

P-04-555 Stop the unethical and draconian proposed compulsory micro chipping of dogs – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 18.08.14

Dear Mr Powell and the Petitions Committee,

I'm grateful for your latest letter requesting further information on the petition calling for the compulsory microchipping of dogs to be stopped. I very much hope it will be reconsidered and curtailed before it becomes a legal requirement in 2015, as is being proposed. I hope the following will help to give some insight on the matter.

The change will mean that around 190,000 dogs in Wales will need to be microchipped over the next year, and that with effect from 1 March 2015, all puppies in Wales would need to be microchipped by the time they are 56 days old.

Before he left his Ministerial role recently, Alun Davies had stated:

“I am committed to promoting responsible dog ownership in Wales. Whilst dog owners already have a duty of care under the Animal Welfare Act, it is increasingly important that we have a reliable way of tracing dogs back to their owners.

“Our decision to introduce compulsory microchipping will create a clear link between a dog and its owner and will increase the accountability of dog owners right across Wales.

“It will make it much easier for an owner to be identified if its dog has strayed or been injured, it will help us to deter dog theft, and the traceability back to breeders should also help us to reduce the incidence of infectious or inherited disease.

“Microchipping will become a legal requirement on the 1st of March next year so I would urge all dog owners in Wales who have not yet had their dogs microchipped to do so before that date.”

There are numerous flaws with microchipping and how it is being promoted to us. Microchips can in theory help to reunite a dog with its owner if it has been lost and caught but then so can a tattoo or a collar and tag which are far cheaper, are less intrusive and cause no harm to the dog. In all cases the dog has to first be caught so that its collar and tag can be read, or, in the case of a microchip, scanned with the zapping machine placed right up against the dog's body.

No one has yet been able to explain how a microchip inserted under the skin is going to stop dogs from being a danger to people and other animals, from spreading potential diseases or from being treated irresponsibly.

There are also obvious serious moral, ethical and practical flaws in these Government proposals. As stated above, a collar and tag does exactly the same job as a micro chip and is cheaper and far less contentious and invasive. And a microchip won't make the dog less dangerous whereas a simple lead and a muzzle will.

The dog's and owner's details will also be registered on an authorised commercial database, providing authorities with yet more information about people's whereabouts and activities at a time when civil liberty groups are campaigning against increased invasions of privacy.

The decision to introduce compulsory microchipping follows a public consultation by the Welsh Government that ended in 2012. According to the Welsh Government the overwhelming majority of respondents were in favour of the move

However, as pointed out by the British Association of Shooting and Conservation in the consultation responses (found in the attached PDF: Question 1, page 11), in a 2009 Welsh local authorities survey regarding microchipping, only seven authorities responded from the 12 asked (not all 22 authorities were asked for reasons unknown)

A similar unclear picture can be seen with the responses of Welsh vets although many of the veterinary corporations and dog charities that are in favour of dog chipping also stand to make a good deal of money from the chipping of dogs.

The British Association of Shooting and Conservation further commented: "BASC believes that whilst micro chipping has benefits, its use should be down to individual choice and not a mandatory requirement – the case for compulsory microchipping has not yet been made"

As seen in the consultation responses in the attached PDF's, The Pet Care Trust also strongly disagreed with the compulsory microchipping plans.

The Self Help Group (The SHG)

<http://the-shg.org/Compulsory%20Microchipping%20in%20Wales.htm>, a group set up for farmers, pet owners and others experiencing difficulties with the RSPCA, is another group opposing compulsory microchipping. The group provides support and legal advice to people who may consider that they are being unfairly investigated or prosecuted for Animal Welfare related offences, usually by the RSPCA. The group state that:

"in the face of this powerful organisation (the RSPCA), the defendant, often through lack of funds, may be unrepresented, or represented by an inexperienced solicitor. Potential professional witnesses will often decline to even consider his case on hearing that the RSPCA is involved."

It does not make any sense for the RSPCA especially to be supportive of the microchipping plans when microchipping has not been proven to be safe or ethical for dogs and all evidence points to the fact that it isn't either safe or ethical.

The SHG and other groups such as ChipMeNot also point out that the microchipping procedure means responsible pet owners have to risk the health of their animal in a futile act that might well be in breach of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. As evidence emerges that chips can cause cancer and other illnesses, it might be presently possible to prosecute those who implant chips for causing unnecessary suffering to animals. ChipMeNot states that according to The Animal Welfare Act 2006 [7] Section 4(3)(b), rather troublingly, if chipping becomes compulsory, the suffering will be state sanctioned and as a result, those who implant chips will have immunity from prosecution and cannot be prosecuted. This would arguably include any financial claims for compensation for injury and suffering caused to dogs as well as the inevitable associated veterinary fees that could result from migrating or faulty chips placed in the animal (http://www.chipmenot.org.uk/whats_wrong.asp)

The Farmers Union of Wales could also not find genuine good reasons for supporting the compulsory microchipping scheme. All these responses can be seen in the two attached pdf's produced by the Welsh Government as some of the responses received in the open consultation.

From looking at a 'Road map on dog welfare' produced by the Welsh Government going back to 2007, it seems to the observer that the end result of compulsory microchipping has already been predetermined by some, rendering the consultation process a futile exercise if so and making the microchipping bill even less credible. This map is also attached.

At a time of serious austerity, the £15 charge for dog owners (up to £2.85 million in total) and the extra enforcement and manpower costs for local authorities makes this plan draconian and out of touch. It could also mean that, rather than risking prosecution and fines, dogs could be killed or chips physically removed by impoverished owners especially, leading to an increase in animal suffering as a result of such enforcement.

As mentioned there is also increasing evidence by anti chipping groups and from scientific research that chips cause cancer in animals, with tests reported by the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) showing a 1–10% lethal cancer rate in tests on microchipped mice and rats . A comprehensive 2007 report by Dr Katherine Albrecht Ed.D titled 'Microchip-Induced Tumors in Laboratory Rodents and Dogs: A Review of the Literature 1990–2006' also points out very serious concerns regarding the safety of microchipping. A link to this report can be found here: <http://www.antichips.com/cancer/albrecht-microchip-cancer-full-paper.pdf>

According to campaign groups in Britain such as ChipMeNot, (http://www.chipmenot.org.uk/whats_wrong.asp) there would also be a real environmental impact from microchips due to the chips themselves, the need for readers, batteries for each reader, the computers to administer the database and so on. A collar with a tag is still the easiest and most effective way of reuniting a dog and its owner by far – anyone who can read can use this system.

The Control of Dogs Act 1992 already requires a collar and tag with the owner's name and address on it in a public place as well as a muzzle for breeds considered dangerous. As previously stated, microchipping does not make dogs or people safer and charging owners for microchips and on-going database updates, as well as the additional manpower costs for local authorities needed to enforce such a policy, reflects badly on the Welsh Government's claims to be concerned with unnecessary expenditure in a time of austerity. Furthermore, any problems are caused by a minority as confirmed by Welsh Environment Minister John Griffiths when he said:

“We believe the majority of dog owners in Wales are responsible and take good care of their animals.”

Many would argue that only responsible owners would have their dog microchipped, while irresponsible owners would ignore any such requirement, driving dangerous dog breeding and irresponsible ownership further underground.

The people of Wales and Britain share a common love of dogs but humans could also be under threat. According to ChipMeNot, it is worth noting that RFID / Radio Frequency Identification (another name for microchip technology) is being pushed in an increasing number of areas. The RFID chips – which can be detected and read by radio waves – are already used in new UK passports and numerous other systems such as London's Oyster card system to name but a few.

Many would argue that allowing for such interference and compulsory intrusiveness into the body of a well liked pet sets a dangerous precedent. According to ChipMeNot "There have been recurrent attempts to introduce mandatory chipping of selected humans in the UK, but these have been defeated either due to public reaction or the fact that the proposals were technically not possible"

http://www.chipmenot.org.uk/where_next.asp

The compulsory microchipping of dogs is both draconian, non nonsensical and out of touch. Wales and its politicians can take this opportunity to represent the fundamental rights of the dogs and dog owners of Wales and, based on their common sense and the obvious substantial flaws in the microchipping programme as hopefully described above, reject this bill.

Thank you again for taking the time to read and digest this information. I very much hope that you will give due consideration to the importance and significance of this subject matter which is very relevant to all of us,

Sincerely,

G.Meredith.

