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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WORKING TRIALS LIAISON COUNCIL  
HELD AT 10.30 AM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 11 JULY 2024**

**PRESENT**

Mrs P Bann	Essex Working Trials Society
Miss J Carruthers	North East Counties Working Trials Society
Mrs L Cottier	Scottish Working Trials Society
Mr B Gilbert	ASPADS Working Trials Society
Mrs S Haim	Wessex Working Trials Club
Mrs J Holt	North West Working Trials Society
Mrs J Howells	Hampshire Working Trials Society
Mrs D Ling	East Anglian Working Trials Society
Mr D Marchant	Yorkshire Working Trials Society (From paragraph 19)
Mrs L Marlow	Southern Alsatian Training Society
Mrs F McKenzie	Association of Bloodhound Breeders
Ms J McOuat	East Riding Working Trials Society
Mr N Sutcliffe	Bloodhound Club
Mr C Taylor	British Association for German Shepherd Dogs
Mrs J Wood	Surrey Dog Training Society
Mr J Wykes	Leamington Dog Training Club (From paragraph 7)

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Miss D Deuchar	Head of Canine Activities
Ms R Mansfield	Committee Secretary – Working Dog Activities Team
Ms H Byrne-Ingle	Administrator – Working Dog Activities Team

**NOTE: any recommendations made by the Working Trials Liaison Council are subject to review by the Activities Committee and The Kennel Club Board, and would not come into effect unless and until Board approval has been confirmed.**

**IN THE CHAIR: MR C TAYLOR**

**ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

1. Apologies had been received from Mrs L Newbold, Mrs S Wright and Mr N Hines.

**ITEM 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

2. The minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2024 were approved as an accurate record.

**ITEM 3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COUNCIL**

3. Following the resignation of Mr D Craven, Mr S Ford and Mr D Robertson the Council noted the following replacements:

Mr D Marchant  
Mrs J Wood  
Mrs F McKenzie

4. The Council also noted that following East Riding Working Trials Society being granted championship status, a new representative had been appointed to represent the club:

Mrs J McOuat

5. The new members of the council were welcomed to their first meeting.

**ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

6. The Council noted that the Board, at its meeting held on 8 May 2024, approved the following amendment to regulations:

Regulation I(B)17.

**TO:**

The dog will be off lead beside the handler. The position of the dog and command given to send the dog must be the same as that for the Recall exercise. The 'protected steward' will be challenged and will reply in order to gain the dog's attention before running away as directed by the judge. The handler will be told when to send his dog. A run-out point may be set by the judge. The dog must detain the 'protected steward' by holding him by the protected arm until commanded by the handler to release. **The protected steward should continue to try to escape if not detained by the dog.** If the dog fails to detain the 'protected steward', it shall lose any marks that it may have obtained for the Recall exercise, or it shall not be tested on the Recall.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2025)

*Mr Wykes joined the meeting.*

**ITEM 5.      ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP**

Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group Report

7. The Council noted a written report from the office following the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group's meeting on 25 April 2024.
8. Mrs McOuat queried why the clear jump had not been included in any of the research into the working trials obstacles. It was clarified that there had not been any indication there were any issues with the clear jump and as such it was decided that resources should be spent on the other pieces of equipment.
9. An update was provided from Mrs Cottier that it was unlikely that the project would be able to be funded by The Kennel Club and as such the research would need to be undertaken by an undergraduate student. Concerns were expressed as to whether the research would be robust enough as it would be undertaken by a student, but it was explained that students were supported by supervisors and the research peer reviewed.
10. It was noted that the research could take a number of years to complete due to the university timescales.

Membership of the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group

11. Due to Mr Gilbert's retirement from the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group the Council had been asked to name a replacement member. The office provided an update following restructuring within The Kennel Club and explained that the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group had been disbanded and would be incorporated into a different group. The newly formed Health Advisory Group would be formed of animal health experts and would seek advice from discipline subject matter experts when needed.
12. As such, a replacement for Mr Gilbert was still required, however they would not need to attend formal meetings twice a year and would serve in an advisory capacity to the Health Advisory Group.
13. Mrs Ling was proposed by Mrs Cottier and seconded by Miss Carruthers. Mrs Ling accepted the nomination and was therefore **recommended** as the working trials liaison council's representative to the Health Advisory Group.

