

The KarltonINDEX™

Measuring progress in the health of our dogs

Full Written Report

September 2011

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Methodology

Methodology for this project was as follows:

- February – March 2011 breed club related web resources were reviewed and catalogued
- March – September 2011 published health related data was collated for each breed
- Late August-Early September 2011 every breed club was reviewed against the Karlton Index framework and all web-based resources were accessed for a final time
- 10th – 15th September score moderation to ensure fairness and equity.

The scored results for 80 breeds are written up in this report. The list of 80 includes the top performing breed communities and the bottom disappointing performers as measured against the Index. Apologies if your breed is not included in this initial list of 80 – if your breed does not appear here it is because you have scored somewhere in between those two groups. The full listing will be completed during October.

Context for this report

There are some very important considerations to bear in mind when digesting the results of this review.

It is a “snapshot” of breed health as at September 2011. Already the facts and figures mentioned here could be out of date – tens more dogs could have been DNA tested for various conditions, websites could have been updated, and new initiatives launched. I very much hope that to be the case. But snapshots are invaluable when plotting progress. The results map out where each breed is this autumn. Another snapshot, using exactly the same methodology, can be taken once again in say, eighteen months time and from that we can gauge how much progress is being made towards improving breed health.

Scores are awarded on the basis of published information and data. Many breeders have said to me that much more is going on “behind the scenes” to support breed health. But “behind the scenes” is not helpful anymore. If breeders have nothing to hide with regard to the health of their dogs then published data is not a threat to them whatsoever, in fact it is a useful tool.

The Karlton Index is designed to be constructive. This may be hard to believe if your breed is one that has scored just a handful of points but it is true. The review flags up excellent real-time examples of good practice to enable the sharing of workable ideas. It also does an important job of recognising the great effort and achievements that are being secured by the best breeders. Furthermore, following on from this analysis The Karlton Index will produce or signpost communities to useful tools and ideas to support their efforts. These will be available online and free of charge.

**ALL WEBSITES WERE LAST ACCESSED BETWEEN MID AUGUST AND
SEPTEMBER 10th 2011**

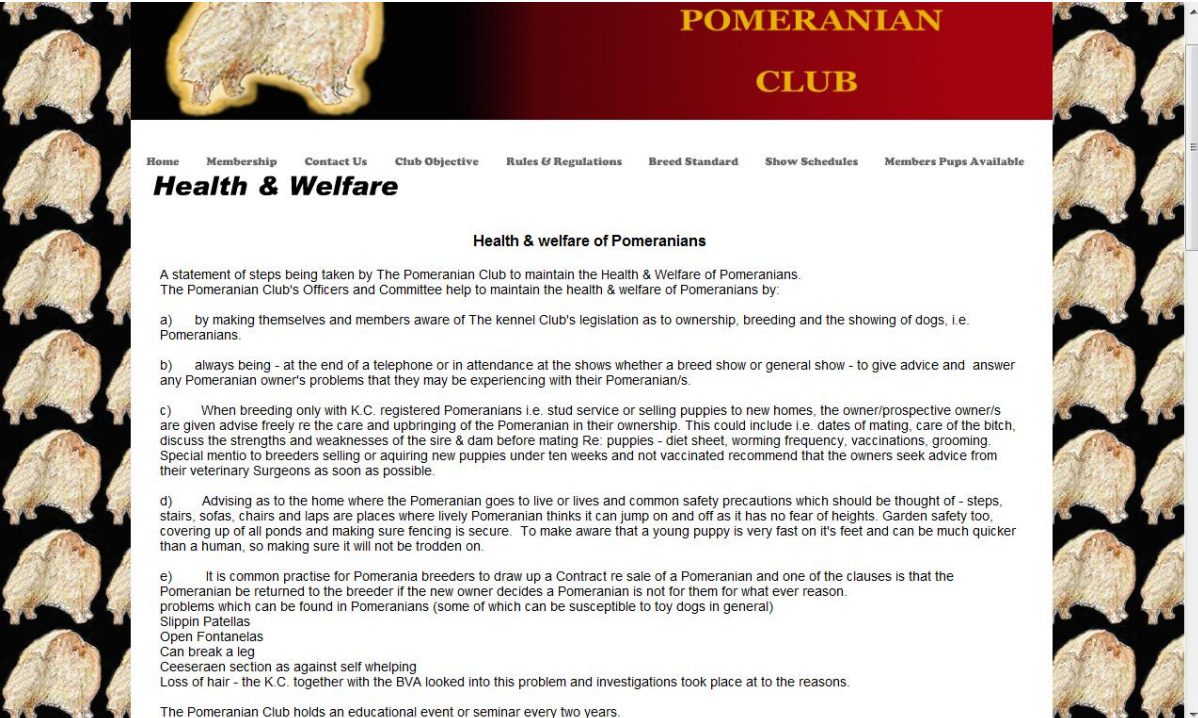
Conclusions

Overall, the results are a mix of disappointment punctuated by glimpses of inspiring hard work and achievement. Given the current climate it would have been good to be reporting every breed community is visibly supporting the health agenda for their breed to the max, sadly this is clearly not the case. To have reported back that one or two breeds scored zero against the framework would have been disheartening to have to report back that two dozen have scored zero is a sad indictment. When you hear the battle cry from pedigree breeders and the Kennel Club that external criticism of their practice is unjustified and unwarranted because they are doing all they can to improve health and welfare in their dogs be assured that the correct reply is “some of you are some of you aren’t”.

Good news is that the breed communities that are investing huge amounts of work, time and effort into improving the health and welfare of their dogs (and there are about two dozen of those) are inspirational. They are setting impressive standards in terms of what can be achieved and are wholly deserving of praise and recognition.

The top dog is as predicted the Dachshund because of commendable efforts by the Dachshund Breed Council, well done to the team there.

Bottom place is going to be awarded to the Pomeranian (though it was hard fought for by several breeds mostly from the Toy Group).



POMERANIAN CLUB

Home Membership Contact Us Club Objective Rules & Regulations Breed Standard Show Schedules Members Pups Available

Health & Welfare

Health & welfare of Pomeranians

A statement of steps being taken by The Pomeranian Club to maintain the Health & Welfare of Pomeranians. The Pomeranian Club's Officers and Committee help to maintain the health & welfare of Pomeranians by:

- by making themselves and members aware of The kennel Club's legislation as to ownership, breeding and the showing of dogs, i.e. Pomeranians.
- always being - at the end of a telephone or in attendance at the shows whether a breed show or general show - to give advice and answer any Pomeranian owner's problems that they may be experiencing with their Pomeranian/s.
- When breeding only with K.C. registered Pomeranians i.e. stud service or selling puppies to new homes, the owner/prospective owner/s are given advise freely re the care and upbringing of the Pomeranian in their ownership. This could include i.e. dates of mating, care of the bitch, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the sire & dam before mating Re: puppies - diet sheet, worming frequency, vaccinations, grooming. Special mentio to breeders selling or aqiring new puppies under ten weeks and not vaccinated recommend that the owners seek advice from their veterinary Surgeons as soon as possible.
- Advising as to the home where the Pomeranian goes to live or lives and common safety precautions which should be thought of - steps, stairs, sofas, chairs and laps are places where lively Pomeranian thinks it can jump on and off as it has no fear of heights. Garden safety too, covering up of all ponds and making sure fencing is secure. To make aware that a young puppy is very fast on it's feet and can be much quicker than a human, so making sure it will not be trodden on.
- It is common practise for Pomerania breeders to draw up a Contract re sale of a Pomeranian and one of the clauses is that the Pomeranian be returned to the breeder if the new owner decides a Pomeranian is not for them for what ever reason. problems which can be found in Pomeranians (some of which can be susceptible to toy dogs in general)
Slippin Patellas
Open Fontanelas
Can break a leg
Ceeseraen section as against self whelping
Loss of hair - the K.C. together with the BVA looked into this problem and investigations took place at to the reasons.

The Pomeranian Club holds an educational event or seminar every two years.

Glimpses of Brilliance

The following are examples of fantastic work done in some breeds and should be shared and celebrated.

- All the work of the [Dachshund Breed Council](#), but notably their strategic use of tools to help assess their health priorities.
- All the work done by the Wheaten Health Initiative but in particular their work on pANCA and their [Health Handbook](#).
- The work being initiated by the Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla Club but in particular their stand-out [health survey](#).
- The [Bernese Mountain Dog Club of Great Britain](#) for putting health at the heart of their Ruby Anniversary celebrations.
- The [Slovakian Roughaired Pointer health report](#), which is exemplary and well done to the Club for publishing.
- The Labrador Breed Council for very clear information [on testing protocols](#).
- The [Leonberger club](#) for taking a lead on open health registries.
- The Hungarian Vizsla Club for the effective way they have engaged the breed community with the [devastating polymyositis](#) and other health issues.

There are others and more will emerge throughout the year. For updates on examples of good practice follow The Karlton Index on [twitter](#).

Disappointing

It is disappointing to find breed clubs providing poor information on health in the current climate. Especially as prospective owners are signposted to clubs for more detailed information by the Kennel Club. They also mention that each breed has a breed health co-ordinator yet too many clubs make it very difficult to locate either the name or contact details of their health representative. Breeds such as Toy and Miniature Poodle, Bichon Frise, Shih Tzu, Yorkshire Terrier and West Highland White together with many of the high profile breeds such as Pug, Bloodhound and Chow score badly. Too many of the brachycyphalic breeds offer prospective owners poor quality information on health and support the welfare of their dogs with negligible levels of health related activity. There are some breeds that did not score as high as one might have expected such as the Dalmatian, German Shorthaired Pointer and Boxer.

The important thing to bear in mind with low scoring breeds is that with the development of a balanced health strategy together with embarking on a health survey and wider communications they could be demonstrating much more visible support for the health agenda very speedily.

Leadership and Strategy

The importance of setting a balanced strategy for breeding harnessed to effective leadership was emphasised strongly in a number of scientific papers published in *The Veterinary Journal* this summer (2011). Specifically in the article *Getting Priorities Straight*¹ Collins et al argued that there are five key steps to decreasing inherited defects in pedigree dogs.

1. Development of breeding objectives
2. Use welfare and economic rationale to set priorities for the measurements that will drive selection
3. Development of operational tools and strategies
4. Development of a plan for dog selection based on the results of the analysis
5. Measurement of progress and success in a national breeding programme.

In their article *International and collaborative strategies to enhance genetic health in purebred dogs* Hedhammer et al² stated

“Increasing attention to and awareness of health problems in purebred dogs has to be followed by collaborative actions to evaluate and strategically counteract them. Actions should be based on severity, prevalence and inheritance of each problem within breeds. Strategies regarding recognition of new breeds, health problems related to anatomical features and selection of breeding stock, need to be developed. For effective collaboration on these strategies, key stakeholders should develop platforms at national and international levels.”

