



The welfare of seized dogs in kennels

A GUIDE TO GOOD PRACTICE

PRODUCED IN CONSULTATION WITH POLICE DOG LEGISLATION OFFICERS, LOCAL AUTHORITY DOG WARDENS AND ANIMAL WELFARE OFFICERS.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	03
● Dog welfare in a kennel environment	03
● The main legal requirements	04
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE	05
GENERAL POINTS OF GOOD PRACTICE	05
THE FIVE WELFARE NEEDS	
 1. Environment: Making sure dogs have a suitable place to live	06
 2. Diet: Making sure dogs have a healthy diet	11
 3. Behaviour: Making sure dogs behave normally	12
 4. Company: Making sure dogs have the company they need	16
 5. Health: Making sure dogs are protected from pain, suffering injury and disease	18
FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION	21
REFERENCES	21
APPENDICES:	
● Appendix I: Dealing with pregnant bitches and puppies	22
● Appendix II: Environmental enrichment	23
● Appendix III: Behaviour experts	26
● Appendix IV: Muzzle training	26
● Appendix V: Examples of record sheets	27

This guide to good practice aims to provide kennel owners/managers and seizing authorities with advice on meeting and protecting the welfare needs of seized dogs as well as setting out the minimum standards kennels need to meet to comply with current law as it relates to England (see page 5, 'How to use this guide'). Please note, however, that this document is for guidance only and ***we strongly recommend that seizing authorities check legislation for themselves to ensure they are familiar with the requirements.***

INTRODUCTION

Dog welfare in a kennel environment

Every year thousands of dogs are seized by enforcement bodies under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Following seizure, many of the dogs will spend a period of time in a kennel environment.

Research using dogs kennelled for a variety of reasons has shown that many find kennel life challenging and experience poor or compromised welfare as a result¹. Studies have also shown that there are specific aspects within the kennel environment that, if inadequate or inappropriate, make it difficult for dogs to cope. For example, small kennel sizes and restricted exercise may influence dogs' behaviour patterns and can limit their ability to explore and investigate, while limited contact with people and other dogs can impact upon social interactions². Based on these findings, it is likely that dogs seized and kennelled by enforcement bodies, even for short periods of time, may find it difficult to cope with kennel life and, for some, this means that their welfare will be compromised. In addition, research using working dogs has found that for those neither bred nor raised in kennels the transition is especially stressful¹. It is probable that many of the pet dogs seized by enforcement bodies will have had limited experience of a kennel environment and so may find the transition particularly stressful.

Existing legislation relating to kennelled dogs, e.g. Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963, tends to be very focused on the physical environment in which the dog is kept. However, studies have shown that husbandry regimes and, in particular, the level of contact with people may be as important, if not more so, than the physical kennel environment for the welfare of dogs kennelled

for various reasons^{3,4}. It is reasonable to assume that some (but not all) dogs seized by enforcement bodies, e.g. strays, cruelty cases and some prohibited or dangerous dogs, were household pets and may have spent a lot of time in contact with people or other animals. Once within the kennel environment, this level of contact is not always possible, and this can be stressful for the dog. It is therefore important (and a legal requirement) that seizing authorities and kennels do all they can to provide not only for the dog's environmental needs but also for those that relate to diet, behaviour, company and health.

Ensuring the welfare of seized dogs in a kennel environment not only benefits the individual dogs and kennel staff, but can also, potentially, save money as less is spent on veterinary treatment, etc. Good welfare can make good business sense.

This guidance has therefore been written to help kennels and seizing bodies provide for dogs' welfare needs and to assist in the care and management of all seized dogs whether long- or short-term. While we recognise some of the guidance may be more difficult to implement in certain areas or under certain conditions, all kennels and contracting bodies should ensure they meet the minimum legal requirements and aim to improve their standards in line with this guidance.



The main legal requirements

This guide aims to help kennel managers and contract managers comply with legal requirements, thereby helping to improve the welfare of the dogs they are responsible for. Often, ensuring and improving dog welfare means that the financial impact of holding seized dogs can be reduced and money can, potentially, be saved. There are several pieces of legislation that we recommend that the reader consults along with this guide and these are laid out below.

Animal Welfare Act 2006

Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (AWA 2006), which applies to England and Wales, those responsible for animals have a duty to ensure reasonable steps are taken to ensure the welfare needs of the animals are met 'to the extent required by good practice' and it is an offence to fail to do so (section 9, AWA 2006).

THERE ARE FIVE WELFARE NEEDS.

1. The need for a suitable environment.
2. The need for a suitable diet.
3. The need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns.
4. The need to be housed with, or apart from, other animals.
5. The need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Welsh Government have produced Codes of Practice concerning dogs that provide practical guidance in respect of the AWA 2006. Failure to comply with – or compliance with – a relevant provision of the Codes of Practice may be relied upon as tending to establish or negate liability for an offence under the Act (section 14[4]).

Under section 3 of the AWA 2006, a person is responsible for an animal on both a temporary and a permanent basis. Under Section 57, a body corporate can be responsible therefore both the seizing authority and the kennels are liable under this Act for ensuring the welfare needs of the dogs in their care, not just individuals.

Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963

The Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 requires anyone who wishes to keep a boarding establishment to be licensed by a local authority and to abide by the conditions of the licence. In particular, the local authority will consider whether the establishment is able to ensure that the following provisions are met.

- Accommodation must be suitable in respect of construction, size, number of occupants, exercising facilities, temperature, lighting, ventilation and cleanliness.
- There must be an adequate supply of suitable food, drink and bedding material for the animals and they are to be adequately exercised and visited at suitable intervals.

- Reasonable precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious or contagious diseases, including the provision of isolation facilities.
- Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of animals in the case of fire or other emergency.
- A detailed register must be kept of any animals received into the establishment, and must be available for inspection at all times.

Transportation legislation

When transporting animals, there is a general duty of care to protect them from injury or unnecessary suffering (see Article 4 of Welfare of Animals [Transport] [England] Order 2006 or [Wales] Order 2007) and to also ensure they are transported in suitable containers. If the transportation is carried out in connection with an 'economic activity', as defined by the Regulations, then there are further legal requirements to comply with under this legislation; both the seizing authority and/or its contractors should be aware of these requirements and comply with them accordingly. Furthermore, there is a requirement under the Highway Code that animals should be 'suitably restrained' when transported (Rule 57, Highway Code).

Any vehicle used for transporting dogs must be suitable and have the correct ventilation and temperature control so that the dog remains comfortable during the journey, whatever the outside temperature.

Please see 'Further sources of information' for a list of the key pieces of legislation and codes of practice mentioned above, plus how to obtain copies.



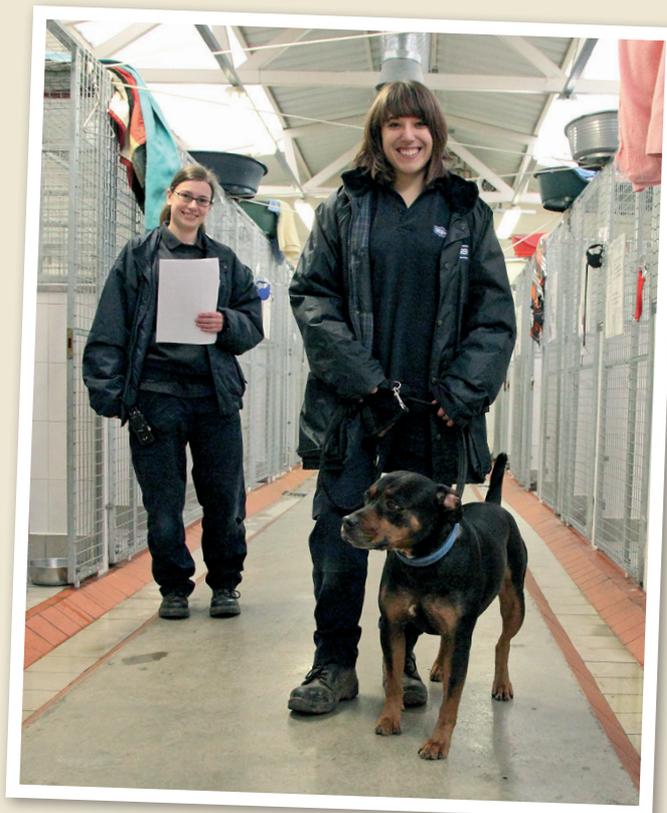
HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Each of the sections in this guide provides practical advice to help comply with the provisions of Section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

Those requirements that we consider important in order to meet the provisions of the act are indicated as a **must**, whilst use of **should** indicates those provisions which are recommended best practice.

It should be noted that in considering those requirements that are important in order to meet the provisions of the Act, we have used the English Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs as guidance. For establishments to which the Welsh Codes of Practice apply, it is strongly recommended that these be consulted when using this document.

