



Derry City & Strabane
District Council
Comhairle
Chathair Dhoire &
Cheantar an tSrátha Báin
Derry Citty & Strabane
Districk Council

Ref: FOI / 5465

06th January 2025

Email:

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request - Dog Breeding Information

I refer to your FOI request and respond as follows:

Request

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information, please:

1. How many dog breeding establishments does your council currently licence pursuant to the Welfare of Animals (Dog Breeding Establishments and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013?

A. None

2. Please provide a breakdown by licence of the number of:

- a. Breeding female adult dogs**
- b. Breeding male adult dogs**
- c. Litters of puppies**
- d. Other (non-breeding) dogs specified on each licence currently in effect**

A. N/A

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Derry
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Strabane

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47 Derry Road
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3. Please provide a blank copy of the inspection form/s used by your council during the inspection of dog breeding establishments pursuant to reg 5(2) of the Welfare of Animals (Dog Breeding Establishments and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland).

A. Please see attached a copy of Dog Control's inspection sheet used for inspecting breeding establishments.

4. For the calendar year 2023, how many dogs (including puppies) did your local authority take into possession, pursuant to s17 of the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011?

A. 12 Dogs Seized, including pups in the DCSDC area.

5. In the event your local authority needs to take dogs (including puppies) into possession, pursuant to s17 Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011:

a. What kennel capacity do you have access to for such eventualities?

A. 50 plus kennels

b. Is this capacity provided by private kennels, an animal welfare charity/charities or another provider?

A. Private

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you have rights of review and appeal; these rights consist of two review processes.

Firstly, our internal review procedure is available by contacting:

John Kelpie
Chief Executive
Derry City and Strabane District Council
98 Strand Road
Derry BT48 7NN
Tel: 028 71253253 or email: john.kelpie@derrystrabane.com

Secondly, you can appeal directly by contacting the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

CHESHIRE SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113 (local rate) or email: casework@ico.org.uk

I would however advise that the Information Commissioner has indicated that a review will not be undertaken unless the Council has first had an opportunity to re-consider its decision.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S. Donaghy', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Seamus Donaghy
Head of Health & Community Wellbeing

**NIDAG
XXXX Council
Internal Working Procedure**

Document Number: NIDAG/2023/0

Title: Inspection of a Licensed and Unlicensed/Illegal Dog Breeding Establishment

No. of Pages:

Version: 1

Version 1 Issue Date: June 2023

NIDAG PROCEDURES 2023 - INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURES FOR INSPECTION OF A LICENSED DOG BREEDING ESTABLISHMENT AND AN UNLICENSED/ILLEGAL DOG BREEDING ESTABLISHMENT

Background

The Welfare of Animals (Dog Breeding Establishments and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 requires that anyone wishing to operate a dog breeding establishment must first obtain a licence from the District Council in which the establishment is located.

A dog breeding establishment is defined as one or more premises within the same District Council area, operated by the same person and from which that person keeps 3 or more breeding bitches and also either:

- Breeds 3 or more litters of puppies in any 12 month period; or
- Advertises 3 or more litters of puppies for sale in any 12 month period; or
- Supplies 3 or more litters of puppies in any 12 month period; or
- Advertises a business of breeding or selling of puppies.

Hobby breeders, ie people who keep only 1 or 2 breeding bitches do not require a licence to keep a dog breeding establishment. Hunt clubs and charities are also not required to obtain a licence.

Inspecting a Licensed Dog Breeding Establishment

Council Officers are responsible for carrying out inspections of licensed breeding establishments. A licence will only be granted where an officer is satisfied that the prescribed licence conditions are met.

Inspections may be either announced or unannounced;

Announced – An appointment will be arranged with the breeder to inspect and renew the licence annually. Following satisfactory inspection, completion of a "Dog Breeding Establishment Licence" application form, and the appropriate fee paid, the licence will be renewed.

Unannounced – Approximately 2 times per year. Officers should follow the same procedure as a normal inspection but the breeder will not be given any notice or warning and must allow the officer onto the premises to carry out checks/inspections. This could be following a complaint made against the breeder or a routine check/revisit.