In short, strategies need to include robust health surveillance, objective analysis of data, realistic achievable goals, identification of required resources and collaborative action. Under the Leadership and Strategy section breeds are awarded points for how far they have got with establishing such strategies. In truth only the Dachshund Breed Council is close to developing an approach akin to what experts have called for so many congratulations to them for their progress.

In my opinion, breed clubs can be forgiven for not yet establishing such strategies. They have had no meaningful guidance from the Kennel Club (KC) on this. Following the broadcast of *Pedigree Dogs Exposed*³ in what was a knee-jerk reaction, they required all breeds to produce a breed plan and they provided the template for this. But what they provided fell far short of a strategic approach. Listing known health conditions without context, without management plans or even robust health reporting does not constitute effective strategy. It also fails to address the very important matter of the root cause of the rise in health conditions in purebred dog populations. It is essential that the root cause of health problems be investigated and tackled otherwise breed clubs will be facing ever growing lists of health conditions and canine suffering will simply be prolonged. Furthermore, if the root causes are not eliminated breeders will face ever more complicated and costly testing protocols.

The Kennel Club is good at supporting the development of testing protocols and new DNA screenings are added each year but it is fair to say they have, in the course of their 138 year history, singularly failed to establish a strategic approach to health and failed in establishing robust health surveillance. It is perhaps because of the lack of leadership on surveillance that so few breed clubs have yet to instigate their own health reporting and recording schemes. The breed communities that have developed a systematic approach to reporting were scored highly in this framework in recognition of the importance of this element.

¹ Collins, L.M., et al. *Getting priorities straight: Risk assessment and decision-making in the improvement of inherited disorders in pedigree dogs.* *The Veterinary Journal* (2011), doi:10.1016/j.tvjl.2011.06.012

² Hedhammer, Å.A., et al. *International and collaborative strategies to enhance genetic health in purebred dogs.* *The Veterinary Journal* (2011), doi:10.1016/j.tvjl.2011.06.018

³ *Pedigree Dogs Exposed* August 2008 BBC Passionate Productions

Top breeds for leadership and strategy include Dachshunds, Leonbergers, Hungarian Vizslas, Giant Schnauzers, Soft Coated Wheatens, English Springer Spaniels and Bernese.

Communication and Engagement

Once strategies are in place and goals set to improve the health and well-being of breeds they need to be widely communicated and promoted to secure universal buy-in and support. Results prove this is an area where many breed clubs are performing well. Many have excellent and informative websites, many have presences on social media such as Facebook and Twitter, they produce regular newsletters and organise calendars of events. Points are given for a communication strategy that reaches beyond the membership of the breed clubs. An important consideration as club membership constitutes such a tiny proportion of owners in most, if not all breeds. Points awarded reflect that.

Top breeds for communication and engagement include Dachshunds, Leonbergers, Hungarian Vizslas, Wheatens, Giant Schnauzers, German Wirehaired Pointers, English Springer Spaniels, Bernese and Irish Wolfhounds.

Participation

Once communicated breed communities need to actively participate in all health related activities if goals are to be achieved. In the main, published data on participation levels is hard to find. The most obvious is the British Veterinary Association's (BVA) [annual publication of hip scores](#) and the Kennel Club lists of dogs tested for their DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) screening programmes. The KC also publishes open registries on Multifocal Retinal Dysplasia (MRD) for example. The Animal Health Trust(AHT) also publishes some data. Several breed clubs publish details of participation in activities such as health surveys, events and DNA collection schemes. But overall it is patchy. Breed specific statistics are not available for the BVA eye or elbow schemes for instance, and the KC does not give "totals" of dogs tested under each DNA scheme so lists have to be counted manually. The AHT included a few statistics relating to DNA schemes in their mid-term report for the Genetics Centre but those included submissions from all participating countries, so UK figures were not singled out. My big fear is that this data remains unpublished because it would confirm poor levels of participation. I would be delighted to be proved wrong. I urge more and more data be published because without stronger compliance and participation with these health strategies we will never secure the health objectives nor deliver improved health and welfare for our dogs. Universally clubs did not score well on participation.

Impact

Impact; the holy grail of all our efforts. As the scores show there are to date very few measurable improvements in breed health. But as neither the KC nor breed communities have been working with balanced strategies and breeding programmes that is hardly surprising. It would be great to report more on impact but realistically given the lack of leadership on health in recent decades, it will be some time yet before we see meaningful results.

Next Steps

As declared, upfront this is a “snapshot” of breed health. If snapshots are to be useful, the all important work comes in following up on findings. Some suggested next steps are as follows:

Breed clubs and communities need support and resources to enable them to develop broad balanced strategies. The sooner the best strategic approach for each breed can be identified the sooner positive impact can be achieved.

Breed clubs and communities need ongoing support, guidance and encouragement to develop their health surveillance capabilities.

If breed clubs could master just those two elements, strategy and surveillance, the progress towards improving breed health will advance exponentially.

Breed clubs that have scored poorly this autumn need to identify the barriers that currently exist preventing them from embracing the health agenda more visibly and effectively. They need to list what knowledge, information and resources they need and make that known.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, The Karlton Index will also put action plans in place based on feedback received so far. To that end my priorities are

- Ensure the scoring process becomes totally transparent (March 2012)
- Broaden the net for collection of verified health data for each breed (ongoing)
- Produce support materials such as a Health Strategy Toolkit (March 2012)
- Develop an external moderating team (Autumn 2012)

Any other observations, feedback, suggestions are warmly welcomed please send them through to me on update@thekarltonindex.com

The next full Index is timetabled for March 2013 which gives a gap of about eighteen months. That snapshot when compared to these results will give us a sense of how much progress is being made across all breeds.

A

Afghan Hound

The [official breed club](#) has nothing on health. There are no contact details for the breed health co-ordinator nor even a useful link to other Afghan related health resources. Better information is available from the [Affielovers Club](#) demonstrating that there are people within the breed concerned about health and wanting to address the issues. The breed is not that popular with a ten-year registration figure of less than 2,000 but currently the breed community is failing to support the health of those few Afghans in any meaningful way.

Afghan Hounds	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	4	0	1	0	5

B

Basenji

The [Club website](#) has no health section and the contact details of the breed health co-ordinator are unavailable too. There are links to genetics information and an [international database](#) which does mention Fanconi Syndrome. But that is the sum total of their efforts on health. The ten-year registration figure is 505, so not a large breed numerically, however other breeds with similar numbers are demonstrating a much better approach to health than this such as the Finnish Lapphund. 41 Basenjies have been hip scored through the BVA scheme but the 5-year rolling BMS has increased by one.

Basenji	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	2	0	1	0	3

Basset Hound

Despite being first on the KC's [high profile list](#), nowhere on the [Basset Hound Club](#) website does it mention the Basset's inclusion (in fact, there is no health page on the club site – August 2011) nor does the Kennel Club in its assessment of the [health of the breed](#). This is failing prospective puppy buyers but more importantly it is failing the breed. Furthermore if you read the KC's introduction to the [Basset Hound](#), in which it is characterised as a lovable buffoon(!) and then click over to [breed watch](#), you would be forgiven for being very confused. Are these exaggerated traits something to be cherished or something to be wary of? The latter is the case of course but the KC fails to make that clear.

However, the breed club must be recognised for, this year, embarking upon a breed health survey. It is because of this they have scored the points they have. Other good news is that on 13th November 2011 they are planning a [Health Day](#), which is very welcome. The bad news is that the only serious health issue to be explored on that day is skin disease. The other topics are nutrition and exhibiting. This is a lost opportunity but nonetheless constitutes the beginning of an improved approach to health.

Leadership on health appears to be emerging and is deserving of full support. Once the health survey is completed or in train, a balanced strategy to tackle the many health issues of the breed can be developed and then implemented. But at the time of this assessment the information available on the health of Bassets is poor and given that the number of registrations (2001-2010) is nearly 12,000 that is a fair number of dogs being failed.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Basset Hounds	4	3	0	0	7

Bernese Mountain Dog

The official breed club is celebrating their 40th anniversary this year and are marking this milestone by hosting an [international breed seminar](#), much of the focus of which is health. This illustrates how important health is to this breed community. The club website has an excellent [section on health](#) which provides meaningful context for the conditions listed, and shows concern over the compromised longevity of the breed, and proactively encourages participation in the health survey. This was most recently done in 2009 but no results are published on the site. They are proud of their track record on health as the club has been proactive for many years now.

The strong leadership on health is supported by impressive participation levels, 4,694 Bernese have been through the BVA hip scheme as at 2010, and they are the third highest participator in the elbow scheme. This is on a ten-year registration figure of 7,302.

There are some solid foundations already in place for this breed on which to secure even more progress on health.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Bernese Mountain Dog	9	9	8	4	30

Bichon Frise

The good news is that since I last reviewed this breed they have a [brand new website](#). The not so good news is there is nothing on health and no contact details given for the health co-ordinator. For a breed that has a ten-year registration figure of 23,901 more should be expected of the Bichon breeders and enthusiasts. Currently they show no commitment to the health of these dogs. 17 dogs have been hip scored but that can hardly be assessed as substantial participation and does not merit a mark.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Bichon Frise	0	0	0	0	0

Bloodhound

Like the Basset Hound, the Bloodhound is also on the high profile list of breeds at the Kennel Club. There is nothing on health on [The Bloodhound Club](#) website and once again, the [health page](#) on the KC site fails to be clear that this is a high profile breed. The [Breed Watch](#) page makes scary reading for prospective puppy buyers but no context is given for the list of issues and there is no link back to a strategy that demonstrates how the breed is addressing the concerns.

The [Association of Bloodhound Breeders](#), despite its long history (established in 1897) has nothing on health either. There have been fewer than 1,000 bloodhounds registered through the KC in the past ten years, so it is not a popular breed. Nevertheless the dogs deserve stronger leadership on health, puppy buyers deserve better information and overall this breed community could be demonstrating a great deal more commitment to the health and well-being of the breed. 44 have hip scores recorded through the BVA scheme.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Bloodhounds	0	0	1	0	1

Bolognese

The breed club does have a [health page](#) but it contains nothing of substance and does not even say who the breed health co-ordinator is. The one condition that is mentioned is patella luxation for which there is a test. A question as to how many Bolognese have now been tested was submitted to the club several weeks ago and so far no reply has been received. A real commitment to improving the health of these dogs is not being demonstrated here. Without any ongoing survey of their health any claims that it is generally healthy and robust are questionable.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Bolognese	0	0	0	0	0

Boston Terrier

The information available on the health of this breed through the [club website](#) is poor. There is no health section and just the briefest of mentions of health testing. The club has given reassurances that more is being done “behind the scenes” but this is not of any value to prospective owners nor is it really of value to the breed population as a whole. It is also a brachycephalic breed and there is no information on their site explaining the health risks attached to this exaggerated physical trait.