Kennel and contract managers may wish to begin with the areas identified as 'musts' that are more easily achievable. However, please note that this document has been produced by experts in veterinary, behaviour and welfare science, the law and frontline practitioners who all agree it illustrates expected practice in the key areas.



GENERAL POINTS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- In order to house dogs, all premises **must** be licensed under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963, where appropriate, and act in accordance with the licensing conditions set out by the local authority. Where licensed, they **must** meet the minimum legal requirements.
- The establishment's licence holder and employees **must not** have any previous convictions under relevant animal welfare legislation. Please note that this includes convictions under older legislation that has since been repealed.
- The seizing body eg. police, local authority or RSPCA, etc. **must** reserve the right to arrange for inspections of all kennel facilities, and carry out routine kennel inspections as and when required during the contract period, including inspections without prior notice.
- Where the contract manager is not directly involved with the daily care of the dogs, they **should** ensure they maintain contact with whoever is directly involved.
- The establishment licence holder **must** maintain a satisfactory level of security at the premises.
- Adequate contingency steps **must** be in place for the protection and/or evacuation of the dogs in case of fire or other emergencies (as per the 1963 Act). The name, address and telephone number of the licensee **must** be permanently displayed on the premises and also logged with the police and fire and rescue services. Fire protection advice **must** be sought from the local Fire Prevention Officer and then implemented.
- Sufficient adequately trained staff **should** be available every day to ensure that the welfare needs of the dogs at the establishment are met.
- When staff are caring for and working with the dogs they **must** give them their undivided attention. For example, mobile phones **must** be switched off except for breaks and lunch. This helps ensure better staff interaction with the dogs, improving the animals' welfare, and also ensures better health and safety for staff.



1. ENVIRONMENT

Making sure dogs have a suitable place to live

1.1 Kennel construction

- a) All kennels **must** be of substantial construction and provide protection from the weather. For example, where concrete or other building blocks or bricks are used, they **must** be sealed so that they are smooth and impervious (i.e. do not let in water) and then resealed as necessary. Wood should not be used for new builds; however, when it appears in existing constructions it **must** be smooth and treated to render it impervious for hygiene and safety reasons.
- b) Products **must not** be used for kennel construction if they contain substances that are toxic to dogs.
- c) All kennels **must** be secure to prevent escape. For example, doors must be close fitting and able to be secured effectively.
- d) Kennels **must** be free from hazards. For example, there must be no projections or rough edges liable to cause injury.
- e) All internal surfaces used in the construction of walls, floors, partitions, doors and doorframes **must** be durable, smooth, impervious and easily cleaned.
- f) Materials used in the construction of partition walls (i.e. walls between adjacent kennels) **must** ensure the safety of the dogs and prevent injury to any body parts. For example, wire mesh should be of a diameter that prevents access to neighbouring dogs and protects noses, paws and claws. Where mesh is used, consideration may be given to double-skinning (i.e. using two mesh panels with a gap in between) to ensure safety and prevent injury.
- g) When a dog poses a health and safety risk to other dogs, he or she **must** be kept in a kennel with solid partition walls.

PARTITION WALLS

Solid walls can affect an animal's welfare as the height may restrict the dog's control over visual access to his/her surroundings and other dogs. Where partition walls are needed, they **must** be of a suitable height and structure to ensure dogs cannot attack or injure each other or themselves. In kennels such as these, some dogs exhibit repetitive behaviour e.g. bouncing or spinning, management plans **must** be explored giving consideration to aspects of the dog's environment that could be making it difficult to cope and includes seeking advice from a suitably qualified behavioural expert (see Appendix II) who can help carry out an assessment on how to resolve the problem. Where appropriate and possible, changes **must** be implemented.

- i) Flooring **must** be of a non-slip, urine-resistant material. It **must** be laid in a way and at a fall that avoids the pooling of liquids. Slatted or wire mesh floors **must not** be used.



1.2 Kennel design

SOCIAL CONTACT

Current standard practice tends to involve housing dogs individually but it should be noted that this can compromise the animal's welfare and so it is important that (where possible, when appropriate for the individual dog, individual circumstances, and it is safe to do so) kennels are designed and laid out to allow dogs to exercise and control opportunities for social contact with other dogs, unless there are clear biosecurity or health and safety reasons not to do so.

Pair- and group-housing requires careful planning, appropriate kennel design and the identification of compatible individuals by trained and competent staff, so this type of housing may not always be possible. However, at a minimum, visual contact with other dogs (where this is appropriate for the individual dog, individual circumstances, and it's safe to do so) should be provided, so long as the guidance below is followed and dogs have a place where they can remain out of view when they choose. Kennels and seizing authorities may wish to consider pair- and group-housing for seized dogs from the same household where appropriate.



- a) Many kennel designs are very barren. Sleeping platforms can increase kennel complexity and three-dimensional space as well as offering insulation from the cold and a vantage point – so where possible, a platform **should** be provided.
- b) The design and layout of kennels **should** allow dogs to be able to control their visual access to their surroundings and dogs in other kennels, where this is appropriate for the individual dog, individual circumstances, and it is safe to do so. This can be achieved in two ways:
 - i. in an open kennel, by having an area that the dog can move into to avoid visual contact with other dogs, and
 - ii. in a visually restricted kennel, by having a raised area, e.g. a platform, to enable visual contact.
- c) The layout of kennels **should** minimise the number of dogs that staff disturb when removing any one individual, and **should** also ensure the safety of staff when passing other dogs with a dog on a leash. For example, staff can minimise disturbance by choosing a route that passes the fewest dogs (see section 5.3f) or by placing reactive dogs in a kennel where few dogs need to go past.
- d) Kennels **should** be designed and laid out in such a way as to reduce noise (see section 1.7, below).
- e) Every dog **must** be provided with continual access to a comfortable, dry, draught-free, clean and quiet place to rest.
- f) Every dog **must** be provided with somewhere he/she can go to avoid things that frighten him or her. This could be the sleeping area or underneath a sleeping platform, however, to ensure safety for humans and dogs, platforms **must** be hinged on one side to allow easy and safe access to the animal if needed. Or a short partition wall across the activity area could be provided, behind which the dog can retreat.
- g) Bedding of a suitable material, e.g. shredded paper or fleece material, **must** be provided. Chewing or destruction of bedding should not result in restricted access, rather alternative materials **must** be trialled. If it is found that a dog persistently chews or destroys bedding then advice **should** be sought from a suitably qualified behavioural expert (see Appendix III) or veterinary surgeon and an assessment made of how to resolve the problem. For example, consideration should be given to the aspects of the dog's environment that could be making it difficult for the dog to cope, and changes implemented where appropriate.

1.3 Kennel size

- a) The kennel area **must** be large enough to allow separate sleeping and activity areas.
- b) The kennel **must** be sufficiently large to allow each dog to be able, as a minimum, to walk, turn around and wag his or her tail without touching the sides of the kennel; to stand



on his/her hind limbs; and to stretch and lie down in a natural position without touching another animal or the sides of the kennel. It **must** also be large enough to allow dogs to interact, play, go to the toilet and feed.

- c) For all new builds, the minimum kennel size **must** be at least 4m² for dogs under 20kg, and 8m² for dogs over 20kg. This **should** be increased in relation to the size and number of dogs, so that both the length and width are sufficient for each and all the dogs to lie outstretched at all angles, with neither their tail nor snout touching the walls or another individual. Current constructions **should** be of this minimum size.
- d) If housing more than one dog in one kennel, the kennel **must** be large enough to allow adequate resources to avoid competition and monopolisation in the kennel e.g. sufficient beds, toys, etc. for each dog.

For more information about appropriate kennel sizes for bitches with litters and post-weaned puppies, see Appendix I.

1.4 Lighting

- a) As a general rule, the accommodation for kennelled dogs **should** give them access to indoor and outdoor areas. However, if there is no alternative and dogs have to be kennelled indoors, they **should** be provided with a light/dark cycle that corresponds to external day- and night-times; in addition, natural daylight **should** be provided where possible.
- b) Indoor kennelling **should not** be seen as a long-term solution and dogs should be moved to more suitable accommodation as quickly as possible.

1.5 Temperature

- a) Kennels **must** be insulated to avoid extremes of temperature.

- b) At all times there **must** be some part of the kennel where the dog can experience temperatures above 10°C (50°F) and below 26°C (79°F). If necessary, heating and/or automatic cooling/ventilation **must** be provided to achieve this.

1.6 Ventilation/humidity

- a) Ventilation in the dogs' indoor accommodation **must** provide sufficient fresh air of an appropriate quality; this **must** keep down the levels and spread of odours, noxious gases, dust and infectious agents of any kind, and provide for the removal of excess heat and humidity.
- b) The ventilation system **should** be designed to minimise harmful draughts and noise disturbance.