All inspections are carried out in accordance with the **Dog Breeding Licence Conditions and Guidance for Council Enforcement Officers** issued by DAERA pursuant to section 12 and schedule 2 of the Welfare of Animals Act (NI) 2011.

The conditions for obtaining a licence and appropriate fee are outlined in the Welfare of Animals (NI) Act 2011 and the Welfare of Animals Dog Breeding Establishments and Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations (NI) 2013.

Fees

The fee for a dog breeding establishment licence depends on the number of breeding bitches present:

Where 10 or less bitches are kept - £150

Where 11 to 25 bitches are kept - £200

Where 26 to 50 bitches are kept - £250

Where 51 to 100 bitches are kept - £300

Where 101 to 200 bitches are kept - £350

Where more than 200 bitches are kept - £350 plus £50 for every additional 100.

Conditions

The statutory licence conditions that must be complied with are detailed in Schedule 4 of the 2013 Regulations as follows:

- Accommodation and environment
- Whelping facilities
- Diet and nutrition
- Physical behaviour and social requirements
- Socialisation
- Enhancement and enrichment
- Health and welfare
- Mating
- Change of ownership of a puppy
- Dog identification
- Identification of puppies
- Record keeping
- Inspection and enforcement

During inspection and assessment, officers should follow the DAERA guidance for the 13 Licence conditions above, as outlined under the Statutory Requirements.

A **Dog Breeding Establishment Inspection Checklist** must be completed during the inspection and appropriate score awarded to ensure that all the conditions of the licence are being complied with at the date of inspection (see below).

For purposes of inspecting records, officers should randomly select a number of dogs and scan for a microchip. Records should then be requested for each, and these must be accurate, up to date and must be readily available to an officer.

If the breeding establishment does not meet some or all of the minimum standards, the inspecting officer should suspend the premises licence and revisit at a later date to ensure compliance.

The licence may be revoked in extreme circumstances, where none of the minimum standards are being met.

Inspecting an Illegal Dog Breeding Establishment

What is an Illegal Dog Breeding Establishment?

A dog breeding establishment is one or more premises within the same District Council area, operated by the same person from which that person keeps 3 or more breeding bitches; and also either:

- Breeds 3 or more litters of puppies in any 12 month period; or
- Advertises 3 or more litters of puppies for sale in any 12 month period; or
- Supplies 3 or more litters of puppies in any 12 month period; or
- Advertises a business of breeding or selling of puppies.

Before operating a dog breeding establishment an application must be made to the District Council in which the business is situated. Operating a dog breeding establishment without a valid licence is illegal. The applicant must be in receipt of a licence before the establishment is opened for business.

An applicant may be required to notify other public bodies and organisations such as Environmental Health, Building Control, Planning Service, Fire and Rescue Service etc.

Visiting the Premises

A visit to the premises should include the following:

NB Preferably a 2 person visit for health and safety reasons and another witness may help with prosecution success

- Identify yourself and explain nature of enquiries/complaint etc.
- Ask for person's details and establish if owner of premises and owner or keeper of dogs.
- Request to see dogs and puppies and if satisfied an offence is being committed, immediately caution the owner and record PACE contemporaneous question and answer notes.
- Note details of each dog and puppy, such as gender, description, name, breed, age and microchip number (if microchipped).
- Take photographs.
- Note conditions of where dogs are being kept. If any welfare concerns refer to an Animal Welfare Officer.
- Ask to see any related paperwork for the dogs and puppies, such as microchip registration records, licence records, veterinary cards.
- Prepare file for prosecution.

