

GREYHOUND FORUM

Friday 22nd April 2022 at 10am by Zoom

MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance: Battersea Dogs & Cats Home; DEFRA; Dogs Trust; Dogs Trust Ireland; Greyhound Board of Great Britain; Greyhounds in Need; Greyhound Trust; Kennel Club; RSPCA; Wood Green

Apologies were received from Blue Cross

- GBGB reported that a new track had opened since the last meeting in Suffolk and the forthcoming re-opening of the track in Oxford. GBGB agreed to liaise with the Racecourse Promoters Association to ask whether they intended to remain members of the Forum.
- The implications of recent parliamentary activity in favour of a ban were considered: a petition discussed in the Welsh Parliament; a Westminster Hall debate; and a similar debate on the back of a petition in Scotland.
- Minutes of the previous meeting will be amended to reflect "*Welsh Government are considering...*", not that they are yet looking to regulate.
- The forthcoming DT / RSPCA joint review of greyhound racing will not look at the whole industry in Ireland, only the breeding and sourcing of greyhounds for racing in GB. It is still gathering evidence and the review is expected to be ready to be shared with internal DT and RSPCA audiences later in the spring. No decision has been taken on wider publication.
- The GBGB Welfare Strategy is ready in draft form, however it will not be shared with welfare organisations until after consultation with bookmakers, that is due to begin on 25th April.
- The Strategy is to look at the whole life of the Greyhound, and how this can be made more compatible with the five welfare needs, under the following themes: Nutrition; Training; Breeding; Impact and Importance of Early Life; Role of the Vet as a Champion of Welfare.
- The current draft has the full support of the GBGB Board. It is not yet possible for welfare organisations to comment.
- Following discussion at the last meeting, GBGB confirmed that a new rule is about to be introduced to limit an individual greyhound to a maximum of 6 runs in any 28 day period with at least three clear days between runs. This rule change was welcomed by welfare members. There was some discussion around monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.
- On the independent kennel inspection programme, SCI took over the contract in late 2021. Currently, there are 335 compliant kennels, with 165 in post-inspection transition phase. All are within the required 90 days to comply and will be re-inspected. GBGB confirmed that the BSI PAS relating to trainers' kennels could be reviewed with welfare charity input and was an example of a potential joint initiative within the Welfare Strategy.
- UKAS are currently undergoing final checks of assessment processes prior to the anticipated award of formal accreditation of GBGB's work to inspect and licence kennels.
- GBGB is in the process of appointing a first Veterinary Executive to its staff, following a competitive recruitment.
- The Injury Recovery Scheme paid out over £250,000 in 2021, while the Greyhound Retirement Scheme has paid out over £2 million in 18 months.
- Welfare members reported a general slowdown in dog rehoming. Greyhound Trust noted that a number of greyhounds registered prior to the introduction of the GRS scheme were entering their care without an associated GRS payment and this was causing some financial pressures.
- In the absence of a published GBGB Welfare Strategy and with the DT/RSPCA Review ongoing, it was agreed that a fuller discussion on the future role of the Forum should be deferred to the next meeting that would take place in July.