

Dachshund Health Report 2022

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Introduction

This is the final Annual Health Report under the chairmanship of Roger Sainsbury BVM&S MRCVS as he will be retiring from this role in May 2023. We would like to acknowledge Roger's contribution over many years and express our gratitude for the time he has devoted to supporting the health and welfare of the breed. Roger will remain as a trustee of Dachshund Health UK.

We were sorry to lose Gill Key from the Breed Council's Health Committee during 2022. She has been a tireless champion for Lafora screening and extremely active in our social media channels, providing support and advice to buyers and owners. Gill remains as a trustee of Dachshund Health UK.

Our Breed Health and Conservation Plan describes the evidence-base for our priorities in addressing the breed's improvement challenges. This report does not reiterate the information in the BHCP (which is available at www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/health-plans). This report for 2022 focuses on the work we have done and what has been achieved.

Priorities for 2022

In our 2021 report, we summarised our priorities for the coming year:

- Reduce the risk of IVDD by promoting the use of screening and by educating owners about lifestyle risk factors
- Increase buyer and breeder awareness of the breed to influence responsible buying/breeding decisions, particularly in relation to the dilute colours that have increased risks of health issues

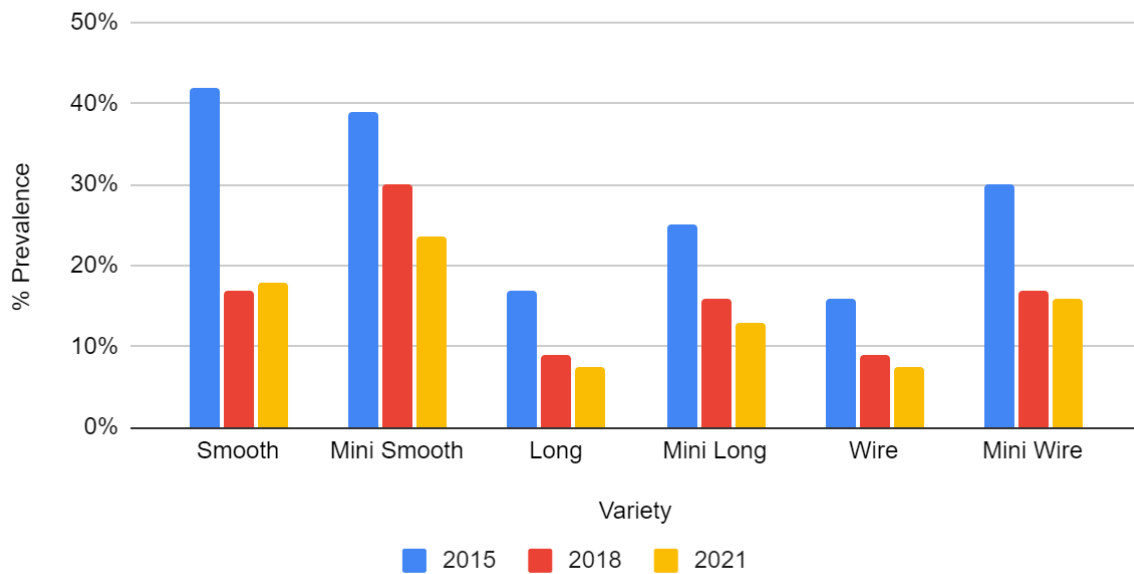
Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD)

IVDD is the single most significant health issue affecting the breed, albeit to different degrees across the 6 UK varieties.

In 2015, our DachsLife Survey identified several lifestyle factors that are associated with an increased risk of IVDD. This has enabled us to focus our communication efforts for breeders, buyers and owners. At the end of 2016, we launched our IVDD Screening Programme, based on multiple research papers published over the past 30 years. In 2018 and 2021, our DachsLife Surveys collected further data about IVDD prevalence. The chart below summarises the trend we are seeing. It shows a statistically significant reduction in IVDD prevalence in all 6 varieties, for dogs aged 4 and over. N.B., we exclude dogs under 4 years because the typical age of onset is 4-7 years.

