



DBC NEWS



A news update from the **D**achshund **B**reed **C**ouncil

October 2008

www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk

Some information about this Newsletter

It's only been six weeks since the Dachshund Breed Council held its inaugural meeting and yet in that time there has been so much happening. The Breed Council may be new, but it simply continues the work of the UK Dachshund Clubs' Forum which has seen the Breed Clubs working together for several years.

We want to ensure that as many people as possible are aware of what is being done by the Breed Council, particularly in relation to Health and Welfare matters.

We will issue further Newsletters whenever there is important information to share with Dachshund owners. The Newsletter will only be available electronically, so if you have Dachshund-owning friends who do not have Internet access, please print off a copy and give it to them. There has been too much criticism of pedigree dogs in recent weeks and we all need to be "singing from the same hymn sheet". It is not acceptable for people, particularly Breed Club members, not to know what is going on, or to have to rely on rumours and mis-information.

Please also visit our website:

www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk

Breed Standard Revisions

Following the "Pedigree Dogs Exposed" TV programme the Kennel Club announced it would be reviewing every Breed Standard before the end of 2008. Their aim is to ensure that Standards do not encourage any form of exaggeration which might adversely affect the health of a breed.

The Dachshund Breed Council had initiated its own review of our Breed Standard in September.

Three changes have been proposed by our Sub-Committee and these were circulated to all Club Secretaries for comment in mid-October.

Because of the speed at which the KC is moving, we need to get our suggestions to them very early in November.

The proposed changes are not radical. They emphasise...

- the need to avoid exaggeration by providing some guidance on the length:height ratio
- a reminder that Dachshunds are a working breed and should have enough clearance to be able to work above ground as well as to be able to go to ground
- a statement of clarification that white is not a permitted colour and that Double Dapple is unacceptable because of the health risks (blindness and deafness)

As soon as we know what changes the KC are prepared to approve, that information will be communicated.

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Accredited Breeder Scheme

The Breed Council has written to the KC outlining its concerns which centre on the lack of quality assurance and the perception that some current ABS members would generally be considered not to be “adopting best practice”.

The Breed Council also made a number of recommendations to the KC including a desire for Breed Clubs to be involved in the “vetting” process for all new ABS applicants. We made suggestions on how the ABS could become a mark of “Quality” and the need for KC Registration to be a way for puppy buyers to differentiate between well-bred dogs whose breeders understood the breed standard and had applied all the appropriate health screening and testing.

We await the KC's response and hope they will be willing to work closely with the Breed Clubs to improve the ABS. At that point, more of us might be prepared to join.

As an indication of our determination to ensure ABS members do adhere to the high standards the KC aspires to, we have reported one ABS breeder of Miniature Dachshunds to the KC for investigation.

Code of Ethics

The KC has announced a mandatory Code of Ethics which all Breed Clubs are expected to adopt and which will apply to all Club members.

The Breed Council's Health & Welfare Sub-committee had already been developing a Code of Ethics which specifically took into account the needs of Dachshunds. We have therefore written to the KC to ask for permission to add these requirements to the KC's own mandatory list.

Health and Welfare Issues

We have an active Health and Welfare (H&W) Sub-committee and we should be proud of the work that has been done over many years (but not complacent!).

The KC will be issuing “Health Plans” for all Breeds and these have to be completed by the end of December. At the moment, we don't know what these will involve but feel we will be well placed to respond, based on our current work.

Since the BC meeting in September we have...

- drafted an information leaflet on Retinal Degeneration (cord1 mutation) in MSHD and MLHD which will be available to the public at Discover Dogs
- drafted an information leaflet on the lethal gene risks associated with Double Dapple matings

We are also developing, with the Miniature Dachshund Club, guidance for judges and exhibitors on the weighing of Miniatures at Shows. Despite guidance from the KC, it is clear that some judges are not aware of the H&W reasons behind the change of Weighing Regulations, or of the fact that they can no longer disqualify exhibits over 11 lbs./5 kg.

For November's Discover Dogs, we have, with the Midland Dachshund Club, updated their handout with the latest information on H&W aspects of buying and owning a Dachshund.

Over coming weeks the H&W Sub-committee will be asking for information about two conditions which have been chosen for investigation: Diabetes and Epilepsy. All information received will be treated as confidential. We can only hope to address potential health problems if breeders and owners are open and honest about reporting problems when we ask for information. Pretending there are no health problems, or keeping them quiet, will only add weight to the arguments of those who are criticising pedigree dog breeders. If we are not seen to be acting responsibly we will get what we deserve: legislation that will make breeding and showing either difficult, or impossible!