1.7 Noise

A DOG'S HEARING

Dogs' hearing has a wider frequency range and is more sensitive than ours, especially at high frequencies and in the ultrasonic range. They can hear sounds up to four times quieter than we can and so noise levels that would be fine for us might prevent dogs resting or cause them discomfort or pain.

- a) High levels of noise can be stressful to dogs and **must** be avoided. Numerous sources can contribute to the noise within a kennel establishment, including other dogs. Measures to mitigate noise **must** be explored and where, possible implemented, for example, changing metal buckets and bowls to plastic can significantly reduce noise levels (see sections 1.2c and 5.3e for information on how to minimise the disturbance of other dogs).

- b) If there is a lot of ambient noise then buildings or kennels **should** be sound insulated. If there are likely to be high levels of internal noise, sound-absorbent materials **should** be incorporated into the kennel design.
- c) Housing **should** be designed to avoid prolonged, loud or high frequency noises, such as those generated by audio-visual equipment, certain kinds of industrial machinery, and metal gates.
- d) Soothing background music, e.g. classical music, can be beneficial (see Appendix III) and may be provided*, but loud music may be stressful and **should** be avoided.

1.8 Access to an outdoor area for exercise and interaction

- a) All adult dogs and puppies over six weeks of age **must** have daily access to outdoor safe and secure areas, away from the kennel area and this should be for at least 30 minutes per day, whether this is lead exercise and/or in an exercise run and unless a vet indicates otherwise. This should be in addition to opportunities for toileting. Consideration should be given to the siting of the outdoor enclosure to ensure it is in a suitable position.
- b) The presence of trained and competent staff and other dogs will encourage dogs to explore their surroundings, interact and play. Providing it is safe to do so, appropriate for the individual dog and individual circumstances, trained and

competent staff and other dogs **should** be present when dogs have access to an outdoor area.

- c) Equipment such as tunnels, platforms and toys (see Appendix II) **should** be provided as they encourage activity and exploration of the outdoor area.
- d) Outdoor areas where animals exercise and interact cannot have strict temperature regulation. Dogs **must not** be restricted to such areas when climatic conditions may cause them distress. They **must** have constant access to fresh clean water, shade and shelter so they can avoid rain, wind, snow, ice or direct sunlight, etc.
- e) When dogs are housed outdoors, there **must** always be a cool shaded area available to them. They **must** also have constant access to fresh clean water.

1.9 Transport

When transporting animals, there is a general duty of care to protect them from injury or unnecessary suffering and to ensure they are transported in suitable containers.

- a) Dogs **must not** be left unattended in a vehicle where the temperature may pose a risk to them. It is also important to ensure that any vehicle used for transportation has the correct ventilation and temperature control so that the dog remains comfortable during the journey whatever the outside temperature.



* The playing of copyright music or sound recordings, including playing the radio, in areas to which the public has access typically requires licences to be purchased from both of the following bodies: the Performing Rights Society (PRS) in respect of copyright in the lyrics and composition; and the Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL) in respect of copyright in the sound recording and performance.



- b) Whenever dogs are transported they **must** be fit and healthy for the intended journey. Injured and/or diseased dogs **must not** be transported unless they are being taken to a veterinary surgery or under veterinary advice. The transporting of distressed dogs should be avoided whenever possible.
- c) Dogs **should** be fed a small meal about two hours before a journey and exercised immediately before they are loaded to give them the opportunity to go to the toilet.
- d) During a journey dogs **must** be securely and comfortably confined. If a dog is transported alone in a container, he or she **must** have enough space to stand, sit erect, lie in a natural position and turn around normally while standing up. If transported with other dogs, there **should** be sufficient space for all the dogs to carry out all these behaviours without touching other dogs. It is recognised that this might not always be possible in urgent or emergency situations.
- e) If transporting dogs by road, there **should** be a break every two hours to offer water and the chance to go to the toilet. Breaks **should** be at least 30 minutes long to allow the water to be absorbed.

For more information specific to pregnant bitches and puppies, please see Appendix I.

1.10 Crating

- a) Crating **must not** be used to house seized dogs permanently.
- b) Crating can be useful for habituating puppies to be left alone to aid recovery following an injury or operation or during transportation. Where a crate is used in these circumstances, it **must** be large enough to allow the dog to stand, turn around normally while standing up, sit erect and lie down in a natural position. Take the dog out regularly to allow him/her to toilet, but do not leave the dog inside for so long that he or she becomes distressed, or generally for more than four hours at a time.



2. DIET

Making sure dogs have a healthy diet

2.1 Food and water

- a) All dogs **must** be provided with continuous access to fresh, clean drinking water, except when being transported.
- b) All dogs **must** receive a palatable diet that fulfils their nutritional requirements and is matched to their age, breed, health, reproductive status, body condition score*, and weight and activity level. A veterinary surgeon **should** assist with devising an appropriate diet, and manufacturers' advice **should** be read and followed.
- c) Wherever possible, changes to a dog's diet **should not** be made suddenly. Whenever possible, details of the seized dog's diet **should** be obtained at the point of seizure and any changes in type, quantity or frequency **should** be implemented gradually over several days. In the absence of information about a dog's diet, or where the current diet is deemed unsuitable, a bland diet **should** be introduced initially.

2.2 Feeding regime

- a) Adult dogs **must** be fed at least once a day, unless advised otherwise by a veterinary surgeon. Consideration **should** be given to the feeding regime the dog has been used to in his or her previous home/accommodation.
- b) Dogs **should** be fed at least two hours before transportation and **should not** be fed shortly before or after strenuous exercise.
- c) If more than one dog is housed together, each dog **must** be fed from a separate bowl to reduce potential competition.
- d) If a dog's eating or drinking habits change, the dog **should** be closely monitored by trained and competent staff. A veterinary surgeon **should** be consulted if there is no improvement within 24 hours and **must** be if the animal's condition worsens.
- e) The body condition and/or the weight of all dogs **must** be monitored regularly and diets adjusted to ensure the correct body condition score and weight is achieved and maintained.
- f) To achieve e) above, kennels **must** have weighing scales available for staff to monitor the dogs' weight. Dogs **should** be weighed at least once a week, with the information recorded in a suitable place i.e. the individual dog's daily care sheet (see Appendix V for an example). A number of companies provide body condition score charts, which can be useful in assessing a dog's body condition .

- g) For individually housed dogs, part or their entire food ration **should** be provided in an activity feeder. For example, where safe and appropriate to do so for individual dogs, a food-filled Kong can be provided just before staff leave at the end of the day and collected the following morning. During the day the Kongs can be cleaned and food prepared for refilling. It can also be beneficial to provide part of the food ration for pair- or group-housed dogs in this way, as long as dogs do not guard these.

ACTIVITY FEEDERS

Research has shown that most dogs do not become possessive over activity feeders. Once emptied, the value placed on feeders usually reduces greatly which means that the chances of dogs displaying aggression are low. Displays of guarding behaviour towards people can be prevented by avoiding confrontation and by using other distractions which the dog finds rewarding e.g. taking the dog for a walk or giving it another toy or food treat.



For more detailed information on the feeding of pregnant and lactating bitches and puppies, see Appendix I.

* It is important that any Body Condition Scoring (BCS) system used is validated. The BCS systems developed by Purina and Waltham have been validated and are suitable to use.



3. BEHAVIOUR

Making sure dogs behave normally

3.1 Exercise

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXERCISE

Exercise is important, not just for physical fitness but to alleviate boredom – it provides opportunities for behaviours which dogs are strongly motivated to perform, for example, exploration, investigation and contact with humans and other dogs. Recent studies of kennelled working dogs showed that dogs exercised less often tended to rest less, exhibit more repetitive or stereotypical behaviours, bark and visit a veterinary surgery more frequently.

- a) Dogs **must** be provided with the opportunity to exercise away from their kennel at least once a day and this **should** be for a total of at least 30 minutes – unless veterinary advice suggests otherwise.
- b) In addition, where possible, daily opportunities for exercise **should** be provided with staff and other dogs as long as it is safe to do so (see section 1.8b also). The provision of safe and suitable enrichment items, such as tunnels, steps, ramps and toys **should** be considered for use in the off-lead exercise areas. See Appendix II.
- c) Additional opportunities, besides those during exercise, **should** be provided for toileting (see section 5.3e). This is particularly important for those dogs that won't urinate or defecate in their kennel area.
- d) The provision of exercise **should** follow a consistent daily pattern so that it is predictable to the dogs (see also section 5.3b).

For more detailed information on the exercising of nursing bitches and puppies, see Appendix I.