About 300 Bostons have been tested for hereditary cataracts on a ten-year registration figure of 3,788 demonstrating some appetite at least for complying with health schemes.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Boston Terrier	0	2	2	0	4

Bouvier des Flandres

The [official breed club](#) has nothing on health and no contact details for the health co-ordinator are given. The club does have a [facebook presence](#) and activity in support of Bouvier welfare is very apparent, but not on health. Not a hugely popular breed here in the UK with just around 100 registered each year, but from the British Small Animal Veterinary Association [BSAVA Survey 2004](#), 40% of Bouviers had one or more reported health condition. 149 Bouviers have been recorded through the BVA hip scheme on a ten-year total registration of 1,119. The 5-year rolling BMS is higher than the annual BMS. The only conclusion that can be drawn on this evidence is that much more could be done to support the health of this breed. Currently the sum total of visible effort are a few breeders willing to hip score.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Bouvier des Flandres	0	0	3	0	3

Border Terrier

The lead on Border Terrier health is taken up by the Southern Border Terrier Club and their health co-ordinator is none other than Professor Steve Dean (now the Chair of the Kennel Club itself). The club provides a good overview of the [health status](#) of the breed based on their ongoing health surveillance, which is a health survey that has run since 2005. This gives credibility and currency to the list of health conditions. However since its launch the survey has received in the region of 250 new reports from a breed with a ten-year registration figure of over 75,000. So the surveillance net could be thrown a lot wider. Border terrier clubs are on facebook and have well laid out websites so they have communication tools in place to widen the health reporting process.

There is no overarching published health strategy but at least the vital element of health reporting is being proactively managed.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Border Terrier	8	6	2	0	16

Boxer

There is a breed council for Boxers but the link to their website home page www.boxerbreedcouncil.co.uk has not been working for several months. The [health page](#) link is functional and provides the objectives and membership of the health subcommittee, but guidance on how to report a health issue is not clear, there is a survey labelled “general”(so not obvious to recognise) and health conditions are constantly referred to using acronyms. Results of health surveillance do not appear to be published. The layout and style creates confusion.

Impressively they publish a [list of heart-tested](#) dogs (aortic stenosis), of which there are over 4800 listed. On hip scoring participation, levels are less impressive with just 401 Boxers being recorded in total and apparently, just eight scored in 2010 according to BVA figures. This on a ten-year registration number of 83,003.

Compared to other web-based health resources the Boxer’s is confusing and not comprehensive. Participation levels seem disappointing for such a popular breed.

Boxer	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	6	3	4	0	13

Bracco Italiano

The Bracco Italiano Society has an emerging [health strategy](#) in place dated 2009/2010. There is no obvious progress report published online. It does not include any consideration of the acknowledged root causes of many health problems such as genetic diversity and the dangers of popular sires, which given the small population of Braccos in the UK is a shame. At least there is evidence of health reporting and they can demonstrate some degree of participation. 121 Braccos have been recorded through the BVA hip scheme suggesting a good appetite for compliance with that health scheme.

With a ten-year registration of just 381 and already reports of some serious health conditions, it is essential that the root cause should be addressed with urgency. That said it is clear some breeders and enthusiasts are working hard at creating an open culture, recognising that they have responsibilities for establishing the foundation of this beautiful breed here in the UK.

Bracco Italiano	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	7	6	2	0	15

Briard

The British Briard Club has got some important building blocks in place on which to create a good approach to health. There is a dedicated [health section](#) on the website, conditions are listed with breed specific context, the contact details of the health co-ordinator are clear and they are conducting that all-important health surveillance activity in the form of a health survey. But there is neither obvious mention of the publication of the results of that survey nor any overarching strategy.

Nearly 200 Briards are listed as tested for Congenital Stationary Night Blindness and 908 have been hip scored on a ten-year registration figure of 1626. Demonstrating some enviable levels of participation.

Briard	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	9	8	6	4	27

Brittany

The [official club website](#) has nothing on health but the contact details of the health co-ordinator are available. Brittanys do participate in the BVA hip scheme and so far, 437 have been recorded, this is on a ten-year registration figure of 1,326, which demonstrates a keenness to comply with testing protocols, as yet this scheme has not had any impact on the BMS which stubbornly remains at 17. In the BSAVA survey 2004 35% of Brittanys were found to be reporting one or more health condition so the dogs would benefit from further exploration as to how prevalence could be reduced in the future. On this evidence, commitment to their health is not visibly robust.

Brittany	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	4	0	3	0	7

Bulldog

The [Bulldog Breed Council](#) does make it clear that exaggerated traits have been considered a problem and they have introduced a health testing scheme to allay fears about the health of the breed. The fact the breed council feels that the [European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals](#) is a “threat” to the breed, rather than the health issues themselves, has to be a concern. Furthermore despite the introduction of a health testing scheme there is no data provided on how many bulldogs have been tested and what numbers have passed or failed. There is a page on the site that says “Health Survey” but sadly when opened, reveals that there are no surveys being done at this time. The absence of any meaningful collection of health data is failing the dogs considerably.

DNA screening for Hyperuricosuria (HUU) has been available since 2009 and [37 Bulldogs](#) have recorded results on the KC website (September 2011). Nineteen have been tested this year so far, which perhaps signals an increase in appetite for health screening. But given that nearly 5,000 bulldogs were registered in 2010 and just over 4,000 in 2009 are just 37 health tested dogs acceptable? Only 25 bulldogs have been through the BVA hip scheme despite a 5-year rolling BMS of a significant 45. So the only conclusion to be drawn here is that participation levels in health activities have been low to near-on non-existent.

Overall, the combination of significant health and welfare issues associated with Bulldogs, together with their popularity means the current approach to health by the breed community is, to be diplomatic, disappointing, to be frank, woeful. If welfare is to improve for these dogs, considerably more needs to be done as a matter of urgency. Sadly, denial over the impact of exaggerated traits on the welfare of these dogs remains strong.

Bulldog	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	2	4	0	0	6

C

Cavalier King Charles Spaniel

The [Club website](#) has a worthy aim of “providing up-to-date information on health”, but is immediately scuppered by the next sentence, “Cavaliers are generally a happy, healthy breed”. Evidence suggests that in fact Cavaliers have become one of the most afflicted with genetic health problems.

That being said there is more information on the site than ever before and they do update it with details of the many health-related events that now take place. The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel community is a dramatic reminder to all other breeds of how easy it is to breed in serious health conditions and how difficult people can make the reversal of that. They have a history of persistent denial, they have a history of attacking the messenger, and they have not yet created a culture of early adoption of best breeding practice. The current approach to managing health, as presented now, certainly fails to match the urgent need for concerted action that the clinical evidence says is required. Better web-based resources on cavalier health can be found at [Dog Breed Health](#), [Cavalier Campaign](#) and [Cavalier Matters](#). The Club is improving its approach, but the pace of change needs to quicken. After all over 103,000 were registered in the past ten years.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Cavalier King Charles Spaniel	4	5	4	0	13

Cesky Terrier

The [club](#) has got many of the essential building blocks for effective management of health in place, they have conducted a health survey, they work collaboratively with scientists and vets, and they have placed genetics and diversity on the agenda, and are clearly working hard to develop good health surveillance. I cannot see survey results published anywhere as yet. An [obvious link](#) to the diversity project is provided, but again I cannot see anything in terms of progress reports, which would be useful information. No data on participation is available. But this feels like a good starting position for the future.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Cesky Terrier	8	6	0	0	14

Chesapeake Bay Retriever

I would describe the Chesapeake Bay Retriever approach to health as very matter of fact. It feels as if they are getting on with it quietly and with no fuss. They have a clearly labelled [“health” section](#) on the website. There is a short list of ailments with an additional few resources such as the [OFA registry](#) but no indication as to how many UK based dogs are listed. They provide a link to the excellent [Chessie Foundation](#) but there is no mention of a health strategy or surveillance.

501 chessies have been recorded through the BVA hip scheme on a ten-year registration total of 1,275 suggesting a reasonable uptake of available screening. There are now two DNA screenings

available for them prcd-PRA and degenerative myelopathy (DM), number of listed dogs for which were 16 and 76 respectively.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Chesapeake Bay Retriever	4	4	4	0	12

Chinese Crested

In February I noted that the [Chinese Crested Breed Club](#) promised “The Club website will have a section devoted to the subject of health.” No such section has yet emerged. The site has links to further health testing information but these are of poor quality and have not been updated. Nowhere is it mentioned that this breed is now also on the high profile list. Likewise, on its section on [Chinese Crested Health](#), the KC also fails to mention its inclusion. In fairness to the club it readily acknowledges that more needs to be done and is planning to hold a health day next year. They also sent me a link to an additional website that lists the health-tested dogs but that link is no longer working.

Given the lack of data it is clear that very little is being demonstrated in terms of commitment, leadership and participation with the health agenda. That being said my exchanges with the Chair of the health committee leads me to feel hopeful that he will direct his leadership skills to turning this around in the near future. But on current available information the dogs are not being well served on this performance.

A better, if unofficial, source of health information can be found at <http://crestedlinks.2n3055.com/>

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Chinese Crested	0	0	2	0	2

Chow chow

Again on neither the club websites nor the relevant health pages of the KC website is it flagged that the Chow chow belongs to the list of high profile breeds. The [Club](#) has one short paragraph on health followed by mentions of entropion and soft palate related breathing problems. But it fails to make the point these conditions are because of its physical form and could be eliminated by better breeding. There is a [Chow Breed Council](#) which has a [health section](#) with no content whatsoever (September 2011). There is a slightly better section on the [North Eastern Chow](#) club site.

Hip scoring is strongly recommended for the breed and in total 775 dogs have been scored through the BVA scheme, 19 of those were done in 2010. Ten-year registration is 4,138 suggesting some appetite for compliance with health screening but the 5-year rolling BMS is higher than the most recent annual one. A health survey is never mentioned nor is there any kind of published health strategy.

Given so little published activity, the only conclusion can be that there is a lack of leadership on health and low levels of visible interest in health matters.

Chow	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	3	0	3

Clumber Spaniel

There is no mention on the club website, nor the KC breed specific health pages that the Clumber is on the high profile list. But there is better news for the Clumber, at least the breed club is making attempts at taking [health matters seriously](#). Like so many breed clubs the Clumber has enjoyed a long history, being founded in 1904 and officially recognised in 1920. The club admits that it has only tackled health issues in the past twenty years, but at least in this admission it is being more honest than most. However, what it has done in those few years has been positive. The health subcommittee has [provided a context](#) for the health issues in the breed and has set itself some objectives. These could be the basis for a balanced strategy to address health problems effectively. Included in those objectives is one around the collection of health data and health surveys, but there is no mention anywhere of a current health survey.

