

A GOOD LIFE FOR EVERY GREYHOUND

Strategy Summary



A Welfare-Centric Sport

The Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) is the regulator of licensed greyhound racing in Great Britain. At present, there are 20 licensed stadia across the country all of which must adhere to GBGB's Rules of Racing. This means that, as well as upholding the highest standards of integrity, stadia, along with trainers, owners, GBGB stipendiary stewards and veterinary surgeons, must provide all registered greyhounds with the very best care and attention both on and off the track. This commitment to welfare is paramount within the sport and everyone involved places the health and wellbeing of greyhounds above all else.



Building on the Greyhound Commitment

Launched in 2018 and welcomed across the sport, the Greyhound Commitment is GBGB's blueprint for continuously driving welfare standards forward. Through the Commitment, several important and successful initiatives have been launched including the Greyhound Retirement Scheme, the Injury Recovery Scheme and the introduction of independent residential kennel inspections. Our annually published data on injuries and retirement destinations show that these initiatives are having a positive impact – particularly on the number of greyhounds successfully homed on retirement.

A New Long-Term Strategy for Greyhound Welfare

Building on the success of the Greyhound Commitment, GBGB, led by Independent Director Professor Madeleine Campbell (an EBVS® European Veterinary Specialist and a RCVS Specialist in Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law) initiated and developed a new long-term strategy for greyhound welfare across the sport: 'A Good Life for Every Greyhound'. GBGB sought, received and listened to a wide range of views and comments on current and aspirational welfare from stakeholders within and beyond the sport including canine welfare charities (members of the Greyhound Forum), academics, owners, trainers, breeders, promoters, stewards and veterinary surgeons.



A Lifelong Commitment to Greyhounds

Most notably, the strategy goes beyond GBGB's regulatory remit and sets out the Board's collective ambition to safeguard the welfare of greyhounds throughout their entire lives – not just during their racing careers. The strategy makes clear the ways in which, as the regulator, GBGB expects and requires all such stakeholders to fully engage in protecting and optimising the welfare of the greyhounds under our care across all stages of a greyhound's life: breeding, rearing, racing years and retirement. In doing so, GBGB will provide national and international leadership to benefit all racing greyhounds across the world.

A GOOD LIFE FOR EVERY GREYHOUND

A Holistic Approach to Welfare



The strategy focuses on all aspects of greyhound care and wellbeing across the 'five domains' of animal welfare: nutrition, behaviour, health, environment and mental state. The full strategy is available at www.gbgb.org.uk but key initiatives include:

High Welfare British Breeding:

GBGB has partnered with The Kennel Club (KC) to develop and implement a high welfare standard 'Assured Breeders Scheme' for greyhounds. GBGB will promote high welfare standards in breeding through supporting breeders who wish to join this KC Scheme and encouraging owners and trainers to purchase greyhounds from British breeders who are members of it.



More Comprehensive Monitoring to Improve Welfare for Individual Greyhounds:

To facilitate shared responsibility for the welfare of each greyhound, GBGB has partnered with Professor Sarah Wolfensohn and her team at Surrey University and commissioned the development of a greyhound-specific Animal Welfare Assessment Grid (AWAG). The AWAG is a web-based software application which captures, stores and enables visualisation of animal welfare assessment data. The AWAG will enable all those caring for a greyhound to readily notice any changes in its welfare status – both positive and negative – and identify the individual factors which are responsible for those changes. This will ensure that the necessary action is taken either to promote a positive impact or to mitigate a negative one.

Minimising Risk and Preventing Injuries Further:

To minimise track-related injuries being sustained at GBGB-licensed tracks, visits to each track by

safety experts from STRI will be increased to quarterly (as opposed to annually) to provide specialist advice on the preparation and maintenance of racing surfaces. In addition, GBGB's Track Liaison Officer and the Track Sub-Committee will develop a knowledge base to allow those responsible for track maintenance to readily access best practice, guidance and support with the intention of improving consistency of delivery across all GBGB licensed racetracks. Alongside this, GBGB will commission research into exploring the multi-faceted causes of injuries including breeding, genetics, nutrition and fitness.