SOCIAL CONTACT WITH OTHER DOGS

As social animals, dogs have a great desire for contact with humans and other dogs so off-lead exercise with other dogs can provide great benefits. It is recognised that there will be some dogs that do not interact well with other dogs. It is therefore important that dogs are introduced to one another with care and that trained and competent staff find combinations of dogs that interact amicably, where it is appropriate for the individual dog and individual circumstances to do so.

3.2 Toy and food enrichment

- a) Dogs show a natural drive to chew and **must** be provided with safe, suitable toys, bones or other items as an outlet for this behaviour, appropriate for the individual dog.
- b) Safe, durable, chewable, food-flavoured or food-filled toys **should** be provided to each dog every day e.g. Kong toys – (see section 2.2g for an example of how to use them).
- c) Devices **should** be presented in such a way as to maintain interest and activity in the dogs. This can be achieved, for example, by changing toy types to increase novelty.
- d) Not all dogs will be motivated by the same type of enrichment, so it is important to try different types and provide a range of options to ensure all dogs benefit.
- e) Toys **must** be checked daily to ensure they are safe and **must** be replaced when necessary.
- f) Toys **must** be disinfected before being given to another dog.

ENRICHMENT

Enrichment generally leads people to think about the provision of toys and feeding devices but there are additional methods of enrichment that can be used in a kennelled environment. See Appendix II for more information.



3.3 Monitoring of behavioural signs

- a) Staff **must** be familiar with and able to recognise signs of stress, fear and anxiety to determine whether the dog is experiencing good or poor welfare.
- b) The behaviour of all dogs, and in particular any changes, **must** be recorded during daily inspections. For example, the use of a daily care sheet placed on the front of the kennel can be of benefit, particularly when different staff deal with the same dog (see Appendix V for an example).

AGGRESSIVE DOGS

The RSPCA is aware that, in some cases, staff are so concerned about a dog's aggressive behaviour and the risk posed to themselves that a decision is made to withhold exercise and human contact. Whilst it is acknowledged that health and safety of kennel staff must be protected, not providing a dog with daily exercise or contact fails to fulfil the need to make sure a dog can behave normally, its need for company and to protect the dog from suffering.

In the majority of cases, dogs display aggression because they feel threatened by something or someone and so this behaviour is generally indicative of poor welfare. Therefore, where such situations arise, and it is believed that there is no alternative but to withhold exercise and human contact, it is necessary for all other possible means of improving the dog's welfare to be explored which includes providing further enrichment (Appendix II) and seeking advice from a vet and suitable behaviour expert (Appendix III). In some cases vets may prescribe psychopharmacological interventions. Where such efforts fail to protect the dog, euthanasia should be considered if that is in the animal's own interests.

Changes in behaviour are often the first signs of illness or injury, so possible causes for these signs in individual dogs **must** be investigated. Veterinary advice **must** be sought where significant or persistent changes in behaviour are noted and if/when advised the advice of a suitably qualified behaviour expert (see Appendix III) **must** be sought.

- c) Where multiple dogs within an establishment show signs of stress, fear and anxiety e.g. exhibiting repetitive behaviours, the housing and husbandry routines of the establishment **must** be reviewed (see also section 1.1h). Advice from a veterinary surgeon and/or suitably qualified behaviour expert (see Appendix III) **must** be sought where necessary. If the kennel fails to adhere to the advice, the dogs **should** be removed to another kennel and the contract terminated.
- d) When an establishment has concerns about a dog's behaviour, they should inform the seizing authority and it **must** provide information on these concerns to the recipient, for example, when the animal is returned to his/her owner or transferred to another organisation for rehoming.

SIGNS OF STRESS, FEAR AND ANXIETY

Studies of dogs in different environments have shown that individual dogs respond in various ways when they are stressed, fearful or anxious so it is not possible to provide a definitive list of signs.

Some of the signs that staff might see include but are not limited to⁵:

- changes in behaviour (e.g. activity)
- emergence of fearful behaviour (e.g. aggression, cowering, hiding)
- self-mutilation or over-grooming
- performance of repetitive behaviour
- shivering
- trembling
- paw-lifting
- weight loss
- loose faeces
- coprophagy (consumption of faeces)
- sore feet
- high levels of vocalisation, or
- kennel chewing.

Photographs and videos of some of the behaviours described above can be found at:

www.bristol.ac.uk/vetscience/services/behaviour-clinic/dogbehaviouralsigns/

As individual dogs respond in different ways when they are stressed, fearful or anxious, it is important that staff inspect and monitor their dogs on a regular basis and become familiar with an individual dog's behaviour and characteristics.

3.4 Socialisation and habituation of puppies

3.4.1 Socialisation of puppies

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALISATION

Socialisation is a process that occurs in puppies between three and 14 weeks of age, although this can vary with breed. During this time they learn most readily about the characteristics of dogs, other animals and humans they come into contact with. It is important to maximise the chances of each puppy developing into a well-adjusted, happy and healthy dog by ensuring each one is provided with adequate and appropriate opportunities for socialisation and habituation.

A lack of opportunities for – or inappropriate – socialisation during this period is a major risk factor for the development of behavioural disorders later in life, in particular those associated with fear and/or anxiety, including aggression towards unfamiliar people. Therefore, it is very important that kennels and seizing authorities find effective mechanisms for ensuring puppies can be adequately and appropriately socialised during this period, so that they will be well socialised if they can be returned to an owner or rehomed.

- a) In addition to handling the puppies during regular husbandry procedures, staff **must** ensure that they are handled regularly on a daily basis from three weeks of age. The handling over the following weeks **should** be conducted by a variety of people of both sexes, of different ages and appearances, especially children, and be exposed to different environments.
- b) Where possible, puppies **should** be carefully introduced to children before they are returned home or rehomed.
- c) Where possible, at between six and eight weeks of age, puppies **should** be carefully introduced to vaccinated, healthy, calm adult dogs from outside their litter.
- d) Points a to c above are more practically achieved in a domestic setting, so wherever possible puppies **should** remain at home and an undertaking used (this is a set of conditions between the two parties outlining how the dogs should be kept). Alternatively, the puppies **should** be placed with suitable fosterers or a third-party agency* **should** be used.

3.4.2 Habituation

Puppies need to get used to the many noises, objects and activities in the environment, some of which are frightening when first experienced.

* For example, a reputable rehoming or animal welfare organisation.

- a) Where possible, puppies and previously unhabituated dogs **must** be gradually introduced to a full range of normal sounds, including household ones, through supervised daily exposure. The level of exposure to such sounds should be increased very gradually to avoid causing fear. Household sounds may occur naturally in domestic environments but for puppies in kennels, recordings of the sounds could be played.
- b) From two weeks of age, puppies **should** be gently examined daily e.g. picked up, ears checked, feet handled, etc. This can be done within the handling specified above, and should happen before the puppy's first examination by a veterinary surgeon or before he/she is microchipped.
- c) Adult dogs **should** be habituated to physical examination, general handling and grooming (see sections 3.1e and 4.2d for further information about fearful and aggressive dogs).

3.5 Handling, training and training devices

- a) A suitable flat collar, harness or head collar **should** be used to walk dogs and they must be correctly fitted and used.

FITTING A HARNESS

Harnesses **must** be fitted appropriately and not cause irritation to any body parts. Head collars **must** also be fitted properly so as not to cause irritation to the dog's eyes and lips, and are best introduced gradually in a positive way. Head collars should always be used with a flat collar; this ensures that the dog cannot escape and enables appropriate use of the head collar. When two leads or a single double-ended lead are used, the dog can be walked predominantly on the flat collar, with pressure applied to the head collar to turn the dog around only as required. Pressure on this lead can then be released immediately.





- b) Half-check chains can be used when staff are concerned about a dog potentially slipping its collar, but they **must** only be fitted and used by suitably trained and competent staff.
- e) To prevent fear of new situations, and the possible formation of negative associations, any new situations **should** be introduced slowly and carefully.

HALF-CHECK COLLARS

When tightened, a correctly sized half-check collar **must** allow the two rings to meet around the dog's neck, with sufficient space for two fingers (on edge) to be slipped against the neck under the collar, in exactly the same way as a flat collar would be fitted. When in use, pressure **must not** be constantly applied to the dog's neck as this could cause physical injury.

MUZZLES

Where possible, dogs which are to be returned to their owner or keeper and which are required to be muzzled in a public place **should** be muzzle trained (using positive reward-based methods) while held in kennels. For information on how to achieve this, see Appendix IV.