Ref	Response
0017	Yes
0018	Yes. Reasons stated here/in this document. It will help with strays, disease tracing. I am less convinced about arguments for fouling.
0019	Yes. For traceability of owner AND breeder.
0020	Yes if licensed breeders have to everyone should.
0021	Yes – promotes responsible ownership.
0022	No. Exempt foxhounds if tattooed.
0023	All dogs through the UK not only Wales.
0024	Yes but I think puppies new owners should have the option of doing it if they wish.
0025	It refers to do we microchip dogs yes or no. the answer is yes. If so then all dogs in Wales – UK should be microchipped.
0026	Yes – because they can be returned to owner if lost or stolen.
0027	<p>Yes I consider this to be a vital tool to identify dogs and provide a clear link to owners for the purposes of return in cases of loss and to aid enforcement of dog control and other legislation.</p> <p>There are problems regarding the phrase “all dogs in Wales”, but I will deal with that later in my answer to question 8.</p>
0028	Yes. If dog found without a chip, what happens? Is there any enforcement for dog found with microchip yet owners say not mine or doesn't want dog? Can breeder be contacted as should be traceable if registered as first owner or “breeder” like car manufacturer.
0029	Yes – Not only for the reasons set out in the consultation document but it would help with the control of ‘dog mess’ which is a major issue in the UK.
0030	<p>Yes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To identify ownership ○ To identify any inherited health issues that the dog may have ○ To identify health records for puppies that will follow the dog through its lifetime <p>I feel larger breeds such as Great Danes should be microchipped at 8 weeks. Smaller breeds could be microchipped at 14-16 weeks.</p>

0031	Yes. Primarily to ensure dog welfare and ownership issues when dogs are lost / stolen. An additional cost may also deter or at least make people think more about getting dogs 'on a whim' without properly thinking through the implications of dog ownership.
0032	Absolutely. Promotes animal welfare and makes owners more accountable
0034	Yes, to safeguard the welfare of dogs and encourage responsible ownership
0035	Yes to reduce the stray dog population and to make dogs owners more responsible
0036	Yes. I agree with the cogent points raised in the consultation document. I would also suggest that if technologically and financially practicable, these microchips be utilised for purpose as Wi-Fi hotspots. I believe this would be good business sense in times of recession. I'm not sure if this would require secondary legislation.
0037	Yes - all dogs, however benign they may appear are a potential danger to the Public Health.They are both a potential physical danger and can carry a number of pathogens dangerous to man.
0038	YES their is no valid reason not to have it done
0039	No. I am in favour of permanent identification, but think people should be given a choice between tattooing or microchipping. So I am in favour of permanent ID
0040	yes - to allow accountability of owners
0041	For reunification in event of loss or theft, also for tracing where a dog has come from should it be abandoned, abused, neglected or put in to a rescue centre. This is the only way some people will ever become responsible
0042	Yes I believe there should be compulsory identification for all dogs though not necessarily Microchipping as there are other means available (tattoo, DNA)
0043	Yes - this would save councils considerable expense in housing strays and enable most of the costs involved with collecting them to be recovered from the owner. It would make it much easier to determine who the owner was when prosecuting under the dangerous dogs or welfare legislation. It may help to reduce theft.
0044	No - Because: 1) The irresponsible people who ought to have their dogs microchipped simply will not do it. 2) The Police will neither have the time or the resources to enforce the legislation. 3) The vulnerable (pensioners etcetera) will be unable to afford it.
0045	Yes – for all the reasons you state
0046	No - Because it simply will not work. Responsible dog owners (me included) would I am sure, comply if legislation were introduced. However, many others would not comply, which would make the whole thesis of microchipping in

	<p>the first place redundant.</p> <p>Take the analogy of compulsory car tax and insurance for example. There are many thousands of untaxed and uninsured cars in Wales even though the Police have proactive automated systems for detecting defaulters. It will be pretty much impossible (or extremely expensive) to 'police' chipped or unchipped dogs, and to put the onus for this on local authorities would certainly not work.</p>
0047	<p>Yes - Compulsory microchipping of dogs in Wales is likely to significantly increase the likelihood of reuniting stray dogs with their owners, as currently only about 30% of dogs arriving in pounds are micro-chipped and a substantial proportion of dogs fail to be re-united. This would be of benefit to both owners and dogs. It would benefit dog welfare by reducing time in kennels, and reducing risks of euthanasia. It should also make available more places at rescue centres for dogs that require rehoming.</p> <p>Compulsory microchipping of dogs, particularly puppies and breeding dogs, has the potential to ensure that puppies developing health or significant behavioural problems may be traced back to the breeder. This would facilitate taking action under trading regulations for provision of unhealthy animals or for misrepresentation. It may also encourage breeders to take steps to prevent health problems arising for which they may be held liable. Microchipping of breeding parents may help determine if they have been tested for genetic disease. It may also provide a basis in the future for veterinary research on aspects of genetically-based disease.</p> <p>Where micro-chipping is widespread, there is likely to be increased potential for holding owners to account for a range of irresponsible actions, from dog-fouling to allowing dogs to be out of control or to behave aggressively.</p> <p>It is possible that in future instances of disease monitoring and management programmes (e.g. in relation to diseases introduced from other countries) that microchipping of dogs may support tracing of routes of transmission or provide other useful information.</p> <p>In each of the above, microchipping will represent only part of any solution and must be considered alongside other measures.</p>
0048	<p>The Kennel Club believes that all dogs in Wales should have to be microchipped as this form of permanent identification is deemed to be the most efficient in identifying and returning stray dogs to their owners and as a</p>

	<p>result, the most beneficial in relation to welfare and cost savings.</p> <p>The most important reason for microchipping is to enable a straying or lost pet to be returned quickly to its owner. Microchipping has also a number of advantages over other forms of identification. With regards to the collar and tag, it may fail to reunify pet and owner as the collar and tag could fall off or the writing on the tag can fade making it illegible. Additionally, if a dog was stolen, the collar and tag could be removed easily. Permanent identification via microchipping would be effective at all times and difficult to remove or alter.</p> <p>All dogs should be microchipped in Wales in order to reap the wide range of welfare benefits that microchipping provides. As stated above, the main welfare benefit is for dogs to be promptly identified and returned to their owners. In addition, microchipping and registration to a database allows quick and simple detection, acts as a deterrent to dog theft, provides easier identification of owners who persistently allow their dogs to stray, cause nuisance or are culpable of animal cruelty, helps puppies be traceable to their breeder and as a consequence helps to tackle puppy farming problems.</p> <p>Lastly, as microchipped dogs can be returned to owners faster, there are significant economic benefits that can be accrued from saving local authority and rescue centres kennelling costs. This is expanded further in question 2.</p>
0049	<p>To assist with encouraging more responsible dog ownership, all dogs should be permanently identified, i.e. through microchipping so that animals can be matched to their owners and traceability can be improved. The RSPCA firmly believes that this should be part of an annual registration scheme. Such a scheme, implemented at a local level, would ensure there are sufficient funding streams for dog wardens and police Dog Legislation Officers (DLO) roles so that the law can be adequately enforced and public safety and animal welfare improvements can be seen in practice.</p> <p>The RSPCA believes that compulsory microchipping is a useful tool to allow for the traceability of dogs back to their owners (providing the owner's contact information remains up to date on one central database). This can be beneficial for ensuring dogs that are lost or stray can be returned to their owner more quickly and also encourages more responsible dog ownership. However, microchipping on its own will not solve irresponsible dog ownership and as such we are concerned that the Welsh Government may be placing too much weight on what compulsory</p>

	microchipping can deliver especially when no extra resources are being provided for local authorities for the enforcement of such provisions.
0050	<p>Yes, we support the compulsory microchipping of all dogs. We believe;-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is an effective way to link a dog to its owner and to make all owners accountable for the actions of their dog. ○ Compulsory microchipping will improve animal welfare by making it easier to reunite a stray dog with its owner. ○ Develop further, responsible ownership by introducing greater traceability of owners (past and current). ○ Act as a deterrent against dog theft.
0051	<p>Yes</p> <p>Rapid identification of dogs would allow enforcement authorities to deal more effectively with straying, fouling and dangerous dog issues, and micro-chipping is the only way in which this can be achieved in a cost effective way.</p>
0052	No – it is not enforceable and will cause good/ honest breeders and owners into spending money as vets wont do this for free.
0053	<p>PDSA would support microchipping all dogs within a year of any legislation coming into effect.</p> <p>If there were no change to the current situation whereby owners can choose whether or not to microchip their puppies and older dogs, this would not be supported by PDSA. Approximately 80% of the public want to see microchipping for all dogs and various organisations have long been promoting microchipping outlining the benefits to the dog and their owner.</p>
0054	<p>Yes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To improve animal welfare; easier to return stray dogs to their owners, owners more easily identified where suffering is found, greater traceability of dogs from breeders etc. ● Promote responsible ownership; dog's owners could be identified from microchip information.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deter the theft of dogs, as the owners of dogs can be identified from the microchip information. • Aid any investigation in connection with dogs as owner can be identified and held liable.
0055	<p>Yes. Over 120,000 dogs were picked up as strays by Local Authorities across the UK last year, an overall increase. In Wales some 9,482 dogs were dealt with as strays, which is a slight decrease on the year before (<i>Dogs Trust; Annual Stray Dog Survey 2011</i>). However, despite the slight decrease the number being returned to their owners remains below half at just 42%.</p> <p>The result of this is financial cost to the Local Authorities, a continuing burden on rehoming and rescue organisations, and the destruction of hundreds of dogs for want of a good home. The introduction of mandatory permanent identification by microchip would enable many more dogs to be returned to their owners and fewer having to be destroyed, or passed on to already overstretched rehoming and rescue centres.</p> <p>Permanent identification would also allow the easy identification of an owner where allegations of cruelty are being investigated, the policy could have a positive impact on the problem of puppy farming and irresponsible breeding, and it will promote the principles of responsible dog ownership. It is also hoped that the need to permanently identify a dog, combined with useful outreach work to inform the dog owner of their responsibilities, will also have a positive impact on the dangerous dog problem in Wales.</p>
0056	<p>In principle the micro chipping of all dogs is agreed because it would enable the Council's dog wardens to trace the owners of any stray dogs collected and return them directly to the owners; this would effectively reduce the kennelling costs for the Authority.</p>
0057	<p>Yes but it isn't just the micro-chipping that is the issue it is making sure that details are kept up to date.</p> <p>I don't think that compulsory micro-chipping is going to miraculously solve all dog related problems including dog attacks as many people seem to think it will. However, I do think it is a good starting point and a step forward in responsible dog ownership and it should in theory help Local Authorities and stray dog facilities in identifying owners of dogs which may be straying, fouling or behaving in a dangerous manner.</p>