Dachshund IVDD Prevalence from 3 breed surveys

(Dogs >3 y.o.)

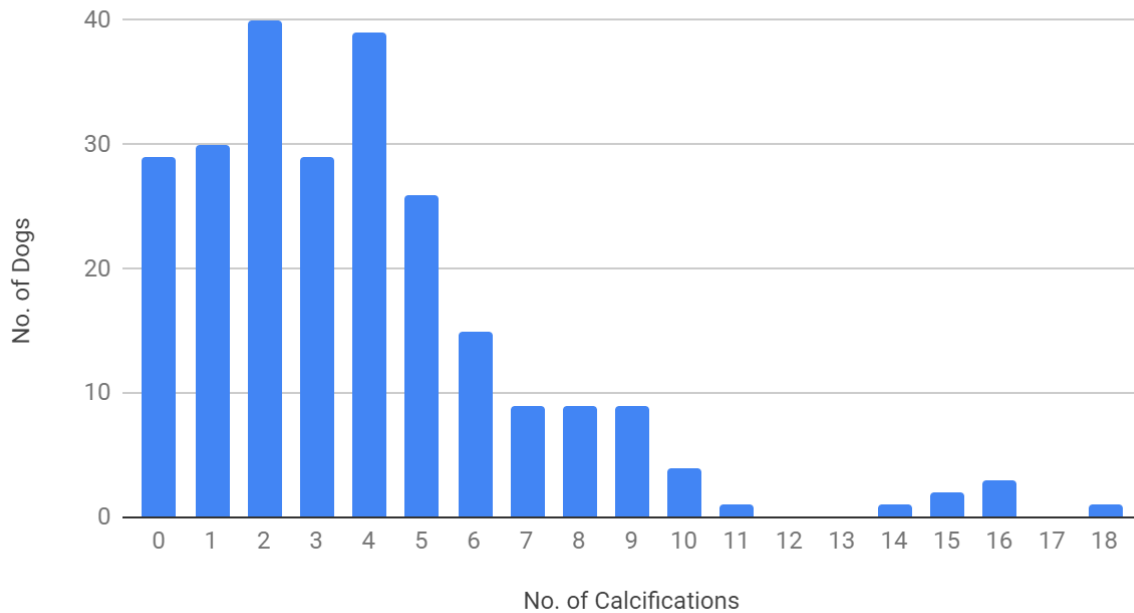


During 2021, the Kennel Club took over the running of our IVDD screening programme. It is now officially recognised by the KC and they manage a team of UK assessors who are all experienced veterinary surgeons and neurology experts. IVDD screening is now a Recommendation for members of the KC's Assured Breeder Scheme.

Both the KC and Dachshund Health UK have been offering £100 subsidies to those participating in the screening programme during 2022 and this will continue in 2023. This reduces the cost to an owner to £110.

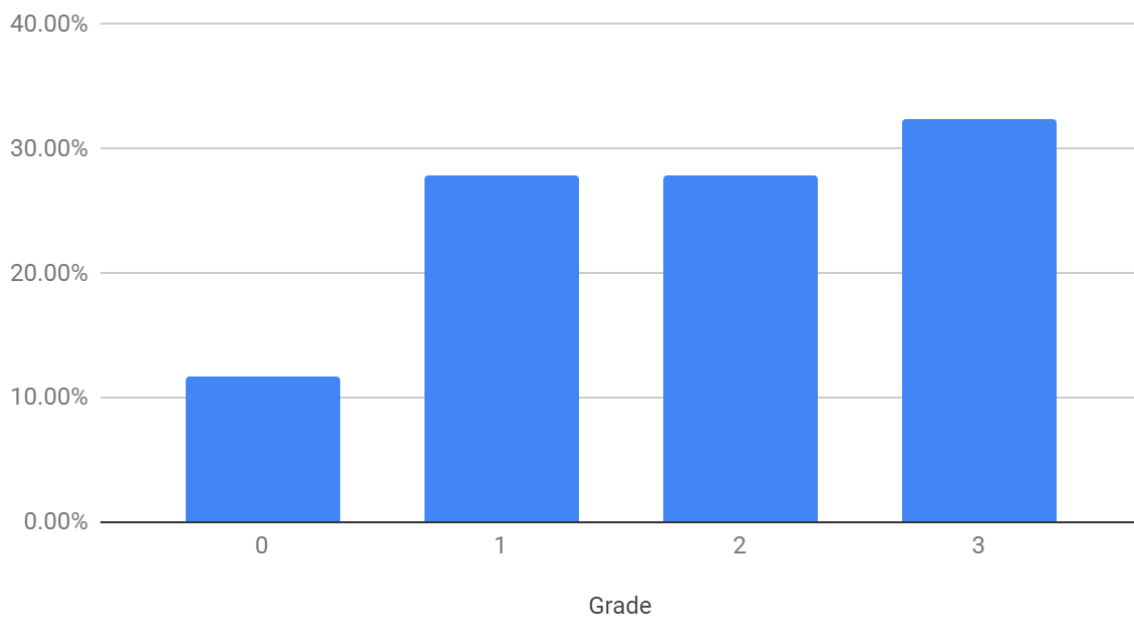
The chart below shows the numbers of calcifications reported in the 247 dogs screened so far.