- c) Slip leads can also be used when staff are concerned about a dog potentially slipping its collar but **must not** be used in a way that restricts the dog's airway.
- d) Punishment-based training has been linked to an increased incidence of behaviour problems in dogs, including fear, anxiety, decreased confidence, overexcitement and fear aggression. Electric shock devices (which are illegal to use in Wales, see Further sources of information), choke/check chains, pinch collars, spray collars and other punishment-based methods **must not** be used when training seized dogs. Instead, reward-based training methods should always be used.
- f) Equipment to catch and control dogs **must** be kept on site. For example, all kennels **should** have slip leads and dog graspers, with staff trained in their use. Kennels that house dogs seized under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 **should** also have some form of propellant-based distraction device, e.g. fire extinguisher for use in emergencies. However, to safeguard dog welfare and their own health and safety, staff **must** be trained and competent in how to use such equipment and in which circumstances it is appropriate to use it as well as recognise that some devices have the potential to escalate aggression.



4. COMPANY

Making sure dogs have the company they need

THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPANY

Dogs are sociable animals and most need and enjoy company. While experiences can influence how they interact with other dogs and people, in general dogs have an inherent desire for contact with their own species and form strong social bonds to humans. For many dogs one of the greatest stressors upon arrival into a kennel environment is the separation from their familiar social group. Numerous studies have shown that the provision of contact with other dogs and humans has a positive benefit for welfare. In fact, the level of contact with people may be as important, if not more than, the physical kennel environment for the welfare of dogs. Therefore, it is important that, where appropriate for the individual dog, individual circumstances, and it is safe to do so, company with other dogs and humans **must** be provided.



4.1 Group or separate housing

- a) Where it is practical and safe to do so, for example there are no biosecurity or health and safety concerns, dogs **should** be pair- or group-housed. For example, consideration **must** be given as to whether it is possible to house dogs seized from the same household in this way – see section 4.1f below.
- b) Decisions to pair- or group-house dogs **must** be made by suitably trained and competent staff and, where necessary, with advice from a veterinary surgeon or suitably qualified behaviour expert (see Appendix II), giving due consideration to all the human safety and animal welfare implications.
- c) Where dogs are housed separately it is important to ensure that their welfare is maximised. Where there are concerns about an individual dog's welfare, advice from a veterinary surgeon or suitably qualified behaviour expert (see Appendix III) **should** be sought to ensure optimal welfare. Any dog housed in isolation **must** be provided with alternative means of enrichment (see sections 3.1, 3.2 and 4.2).
- d) Where dogs can be pair- or group-housed, new pairs or groups **should** be gradually introduced under the supervision of suitably trained and competent staff in a neutral environment where they can avoid one another if they so choose.
- e) Some minor or temporary signs of aggression such as growling or raised hackles may occur on first introduction of unfamiliar dogs. However, where more severe or persistent signs of aggression are shown (e.g. biting, chasing, pinning down, blocking movement), dogs **must not** be housed together.
- f) When dogs are brought to the kennels from the same household, pair-housing can work especially well in avoiding unnecessary distress. Whenever suitable facilities exist, these dogs **should** be housed together, unless behaviour as described above indicates otherwise.
- g) A dog **must not** be housed with another dog if he or she tries to avoid them or appears fearful of them; for example, one of the dogs avoids contact, persistently hides or cowers.
- h) Where dogs are housed in the vicinity of other dogs, each dog **must** be able to control their visual access to every other dog (i.e. retreat from view) to avoid situations that they find fearful or frustrating.
- i) Dogs **must** never be muzzled in their kennels to facilitate pair- or group-housing.
- j) Pair- and group-housed dogs **must** have sufficient space and adequate resources to minimise competition and monopolisation and to be able to move away from one another if they so choose (see also section 1.3d).
- k) Housing entire males and entire females where they can smell each other (within olfactory range) can cause frustration and **should** be avoided; housing males and females in separate kennel blocks, where available, can help.
- l) Where facilities or circumstances prevent the pair- or group-housing of dogs, dogs **must** be provided with regular opportunities to exercise with other friendly dogs, as long

as it is safe and appropriate for the individual dog and individual circumstances (section 4.1c is relevant here).

- m) To ensure biosecurity and appropriate controlled socialisation (see section 3.4.1), bitches with puppies and litters of puppies **must** be housed in separate facilities to other adult dogs.
- n) Puppies that remain in the care of enforcement bodies after weaning **should** be housed with their littermates or with other puppies of a similar age and size. They **should** remain as a group unless their behaviour dictates otherwise and if the needs of each dog can be met. For example, establishments **must** ensure that the kennel is sufficiently large to allow each dog to be able to walk, turn around and wag his/her tail without touching the sides of the kennel, play, stand on his/her hind limbs and lie down without touching another animal or the sides of the kennel.
- o) Puppies under 7 months of age **should** be housed somewhere safe and quiet preferably away from the main kennel block.

4.2 Human company

- a) Depending on past experiences, many dogs find human company rewarding and calming. Contact with humans **must** include activities such as grooming, exercise, playing, petting and training, but at a level that is suitable for the individual dog.
- b) Dogs who enjoy human contact get more benefit from exercise if people are involved, so whenever possible such dogs **should** be exercised in the presence of people (see also section 3.1a). It is important that, when staff are interacting with dogs, they are able to concentrate fully and so use of mobile phones or other distractions **must not** be allowed.
- c) All staff must strive for a positive relationship with each and every dog and negative interactions **must** be avoided.
- d) Staff **must** be able to identify a dog that is anxious or fearful about contact with people from his/her body posture. Photographs and videos of some of the behaviours described above can be found at: www.bristol.ac.uk/vetscience/services/behaviour-clinic/dogbehaviouralsigns Such dogs **should** be slowly and patiently introduced to people and rewarded for calm behaviour. During this process, and until human contact becomes rewarding, additional enrichment **should** be provided, e.g. exercise, toys and feeding devices.
- e) In addition to routine care and management, wherever possible, there needs to be sufficient adequately trained staff available every day to carry out all the interactions and procedures with dogs specified within this guide.

4.3 Staff training/competency

- a) The establishment licence holder is responsible for ensuring that they and their members of staff have adequate knowledge and skills that **must** be kept up-to-date, so that they can implement the guidelines in this document and ensure the well-being of dogs in their care. The contract holder **should** check this prior to the contract being agreed.





5. HEALTH

Making sure dogs are protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

5.1 Health inspection responsibilities

- a) The establishment licence holder (as well as the seizing body) is responsible for:
 - i. the health and welfare of the dogs in their charge;
 - ii. ensuring that treatment by a suitably qualified veterinary surgeon is available or accessible at all times of the day or night;
 - iii. ensuring that every dog admitted to the kennels receives standard veterinary care as described or required by the seizing body;
 - iv. seeking authorisation from the seizing authority's representative before any additional veterinary treatment, other than standard veterinary care, is administered, unless treatment is urgently required and a delay would cause unnecessary suffering.
- b) All staff **must** be familiar with, and able to recognise, signs of illness, injury and disease.
- c) Advice from a veterinary surgeon **must** be sought and acted upon immediately whenever a dog shows signs of disease, injury or illness.
- d) Where possible, all dogs **should** be examined by a veterinary surgeon within 72 hours of arriving at a kennel. Where requested, a report of their physical and psychological condition **should** be prepared for the kennel owner and seizing body.
- e) Further meaningful veterinary examinations **should** take place as needed – at least once a month – and a report submitted after each examination (see an example of a monthly health check sheet in Appendix V).
- f) Each dog **must**, at the very least, have a daily visual inspection to check for any signs of illness or distress (see also section 3.3b) but ideally this should be a physical inspection. This **must** be recorded, for example on a daily record kept on the front of the kennel (see Appendix V for an example).
- g) During normal working hours dogs **must** be observed at regular intervals and at least three times each day. Out of normal working hours, dogs **should not** be left for more than 12 hours without being checked. The frequency of visits should be balanced against the possibility of disturbing the dogs, although exceptions will arise when dogs are ill or injured.
- h) Where appropriate, all adult dogs **should** be vaccinated by a veterinary surgeon within 72 hours of admission and as part of the initial assessment, unless evidence of previous vaccination is provided.
 - i) Puppies **should** be vaccinated by a veterinary surgeon at eight weeks of age or an age that the veterinary surgeon deems appropriate.
 - j) All dogs **should** have routine control of ecto- and endoparasites (e.g. worms, fleas, ticks, etc.) as directed by a veterinary surgeon. Records **must** be kept for veterinary and seizing body inspection.
 - k) Any medication given **must** be prescribed for the individual animal by a veterinary surgeon, and each instance **should** be recorded.
 - l) Dogs **must** be groomed regularly to ensure their coat is kept in good condition, although exceptions may arise, for example when dogs have any injuries, pain or skin conditions or are fearful of or display aggression towards people.