751 Clumbers have been hip scored through the BVA scheme by 2010, suggesting that levels of participation, in that scheme at least, is better than many breeds. A DNA test for PDP has been available since 2006 and so far 122 Clumbers have been screened. They should also be eye screened but the KC does not publish breed by breed totals within the BVA eye screening scheme so we don't have published figures for Clumbers. To give these numbers some context the ten-year registration for Clumbers is 1,915.

Good leadership on health is emerging and participation levels suggest a reasonable commitment to improving health.

Clumber Spaniel	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	5	4	6	4	19

Cocker Spaniel

The [parent breed club](#) has a good section on health with clear links to the breed council and to the health co-ordinator's contact details. [The Breed Council](#) also has a clearly set out health section giving some context for the conditions listed.

A health seminar is planned but there is no overall health survey or published balanced health strategy. So though visible leadership is emerging it is not obviously directed towards specific health objectives. [Health reporting](#) is actively encouraged

Participation in existing health schemes is as follows, progressive retinal atrophy (prcd-PRA) 1,525, familial nephropathy FN 919, hip scoring 1013 (by 2010) on a ten-year registration figure of over 184,000, so comparatively very low and disappointing, given the popularity of the breed. They are one of the top five participators in eye screening and they feel that FN is now virtually eliminated from the population.

Cocker Spaniel	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	7	7	4	4	22

D

Dachshunds

As identified in the spring [The Dachshund Breed Council](#) (DBC) continues to set the benchmark in its approach to breed health. It impresses with the following:

- Establishing a [balanced strategy](#) for prioritising health issues
- Setting objectives and measures to help gauge progress
- Communicating this far and wide using a dedicated website, regular press releases and social media
- Organising regular health related events and campaigns
- Involving a wide range of people in the health agenda, including pet owners
- Regularly surveying the breed on health matters and publishing the results
- Developing very strong partnerships across the relevant breed clubs and with the KC and veterinary/scientific profession
- Being very generous in sharing information and practice.

Their approach is by far the most advanced in the UK, and rightly, the Kennel Club now links its [Dachshund information](#) pages to the DBC, thus giving prospective dachshund owners direct access to this invaluable source of information. They can do this in confidence that the information is credible, current and comprehensive. The work done by the DBC team is nothing short of outstanding.

Dachshund	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	15	15	6	4	40

Dalmatian

The official breed club has a [health section](#) that covers conditions such as urinary stones, epilepsy, deafness and allergies. However, there is no mention of any health surveillance and no reference to a health strategy, indeed no details of how to report health issues nor the name of the health co-ordinator. They have detailed information regarding the management of urinary stones but sadly absolutely nothing on the breakthrough news of 2010/11 [that LUA Dalmatians](#) have been recognised by the KC. Nor do they supply links to information on those dogs such as

<http://www.luadalmatians.com/>
<http://www.nuadalseurope.co.uk/>

This casts serious doubt over the credibility of the information they are supplying for prospective owners and it means that they are persisting with promoting Dalmatians that are not free from the

suffering caused by this condition. Of course, it remains essential that they continue to provide information on the management of high uric acid because so many Dalmatians are affected.

The only data on participation available is the BVA hip scheme through which 149 have been recorded. The ten-year registration for Dalmatians is 18,591. In the States, there is a [hearing registry](#) for BAER tested dogs, which may include some that are UK based.

For a breed well catalogued as prone to inherited disorders this approach is disappointing.

Dalmatians	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	4	4	3	0	11

Dobermann

The lead on health is taken by the [Dobermann Breed Council](#) and they have a well resourced website including a register of [health-tested dogs](#) which looks to be regularly updated. There is no mention (an obvious one anyway) of ongoing health surveying nor a published health strategy but nevertheless it feels as if some strong leadership on health is emerging.

On participation over 1,000 have been screened for vWDs and 1,323 have recorded hip scores on a ten-year registration of 26,545. This demonstrates that compliance amongst breeders is sporadic.

Dobermann	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	8	7	4	0	19

Dogue De Bordeaux

Information on health is clear and easy to find on [the Dogue de Bordeaux club website](#). But in the absence of any annual or ongoing health survey there has to be a question mark over the validity and context for the conditions listed. The health information provided on [the breed](#) by the Kennel Club is totally inadequate; it just mentions hips and then refers readers to the breed club and health co-ordinator. Contact details of the health co-ordinator are not to be found on the club website.

There is no published strategy to tackle health and no clear guidance on how to report health problems. The club does have a presence [on facebook](#); however, so this combined with the website could easily and quickly improve their communication of health matters and health reporting.

Current figures for participation in elbow scoring are unavailable but by 2008 about 84 had been recorded. 864 Dogues have so far been hip scored through the BVA scheme. 661 were registered in 2001 but that number had increased to 2,841 in 2010 bringing the ten-year total to a massive 19,227.

The content of the breed club website and the facebook pages suggest that there are committed breed people willing to take a lead on the all-important matter of health. Embarking, with urgency on a comprehensive health survey would be a good next step for the breed, and from that the development of a balanced strategy for managing Dogue health will help to secure a more positive impact on the well being of these amazing dogs.

Dogue de Bordeaux	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	4	3	2	0	9

E

English Setter

The English Setter Association has a [specifically labelled health section](#) and gives contact details for those in the breed responsible for health. They have established an [online health forum](#). This is members only which is understandable, however some published updates based on the information they are gathering through that would be interesting. There is no mention of an overarching health strategy, no reference to genetic diversity nor any details of health surveillance.

The only data on participation available at this time was for hip scoring, and 2,885 setters have been recorded on a ten-year registration total of 4,627. This is an impressive level of compliance.

English Setter	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	5	5	4	4	18

English Springer Spaniel

The [breed club](#) takes a good approach to health with obvious contact details for the health coordinators, together with an explanation of their role. They publish a health report on an annual basis, the latest being for 2010. This report provides updates on the specific health issues of concern in the breed and on general health developments such as the introduction of Estimated Breeding Values. They provide clear guidance on the ethics of breeding which includes how to use the DNA test results in a breeding programme and some information on genetics.

On participation levels the following numbers of Springers have been tested for the following conditions (as at summer 2011), phosphofructokinase deficiency PFK 21, generalised progressive retinal atrophy (PRA Cord1) 404, fucosidosis (Fuco) 375, hip scoring 890 (by 2010). These are on a ten-year registration figure of 139,567, so comparatively, participation levels are poor.

They have a charity through which they are raising funds for health but the Charity Commission reveals that [not much of substance is achieved](#) by this organisation. There is an online [pedigree database](#). Leadership is good but the dogs would benefit from much higher participation levels.

English Springer Spaniel	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	10	9	4	0	23

Estrela Mountain Dog

The official club has a new website and this has a [health section](#). Sadly, this is “under construction” and perhaps the builders are out on strike because it has been like this for months. Consequently the breed community is not doing much visibly to support the health of this breed which is a shame because in the [BSAVA survey 2004](#) it emerged as the “sickest” breed with a staggering 65% of dogs reporting with one or more health condition. Of course, that was on a sample of just 23 dogs, so what the current UK Estrela population would benefit from is a wide ranging survey to verify or refute the 2004 findings. On a more positive note over 300 have been registered in the past ten years and 62 have been hip scored which suggests reasonable levels of participation in that scheme at least, and the BMS is declining which signposts some positive impact.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Estrela Mountain Dog	0	0	3	4	7

F

Field Spaniel

The [health landing page](#) is very welcoming and immediately provides a list of health related events. The committee has set out its [aims and objectives](#) and has identified the need for supporting resources. The information they provide is good and simple to digest. The reporting of health issues is encouraged but there is no mention of an ongoing health survey. Nor is there any data relating to participation in the health testing protocols save for hips – through which 207 Field Spaniels have been recorded on a ten-year registration figure of 716. So in comparison to many breeds not a bad basis on which to build.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Field Spaniel	7	6	4	0	17

Finnish Lapphund

The opening claim by the breed club that The Finnish Lapphund is generally healthy in comparison to many other breeds is possibly justified given that with 23% of live dogs reported with one or more health condition in the [BSAVA health survey \(2004\)](#) it is the 11th least sick breed as measured by that data. 48 dogs were included in that survey, on a ten-year registration figure of 408 so it is based on a reasonable sample size, too. What this breed community demonstrates is that just because you may be a small numerical breed does not mean you should be complacent about health.

The [health section](#) on the breed website looks impressive with excellent links and information. There is a full pack of papers relating to the Breeders Symposium in 2009, so it is a shame they have not updated that with the papers from 2010. However they do publish the list of dogs that have been through the [BVA eye screening](#) but again the most recent eye test dates are for 2009 suggesting the site has not been updated this year. On a plus by 2009, 175 Lapphunds had been

through the eye screening, and 182 hip scored by 2010. So participation levels are high. The KC reports 101 Lapphunds has having been DNA tested for PRA.

The Club proactively seeks reports on the health of individual dogs and it has a [facebook presence](#) also demonstrating a keenness to get its messages to a wide audience. A published balanced health strategy which included all-important considerations on genetic diversity and the harm of popular sires etc. together with another health survey would complete their approach to health. But even without those elements they are leading the field for small numerical breeds.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Finnish Lapphund	7	6	7	0	20

Finnish Spitz

The [club site](#) has nothing on health nor does it give details of the health co-ordinator. I did make an inquiry and was told that the reason there was no information on the health of the breed is because, it is very healthy. Of course without any meaningful ongoing health surveillance the club cannot back that claim with evidence. So overall, the true health status of this breed here in the UK is unconfirmed.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Finnish Spitz	0	0	0	0	0

Flatcoated Retriever

The Club has an informative health section and they publish their [Health Plan](#). Whilst it is a basic document and certainly not a broad and balanced strategy, they deserve credit for at least publishing what they have so far developed. They have embarked upon another full health survey so once the results of that are available they will be able to update their strategy accordingly. In this, they demonstrate that they have got important building blocks in place to establish more effective health management. There is an insubstantial reference to genetic diversity in the Health Plan. On a plus, they are planning to follow an entire cohort of Flat Coats through [a group study](#), which will not be anonymous.

Cancer is a serious problem in the breed and there is a [specific project](#) in place to help understand and manage this issue more effectively. An impressive total of funds has been raised to support this work. The levels of participation in this scheme are not published, if known. However, the levels of participation in other schemes such as BVA hip scoring are good with 5878 dogs recorded on a ten-year registration figure of 14,178.