No. of Dogs vs No. of Calcifications

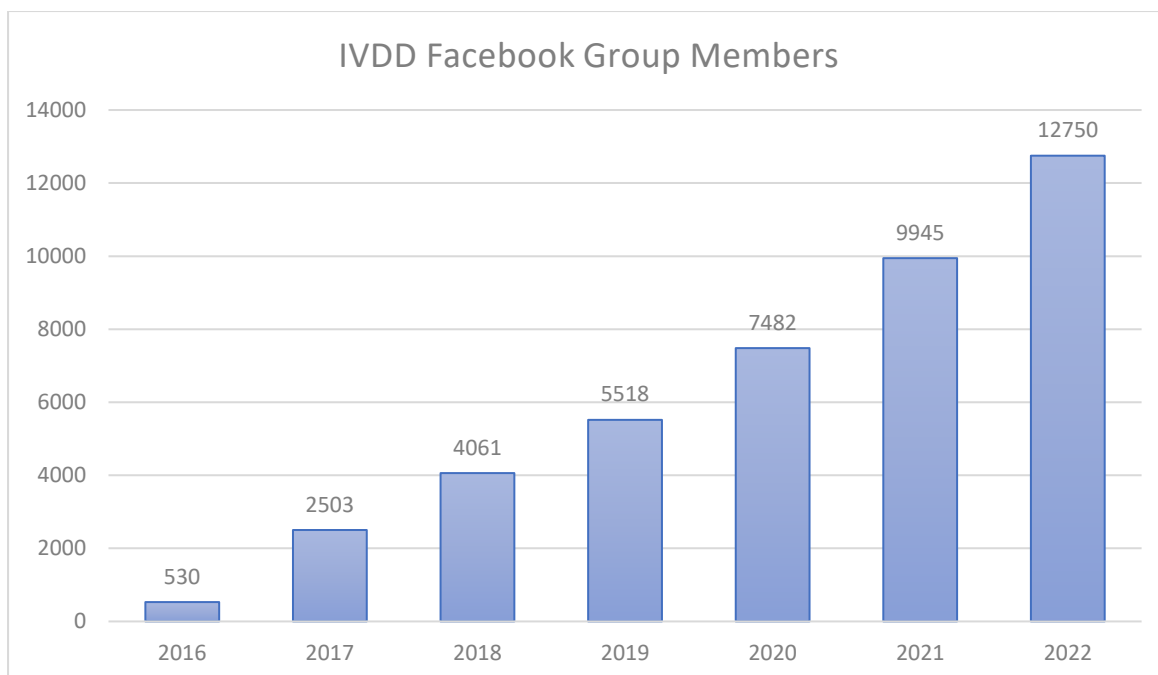


68% of the screened dogs were graded 0, 1 or 2 (see chart below); i.e., low to moderate risk of IVDD.