**ITEM 6.      ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP**

14. The Council noted a written report from the office following the Activities Judges Sub-Group's meeting on 9 April 2024.

**ITEM 7. COUNCIL STRATEGY DOCUMENT**

15. At its last meeting Mrs Cottier had stepped down from having ownership of the document and volunteers to take it up were requested. No one had been forthcoming, and it had been agreed that the ownership of the document would be discussed outside the meeting and resolved.
16. A question was raised regarding the future of the council in its current format and whether the document would still be needed. The office assured the Council that it would still exist in the new governance structure but the exact format was not known at the current time. It was stressed that the document served as a guide and focus for the Council to decide on the future of working trials and that should not change with the governance review.
17. It was decided that the document as it stood was comprehensive and it would not be detrimental to leave it as it was and review it when the governance review was completed.

**ITEM 8. REPORT FROM THE PD STAKE PANEL**

18. The Council noted a written report from the PD Stake Panel.

*Mr Marchant joined the meeting.*

**ITEM 9. REPORT FROM THE EQUIPMENT AND PROGRESSION PANEL**

Score Sheets

19. The panel had been contacted by some working trials competitors and trials managers who had requested the Council to clarify the correct way of displaying the marks on the score sheets for the heelwork/down on the move exercise.
20. There had been a variety of different base score sheets from the first four months of the current year's trials with the new 'down on the move' marks being shown differently by each society.
21. According to the 2024 regulations, the heelwork marks were out of 10: 5 for heelwork and 5 for 'down on the move'. Some of the year's score sheets showed the 'down on the move' as a completely separate exercise in the control section rather than as part of the heelwork marks.
22. A short discussion ensued and it was ultimately decided that as long as the 'down on the move' marks were written down separately so that it could be shown where the marks were given, then it did not matter where it was written. However, it was hoped that when new score sheets were printed, the exercise could be placed where the score for the gun exercise had been.

**ITEM 10. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS**

East Riding Working Trials Society

Mrs J McQuat

Proposed amendment to regulation I(B)2

23. The Council considered an amendment to the above regulation to clarify when the dog and handler should proceed to move forward together during the exercise. The proposal was seconded by Mrs Marlow.
24. It was clarified that the proposal had been submitted by an individual, Mrs S Lewindon, not East Riding Working Trials Society.

Regulation I(B)2

**TO:**

Heel work – The judge should test the ability of the dog to keep its shoulder reasonably close to the left knee of the handler who should walk smartly in a natural manner of normal, fast and slow paces through turns and among and around persons and obstacles. The halt, with the dog sitting to heel and a “figure of eight” may be included at any stage. Extra commands shall be permitted in the introductory and CD stakes.

Any act, signal or command by jerking of the lead which in the opinion of the Judge has given the dog unfair assistance shall be penalised.

Where required the lead must be attached to a close fitting smooth collar. Retractable leads or head collars are not to be used. In TD And PD stakes, at some time during the test, while working at a normal pace, the dog shall be required to be left in the down position when directed by the judge. The handler shall continue forward alone, without hesitation, and proceed as directed by the judge until upon reaching the dog, **when the dog is on the handler's left hand side and both handler and dog are facing in the same direction**, both shall continue forward together in accordance with the instruction given.

(Insertion in bold.)

25. The way the regulation was currently worded meant that ‘Until upon reaching the dog’ could be interpreted as the handler was walking towards the dog face on, not from behind, and would collect the dog into heelwork whilst facing different directions. It was felt that it needed clarifying to ensure both dog and handler were facing the same direction.
26. A vote was taken, and the amendment was **recommended** for approval by a majority.