	<p>We have been offering free micro-chipping at Cardiff Dogs Home for a number of years and although we micro-chip all the dogs we home and many public take up the offer of micro-chipping there are still a large number of people that don't get their dogs chipped. Further action is needed to make it compulsory but not only compulsory to get it done but to also keep records updated.</p>
0058	<p>Yes. Compulsory microchipping is an essential element of the excellent animal welfare work already in place in Wales.</p> <p>The benefits of permanent identification are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The easy return of stray dogs; b. The ability to identify any dog that may transgress including being out of control or dangerously out of control; c. The ability to identify the owner of a dog where there may be an offence under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and subsequent secondary legislation introduced by the Welsh Assembly Government; d. The ability to trace the provenance of a dog to its breeder; e. The ability to trace dogs for disease control purposes. <p>None of these benefits can be attained except by the introduction of compulsory permanent identification and this is currently best achieved using the microchip.</p> <p>While voluntary microchipping has been available for more than fifteen years, it is clear that dogs belonging to two groups are most likely to be microchipped: the responsible owner who wishes to ensure their lost dog can be returned promptly; and the dog owner who has had their dog microchipped free of charge or at a reduced rate by a charity. Sadly this latter group are less likely to amend their contact details and it seems likely that their dogs represent the majority of microchipped stray dogs whose owners cannot be traced. A properly constructed compulsory scheme is likely to encourage this latter group to keep their details up to date.</p>

	<p>The owners of dogs that have not been microchipped probably fall into two groups: those who just haven't got round to it and the majority of whom will comply with a compulsory scheme; and those who have no regard for any legislation and are probably the most irresponsible owners. While some of this group may be forced to comply by their housing provider, there will inevitably be some who will never do so.</p>
0059	<p>No, we do not think that all dogs in Wales should have to be microchipped, we believe it is overly intrusive and only offers limited suggested "possible benefits".</p> <p>At a time of national austerity and public sector cut backs, it would place an unnecessary financial burden on many hundreds of thousands of already responsible dog owners and an additional financial and administrative burden on our already overstretched public sector services, and is also likely to be ignored by those less responsible dog owners it is most intended to target.</p> <p>The enormity and the financial and administrative implications of enforcing and <u>accurately</u> maintaining such records should not be underestimated. Particularly bearing in mind that not only do dogs change owners, but that owners also change addresses. This coupled with the fact that new owners may have no way of verifying for themselves that a dog is microchipped, or that any microchip number with which they are provided is accurate, it has the potential to become an administrative nightmare which realises few of the suggested benefits and at significantly higher costs.</p>
0060	<p>Given the increasing concerns of NFU Cymru members throughout Wales of livestock worrying by stray dogs, particularly with sheep worrying around the spring lambing season, it is our view that dogs in Wales should be microchipped.</p>
0061	<p>Like the majority of individuals and organisations involved in dog welfare, I believe that microchipping can help with a number of welfare issues. Microchipping can reunite lost and stray dogs with their owners. When dogs are tragically killed in road accidents, scanning for chips can allow information to be relayed back to an owner who may be worried about a missing dog.</p>

	<p>I am involved in voluntary work with greyhounds. Currently, these are routinely tattooed for identification in the racing industry. Sadly it is not unknown for dogs to have their ears mutilated (cut off) to eliminate tracing identification. Universal microchipping would ensure there is less motivation for this to occur, and may assist in reducing the problem of ex-racing dogs being abandoned.</p> <p>Easier identification of dogs will assist considerably in managing the problems caused by irresponsible dog ownership and “status dogs” – compulsory chipping for dogs who belong to social housing tenants will help in the management and identification of disputes caused by episodes of anti social behaviour linked to dog ownership.</p> <p>Easier identification of dogs will assist in the enforcement of dog fouling legislation.</p> <p>Clear identification of individual dogs will assist in the welfare issues associated with management of dog breeding premises. The issues attached to this are already being dealt with via the proposed changes to dog breeding legislation in Wales, so it is unnecessary to repeat the points here, except to say that chipping will be warmly welcomed.</p> <p>Finally, chipping of the dog population could be of considerable assistance in respect to issues of disease management.</p>
0062	<p>Yes</p> <p>Our experience as Dog Wardens is that it is often difficult to identify owners of dogs that are straying, fouling or acting in a dangerous manner. Rapid identification of dogs would allow enforcement authorities to deal more effectively with these issues, and micro-chipping is the only way in which this can be achieved in a cost effective way.</p> <p>Free or low cost micro-chipping has been offered by charities and local authorities across Wales over many years, but this has not led to universal coverage and further action is therefore required.</p>
0063	<p>We understand the reasons for microchipping as set out in the consultation document and agree with the points made. We recognise in particular that microchipping will assist greatly with returning lost, stolen or stray dogs to</p>

	their respective owners.
0064	We are in support of compulsory microchipping of puppies for the reasons given in the consultation document.
0065	<p>The Union supports in principle microchipping dogs as a backup mechanism for identification should collars and tags be lost or tattoos faded, although it does believe that some of the issues raised in the document in support of compulsory chipping, such as encouraging responsible dog ownership, will be dependant on owners actually microchipping their dogs in the first place. There is also concern at the use of legislation rather than positive voluntary measures, which adds another layer of unnecessary bureaucracy whilst achieving very little in return.</p> <p>The Union fully supports the promotion of voluntary microchipping for older dogs, although agrees that there might be a case for microchipping puppies from licensed breeders to improve the perception of Wales as a centre of puppy farming. This, however, will only work if the public buy microchipped puppies.</p>
0066	<p>Yes</p> <p>Our experience as local authorities – and specifically in this instance – dog wardens- is that it is often difficult to identify owners of dogs that are straying, fouling or acting in a dangerous manner. Rapid identification of dogs would allow enforcement authorities to deal more effectively with these issues, and micro-chipping is the only way in which this can be achieved in a cost effective way.</p> <p>Free or low cost micro-chipping has been offered by charities and local authorities across Wales over many years, but this has not led to universal coverage and further action is therefore required.</p>
0067	<p>We have long called for the microchipping of all dogs to be made compulsory. Compulsory microchipping is beneficial for animal welfare and responsible pet ownership for the reasons given below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Microchipping is a permanent form of identification; 2. It enables pets and owners to be reunited in cases of straying, accident or theft; 3. It could help reduce the numbers of stray dogs; 4. As the owner/breeder of the animal can be identified, it can promote responsible pet ownership and responsible breeding practices; 5. It allows for the identification of individual animals for certification, test results and medical history; 6. It enables veterinary surgeons to contact owners more easily in case of an emergency – e.g. with an animal

	<p>brought in after a road traffic accident.</p> <p>It is important to stress, however, that compulsory microchipping will be ineffective without a robust registration system that needs to be well regulated in any legislation along with a requirement for the owner/registered keeper to be responsible for keeping the details up to date. A central reunification mechanism for databases will need to be established to facilitate access through a single point of entry.</p>
0068	YES - It will promote traceability, enabling authorities to reunite stray dogs with their owners and make it very difficult (if not impossible) for irresponsible owners to deny ownership and avoid liability for their dogs. It will also deter dog theft
0069	BASC believes that whilst micro chipping has benefits, its use should be down to individual choice and not a mandatory requirement and that the case for compulsory microchipping has not yet been made. The consultation document quotes figures from a 2009 survey regarding local authorities in which seven of the twelve that responded were in favour 58.3%. It would therefore follow that 41.7% were not. With 22 Unitary Authorities in Wales, if all of these were surveyed the proportion of positive responses received actually decrease. The same could be true in respect of the figures quoted for vets. Whilst 65% of the 81 who responded felt that microchipping should not remain voluntary. What was the original number surveyed? Is this a true representation?
0071	Yes, we believe that all dogs in Wales should be microchipped irrespective of where they have been bred, and that this will be a major step forward in improving animal welfare. From an enforcement perspective, compulsory microchipping proves ownership and therefore who is liable/responsible for an animal. In addition, it will also reunite stray dogs with their owners and reduce incidences of stolen dogs as it will act as a deterrent. Compulsory microchipping will reduce the numbers of dogs that have to be impounded and will be a very useful tool for the Police when dealing with dangerously out-of-control dogs as they will be able to quickly identify owners.
0072	Yes. For welfare reasons with stray or abused dogs and traceability of breeders as well as owners. This would make them responsible for their dogs.
0073	Yes