IDC Grades



The Dachshund Health UK IVDD support group on Facebook continues to provide advice to owners whose dogs are affected by IVDD, as well as providing information to owners on how to reduce risks. On average, there were 5-10 new cases reported to the group each week. The group has featured an “IVDD Website Page of the Week” throughout the second half of 2022 to raise further awareness of the disease, its causes and treatments.



The IVDD website www.dachshund-ivdd.uk had 170,000 visitors in 2022, making a total of 900,000 since it was launched in November 2016.

We support the work of “Dedicated to Dachshunds with IVDD”, a not-for-profit organisation that provides equipment for recovering and disabled dachshunds. Since 2016, D2D has purchased and loaned more than 500 strollers and supported over 1100 families. Find out more at: <https://dedicatedtodachshunds.co.uk/>

The most significant research that we are currently supporting is being carried out at Cambridge University Vet School. They are investigating the recovery of paralysed dachshunds (Grades 4 & 5) using conservative treatments. We have run 3 webinars with the Cambridge team, and you can find these here: <https://www.dachshund-ivdd.uk/research/cambridge-research/> The team has found high recovery rates at 12 weeks in dogs treated conservatively but have not yet published their findings and need more dogs to participate in the programme. These encouraging results offer great hope to owners of affected dogs who choose not to opt for surgery.

Dachshund Health UK ran a series of webinars on IVDD recovery and rehabilitation, presented by Dr Marianne Dorn. Videos from these are available at <https://www.dachshund-ivdd.uk/symptoms-treatment/rehabilitation/the-rehab-vet-webinar-videos/>

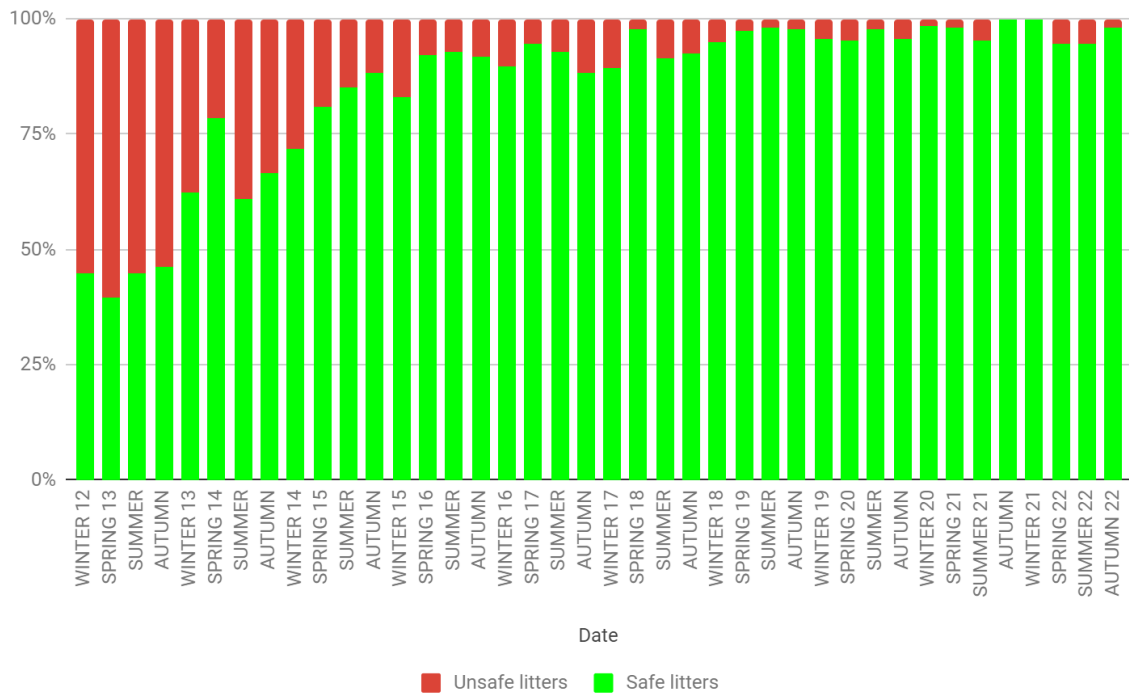
Towards the end of 2022, Sharon Alton designed and launched 2 surveys to explore lifestyle factors associated with IVDD. These surveys were promoted by the Kennel Club and results will be available in Spring 2023.

