

Basset Griffon Vendéen (Petit)

19 / 10 / 2018

AT THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY JUBILEE SHOW in Warsaw the entry was 15 and, from Champion classes, BOB went to the bitch Solettrader Just Jazz with BOS to Aldia Billi Bom. The judge was Siret Lepasaar (EE). Closer to home, at Hound Association of Scotland open show Claire Gilluley's Haliston Didier ShCM went BOB in one of the biggest breed classes of the day. He was also short-listed for BIS.

The weeks are passing quickly and it is that time of year coming up which so many of us dread with evening after evening of fireworks. Make sure your BGVs go out in the garden before the time comes. Batten down the hatches, close curtains, put lights on, turn up TVs and radios as loud as possible and sit it out with your frightened friends, many of whom will be quaking, shaking, trying to climb on your head and generally inconsolable. It is always a relief when daylight comes the following day and you know you have got through another evening of your dogs experiencing sheer terror. It goes on year after year and people continue to call for organised displays only; but nothing ever happens about it.

Most of you who breed BGVs will be aware of the new DEFRA Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 which came into force on 1 October. Back in August I read through the new regulations and, like many other infrequent breeders, I have found them confusing and open to interpretation not least by the local authorities who implement them as they see fit with requirements varying from one council to another. The change in emphasis has certainly caused immense concern and controversy amongst countless hobby breeders in part due to the "business test" because there is an assumption that anyone who breeds is in business.

This is where Revenue comes in as well. So it isn't just a simple case of do I or don't I need a licence, it also involves whether you are making a profit which needs to be declared. And, as we all know, it costs a lot to raise a litter of PBGVs. Expenses would typically include stud fee, veterinary fees, heat lamp, infra-red bulbs, milk, food and all the outgoings associated with cleaning, washing, not forgetting health checks and especially DNA testing for POAG where necessary. If things don't go quite right, veterinary fees can be colossal and we invariably end up being out of pocket. We do this for the love of the breed, not a business. Most of us breed extremely rarely, primarily to continue our own line and only after much research and study into pedigrees to produce healthy puppies. We are not, and never will be, a business. Other than supporting the Club by being on the Breeders' Directory year after year, when we do have a litter, save for the Puppy Register facility on the website, we do not advertise as puppies of this numerically small breed are in short supply.

The "Procedural Guidance Notes for Local Authorities" do however give some leeway in asking that criteria for assessing small businesses should be based on the principle of proportionality commensurate with the nature and size of the business. This allows a degree of flexibility for those who are classed as hobby breeders.

As everyone's situation is different, back in August I opted to restrict giving information on our Club website and placing the onus on you, if you wish to go on our Breeders' Directory, by asking you to declare "I/We are aware of "The Animal Welfare Regulations (England) July 2018: The breeding and selling of litters" and how it will affect me / us – as detailed on www.bgvclub.co.uk/breeders". In reality, I sense that for those of us who only breed once in a blue moon we have nothing to worry about. As the Secretary of State has said these new regulations "are, and always have been, aimed at businesses and those carrying out one of the licensable activities as a business, for example where the person has a view to making a profit. They are not intended to capture or regulate hobby breeders of any animal or those who carry out activities such as exhibiting their animals for enjoyment, sport or engage in any activity that does not constitute a business. Therefore not all dog breeders will need to be licensed, only those that are considered to be operating as a business".

If you are intending to breed, or have a litter, don't sit there fretting but phone your local council and speak to a Licensing Officer before some interfering neighbour reports you for breeding dogs, as has recently happened to me (two litters in nine years!) I am sure you will find you have nothing to worry about.

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