

**TO: LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
11 OCTOBER 2012**

**ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS – HOME BOARDING OF DOGS
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose amendments to the model home boarding of dogs licence conditions.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Committee:

- i) **amends condition 3.2 of the model home boarding licence conditions to: “Only dogs from the same household may be boarded at any one time unless the licence holder has secured the specific written consent of each household to confirm that they are content for their dogs to be boarded with others. Dogs must be separated in secure areas when left unattended and must also be fed separately. Dogs must not be boarded with any cat, unless they normally live together in the same household”; and**
- ii) **amends condition 1.6 of the model home boarding licence conditions to: “Puppies under 6 months of age may be boarded with other dogs provided they have been suitably vaccinated and no difficulties identified during a documented trial socialisation period”;**
- iii) **both of the above amendments to come into effect when the licences are next renewed as from 1 January 2013.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The existing home boarding of dogs licence conditions can be found at **Annex A**. An update document from LACORS which is attached at **Annex B** supports the proposed amendments. This document confirms that the Council can use the model conditions as a template and adapt or amend as appropriate.
- 3.2 Condition 3.2 of the Licence Conditions for Home Boarding of Dogs states “Only dogs from the same household may be boarded at any one time.” From discussion with current licence holders, it is understood that there are concerns that this is not proportionate and can make it difficult both at changeover times (where a boarder can end up with gaps because they cannot have even a short overlap) and in the busy season.
- 3.3 The update document from LACORS explains that the purpose of the model condition preventing the boarding of dog from more than one household was because of the higher level of risk associated where dogs are not contained in kennels. It also refers to local authorities that have relaxed the condition but implemented other requirements to address the risk. It is believed that a requirement for the written consent from both owners would be a sensible precaution so the owners can choose another boarding option if they are not happy with the arrangement; along with separation of dogs in secure areas when left unattended and separate feeding. Trial familiarisation sessions will be recommended but not made mandatory in case this is not possible to arrange.

- 3.4 Condition 1.6 of the Model Home Boarder of Dogs Licence Conditions states “Puppies under 6 months of age must not be boarded with other dogs including resident dogs”. The update document from LACORS confirms a change of opinion in respect of boarding of puppies and states that “providing they were suitably vaccinated and difficulties had not been identified during a trial socialisation period, dogs under 6 months could be boarded”.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Members may choose to reject the request or vary the proposed conditions in the recommendation.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Council first introduced a licence specifically for home boarders of dogs in October 2008. The traditional business model for an Animal Boarding Establishment has been based upon a property with land and separate outdoor kennelling facilities. Over recent years a new model has developed where people take dogs into their own homes to board. There are currently 12 licensed home boarders in the Bracknell Forest area.
- 5.2 Home boarder licences are issued under the same legislation as kennels and catteries, the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 (‘the Act’). The model conditions for home boarding establishments are adapted from the model conditions for kennelling facilities (produced by the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health) to provide appropriate control over welfare conditions for dogs being boarded at domestic premises. Under the Act, a local authority can attach licence conditions to ensure:
- i) that dogs are kept in accommodation suitable as respects construction, size, temperature, lighting, ventilation and cleanliness;
 - ii) that dogs will be adequately supplied with suitable food and drink, and are visited at suitable intervals;
 - iii) that dogs are kept secure;
 - iv) that reasonable precautions are taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious diseases;
 - v) that appropriate steps are taken in the event of an emergency; and
 - vi) that a suitable level of management is maintained.
- 5.3 Premises are licensed on an annual basis following an inspection by a licensing officer. The conditions on the licence govern the number of dogs which may be boarded. Fees for such licences are set at a lower level than animal boarding establishments to reflect the fact that it takes less time for officers to process applications and monitor compliance.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The legal implications are identified within the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 There are no implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 There are no implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 None.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 None.

Representations Received

- 7.3 None.

Background Papers

Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963

LACORS - Model Conditions for Home Boarding of Dogs: November 2005

LACORS - Model home boarding conditions Update and clarification: 14 October 2009

Contact for further information

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**LICENCE CONDITIONS FOR HOME BOARDING (DOGS)
ANIMAL BOARDING ESTABLISHMENTS ACT 1963**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Unless otherwise stated, these conditions shall apply to all buildings and areas to which dogs have access and/or which are used in association with the boarding of dogs.
- 1.2 Normally planning permission will not be required for the home boarding of animals on the scale proposed, however should complaints be received because of particular noise or odour problems, then the Council reserves the right to consider whether there has been a change of use which requires a planning application to be submitted.
- 1.3 The Licensee must ensure that the establishment is covered by adequate and suitable public liability insurance and, where necessary, adequate and suitable employers liability insurance.
- 1.4 No dog registered under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 must be accepted for home boarding.
- 1.5 Dog hybrids registered under the Dangerous Wild Animal Act 1976 (e.g. Wolf Hybrids) are not to be accepted for home boarding.
- 1.6 Entire males and bitches in season or bitches due to be in season during the boarding, must not be boarded together or boarded with resident dogs. Puppies under 6 months of age must not be boarded with other dogs including resident dogs.

