activity, irrespective of the number of litters produced per year.

*This is not restricted to registered businesses – individuals can also be classed as a business depending on the extent of their activities.*

Breeders that breed a small number of puppies (ie less than 3 litters per year), and sell them without making a profit will be exempt, however \*the sale of even a small number of puppies with a high sale price would indicate the need for a licence.

*\* What about all the puppy farms, imported puppies and poor welfare puppies being sold cheaper than those breeders who meet the welfare standards set out in the Regulations? Anyone selling puppies in England will need a licence so even those breeding outside England will need to apply for a Selling Animals as Pets Licence. Wales and Scotland are also looking at changing the way they regulate breeders. Additionally, there is a lot of work going on around tackling the importation of puppies and anyone bringing puppies into the UK will need to have a licence to sell those dogs again under the Selling Animals as Pets requirement.*

**3. New requirements around the health and welfare of the puppy.** New formal requirements have been introduced following concerns raised by welfare organisations and vets over the last few years. These include:

- a. The requirement for the puppy to be shown with its biological mother to any prospective purchaser unless there are evidenced medical grounds as to why this cannot be done.
- b. An adequate programme to socialise puppies and prepare them for life in their new home.
- c. Licence holders taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the dogs are of good physical and genetic health, of acceptable temperament and fit for function (eg be able to see, breathe normally and be physically fit and able to exercise freely).
- d. Not breeding from dogs that have needed surgery to rectify an exaggerated conformation that has caused adverse welfare, or that require lifelong medication.
- e. Not breeding from bitches that have had two litters delivered by caesarean section.