0074	no. My experience of microchipping companion animals is that the system does not always work. An animal of mine was killed by a car, left on the side of the road and neighbours arranged for local environmental services to destroy the remains whilst I was at work. The animal was microchipped. So it did not help in this situation.
0075	Yes because there are too many irresponsible owners who abuse, abandon and use their dogs for harmful acts such as dog fighting or training them to be aggressive towards people. In order to hold them accountable they need to be traced.
0076	No. But I have to say that all our lggies are microchipped, I just don't agree with compulsory chipping, as there are perfectly good alternatives ie tattooing
0077	yes because I think the owner will then take better responsibility of the dog, police will have better evidence to act on dogs that have attacked someone so there is no question then who the dog belongs to and the animal welfare would be able to take action much quicker.
0078	Yes - to deter owners from abandoning dogs and from irresponsible breeding (breeders should take responsibility for dogs they have bred.) This should include ALL breeders - not just those licensed by their local authority.
0079	I think it would be a good idea for all dogs in Wales to be microchipped when they are born. This will ensure all dogs are registered to an owner and the types of dogs that people own is also registered.
0080	Consolidate responsibility of dog owner /positive ID of dog throughout its life. makes dog a member of society by association with owner/not anonymous/traceable/ accountable.
0081	Yes, it will improve the ability of councils to trace the owners of stray dogs and hopefully discourage people from abandoning dogs. It will aim to create a culture of responsible dog ownership.
0082	Yes. It will encourage owners to take greater responsibility for their dogs.
0083	yes It will improve identification and help reunite lost animals it will help prove accountability and liability of ownership and help prevent theft.
0084	No, worthwhile objective but unworkable, what happens to an owner who has had their dog chipped and the chip migrates/ceases operating? is the owner prosecuted? if only 1% are not readable that is over 4,000 dogs (some evidence suggests the figure is nearer 5% failure. consultation states that tattoos can be removed so can microchips either surgically or with more cruel methods (there is thriving underground vet side to dog fighting) what is the position with dogs that come in from countries where it is not compulsory to microchip. Obviously this will not be a factor if all parts of the UK implement at the same time with the same rules.
0085	Yes, to ensure that traceability of dogs can be ascertained. That puppy farms can be monitored accordingly and that

	criminals can be prosecuted by proving ownership of dogs in cruelty cases etc.
0086	Yes. Battersea Dogs & Cats Home, one of the oldest and best-known animal welfare organisations in the world, supports the compulsory microchipping of all dogs in Wales and throughout the UK. Although not a catch-all solution in its own right, we believe that compulsory microchipping will provide an essential framework for creating a culture of responsible ownership of dogs. Compulsory microchipping of all dogs in Wales would be an efficient way of reuniting lost dogs with their owners and would combat unidentifiable strays. Both of these create higher kennelling costs organisations such as Battersea and Local Authorities.
0087	Unlike other animals dogs are associated closely with areas inhabited by humans. Dog numbers are increasing. Dogs do not have a moral compass and their safe and civil conduct is under the direct control of their owners. There must be a means to identify and hold to account the owner of animals causing civil nuisance and exhibiting behaviours that threaten the well being of citizens.
0088	Will help control of stray dogs and make it easier for authorities to deal with owners who do not control their dogs. It will make it easier for victims of dog attacks to get justice from the owner.
0089	Yes, logged on a single database. This would enable the owners of dogs to be identified so that prosecutions can be brought against their owners when a dog attacks a horse or rider, or any other person. It would also help to ensure improved regulation of breeding dogs in a region that is stigmatised by the number of <u>_puppy farms_</u> . Legislation regarding the passporting and microchipping of horses has been in place for a number of years now, microchipping dogs would be the modern replacement for the licence that owners used to have to have. Responsible dog owners would welcome the introduction of microchipping; it would help to relocate dogs if lost, it could be used to improve breed standards (to confirm that it is the correct dog) and help to reduce the number of <u>_puppy farms_</u> .
0090	No, it should be the owner's free choice.
0091	yes. My cat was chipped and when he got lost someone took it to a vet and so he was identified and came home.
0092	Tracability
0093	Yes. This will control all dogs especially violent and illegal dogs. It will make policing the dog problem a lot easier.
0094	Yes It would make people more responsible for their animals' behaviour and safety, and for leaving their faeces in inappropriate places. It would make people think more responsibly about acquiring dogs at all.
0095	Yes, to reduce the number of stray animals and to improve animal welfare, forcing owners to take responsibility for thier dogs.

0096	<p>No: Whilst the Pet Care Trust supports microchipping and believes that microchipping is an excellent method of permanently identifying a dog, it should not be made mandatory.</p> <p>The present legal requirement for dogs in public to wear a collar and tag showing the owner's name and address is perfectly serviceable as a way of reuniting the vast majority of dogs with their owners. Whilst microchipping is desirable as an extra safeguard in case the collar falls off, it would be disproportionate to criminalise pet owners who do not comply.</p> <p>You state that compulsory microchipping could :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>1. Shorten the period of confinement for stray dogs, thus reducing stress for the animal and costs for the local authority.</i> However this does not guarantee that animals will be reunited with their owners. For instance, if a vet finds a chip which has different owner details from that of his client, he is under no obligation to inform the original owner.<i>2. Introduce greater traceability</i> This will only happen if transfer papers are up to date, this is also important when establishing liability and proof of ownership<i>3. Could act as a deterrent against theft</i> This is not an automatic deterrent to theft, as microchips are not visible. How will it be policed? Will owners become criminalised if the chip has become dormant? What level of fine would be levied on an owner? Who will bring prosecutions? <p>The Pet Care Trust believes that enforcement of mandatory microchipping would only further burden an overworked police force and local authority. It would require further investment in infrastructure.</p> <p>The Pet Care Trust strongly recommends the Welsh Assembly Government adopt option 1.</p> <p>Not introduce legislation but continue to work with local authorities and third sector organisations to</p>
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	<p>encourage owners to microchip their dogs on a voluntary basis</p> <p>STATE This approach also complies with the Hampton review for better regulation by making use of bodies and systems already in place.</p>
0097	<p>The SHG is opposed to compulsory micro-chipping. The decision to micro-chip should remain with the individual dog owner in Wales.</p> <p>The UK government has recently committed to closing down the ID card database. Dog microchipping is just another register of people. It does nothing to prevent dog theft or to help find dogs that are lost. Indeed, reading reports of missing dogs there seem to be as many lost and stolen that are micro-chipped as those that are not. There is no evidence that this leads to an increased percentage of dogs that are micro-chipped being found and returned to their owners when either lost or stolen. See <i>“Pet owner hits out as dog re-homed”</i>. http://www.blackpoolgazette.co.uk/news/local/pet-owner-hits-out-as-dog-rehomed-1-4733856</p> <p>The SHG opposes compulsory micro-chipping on the grounds that it is dog registration and licensing under another name, that it creates a database registry of people and their movements, thus representing great intrusion into people's privacy, and that it punishes responsible dog owners for the actions of a minority.</p> <p>We know that any problems are caused by a minority because Welsh Environment Minister John Griffiths said: <i>“We believe the majority of dog owners in Wales are responsible and take good care of their animals.”</i> http://www.vetsonline.com/actualites/detail/53831/welsh-to-consult-on-compulsory-dogmicrochipping.html</p> <p>Clearly the Welsh Government must consider the proportionality of forcing uncalled for restrictions on the peaceful enjoyment by people of their property (dogs) when it is clear from the proposals that the majority of people have chosen not to take up offers of free or cheap micro-chipping.</p> <p>We have been unable to find any figures to show the actual voluntary uptake of micro-chipping among Welsh or UK dog owners. Nor have we found any figures for compliance with compulsory microchipping in Northern Ireland although we accept that this is new legislation. It should be remembered</p>

	<p>that when the dog licence was abandoned it had an uptake of only 50%. A large number of people who would need to be forced to comply.</p> <p>There are serious health issues with microchips. They may move within the dog's body. There are certainly instances where chips that have been inserted for pet passports have not been found resulting in dogs facing long stays in quarantine. Microchips appear to be associated with the appearance of tumours at the site of the chip. No responsible pet owner is going to want to risk the health of their animal for a dubious benefit. Indeed, the procedure might well be in breach of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (AWA), although we note that the Act makes government sponsored cruelty exempt. See: http://www.chipmenot.org/ and http://www.antichips.com/cancer/</p> <p>This does not sit easily with the claim that these proposals will serve to improve animal welfare. Worse, by creating compulsory micro-chipping the Welsh Government will provide micro-chippers with the protective cover of S. 4(3)(b) of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. This essentially states that state sanctioned cruelty is exempt from prosecution – and arguably from any financial claims for compensation for injury and suffering caused to dogs and the inevitable associated veterinary fees.</p> <p>Tattooing appears to be a far less dangerous procedure and at least is visible on the dog, unlike microchipping which needs specialist equipment. There is already a dog tattoo register and it should be noted that the Dangerous Dogs Act insists on a tattoo as well as a micro-chip. http://www.dog-register.co.uk/ .</p> <p>It is impossible to see how micro-chipping could reduce dog fouling.</p>
0098	<p>Yes. So that strays and lost dogs can be found easier. It could also mean that puppy farms and breeders would need to take more responsibility so that you could see just how many they are breeding, plus the welfare of these dogs can be monitored. An entire history of a dogs life can be recorded and the issues surrounding them tackled more easily.</p>
0099	<p>Yes, because it would force owners to take responsibility for their animals and make any necessary actions against those owners easier, as it would be like owning your car..... you're responsible for the actions of anyone driving your car etc.</p>
0100	<p>DEFINATELY!!! I think if all dogs were microchipped, you could trace owners who dump or neglect their dogs. I also</p>