2 LICENCE DISPLAY

- 2.1 A copy of the licence and its associated conditions must be suitably displayed to the public in a prominent position in, on or about the premises or made available to each boarder.

3 NUMBERS OF ANIMALS

- 3.1 The maximum number of dogs to be kept at any one time is **(enter number)**.
- 3.2 Only dogs from the same household may be boarded at any one time. Dogs must not be boarded with any cat, unless they normally live together in the same household.
- 3.3 Where there is a resident dog or cat kept at the household, written consent from the owners of the boarded dog must be gained following a trial familiarisation session.
- 3.4 The Licensee will be required to make an assessment of the risks of home boarding to include the risk to or caused by children who are likely to be at the property.

4 CONSTRUCTION

- 4.1 Dogs must live in the home as family pets. There must be no external construction of buildings, cages or runs.

- 4.2 The premises shall have its own entrance and must not have shared access e.g. communal stairs.
- 4.3 There must be adequate space, light, heat and ventilation for the dogs.
- 4.4 As far as reasonably practicable, all areas/rooms within the home to which boarded dogs have access must have no physical or chemical hazards that may cause injury to the dogs.
- 4.5 There must be sufficient space available to be able to keep the dogs separately if required.
- 4.6 If a collection and delivery service is provided, a suitable vehicle with a dog guard or cage in the rear must be provided.

5 MANAGEMENT

5.1 Training

- 5.1.1 A written training policy for staff must be provided. Systematic training of staff must be demonstrated to have been carried out.

5.2 Cleanliness

- 5.2.1 All areas where the dogs have access to, including the kitchen etc, must be kept clean and free from accumulations of dirt and dust and must be kept in such a manner as to be conducive to maintenance of disease control and dog comfort.
- 5.2.2 All excreta and soiled material must be removed from all areas used by dogs at least daily and more often if necessary. Disposal facilities for animal waste must be agreed with the Licensing Authority.
- 5.2.3 All bedding areas must be kept clean and dry.
- 5.2.4 Facilities must be provided for the proper reception, storage and disposal of all waste. Particular care should be taken to segregate clinical waste arising from the treatment and handling of dogs with infectious diseases. The final route for all such waste shall comply with current waste regulations.
- 5.2.5 Measures must be taken to minimise the risks from rodents, insects and other pests within the premises.

5.3 Food and Water Supplies

- 5.3.1 All dogs shall have an adequate supply of suitable food as directed by the client.
- 5.3.2 Fresh drinking water must be available at all times (unless advised otherwise by a veterinary surgeon) and the drinking vessel cleaned daily. The water must be changed at least twice a day.
- 5.3.3 Clients must be encouraged to provide each dog with its own bedding, bowls, grooming materials etc. These items must be cleaned regularly to prevent cross-infection. The Licensee however should also be able to provide extra bedding material.

5.3.4 Where necessary, eating and drinking vessels must be provided, and where so, they must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected to prevent cross-contamination. They must also be maintained in a clean condition. Feeding bowls must be cleaned or disposed of after each meal and each dog must be provided with its own bowl.

5.4 **Kitchen Facilities**

5.4.1 Airtight containers must be provided for the storage of dry foods. Uncooked food and the remains of opened tins must be stored in covered, non-metal, leak-proof containers in the fridge.

5.4.2 All bulk supplies of food shall be kept in vermin-proof containers.

5.5 **Disease Control and Vaccination**

5.5.1 Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious and contagious disease and parasites amongst the dogs, staff and visitors.

5.5.2 Proof must be provided that boarded and resident dogs have current vaccinations against Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis (Canine adenovirus), Leptospirosis (*L. canicola* and *L. icterohaemorrhagicae*) and Canine Parvovirus and other relevant diseases. The course of vaccination must have been completed at least four weeks before the first date of boarding or in accordance with manufacturer instructions. A record that this proof has been supplied must be kept on-site throughout the period that the dog is boarded.

5.5.3 Advice from a veterinary surgeon must be sought in case of signs of disease, injury or illness. Where any dog is sick or injured, any instructions for its treatment, which have been given by a veterinary surgeon, must be strictly followed.

