

P-06-1391: Introduce regulation of the dog grooming sector, to protect the welfare of dogs and rights of owners

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 4 Mawrth 2024
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Reference: SR24/7752-8

Petition Number:

P-06-1391

Petition title:

Introduce regulation of the dog grooming sector, to protect the welfare of dogs and rights of owners

Text of petition:

We believe that the establishment of clear guidelines, licensing requirements, and industry standards will aid the welfare and safety of dogs during grooming procedures. There's no regulatory framework at all of the sector, whether at local authority or national level. It doesn't fall within the oversight of any charity or the RSPCA.

The last 3 years has seen an exponential growth in dog ownership and the businesses that service their needs. Establishing standards is long overdue.

1. Animal Welfare: It is imperative to prioritize the well-being and humane treatment of dogs. Regulation will promote responsible ownership, minimise stress levels, and reduce potential harm/injury caused by unqualified/negligent groomers.



2. Training/Certification: Unregulated dog grooming has led to untrained individuals operating without the necessary knowledge of breed-specific needs, hygiene practices, handling, or grooming procedures. A minimum standard of Animal First Aid should be a pre-requisite component.

3. Health and Safety: Minimum health and safety guidelines to maintain a safe environment. Correct sanitation, grooming equipment maintenance and compliance with hygiene protocols, crucial in preventing the spread of infections/parasites/diseases.

4. Licensing/Inspection: Training/insurance verification and compliance with health and safety regulations.

5. Setting standards: Regulation offers owners an assurance of standards by identifying qualified practitioners.

1. Background

There is currently no specific regulation of dog grooming establishments in Wales. Any such establishment is responsible for the welfare of the animals in its care under the *Animal Welfare Act 2006* general provisions. It must meet the five welfare needs of the animals at all times:

- for a suitable environment;
- for a suitable diet;
- to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns;
- to be housed with, or apart, from other animals; and
- to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

The Welsh Government's *Code of Practice on the Welfare of Dogs* includes a 'duty of care', but there is no guidance specific to dog groomers.

The Dog's Trust has called for the *Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) Wales Regulations 2021* to be extended to cover dog grooming, which it says has "the potential to seriously impact dog welfare".

2. Welsh Government action

While there are no plans to license dog grooming establishments under the Welsh Government's current [Animal Welfare Plan 2021-2026](#), the Welsh Government's [Programme for Government](#) does commit to:

Develop a national model for regulation of animal welfare, introducing registration for animal welfare establishments, commercial breeders for pets or for shooting, and animal exhibits.

The Welsh Government subsequently consulted on the [licensing of animal welfare establishments, activities and exhibits](#) between 8 December 2023 and 1 March 2024.

The consultation was broad-ranging and sought views on the potential introduction of licensing for dog grooming services, amongst a number of other activities.

The Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths, wrote to you in relation to this petition drawing attention to the Programme for Government commitment and related consultation. She said her officials would consider the consultation's findings.

3. Welsh Parliament action

Senedd Research is not aware of this specific issue having been raised in the Senedd recently.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.