5.2 Hygiene

- a) All places that dogs have access to (i.e. living accommodation, corridors, common areas, kitchens) **must** be kept clean and free from accumulated dirt and dust to minimise disease transmission and to ensure the dogs are comfortable.
- b) Separate cleaning utensils **should** be provided for each kennel block and should be colour coded.
- c) A cleaning schedule for the dogs' accommodation **should** be implemented and displayed; this should outline daily, weekly and monthly cleaning and disinfection duties. The cleaning **must** incorporate a recognised formulation effective against microorganisms responsible for canine diseases; for example, bleach **must not** be used, as it is harmful to dogs. However, any disinfectant used **must** be parvocidal. This programme **should** be included in the health plan developed with veterinary advice.

- d) Spot cleaning is permitted so long as it doesn't pose a risk to the dog's health and each kennel **must** be deep cleaned with an appropriate disinfectant (see section 5.2c) when the dog permanently vacates the kennel.

SPOT CLEANING

The daily use of disinfectant can be stressful for dogs as it removes familiar scents from their environment. In some cases it can lead to increased marking as dogs re-mark their territory. It is therefore recommended that the daily use of disinfectant is avoided with spot cleaning to remove urine and faeces as required so long as it doesn't pose a risk to the dog's health. A deep cleaning must occur at the change of occupancy.

5.3 Husbandry routines

- a) Dogs **must** always have access to a dry, clean area and be able to avoid wet floors after cleaning. This could be achieved through the provision of a sleeping platform (see section 1.2a).
- b) Husbandry procedures **should** have a consistent daily pattern so that they are predictable to the dogs.
- c) Dogs housed in kennels **must** be removed during high-pressure and steam cleaning and any other cleaning procedures likely to be frightening.
- d) Staff **should** avoid confining dogs to areas within the kennel when cleaning the kennel as this can result in fearful behaviour.
- e) Adult dogs **should** be given the opportunity to toilet regularly outside the space in which they are kept (e.g. their kennel).
- f) When removing individual dogs from kennels, staff **should** try to minimise disturbance to dogs in neighbouring kennels. For example, when leaving the kennel accommodation, staff **should** choose the exit that passes the fewest dogs (see also section 1.2c).



5.4 Isolation facilities

- a) Each establishment **should** provide isolation facilities that are physically isolated from all other dog housing.
- b) Veterinary advice **must** be sought for any animal with a potentially infectious disease. Where advised, the dog should be isolated immediately and the procedure documented.
- c) Procedures **must** be in place, and understood by all staff, to prevent the spread of infectious disease between isolated animals and the other dogs.
- d) Procedures for quarantining new arrivals **should** be devised in consultation with a veterinary surgeon. When new arrivals show any signs of disease, veterinary advice should be sought before they are mixed with other dogs.

5.5 Identification

- a) All dogs **must** be easily identifiable and, whenever possible, microchipped.
- b) There **must** be a system in place to ensure the correct identification of the dogs housed.
- c) Each kennel **must** be clearly and permanently numbered and **must** carry a notice that details relevant information (see the example of a daily care sheet in Appendix V for an example of the type of information that should be recorded).



5.6 Record keeping

- a) The establishment **must** keep a register of all dogs boarding and information about them. Care sheets, etc. can be useful in assisting with this (see Appendix V for examples). The register **must** include the following information, although this list is not exhaustive:
- i. date of arrival and kennel number
 - ii. name of the dog (if available), and any other identification marks
 - iii. description, sex, breed, and age/estimated age
 - iv. name and address of appropriate veterinary surgeon
 - v. health, welfare and nutrition concerns and requirements (if applicable)
 - vi. reference information
 - vii. microchip number if implanted
 - viii. a photograph taken on arrival and at the point of the dog's departure
 - ix. record of the dog's behaviour
 - x. record of veterinary treatment
 - xi. record of food, including quantities and times
 - xii. record of exercise given
 - xiii. regular record of the dog's weight and body condition score throughout his or her stay; the frequency of recording will be determined by the individual dog and individual circumstances.
- b) All original records **must** be kept by the establishment for the length of time defined by the licensing authority and seizing body and thereafter stored/disposed of as required.

5.7 Euthanasia

- a) Any animals ordered by the court as unable to be returned to their owner or animals deemed unsuitable for rehoming due to health or behavioural problems **must** be humanely euthanased. This decision should be made at as early an opportunity as possible to ensure animal welfare and **must** involve appropriate experts and relevant bodies. Euthanasia **must only** be carried out by or under the direction of a veterinary surgeon.
- b) When a dog dies suddenly or unexpectedly a post-mortem **should** be carried out to determine the cause of death and identify whether there is any disease or welfare risk to the rest of the kennel population. Where there is a disease risk, appropriate measures **should** be taken to protect the remaining dogs.

5.8 Restoration to owner

- a) Any long-term-stay dog being returned to their owner **should** undergo a veterinary examination unless he or she has been seen by a veterinary surgeon within the preceding 14 days, or is a stray dog.
- b) When a dog is returned to his or her owner, the kennels **must** provide the owner with information about the care and treatment of the dog while in kennels. A dog return sheet or similar could be used (see section 3.3d, and Appendix V for an example).

For more detailed information on meeting the health needs of pregnant and whelping bitches and litters, see Appendix I.



FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Animal Welfare (Electronic Collars) (Wales) Regulation 2010, accessed at: www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2010/943/pdfs/wsi_20100943_mi.pdf
- Code of Practice for the welfare of dogs, Defra 2009, accessed at: www.defra.gov.uk/publications/files/pb13333-cop-dogs-091204.pdf
- Code of Practice for the welfare of dogs, Welsh Government 2008, accessed at: www.cymru.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/animalwelfare/pets/codesofpractice/081205codeofpractdogs/?lang=en
- Rule 57 of the Highway Coded, accessed at: www.direct.gov.uk/en/TravelAndTransport/Highwaycode/DG_069853
- Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007, accessed at: www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2007/1047/contents/made
- Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006, accessed at: www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/3260/pdfs/uksi_20063260_en.pdf
- Animal Welfare Act 2006, accessed at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45/pdfs/ukpga_20060045_en.pdf
- Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, 1993. Model Licence Conditions and Guidance for Dog Boarding Establishments. Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963. Working party report.
- Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963, accessed at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1963/43/pdfs/ukpga_19630043_en.pdf

REFERENCES

- 1 Hiby, E.F., Rooney, N.J. & Bradshaw, J.W.S., 2006. Behavioural and physiological responses of dogs entering rehoming kennels. *Physiol. Behav.* 89, 385–391, and Rooney, N.J., Gaines, S.A. & Bradshaw, J.W.S., 2007. Behavioural and glucocorticoid responses of dogs (*Canis familiaris*) to kennelling: Investigating mitigation of stress by prior habituation. *Physiol. Behav.* 92, 847–854.
- 2 Gaines, S.A., 2008. Kennelled dog welfare – effects of housing and husbandry. University of Bristol, PhD thesis.
- 3 Gaines, S.A., Rooney, N.J. & Bradshaw, J.W.S., 2005. Investigating the relationship between different housing and husbandry regimes and the behaviour and physiology of working police dogs. Abstract from 6th International Seminar on Detection Dogs. Kincardine, Scotland, UK.
- 4 Taylor, K.D. & Mills, D.S., 2007. The effect of the kennel environment on canine welfare: A critical review of experimental studies. *Animal Welfare* 16, 435–447.
- 5 Rooney, N.J., Gaines, S.A. & Hiby, E.F., 2009. A practitioner's guide to working dog welfare. *Journal of Veterinary behaviour: Clinical Applications and Research* 4: 127–134.
- 6 Council of Europe (2006). Appendix A of the European Convention for the Protection of Vertebrate Animals used for Experimental and other Scientific Purposes (ETS no. 123) – Guidelines for the accommodation and care of animals (Article 5 of the Convention). Council of Europe.

The information in this guide is based upon: RSPCA Breeding and Sale of Dogs Act review – the conclusions of an expert workshop held on 28 April 2010. Experts in attendance from the University of Bristol were Drs Nicola Rooney, John Bradshaw and Rachel Casey; and from the RSPCA, Dr Samantha Gaines and Claire Calder.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Dealing with pregnant bitches and puppies

Kennel sizes for bitches with litters and post-weaned puppies

- Bitches with litters **should** be provided with double the space allowance described in section 1.3.
- For post-weaned puppies, the following minimum enclosure dimensions and space allowances **should** apply (taken from Council of Europe [2006]⁶).

WEIGHT OF DOG (kg)	MINIMUM ENCLOSURE SIZE (m ²)	MINIMUM FLOOR AREA/ ANIMAL (m ²)	MINIMUM HEIGHT (m)
Up to 5	4	0.5	2
Over 5 to 10	4	1.0	2
Over 10 to 15	4	1.5	2
Over 15 to 20	4	2	2
Over 20	8	4	2

Exercising nursing bitches and puppies

- Short periods of exercise **should** be provided to bitches from three days post-whelping and increased gradually thereafter.
- Puppies **should** be provided with an environment in which they can explore, exercise and play, and **should** be given access to a play area away from the maternal kennel by at least the age of six weeks.

