

**EQUIPMENT & PROGRESSION Panel**

**Discussion Item - improving communication with the WT community over Liaison Council matters**

In general, the current WTLC format is for Ch Societies to engage with their members and others, with the Agenda items, and all feedback is put through to the Society committee who then advise the Rep how to vote on any matters.

The liaison councils for Agility and Obedience operate in a different manner when communicating with their community and the WTLC is requested to consider if their format has any elements that working trials could use to improve the communication with the WT community and obtain their feedback to present at liaison council meetings.

The Agility & Obedience Liaison Councils work in a similar way to each other - reps are from "areas", i.e. English regions, along with Scotland and Wales.

Each area has a specific Liaison Council Facebook page, managed by the rep(s) and solely for use by those who reside in that area. Members are those who are learning /training re the sport, currently involved in any way and those still interested in the sport. Constructive feedback from all is encouraged and welcomed.

In Obedience, each area has 2 Facebook pages – one for everyone, and a second page for people who are interested or competing in intro to beginners. Their LC decided to set up a second group to give those people a chance to make comments between themselves without the possibility of feeling intimidated by those in Novice and above.

The way the 2 sports operate their Facebook pages are similar. On release of the LC agenda, the rep will then put each discussion item / proposal on their Facebook page as an individual post. Members are encouraged to share their opinions, give feedback and participate if a poll is put alongside the post.

Email or private message is also used if people do not wish to vote/comment on the page.

When the rep posts an agenda item on Facebook, only comments are thereafter posted (not replies) to prevent creating separate threads. This works very well. Example of a post is -

**Next Agenda item for discussion:**

*Please remember comments only no replies - we cannot follow if you start replying to comments, creating separate threads.*

***ITEM 12.j. Ms S Brown - Health issues in relation to ring sizes***

*Ms Brown wishes the Council to raise concerns regarding the practice by some clubs of extending ring sizes to 40m x 40m. It is noted that whilst there is a Kennel Club minimum size for rings of 32m x 32m, there is no maximum size.*

Reps count the "for" and "against" views and along with the results of any polls used, present the results, along with feedback, at the LC meeting.

“Member Discussion points” are also posted – when a member of the community approaches the rep about an idea they have to improve the sport, the rep posts their idea to the group. This allows the member to remain anonymous so no-one is offended if people do not like the idea.

An example of this -

***Discussion Point*** *I have been asked to seek members opinions on the following:*

*Dog Walk*

*Judges guide currently states "Positioning – Entry onto the contact equipment should be reasonably straight"*

*What are your opinions on a rule stating "Dog Walk approach MUST be straight with either 2 straight jumps prior, or a tunnel and jump to dog walk"*

Previous attempts to engage with the WT community via Facebook over LC matters have proved difficult. Both Agility and Obedience have created a system that allows people to give feedback without arguments developing and inappropriate comments being posted. Any replies are removed with the author being asked to put a separate comment. The communities are now used to this structure and it is well managed and respectful.

It is felt that by creating a specific WT Liaison Council Facebook page (or 2 as per Obedience), and operating it in the same manner as Agility and Obedience, communication with the WT Community would be improved and their views and feedback better presented at LC meetings.