For information on IVDD, visit www.dachshund-ivdd.uk

Lafora Disease

A DNA test has been available for more than 10 years and screening is a Requirement for members of the KC’s Assured Breeder Scheme. We continued to see a high uptake of DNA testing and a low proportion (4% in 2022) of litters that potentially included “Affected” puppies.

Mini Wire Dachshund Lafora Safe and Unsafe Litters



Read more about Lafora disease here: <https://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/lafora-disease>

Eye Disease

Clinical eye screening is a Recommendation for members of the KC's Assured Breeder Scheme breeding for Miniature Longhaired Dachshunds. Our advice is that it is good practice for all varieties to be eye screened prior to breeding.

All the Miniature varieties also require (under the ABS) DNA testing for cord1 PRA.

In the Mini Longs and, to a lesser extent, the Standard Longs, Distichiasis is a condition of concern. Prevalence in our 2018 survey was 2.5% and 1% respectively. In our 2013-14 clinical surveys, this was a condition of clinical concern in 13% of Mini Longs.

Dachshund Health UK and the Dachshund Club subsidised an eye screening day in November. Professor Peter Bedford screened 41 Dachshunds.

Read more about eye disease here: <https://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/eye-disease>

Buyer and owner education

The main opportunities to engage with buyers and owners were via our social media channels and at Discover Dogs which was held at Crufts in March and in London in November. The Crufts event was organised by the Midland Dachshund Club and the November event was organised by the Southern Dachshund Association. We are grateful to all the volunteers who took their dogs over the 6 days of the 2 events.



We created a QR Code poster that provides a direct link to our most frequently asked questions.



Our health website (www.dachshundhealth.org.uk) had 85,000 unique visitors in 2022, with 115,000 site sessions.

During 2022, we published a new infographic summarising the results of an analysis of puppy prices since 2019. The full report is available here:

<https://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/welcome/an-analysis-of-dachshund-puppy-prices-from-2019-to-2022>

We also published a 1-page infographic of advice for buyers, covering the Breed Standard, coats, colours, longevity, and health.

DACHSHUND PUPPY PRICES 2019-2022

Results of an online survey

RESPONSE SUMMARY

We received 886 responses to our survey. Of these, 85% were puppy buyers and 16% were breeders (sellers). The responses represent about £7.5M worth of Dachshund puppy sales (assuming an average litter size of 5 puppies).



KC REGISTERED VS. UNREGISTERED

On average, across the 4 years, KC Registered puppies cost £300 more than unregistered ones. However, since the 2nd half of 2021, KC registered puppies have cost approx. £550 more than unregistered ones.

PRICES BY VARIETY

Mini Longs were the most expensive KC registered variety and Standard Longs were the cheapest. Prices peaked in the first half of 2021 and are now (2022) about 17% higher than in 2019.



ADVICE FOR PUPPY BUYERS

We strongly recommend that you buy a KC registered puppy from a breeder who has done the recommended health screening. A reputable breeder will be able to talk knowledgeably about the breed and the pedigree of their puppies. Avoid buying a dilute (blue or isabella) coloured puppy as these have an increased risk of skin diseases.

Check out our advice for buyers and new owners on our website. Read more at www.dachshundhealth.org.uk

The full results of this survey are available at: <http://bit.ly/PuppyPrices22>

Education - Research - Health

DACHSHUND HEALTH UK IS A REGISTERED CHARITY (NO. 1177400)

Dachshunds

Essential information for buyers

In the UK, Dachshunds come in 2 sizes (Standard and Miniature) and 3 coats (Smooth, Long and Wire)



The breed has short legs but with sufficient ground clearance to be able to run freely and work. Dachshunds should not be long-bodied. Their origins are a hunting breed that can track or go to ground.