The Club held a [breed health seminar](#) but no feedback on it has been published.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Flatcoated Retriever	9	8	6	0	23

Fox Terrier

The official breed club has only [short sentences on health](#) in which the following is claimed

“As a breed the Smooth/Wire fox Terrier is a hardy dog that doesn’t suffer from many health problems and any problems they do have tend to be as individuals and non-breed specific. The breed’s hardy constitution and known longevity has never led to the need for breed testing for clinical or hereditary defects. The breed is suitable for hot, sunny climates but thrives in cool climates.”

As there is no mention of any ongoing health surveillance the validity of this claim is questionable. In the [BSAVA survey 2004](#) one third of Fox Terriers were reported to have one or more health condition.

Both the prospective fox terrier buying population and the dogs themselves are poorly served by this approach which comes across as complacent.

Fox Terrier	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	0	0	0

French Bulldog

The [French Bulldog Club](#) states

“Founded in 1902 by a small group of enthusiasts dedicated to the preservation, promotion, and well being of the breed, more than 100 years later those aims remain unchanged”

Given that French Bulldogs have mortality rates more than twice as high as that of all purebreds, and given that they enjoy the regrettable status of being on the high profile list, perhaps now would be a good time to address the health and welfare of this breed with more urgency. The good news for Frenchies is the breed club has a section dedicated to [health on its website](#). The bad news is that it hasn’t been updated for a while. They have instigated a health-screening programme and earlier in the year were pleased to announce that twelve Frenchies had been through the testing protocol. But since then there have been no updates. They were contacted and asked for an update but several weeks later I have still not had a reply.

A DNA screening programme for hereditary cataracts in French Bulldogs has been introduced and so far 88 are listed as having been tested. This figure has doubled in just the past year showing that a few Frenchie breeders and owners do have an appetite for participating in health schemes. Of course with over 2000 registered in 2010 alone (nearly 7500 in ten years) there is a still a long way to go before a significant part of the breeding population have been tested but it is at least a beginning.

There is no mention of a health survey and no published strategy for tackling health so there is still much more that could be done to support the dogs.

The breed community shows a keenness to communicate, not only is there a website but they have a [facebook](#) presence and are on twitter. This will allow them to communicate quickly and widely on health matters should they choose to do so. There seems to be good intentions here but they lack strong leadership and need a clear balanced strategy to help focus the activities and efforts. There remains high levels of denial that conformation issues are seriously impacting the welfare of the dogs.

French Bulldogs	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	4	3	2	0	9

G

German Longhaired Pointer

There is no mention of health on the [official club website](#) nor are any contact details for the breed health co-ordinator. So on that basis it is very hard to conclude that anything of substance is being done to support the health of this albeit very small numerical breed (224 registrations in ten years).

German Longhaired Pointer	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	0	0	0

German Shepherd Dogs

OK I will have to admit upfront that I do not understand, for the large part, what German Shepherd (GSD) breeders are talking about much of the time. There is a tendency for them to talk in acronyms such as GSDL, BAGSD, WUSV, IPO without explaining them, assuming prior knowledge.

The British Association of German Shepherd Dogs has a [health page](#) but one that prefers to talk in acronyms. More is listed on the [German Shepherd Dog League](#) website. But neither club provides a useful context for the lists of issues, and neither publishes any form of strategy to demonstrate how the breed community is tackling health problems. Nowhere is it made clear the GSD is on the list of KC high profile breeds and nowhere can I find any mention of health surveys or health reporting. The [GSD Breed council website](#) is cursory towards health.

In the breed's favour a good number of Shepherds have been scored through the BVA hip scheme – 40,924 up to 2010. The impact is a reduction in the five year rolling BMS from 19.3 in 1996 to 16.1 in 2009, according to the Dog Health Group Annual Report 2010. But the effective management of a single health problem, albeit an important one, does not a comprehensive strategy make. They are also one of the top five breeds participating in the elbow scheme with approximately 1,300 dogs scored. Despite these efforts there remains serious concerns over the conformation of the show lines of GSDs with many commentators feeling that much more urgent action is required to relieve the suffering caused in particular by the roach backs, preferred by certain breeders.

Overall the dogs are not being served well by the politics that exist within the breed community, prospective puppy buyers are not well served by the fragmented and confusing information published on health and welfare. If strong leadership does exist on the health agenda breeders are keeping it well hidden. Given the popularity of the breed (ten-year registration figure is 127,660), and given that there are well-justified concerns over the health and conformation of the breed this approach to health should be more coherent.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
German Shepherd Dog	4	2	7	4	17

German Shorthaired Pointer

Unlike its longhaired cousin, the German Shorthaired Pointer is a very popular breed with a ten-year registration figure of 14,061. However, just like its longhaired cousin there is very little information published on the state of the breed's health. There are two breed clubs, neither the [Association](#) nor the [Club](#) have anything on health. There is no mention of a health strategy, breed plan, health surveillance nor even contact details of the health co-ordinator. The [GSPA](#) says that it includes articles on health in its SCENT magazine which is distributed to members.

950 GSPs have been recorded through the BVA hip scheme so there is some propensity to participate in this health scheme at least. But the dogs deserve stronger leadership and would benefit from the establishment of a broad health strategy. An excellent health report on the breed can be found on the [American GSP Club](#) site and other UK hunt, point, retrieve breeds here in the UK such as the GWP, Spinone and Weimaraner are all doing much more to improve the health of the dogs, so there are resources, examples, role models from which the GSP could learn.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
German Shorthaired Pointer	0	0	2	0	2

German Wirehaired Pointer

The Karlton Index is set up in memory of my German Wirehaired Pointer so I recognise the need to demonstrate total impartiality when assessing the work done in this breed. I am not a member of the breed club so none of this good work is down to me. The facts speak for themselves.

- The club website is updated and in fact has been redesigned this year helping to refresh all the content
- There is a dedicated [website on health](#) which holds credible information
- The club has an ongoing health survey that helps to inform their priorities
- It looks as if they have responded with great speed when a new condition, [Dilated Cardiomyopathy](#) emerged this year
- They differentiate health-tested matings on their [puppy list](#)

Strong leadership is emerging and the club works hard at communicating its health agenda widely through the two websites and [through facebook](#). Participation levels in health schemes and activities are improving.

Results from the ongoing health survey have never been published, however and there is no published health strategy. The breed could also consider the introduction of open health registries for conditions such as epilepsy. However, they deserve much credit for becoming one of the front-runners in terms of their approach to breed health.

64 Wires are listed by the KC as tested for von Willebrands and 342 have been recorded under the BVA hip scheme, this on a ten-year registration figure of 3,861.

German Wirehaired Pointer	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	9	11	5	0	25

Giant Schnauzer

The Karlton Index does not assess websites on how they look but on their content, however the [Giant Schnauzer Club](#) website is one of the easiest to use, with very simply laid out information. The Karlton Index does assess clubs on the quality of their approach to health and the Giant Schnauzer community scores well on that too. The first item under health is “[genetics and research](#)” in which we are told that they are assessing the genetic diversity within the breed as well as several health conditions. Furthermore, the club is proactively surveying on health matters with an annual survey, the [results for 2009](#) are available as a download. The survey is a collaborative project with all three sizes of Schnauzer, demonstrating a cost effective approach.

The site does claim that the results of the 2009 and the BSAVA 2004 surveys show that the breed is one of the healthiest, which deserves challenging because in the 2004 survey 44% of the 113 live dogs surveyed had one or more health condition. That survey also showed that 41% of GS died of cancer. Yet cancer is not highlighted as much of a concern in their own survey. However as the breed is continuing to collect health data credibility of information will further increase. They also publish a burgeoning [health strategy](#) called Keeping Healthy.

What is good about their current approach is they provide context for the health issues listed, they see health surveillance as an important and ongoing activity, they explain how they are going to try and manage the health issues and they are working in collaboration with other clubs, the KC and the AHT. In their Keeping Healthy section, they ask breeders to use common sense when it comes to conditions for which there is no test such as epilepsy and melanoma. They could consider publishing open health registries for these conditions, as that is a short-term way of getting valuable information out to potential puppy buyers and breeders alike.

On participation, the only data available in addition to the number of survey returns is for hip scoring and 177 have been scored on a ten-year registration of just over 2,500.

Giant Schnauzer	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	11	9	5	0	25

Golden Retriever

The Breed Council publishes information from the health sub-committee meetings which reveals an emerging [strategic approach](#), this in turn gives context to the list of conditions for which they provide further information. Contact details of the health co-ordinator are also clear. They are good at setting specific targets for health schemes such as an initial target of 200 dogs for DNA testing for PRA. Though, nowhere does it update on progress towards this. The strategy says nothing about ongoing health surveying nor anything on issues such as the over use of popular sires and inbreeding. There is a useful website based in the States which does list tested dogs, [GoldenDNA](#).

On participation, Goldies are establishing a good record. 32,906 have been recorded through the BVA hip scheme and they are the second highest participating breed in both the BVA elbow and eye schemes. This is on a ten-year registration figure of 95,533.

This is a good foundation on which to build future progress on health and if a more comprehensive health surveillance scheme were evident, they could be one of the best breeds.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Golden Retriever	8	7	8	4	27

Great Dane

The [Great Dane Club](#) has a health section and is promoting a health day. The only condition it lists is Dilated Cardiomyopathy, however, it does give good information on this. More health information is available through the very well laid out site for [Great Dane Breeders and Owners Association](#). That association clearly recognises the importance of robust health surveillance and provides links to the most recent data available in the UK on Dane health. There is no published overarching health strategy and no ongoing health survey as far as I can see.

473 Danes have been recorded through the BVA hip scheme on a ten-year total registration figure of 16,686. So it feels as if participation levels could be higher. Some heart testing is done.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Great Dane	6	6	3	0	15

Greyhound

The official Greyhound club has a [health section](#) on its website but it has been under construction all year. Better resources on greyhound health can be found on US based sites such as [Greyhealth](#). Greyhounds are acknowledged one of the fittest breeds but nevertheless periodic health surveillance would help to safeguard that. The name of the health co-ordinator is given, but with no contact details so the reporting of health issues is not actively encouraged.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Greyhound	0	0	0	0	0

Griffon Bruxellois

The Griffon Breeders Association has a [section dedicated to health](#) on its website, this is good news because so few toy breeds have got even as far as this. However the content feels like an arbitrary list of conditions in the absence of any strategy or context. There is no mention of a health survey either. The [Griffon Club](#) also has a health section but again little context is provided and no survey is mentioned. No data on participation is available.

Griffon	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	5	4	0	0	9

H

Havanese

The official Havanese club has just a short paragraph [on health](#) which states

“At present the club is not aware of any major health problems other than possible eye problems. We promote yearly eye testing of all HAVANESE & maintain a voluntary register of the results. The club recommend that prospective owners buy only puppies whose parents have current clear eye certificates.”

The point is made that they are a rare breed and therefore numerically small, but as such the safeguarding of their health is even more important. There is no reference to a health plan or strategy, no reference to any kind of health surveillance and no guidance on how to report health issues.