	believe there should be a ban on breeding also, social networking sites are rife with dogs for sale or free, ban on advertising on networking / selling sites.. with ever increasing horror stories of dogs being used for dog fighting etc. Neutering should also be compulsory to prevent breeding unless people have applied for a special licence. We need dog licences, special licences to allow breeding with restrictions and guidelines on re-homing, making people take responsibility, ownership.. this cruelty has to stop!!
0101	Yn bendant. Mi fyddai hyn yn golygu bod perchnogaeth ci yn rhywbeth i'w ystyried o ddifrif. Mi fyddai hefyd yn golygu bod modd canfod perchnogion cwn strae.
0102	Yes, I work for an animal rescue centre and promote microchipping as a responsible way of taking responsibility for dogs. People should be prepared to look after animals they buy or adopt.
0103	Absolutely, definitely NOT. Irresponsible owners will take no notice and how can it possibly be enforced. Local councils already stretched to deliver essential services. Dog licences were dropped as impossible to administer. Won't help dangerous dog situation. Identification following dog attacks not usually a problem as it is more often than not a family pet or neighbour's dog who commits attack. Won't help stray situation. Most strays are abandoned and owners don't want them back. An owner whose dog is genuinely lost will move heaven and earth to get them back. Highly efficient websites have an interactive network, rescue centres, dog wardens, vets etc would be contacted routinely
0104	YES - to tackle the increasing problem of strays, fouling and encourage more responsible dog ownership.
0105	No, we do not think that all dogs in Wales should have to be microchipped, we believe it is overly intrusive and only offers limited suggested "possible benefits". At a time of national austerity and public sector cut backs, it would place an unnecessary financial burden on many hundreds of thousands of already responsible dog owners and an additional financial and administrative burden on our already overstretched public sector services, and is also likely to be ignored by those less responsible dog owners it is most intended to target. The enormity and the financial and administrative implications of enforcing and accurately maintaining such records should not be underestimated. Particularly bearing in mind that not only do dogs change owners, but that owners also change addresses. This, coupled with the fact that new owners may have no way of verifying for themselves that a dog is microchipped, or that any microchip number with which they are provided is accurate, has the potential to become an administrative nightmare which realises few of the suggested benefits and at significantly higher costs.

0106	<p>Microchipping is proven to be the most effective way of ensuring lost dogs are returned to their owners. However of the 8.2 million pet dogs currently in the UK, more than a third remain unidentifiable, by permanent means.</p> <p>As a further encouragement, according to recent independent economic research carried out by the Alliance, it has revealed that if the Welsh Government were to introduce compulsory microchipping it could save the public purse between £2.39 and £2.67 million per year¹.</p> <p>If more dogs were microchipped, more could be returned direct to their owners enhancing animal welfare as well as the cost savings to local authorities. We believe that microchipping could help with the enforcement of other existing legislation such as the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 or Dogs Act 1871.</p> <p>The most important reason for microchipping is to enable a lost, stolen or straying dog to be returned promptly to its owner. Permanent identification has a number of advantages over the use of a collar and tag. A collar and tag can easily be removed from a stray or stolen dog. Conversely, permanent identification by means of a microchip is effective at all times, is impossible to alter and extremely difficult to remove.</p> <p>However, the microchip number on its own is meaningless. Owners need to register the microchip number along with their personal details with an appropriate computerised database. The databases currently used in the UK can only be accessed by authorised bodies such as animal wardens, the police, animal welfare centre personnel and vets. Once an individual or organisation has been verified they are allocated a PIN number to facilitate such access. It is essential that database details are kept up to date, and, that the database is available 24 hours a day. All databases must be compatible with a single point of entry.</p> <p>We believe that the introduction of compulsory microchipping of all dogs will help to improve animal welfare, aid the government in tackling a large number of issues relating to irresponsible dog ownership and ease financial pressures on local authority services.</p>
0107	<p>Yes. Guide Dogs concur with the potential benefits identified by compulsory microchipping within the consultation document. We believe that the compulsory microchipping of all dogs at the earliest opportunity is the best and most</p>

¹ Microchipping Alliance independent economic research 2011

	<p>effective way of improving animal welfare; reducing the level of stress for a dog when separated from it's owner and helping establish ownership liability where required. We believe compulsory microchipping should be an important element of any future dog control legislation that may be introduced as the result of the forthcoming Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill consultation that was recently announced.</p>
0108	<p>Yes. Dogs if strayed, can be reunited with their owners. Dogs that do damage can be traced back to their owners.</p>
0109	<p>Yes. I think there are many benefits to having all dogs microchipped and it will encourage dog owners to take more responsibility for their animals.</p>
0110	<p>Yes encourages responsible ownership. I particularly relate to geyhounds who are often abandoned after their racing days. Also if you loose your dog can be easily identified.</p>
0111	<p>Dogs Trust believes that all dogs in Wales should have to be permanently identified via a microchip.</p> <p>Microchipping is proven to be the most effective way of ensuring lost dogs are returned to their owners. However, of the estimated 8.2 million pet dogs currently in the UK, more than a third remain unidentifiable by a permanent means of identification. According to recent independent economic research carried out by Dogs Trust on behalf of the Microchipping Alliance, if the Welsh Government were to introduce compulsory microchipping it could save the public purse between £2.39 million and £2.61 million per year. If more dogs were microchipped, more could be returned to their owners and in a timelier manner. As such the cost to local authorities would be vastly reduced. Dogs Trust is aware that the Local Government Authority believes voluntary microchipping is working. However, despite years of endless education and free microchipping offers from charities, only an estimated 59% of the dog population is currently microchipped and stray dog figures for the UK continue to rise year on year, last year standing at over 9,482 in Wales.</p> <p>The most important reason for microchipping is to enable a lost, stolen or stray dog to be returned promptly to its owner. Permanent identification has a number of advantages over the use of a collar and tag. Some dogs are not left with their collar and tag on at all times and dogs, stolen from owners' premises, are likely to have their collar and tag removed if they are wearing them at the time. Permanent identification is effective at all times, is impossible to alter and extremely difficult to remove.</p> <p>As stated above, the main welfare benefit is for dogs to be promptly identified and returned to their owners. In</p>

	<p>addition, microchipping and registration to a database allows quick and simple detection, acts as a deterrent to dog theft, provides easier identification of owners who persistently allow their dogs to stray, cause nuisance or are culpable of animal cruelty, helps puppies be traceable to their breeder and as a consequence helps to tackle puppy farming problems.</p> <p>However, the microchip number alone is meaningless. Keepers need to be compelled to register the microchip number and their details with an appropriate computerised database. It is essential that dog owners update their personal details; to be effective this needs to be mandatory with a penalty imposed for non-compliance. Any database should be available 24 hours a day and all databases compatible and communicate with each other. Dogs Trust is adamant that an independent single point of access to the databases, signed up to a Code of Practice, is essential. A PIN number is needed to access the databases, which can only be accessed by authorised bodies such as animal wardens, the police, social housing landlords, animal welfare centre personnel and vets.</p>
0112	Yes eventually all dogs ... so each owner can take responsibility
0113	Yes Because it would make dealing with the huge numbers of stray dogs so much easier and make owners more responsible for their dogs
0114	Yes. To enable easy identification of stray or lost dogs. To ensure that the necessary authorities can track down owners in the case of animal maltreatment or dog attacks against humans. To ensure that farmers can locate dog owners if a dog is worrying their flocks to help prevent immediate premature shooting of dogs. Chipping might also encourage a more responsible attitude towards dogs e.g. fouling.
0115	Yes.It would result in a full data base of all dogs in Wales. Lost dogs would be rehomed quicker and save on expensive kennelling costs, it would demonstrate responsible dog ownership and identify those dogs that are repeatedly allowed to stray.
0116	Yes, as hopefully this would prevent as many dogs finding thier way into pounds that are there now.
0117	No, there is already to much legislation surrounding hunting, docking tails, etc the goverment should concentrate on more important & relevant issues. eg education, economy health
0118	No. There are health issues arising from the use of microchips. If my dog develops a tumour at the site of the microchip, will I be able to sue the government? The chips can also migrate .
0119	Yes. Animal welfare reasons such as reunite lost animals with owners and potential prosecution of owners for animals discovered in poor health. Public health reasons such as identifying and potentially prosecuting owners of

	dangerous dogs - and by dangerous I mean an animal that is behaving dangerously NOT an animal that simply passes some measurements and ticks a few dubious boxes relating to 'type'
0120	Yes – it will promote traceability, enabling authorities to reunite stray dogs with their owners and make it very difficult (if not impossible) for irresponsible owners to deny ownership and avoid liability for their dogs. It will also deter dog theft

Ref	Response
0027	I think that all dogs should be microchipped within 1 year of the legislation being enacted. The idea of microchipping is sound and, so long as the microchipping companies can cope with the number of dogs to be chipped, it would serve no useful purpose by delaying Wales-wide coverage.
0029	In the view of Welshpool Town Council all dogs should be microchipped.
0030	<p>I feel all breeding bitches should be microchipped and health checked before they are used for breeding. This will prevent over-breeding and keep a record of the litters they produce. Each dog should then receive a health check after each litter, e.g. between 6-8 weeks post litter.</p> <p>The microchipping number of the mother should then also be recorded on the puppies chip.</p> <p>All dogs to be used as a stud dog should also be microchipped and health checked, because of potential inherited health issues.</p> <p>All puppies should be microchipped after a certain date and have a health check before leaving a breeder.</p>
0041	The first two points should be the requirements although I would make the second within 6 months of introduction
0042	In addition I feel that all puppies should be identifiable prior to leaving it's breeder with breeder details being kept on record so that they are also accountable for any offspring they produce. All older dogs should be permanently identifiable within an agreed timescale which I suggest to be 1 year from the date of legislation.
0043	<p>All puppies (including (and indeed especially) those bred by people other than licensed breeders should be microchipped and registered before a certain age (I would suggest around 14 weeks). Although requiring microchipping before leaving the breeders might make enforcement easier neonatal animals may feel more pain from the chipping procedure than those at 14 weeks (in my experience pups complain a lot more about their first vaccination at 6-8 weeks than their second one at 10-12 weeks). That said the pain involved is likely to be quite a bit less than other procedures such as tail docking and dew claw removal which are allowed in neonates.</p> <p>All dogs should be microchipped within one year of legislation being made, assuming the database companies are sure they can cope. If the approach is phased it will be over a decade before an owner guilty of not chipping his/her dog can claim it was born before the legislation was made.</p>

