



THE KENNEL CLUB
Making a difference for dogs

X MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

dd/mm/yyyy

Dear X MP

Dog Showing & Health

As a dog breeder / person who shows their dogs I am concerned about recent suggestions that the hobby of dog showing is responsible for a number of canine health problems. These suggestions seem to have been made without recourse to scientific evidence to establish the facts.

A number of actions have been taken to improve dog health by organisations such as the Kennel Club, including working with a number of breeders to improve the health of their breed, a full review of the breed standards, banning of close matings and significant levels of investment into science and research.

In January 2009 the Kennel Club published revised breed standards. Dogs at dog shows are judged against these standards which describe the breed's defining appearance, characteristics and temperament, and these were created with the dog's original function in mind. Judges are instructed to remove any dog they deem to be unhealthy from the ring and officials at shows have the responsibility to ensure that any dog not so removed by the judge, but which they suspect of being unhealthy, is examined by a vet. Thus, unhealthy dogs will not be rewarded in the show ring and their owners are further incentivised to breed with health in mind. This rigorous discipline cannot be achieved with non registered dogs or dogs that do not compete in the show ring.

Dog shows encourage healthy breeding practices. At Crufts 2009 a large number of winning dogs were bred by KC Accredited Breeders – KCABs are required to make use

of health screening schemes relevant to their breed on all breeding stock. The attention to health and welfare shown by these breeders is in marked contrast to the kind of breeding carried out by puppy farmers, who breed purely for profit or fashion with no concern for health and welfare.

Dog shows are also a vital means by which to educate both dog breeders and potential puppy buyers about dog health and other welfare issues.

I hope you will agree that far from having a negative effect on dog health, shows are an important way to ensure that dogs' health improves. As my representative I am asking you to write to the Minister to echo your support for a minimum set of standards to be brought in which would apply to the breeding of all dogs.

I look forward to your prompt reply regarding this issue.

Yours sincerely,