Transporting pregnant bitches and puppies

- Pregnant bitches **must not** be transported within 10 days of their expected whelping date or within 48 hours of giving birth, unless agreed by a veterinary surgeon, or in an emergency.
- Puppies **should never** be transported before eight weeks of age without their dam unless a veterinary surgeon agrees otherwise for health and/or welfare reasons, or in an emergency.
- Between eight and 12 weeks of age, prior to return or rehoming, puppies **should** not be transported for more than two hours (because dogs **should not** be transported within two hours of feeding and puppies this age should be fed every four hours).
- Where possible, puppies **should** be trained to stay calmly in a crate by using reward-based training prior to transportation.

Feeding pregnant and lactating bitches and puppies

- The food requirements of pregnant and lactating bitches will increase and provisions **should** be increased accordingly – as specified in the manufacturer’s recommendations or as devised with a veterinary surgeon as part of a health plan.
- Puppies **should** be weaned gradually at six to eight weeks of age onto an appropriate diet to support normal growth.
- Veterinary advice **should** be sought for further guidance on providing for the dietary needs of pregnant and lactating bitches and puppies.

Caring for pregnant and whelping bitches and litters

Care of bitch

- Bitches **should** be individually housed in a designated area from three days prior to whelping, but **should** have daily contact with humans.
- The bitch **must** be provided with a suitable whelping box/bed and an area within the whelping kennel where she can rest away from her pups. Heating facilities **must** be adequate, safe and secure.

Whelping

- Veterinary advice **should** be sought before the bitch gives birth.

Care of litter

- Puppies **should not** be housed away from the bitch, returned or rehomed until at least eight weeks of age, unless this is under veterinary advice.
- For the week prior to returning or rehoming, each puppy **should** be removed separately from their siblings and mother each day for periods of initially a few minutes and then of increasing length.

Appendix II: Environmental enrichment

Enrichment generally leads people to think about the provision of toys and feeding devices but there are additional methods of enrichment that can be used in a kennelled environment. The different methods are often split into two different groups: enrichment through the provision of social contacts with other dogs and people (animate) and enrichment through the provision of toys, cage furniture, auditory and olfactory stimulation (inanimate).

The following section provides an overview of the different types of enrichment and how it can be used.

Animate Enrichment

Dogs are sociable animals and most need and enjoy company. It is therefore important that, where appropriate for the individual dog, individual circumstances, and it is safe to do so, company with other dogs and people is provided. There are many different ways of achieving this and most are covered in the main body of the document but additional information is provided here.

Training

Reward based training is one way of providing opportunities for positive contact with people within the kennelled environment and it can make dogs easier to manage, provide social and mental stimulation and provide the dog with some control over his/her environment. Short sessions are best and those that are really useful are those that can be implemented by staff easily, such as sitting at the front of the kennel when people approach and not jumping up when people enter the kennel.

‘Quiet time’

Positive contact with people doesn't always have to take place outside the kennel. Some dogs will benefit just from having a person close by or outside the kennel door. This can be a very useful exercise for teaching dogs to relax in the presence of people or for those dogs that are fearful or anxious. As an example, many rehoming organisations are introducing reading schemes whereby volunteers sit outside dogs' kennels and read to them and taking opportunities to reward the dogs when calm and relaxed.

Inanimate Enrichment

Toys

Toys are the most frequently used form of inanimate enrichment and have been found to increase play, reduce boredom and increase adoption. Studies have however shown that any interest in the introduction of toys such as balls and tug toys wanes quickly so, to maintain novelty and interest, toys should be changed regularly. Staff/volunteers can also use toys to encourage interactions as dogs find toys really exciting when they are the focus of a game.

The same studies have also found that some toys appear to be more attractive than others and chewable toys seem to be preferable, in particular nylabone and gumabone chews. This is not surprising as dogs are highly motivated to chew objects as this helps to keep their teeth and gums in good condition, hence most dogs find chewing toys and bones rewarding and relaxing.



There is a range of manufactured chew toys and bones on the market, which are relatively inexpensive and safe although not all dogs will like the same type so it is important to try different types to ensure that all dogs benefit. Items such as egg cartons can also make very cheap toys as some dogs will really enjoy destroying them.

It is often feared that providing toys or chews to dogs leads to possessive behaviour; research has shown that the majority of dogs do not become possessive. Most possessive behaviour is caused by fear, due to the dog having been punished previously for not giving up objects. This can be prevented by avoiding confrontation and by using distractions, such as taking the dog for a walk, or giving it another toy or food treat when removing the chew toy. Dogs can also be trained to give up objects on command in return for rewards.

Feeding devices

Kongs (commercially available rubber cone-shaped toy) are probably one of the best known feeding devices and dogs often find food filled (e.g., yeast or meat extract, or part of the daily food ration) Kongs rewarding and relaxing, and previous studies and anecdotal reports have shown that providing a Kong can actually prevent or reduce self-mutilation. Studies have however shown that when dogs that interact regularly with Kongs have them removed, the dogs experience a significant increase in stress hormones and many also show an increase in behaviour indicative of poor welfare. It is therefore very

important that staff/volunteers are predictable in their provision of Kongs and they must also choose the correct size and type. For example, black Kongs are specifically designed for powerful chewers.

Feeding devices do not have to be costly and alternatives can be fairly easy to prepare e.g.

- Paper bags rolled down to contain food
- Scrunched up pieces of paper
- Cardboard tubes with the ends flattened or folded down to make them more challenging
- Frozen cubes of diluted broth, kibble and water or peanut butter
- Biscuits frozen in ice cubes
- Rope/chew toys (natural fibres only) soaked in gravy and then frozen.

Feeding devices can also offer opportunities for other behaviour. Hiding food within paper and placing in a box encourages hunting behaviour, feeding and digging and depending on how the food is presented, problem solving.

Similar to toys, there are concerns about the provision of feeding devices leading to possessive behaviour. Research has shown that most dogs do not become possessive over feeding devices. Once emptied, the value placed on feeders usually reduces greatly which means that the chances of dogs displaying aggression are low. Displays of guarding behaviour towards people can be prevented by avoiding confrontation and by using other distractions which the dog finds rewarding e.g. taking the dog for a walk or giving them another toy or food treat.



Platforms

The majority of current kennel designs are very barren and offer little opportunity for dogs to carry out natural behaviours or provide little choice within their environment. The addition of a platform can help with this by increasing the environment's complexity and available three-dimensional space. This can provide the dog with somewhere to hide underneath or a vantage point from which to carry out natural lookout behaviours that can be particularly important for smaller dogs, which may not otherwise be able to see out of the kennel without standing on their hind legs. Platforms also offer protection from a cold or wet floor, providing a more comfortable and warmer area to rest. Platforms are used extensively and have shown to be beneficial within laboratory kennels and other rescue shelters, are relatively cheap and easy to construct.

Although staff may have concerns about the safety issues of platforms i.e. when entering the kennel the dog could be at their head height, this can be avoided. For example, if the platform is in the sleeping area, staff could remove the dog from the exercise area and vice versa. Alternatively the dog could be trained to jump off the platform so that situations of potential conflict are avoided.

Furniture for outdoor areas

Enrichment does not just have to be confined to the kennel environment but can also be incorporated into exercise areas or paddocks.

Platforms, steps and ramps are beneficial in outdoor areas, providing opportunities for exploratory as well as vigilance behaviours. Whilst tunnels and pipes offer the same behavioural opportunities, they are also areas in which to seek shade. Paddocks also provide sufficient space to include boxes which, when filled with sand, allow dogs to dig. Digging behaviour can be encouraged by hiding treats in the sand, which also increases olfactory behaviour.

Creating areas with soil or sand and burying objects can also provide opportunities for dogs to search and dig.

Natural furniture can also be considered such as the use of safe and non-toxic plants, bushes and shrubs for dogs to push through and explore as well as trees which dogs can investigate and mark.

Auditory enrichment

As described in section 1.7a, classical music can be beneficial to welfare with dogs spending more time showing relaxed behaviour. This is in contrast to heavy metal music where dogs spent more time showing agitated behaviour. Human conversation and pop music appears to have neither a beneficial or detrimental effect. Classical music is therefore suggested but staff should be aware that the playing of music has licensing requirements and it shouldn't be played any louder than a normal conversation.

