



Big Tent Workshops: Outcomes

1. What will future demand for puppies and kittens look like with all of the changes around licensing, third party sales, breed trends, health issues etc and how do we work to shape it?

Group Response:

- Conservative estimate to maintain population 690,000 puppies are needed each year minimum to meet demand. The group feels it is like to be a lot more.
- The biggest gap in research is that we do not know what future demand will look like and therefore feel it needs research. The question is whether we want future demand to go up or down? It is felt that until we have decent supply of ethically supplied animals we should reduce demand but it was recognised that the more squeeze put on here the more the risk of exporting the problem if demand continues.
- How do we control demand? The more we talk about how difficult it is to have a pet the more we might drive down demand and we don't necessary want to do that.
- Consideration was given to bringing back the dog licence but no consensus was gained. It was felt important that there be an obligation to present the star rating with the licence number so that we can move the trends towards that.

- Thought should be given to working on behaviour change amongst the public so we can shape demand in a more positive way in regards to breed trends, finding the right breeders etc. It is not about wanting to stop people having pets, it is about choosing the right one from the right breeder.

Action:

CFSG has a workstream on conformation and breeding for 2018/19 and these points will be put forward for consideration. Research is currently being done by Dogs Trust and CFSG intends to promote the star rating.

2. How do we as key stakeholders make sure that the Animal Activities Licensing Regulations are effective and supported?'

Group Response:

- How the appeal process is dealt with will be important especially in relation to feelings of incorrect inspection. There will need to be ways of getting re-inspections to upgrade the star ratings to engage businesses and give them incentives.
- How loading of complaints will be dealt with is important as they have to be justifiable complaints and not malicious as that could cause lots of problems.
- It would be helpful if the system was worked through a central database rather like vehicle licensing so the public can check up on who is licensed. The public will have a role in driving those who need to be licensed who may not be and also in pushing the standards upwards.
- The guidance will certainly need reviewing and updating to make sure it supports the Regulations and the inspector.

- Charities and vets and trade association need to make members and supporters aware of the new system.

Action:

These points will be factored into the guidance on using the risk based system currently being drafted by the Expert Panel. CFSG intends to set KPIs around the the new Regulations and will certainly be reviewing the Guidance regularly.

3. How do we ensure that the risk based model is appropriately enforced and how do we support and promote this system as stakeholders?

Group Response:

- There is the element of cost and cost restraint, fees need to be consistent, fair and proportionate and to reward those who meet higher standards.
- Enforcement officers need to be trained on a national basis to ensure they reward the right rating. Additional online training system could be considered.
- There needed to be some sort of collation of results across all local authorities and annual review to enable benchmarking.
- Independent inspectors who can do spot checks would help with benchmarking.
- Communication and education – we could use some of the systems in place already such as the Pet Advertising Advisory Group and other sector groups, membership of CFSG sharing information that we have and giving them the tools to disseminate to their wider groups.
- A national campaign by Defra to promote this would be very helpful.

- We need to ensure we consider the audience – the public will have not knowledge so promoting and educating pros and cons of the star rating would be helpful. Posters in veterinary clinics would be a good start.

Action:

CFSG will look at the communication around the risk based model and will push for collection of data from local authorities to enable review and benchmarking.

4. Should we have licensing of cat breeders and, if so, would it be different to the dog breeding regulations and in what way?

Group Response:

- Only 10% of cats are pedigree and only a proportion register with GCCF so it is not comparable to the dog situation.
- If licensing of cat breeding does not move forward, the vending legislation will assist to capture those selling commercially and can be a tool to deal with some issues for the time-being.
- The new kitten checklist signed off by CFSG needs endorsement and sharing. That needs a massive drive as it could help.
- Ultimately a Code of Practice for Breeding would be the best outcome as the current cat code does not cover breeding and the licensing system would not be as effective for kittens as it will be for puppies.

Action:

CFSG has a workstream for 2018 on drafting a Code of Practice for Cat Breeding and will also look for opportunities to promote the Kitten Checklist

5. What other activities involving cats and dogs should be included under the AAL when they come for review and why?

Group Response:

- The business test excludes some activities which would need to be considered as it would not cover all activities which may pose a risk but are not necessarily for profit.
- Some of the future activities to consider under the AAL include:

Behaviour and training

Hydrotherapy,

Grooming

Dog walking

Exhibitions and shows

Sanctuaries, rescue and rehoming

Animal assisted interventions – not all the focus on the dog or animal.

- The priority would be those with the longest term effects on most animals which would be training and behaviour and sanctuaries. There is already a voluntary set of standards with ADCH but we have met a limit there as it is voluntary.
- The other priority should be getting consistency all across devolved administrations.

Action:

CFSG has supported the drafting of a Code of Practice on Dog Walking and is now working on a Code for Groomers and Hydrotherapy. There is a workstream looking at drafting regulations and guidance on sanctuaries and rescue centres to put to Government in due course. The Group will then push for them to be included under future AAL.

6. How do we ensure a ban on third party sales is effective – what are the potential loopholes and how can these be closed?

Group Response:

- In principle consensus for a ban but it was difficult to predict the problems.
- There needs to be legal deterrents such as traceability through micro-chipping, registration for less than 3 litters, training for inspectors, regulation for rehoming activity and reviewing the pet travel scheme, education and potentially penalties for the buyer.
- There are many loopholes – entrance to private dwellings potential to evade the law in that it only applies to England, imports from abroad including bitches who are pregnant and cash sales which would need to be tackled through more enforcement ultimately.

Action:

CFSG is aware of the potential loopholes to a third party ban and has suggested ways in which Defra could seek to close them before a ban is implemented. This includes licensing of sanctuaries and rescue centres and tackling puppy importation. CFSG is involved in an AHWBE task group looking at the Pet Travel Scheme.

7. Aside from breeding, dealing and trading of puppies and kittens, a ban on third party sales and measures to tackle importation, what other welfare issues remain around dogs and cats which CFSG should consider going forward and why are they important?

Group Response:

- Protection of offspring and dog confirmation issues.
- Licensing of sanctuaries which is a big loophole to a third party ban.

- Pet theft as there are no databases talking to each other and pet theft is increasing. Pets are seen as property whereas in other countries they are seen as living property which makes it easier for police to get involved and ends with better sentencing.
- Dog licensing needs to be looked at again to assess the potential benefits.
- Compulsory scanning by vets it is optional to scan at the moment.
- Registration for people working with animals having some sort of qualification
- Putting animal welfare into the national curriculum
- Pets in sheltered accommodation.

Action:

CFSG has a workstream for 2018 on conformation. It is also drafting potential regulations and guidance around sanctuaries. We will look at the pet theft issue.

8. **Whilst the majority of owners in the UK are responsible and do their best to meet the welfare needs of their pet as well as controlling its interactions outside of the home, how we do tackle the irresponsible dog and cat owners who do not necessary engage with vets, welfare groups, local authorities or consider legislation?**

Group Response:

- An individual approach is required as one sizes does not fit all. It needs to be decided on what intervention is needed for each community perhaps using a toolbox of ideas.
- Networks needs to be expanded to include housing officers, police, doctor's surgeries and organisations which make up communities. Working with grass root organisations.
- Pre-dog owner approach needs expanding and more community engagement e.g. Camden council offer free dog training classes.
- School programmes are a way of engaging with younger people.
- Changing mind sets more widely on what is a dangerous dog, not focussing on size and breed, and promoting a wider approach to safety around dogs.

Action:

CFSG has set up a workstream for responsible dog ownership which will progress alongside the Livestock Worrying work being done by APGAW. The points will be raised within that group, particularly around expanding networks.