

# HEALTH REPORT FOR 2020



*This is the Dachshund  
Breed Council's 12<sup>th</sup>  
Annual Health Report*

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*January, 2021*

*Prepared by:  
DBC Health  
Committee*

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# 2020 highlights

## What was achieved in 2020?

- Our IVDD Screening Programme was formally adopted by the Kennel Club's Neurology Working Group – for launch in 2021
- IVDD screening was made an ABS Recommendation by the KC
- Lafora testing achieved 96% of litters being safe, with no affected puppies
- Clinical eye screening for Mini Longs became an ABS Recommendation, recognising that PRA had largely been eliminated through the use of cord1 DNA testing
- We worked with the KC to design our DachsLife 2021 breed health survey which will focus on allergies and skin conditions
- The redesigned Breed Council website/blog had 230,000 visitors, the highest total since we launched it in 2009
- We published new resources and infographics for potential Dachshund buyers
- We updated the "Tips for new owners" on our website
- The KC ended the use of "Colour Not Recognised" and published our agreed lists of Breed Standard and Non Breed Standard Colours
- We ran a webinar on IVDD with Cambridge Vet School



*If you want to track our history of work on breed health, visit our [Interactive Timeline](#).*



# Chairman's summary

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*Roger Sainsbury BVM&S, MRCVS  
Chairman, Health Committee*

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Chairman, Health Committee*

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*2020 was a particularly difficult year in many ways and this has affected the dog world considerably. Dog shows of all sorts ceased after the initial lockdown which was just a few days after Crufts - where Maisie, a Wire Haired Dachshund, was Best in Show.*

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## **The current popularity of Dachshunds**

There has been an enormous demand for Dachshund puppies during the pandemic which has caused much concern. Will they still be needed when the world returns to normal? Also, there are no facilities at present for training these puppies and no option for socialisation open to the new owners. The demand has increased the price asked for new puppies considerably and this has, unfortunately, made puppies and dogs generally a target for thieves hoping to make money by selling them.

## **Online meetings**

One interesting development due to the pandemic has been the increasing use of video-conferencing (such as Zoom or Teams) for meetings. National Breed Council meetings have previously involved people travelling, sometimes considerable distances, but nobody has to travel any further than their computer for these at present, and it may be that video-conferencing will become a permanent feature of meetings in the future.

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# Chairman's summary

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*Roger Sainsbury BVM&S, MRCVS  
Chairman, Health Committee*

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*We have had many donations from Dachshund owners whose dogs are no longer with us as well as from grateful owners who have appreciated the support we provide via our social media channels.*

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***Many thanks to everyone who was involved; your donations will be put to good use!***

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## **Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD)**

Research on IVDD continues; the University of Cambridge Vet School are looking at conservative vs. surgical treatments and quantifying the benefits and the need for each. They are also looking at CT scanning as a more sensitive way of visualising the number of calcified discs in dachshunds' backs. This could improve the IVDD scheme which will become recognised, formally, by the Kennel Club in 2021. The Royal Veterinary College and Bristol Veterinary School are working on stem cell treatment with the potential to regenerate damaged nerves in the spine – although this is at an early stage.

During the year, Dachshund Health UK were offering a £150 subsidy on the cost of the x-rays for the screening programme.

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# Chairman's summary

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Chairman, Health Committee*

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*If your vets don't understand Dachshunds, you should quietly point them in the direction of our website which has recently been updated with a new paper specifically written for a veterinary audience.*

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*Looking ahead to 2021, Crufts is currently planned to go ahead from the 15th to 18th of July according to their website - [crufts.org.uk](https://crufts.org.uk). Let's all hope that things are able to go ahead by then, and that we have a happier 2021!*

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The Breed Council has been involved in discussions over the year, including disease conditions such as sarcoglycan muscular dystrophy (not seen in the UK) to the registration of colour details of Dachshunds with the Kennel Club (still under discussion) and CRGV (was called Alabama rot) amongst other things.

The lack of dog shows and events has reduced donations to many charities and this included Dachshund Health UK. Innovative events such as the Virtual World Dog Walk have helped, however, and donations from other sources are very welcome - thank you to everybody who has helped!

Sadly, in the middle of the year, the AHT went into liquidation. This was very unfortunate given the good work that they have done over the years. Fortunately, their scientific data and DNA samples have found a new home in Cambridge University.



# Leadership

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*In this section:*

- *Health Committee*
  - *Contacts*
  - *Pet Advisers' Report*
  - *Health Fund*
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# Health Committee

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The Breed Council represents the interests of fifteen UK Dachshund Breed Clubs and has appointed a Health Committee to develop policies and coordinate plans for breed health improvement.



[Interactive breed health timeline](#)

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Members of the Sub-committee are:

Roger Sainsbury BVM&S MRCVS (Chairman),  
Helen Kerfoot,  
Bryony Fossett,  
Dawn Norton,  
Nora Price,  
Ian Seath and  
Judy Squires.

In addition, Gill Key,  
Charlotte Baldwin and  
Aimée Thomas are Pet  
Advisers to the  
Committee.

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Other Clubs and individuals take the lead on specific projects within our Health Plan:

- The Wirehaired Dachshund Club leads on Lafora Disease
- The Miniature Dachshund Club leads on eye disease, including cord1 PRA and Distichiasis.

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Bryony Fossett is a veterinary student and Helen Kerfoot is our genetics advisor.

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# Pet Advisers' report

Gill Key, Charlotte Baldwin and Aimée Thomas are Pet Advisers to the Health Committee.

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As widely reported, there has been a huge increase in the demand for puppies, unmet by the supply from traditional breeders, leading to a huge increase in price, and commercially minded breeders have been quick to jump into the breach: <https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/news-events/news/2020/puppy-prices-at-all-time-high-since-lockdown-as-sellers-cash-in>

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Unfortunately, according to recent KC research, 20% of puppy buyers do no research before buying their puppy and 36% take 20 minutes or less to find where to get their dog <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/getting-a-dog/are-you-ready/finding-a-good-breeder/>

Despite sterling work by our Instagram manager, there is clearly is an ongoing issue with 'getting to the puppy buyers first', especially on Facebook.

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*The Pet Advisers' main role is to help raise awareness of responsible purchase and ownership, health issues including IVDD risk, whether in person at events, or on social media channels or writing articles for the DBC website. They also assist the Dachshund IVDD UK Facebook group admin team. In 2020 we planned to:*

- a. have a renewed focus on the Instagram platform (partially achieved)*
- b. assist in reviewing and suggesting changes to current DBC advice to prospective puppy owners, to include more information on IVDD risk and the reality of ownership (ongoing)*
- c. revisit a previous idea of posting adverts on the dog selling sites, giving information on responsible buying and ownership – including IVDD risk and questions to ask breeders (not achieved)*

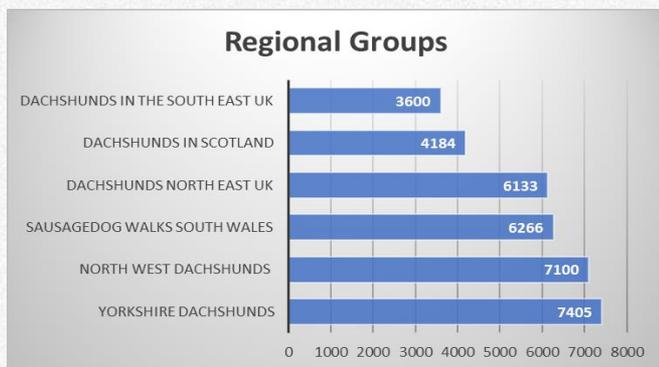
*However, due to the extraordinary circumstances of 2020, the focus changed. All planned walks, get-togethers and pet shows were cancelled, which means our activity has been virtually entirely focused on Facebook activity, with some input into the new Instagram account.*

# Pet Advisers' report

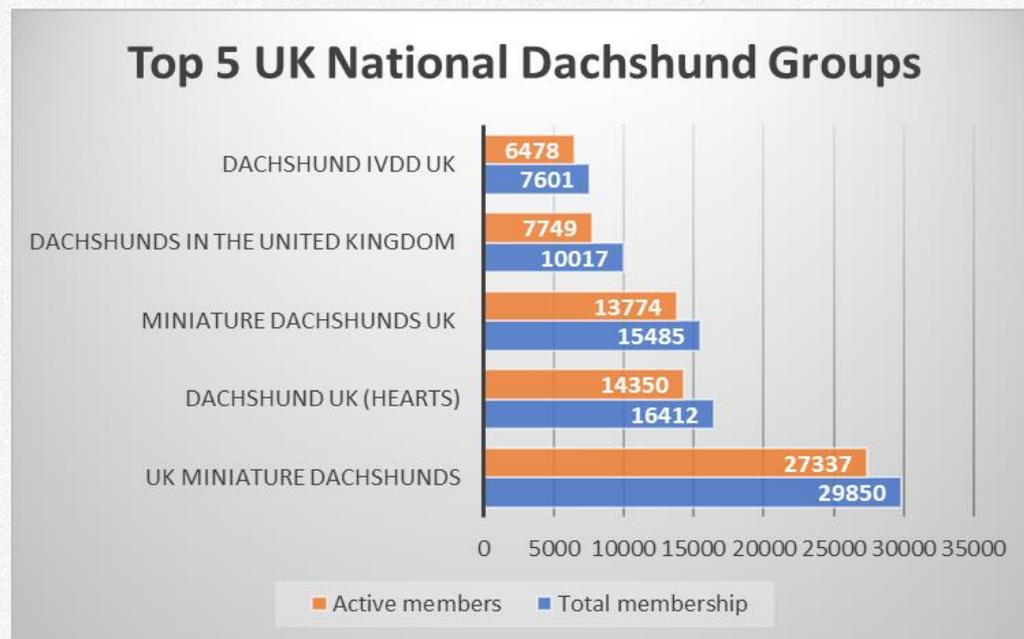


Note that for the first time, the Dachshund IVDD UK group is in the top 5 groups, suggesting that awareness of the condition is increasing – alongside the number of dogs affected.

There are also a number of regionally based groups of significant size, most attracting members from outside their local area:



The main Facebook groups have increased in size dramatically since 2020: the largest, UK Miniature Dachshunds, has doubled from 15,000 – 30,000 in 12 months:



All have a very actively engaged membership, with an average of 86% of members contributing in the last month of 2020 – but pre-purchase advice posts by the Pet Advisers receive very little engagement, often swamped by posts showing off new pups and new owner questions.

# Pet Advisers' report

Facebook

67% posts were related to buying or selling pups

There are several groups that have been set up specifically for 'colourful' dachshunds, the largest having 6000 members. However, it's noticeable that a significant majority of their posts feature photographs of heavily pregnant bitches, litters or single photographs of pups – no reference to selling on the original post, but responses below give the game away:

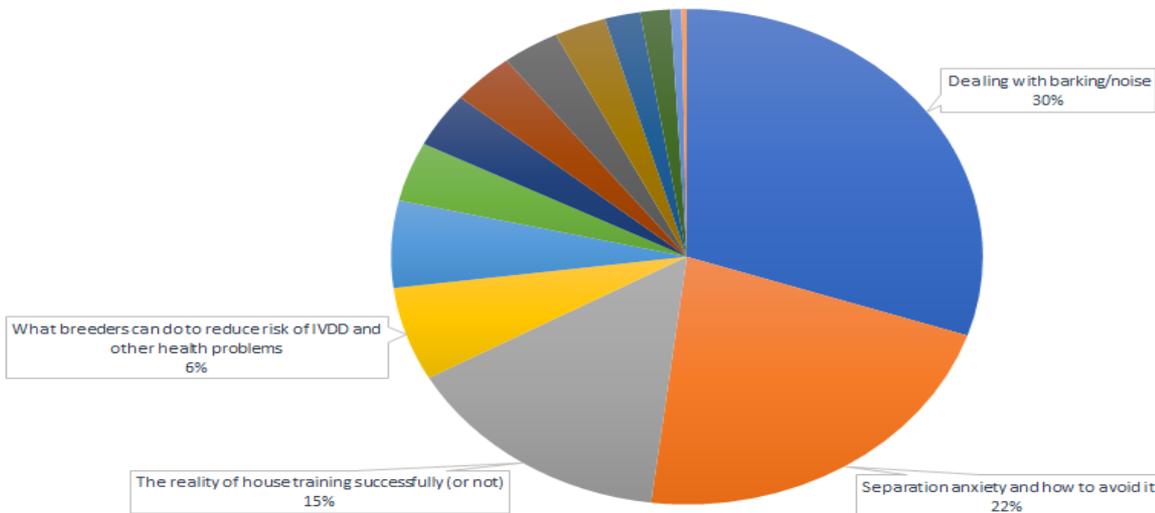


In the largest of these groups, an analysis of 150 posts over the course of just 5 days demonstrates the extent of the issue: 71 included photographs of new litters or single pups, including a significant number of dilute coloured dogs. There were also 6 with photographs of pregnant bitches and 3 stud posts. Of the remaining 71 non-breeding related posts, 23 were enquiries for puppies: i.e. 52% of posts were 'hidden sale adverts' and an additional 15% were 'wanted' posts – that's a staggering 67% of posts related to buying or selling puppies.

