

Matings and Litter Registration Policy

Overview

This policy applies to all individuals using GBGB's Matings and Litter Registration service to register matings and subsequent litters of British-bred greyhounds (greyhounds born and earmarked in England, Scotland, or Wales).

It is the responsibility of all persons whelping and caring for a litter to ensure they are familiar with and compliant with all current animal welfare and dog breeding legislation and regulations in their nation and specific locality. Where required, breeders must hold a valid and in-date local authority dog breeding licence.

The emotional, physical, and behavioural needs of all greyhounds must be met at every stage during mating, whelping and rearing, and through to their retirement from breeding. This includes providing an appropriate and secure environment, suitable nutrition, positive social interactions, handling and enrichment, proactive healthcare and good kennel biosecurity.

All persons involved in the care of a stud dog and/or a brood bitch and her litter must be competent and appropriately knowledgeable in canine breeding husbandry and management to ensure that the welfare of stud dogs, breeding bitches and puppies is protected.

Stud Dog / Brood Bitch Selection

- All greyhounds used for breeding must have up-to-date and valid vaccinations as directed by their veterinary surgeon and valid vaccination records.
- Greyhounds diagnosed with a heritable disease or condition (e.g. cryptorchidism or chronic superficial keratitis) should not be bred from. No greyhound should be used for breeding if doing so may negatively affect either their health or welfare or that of their puppies.
- Overuse of a stud dog should be avoided, as this may reduce genetic diversity and affect population fitness.
- It is recommended that brood bitches should be examined by a veterinary surgeon prior to each breeding, and that stud dogs receive an annual veterinary inspection (e.g., during an annual booster vaccination appointment) to ensure their suitability for breeding in terms of good physical and physiological health.
- A stud dog or brood bitch must be at least 18 months of age before mating.¹

¹ Under the [Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(England\) Regulations \(2018\)](#), a bitch must not be mated if she is under 12 months of age. Best-practice breeding guidance recommends all bitches must be at least 18 months old before they are used for mating taking into account size and skeletal maturity. Similarly, while there is no legal minimum age for stud dogs, best-practice breeding guidance recommends that dogs should be at least 18 months of age to ensure full physical maturity and optimal fertility.

- Under the [Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involving Animals\) \(England\) Regulations \(2018\)](#), a licence holder must ensure that a bitch does not give birth to more than one litter in any 12-month period and must not whelp more than six litters in total.
- It is not recommended for a bitch to have her first litter at six years of age or older².
- It is not recommended that a bitch should not be bred from if she is eight years or older³, unless a veterinary surgeon (M/FRCVS) has examined the bitch and provided the breeder with a letter stating that breeding is not expected to be detrimental to the bitch's health and welfare. This letter must be lodged with GBGB prior to mating.
- A female greyhound shall not participate in either a race or a trial if she is in season (Rule 56) or if she is pregnant.
- In line with the [Animal Welfare \(Licensing of Activities Involved Animals\) \(England\) Regulations \(2018\)](#), no pregnant bitch may be transported after 54 days from the date of mating, unless the transportation is to a veterinary practice. The brood bitch must not be transported within 48 hours after whelping, except to a veterinary practice in a circumstance where it is either not appropriate or not possible for the vet to attend to the bitch at the whelping kennel.
- A brood bitch shall not race or trial for at least ten weeks after the whelping date and she must have regained her physical condition and fitness before returning to competition. This should be considered on an individual greyhound basis, as some bitches may require longer than 10 weeks to regain physical condition and fitness.

Registering the Mating

- The stud keeper or authorised agent must inform the GBGB of a mating within 14 days of it taking place.
- Bitches in season should be securely accommodated apart from males when breeding is not planned. In the exceptional circumstance of an accidental mating, this must also be reported to the GBGB within 14 days.

Artificial Insemination

- Canine artificial insemination (AI) must only be performed in accordance with all relevant legislation and regulations. In the UK, surgical artificial insemination (AI) is not legally permitted, and all forms of non-surgical canine AI (intravaginal and transcervical) are considered acts of veterinary surgery. It is illegal for anyone other than a veterinary surgeon (F/MRCVS) to artificially inseminate a bitch in the UK.
- In line with current Greyhound Stud Book requirements, a stud dog must not perform more than 14 services and/or semen collections per calendar month⁴.

² EU Platform on Animal Welfare, Welfare in Pet Trade: *Responsible Dog Breeding Guidelines* (2020). Available at: [aw_platform_plat-conc_guide_dog-breeding.pdf](#).

³ EU Platform on Animal Welfare, *Responsible Dog Breeding Guidelines*.

⁴ Greyhound Stud Book, *AI Rules* (Available at: [AI Rules | Greyhound Stud Book & National Coursing Club](#)).

Registering the Litter

- Breeders must notify GBGB if a bitch has a caesarean operation. Bitches should not be bred again after one caesarean unless, prior to mating, GBGB is provided with a letter from a veterinary surgeon (F/MRCVS) who has examined the bitch which states that further breeding is not expected to be detrimental to the bitch's health or welfare⁵.
- In accordance with Greyhound Stud Book requirements, a veterinary surgeon must examine the litter within one month of birth and sign the Litter Registration Form to confirm the composition and the consistency of the puppies' appearance with the reported whelping date⁶.
- All puppies whelped in a litter must be accounted for. Records of all pup deaths must be kept for each litter whelped and reported on the Litter Registration Form. This should include the date of death and details of the circumstances/cause of death (e.g. illness, stillbirth, trauma).
- Under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations (2018), no pup less than eight weeks of age may be transported without its mother, except in an emergency or if under veterinary instruction.

Vaccinations, Microchipping and Earmarking

- The breeder must ensure each puppy is microchipped in line with current legislation and the breeder or owner must be registered as the first keeper/owner on an approved microchip database.
- All puppies must correctly complete a primary vaccination course before being earmarked (Rule 60). The puppy primary vaccination course must be followed by appropriate booster vaccinations, as instructed by the attending veterinary surgeon.
- Greyhounds must be earmarked between 12–16 weeks of age (Rule 28).
- The entire litter must be accounted for at the time of earmarking. If any puppy is not being registered to race, GBGB must be informed of the reason and the details of its new pet owner or homing centre placement.
- All British-bred greyhounds should be given appropriate analgesia for the earmarking procedure as prescribed by a veterinary surgeon, unless there is a clinical contraindication.

⁵ EU Platform on Animal Welfare, *Responsible Dog Breeding Guidelines*.

⁶ The Greyhound Stud Book and National Coursing Club, *NCC Bye-law T Registrations*.