0044	This should not be introduced, therefore this question is NOT APPLICABLE
0045	All dogs be microchipped within 1 year of the legislation being made. Because most effective and easiest to implement & enforce.
0046	IF microchipping legislation were introduced it would make sense to microchip all dogs within a given time period perhaps a year. Microchipping puppies at time of sale would mean there would be a gap of at least ten but possibly up to seventeen or twenty years during which some dogs would be chipped and others not (because some non chipped dogs would live that long) – clearly this would be counterproductive, especially if the disease transmission to humans scenario should ever occur.
0047	It is important that all new puppies are microchipped, that microchipping is required on change of ownership, and that the adult dog population is microchipped within a relatively short period. This would aid publicity campaigns, enforcement by agencies such as local authorities and the police, and create early benefits (eg of reduction of the stray population). However, a one-year time-scale may be too short for effective administration. It is suggested that all dogs should be microchipped within 2 years of the date of implementation of legislation, but that microchipping of new puppies and at change of ownership be required from date of implementation.
0048	<p>The Kennel Club supports Option 2, which requires all dogs be microchipped within 1 year of the legislation, as the best option out of the 5 proposed as it has both the highest welfare and economic benefits combined.</p> <p>Option 1 which would require microchipping puppies born after the legislation has been enacted would eventually lead the outcome of compulsory identification of all dogs. However, this option alone would not be immediately effective in securing both the welfare and economic benefits associated with microchipping all dogs without efforts to ensure existing adult dogs are also included.</p> <p>Option 3 may cover a larger proportion of the dog population as it includes both the microchipping of new puppies and a requirement to microchip upon change of ownership, however it would also not be immediately effective in securing the benefits as it would take years in order for the entire dog population to be microchipped and registered to a database. Furthermore, the Kennel Club’s concern regarding the change of ownership element is that dogs which are kept in the ownership of the breeder (for example working dogs) would not need to be microchipped as they have not changed ownership. Problems could arise when an un-chipped animal strays, gets lost or is involved in a dog bite incident. The ability to identify owners to reunite them with their dog and possibly hold them responsible for</p>

	<p>an incident would be a longer and more complicated process. Additionally, there is a higher chance of finding legal loopholes which would allow owners to legally avoid microchipping their dogs.</p> <p>With regards to Option 5 which involves a phased in approach by microchipping puppies at the time of sale, the concern is once again that both welfare and economic benefits would not be delivered fast enough as well as the segment of dogs that might be excluded because they are never transferred to a new owner. This option would offer extremely slow progress for both animal welfare and financial gains for both local authorities and rescue centres.</p> <p>Option 4 which requires new puppies to be microchipped and all dogs on change of ownership as well as the remainder microchipped within an agreed timescale would be the second best option as it would cover a greater proportion of the dog population which would ensure faster delivery of benefits. However, instead of having three different requirements placed on the public, Option 2 which requires all dogs to be microchipped within one year of the legislation would be an easier and more digestible requirement for the public to understand and comply with.</p> <p>Based on a cost impact analysis undertaken by the Microchipping Alliance, the Kennel Club considers Option 2 to be by far the most beneficial in terms of cost savings. The cost analysis looked at implementation costs, enforcement costs, cost savings in Wales and the total estimated cost. The calculated annual cost savings relating solely to dog welfare amount to between £2.39-£2.61 million in the first year of introducing such legislation. These savings could enable local authorities to offer further assistance in other canine related matters as well as potentially providing extra income.</p> <p>Option 2 would allow all dog owners sufficient time to get their dogs microchipped which would ensure that should any dog get lost or stray, the chances of their reunification with the owner are higher and kennelling time lower. In addition, legislation centred on Option 2 could also include measures to avoid possible welfare implications of microchipping older dogs who may find the microchipping process distressing.</p> <p>For these reasons, the Kennel Club considers Option 2 to be the most efficient, beneficial and best 'catch all' option that has the highest welfare benefits as well as lowest costs to both local and national government.</p>
0049	The RSPCA's preferred position of the options listed is the second of those above – all dogs to be microchipped

	<p>within 1 year of the legislation being made - however this is not the solution we would choose.</p> <p>The consultation document states that compulsory microchipping would improve animal welfare by making it easier to re-unite stray dogs with their owners; develop responsible ownership through greater traceability; help establish liability and prove ownership; assist with disease control; and act as deterrent against dog theft. All of these objectives rely on the quality and integrity of the database(s) that holds the information on the owner and the dog. The current situation which allows for any number of private database companies with no central portal for information to be inputted or extracted cannot meet the objectives the Welsh Government want to achieve with this legislation. A new system of registration with a Government-owned database, where owners are required to keep their data up-to-date, would however satisfy these objectives.</p> <p>This is why the RSPCA supports and believes a national dog registration scheme should be brought in because it would also provide a funding stream at a local level to ensure education and enforcement can take place. An annual fee would ensure such resources could be made available and ensure preventative action could be taken to deal with irresponsible dog ownership.</p>
0050	<p>We believe if compulsory microchipping is introduced in Wales then -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It should be required for new puppies and all dogs on change of ownership and the remainder microchipped within an agreed timescale ○ This should be regardless of age (not just those born after a certain date) with implementation from a certain date. This set date should commence as soon as possible, rather than a phased-in approach. ○ The microchipping of all dogs should be completed within 2 years, as this would coincide with the vet visits and booster vaccinations programmes that many dog owners use.
0051	<p>We would support all dogs being micro-chipped within a year, as this would allow for a more rapid resolution of the issues which are currently occurring through inappropriate or irresponsible dog ownership. This is also the easiest option for dog owners to understand and for enforcing authorities to implement.</p>
0053	<p>PDSA would support <i>the second option</i> (microchip all dogs within a year of legislation coming into effect), assuming that this generic phrase includes puppies. We believe the other options could not be enforced and would provide few welfare benefits to dogs in the immediate future.</p>

The other options would not tackle irresponsible dog ownership, under which the changes are proposed. The Microchip Alliance estimate that, at the very least, 60% of dog owners already have their dogs microchipped, and therefore many already view microchipping as a responsible part of dog ownership.

The UK's stray and abandoned dog numbers are vast, with nearly 127,000 dogs being picked up by Local Authorities (LA's) over the year. Over 6% of these strays were euthanased by LA's, an 18% increase on the previous year.

If more dogs were microchipped, this would inevitably result in more being re-united with their owners, fewer being euthanased or housed in rescue centres. The Microchip Alliance estimates these benefits could save LA's approximately £22 million a year.

PDSA also supports the Microchipping Alliance Group's belief that **the first option** (microchip only puppies) is ineffective in improving dogs' welfare and would not ease the burden on charities. In addition, owners of unidentified dogs that were lost or involved in an incident may not be re-united with their owners.

There are also concerns about enforcement if this option (microchip only puppies) were adopted. An enforcement officer may be unable to ascertain if the owner were complying with legislation based on the dog's age if there was no record of the dog's date of birth.

If **the third option** (microchip new puppies and all dogs on change of ownership only) were adopted, PDSA believes that this would have little benefit as dogs usually stay with the same owner for their whole life and under this option the dog would never be microchipped.

The fourth option (microchip all dogs on change of owner and then after a period of time) may have better welfare and financial benefits than previous options, but only if it were necessary for all dogs to be microchipped within 2 years of the legislation coming into effect rather than five years. PDSA would cautiously welcome this option but only if the period of time for compliance was fixed and lower.

	The fifth option would not be supported by PDSA. Approximately 80% of the public want to see microchipping for all dogs and various organisations have long been promoting microchipping outlining the benefits to the dog and their owner.
0054	All dogs are microchipped within 1 year of the legislation being made. This will enable there to be a clear start point. If all dogs are microchipped then reuniting lost/stray dogs with their owners would be easier. Regulators would be better placed to take action against irresponsible dog owners where appropriate.
0055	Blue Cross considers the legislation should provide for all dogs be microchipped within 1 year ideally. But we acknowledge that this could provide some implementation issues. However, due to the outreach (microchipping services) already offered by the voluntary sector in Wales we don't consider that the supply of microchips would be a barrier. All puppies should be microchipped at time of sale, and we consider that a two year implementation period would be more than adequate to ensure that all dogs in Wales were permanently identified by microchips.
0056	If compulsory micro chipping was introduced it should be applied to all dogs. It is estimated that there are 463,000 dogs in Wales therefore sufficient time needs to be allowed for this to happen. Assuming the above figures are accurate there are approximately 21,000 dogs per Authority. Whilst it is appreciated that many of these dogs would already be chipped, it is doubted whether 1 year would be sufficient to ensure that the remainder are chipped. Notwithstanding this a five year period would likely be too much. It is suggested that all new puppies and dogs that change ownership are immediately micro chipped with all other dogs being chipped within a two year period.
0057	I feel that all dogs be micro-chipped within 1 year of the legislation being made is the best option. It is probably the easiest to understand and enforce and will also see the quickest results.
0058	The average life expectancy of a dog is 10-11 years and consequently any scheme that relies solely on microchipping puppies would take ten years to be fully effective. The adverse welfare consequences of such a delay are unacceptable. However the compulsory microchipping and registration on a database of puppies before they change hands is an essential element of the introduction of compulsory microchipping. A phase in period is essential to the introduction of compulsory microchipping to allow owners and the industry a reasonable time to react. A year is the maximum that should be allowed for dogs born after the date of implementation of any legislation. Dogs have temporary teeth which are readily distinguishable from permanent teeth, with permanent teeth all erupted by the age of six months. It is therefore possible to identify whether a dog is