East Riding Working Trials Society

Mrs J McQuat

Proposed amendment to regulation I(B)9

27. The Council considered an amendment to the above regulation to clarify that it was the handler that chose the position of the dog in the exercise. The proposal was seconded by Miss Carruthers.

Regulation I(B)9

TO:

'Speak on command' – In TD and PD, the number of barks is at the judge's discretion and after the cease "speaking" the handler may be instructed to make the dog speak again. "Speaking" should be sustained by the dog with the minimum of commands and/or signals. Continuous and/or excessive incitements to "speak" must be heavily penalised. This test must not be incorporated with any other test.

The judge will control the position of the handler in relation to the dog. In UD Stake and WD Stake, this position should be near and in sight of the dog. **The handler may place the dog** ~~The dog may be~~ in the stand, sit or down.

In TD and PD, the handler may be required to work the dog walking at heel. If the dog is not required to walk at heel, the handler may place the dog in the stand, sit or down.

In UD the number of barks should be 5, in WD the number of barks should be 10.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through.)

28. The proposed wording would ensure that it was clear that the handler would choose the position of the dog in the exercise, and not the judge. It would also bring the wording in line with the TD and PD speak exercises.
29. A vote was taken, and by a majority the amendment was **recommended** for approval.

Southern Alsatian Training Society

Ms L Marlow

Votes to be recorded

30. The Council considered a proposal to have the outcome of votes recorded in the minutes to show how representatives had voted. Mrs Cottier seconded the proposal.
31. At times voting on proposals had been very close and there had been some confusion at meetings. A decision based on a show of hands during online meetings may therefore be inaccurate. Given the narrow margins on some proposals, it could make a material difference to the outcome of the vote.
32. Societies' members were entitled to know how their representative had voted following discussions at the meeting. The wider working trials community would be able to see the degree of support for proposals and regulation changes, making the process more transparent.
33. The office informed the Council that a similar proposal had been discussed by the Obedience Liaison Council several years ago and there had been concerns on the proposal at the time. The discussion at the meeting could change the way that a representative voted, meaning they did not follow their society's view. If it were to be dictated that a representative could only vote in line with

what their society had said, then there would be no need for meetings and discussions. Also, it was stressed that the Council had collective responsibility for its decisions and once a decision had been made it was to be supported by the Council as a whole.

34. However, the Council did not feel that the office's comments were relevant and that the proposal was a more practical consideration. Representatives appreciated that they may need to deviate from their society's viewpoint. It was queried how much transparency should be given, would it be sufficient to just have the numbers or list out specifically which representative voted which way.
35. A short discussion ensued and it was decided that it would be preferable for votes by society to be recorded.
36. A vote was taken, and by a majority the proposal was **recommended** for approval.

Association of Bloodhound Breeders

Mrs F McKenzie

Proposed amendment to regulation I(C)1.

37. The Council considered a proposal to amend the above regulation which would revert the wording back to its original wording after it was changed in 2020. Mr Sutcliffe seconded the proposal.

Regulation I(C)1

**TO:**

A Kennel Club Bloodhound Working Trial Certificate may be awarded to a Bloodhound winning a senior stake without assistance at a Championship Bloodhound Trial if it has clearly identified the ~~runner-~~ **line-walker** to the satisfaction of the judge or judges. A hound will be considered to have made a satisfactory identification if it is seen to approach and clearly select the ~~runner-~~ **line-walker** from a group of three people at the end of the line. ~~Handlers who choose to work/hunt their hounds leashed must drop their leash within a minimum of 200yds/183m of the line up, so that a natural identification takes place that is free from any handler interference.~~

Judges may award a Certificate of Merit in all stakes to any hound not being placed which has given a good performance.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

38. Several trials had been held since the introduction of the 200 yard rule and it was proving to be unserviceable for the following reasons:
  - It was hard for the handler while hunting a hound to guess when they were 200 yards from the end as due to the terrain and weather conditions the line-walker may not be easily visible.
  - Many of the sheep farmers who allowed use of their land insisted that hounds were leashed when in fields with sheep.