# Pet Advisers' report

- Dealing with barking/noise
- Separation anxiety and how to avoid it
- The reality of house training successfully (or not)
- What breeders can do to reduce risk of IVDD and other health problems
- Diet - what and how to feed
- Getting through the first nights with a new pup
- When and if to neuter/castrate
- Dealing with biting/overstimulated pups

2020: What pet owners wished they had known about before buying their first dachshund



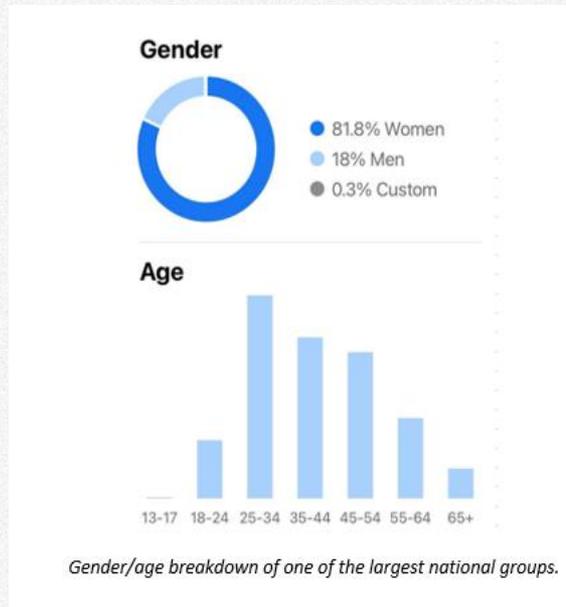
## Common concerns amongst owners:

A Facebook poll in January 2021, based on the most commonly asked questions noted across all the Facebook groups in 2020, revealed what owners wished they had known more about before owning their first dachshund: 'dealing with barking/noise, separation anxiety and house-training problems accounted for 67% of all entries, suggesting that many owners may be ill-prepared for the reality of owning the breed:

Dealing with barking/noise was the most common issue mentioned, overtaking house-training, which was by far the biggest concern in 2019. It's impossible to say for certain, but is this related to many more people being at home for much of the year, meaning that neighbours who may have been out at work previously are now being disturbed by noise during the day?

It is encouraging, though, to see, for the first time, 6% of the responses were looking for more information on IVDD and risk (again, suggesting that awareness of this issue is beginning to grow).

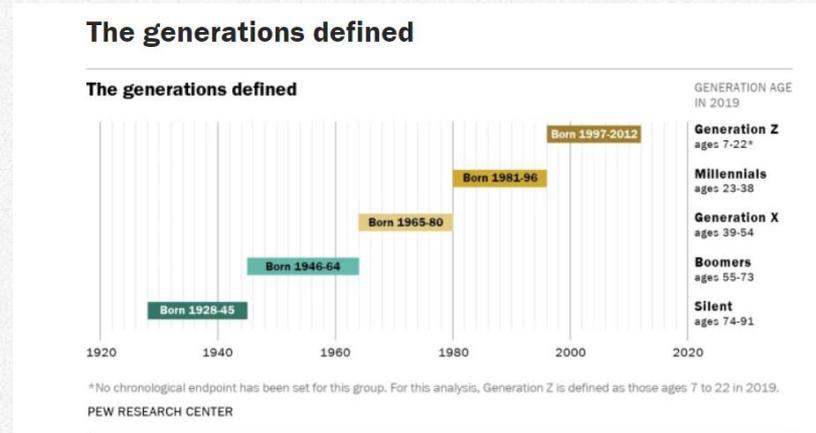
# Pet Advisers' report



Typically, Millennials spend more on clothing and restaurants than any other demographic group, spending an average of £150 per month on eating out and £75 per month on clothes. They tend to spend on experiences and, culturally, tend to share recommendations. It is this same group that has received more furlough payments than any other.

## Demographics of Dachshund ownership/interest:

Across all the Dachshund Facebook groups surveyed in January 2021, the majority are dominated by female membership, with the highest % in the 25-35 age group.



Interestingly, according to marketing websites, this demographic group is also the highest user of Instagram. This group is often defined as the Millennial generation.

Could this be behind the huge increase in the demand for dachshunds and other popular breeds?

- A generation heavily influenced by their peers' experiences, shared on social media platforms
- On furlough, meaning though their income would be less than normal, they have little opportunity to spend it on their favourite things (eating out, clothes) and potentially no commuting costs
- The very rare opportunity to spend time legitimately with a puppy at home for weeks/months

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# Pet Advisers' report

## The future?

As we emerge from the pandemic in 2021 and more owners return to work, sadly, it's likely that the behavioural issues mentioned, combined with the reality of dog ownership and the challenges and cost of doggy day-care or finding dog care, will lead to yet another increase in the number of rehome requests and surrenders .



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## Pet Advisers' priorities for 2021:

- Continue to explore ways of improving messaging pre-puppy purchase, both on Instagram and Facebook, for example, recruit a PR savvy young breeder with a big Instagram following to influence the female 25-34 year old demographic group noted in this report
- Revisit a previous idea of posting adverts on the dog selling sites, giving information on responsible buying and ownership – including IVDD risk and questions to ask breeders
- Support/raise awareness of the Kennel Club recommending IVDD x-ray screening etc.
- Assist in reviewing and suggesting changes to current DBC advice to prospective puppy owners, to include more information on IVDD risk and the reality of ownership
- Raise awareness of the extent of illicit puppy sales activity on Facebook – approach Kennel Club, Cariad, Facebook

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Follow us on Instagram:

@DachshundHealthUK

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# Pet Advisers' report



Charlotte Baldwin, one of the Pet Advisers, runs the Dedicated to Dachshunds with IVDD charity. Charlotte and her team of D2D supporters are at the sharp-end of IVDD and feel strongly that breeders are not doing enough to help reduce the number of dogs going on to be struck down by this terrible condition. D2D offers invaluable practical advice and support to owners of affected dogs, including lending or donating equipment to support the recovery or improve the quality of life of paralysed dogs. In 5 years, D2D has supported well over 1000 Dachshunds. In 2020, they provided the extraordinary total of:

♥ 300 new strollers 🐾 121 preloved strollers	Practical transport option for recovering dogs both in and outside the home
♥ 224 new Gingerleads 🐾 145 preloved Gingerleads	Essential support during toilet visits to reduce stress on damaged spines
♥ 130 new pens 🐾 130 preloved pens	To restrict movement and support conservative treatment – many dogs cannot cope with crate confinement
<b>PLUS:</b> 🐾 drag bags ♥ sets of wheels 🐾 pairs of booties	For long-term paralysed dogs, improving quality of life and preventing sores on feet and body

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# Health Fund



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*Dachshund Health UK was formally registered as a UK charity in 2018 to support the Breed Council's health activities.*

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*The Trustees are: Sharon Alton\*, Katherine Herrington, Gill Key, Anne Moore, Daniel Roberts\*, Roger Sainsbury, Ian Seath.  
\* = appointed in 2020*



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*£6,600  
donated in 2020*

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During the year, DHUK supported several projects, including:

- Cambridge Vet School IVDD research (2020-2022)
- Grants for IVDD screening of 46 dogs
- Dedicated to Dachshunds with IVDD for strollers and rehab equipment

In 2021, DHUK will continue to support the IVDD study at Cambridge University Vet School and begin support to the KC's IVDD screening programme.



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*£10,500  
raised in 2020*

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We are grateful to everyone who has raised funds for us during 2020. Just some of those who have supported us include:

- The Wirehaired Dachshund Club
- Devoted to Dachshunds (Xmas cards and gifts)
- The RED Foundation
- Candy Jones and Linda Whitwam – authors of 2 Dachshund books

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*About a third of our income is from Breed Club donations.*

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# Planning

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*In this section:*

- *2020 priorities*
  - *Registration trends*
  - *Health surveillance*
  - *Partners*
  - *Communications*
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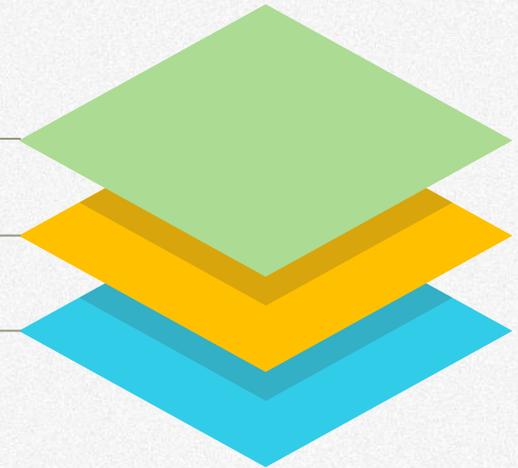
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# Our priorities for 2020 were

IVDD Prevention & Treatment

Eye Disease

Buyer Education



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*In 2020 we planned to work with the Kennel Club's Neurology Group on the formal recognition of our IVDD Screening Programme.*

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*We also began supporting an IVDD research programme at Cambridge University Vet School to study the recovery of IVDD-affected dogs with conservative treatment.*

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## Breed health

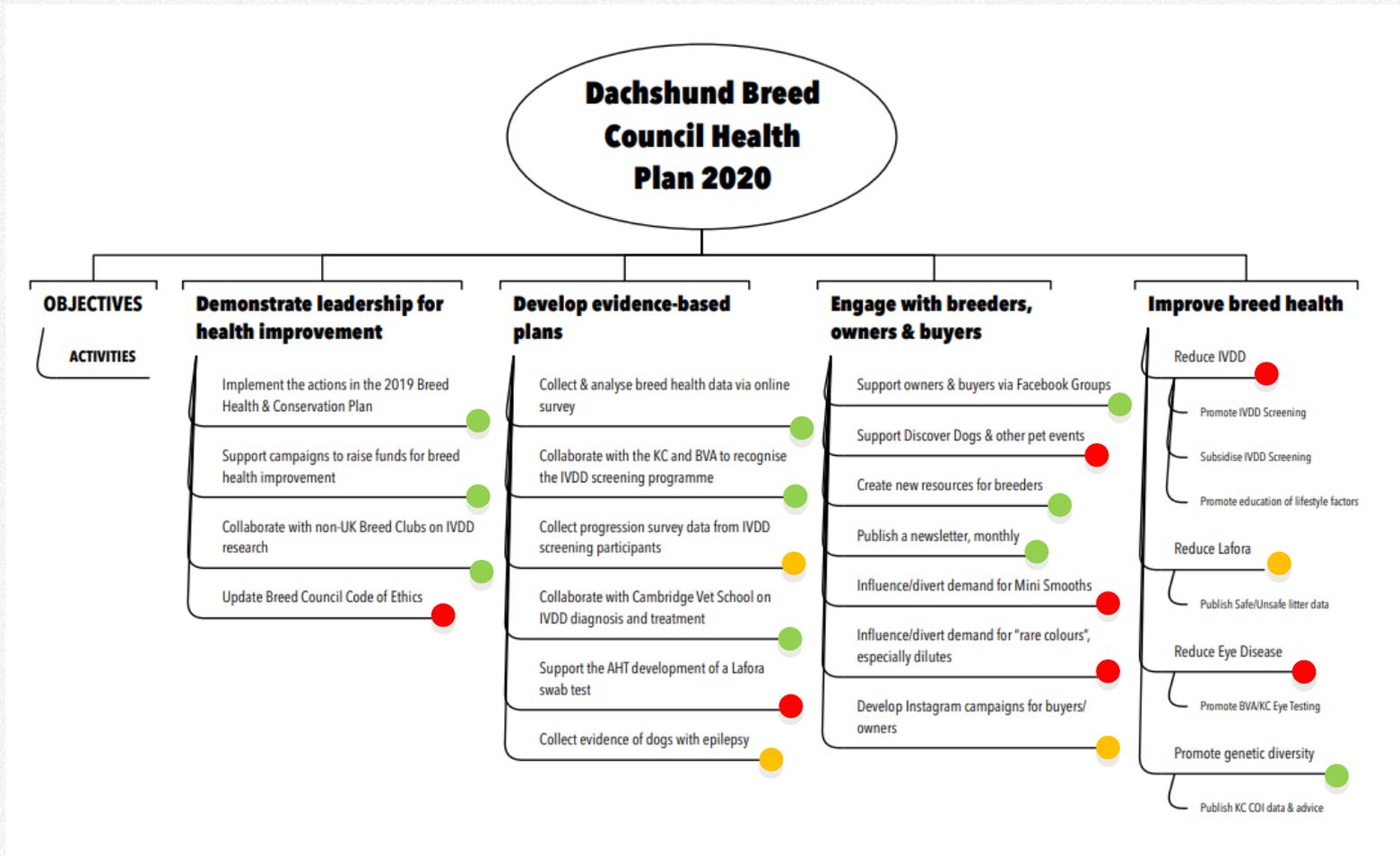
- Reduce the risk of IVDD by promoting the use of Screening and educating owners about lifestyle risk factors – **offered £100/£150 subsidies**
- Achieve 98% Lafora safe litters – **96% actual**
- Promote the use of KC/BVA/ISDS eye screening – **offered 50% subsidies**