	<p>aged more or less than six months and so a six month phase in period may be easier to enforce. However such a measure on its own would not be sufficiently effective as there would be many young puppies that were perceived to be too young to be microchipped and therefore not microchipped prior to sale.</p> <p>If the ability to identify the owner of a dog is to be possible there must also be a requirement to identify dogs as they change hands. Such a requirement is also an essential element of the legislation.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to including a residency requirement in the legislation as some visitors to Wales may, sadly, not have their dogs microchipped. I consider that any person who owns property in Wales, even if it is not their primary residence, or who has been resident for more than thirty days should be required to have their dog microchipped under the legislation. Any person whose dog is not microchipped should be required to show that they do not meet the residency stipulations.</p>
0059	We do not support the compulsory microchipping of all dogs. However if made compulsory, and if enforcement/compliance are to become effective within a reasonable timescale, the requirement for all dogs to be microchipped within 1 year of the legislation would seem the most appropriate option
0060	Given the severity of the problem of livestock worrying by stray dogs and the urgent need for a solution to this problem it is NFU Cymru's view that all dogs should be microchipped within 1 year of the legislation being made. This would be in line with the scenario outlined in Option 4 of the consultation document and this would give a clear enforcement date by which all dogs must be microchipped. We recognise that the need to register a large number of dogs in a short time period may put some pressure on microchip database operators but feel that the potential benefits would outweigh the costs.
0061	Adoption of a phased approach may initially appear to be attractive, but could be problematic for anyone involved in enforcement of the requirement. Since the majority of dogs already are chipped, and action is forthcoming also on chipping of all dogs produced in licensed breeding kennels, it makes sense to adopt the requirement for all dogs to be chipped within one year of the legislation being introduced.
0062	We would support all dogs being micro-chipped within a year, as this would allow for a more rapid resolution of the issues which are currently occurring through inappropriate or irresponsible dog ownership. This is also the easiest option for dog owners to understand and for enforcing authorities to implement.
0064	The most logical approach is to microchip all new puppies after the legislation is made. This would ensure that all

	<p>dogs of a certain age should be expected to have a microchip making it easier to enforce. Micro chipping of older dogs should remain voluntary but should be promoted by increasing the information available to owners (e.g. through the media, veterinary surgeries). Given the average dog's lifespan it should then take between 10-15 years for all dogs to be microchipped.</p> <p>If all dogs are immediately to be microchipped then a much greater resource is needed to supply and implement this.</p>
0065	<p>The FUW believes that most responsible owners will microchip their dogs as a matter of course, as the benefits are primarily to their advantage, such as reunification and or identification in cases of theft etc, however, the Union is unconvinced that the wider benefits cited by the welsh government, of promoting responsible dog ownership can be backed up by fact. Indeed, there may well be welfare issues if chips are removed by unscrupulous dog owners and this needs to be considered in the context of this consultation.</p> <p>Under the Control of Dogs Order 1992, dogs are already required to be identifiable in public by wearing a collar and tag with the owner's name and address. The Union believes that irresponsible dog owners are as likely to not use a microchip as they would a collar and indeed, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest that some dog owners stop using collars and tags once their dogs have been chipped.</p> <p>The agricultural industry has suffered increasing problems associated with sheep worrying on farmland, and so it is extremely interested in any measures which would help mitigate these problems. Unfortunately, the FUW does not believe that compulsory microchipping will have any real impact on irresponsible dog owners who are unlikely to comply and so the decision whether or not to microchip older dogs should remain a voluntary.</p> <p>The FUW also believes that any consideration of a statutory framework must be done on a Wales/England basis, as legislating in Wales only will be almost impossible to police, particularly in border and tourist areas.</p>
0066	<p>We would support all dogs being micro-chipped within a year, as this would allow for a more rapid resolution of the issues which are currently occurring through inappropriate or irresponsible dog ownership. This is also the easiest option for dog owners to understand and for enforcing authorities to implement.</p>
0067	<p>We support the microchipping of all dogs after a certain period (e.g. a year from the introduction of the legislation) as this is likely to make enforcement easier. We therefore support the second consultation option. We further advise that</p>

	<p>puppies should be microchipped and registered before the first change of ownership such that the breeder is the first registered owner. This will provide transparency regarding a pup's origin.</p> <p>We believe that requiring all dogs to be microchipping within a year of the legislation will be the most effective option as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only microchipping puppies will mean that it will be 10-12 years before the legislation is fully effective meaning that the full welfare benefits will not be realised until this time. It will also be difficult to enforce as it is hard to accurately estimate the age of an adult dog and therefore whether or not it should have been microchipped. 2. Requiring microchipping on change of ownership will be difficult to enforce as it will be difficult to ascertain whether or not an animal had a previous owner. <p>It will of course be vital to ensure that all microchip implanters are adequately trained.</p>
0068	<p>Option 2 in the above list; all dogs to be micro-chipped within 1 year of the legislation coming into force. Continued reliance on voluntary registration leaves the key group of irresponsible owners and thieves largely unaffected. Confining registration to new puppies will take 10- 12 years to implement complete coverage and this is too long. Simply micro-chipping new puppies and other dogs on a transfer of ownership would be difficult if not impossible to enforce. Option 2 in the above list could be applied in a phased way, new puppies, change of ownership by sale or gift and within one year of the legislation coming into force if the other two eventualities have not occurred. Failure to register within time should be an offence. Penalties for failure to register should include a fine and/or imprisonment coupled with a ban on ownership of a dog as is appropriate in the circumstances.</p>
0069	<p>If compulsory microchipping is introduced in Wales then BASC would suggest that the option to microchip all puppies born after the legislation is made would be the easiest and most straight forward. It would also be in harmony with the proposed legislation regarding licenced breeders in that all breeders of dogs would have to microchip puppies born after this date.</p>
0070	<p>ACPO support compulsory microchipping of puppies at the earliest opportunity, and all dogs over a period of three years. This is primarily an animal welfare issue, but will assist the Police in assisting other agencies. Aside from owner accountability and a stray dog being involved in an incident of being dangerously out of control, there are few public safety issues benefited from, or affected by, compulsory microchipping.</p>

However, this would address a number of areas of current concerns including:

- A phased approach is necessary to ensure that the workload being placed on microchipping companies with a surge of applications is taken into account.
- That sufficient and reasonable period of notice is given to the public to have their dogs microchipped, maximising compliance.
- Those involved in the microchipping of dogs, such as veterinary practices and the charitable sector, are not overwhelmed but rather experience a gradual increase over the period of three years.
- ACPO suggests a three year lead time on implementation. In the first year microchipping should take place at sale or change of ownership. In the second year microchipping should take place of any animal that comes to local authority and third sector possession/attention. By the end of year three the Police would wish to see the microchipping of all dogs. This would greatly assist a long term solution to irresponsible dog ownership.

The potential benefits of compulsory microchipping would include:

- Empowering the local authorities and voluntary sector to microchip dogs that come into their possession. It is important that, to be effective, the agencies have the power to microchip a dog that is in their temporary possession without having to seek the permission of the owner.
- Empowering enforcers to take action against those irresponsible individuals who will not microchip and register their dogs. Without this power, any other type of compulsory microchipping risks becoming a tax on responsible dog owners. With the context of 20% cuts in police funding and the low numbers of Dog Legislation officers in Wales we do not see the police having the capacity to undertake enforcement action on any significant scale.
- The suggestion that only puppies should receive compulsory microchipping will not address or affect the many back street breeders, which are proving to be the main aggravating factor with regards to irresponsible dog ownership within our society.
- The quick locating of owners of dogs that may have been involved in an incident. This will increase the accountability of those who allow their dogs to stray and be dangerously out of control. It would also reduce the unnecessary kennelling of dogs that can be returned immediately by the local authority.