- If lines were able to be set to end where no sheep were present, there was no control if they had been moved there on the day of the trial.
39. The last trial run by the Association of Bloodhound Breeders was held on fully stocked land and in order for the trial to go ahead the Activities Committee agreed to a special dispensation as a one-off special circumstance as there was not time to source fresh land.
  40. Reverting the regulation would allow handlers to choose whether to hunt their hounds free or leashed, as was previously the case, unless instructed by the farmer to leash in fields with sheep.
  41. If the hound was leashed at the identification, the expertise and experience of the senior judge would recognise if the hound was influenced by its handler.
  42. A vote was taken and by a small majority the amendment was **recommended** for approval.
  43. There was some confusion over whether the representatives from working trials societies could vote on Bloodhound working trials matters, however it was noted that under the current format, Bloodhound working trials fell under the remit of working trials as a whole and as such the only avenue for progressing proposals was through the Working Trials Liaison Council.
  44. However, it was accepted that there was minimal knowledge of Bloodhound working trials amongst the representatives, except for the representatives from the Association of Bloodhound Breeders and the Bloodhound Club and vice versa. As such, the Bloodhound representatives should not vote on working trials matters as it could skew the vote.
  45. It was queried whether there shouldn't be a separate group for the Bloodhound representatives to liaise with the Activities Committee. The office explained that there had been an attempt to set up a task and finish group with the two Bloodhound societies and Committee but neither representative had responded to communications from the office and therefore it had not not progress.
  46. It was suggested that the Board could be requested to review the Bloodhound involvement in the Working Trials Liaison Council in the governance review. The Council agreed to this course of action.
  47. In the meantime, Mr Taylor requested the Bloodhound representatives to contact him subsequent to the meeting so that he could be fully briefed on the proposal so that he could sufficiently support it at the next Activities Committee meeting.



British Association of German Shepherd Dogs

Mr C Taylor

Proposed amendment to regulation I26.c

48. The Council considered an amendment to the above regulation to reduce the period between championship TD and PD stake judging appointments to three months. Mrs Ling seconded the proposal.

Regulation I26.c

**TO:**

A person approved to judge a Championship Working Trial Certificate stake may not judge the same stake within a period of ~~six~~ **three** calendar months. The relevant date being the last day of each trial.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

49. The period of six months was making it difficult for clubs/societies to appoint qualified judges. Although new judges were being brought through the system, there were fewer judges available for selection in recent times. The six month rule further compromised a judge's availability and often ended up in them being unavailable to a society for much longer than six months.
50. It was suggested that 3 months was too short a timeframe between appointments and it was proposed by Miss Carruthers that the proposal be amended to four months. Mrs Wood seconded the amendment.
51. A vote was taken and by a majority the amended proposal was **recommended** for approval as follows:

Regulation I26.c

**TO:**

A person approved to judge a Championship Working Trial Certificate stake may not judge the same stake within a period of ~~six~~ **four** calendar months. The relevant date being the last day of each trial.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

52. A brief discussion was held regarding what stakes a dog needed to win to be made a champion and it was clarified that the regulation K.2.f(1) references that any dog awarded two Working Trial Certificates in either PD, TD or both stakes, under two different judges provided that it had obtained an 'Excellent' qualification, automatically gained the title of Working Trial Champion.

**ITEM 11. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

53. No discussion items had been received from individuals/societies.

**ITEM 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Online entry system

54. Mrs Bann gave the Council an update on the online entry system. Communication had been received from With Your Dog, who had agreed to create the system, and a new database would need to be created to incorporate working trials. A developer had been contracted but there was a delay on the build for working trials. Mrs Bann confirmed she was looking at alternatives such as Fosse Data. An update would be given at the next Council meeting.

Kennel Club Working Trials Championships

55. Mrs Wood asked for an update on the 2025 championships and where they would be held. Mr Taylor explained that a proposal had been put forward to the Board that The Kennel Club take over the running of the championships instead of individual societies, in the same manner as it ran the obedience and agility championships at Crufts and the office was waiting on the outcome of that decision.
56. Judges had been nominated and voted on for the 2025 championships and the successful nominations needed to be confirmed by the Activities Committee. The Council would be informed of the outcome.