I have asked the club for more clarification on their approach but as yet have not had anything of substance back (September 7th).

Havanese	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	0	0	0

Hungarian Vizsla

Leadership and commitment to health is unquestionable in this breed. Both official clubs support the health initiatives and excellent web based resources have been developed. A [breed health survey](#) has been launched to provide an up-to-date assessment of the breed. The health group is proactive in tackling emerging health issues head on and openly, as illustrated by the approach they have taken on [Polymyositis](#). 1,908 Vizslas have been through the BVA hip scheme on a ten-year registration figure of 10,115 suggesting a reasonable appetite for participation in health screening protocols.

The health team uses as much available health data as they can to establish the priorities for their approach to health and are very effective at communicating these. They also publish open health [registries](#) which is a highly effective way of beginning to tackle health conditions for which there are

no known tests. They are not afraid of raising contentious issues such as the overuse of popular sires.

With their obvious appetite for continuously improving their approach to health and their generosity in sharing ideas with others, combined with excellent communication of health priorities this breed community will always be a role-model on breed health.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Hungarian Vizsla	11	12	7	0	30

Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla

Strong leadership on health is evident in this breed. There are currently two outstanding elements to their approach on health. They are creating a DNA bank in partnership with the Animal Health Trust and have recently completed an [exemplary health survey](#). This is all being co-ordinated by the [official breed club](#). They have published the results speedily, they have set out what they are going to do next and they have provided useful information on their website.

This activity will allow them to develop a broad and balanced health strategy. The survey results are invaluablely informative and hopefully the ensuing strategy will focus on the underlying causes of these health conditions such as inbreeding, loss of genetic diversity, dangers of popular sires and so on. The explanation behind the DNA bank does comment on the importance of getting to understand the impact of popular dams and sires so there is recognition that these are important considerations.

The breed community demonstrates reasonable commitment towards health as demonstrated by the impressive return rate of the health survey (57%). 314 wires have been through the BVA hip scheme from a ten-year registration figure of 2,339, however 69 of those dogs were scored in 2010 suggesting that participation levels mirror the growing popularity of the breed. Annual registration numbers have trebled since 2001.

But overall a very impressive foundation for the future health and well-being of Hungarian Wirehaired Vizslas.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla	9	8	6	0	23

|

Ibizan Hound

The [official club](#) has no health section and no details of health concerns. They do publish the contact details of the breed health co-ordinator. It is a very small numerical breed in the UK with just over 100 registered in ten years. But how they are managing health in such a tiny gene pool would of general interest, so more forthcoming information would be valuable.

Ibizan Hound	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	0	0	0

Irish Red and White Setter

The official club's website provides a good [overview of health](#) in the breed. They say the breed's health is under constant monitoring and held a [survey in 2008](#) results of which were published to club members (though when requested, a copy was quickly sent through to me). The site also claims "There are other unwanted conditions in the breed such as Haemolytic Anaemia, heart problems, allergies and cancers but these are not hereditary and are not enough to be considered a breed problem." But fails to give any evidence as to how they know this, when similar conditions in other breeds are inherited. However the club needs recognition for at least covering the issue of genetics and indeed has a dedicated genetic sub-committee. The breed is embarking upon an international [outcross programme](#) which shows a willingness to address the causes of poor health in pedigree dogs, not just the symptoms of it. They include links to [this project](#) on their website but follow it immediately with an article written in 1987 which raises concerns over such a step. This juxtaposition is confusing for readers because the article is clearly against outcrossing. The dogs and the puppy buying public deserve clarification on where the club stands on this important issue.

There is demonstrable commitment to the health agenda in the breed with good participation levels in screening, CLAD about 149 dogs tested, vWDs about 80 and 381 hip scored on a ten-year registration figure of 1116.

Irish Red and White Setter	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	8	6	8	4	26

Irish Setter

A breed [health survey](#) has been done through the Animal Health Trust which provides credible and current health information. The national club has published the findings but the club does not have a published health strategy. Despite no apparent strategy, the club is focusing on key health issues and provides some good information on these. The website is updated and prominence is given to health issues. But there is nothing on genetics or inbreeding. There is no follow up on the health survey as yet, for instance, the survey clearly pinpoints concerns over cancer, bloat, kidney failure and megaesophagus but there is no further information on these available on the club website.

Stronger leadership on health is evident from the [South of England Irish Setter club](#) which has a dedicated health site called [Irish Setter Health](#). There is no link from the national club to this health site as far as can be seen.

Only a few dogs have been tested this year under the KC health testing schemes for the Irish Setter which are CLAD, PRA – rcd1 and PRA-rcd4 (new test for the breed). The low levels of participation this year are not explained anywhere. It could be that as more of the population gets DNA tested fewer in future need to be screened because they are clear by parentage – but that is not explained anywhere obvious. 1,246 Irish Setters have been through the BVA hip scoring scheme (from a ten-year registration number of 11,684. These participation figures suggest a patchy approach with good levels of compliance on some schemes but not all.

The breed community demonstrates some good leadership but the dogs would benefit from a published balanced health strategy that could provide context and measurable objectives for tackling current health issues that impact the breed. Information available is fragmented and it looks as if it could be hampered by internal politics. That said of course, they are one of only a few clubs to have done a recent health survey so deserve recognition for this vital element to any health management process. More collaboration and co-operation between clubs would be very welcome perhaps through the development of a breed council. How the community is addressing important health issues such as the high levels of cancer and bloat in the breed are unclear and this should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Irish Setter	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	9	7	5	5	26

Irish Terrier

The [Irish Terrier Association](#) does not have a health page on its club site. It gives details of the condition hyperkeratosis in the [section on puppy advice](#). There is no other information on how they are approaching health in the breed.

Irish Terriers	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	2	2	0	0	4

Irish Wolfhounds

The official club has a [section on health](#) in which it is immediately clear that this is a group who are keen to engage the breed community on health matters. There is an obvious link on the health page to the [Irish Wolfhound Health Group](#). The health group provides a context for the health conditions that affect the breed and acknowledge the size of the breed and the compromised longevity it experiences. They are intent on proactively managing the health issues but would have to accept that many would disagree with their opening sentence “it remains totally unexaggerated in type and conformation” as to many its size IS an exaggeration.

They are rightly proud of their track record in health such as encouraging health testing for over twenty years but nowhere do they mention what impact this health testing protocol is having on the dogs. Much effort is given over to fundraising and the group comes across as very enthusiastic in its support of the health agenda but more context would be beneficial. They show real determination to tackle heart problems

There is no broad published strategy and there is no indication as to the trends in the conditions such as heart problems. There is no mention of a health survey and there is no open register. But the group has created a solid foundation on which to build a more comprehensive approach to health.

Irish Wolfhounds	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	7	9	5	0	21

Italian Spinone

The Club has taken a lead on health for some time now and has a detailed [health section](#) on its website. There is an engaging mix of content from both veterinary specialists and pet owners which helps to create the context for each condition. The Club acted decisively on the issue of [Cerebellar Ataxia](#) and there are several updates together with published names of tested dogs. The list feels as if it is out of date. Health reporting is encouraged but there is no mention of a health survey and no overall health strategy.

In the region of 500 Spins have been tested through that scheme and 1,146 have been hip scored, this on a ten-year registration figure of 3,773 which indicates reasonable levels of participation. This is definitely a breed community who are taking health matters seriously and have put a solid foundation in place on which to make further progress. My only observation is that most of the web content is dated on or prior to 2008 – is that because these topics were effectively covered then and no updates are necessary? Or does it indicate diminishing activity levels?

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Italian Spinone	8	7	6	4	25

K

Keeshond

I like the prominence given to health and the health co-coordinator on the [Keeshond Club website](#). There is a specific health section which includes updates on progress. Very well done to them for reaching one of their [epilepsy research milestones](#). They have established open health registries and wherever possible provide the context for each condition with regard to Keeshonds.

There is no overall strategy published and no mention of a health survey but the site does demonstrate a determined commitment to Keeshond health. About 160 Keeshonds are listed as tested on that and 53 have been hip scored on a ten-year registration total of 883. So reasonable to moderate levels of participation.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Keeshond	7	7	4	0	18

King Charles Spaniel

There are two recognised breed clubs, the association does not appear to have a website and the [Club](#) has no health section. Under their news section they mention [Syringomyelia and heart testing](#) but little context is provided. There is no reference to a health plan/strategy nor any mention of health surveillance. So leadership on and participation with a meaningful health agenda is poorly evidenced. The breed is a great deal less popular than the Cavalier with under 2,000 registrations in ten years but nevertheless those few dogs deserve to have their health safeguarded better than this.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
King Charles Spaniel	0	0	0	0	0

L

Labrador

The health agenda in Labradors is managed through the [health sub-committee of the breed council](#), which is headed up by Dr Jeff Sampson of the Kennel Club. The health section is clearly set out and contact details of the committee members are prominent. They also publish an excellent guide on the [testing protocols](#) for Labradors and provide minutes of their meetings, the most recent seemingly April 2010. From those [minutes](#) it is clear that a strategy for health is emerging and includes consideration of the dangers of popular sires, though it is disappointing to note the council rejected limits on the use of popular sires. But they do show an appetite for tighter controls on only registering puppies from health-tested parents so that is more positive. They also discussed health reporting with a view to creating a health “blog” through which problems can be reported, but I cannot see if that has materialised. Reference is made to the innovative [DogsLife](#) project which is being run by the Veterinary School at Edinburgh University.

The glaring omission in this approach is systematic health surveillance as there is no mention of a health survey. I understand one is planned.

On participation, Labradors appear to do well, but they are the UK’s most popular breed with a ten-year registration figure of a staggering 423,184. Over 70,000 have been hip scored, and they are the number one breed for participating in the elbow and eye schemes. Numbers screened through the other available DNA tests are less impressive as all come in at around the few hundred mark but many of these are recent developments. Jeff Sampson has calculated that currently around 50% of all Labrador litters are bred from parents that have both been hip scored. Whether that is a satisfactory level of compliance depends very much on your point of view however, it is one that many other breeds can envy.

Whilst this is a good basis from which to move forward the currency of health information from the breed council is disappointing given that the most recent contribution is as far back as April 2010, and there is no recent health survey of the breed. The health strategy is not comprehensively communicated on the website and targets they have set seem to be slipping.

Labradors	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	8	7	9	4	28

Leonberger

[The Leonberger Club](#) demonstrates strong leadership on health matters. They provide clear, credible health information on the website and contextualise listed conditions, resulting in an excellent resource for all Leonberger owners. They are exemplary in setting up open health registries for conditions that have no straightforward screening yet available, such as Addison’s. The site is regularly updated and they offer a very helpful support guide for owners whose Leos are sadly affected by a health condition. Genetics is covered in a supporting document and there is a superb links section which provides links to international databases such as the [Leonberger Database](#).