Expanding Veterinary Expertise:

Through the appointment of a new Executive Veterinarian, GBGB will seek to enhance current veterinary provision. Key streams of work include encouraging the development of centres of excellence for greyhound veterinary services, introducing a system to record veterinary advice around general health issues and requiring all track veterinary surgeons to have at least two years' post-qualification

experience. Vets will also benefit from enhanced CPD on trackside first aid delivered by external providers. GBGB will employ a field force of Regional Regulatory Veterinary Surgeons to act as an additional point of referral and support for track vets and stipendiary stewards. The Regional Regulatory Veterinary Surgeons will also carry out annual veterinary inspections at trainers' kennels and random inspections of vehicles being used to transport greyhounds to tracks, as part of the Hot Weather Policy.

Reviewing Greyhound Nutrition:

GBGB has partnered with Dr Teresa Hollands, Senior Teaching Fellow in Veterinary Nutrition at the University of Surrey. Dr Hollands will convene and chair a working group of external experts to review greyhound nutrition. This panel will make recommendations for appropriate nutrition and feeding practices at each stage of a greyhound's life, and will identify where further research needs to be undertaken. Dr Hollands will also facilitate a series of knowledge sharing nutrition workshops with greyhound trainers, breeders and owners.

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A Lifelong Commitment



Maximising the Number of Greyhounds Successfully Homed:

To build on the success of the Greyhound Retirement Scheme, GBGB will work with charities with expertise in canine behaviour to develop educational programmes for breeders, owners and trainers around preparing greyhounds for successful transitions to retirement. GBGB will also work with the Greyhound Forum on projects focused on promoting responsible homing such as the creation of a welcome pack for new owners and the establishment of a harmonised programme of behavioural assessments – where required – for greyhounds retiring from racing.

Monitoring Welfare Throughout a Greyhound's Life:

Whilst GBGB's remit only covers the welfare of registered greyhounds during their racing careers, as part of its lifelong commitment to greyhounds, GBGB will work with the Greyhound Stud Book, breeders, owners and trainers to build an evidence base around greyhounds which were ear marked but never presented for racing. GBGB will also review whether the current Retirement Form system could

be refined to further optimise welfare during retirement. As a first step, the option for a greyhound to enter independent, unregulated British racing will be removed from the Retirement Form. This is because GBGB does not find it acceptable that greyhounds should be leaving a regulated environment with clear safeguards around environmental standards and kennel inspections to enter an unregulated environment in which such protections are not required and where welfare standards cannot be verified.

Upskilling and Enhancing the Welfare Knowledge of Everyone in the Sport:

Trainers, kennelhands, owners, track staff and veterinarians will receive the very latest guidance on greyhound welfare through a combination of face-to-face and virtual training and information sharing. Participation in some elements of this training will be compulsory for particular groups. For example, completion of specified knowledge sharing courses as well as attendance at annual welfare refresher workshops will become a mandatory requirement of holding a trainer's licence, whilst regular attendance at CPD refresher courses will become a requirement of working as a track veterinary surgeon. Greyhound

breeders will also receive tailored training through knowledge sharing workshops covering key aspects of care during early life.

International Collaboration:

To optimise care for greyhounds globally, GBGB will lead an effort by international greyhound regulators to develop harmonised welfare policies and strategies. To establish the foundations of this collaborative thinking, during 2022 GBGB will host an inaugural meeting of international greyhound regulators. GBGB will also aim to work specifically with its Irish counterparts to encourage and promote equivalent high welfare standards across borders.

"Greyhounds deserve the highest level of care not only during their racing career but also in their retirement that follows. The Government recognises the genuine concerns some people have about parts of the sport and I'm pleased to see this five year plan set out how everyone involved in greyhound racing has a role to play in improving welfare. The Government welcomes the Good Life for Every Greyhound strategy and the positive progress the Greyhound Board are continuing to make."

Lord Goldsmith, Animal Welfare Minister

Realising the Full Potential of the Strategy:

Whilst some of the streams of work set out above are already underway – or shortly will be – the full strategy can only be realised with the support of long-term funding from the bookmaking industry. Currently, all members of the Betting and Gaming Council voluntarily pay into the British Greyhound Racing Fund which funds GBGB's welfare work. Their contribution is derived from 0.6% of their turnover on licensed greyhound racing; this compares to the statutory levy of 10% of profits on leviable bets in horseracing. We will continue to engage with bookmakers and investigate how an increased and fairer investment will enable the full implementation of the strategy and safeguard the welfare of greyhounds and, indeed our sport, for the long term.

Further Information

Keep up-to-date with our latest initiatives by following us

@GreyhoundBoard

Get in touch at info@gbgb.org.uk