**ITEM 13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

57. The Council noted that the date of the next meeting would be announced in September 2024.
58. The meeting closed at 12pm.

**MR C TAYLOR**  
**Chairman**

***THE KENNEL CLUB'S STRATEGIC AIMS***

- *Champion the wellbeing of dogs*
- *Safeguard and enhance the future of pedigree dogs, addressing breed-associated health issues*
- *Protect the future of dog activities together with our grassroots network*
- *Become relevant to more dog owners to increase our impact*
- *Deliver an excellent member experience and widen our community*
- *Ensure we are financially secure and sustainable*

## Liaison Societies for Non-Championship Working Trials Societies

### Working Trials Society

Australian Shepherd Club of the United Kingdom  
Aveley Obedience & Working Trials Society  
Avon Working Trials Training Society  
Aylesbury Canine Training Society  
Banbury & District Dog Training Society  
Billingshurst Dog Training Club  
Birmingham & District German Shepherd Dog Association  
Central Bernese Mountain Dog Club  
Chipping Norton & District Dog Training Club  
Cynllan Lodge Dog Training Club  
Deveron Dog Training Club  
Donyatt Dog Training Club  
East Riding Working Trials Society  
Grampian Gundog Club  
Haslemere & District Dog Training Club  
High Peak Dog Training Society  
Hucknall & District Canine Training Society  
Lochaber & District Canine Society  
Midlands Border Collie Club  
Mid Wales Working Gundog Society  
National Australian Shepherd Association  
Newlands Working Dog Society  
North of England Weimaraner Society  
Northants & Bedfordshire Working Trials Dog Training  
Northern Alsatian & All Breeds Training Society  
Northern Newfoundland Club  
Portland Dog Training Club  
Rough & Smooth Collie Training Association  
Scottish Kennel Club  
Six Counties Working Trials Society  
Slovakian Rough Haired Pointer Club (Provisional)  
South Devon Agility & Dog Training Club  
South Leeds Working Trials Dog Training Club  
Spanish Water Dog Club (Provisional)  
Spey Valley Dog Training Club  
Sporting Irish Water Spaniel Club  
Stonehouse Dog Training Club  
Wakefield Dog Training Club  
Weimaraner Club of Great Britain  
Weimaraner Club of Scotland  
Working Belgian Shepherd Dog Society

### Representative Society

Yorkshire Working Trials Society  
Essex Working Trials Society  
Wessex Working Trials Club  
ASPADS Working Trials Society  
Leamington Dog Training Club  
Southern Alsatian Training Society  
Leamington Dog Training Club  
ASPADS Working Trials Society  
British Association for German Shepherd Dogs  
Welsh Kennel Club  
Scottish Working Trials Society  
Wessex Working Trials Club  
Yorkshire Working Trials Society  
Scottish Working Trials Society  
Surrey Dog Training Society  
North West Working Trials Society  
Midland Counties German Shepherd Dog Association  
Scottish Working Trials Society  
Midland Counties German Shepherd Dog Association  
Welsh Kennel Club  
Iceni Working Trials Club  
Surrey Dog Training Society  
North East Counties Working Trials Society  
ASPADS Working Trials Society  
Yorkshire Working Trials Society  
British Association for German Shepherd Dogs  
Poole & District Dog Training Society  
Leamington Dog Training Club  
Scottish Working Trials Society  
North West Working Trials Society  
Yorkshire Working Trials Society  
Poole & District Dog Training Society  
Yorkshire Working Trials Society  
Lincolnshire German Shepherd Dog & All Breeds  
Scottish Working Trials Society  
North West Working Trials Society  
British Association for German Shepherd Dogs  
Yorkshire Working Trials Society  
Essex Working Trials Society  
Scottish Working Trials Society  
ASPADS Working Trials Society