Minutes of the Health Subcommittee meetings are published (most recent July 2010) and from that it is clear that they are planning a health survey and organise health seminars. However, it looks as if

the number of people attending was disappointing to them. Participation in health screening programmes is encouraging with a total of 1,362 Leos recorded through the BVA hip scheme (on a ten-year registration figure of 3,618) and they are one of the top five breeds for participating in the elbow scheme.

A broader strategy for managing the health of the breed that includes diversity, outcrossing if appropriate, and limitations on popular sires together with the implementation of a full health survey would help to safeguard the health of Leos even more emphatically. But in short the breed club already conveys a strong sense that they genuinely do care about their breed and are making excellent progress at promoting its health and well-being.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Leonberger	12	12	8	0	32

Lowchen

The [club website](#) does not have a health section nor does it provide any contact details for the health co-ordinator. The only conclusion that can be drawn based on this evidence is that not much is being visibly done to safeguard the health of this breed. There have been over 1,200 registered in the past ten years. In the [BSAVA survey 2004 32%](#) of Lowchens had one or more reported health condition. 16 Lowchens have recorded hip scores.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Lowchen	0	0	0	0	0

M

Maltese

When I did my initial analysis of breed clubs I did make a note to award [the Maltese club](#) with the prize for the worst health page (it is a hotly fought for award, especially amongst the toy group of dog breeds). The sum total of its content is:

“On a recent visit to the Vet. with an unwell Maltese, it was discussed that she needed a full dental clean and extractions as necessary.

He then went on to inform me that he had been working in New Zealand for 5 years, where, about a year ago, a vaccination was now in use to prevent periodontal disease. It originates in America, but he felt that it will not be long before it is available here. This must be good news for all breeders, especially Maltese, who nearly all suffer with this problem. No adverse side effects have been recorded, and the vaccine has been given to puppies as young as 7 weeks. Healthy dogs should receive 2 doses, administered 3 weeks apart. Duration of immunity has not been evaluated, and consultation with your Vet. is recommended. The vaccine is called Porphyromonas Denticanis-Gulae-Salivosa Bacterin, details of which can be found on the internet on Pfizer Animal Health website.”

The club does provide the name of the breed health co-ordinator but no contact details.

There is a pattern emerging here amongst some toy breeds. The Havanese Club makes the following point “this little dog (havanese) is the Cuban member of the Bichon family, a group which includes the Bichon Frise, Bolognese, Coton de tular, Lowchen and Maltese”.

None of those breeds has clubs that are approaching the important matter of health systematically or urgently, as assessed by the available evidence. This needs to be addressed quickly. As individual breeds they are small numerically (save for the Bichon itself) but in total their ten-year registration numbers are nearly 33,000. That is a fair number of sweet little dogs whose health is not being reviewed effectively.

Maltese	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	0	0	0

Mastiff

Whilst there is no mention on the [Mastiff Health website](#) of its inclusion on the high profile breeds list it is a better resource than most. A genuine attempt is made to provide good clear information on a fairly long list of health issues. That said, there is no reference to a health survey, no mention of the publication of results and no such thing as an open health registry. There is no guidance on or encouragement of reporting health conditions but the contact details of the health co-ordinator are obvious.

The only data on participation available is that of hip scoring and so far 354 mastiffs have been recorded through the BVA scheme, this on a ten-year registration figure of just short of 4000. The BMS is holding at 18.

Clear leadership on health is emerging and it would not be that hard to communicate better information through the already well-established web site. A health survey would be an invaluable addition, as would simple guidance on how to report health issues, and the publication of test results would also help breeders in their breeding decisions. But overall there is some very good work to be built on here.

Mastiff	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	5	6	3	0	14

Miniature Poodle

There are two national clubs listed on the KC website for Miniature Poodles. One has no web presence. The [Miniature Poodle Club](#) does but there is no health section. It provides a link to the [Poodle Council](#) but it is the wrong link. In terms of a health resource the Poodle Council is also very poor. All it provides is a list of health co-ordinators for each size of poodle. Over 9,000 Mini Poodles have been registered in the last ten years so that is a fair sized population. They deserve to be better supported in terms of health. At the time of this review 299 had been DNA screened for the PRA test. A testing protocol for which there is precious little information available from the club. A club that states “we are dedicated to promoting in every way the Miniature Poodle in the UK by helping breeders, exhibitors and enthusiasts to work together for the betterment of the Breed with regards to it’s(sic) health, public perception and welfare.”

Perhaps someone from the miniature poodle community could tell us how they are doing that exactly.

Miniature Poodle	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	2	0	2

N

Neapolitan Mastiff

The good news is more information on health is now available on the club website than it was earlier in the year. A particularly welcome addition is the [overview](#) which is a good example of how to provide readers with context and background for the health concerns within a breed. It also mentions a health survey and whilst not going so far as to state “the Neapolitan is on the KC’s list of high profile breeds”, the overview does explain Breed Watch. If it then went on to publish a balanced strategy for improving these health conditions that would be an amazing breakthrough but no such strategy is mentioned. Nor is the survey talked about anywhere else, so how did people contribute? Where can they get more information on it?

Only 36 Neos had been hip scored by 2010 despite the ten-year breed registration figure being 2563. Data on the number eye screened is not available and there is nothing forthcoming on the club website. The five year rolling BMS is a staggering 45 so much more could be done to address this.

Whilst the breed is declining in popularity (as measured by KC registration at least – 356 registered in 2001 compared to just 109 in 2010), they still deserve to be shown greater commitment than this in terms of their health and welfare. In its annual report the KC’s Dog Health Group stated that the Molosser Breed Seminar held in 2010 was one of its main achievements, but it is hard to see just what that achieved exactly. In the Neapolitan Mastiff breed community leadership on the health agenda remains equivocal, participation levels in health testing schemes are low and improved communication on health matters is only now being addressed.

Neapolitan Mastiff	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	3	3	1	0	7

Norwich Terriers

On the plus side the club has a [dedicated health page](#) and gives easy access to the contact details of the health co-ordinator. They also provide details of the condition Epileptoid Cramping Syndrome (the most recent update being September 2010). There are some archived updates but that is the total of health content. No strategy is mentioned and no survey is being carried out. The overall feel is minimal. I am sure that their health committee is more active than this but information is lacking.

260 samples have been submitted as part of that research project on a ten-year registration total of 1454 so that does demonstrate commitment to that scheme at least.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Norwich Terrier	4	3	2	0	9



Old English Sheepdog

The [Old English Sheepdog Club](#) starts promisingly by saying “Within this website we aim to provide as much information as possible on the Old English Sheepdog and in particular we will be focusing on the Health and well-being of this wonderful breed.”

There is a specific [health section](#) with further promises to provide as much information on the diseases, conditions and illnesses that affect the breed. It then lists Cerebellar Abiotrophy and Primary Ciliary dyskinesia with two additional sections one for bone conditions and one for eye problems and those are quite informative. However there is no mention of breed a health strategy, no ongoing health surveillance and no guidance on how or to whom to report health issues.

1,765 Old English Sheepdogs have been through the BVA hip scheme which on a ten-year registration figure of 6,055 is very good, and the trend for the BMS is downwards. No data for participation in other schemes is available.

Good intentions have been expressed by the club but not followed through with appropriate actions such as a published health survey or health strategy.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Old English Sheepdog	4	5	4	4	17

P

Pekingese

The [breed club](#) gives prominence to its breed health survey and there is a link to a [health-dedicated](#) web site for the survey and the BAS project, but without clearly explaining what BAS is. If you keep clicking you eventually get to a [powerpoint presentation](#) on Brachycephalic Airway Syndrome (BAS) and it is a very good presentation. But clear context for this is absent from the main club web site and the three letter acronym BAS will not mean much to prospective puppy buyers. The survey deadline was March 2011 and there is no update on when results will be published or indeed if they will be published. It looks as though the health team put in effort to publicise the health survey so the outcome will be interesting.

Again the KC breed specific health pages avoid mentioning that the Peke is included in their high profile list. The [Breed Watch page](#) makes scary reading so it is a shame that information on health is so poor. Hopefully the analysis and full publication of the survey results will provide more credible data and from that the breed community will develop a balanced health strategy. But on the evidence available currently the dogs are poorly served by the breeders approach to health.

Pekingese	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	4	3	0	0	7

Pointer

I have firsthand experience of trying to research the health of Pointers because it is a breed I would love to own one day. Getting credible and current health information is very difficult. [The breed club](#) does not have a health section. Nor does it publish the contact details of the health co-ordinator. There appears to be no health strategy, no ongoing health surveillance, and no guidance on how owners can report health issues. The information I have had from breeders is that they are a healthy breed but without good health reporting mechanisms, this information is not verifiable or credible. The BSAVA survey 2004 found that 36% of pointers had one or more reported health condition. 129 have been hip scored through the BVA scheme on a ten-year registration of 7,343, so not a wholehearted commitment to the process.

Pointer	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	2	0	2

Pomeranian

The Club has health and welfare under the heading of [“Rules and Regulations”](#) for some inexplicable reason. The content of the section certainly does not feel comprehensive. It is poorly written and has misspellings for example it states

“ It is common practise for Pomerania breeders to draw up a Contract re sale of a Pomeranian and one of the clauses is that the Pomeranian be returned to the breeder if the new owner decides a Pomeranian is not for them for whatever reason.

problems which can be found in Pomeranians (some of which can be susceptible to toy dogs in general)

Slippin Patellas

Open Fontanelas

Can break a leg

Ceeseraen section as against self whelping

Loss of hair - the K.C. together with the BVA looked into this problem and investigations took place at to the reasons.” (Sic).

These errors were highlighted by The Karlton Index in an article in Dogs Today Magazine (April 2011) yet the page has never been amended. Such is the interest in health shown by this breed community.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Pomeranian	0	0	0	0	0

Pug

The Pug was included in my initial analysis back in March 2011 and sorry to have to report but nothing on health has changed these past six months. Though the club names the health co-ordinator it fails to give any obvious contact details. The [list of health issues](#) such as it is remains unchanged and there is no mention of the Pug being included on the high profile breed list. The KC information on pug health is extremely limited given the long list of health problems that are regularly reported but they do say that the breed council requires hemivertebrae checking. Nothing on this scheme can be found on the club website and no web presence comes up for the Pug Breed Council.

I had heard that they were conducting a health survey but if so there is no information on this in the public domain as far as I have searched. There is no leadership on health emerging within Pugs and no visible strategy to address the many considerable health issues they suffer. With only 30 pugs hip scored in total and no data on eye testing it is very difficult to conclude anything other than commitment to pug health is low. Ten-year registration is 28,362.

