SBT HEALTH

Lead Breed Health Coordinators Report

28 March 2023 (1 of 3)

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L2HGA

With the plea from Cathryn Mellersh regarding the future of the KCGC at the end of 2022, I asked her to confirm that the sequencing of samples taken from Talulah (the clinically affected 'carrier') would not be impacted following our payment to them.

The response was as follows:

Whatever happens regarding the long-term position of the KCGC I don't think it will impact the L2HGA project. We have received your funds and have spent them already on sequencing the genome of Talulah. The sequencing is happening as we speak, and we anticipate receiving the data back in the very early New Year. So we should be able to analyse the sequence well before the end of March. Thankfully, therefore, your project is one that should be completed within the current KCGC contract.

I have requested an update, but Cathryn is currently away. I will share information when received.

Brachycephalic health

Having attended an online course regarding BOAS, ran by Jane Ladlow (University of Cambridge – Queen's Veterinary School Hospital, Principle Investigator into BOAS Clinical Research) I contacted her regarding the research being carried out.

I know there has been some confusion as to whether people agree Stafford's are a brachycephalic breed, as a specialist she has provided confirmation for the avoidance of any doubt, albeit mildly brachycephalic in relation to other breeds.

I would point out at this time, being classed as brachycephalic is not the same as 'BOAS' (Brachycephalic Obstructive Airway Syndrome) as this is the title of the health issues which can (but not always) be associated.

Following some communication she agreed (and got the KC's approval) to include Stafford's in the research. As the study has been underway for some time already we have got to act quickly in order for it to be carried out in the time frame needed. (Autumn 2023.)

There has been some negative feedback to being included in the study, from some involved with FBD's. They are not happy they are being advised to outcross, following their research, and believe we are leading lambs to the slaughter. Do people really think as a breed we are in a similar position to the FBD's and will come out of this badly?!

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Although I am now aware of 9 current cases and do believe we need to keep it in mind, I certainly have no fears over my dogs being included in the research, I see no problems. If it turns out there is, then let us get on top of it and stop it in its tracks before it becomes more widespread!!!

I do not run on the philosophy of burying our heads in the sand if there are any problems. 'Proactive v Reactive'.

The footage prepared by the King Charles Spaniel clubs has now been circulated to all. This is a positive piece of information and shows their benefits from the research, this is certainly something we could consider in order to keep any legislation for brachycephalic breeds from 'beating on our door'. People involved with Pugs have also praised the research and would do it again in a heartbeat.

Thankfully the vast majority of people have been positive, although currently only one used stud dog has come forward offering their support and putting their dog forward. (I respect it is early days.) I hope this will change and more of those dogs with the greater influence over the future of the gene pool will contact me for inclusion in the research.

The dates for testing are as follows:
Sat 13th May (EASBTC Open Show - Whaplode Grove)
Thurs 6th July (East of England Ch. Show)
Fri 7th July (EASBTC Jubilee Celebration)
Sat 8th July (EASBTC Ch. Show)

If clubs can please share this information, it would be appreciated. There is video footage online showing how simple it is. The chamber only relates to those that contact Fran and arrange full testing at Cambridge.
All research is carried out for FREE.

Breed Health Awareness Week

As previously mentioned, we were considering doing this in July 2023.

This is still hoped to be done, once the BOAS testing bookings are underway and Patella tables updated, this will be the next task!

The Jubilee celebration day and Championship show held by the EASBTC in July will include a health tent, there will be eye screening, patella scoring, DNA testing and samples being taken for the Stud Dog DNA bank. Details will be published in due course.

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Breed Health Survey

Having been advised of a popular blue stud dog being affected with CDA (I am unable to confirm if 'fact or fiction') and having requests for statistics, a breed health survey is being planned for later in the year.

Another request for a subject to be included, is litter mortality. If anybody has any particular items they wish to be included please let me know.

Breed Health Talks

Just a quick mention that I have now carried out a few short health talks at the BAD's. I hope they provide some useful information and clarify some topics for people.

My thanks go to the owners of three BOAS affected dogs who have allowed me to use footage in order to highlight awareness.