## Enablers

- Increase buyer awareness of the breed to influence responsible buying decisions
- Implement the agreed actions in our Breed Health & Conservation Plan
- Analyse and publish data/evidence to support breed improvement

# 2020 Objectives and key activities

*These were our key activities. In addition, we continued to carry out the many other activities that were already under way.*



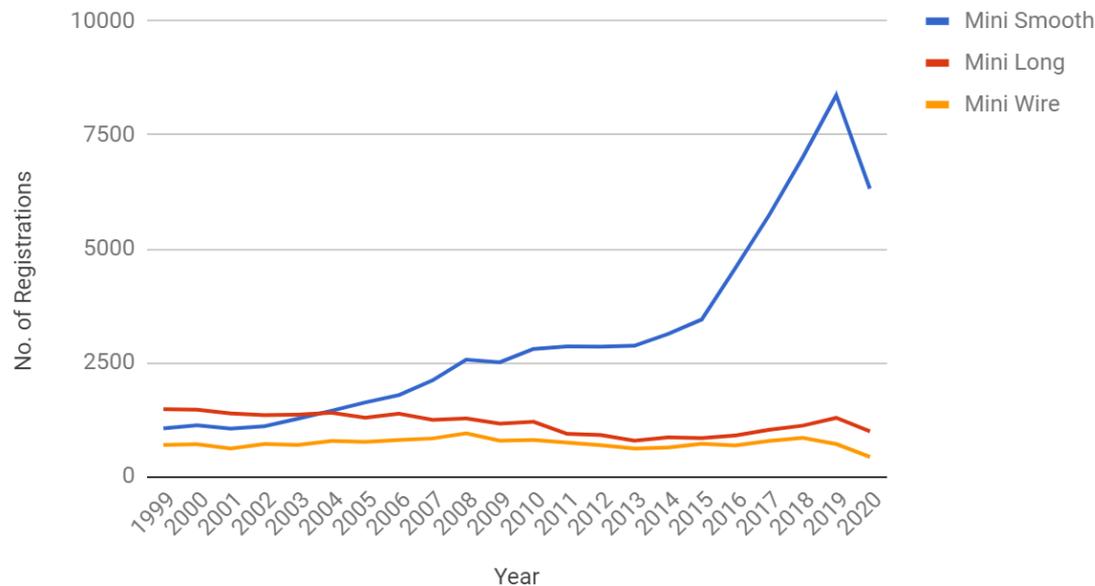
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# Registration trends (Miniatures)

The inexorable rise in popularity of Mini Smooths saw registrations more than double between 2015 and 2019. At the time of writing, with 8 months' data, it looks like Mini Smooths could exceed 9000 registrations in 2020.

In the Miniatures, the Mini Smooths have increased by over 800% since 1999. Mini Longs have declined by about 40% while the Mini Wires have remained roughly static over that same period (based on the linear trend line).

**Registrations of Miniature Dachshunds (1999-2020)**



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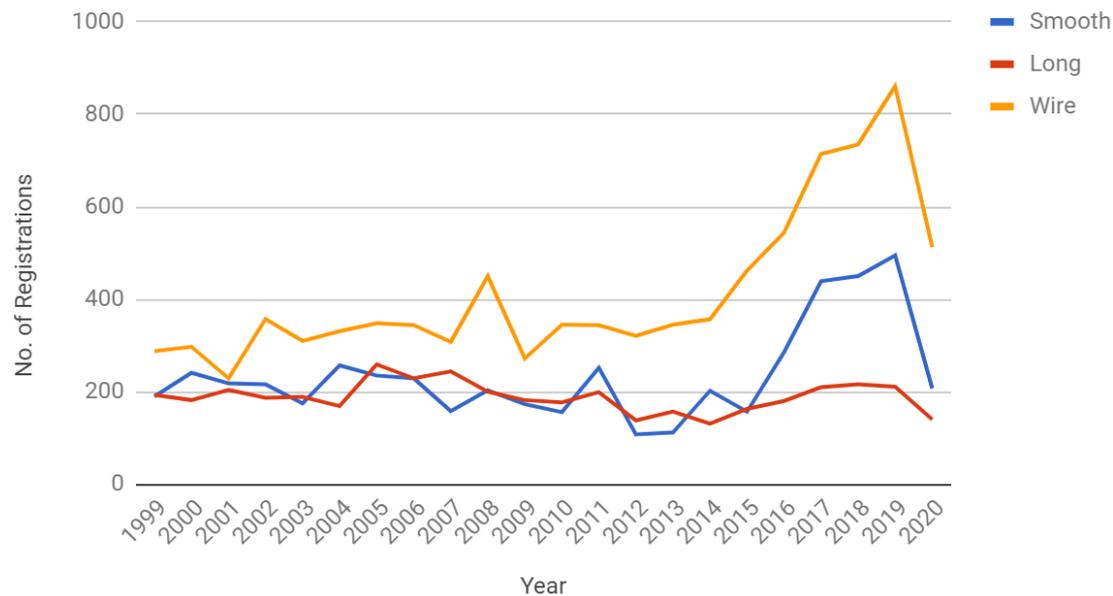
The chart (left) shows Kennel Club registration trends since 1999. N.B. 2020 is for 8 months only.

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# Registration trends (Standards)

In the Standards, the Longs have recovered some of their popularity while the Wires have doubled in popularity since 1999 (based on the linear trend line). Smooths have seen an increase in popularity since 2015, probably on the back of the growth of Mini Smooth registrations.

Registrations of Standard Dachshunds (1999-2020)



The chart (left) shows Kennel Club registration trends since 1999. N.B. 2020 is for 8 months only.

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# Health surveillance

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Our online Health Survey continues to provide a source of useful data on Dachshund health issues and we received 93 reports during 2020; an average of 8 reports each month.

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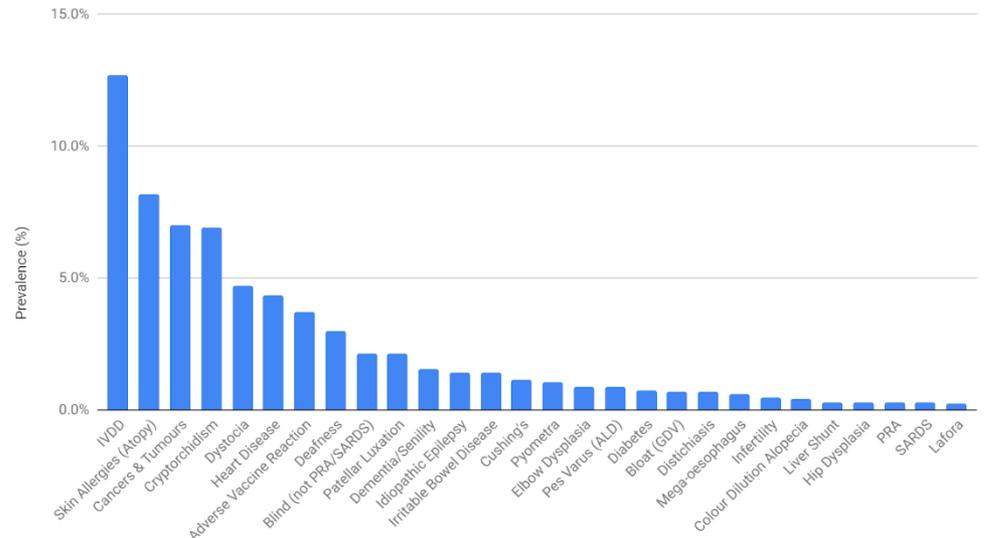
DachsLife 2018 was our most recent major Health Survey and received reports on more than 2500 Dachshunds. Full report at [www.dachshund-health.org.uk](http://www.dachshund-health.org.uk)

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The main focus of DachsLife 2021 will be allergies and skin conditions. These were the second highest prevalence condition reported in 2018.

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DachsLife 2018 Summary of Disease Prevalence (%)



The chart above is a summary of DachsLife 2018 reports.

- IVDD continues to be the No. 1 reported health condition (13% prevalence overall)
- Skin allergies were the 2<sup>nd</sup> most commonly reported condition (8%)
- Cancers and tumours were the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest category (7%) equal with Cryptorchidism (missing testicles)

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# Longevity (Age of death)



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*The chart shows the age of death for dogs in Dachslife 2018*

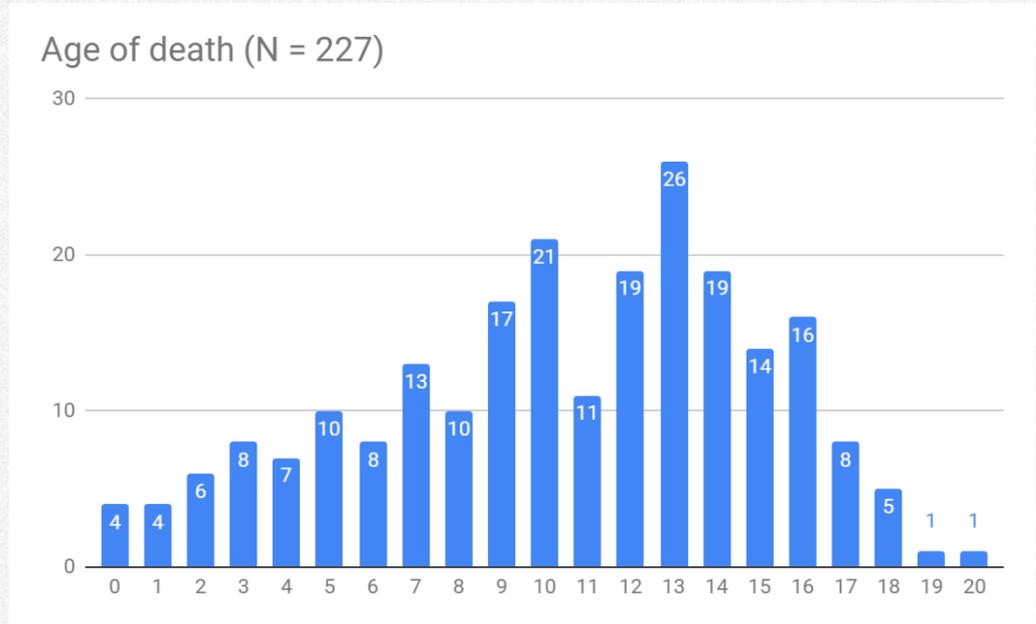
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*The median age of death was 11. In our 2012 survey it was 11.8 years.*

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*40% of deaths were due to cancers, mostly in old age.*

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The median age of death, by variety, in Dachslife 2018 was:

- Smooth = 13
  - Long = 12
  - Wire = 12
  - Mini Smooth = 10
  - Mini Long = 12
  - Mini Wire = 12
-

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# Partners in health improvement



We are working with Professor John Innes and Dr Mark Lowrie of CVS Group as our key partners for the IVDD Screening programme.

We are supporting Dr Paul Freeman and PhD student Sam Khan in their IVDD study at Cambridge Vet School.

Dr Marianne Dorn is supporting members of our IVDD Facebook Group with advice on rehabilitation. [www.therehabvet.com](http://www.therehabvet.com)

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Many of our partners willingly give their time freely and we gratefully acknowledge all their support. Without them, we would not be able to progress our health improvement plans with such scientific and academic rigour.

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Dr Clare Rusbridge continues to support our work on Lafora Disease via our Progression Study, led by Gill Key.

Sadly, Dr Minassian's lab in Toronto is no longer able to offer Lafora screening. The DNA test is available from Laboklin in the UK.



The International Partnership For Dogs have shared examples of our work on their website:

[www.dogwellnet.com](http://www.dogwellnet.com)

In 2020, IPFD published their Dachshund GRIHP resource. GRIHP is Globally Relevant Integrated Health Profile and summarises health information from around the world.