For further information see Rooney, N. J., Gaines, S. A., & Hiby, E. F., 2009, *A practitioner's guide to working dog welfare*. Journal of Veterinary Behaviour: Clinical Applications and Research 4:127–134. *Care And Respect Includes All Dogs*. CARIAD. *Enhancing and Enriching the Experience of Dogs*.



Olfactory enrichment

A dog's sense of smell is highly developed and is the primary sense for dogs. Introducing different odours into the environment and in different ways can be of value. Odours diffused into the environment have been seen to have a significant effect on behaviour. Lavender and camomile appear to be relaxing with dogs spending more time resting and less time moving and vocalising whereas rosemary and peppermint appear to result in more movement and vocalising. Although there are commercially available diffusers, a cheaper way of introducing lavender or camomile is to plant it around the establishment.

Odours can also be used to increase and encourage natural behaviour and can be great for mental stimulation. For example, scent trails can be laid around exercise areas, treats can be hidden that the dog has to find or, for a really cheap alternative, allow the dog the freedom to stop and sniff when out walking and vary the places that he/she walks.

Putting enrichment into practice

Every dog is an individual, so it is important that different methods of enrichment are tried to identify what it is that each dog likes and gains from.

Variety and change can also be used as part of enrichment and can prevent dogs from losing interest in particular items. For example, the types of toys provided to dogs can be varied on a daily basis as can the odours presented to dogs or the places where they might be taken to exercise and sniff.

What to do if nothing seems to work

There are many factors that affect the welfare of dogs. For example, high noise levels, low temperatures, predictability of routine, kennel size and individuals will vary in which factors affect them the most depending upon their life experiences. Therefore, enrichment should not be seen as a panacea to poor welfare. Where staff/volunteers remain concerned about the welfare of an individual dog they should seek the advice of a suitably qualified behaviour expert (see Appendix III).

Appendix III: Behaviour experts

When looking for a behaviour expert it is important to identify someone with a combination of appropriate qualifications, up-to-date knowledge, skills and experience. Their methods must be compatible with modern practice, i.e. positive, reward-based methods, and should not put the animal's welfare at risk.

The Animal Behaviour and Training Council (www.abtc.org.uk) is a regulatory council that represents animal trainers and animal behaviour therapists. It develops, sets and maintains the standards of knowledge and practical skills needed to be an animal trainer or animal behaviour therapist, and maintains a national register of appropriately qualified animal trainers and animal behaviourists. A list of these can be found at: www.abtcouncil.org.uk/find-a-trainer-behaviourist

Appendix IV: Muzzle training

Muzzle selection

It is important to choose the correct type of muzzle, as it must be the correct size and shape for the breed/type of dog. Muzzles come in a range of sizes to fit all skull shapes and lengths, so care should be taken to ensure the right one is selected.

The muzzle should be of the 'basket' type – an open mesh that allows free flow of air. It must be securely fitted to prevent the dog biting but must allow the dog to pant, drink and vomit safely.

Introducing a dog to a muzzle

The muzzle should be introduced gradually, with lots of rewards given when the dog shows relaxed and positive behaviour. The muzzle should never be forced onto a dog – the aim should be to go slowly enough for the dog never to feel anxious or scared.

The procedure should be broken down into very small steps.

1. Show the dog the muzzle. The dog should be rewarded as soon as he or she shows any interest in the muzzle.
2. Let the dog place his/her nose inside the muzzle to retrieve a food treat. A small treat should either be placed in the nose end of the muzzle or held so that the dog can get to it by placing his/her head into the muzzle. This should be repeated regularly until the dog is happily taking food treats from inside the muzzle.
3. Increase the time the dog has his/her nose inside the muzzle in return for a treat. Once the dog is happy placing his/her nose inside the muzzle for a treat, hold the muzzle in place for a few seconds and feed a second treat through the mesh, gradually increasing the time the muzzle is held in place.



4. Move the straps. Again, give lots of rewards for relaxed behaviour.
5. Do up the straps. Once the dog is comfortable and happy with the straps being moved, the muzzle straps can be fastened.
6. Keep the muzzle on for short periods. For example, keep the muzzle on during enjoyable events like walks. The number of steps you take and how fast you progress will depend on the individual dog – some will learn quickly, others may take a little time. The aim is to progress steadily to avoid any anxiety or aversion and to reward all relaxed and positive behaviour immediately. This will help the dog to associate the muzzle with pleasant events and stop him/her from being frightened when the muzzle is used at a later date.

Appendix V: Examples of record sheets

Admission form (template)

Could be used and kept for any seized dog admitted to the kennels

Date of entry:		
Unique reference no:	Dog's name: Kennel or actual (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)	
Admission weight:	Exit weight:	
Sex: Male or Female (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)	Breed/type:	Age:
Date photo taken (attach photo):	Microchip/tattoo number:	
Home diet (if known):	Kennel diet:	
Known veterinary problems/ongoing treatment/medication/etc	Description of dog, including colour, marks, scars, injuries, etc:	
First vet check		
Date of visit:	Name of vet:	
Vet practice address:	First vaccinations given (<i>date</i>):	
Additional instructions/treatments (e.g. specific worm, flea, tick treatment, etc):		
Seizing authority's visit		
Date of visit:	Name of individual: Contact number:	
Date of visit:	Name of individual: Contact number:	
Date of visit*:	Name of individual: Contact number:	

* For any further visits, add the date and details onto the back of this form.

Daily care sheet (template)

Could be filled in and kept each day by kennel staff

Unique reference number:				Name of dog: Kennel or Actual (delete as appropriate)					
Microchip/tattoo number:				Age (if known):			Kennel number:		
Breed/type:				Name of vet in attendance of health check:					
Handler:		Date admitted:		Time/s of feeding:			Date:		
Month/year (of sheet)		Any medication:		Temperament:			Physical condition of dog:		
Weight and body condition score (week 1):		Weight and body condition score (week 2):		Weight and body condition score (week 3):			Weight and body condition score (week 4):		
Day	Food			Medication	Toilet				Comments/observations
	C	1/2	0	Taken?	N	L	O	U	See bottom of sheet for description of symbols
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									
9									
10									
11									
12									
13									
14									
15									
16									
17									
18									
19									
20									
21									
22									
23									
24									
25									
26									
27									
28									
29									
30									
31									

C = all food eaten Taken = if medication was placed in food, check it is gone
 1/2 = food half eaten N = normal faeces 0 = hasn't gone to toilet at all
 0 = no food eaten L = loose faeces U = urinated only (may mean dog won't defecate in kennel area, also consider if dog does not urinate at all)

Monthly health check sheet (template)

Can be filled in by a vet carrying out monthly health checks

Date:			
Unique reference number:		Name of dog: Kennel or Actual (delete as appropriate)	
Microchip/tattoo number:		Weight:	Date of health check:
Breed/type:		Name of vet in attendance of health check:	
Checklist for vet to fill in to check health status of dog			
	Yes	No	Comments
Legs/paws/back			
Eyes			
Ears			
Nose			
Skin/coat			
Mucous membrane			
Teeth			
Heart			
Chest			
Genital area			
Abdomen			
Faeces			
Urine			
Vaccinations (if relevant)			1st 2nd
Worming/flea treatment			
Behavioural observations			
Other comments			
Veterinary surgeon's signature:			Date

Dog return sheet (template)

Can go with a dog when he/she is either returned home or passed on for rehoming

Unique reference number:		Name of dog: Kennel or Actual (delete as appropriate)	
Microchip/tattoo number:		Entry weight: Exit weight:	
Breed/type:		Owner's name/address (where relevant):	
Dog's routine while in kennels			
Brand of food fed to dog:		Time/s of feeding:	Amount of food fed each time:
Type of exercise given:		Duration of exercise:	Frequency of exercise:
Dog's medical record while in kennels			
Has the dog been flea treated while in kennels (including date of last treatment)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date:		Which product was used?	
Has the dog been given worming treatment while in kennels (including date of last treatment)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date:		Which product was used?	
Has the dog been given any vaccinations while in kennels (including date of last vaccination)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date:		Where the dog has been vaccinated, please attach the vaccination certificate/s to this sheet.	
Has the dog received any veterinary treatment other than those listed above?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, what was the dog treated for?	What if any medication was prescribed?	What if any surgery was required?	
If the dog has had surgery, a copy of the postoperative care sheet provided by the veterinary surgeon must be attached to this sheet.			
Any behavioural problems with the dog while in kennels? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		If yes, please state any advice given by vet or behavioural expert	

Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Wilberforce Way, Southwater, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 9RS

Tel: 0300 1234 555 www.rspca.org.uk facebook.com/RSPCA twitter.com/RSPCA_official

The RSPCA helps animals in England and Wales. Registered charity no: 219099

The RSPCA only exists with the support of public donations. An RSPCA in-house publication 12.14

Cover photo: Philip Toscano/RSPCA Photolibrary