5.5.4 A well stocked first-aid kit suitable for use on dogs must be available and accessible on site.

5.5.5 The Licensee must be registered with a veterinary practice that can provide 24-hour help and advice. The clients own veterinary practice must be known and consulted if necessary.

5.5.6 Precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of fleas, ticks, intestinal parasites and other parasites in both boarded and resident dogs. Proof must be maintained of all routine and emergency treatment for parasites.

5.5.7 The premises shall be regularly treated for fleas and parasites with a veterinary recommended product.

5.5.8 Veterinary advice must be sought in relation to cleaning substances so that they or their fumes cannot be harmful to an animal.

5.6 **Isolation and Contagious Disease Outbreak**

5.6.1 Dogs showing signs of any disease or illness shall be isolated from any other dogs until veterinary advice is obtained. There must be sufficient facilities within the licensed premises to ensure effective separation of any sick animal.

- 5.6.2 The Licensee must inform the Licensing Authority on the next working day if a dog develops an infectious disease.
- 5.6.3 Following an episode of infectious disease during any stay, the premises must undergo a reasonable quarantine period before new boarders are admitted. This period will be specified by the Licensing Authority as agreed with their authorised veterinary surgeon.
- 5.6.4 The Licensing Authority must be informed of any animal death on the premises. The Licensee must make arrangements for the body to be stored at veterinary surgeons premises until the owners return.

5.7 **Register**

5.7.1 A register must be kept of all dogs boarded. The information kept must include the following:

- Date of arrival
- Name of dog, any identification system such as microchip number, tattoo
- Description, breed, age and gender of dog
- Name, address and telephone number of owner or keeper
- Name, address and telephone number of contact person whilst boarded
- Name, address and telephone number of dog's veterinary surgeon
- Anticipated and actual date of departure
- Proof of current vaccinations, medical history and requirements
- Health, welfare nutrition and exercise requirements

5.7.2 Such a register is to be available for inspection at all times by an officer of the Licensing Authority or a veterinary surgeon.

5.7.3 The register must be kept readily available for a minimum of 2 years and kept in such a manner as to allow an authorised officer easy access to such information.

5.7.4 If medication is to be administered, this must be recorded.

5.7.5 Where records are computerised, a back-up copy must be kept. The register must also be available to key members of staff of the establishment at all times.

5.8 **Supervision**

5.8.1 A fit and proper person with relevant experience must always be present to exercise supervision and deal with emergencies whenever dogs are boarded at the premises. This person must not have any conviction or formal cautions for any animal welfare related offence.

5.8.2 Dogs must be visited at regular intervals, as necessary for their health, safety and welfare, and must not be left unattended for longer than 3 hours at a time and then not on a regular basis.

5.8.3 No home where there are children under 5 years of age will be licensed.

5.8.4 Only people over 16 years of age are allowed to walk the dogs in public places.

5.9 **Exercise**

- 5.9.1 Dogs must be exercised in accordance with their owner's wishes. If dogs are taken off the premises, they must be kept on leads unless with the owner's written permission.
- 5.9.2 There must be direct access to a suitable outside area. The area/garden must only be for use by the homeowner (not shared with other residents). The area must be kept clean.
- 5.9.3 The exercise/garden area of the premises and any other area to which the boarded dogs may have access, must be totally secure and safe. Fencing must be adequate to offer security to prevent escape and be safe, with no dangerous sharp objects or protrusions. Gates must be able to be locked.
- 5.9.4 If there is a pond, it must be covered to prevent access by dogs.
- 5.9.5 Dogs must wear a collar and identity tag during their time in boarding. The tag must display the name, address and telephone number of the boarding premises.
- 5.9.6 The Licensing Authority must be informed within one working day if a dog is lost.

5.10 **Fire/Emergency Precautions**

- 5.10.1 Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of the dogs in case of fire or other emergencies.
- 5.10.2 The occupier of the property must be aware of the location of the dogs in the property at all times.
- 5.10.3 Careful consideration needs to be given to the sleeping area for dogs to ensure that they can be easily evacuated in the event of a fire, without putting the occupiers of the property at risk.
- 5.10.4 A fire warning procedure and emergency evacuation plan – including details of where dogs are to be evacuated to in the event of a fire or other emergency - must be drawn up, brought to the attention of those involved in the home boarding arrangements and/or displayed in a prominent place on the premises. The Licensee must have suitable arrangements for the temporary boarding of dogs in the event that the licensed premises are rendered uninhabitable.
- 5.10.5 Fire detection equipment must be provided in accordance with general advice given by the Fire Safety Officer. The home must have at least 2 working smoke detectors located at the top and bottom of the staircase, or other appropriate location.
- 5.10.6 All doors to rooms must be kept shut at night.
- 5.10.7 All electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition. No dog must be left in a room with loose or trailing cables or wires.
- 5.10.8 All heating appliances must be free of risk of fire as is reasonably practicable. There must be no use of freestanding gas or oil appliances.