Temperament	Colours	Avoid for health reasons:	Coat patterns
Intelligent, lively, courageous to the point of rashness, obedient. They should not be nervous or aggressive.	Most common: Red Black & Tan Chocolate & Tan Cream Wild Boar	Blue Isabella Double Dapple	Brindle (Tiger-striped) Dapple (Merle) Piebald is highly undesirable in the UK Breed Standard

Top 3 health priorities for breeders and buyers

Intervertebral Disc Disease	Lafora Disease in Mini Wires	Eye Disease
X-ray screening is recommended for all 6 varieties. Smooths and Mini Smooths have the highest risk of IVDD (1 in 4). Longs and Wires have the lowest risk (1 in 15).	This is a form of epilepsy and can be avoided by DNA testing before breeding. This is a required test. 98% of litters are clear of Lafora, thanks to DNA testing.	Clinical eye screening is recommended for all varieties before breeding. DNA testing for cord1 PRA is required for all 3 miniature varieties.

Health conditions on our Watch List

Pes Varus: angular hind limb deformity in the miniature varieties. Excessively out-turned front feet can also be an issue and a sign of poor breeding.	Heart disease: can affect Smooth and Wire varieties. Heart murmurs in puppies are not usually a significant concern.	Skin conditions: grass and dust-mite allergies can affect the smooth-coated varieties. Dilute colours (Blue & Isabella) suffer from Colour Dilution Alopecia.
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How long will my Dachshund live?

On average, Dachshunds live to 11 years. Miniatures tend to live longer than Standards.

Average age of death from IVDD is 6 years.
Average age of death from cancer is 10 years.
Average age of death from heart disease is 9 years.



Visit our website: www.dachshundhealth.org.uk

Scan the QR code to visit our popular online links



We are grateful to Christine Bessio (from the USA) who manages our Instagram account @dachshundhealthuk. She has increased our followers from to over 1800 (up from 1500 at the end of 2021).

Ongoing health monitoring

Owners can report health conditions and causes of death at our health reporting webpage

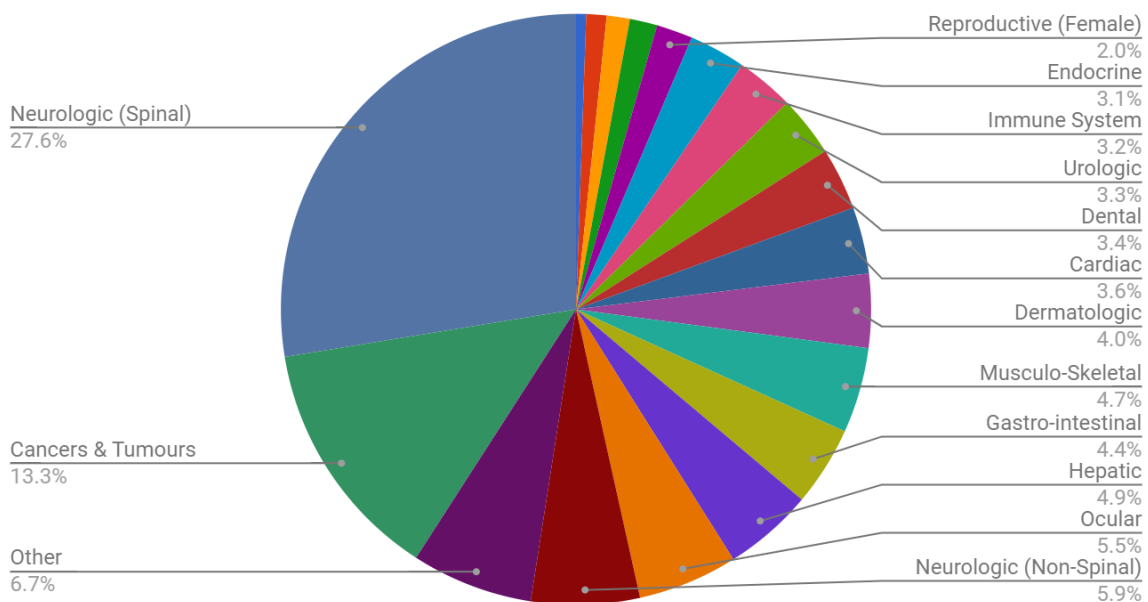
<https://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/submit-a-report>

We received 38 reports during 2022, bringing the total to 1077 in 13 years. While this is a relatively low response rate, it does provide us with some useful data on a regular basis, particularly on mortality and longevity.