# Communications

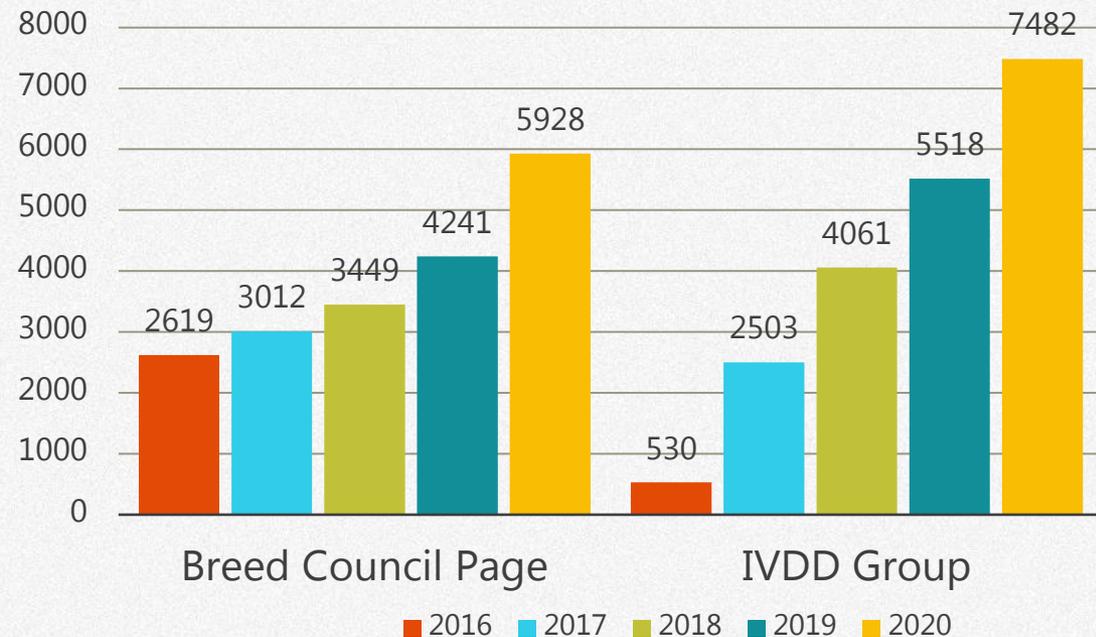
*We have three key groups of people with whom we have to communicate effectively:*

- Breed Club members (who have agreed to abide by our Code of Ethics)*
- Breeders who are not members of Breed Clubs (and who probably represent about 80% of the Dachshund breeders with litters listed in the KC's Breed Records Supplement)*
- Owners and potential owners of Dachshunds, whether they are KC Registered or not*

We have 2 Facebook Groups, a main Breed Council page and an IVDD Support Group. Dachshund Health UK also has a Facebook page with 707 followers.



## Facebook Followers



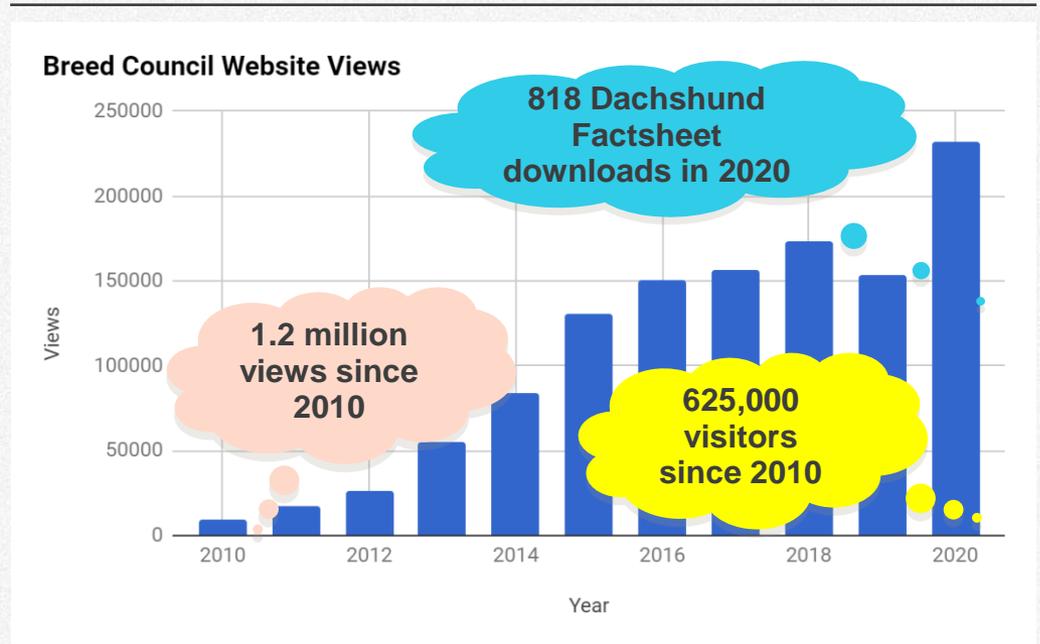
# Communications

*We have 3 websites:*

- Dachshund Breed Council (general information about our breed clubs and the Breed Standard)*
- Health website (advice on the breed, health and welfare for buyers and owners)*
- IVDD (specific information on IVDD and our screening programme)*

204,000 visitors to our IVDD website in 2020 (+46% from 2019)

80% of the traffic to our Health website is on mobile devices (excluding tablets)



### Buying and owning a Dachshund

A free e-book produced by the Dachshund Breed Council

Download our free 44-page e-book  
Visit... [www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk](http://www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk)

[www.dachshundhealth.org.uk](http://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk)

559 downloads in 2020

8900 downloads in total

# Communications

We launched our Health website in September 2017. It had 85,500 visitors in 2020 (up from 29,000 in 2019 and 11,000 in 2018). 87% were new visitors. Monthly views increased from 3000 to 8000 when we relaunched in August 2019 with new buyer and owner advice pages and now average 7200. The most visited pages from the Home page are:

- *Blue & Isabella – health risks*
- *Tips for new owners*
- *Breeding from your Dachshund*
- *Advice for buyers*
- *Cost of ownership*



**Dachshund Health UK**

The health website of the Dachshund Breed Council

23% of visitors came via a social media link & 55% from a search



78% of visitors are from the UK

## DBC News

151 new subscribers  
48% Open Rate (\*)  
80% UK,  
20% non-UK

\* benchmark average is 42%



# Advice for buyers and owners

During 2020, we developed new infographics with advice for buyers and owners. Our updated Health website attracted 200% more visitors in 2020 compared with 2019.



## Dachshund Body Condition Score

<b>TOO THIN</b>	1	Ribs, spine and hip bones are visible from a distance. No discernible body fat and an obvious loss of muscle mass.		1
	2	Ribs, spine and hip bones are easily visible. No palpable body fat and minimal loss of muscle mass.		2
	3	Ribs can be easily felt and may be visible with no palpable fat. Top of the spine is visible and hip bones may also be prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.		3
<b>IDEAL</b>	4	Ribs can be easily felt with minimal fat covering. Waist is easily noted when viewed from above. An "abdominal tuck" is also present, meaning that the abdomen appears tucked up behind the rib cage when viewed from the side.		4
	5	Well-proportioned. Ribs can be easily felt without excess fat covering. Waist can be observed behind the ribs when viewed from above. Abdominal tuck is present.		5
<b>TOO HEAVY</b>	6	Ribs can be felt through a slight excess fat covering. Waist is visible from above, but not prominent. Abdominal tuck is present.		6
	7	Ribs are difficult to feel under a heavy fat covering. Noticeable fat deposits over the lower back and base of the tail. Waistline is absent or barely visible and abdomen may appear obviously rounded or saggy.		7
	8	Ribs can only be felt with heavy pressure. Significant fat deposits over the lower back and base of the tail. Waist and abdominal tuck are both absent. Obvious abdominal distention may also be present.		8
	9	Ribs cannot be felt under a very heavy fat covering. Large fat deposits are seen over the neck, chest, spine and base of the tail. Waist and abdominal tuck are both absent. Obvious abdominal distention.		9

For more information and tips on caring for your Dachshund, visit: [www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk](http://www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk) and [www.dachshundhealth.org.uk](http://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk)  
 © 2020 Dachshund Health UK (Registered Charity 1177400)  
 Body condition images by Hannah Barnes.

## THINKING OF BUYING A PUPPY?

Will you still have free time for your new Dachshund when things eventually return to some sort of normality?



## A DACHSHUND IS A 12+ YEAR COMMITMENT

A Dachshund is for life, not just for Coronavirus!

Get a Dachshund because you have done your research and want one in your life forever.

Advice for buyers at [www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk](http://www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk)



## PHANTOM PREGNANCY

KEY FACTS FOR DACHSHUND OWNERS

### WHEN IS IT SEEN?

Usually seen within 2 months following a season. Tends to last a bit longer than a 'real' pregnancy. (Known as Dioestrus)

**DID YOU KNOW?** every bitch will think they are having puppies? Sometimes symptoms are unnoticeable, other times they may show physical and behavioural signs.



### PHYSICAL SIGNS

- Nipple and mammary gland enlargement (particularly bottom pair);
- Milk or watery discharge from nipples;
- Vulva remains larger but not as big as it was during the season.



### BEHAVIOURAL SIGNS

- Nesting and seeking out quiet areas;
- Very affectionate. Clingy;
- Going off their food;
- Mood swings;
- More fearful behaviours especially to strange humans or dogs coming into the home;
- Gathering of items – often toys or socks.



### WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Increase exercise;
- Cut back on food slightly;
- Give her space;
- Try and deter nesting behaviours;



### DO YOU NEED A VET?

As long as your bitch appears healthy, does not have any abnormal discharge from her vulva, appear unwell in herself or have excessive amounts of milk they should be fine. However, if you are concerned about your dog's health in any way always speak to a vet. They can give medication to stop milk production.

### PYOMETRA!

Pyometra is a serious and potentially fatal womb infection. Every owner of an entire bitch should be aware of this. It is only seen during the Dioestrus or 'phantom' stage. It is a medical emergency. It may result in an emergency spay. And no, it cannot wait to see a vet! Some vets are using medication to treat it now in its earlier stages but mostly the treatment is neutering. It is diagnosed by an ultrasound scan. If you suspect it, please get her checked.

### Symptoms (may be minimal or mild):

- Lethargy; Refusal to eat; Vomiting;
- Diarrhoea; Distended abdomen;
- Enlarged or flaccid vulva; maybe foul-smelling discharge from vulva
- Excessive water drinking and urinating.

It is most common in bitches over 6 years old but is seen younger. It is still less common than IVDD, so please read our neutering research before deciding to neuter your dachshund before 18 months unless an medical grounds (such as pyometra).

LEARN MORE AT [WWW.DACHSHUNDHEALTH.ORG.UK](http://WWW.DACHSHUNDHEALTH.ORG.UK)

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# Advice for Vets

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*During 2019, we published a new advice paper for veterinary surgeons, based on our Breed Health and Conservation Plan. It is fully referenced to published papers on the main conditions affecting our breed.*

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## Dach-Facts: Information for Veterinary Surgeons



### DACHSHUND HEALTH INFORMATION

There are some health conditions which occur more commonly in Dachshunds than in other breeds and these are covered in this Factsheet. The information identifies those that may be particularly prevalent in Dachshunds as a breed, whilst also highlighting any possible differences between individual varieties of dachshunds.

This paper lists conditions in order of body systems. Those highlighted in red are current priorities for the Breed Council.

Points of importance for discussion with clients about owning or breeding are in bold.

References to relevant papers are included and this summary is drawn from the Dachshund Breed Health and Conservation Plan published by the Kennel Club and Dachshund Breed Council in 2018.

For more information, e-mail: [info@dachshundhealth.org.uk](mailto:info@dachshundhealth.org.uk) or visit our website: [www.dachshundhealth.org.uk](http://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk) where you will also find advice for buyers and new owners.

### Breed Priorities

The Breed Council's priorities, agreed with the Kennel Club, are as follows (Nos. 1-6 are conditions to watch out for in veterinary practice):

1. **Intervertebral Disc Disease** (IVDD) which can affect around 1 in 4 Dachshunds and its welfare impact ranges from mild pain to life-changing paralysis. A UK Screening programme exists for breeders.
2. **Lafora Disease** (a form of myoclonic epilepsy) in Miniature Wirehaired Dachshunds, for which a DNA test exists.
3. **Eye disease** including PRA (for which DNA tests exist) and Distichiasis; therefore, we recommend all breeding animals are screened using the BVA/KC/ISDS Eye Scheme.
4. **Mitral Valve Disease** in the Smooth and Wire Standard varieties.
5. **Pes Varus and Patellar Luxation** in the Miniature varieties.
6. **Colour Dilution Alopecia** is a concern in Dachshunds with "dilute" colour genetics (Blue, Isabella/Lilac) but **atopy** is also prevalent across all 6 coats and sizes.
7. Maintenance of genetic diversity. The Kennel Club will now allow puppies born with a different coat type to their parents (so-called recessive coats) to be registered as per their coat.



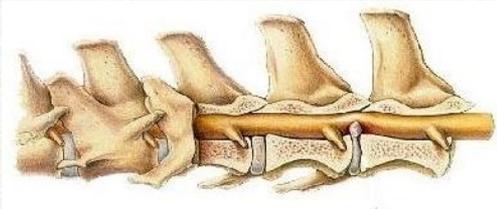
# Breed Health Improvement

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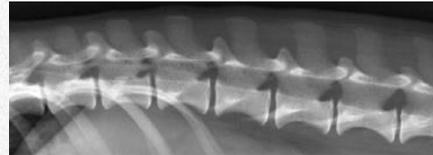
- *IVDD*
  - *Lafora Disease*
  - *Eye Disease*
  - *Watch list*
  - *Genetic diversity*
  - *Recessive coats*
  - *Colours and health*
  - *Conformation*
  - *Temperament*
-

# Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD)



Back disease is reported to affect up to 1 in 4 Dachshunds, but the prevalence varies in the 6 varieties, with S and MS at highest risk. This may range from relatively mild symptoms that can be cured with cage rest and anti-inflammatory drugs, through to paralysis which may require surgery, or in the worst cases, euthanasia.