5.10.9 A relative, friend or neighbour within 5 minutes travelling time must have a spare set of keys and access to the premises in case of an emergency. These details must be made available to the Licensing Authority.

September 2008

LACORS model home boarding conditions
Update and clarification, 14th October 2009

In November 2005, LACORS published [model conditions](#) for the home boarding of dogs. LACORS has drafted this update in response to a number of queries received from councils, particularly in relation to the number of dogs from different households that can be boarded at any one time. This update has been agreed by the LACORS Companion Animal Focus Group.

1) Using the model conditions

The LACORS model conditions are a template which councils can choose to use, adapt or amend as appropriate. The conditions can also be amended and adapted to take account of the specific circumstances (e.g. structure, expertise) of a particular premises, in line with the views of the officer, council licensing policy and any veterinary advice.

2) Dogs from different households

Condition 3.2 of the LACORS model licence conditions for home boarding states that:

“Only dogs from the same household may be boarded at any one time. Dogs must not be boarded with any cat, unless they normally live together in the same household.”

The model condition is intended to protect the safety of the dogs and to protect the licensee from any claim for a dog attack, injury, etc. As dogs in home boarding situations have the freedom to move around, there are risks that are not present in boarding kennels. For example, if dogs that are strangers to each other are left unattended, there is the potential for one dog to turn on another (e.g. over feeding time, or to become protective over an area/corner of a room).

LACORS is aware that some councils are choosing to relax this requirement provided the licensee is able to meet a number of additional requirements/ licence conditions. Examples of additional requirements include:

- Specific written consent of each household showing confirmation that they are content for their dogs to be boarded with others.
- A mandatory, trial (documented) familiarisation session for all dogs prior to stay.
- Separation of dogs from different households in secure areas when left unattended.
- Separate feeding of dogs to minimise the likelihood of dispute and aggression.

Both the overall number of dogs to be boarded, and the number of dogs from different households to be boarded, will usually be dependent on the size of the premises and outside area. As with any decisions relating to the number of dogs allowed to be boarded, consideration is also given to whether the premises are constructed to allow:

- Adequate space for dogs (condition 4.3)
- Sufficient space available to be able to keep dogs separately if required (condition 4.5)
- The separation of dogs showing signs of disease (condition 5.6.1).

Measures put in place to ensure disease control will particularly important in circumstances where dogs from more than one household can be boarded together. To minimise the risk and spread of disease, it is vital that all dogs have current vaccinations against Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Canine

Parvovirus and other relevant diseases (as stated in condition 5.5.2). LACORS is aware that some councils are additionally requiring that dogs boarded together are vaccinated against Bordetella kennel cough. Where necessary, councils should seek veterinary advice on vaccination, worming and flea treatment.

It is also recommended that the Licensee check that their Public Liability Insurance company will cover dogs boarded from different households.

3) Age of dogs that can be boarded

Condition 1.6 of the LACORS model conditions states that:

"Puppies under 6 months of age must not be boarded with other dogs including resident dogs."

The LACORS Companion Animal Focus Group discussed this condition and were of the opinion that, providing they were suitably vaccinated and difficulties had not been identified during a trial socialisation period, dogs under 6 months could be boarded.

4) Further guidance

[LACORS - licencing home boarders](#)

In October 2005, LACORS issued guidance on whether host families and/or agencies required a Boarding Establishment Licence.

[LACORS - day boarding of animals](#)

This LACORS advice from January 2007 seeks to clarify whether those engaged in the day boarding of animals require a licence under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act.

[LACORS - boarding of animals other than cats and dogs](#)

In April 2007, LACORS clarified that the boarding of animals other than cats and dogs (e.g. exotics and small mammals such as rabbits and guinea pigs) is outside the scope of the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 and does not require a licence.

[CIEH - model conditions for dog boarding establishments](#)

The LACORS model conditions for home boarding establishments are adapted from the CIEH full model conditions for kennelling facilities. The CIEH conditions were drafted in discussion with key partners, including the British veterinary Association (BVA), British Small Animal Association (BSAVA) and Pet Trade and Industry Association (PTIA).

[Animal Welfare Act](#)

Both the LACORS model home boarding and CIEH boarding establishment conditions were drafted prior to the introduction of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Anyone running a boarding establishment must also comply with the Animal Welfare Act and must ensure that the welfare needs of animals in their care are met. More information about the Animal Welfare Act can be found on the [Defra website](#).