An unofficial but more informative site for health is this one <http://pugworld.co.uk/about.php>

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Pug	0	2	0	0	2

S

Schipperke

The club has a clearly labelled [dedicated section for health](#). It provides a good overview covering the main health conditions and they have recently carried out a health survey. For a condition shortened to MPSIIB there is a DNA test. But test results are not published here. The Club was disappointed in the response rate for the survey (20%) but at least as a club they have attempted systematic

health surveillance. The score for participation simply reflects the lack of data rather than the lack of participation.

Schipperke	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	8	6	2	0	16

Shar Pei

At least the [Shar Pei Club of Great Britain](#) has put health central to its purpose even if as yet not much meaningful action has happened in support of that goal. They are supportive of the [Chinese Shar Pei Charitable Trust](#) but that has not been wholly effective in tackling health issues in the breed. The breed club health page names four health issues, Familial Shar-Pei Fever (FSF), Amyloidosis, Primary Lens Luxation and entropion and there is good information available on these conditions with some context as to how Shar Peis suffer from these diseases. The club wins the prize for the best secret health survey, see how long it takes you to find information on it? Well as life is short here is [the link](#) page and then scroll down to the last item. Health surveys need to be broadcast loud and long to encourage as wide a participation as possible. They fail to share with us how and when the results will be published.

Leadership on health matters is yet to emerge for this breed and visible participation levels in health activities is low. 61 have been hip scored through the BVA scheme on a ten-year registration of nearly 17,000. The dogs are poorly served by the current approach to health.

Shar Pei	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	4	2	0	0	6

Shih Tzu

The [official club](#) does not have a health section nor does it provide details of the health co-ordinator or how owners can report health issues, so no apparent health strategy, no ongoing health surveillance, no guidance for prospective puppy owners, this in a breed that has registered over 42,000 in the last ten years. The health status of this breed remains unclear given so little published activity around the health agenda.

Shih Tzu	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	0	0	0

Slovakian Roughaired Pointer

In the Spring this breed club was reviewed for its approach to health and did not score very well. But the [SHRP Club](#) illustrates how quickly the approach can be improved with the right focused activities. In this case the publication of a very well researched and produced [health report](#). This sets a benchmark for reports by including

- A broad context on the latest scientific thinking on breeding

- Consideration of genetics and inbreeding (especially important in the introduction of a new breed)
- Considerations of the dangers of popular sires
- Analysis of all available data on the health of Slovaks in the UK
- Details of current and future reporting of health issues
- Conclusions.

This will undoubtedly be an invaluable contribution to the history of Slovaks in the UK and is a credible and comprehensive starting point from which the club can develop a broad health strategy.

All credit to the club for commissioning the report and most of all for making it public. Well done to the author for the outstanding piece of work. This focus has ensured that their approach to health could become a role model for other breeds to follow and it shows that excellent progress can be achieved quite quickly. Hopefully a strategy will follow, and if it is as balanced as the report it will serve the dogs well.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Slovakian Roughaired Pointer	5	5	2	0	12

Soft Coated-Wheaten Terrier

The official Wheaten Club has a good website and runs a great [puppy waiting list initiative](#) which invites prospective owners to visit area reps and meet their Wheatens. There is an informative [health section](#) but there are some simple omissions that if fixed could improve it – for instance there should be an obvious link to the excellent health resource [The Wheaten Health Initiative](#) and though it invites health reports the contact details of the health co-ordinator are not obvious. Although it does list many health issues relating to the breed no context is given except for pANCA (*perinuclear anti-neutrophilic cytoplasmic antibodies*). It would benefit Wheatens greatly if the official club made stronger links to the role-model Wheaten Health Initiative.

The Wheaten Health Initiative demonstrates effective leadership on health matters. [The Health Handbook](#) they have produced is easily downloadable and is also available on facebook. This provides excellent context for the health issues that are affecting Wheatens, which is vitally important to help both pet owners and vets get to the right diagnosis as quickly as possible. It includes a section on genetics that is very well set out and genetic diversity is high on their agenda. The WHI has been established since 2003 and in that time has attended conferences on health, developed strong partnerships with the science and veterinary professions, has implemented an advanced communication strategy and worked hard at raising funds to support health activities. There is also impressive international collaboration. Reporting is encouraged and the monitoring and tracking of health conditions features very prominently.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Soft Coated Wheaten	10	12	6	0	28

Staffordshire Bull Terrier

The Staffordshire Bull Terrier Breed Council takes a lead on [health matters](#) with a specific health section on its website. They have also published a report on last year's [health seminar](#) which gives updates on the number of dogs that have been DNA tested, and reports on presentations given on other health issues.

The Staffordshire Bullterrier Club also give health a prominent position on its [website](#) with detailed information on a number of health problems. However nowhere is there a mention of ongoing health surveillance in the breed so the list of issues feels incomplete.

On participation only 56 staffies have been hip scored through the BVA scheme and 1,869 DNA tested for hereditary cataracts, and just over 2000 for L-2HGA on a ten-year registration of 110,265.

Good leadership on health has emerged but participation levels for such a popular breed are disappointing.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Staffordshire Bull Terrier	7	7	4	0	18

Standard Poodle

The Standard Poodle Club lists several health conditions on its [health page](#) without giving meaningful context for the problem within the breed. As seen here with regard to [bloat](#) (SPs are not alone on failing to provide context for bloat nor in their failure to explain how they are trying to manage this dreadful condition – a topic that needs picking up elsewhere). On a positive note the health co-ordinator's contact details are clear and the reporting of health issues is encouraged. There is a link to the [poodle registry](#) but just how many UK based poodles have been included in that is unclear.

There is no overall health strategy available and no health survey but they have been [raising funds](#) and are half way to meeting their target. 765 Standards have been recorded through the BVA hip scheme, 10 have been DNA screened for von Willebrands, and there are no available figures for eye-screened numbers. The ten-year registration for SPs is 10,218. There is an open registry for Sebaceous Adenitis but this is only available to club members which is not ideal.

There are emerging signs of good intentions here but still a great deal more could be done to safeguard the health of these dogs.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Standard Poodle	6	5	4	0	15

St Bernard

“Sadly, like most breeds, the St Bernard can suffer with certain health problems. The breed is prone to hip and elbow dysplasia and other bone and joint problems; eye problems; heart problems; epilepsy and bloat. It is advisable to have adequate pet insurance.”

That is the sum total of content on health provided by [The English St Bernard Club](#). I cannot even find a link to the better site [St Bernard Health](#). Some of the regional clubs do provide a link to the health site which is full of more detailed information and guidance. The [Breed Buddies](#) scheme is a positive initiative and is clearly aimed at encouraging people to report health and welfare issues and contact details for the buddies are prominent. They are also running a health survey which can be accessed online and is simple and straightforward. No results as yet appear to have been published and there is nothing to say when they will be available.

544 St Bernards had been scored through the BVA hip scheme by 2010, on a ten-year registration figure of 7209. Much fewer have been elbow scored but actual numbers are not released.

The KC website fails to mention upfront that the St Bernard is included on the high profile breed list and as for all other breeds refers readers to the breed clubs for more detailed information. Given that health information on the club website is woeful and the links to the St Bernard health site hard to find it would be better to get the KC to link directly to St Bernard Health.

The development of that group is very welcome and demonstrates some emergent leadership on health matters. The group will be in a better position to develop a balanced health strategy once the results of the health survey are known. My concern is the participation levels of that survey given that so far it has been poorly promoted and in the case of the breed clubs not promoted at all, online at least.

St Bernard	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	5	4	4	0	13

T

Toy Poodle

The Toy Poodle Club publishes no information on the breed whatsoever. There is no website so no evidence of a broad health strategy for the breed. Over 14,000 have been registered in the last ten years and as at September 2011, about 480 had been DNA screened for PRA demonstrating that some breeders at least are willing to participate in the health agenda. As with the other poodle breeds the Toy Poodle Club is a member of the Poodle Council, but as stated before there is no published health strategy or health surveillance scheme organised by that group either.

Overall, it is clear that poodle enthusiasts could be demonstrating stronger leadership and firmer commitment to safeguarding the health of these dogs.

Toy Poodle	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
	0	0	2	0	2

W

Weimaraner

The positive aspects of their approach to health include:

- Dedicated [health section](#) on the club website
- List of health conditions with some breed context
- Links to further reading
- Ongoing health surveillance

Areas for suggested improvement include:

- Publication of the results of the survey
- Evidence that the list of health conditions is comprehensive for example auto-immune is not listed and yet the breed is known to suffer from this
- Develop and publish an overarching health strategy
- Communicate more widely on issues other than “showing”
- Encourage wider participation in the health agenda

On participation the only available data is the return rate of the health survey (18% of club members) and hip scored dogs which number 2,050. The ten-year registration for Weims is 25,320, the number of club members is not known to me.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Weimaraner	8	6	4	0	18

West Highland White Terrier

There are several breed clubs dedicated to this popular breed but sadly, credible, comprehensive and current information on the health of these dogs is hard to come by. If anyone can do a better job than me in finding relevant health information amongst the following resources then please let me know immediately.

<http://www.midlandcountiesblackandwhiteterrier.co.uk>

<http://www.northofirelandwesthighlandwhiteterrierclub.co.uk/index.html>

<http://www.southernwesthighlandwhiteterrierclub.co.uk/>

<http://www.thewesthighlandwhiteterrierclub.co.uk/>

<http://www.thewesthighlandwhiteterrierclubofengland.co.uk/homepage.html>

Well done to the Northern Ireland club as they do actually [mention health](#) under Tips for New Owners and well done to [Southwestern Club](#) as they do have a health page. Interestingly both refer readers to [American resources](#) which they are right to do because there is evidence of commitment towards safeguarding the health of the breed. When I enquired about health information I was told that the best resource for Westie health is the [Westie Foundation](#) (again US based) but despite

recommending that site to me there is no link to it on the [parent club's site](#). This is a shame because the Foundation provides what looks like a comprehensive [Health e-book](#).

Nearly 87,000 Westies have been registered in the past ten years so that is a lot of little dogs whose health is not really being systematically managed and planned for. However, their popularity is plummeting, as registrations in 2010 were half of what they were in 2001. I have not been able to find any analysis of why this is so. All that can be concluded on this evidence is that the collective approach to health by these clubs is unsatisfactory and much much more could be done here in the UK, where the breed originated.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
West Highland White Terrier	2	2	0	0	4

Y

Yorkshire Terrier

The [national club](#) does not have any information regarding health nor can any details of ongoing health surveillance be found and given that over 40,000 have been registered in the past ten years a great deal more should be being done for this breed. Surely somewhere in the UK these dogs have some good resources on health? As is often the case, the [American club](#) has more information available.

	Leadership	Communication & Engagement	Participation	Impact	TOTAL
Yorkshire Terrier	0	0	0	0	0