[www.dachshund-ivdd.uk](http://www.dachshund-ivdd.uk)



We launched our IVDD X-ray Screening Programme in November 2016, together with a dedicated IVDD website and Facebook Support Group.

159 dogs have now been screened. 81 of those were Mini Smooths which is good news considering this variety has the highest prevalence of IVDD.

The scheme is being formally adopted by the KC in 2020.

*The aim of X-ray screening is to reduce the occurrence of herniations by encouraging breeding with dogs that have low numbers of calcifications.*

IVDD CALCIFICATION GRADE FOR EACH DOG		DOG ONE (Sire or Dam)			
		GRADE 0	GRADE 1	GRADE 2	GRADE 3
DOG TWO (Site or Dam)	GRADE 0				
	GRADE 1				
	GRADE 2				
	GRADE 3				

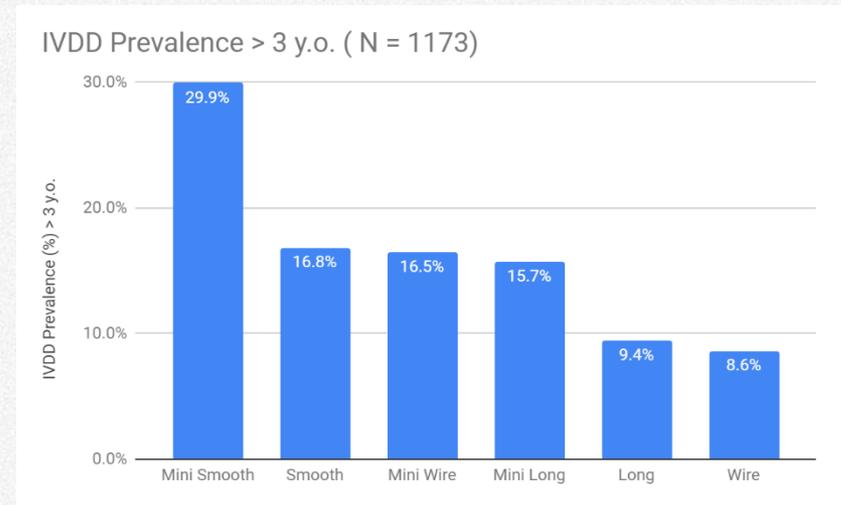
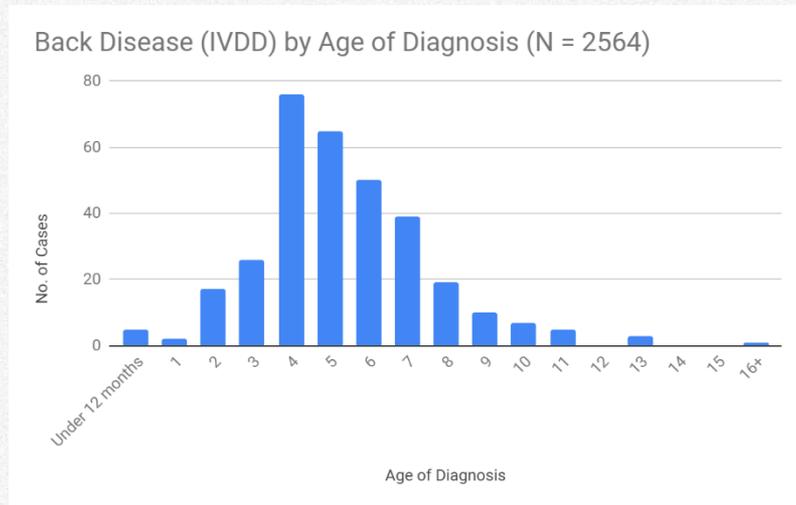
69% of dogs screened had 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 calcifications.

It would not be sensible from a genetic diversity perspective to remove all high-scoring dogs from the gene pool by not breeding from them. We have advice on breeding in the form of a risk matrix, rather than absolute cut-off limits.

IVDD screening is now a Recommendation for all KC Assured Breeders.

# Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD)

*The data in charts here is from our DachLife 2018 survey.*



Overall prevalence = 12.7%. This must be viewed in the context of nearly half the dogs in the survey being under the age of 4 (i.e. generally below IVDD risk age). Unsurprisingly, most cases (70%) of IVDD were reported between the ages of 4 and 7. The median age of diagnosis was 5.

A Danish study published in 2020 showed an overall prevalence of 18%. (Breeding schemes for IVDD; Bruun et al.)

Overall prevalence for Dachshunds over the age of 3 = 21.1%. This calculation excludes the young dogs that, in general, are less likely to have IVDD. The exclusion of dogs under 3 is consistent with analyses in our previous survey reports.

In our online survey from December 2009 to December 2020, 5% of IVDD cases were in the neck and 95% in the back (N=312).

# The genetics of IVDD

## IVDD RISK SCREENING

We do not recommend the use of the UC Davis "DNA Test" for IVDD risk. Here's why...

### 2020 STUDY (DENMARK): IS DISC CALCIFICATION SCORE PREFERABLE TO GENOTYPING OF THE FGF4 RETROGENE?

#### THE FREQUENCY OF THE "INS" ALLELE IS VERY HIGH

Researchers at UC Davis in the USA identified a mutation (insertion) on the FGF4 retrogene. They believe it to be associated with a higher risk of IVDD in Dachshunds. However, nearly all the Dachshunds in this latest Danish study have inherited the insertion from both parents (i.e. they are homozygous for "ins"). This means the DNA test is not a practical tool for choosing lower risk breeding pairs.



#### IN THE DANISH STUDY, THE OVERALL INCIDENCE OF IVDD WAS 18% (91 OUT OF 503 DOGS)

Dachshunds with 5 or more calcifications had a 14 times higher risk of developing IVDD than dachshunds with fewer than 5 calcifications.



In Dachshunds, having a high number of calcifications is a better indicator of IVDD risk than the presence of the FGF4 insertion.

95% of Dachshunds in this study had at least one copy of the FGF4 insertion that is, supposedly, an indicator of risk but just 18% had IVDD.

#### IT'S ALL ABOUT RISK



Breeding Dachshunds with low Calcification Scores has been shown to reduce the risk of disc prolapses.

Low scores do not guarantee a dog won't have a back problem but dogs with high scores are MUCH more likely to suffer.

#### READ THE PAPER

Breeding schemes for intervertebral disc disease in dachshunds: Is disc calcification score preferable to genotyping of the FGF4 retrogene insertion on CFA12?  
Published in Canine Medicine and Genetics, December 2020  
Braun , Braun, Marx, Proschowsky & Fredholm

**Conclusions:** The results of this study show that the FGF4 retrogene insertion on CFA12 is not a valid risk indicator on its own. Relying on the DNA test will have an irreversible effect on the Dachshund breed, excluding almost all dogs from breeding. Thus, using calcification status remains the most reliable breeding scheme for disc herniation in Dachshunds.

#### HELP US TO REDUCE IVDD RISK

Join our Screening Programme  
Visit [www.dachshund-ivdd.uk](http://www.dachshund-ivdd.uk)  
email us at [info@dachshund-ivdd.uk](mailto:info@dachshund-ivdd.uk)

In October 2017, researchers at the University of California, Davis, revealed the discovery of a genetic mutation across breeds that is responsible for chondrodystrophy (the skeletal disorder leading to shorter legs and abnormal intervertebral discs) in a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. We reported this and their claim to have developed a DNA test for IVDD. This is a second gene associated with chondrodystrophy.

*In 2020, a team of Danish researchers published a paper that confirms our earlier findings that the so-called UC Davis DNA test for IVDD is not suitable as a tool to reduce the risk of back disease in Dachshunds.*

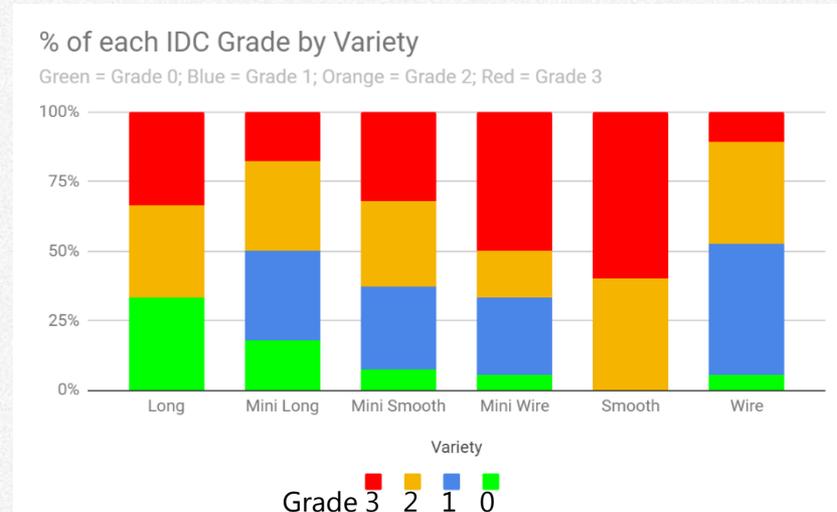
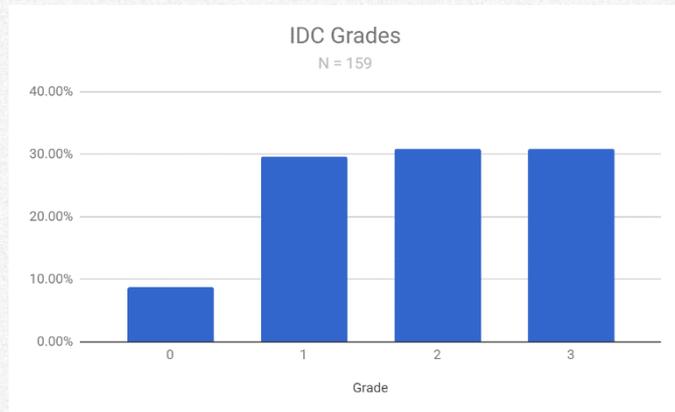
***We do not recommend the use of the UC Davis "DNA Test" for IVDD***

*See: Canine Medicine & Genetics Journal December 2020  
Breeding schemes for intervertebral disc disease in dachshunds: Is disc calcification score preferable to genotyping of the FGF4 retrogene insertion on CFA12?*



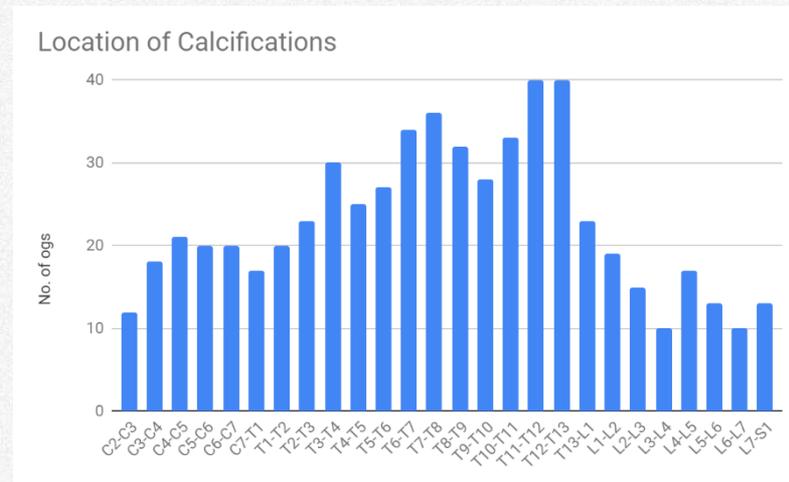
# IVDD Screening update

By the end of 2020, 159 dogs had been screened. 69% were graded 0, 1 or 2 (i.e. with under 5 calcifications).



*McKee (1992) found that, among 60 dogs with thoracolumbar disc protrusions, the most commonly affected disc was T12/T13 (33%). Discs from T12/T13 to L1/L2 accounted for 75 percent of all protrusions. None of these cases had evidence of multiple disc protrusion.*

*In our 2012 Breed Survey, 85% of herniations were in the back and 15% in the neck.*



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# Lifestyle factors and IVDD

IVDD has a strong heritability, meaning it runs in families. Dogs whose parents and other ancestors suffered from IVDD are much more likely also to suffer from IVDD. Unfortunately, just because your dog is fit and in good body condition does not guarantee that it will avoid back problems.

Nevertheless, prevention is better than cure, so lifestyle choices you can take to help reduce the risk of your dog having a back problem are very important.