ACPO agrees that microchipping should be introduced as an amendment within the Animal Welfare Act 2006, as a welfare issue. This is also the view of DEFRA and leading Animal Welfare charities, such as Dogs Trust. As such the

	<p>responsibilities within this area should fall with Local Authorities and the charitable sector in line with DEFRA's preferred approach.</p> <p>What is clear in the current budgetary circumstances is that the Police are not resourced to facilitate the microchipping of dogs. In the context of the reduction in Police funding, it will be not be realistic to divert resources away from core public protection duties. Changes in legislation need to take cognisance of this reality.</p>
0071	<p>In an ideal world all dogs would be microchipped within a year of the legislation coming into force although the enforcement of this would put a lot of additional pressures on local authorities in the already difficult current climate and ineffective enforcement may be worse than leaving the rules as they currently stand. A more realistic approach may be to bring in compulsory microchipping for new puppies and dogs on change of ownership from the date the legislation comes into force and then all other dogs to be microchipped within an agreed timescale. This would lessen the pressure on enforcement agencies and would also leave owners of elderly dogs for example with the option of whether to put their animals through the process of microchipping or not.</p>
0097	<p>Compulsory micro-chipping should not be introduced in Wales. It would be abhorrent to put people who have chosen not to micro-chip for health or privacy concerns in the position of having to decide whether to break the law or put their dog at what they believe to be serious risk of micro-chip induced health problems and to give up their own right to privacy.</p> <p>If it is to be imposed then clearly it should only be imposed on those who choose to buy puppies or dogs in future and who are prepared to take the known risks. It should not be imposed on dog owners retrospectively.</p> <p>Only those people who buy puppies or dogs who will continue to live in Wales should be affected by this legislation. There should be an exemption for people wishing to buy a puppy who live in other parts of the UK, otherwise it will serve to disadvantage Welsh dog breeders when selling to other parts of the EU and UK.</p>
0105	<p>We do not support the compulsory microchipping of all dogs. However if made compulsory, and if enforcement/ compliance are to become effective within a reasonable timescale, the requirement for all dogs to be microchipped</p>

	within 1 year of the legislation would seem the most appropriate option.
0106	<p>The Microchipping Alliance supports option 2, which requires all dogs be microchipped within 1 year of the legislation, as the best option out of the 5 proposed as it has both the highest welfare and economic benefits combined. Stray and abandoned dog numbers in Wales over recent years have either increased or remained static. 9,482 stray dogs were picked up by Local Authorities in 2011 and of that number, 486 of those dogs were put to sleep in the last year under the aegis of the Environmental Protection Act. We believe if more dogs were microchipped then more dogs would be rapidly reunited with their owners and fewer dogs would be put to sleep or end up in rescue centres</p> <p>If option 1 was adopted, the Microchipping Alliance believes that it would be ineffective, in the short and medium term, in improving welfare and reducing the burden on charities. It would also mean thousands of dogs could be left unidentified in Wales with their owners unable to trace them if they are lost or involved in an incident. We also question how this would be enforced. For example, how could any enforcement officer gauge whether an owner should be complying based on a dog's age, when they cannot possibly know how old the dog is?</p> <p>If option 3 was adopted by the Welsh Government, the Microchipping Alliance believes that this may have better welfare and financial benefits than option 1 but only if it was required for all dogs to be microchipped within 2-3 years of the legislation coming into effect. Otherwise, it would also not be immediately effective in securing the benefits as it would take years in order for the entire dog population to be microchipped and registered to a database.</p> <p>With regards to option 5 which involves a phased in approach by microchipping puppies at the time of sale, the concern is similar to option 1 that once again that both welfare and economic benefits would not be delivered fast enough as well as the segment of dogs that might be excluded because they are never transferred to a new owner. This option would offer extremely slow progress for both animal welfare and financial gains for both local authorities and rescue centres.</p> <p>Option 4 which requires new puppies to be microchipped and all dogs on change of ownership as well as the remainder microchipped within an agreed timescale would be the second best option as it would cover a greater proportion of the dog population which would ensure faster delivery of benefits. However, instead of having three</p>

	<p>different requirements placed on the public, option 2 which requires all dogs to be microchipped within one year of the legislation would be an easier and more digestible requirement for the public to understand and comply with.</p> <p>Based on a cost impact analysis undertaken by Dogs Trust on behalf of the Microchipping Alliance, we believe option 2 to be by far the most beneficial in terms of cost savings. The cost analysis looked at implementation costs, enforcement costs, cost savings in Wales and the total estimated cost. The calculated annual cost savings relating solely to dog welfare amount to between £2.39-£2.61 million in the first year of introducing such legislation. These savings could enable local authorities to offer further assistance in other canine related matters as well as potentially providing extra income.</p> <p>Option 2 would allow all dog owners sufficient time to get their dogs microchipped which would ensure that should any dog get lost or stray, the chances of their reunification with the owner are higher and kennelling time lower.</p>
0111	<p>Dogs Trust supports option 2, which requires all dogs be microchipped within 1 year of the legislation, as the best option out of the 5 proposed as it has both the highest welfare and economic benefits combined. Stray and abandoned dog numbers in Wales over recent years have either increased or remained static. 9,482 stray dogs were picked up by Local Authorities in 2011 and of that number, 486 of those dogs were put to sleep in the last year under the aegis of the Environmental Protection Act. We believe if more dogs were microchipped then more dogs would be rapidly reunited with their owners and fewer dogs would be put to sleep or end up in rescue centres</p> <p>If option 1 was adopted, Dogs Trust believes that it would be ineffective, in the short and medium term, in improving welfare and reducing the burden on charities. It would also mean thousands of dogs could be left unidentified in Wales with their owners unable to trace them if they are lost or involved in an incident. We also question how this would be enforced. For example, how could any enforcement officer gauge whether an owner should be complying based on a dog's age, when they cannot possibly know how old the dog is?</p> <p>If option 3 was adopted by the Welsh Government, Dogs Trust believes that this may have better welfare and financial benefits than option 1 but only if it was required for all dogs to be microchipped within 2-3 years of the legislation coming into effect. Otherwise, it would also not be immediately effective in securing the benefits as it would take years in order for the entire dog population to be microchipped and registered to a database.</p>

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0120	<p>Option 2 in the above list; all dogs to be microchipped within 1 year of the legislation coming into force. Continued reliance on voluntary registration leaves the key group of irresponsible owners and thieves largely unaffected. Confining registration to new puppies will take 10-12 years to implement complete coverage and this is too long. Simply microchipping new puppies and other dogs on a transfer of ownership would be difficult if not impossible to</p>

	<p>enforce. Option 2 in the above list could be applied in a phased way, new puppies, change of ownership by sale or gift and within one year of the legislation coming into force if the other two eventualities have not occurred. Failure to register within time should be an offence. Penalties for failure to register should include a fine and/or imprisonment coupled with a ban on ownership of a dog as is appropriate in the circumstances.</p>
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Road Map on Dog Welfare

Delivering Improvements to Dog Welfare

Aim: Working with groups and individuals to improve awareness of the welfare needs of dogs and where necessary providing guidance and legislation to ensure key welfare improvements are achieved

Key

-  Policy established
-  Implementing policy
-  Linked policy

Animal Health and Welfare Strategy 2004

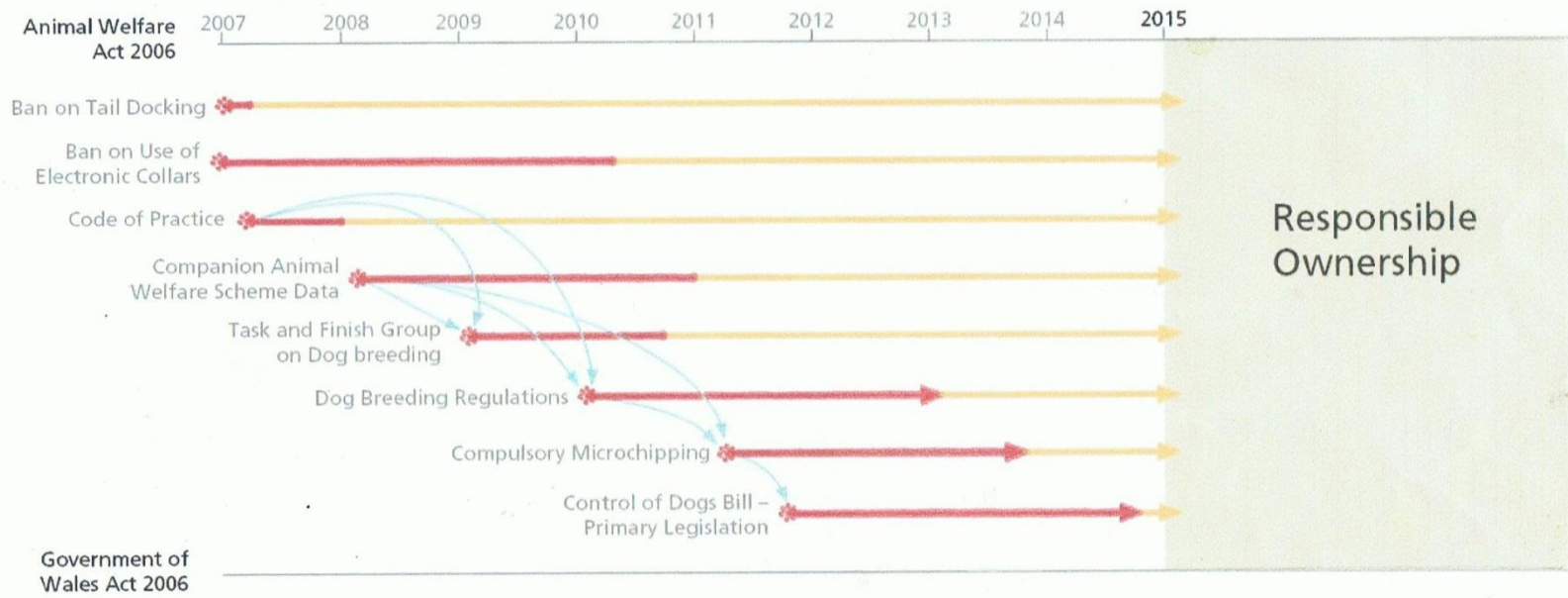
Working in partnership.

Prevention is better than cure.

Delivering and enforcing standards.

Understanding and accepting roles and responsibilities.

Understanding the costs and benefits.



Better understanding of dog's needs through responsible ownership. Improve awareness of animal's socialisation and training needs, their interactions with other animals and their environment.