- Death reported as “Old Age” – Average = 15.3 (15.1 for Standards, 15.4 for Miniatures); Max. = 19
- Death from cardiac conditions – Average = 10.2
- Death from IVDD – Average = 5.7
- Death from Lafora Disease – Average = 9.4
- Death from Epilepsy – Average = 8.7
- Death from cancers and tumours – Average = 9.6

The proportions of each category of condition are shown below:

Conditions Reported as % of Total



Breed Watch

The KC’s Breed Watch scheme is an early warning system for judges at dog shows to identify any emerging concerns. Judges at championship shows can submit a report to the KC to share their views on visible points of concern.

All 6 varieties of Dachshund are in Breed Watch Category 2. Read more about Breed Watch here:

<https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/events-and-activities/dog-showing/judging-dog-shows/breed-watch/>

The KC will be updating the Breed Watch system during 2023 and is running a webinar for judges, breeders and exhibitors, in February 2023. Details here:

<https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/media-centre/2022/december/kennel-club-hosts-breed-watch-webinar/>

Our Watch List

In addition to our priority conditions, we have a Watch List of other conditions which may be of concern if their prevalence increases, or further scientific evidence emerges about their relevance and severity in our breed. Currently, we are watching:

- Pes Varus (particularly, in the miniature varieties)
 - More information at <https://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/pes-varus>
- Cardiac conditions (particularly Mitral Valve Disease)
 - Dachslife 2018: Smooth 6%, Long 8%, Wire 12%, MS 2%, ML 5%, MW 3%
- Lymphoma – early-onset in Mini Longs
 - 40% of all ML cancer cases reported and 4 times as many cancer cases than the other 5 varieties (ref. <https://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/dachslife-2018>)
- Epilepsy – mid-age onset in Mini Longs
 - 4% prevalence in MLs 2012, 2015 and 2018 surveys (~3-4 times more common than in the other 5 varieties) – cases can be reported here: https://docs.google.com/forms/viewform?hl=en_GB&id=1WC2-IEFwjXSgBP7p4G1UMM19RQkCboRrY3VEQE_g_8
- Sarcoglycan Deficient Muscular Dystrophy (SDMD), in the miniature varieties
 - This is currently being investigated in Australia and New Zealand using a DNA test and it is known that some UK Mini Smooths are Carriers of this genetic mutation
 - DHUK will be funding an investigation of the SDMD mutation frequency in UK Dachshunds with the help of the KC Genetics Centre in the Spring of 2023

Fundraising

Dachshund Health UK is a registered charity that raises funds to support education, research and health improvement projects. We are grateful to the many people who have run fundraising events or have made donations from the sale of products (e.g. books and cards).

Details of how to raise funds or to make a donation can be found at:

<https://www.dachshundhealth.org.uk/health-fund>

DHUK's priority projects where grants were made during 2022 were:

- Cambridge University Vet School IVDD research
- UK IVDD screening programme subsidies to participants
- Eye screening subsidies at the Dachshund Club championship show

Priorities for 2023

Our priorities for the coming year:

- Reduce the risk of IVDD by promoting the use of screening and by educating owners about lifestyle risk factors
- Analyse and present the results of the 2 IVDD Lifestyle surveys launched at the end of 2022
- Investigate the genetics of IVDD and SDMD with the support of the KC Genetics Centre
- Increase buyer and breeder awareness of the breed to influence responsible buying/breeding decisions, particularly in relation to the dilute colours that have increased risks of health issues

Contact us

Our websites:

www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk

www.dachshundhealth.org.uk

www.dachshund-ivdd.uk

Dachshund Breed Council Health Committee

Charlotte Baldwin

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Helen Kerfoot

Dawn Norton

Roger Sainsbury (Chairman)

Ian Seath

Judy Squires

Aimee Thomas

Dachshund Health UK Trustees

Sharon Alton

Katherine Herrington (Treasurer)

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Anne Moore

Daniel Roberts

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