Research | [Open Access](#)

## Neuter status as a risk factor for canine intervertebral disc herniation (IVDH) in dachshunds: a retrospective cohort study

Marianne Dorn and Ian J. Seath 

*Canine Genetics and Epidemiology* 2018, 5:11  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40575-018-0067-7> | © The Author(s). 2018

Received: 5 July 2018 | Accepted: 26 October 2018 | Published: 15 November 2018



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*Our DachsLife 2015 Health Survey investigated lifestyle factors that were associated with IVDD. The results were also analysed and published in a peer-reviewed paper in 2016 and a further paper on neutering in 2018.*

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## Exercise

Dogs over the age of 3 that were **highly** or **moderately** active were half as likely to have suffered an IVDD incident as dogs described as mildly or not at all active.

This could either be a genuine effect of fitter dogs being less prone to IVDD, or affected dogs are now leading less active lives.

Keeping Dachshunds at an ideal body condition (fit, not fat) is also recommended.

## Neutering

Females neutered at any age had a significantly increased risk of IVDD than did unneutered females.

Bitches neutered before 12 months old were the group at highest risk.

These early-neutered bitches were around twice as likely to develop IVDD as were unneutered bitches.

Males neutered before 12 months old had a significantly higher incidence of IVDD than unneutered males.

However, there was no significant difference in IVDD risk between unneutered and late-neutered males.

# Lafora Disease

Blood samples have been collected from around 700 MWHDs worldwide, mostly of UK origin, for canine LD genetic testing. Among the total tested MWHD population, 7.2% were homozygous for the dodecamer repeat and at risk for LD. In addition, 222 dogs were heterozygous for the mutation, indicating a carrier frequency of 31.8% in the tested MWHD population. Among the tested MWHDs, the mutant allele frequency was 0.2.

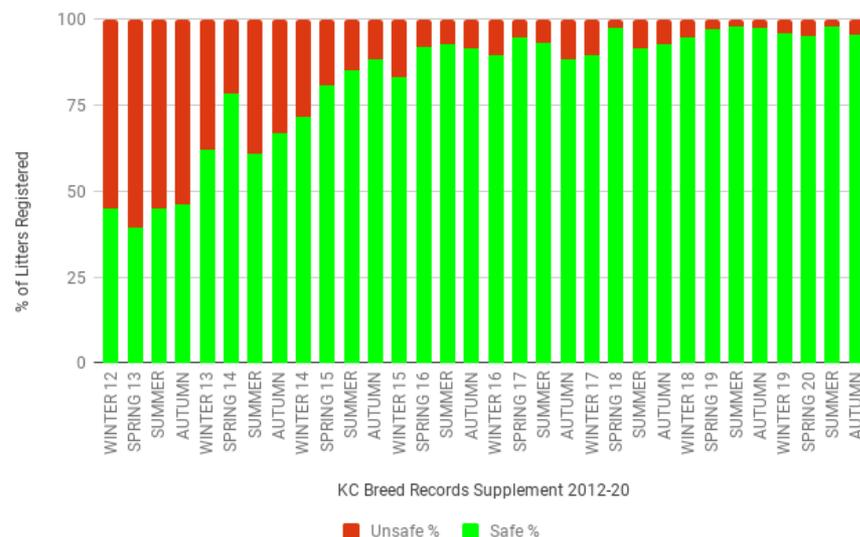
Data from the tested dogs over 6 years indicated that the frequency of the homozygous dogs has decreased from 9.9% in 2012 to 5% now and carrier dogs has reduced from 42.3 % in 2012 to 21.6% now. As a consequence, the frequency of dogs free of the mutation has increased from 47.9% to 73.0%.

*Lafora Screening is now available from Laboklin UK.*

*Results are recorded by the Kennel Club and reported in the Breed Records Supplement.*

96% of litters were Lafora "safe" in 2020

Mini Wire Litters - Lafora Status



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# Eye disease

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*The overall prevalence of PRA in our Dachslife 2018 survey was 0.3% and all 7 cases were in Miniatures.*

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*The overall prevalence of Distichiasis in our Dachslife 2018 survey was 0.7% and 15 of 18 cases were Miniatures. The prevalence in Mini Longs was 2.5%.*

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*The risks of cord1 PRA are now very low and breeders/buyers should not be prioritising cord1 DNA test results above other health conditions.*

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***We recommend clinical eye screening for all varieties of Dachshund.***

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In 2019, the KC announced that, as of 1st January 2020, Mini Smooth Dachshunds will no longer be listed under Schedule B of the KC/BVA eye scheme for Generalised progressive retinal atrophy (GPRA). Schedule B will also cease to exist from this date. Mini Longs remain on Schedule A (for known inherited conditions).

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During 2019, Dachshund Health UK subsidised a clinical (KC/BVA) eye screening session at the Dachshund Club Championship Show. This was carried out by Prof. Peter Bedford.

Examination under the Eye Scheme is not restricted to the identification of inherited eye disease, but also includes general assessment of the health of the eye and adnexa (eyelids, tear ducts and other parts around the eyeball).

Peter Bedford reported:

*I examined the eyes of 30 minis and 4 standard dachs. All the dogs were clear for retinal disease and apart from 3 minis with distichiasis (of no clinical significance) no other ocular or adnexal problems were found. With PRA in the history of the MLH, awareness of this blinding disease is essential and the regular checking of the breeding stock is advisable. Recessively inherited disease can skip generations, but DNA testing can detect carrier stock and awareness of emerging potentially inherited ocular disease should prompt regular eye checks.*

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# Cancers and Tumours

## CANCER IN DACHSHUNDS

The good news from our 2018 Health Survey of 2500 dogs

### FIND OUT MORE

#### DachsLife 2018 Results

The results of our 2018 Health Survey are reported at [www.dachshundhealth.org.uk](http://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk) (go to the "Surveys" menu).

Thank you to all the owners who took the time to provide data on their Dachshund(s) for our survey.

[WWW.DACHSHUNDHEALTH.ORG.UK](http://WWW.DACHSHUNDHEALTH.ORG.UK)



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*The main focus of our DachsLife 2018 survey was cancers and tumours.*

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93% of Dachshunds in our DachsLife 2018 survey reported no cancers or tumours.

About 1 in 20 Mini Smooths, Smooths, Mini Wires and Wires reported a cancer/tumour. About 1 in 10 Mini Longs and Longs reported a cancer/tumour. Interestingly, Red and Cream Dachshunds were statistically more likely to report a cancer/tumour than Black/Tans or other colours/patterns.

Just over a third of the deaths reported in our survey were attributed to cancers.

Mammary tumours and Gastrointestinal cancers/tumours were the most common type reported. They accounted for 44% of all cancers/tumours (22% each). Next most common were skin cancers (12%), blood system (6%), lymph nodes (5%), hormone system ((5%) and bones/joints (5%).

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*The median (average) age of cancer diagnosis was 9. In general, cancers and tumours are more common in older Dachshunds. On average, Smooths were diagnosed at the oldest age, 12, and Longs at the youngest age, 7.*

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*Where it was known, 60% of the cases were reported as benign. 40% were malignant. 1 in 6 owners didn't know if their dog's cancer/tumour was malignant or benign.*

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*We added information to our website for owners and vets to highlight the relatively low risks of cancer compared with the risk of IVDD.*

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# Skin allergies (Atopy)



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*1 in 12 Dachshunds in our DachLife 2018 survey was reported as having some form of skin allergy.*

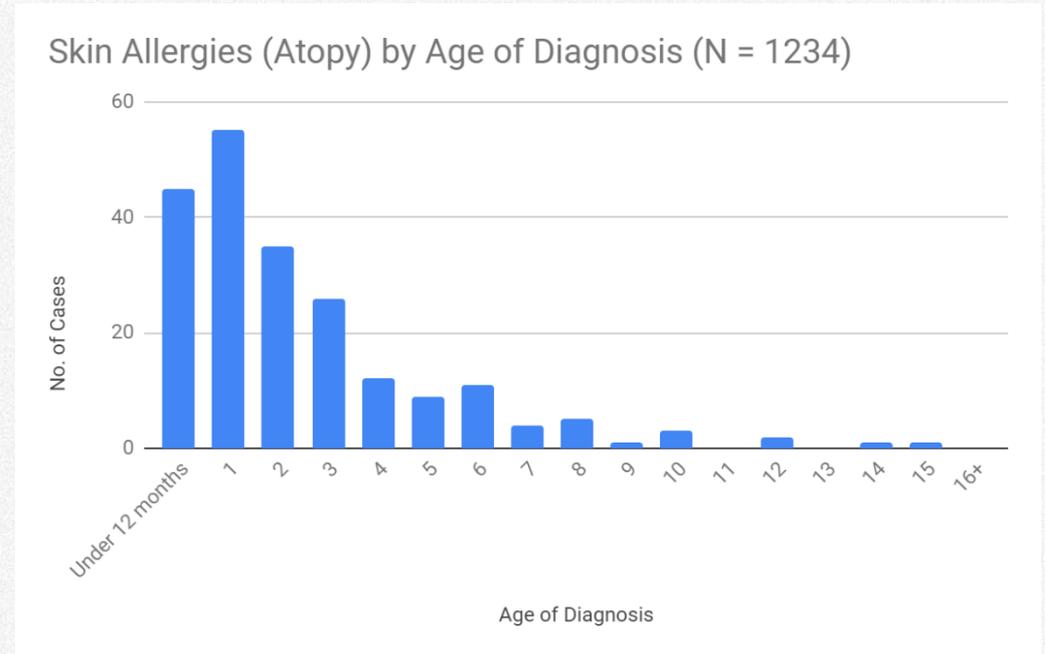
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*This was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest prevalence condition (after IVDD).*

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8.2% of Dachshunds in our DachLife 2018 survey reported some degree of skin allergy. Mini Smooths had the highest prevalence among the 6 varieties and Mini Wires the lowest, although the differences between them were not significant.



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*Our **DachLife 2021 Health Survey** will focus on skin conditions and allergies. The survey has been developed in conjunction with a veterinary dermatology specialist and the Kennel Club.*

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# Sarcoglycan Deficient Muscular Dystrophy

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## **Sarcoglycan: A Mutation in Miniature Dachshund Dogs Causes Limb Girdle Muscular Dystrophy 2D. Mickelson et al. 2020**

A group of related miniature dachshund dogs with exercise intolerance, stiff gait, dysphagia, myoglobinuria and markedly elevated serum creatine kinase activities were identified in Australia and the USA.

Muscle biopsies were dystrophic. Sarcoglycanopathy, a form of limb-girdle muscular dystrophy, was suspected based on immunostaining and western blotting, where  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$ -sarcoglycan were all absent or reduced. Genetic mapping and whole genome sequencing identified a premature stop codon mutation in the sarcoglycan A subunit gene (SGCA). Affected dachshunds were confirmed on several continents.

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*Clinical signs, first noted at approximately 6 months of age, are variable and include exercise intolerance, stiff gait, myoglobinuria and dysphagia.*

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*A DNA test is available from the University of Minnesota, USA. The mutation is autosomal recessive, and the test identifies Clear, Carrier and Affected dogs.*

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*We are following an investigation into SDMD being carried out by Australian breeders.*

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*UK dogs are in the pedigrees of affected Australian dogs. This is unsurprising given the exchange of bloodlines over many years.*

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# Analysis of Caesarean Sections

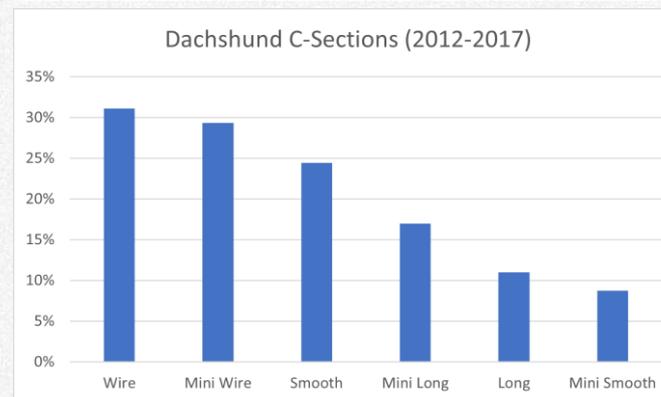
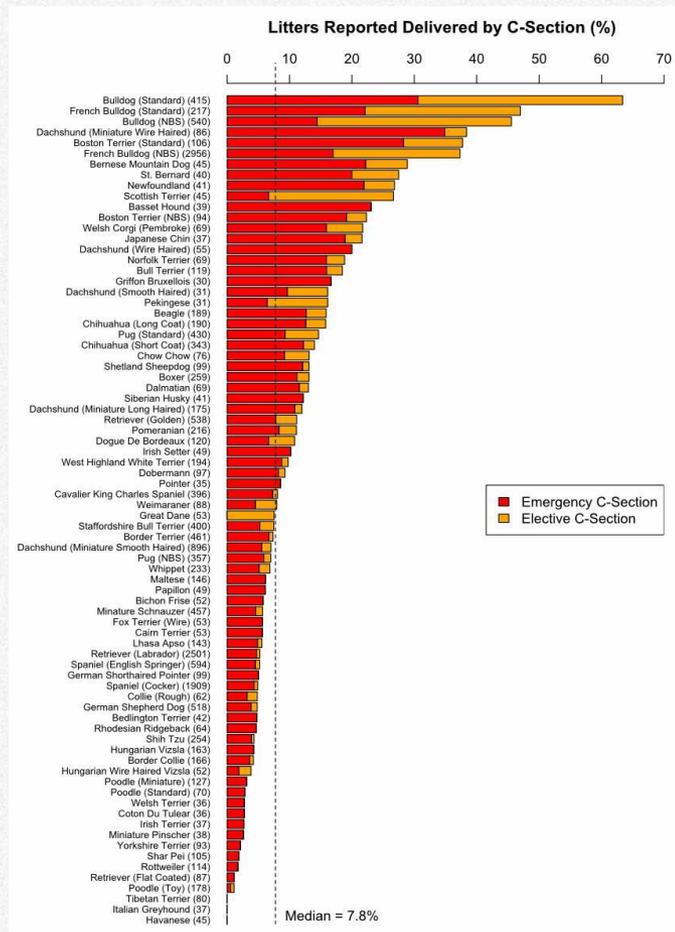
We are grateful to Cassie Smith for allowing us to reproduce her analysis of the rates of caesarean sections in pedigree dogs, as published in the Breed Records Supplements.