Dog Breeding Establishment Inspection Checklist

Applicant:		
Applicant's Address:		
Date of Application:	Inspecting Officer:	Date of Inspection:
Address of Premises:		
Number of Bitches		Number of Dogs

1 Accommodation and Environment		Score Awarded
(1) Accommodation that is durable and appropriate in:		
(a) Construction		
(b) Size		
(c) Exercise facilities		
(d) Temperature		
(e) Lighting		
(f) Ventilation		
(g) Cleanliness		
(h) Waste disposal		
(i) Pest control		
(j) Drainage		
(2) Measures taken for protection of persons in case of fire or other emergency		

(3) Adequate clean bedding provided for each dog and renewed when soiled		
2 Whelping Facilities		
(1) Designated area prior to whelping with a suitable whelping box/ bed		
(2) Adequate heating facilities, secure and safe and capable of providing the range of temperatures suitable for both pups and bitch.		
(3) An area within the whelping kennel where a bitch can rest away from her pups		
(4) Additional supervision provided		
3 Diet		
(1) Suitable quantity and quality of food daily for the type and breed of the dog - Access to drinking water - Individual requirements considered - Dishes cleaned -		
(2) Food preparation facilities - Clean and well maintained - Refrigeration available		

4 Normal Behaviour		
(1) Regular access to adequate facilities to enable dogs to exhibit normal behaviour patterns through play, interaction and relief from boredom		
(2) Regular exercise suitable to the breed and size of the dog (where not detrimental to the health of the dog) - Indoor/outdoor - Written exercise programme		
(3) Supervision - Over 16		
(4) Staffing - Adequate and competent		
5 Socialisation		
(1) Written socialisation programme for puppies Socialisation observed (where biosecurity allows)		
(2) Programme in operation		
(3) Programme reflects requirements of differing breeds		
6 Enhancement and Enrichment		
(1) Written enhancement and enrichment programme for bitches, stud dogs and other dogs		

(2) Implementation verified		
(3) Programme reflects requirements of differing breeds		
7 Health and Welfare		
(1) Inspect dogs regularly throughout day and night where required		
(2) Protect dogs from pain, suffering, injury and disease (reasonable steps)		
(3) Prevent and control spread of infectious/contagious diseases amongst dogs (reasonable steps)		
(4) Adequate/suitable isolation facilities to- a) House a sick dog pending veterinary treatment; and b) Recuperation where appropriate		
c) No continual exposure to direct sunlight		
d) A dog shall receive any necessary veterinary treatment including vaccinations - Registration with Veterinary surgeon - Advise Council if change - Medicines - Breeding - First Aid Kit		

- Fire - Transport - Retirement		
8 Mating		
A breeding bitch shall not:		
(a) Be mated until she is over 12 months old		
(b) Give birth to more than 3 litters in any 3 year period (or bred in any consecutive heat period);		
(c) Give birth to more than 6 litters of pups in total; and		
(d) Be mated after 8 years old unless veterinary certification is granted		
9 Change of Ownership of a Puppy		
A licence holder shall retain ownership and possession of a puppy until at least 8 weeks - Advice/information - Disqualification		
10 Identification of Breeding Bitches and other Dogs		
(1) All breeding bitches and other dogs to be identified with a microchip (exceptions)		
(2) Where a breeding bitch/other dog arrives on any premises and has not been microchipped, the licence holder shall microchip the dog within 7 days.		

11 Identification of Puppies							
(1) The holder of a licence shall ensure that a puppy shall be identified with a microchip before it is 8 weeks							
12 Record Keeping Requirements							
(1) The licence holder to maintain a record for each breeding bitch, puppy and retired dogs kept on the premises in details of their sale							
TOTAL SCORES	1'S		2'S		3'S		

SCORING

1	Does not meet the minimum requirements
2	Meets minimum standard with limitations
3	meets the minimum standard

OPTIONS FOR ENFORCEMENT	
Where scores of 1 are recorded	• Revoke licence • Withhold licence pending compliance • Re-visit within short space of time to ensure compliance • Warning letter detailing remedial actions required and consequences of non- compliance • Refer to Animal Welfare if required • Increase number of unannounced visits in-year
Where scores of 2 are recorded	• Withhold licence pending compliance • Warning letter detailing remedial actions required and consequences of non-compliance • Issue licence • Further scheduled inspections • Increased unannounced visits in-year.
Where only scores of 3 are recorded	• Issue licence • One further inspection in-year.