The chart (left) shows reported C-Section rates for KC registered litters in the first half of 2019, for breeds with 30 or more litters registered in that time (number of litters for each breed in brackets).

Mini Wires are 4th in the list and Wires are 15th. Smooths are 19th. However, if you ignore the separation of Bulldogs and French Bulldogs into Breed Standard and Non-Breed Standard Colours, this puts the Mini Wires at No. 3, Wires at 13 and Smooths at 17th.

*We previously did an analysis of CS rates between 2012 and 2017.*

*As a breed, they can be very slow to whelp and it may be that some owners go to the vet early, as a precautionary measure.*



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# Our current “Watch List”



## Lymphoma

In general, cancers and tumours appear to be conditions of old age in Dachshunds. However, we have seen a spate of reports of Lymphomas reported in young Mini Longs. We have had 11 cases reported in dogs aged 4 and under. These represent 40% of all Mini Long cancer cases in our online reports and we have had 4 times more cancers reported in Mini Longs than any of the other varieties.



## Epilepsy

At its November 2015 meeting, the Breed Council agreed to set up an online registry of affected dogs to encourage reporting of epilepsy by owners. We now have reports for 14 dogs, of which 8 were Mini Longs. Although 57% of cases reported are Mini Longs, we still need significantly more cases reported to be able to carry out any meaningful analysis.



## Heart Disease

In DachsLife 2018, Heart disease was reported in 4.3% of dogs, with Wires reporting the highest prevalence (12%) and Longs second highest (8%).

Heart Murmurs were in the top 3 conditions reported (3%) for Wires in the 2014 KC survey and heart disease was the most common cause of death. The average age of death due to cardiac conditions was 9.

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# Our current “Watch List”

## Pes Varus

### What is it?

Pes varus is a Latin term that combines pes (foot) and varus (inward). It is a bone deformity where the distal tibia is turned inward toward the body. It occurs when the shinbone growth plate closes prematurely, causing asymmetrical growth of the tibia. It results in a bow-legged appearance and lameness. It is also known as Angular Limb Deformity.

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*This is a condition that judges should be aware of when assessing Dachshunds in the show ring.*

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*We have created a Pes Varus page on our Health website.*

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### Prevalence:

The condition was reported with a prevalence of 0.9% in DachsLife 2018.

It is probably under-reported as it may simply be mistaken for "poor hind movement". It has been reported in all three coat varieties and both Standard and Miniature Dachshunds, but UK cases have mostly been in Miniatures.

### Severity & treatment:

The younger the age at which the growth plate closes, the more severe the deformity. Dogs that are mildly affected may experience few problems and are unlikely to need surgical treatment. In more severe cases, the dog may be lame, in pain and may develop osteoarthritis in older age. In these cases, surgery may be required to correct the deformity.



Image courtesy of Georgia Wallin

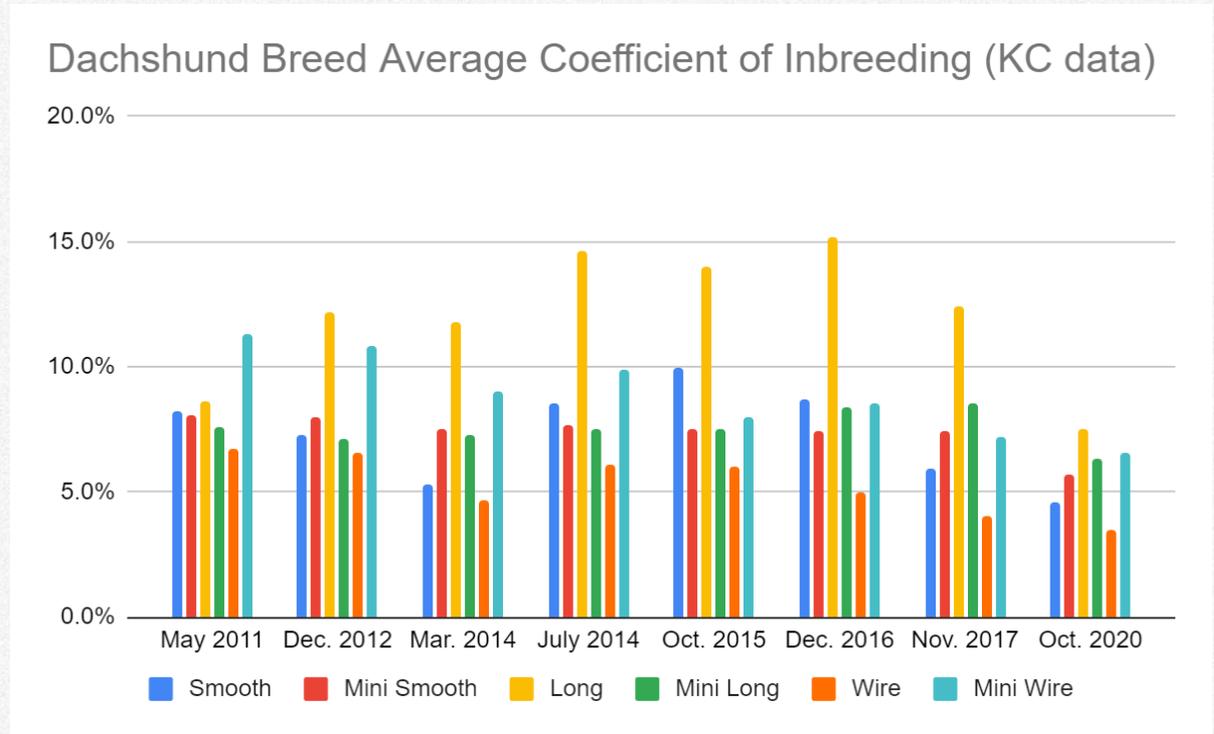
# Genetics and diversity

The higher the CoI, the greater the probability that two copies of a particular gene will be inherited from a common ancestor.

Wires continue to have the lowest Coefficient of Inbreeding and Longs, the highest.

It is interesting to note how the COI for Mini Wires has reduced over the past 6 years.

The Kennel Club updated the published data for breed average Coefficients of Inbreeding. We've been tracking this since it was first published in 2011. Here's the summary of results for each of our six varieties of Dachshund:



*It is likely that the KC calculations of COI are underestimates due to missing pedigree information on imported dogs. However, assuming this discrepancy is consistent over time, the figures should still be comparable and useful to highlight trends. The KC COI data was updated in October 2020.*

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# Recessive coats

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Dachshunds in the UK normally have 2 copies of their own coat type gene (Wirehaired = WW, Smooth-haired = SS or Longhaired = LL) because the KC does not allow cross-coat matings.

However, these were allowed until 1977 and there are still Wires and Smooths that “carry” the genes for different coat types.

DNA tests are available from Laboklin UK for Smooth-Long and Wire.

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In 2017, the Kennel Club decided to amend Annex D to the B regulations, allowing the registration of Dachshunds born with a recessive coat type.

The Dachshund Breed Council expressed concern that this could lead to Lafora’s disease, a debilitating neurological condition which currently affects only Miniature Wire Haired Dachshunds, entering the gene pool of other varieties.

After careful consideration, the Kennel Club Board have approved a recommendation from the Dog Health Group that the progeny of any Dachshund from two Miniature Wirehaired Dachshund parents, registered as a different coat type to their parents, must have a coat type DNA test as a condition of registration, and will be endorsed by the Kennel Club (R progeny not eligible for registration). The endorsement will be removed only should a clear Lafora’s test result be produced or if both parents are either tested as clear or shown to be hereditarily clear from the condition.

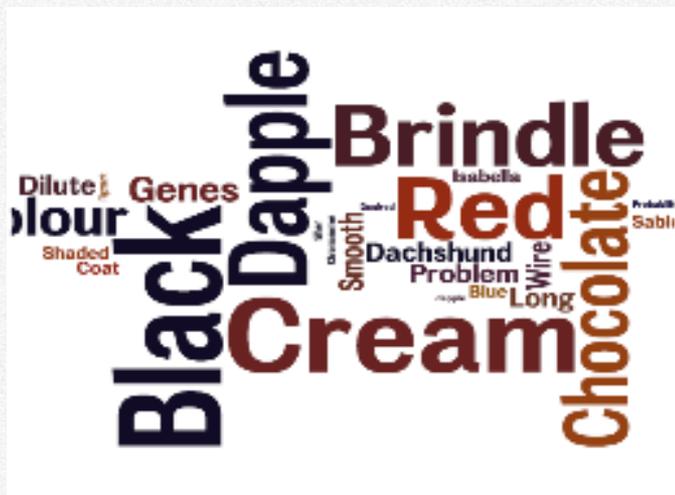
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*Allowing recessive coated Dachshunds to register in the appropriate breed for their coat will help improve the size of the gene pool for these breeds. The Kennel Club have now put testing in place which will prevent Lafora disease from being accidentally introduced into other breeds of Dachshund when this is done.*

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## Colours and health



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In the last year there has been a significant increase in the number of dilute coloured dogs being sold in the UK. The majority are being bred by French Bulldog and English Bulldog extreme-colour breeders, many using dogs imported from the U.S.A. or Eastern Europe, presumably as the market for both has passed the peak and they see an opportunity to make significant money from 'rare' or 'coloured' dachshunds.

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The Blue colour is a dilute of the black and tan; Isabella (also known as lilac in other breeds) is the dilute of the chocolate colour. The gene that causes the dilute colours can also cause an issue in some dogs called colour dilution alopecia (CDA), where the hair shaft is thin and weak, meaning it can drop out of the follicle and cause baldness. Because the coat is thinner than normal, the skin can also be more susceptible to infection and sunburn, which in turn may cause cancer.

Helen Geeson, resident geneticist and colour expert on the Dachshund Breed Council's Health and Welfare Sub-committee explains: "*The hypothesis is that the gene occurs in more than one version and some breeds have the problem gene whereas others do not. If this hypothesis is correct (and the research is incredibly slow and not progressing rapidly), what we do know for certain is that Dachshunds do have the version that causes CDA. At the moment, there is no DNA test for CDA (there is a DNA test for the dilution gene but it cannot differentiate between the version that causes CDA and the version that doesn't). Therefore, currently there is no 100% safe way to breed dilute colour Dachshunds and the people who are breeding them who say they don't have CDA in their lines cannot possibly know that for certain, as they haven't been breeding Dachshunds long enough to prove it. They are relying on mainly American breeders and some in Eastern Europe, and I am not convinced I would be trusting them all*".

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*Gill Key, one of our Pet Advisors, ran a Facebook survey during 2018. 53% of respondents were from USA, reflecting the higher number of dilute dogs bred there. 36% of respondents were from the UK, the rest being from Canada, Australia and South Africa. In total, 43% of dogs were reported as showing CDA.*

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# Conformation



Source: Dogs Today 2009

## The dangers of exaggeration

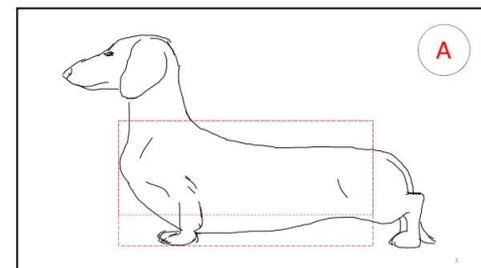
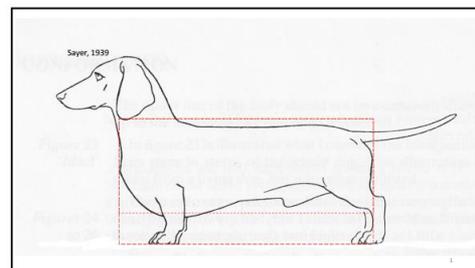
Our Health Committee's concerns are that dogs with excessive length and lack of ground clearance cannot be considered to be "fit for function" and that such exaggerations are likely to increase their health risks.

IVDD is one of those risks, as is Bloat which is reported in Dachshunds and other breeds with proportionately more depth of chest. Angular limb deformities such as Pes Varus are also a risk.

In 2018 we published an article on the dangers of exaggeration: "***Dachshunds: Not long and low; please read the Breed Standard***".

By definition, the Dachshund is an "exaggerated" breed; the genes for dwarfism cause the breed's characteristic short legs. The Breed Standard's use of the word "*low*" relates to this dwarfism; the breed is low to ground at the withers compared with a non-dwarf breed. Low to ground does not mean lack of ground clearance and the standard specifically requires "*body sufficiently clear of the ground to allow free movement*".

**Our Health Committee is concerned that, despite the many messages about desired proportions and ground clearance that have been communicated at seminars for over a decade, some breeders and judges still seem inclined to favour undesirable exaggerations. Many pet owners also seem to think that very short legs are correct.**



We created outlines of a selection of dogs from the show-ring and overlaid these with a 2:1 box and a 25% ground clearance line. All the illustrations have been drawn to the same scale, so are directly comparable. Sayer's illustration is also included as a baseline reference. They clearly show that UK dogs (e.g. A above) which are longer than the desired 2:1 proportions also tend to be excessively deep in chest, with very short legs.

**BVA**  
British Veterinary Association

## EXTREME BREEDING

### Long, low bodies

Examples DACHSHUNDS AND BASSET HOUNDS

Have a high risk of spinal compression and injury, leading to chronic pain and impaired sensation and movement

#HealthOverLooks

# Temperament



In November 2018, an Open Access paper "[Prevailing Clusters of Canine Behavioural Traits in Historical US Demand for Dog Breeds \(1926–2005\)](#)" was published. The analysis identified 6 clusters of breeds, each of which had behavioural traits in common.

Dachshunds were in the small-breed cluster of dogs that score high on aggression, fear, separation, excitability and are motivated by owner attention.

In 2012, we conducted a [survey of Dachshund temperaments](#) and had around 1400 responses. The summary is shown below:

## DachLife 2012 Temperament Survey (1400 dogs)

Percentage of owners saying their Dachshund "Always" or "Often"...

	Outgoing/ Friendly	Excessive Barking	Easy to house-train	Submissive piddling	Separation anxiety	Noise/ Thunder fear	Aggressive with people	Aggressive with dogs	Nervous/ Fearful of people	Destructive
Smooth	74%	17%	94%	2%	15%	10%	2%	7%	14%	7%
Long	88%	14%	100%	0%	4%	5%	0%	1%	4%	5%
Wire	95%	14%	98%	2%	2%	11%	0%	5%	2%	1%
Mini Smooth	84%	20%	88%	7%	11%	9%	1%	5%	7%	3%
Mini Long	79%	17%	94%	1%	6%	3%	1%	4%	5%	1%
Mini Wire	84%	19%	96%	4%	7%	5%	0%	6%	7%	3%

The majority (85%) of Dachshunds were described by their owners as Always or Often Outgoing and Friendly, but 1 in 50 was described as Never behaving in this way. We tend to describe Dachshunds as being a noisy breed, after all they were originally developed to have a loud bark. 15% of owners said their Always or Often barks excessively or persistently.

*Taking the scores for the positive traits and negative traits in our 2012 survey, it is possible to calculate an overall ranking for temperament and behaviour:*

1. Long - most positive traits
2. Wire, 3. Mini Wire, 4. Mini Long, 5. Mini Smooth, 6. Smooth



# Plans for 2021

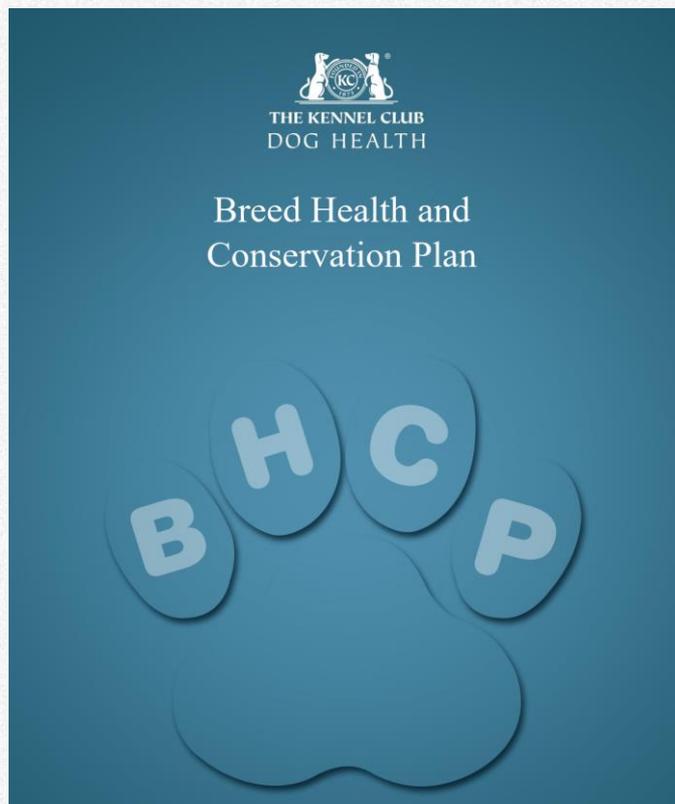
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*In this section:*

- *Breed Health and Conservation Plans*
  - *2021 priorities*
  - *Objectives and key activities*
-

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# Breed Health and Conservation Plan



During 2019, members of our Health Committee updated our Action Plans in conjunction with the Kennel Club and these were published in November 2019.

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The Kennel Club's programme to develop Breed Health and Conservation Plans was launched in 2016 to ensure that, for every breed, all health concerns are identified through evidence-based criteria, and that breeders are provided with useful information and resources to support them in making balanced breeding decisions that make health a priority.

Dr Katy Evans, the KC's lead person on this project, reviewed the published evidence of the state of the breed. This provides a unique and comprehensive source of information covering health, genetic diversity, temperament and conformation.

This evidence is used to provide clear indications of the most significant health conditions in each breed, in terms of prevalence and impact. We were invited to meet the KC team in July and 6 of our 10 Health Committee members were able to attend. The breadth of experience among our delegates was invaluable for 2 reasons. Firstly, the discussions we had and the decisions we made were based on a wide range of knowledge across our 6 Dachshund varieties. No one person can know everything about the breed nor remember the history of how we got to where we are today. Secondly, the decisions made have to be a consensus because the Health Committee has to justify the BHCP to everyone else in the breed. The quality of decision-making by our team far outweighs anything that any one of us could achieve, on our own.

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*We published our first Breed Health and Conservation Plans in January 2019. There is one for each Dachshund variety but a single, common action plan which we have linked with our existing plans for the breed.*

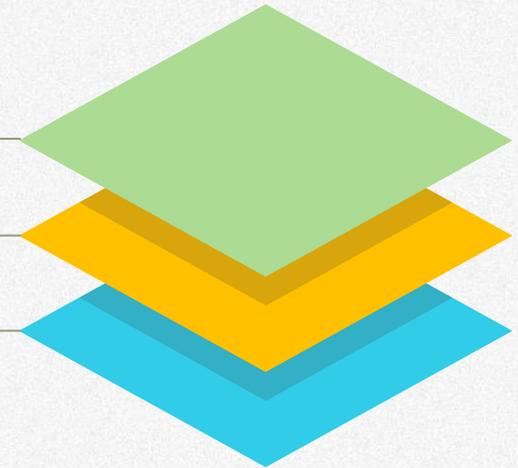
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# Our priorities for 2021

IVDD Prevention & Treatment

Eye Disease

Buyer Education



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*In 2021 the Kennel Club will be formally adopting our IVDD Screening Programme. Results will be recorded by the KC.*

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*We will also continue to support the IVDD research programme at Cambridge University Vet School to study the recovery of IVDD-affected dogs with conservative treatment.*

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## Breed health

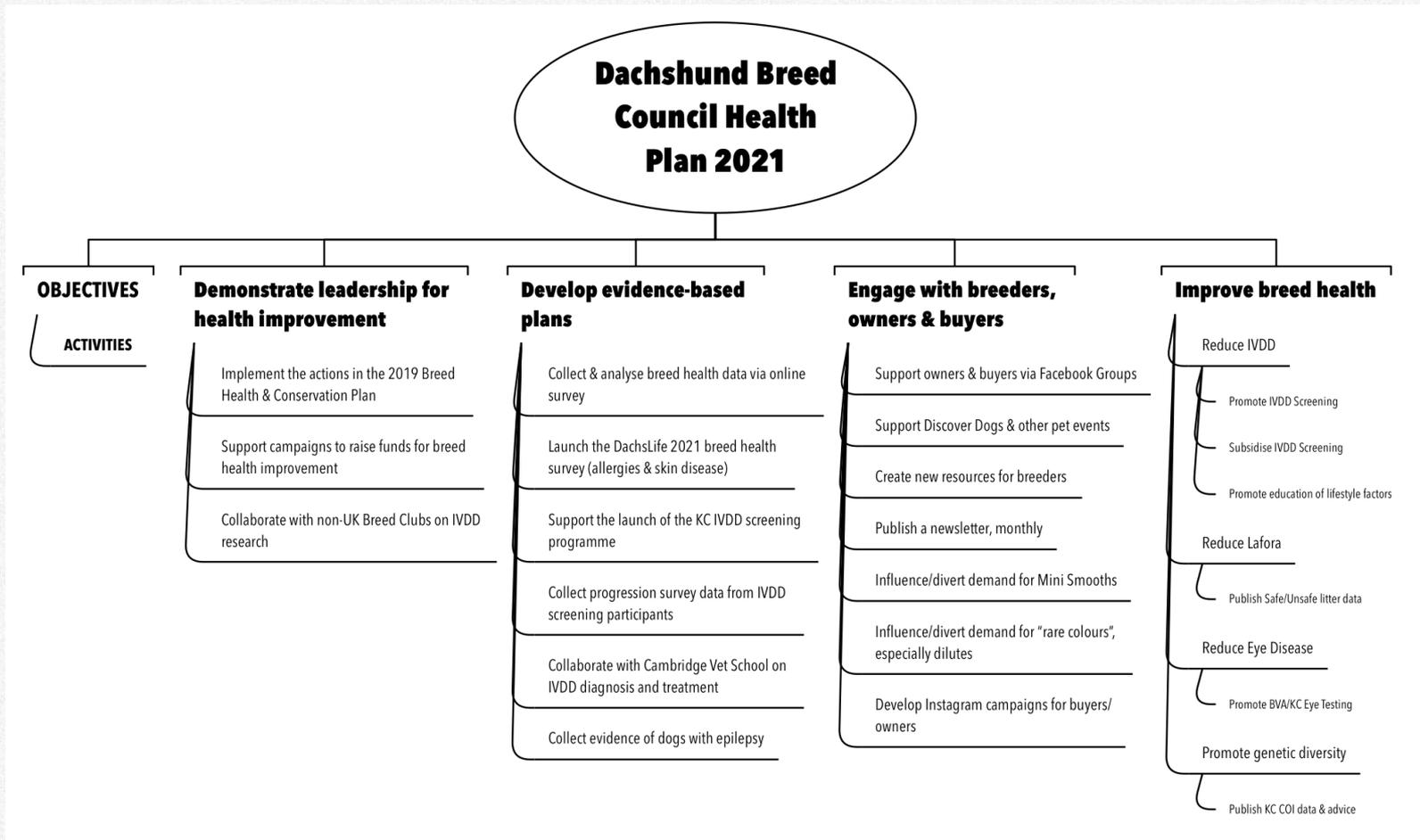
- Reduce the risk of IVDD by promoting the use of Screening and educating owners about lifestyle risk factors
- Achieve 98% Lafora safe litters
- Promote the use of KC/BVA/ISDS eye screening

## Enablers

- Increase buyer awareness of the breed to influence responsible buying decisions
- Implement the agreed actions in our Breed Health & Conservation Plan
- Analyse and publish data/evidence to support breed improvement

# 2021 Objectives and key activities

*These are our key activities. In addition, we expect to continue to carry out the many other activities that are already under way.*



# Contacts

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[www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk](http://www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk)

The Breed Council's website and blog

[www.dachshundhealth.org.uk](http://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk)

The Breed Council's Health website

[www.dachshund-ivdd.uk](http://www.dachshund-ivdd.uk)

The Breed Council's IVDD website

<https://www.facebook.com/The-Dachshund-Breed-Council-UK-118521654856320/>

Our Facebook page.



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/VI-TALDachshundIVDD/>

Our IVDD Facebook Support Group



Working for the benefit of  
Dachshunds and their owners  
since 2008

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