

## JBLC UPDATE January 2019

The JBLC has been working hard over the past twelve months on various initiatives:

- **Research into Addison's disease** - The summary of the results from Professor Catchpole were publicized on Club websites, newsletters etc. His research found that Bearded Collies, unlike many other breeds, were not auto-antibody positive to the adrenal autoantigen used in the initial research into several breeds. However the work continues to see if they will react to another adrenal autoantigen enabling earlier identification of disease onset.

In addition to this research Prof Catchpole is keen to do further research into the genome of Addisonian Bearded Collies. Through the AHT/KC 'Give a Dog a Genome' project the genome of one healthy and one Addisonian Bearded Collie has been sequenced. As Prof Catchpole was already working with Beardies with Addison's it was agreed that the AHT would share the data obtained with him and consequently the GDG team at the AHT would not be analysing it to try and identify any variants that contribute to Addison's Disease in Bearded Collies.

Professor Catchpole recently approached the JBLC to see if we could fund further DNA analysis so that the genome from five more Addisonian Bearded Collies and one more normal Bearded Collie could be sequenced. The cost of this would be in the region of £7000 - £8000. Although the JBLC was not able to meet the full cost of this, thanks to the funds we do have, we were able to contribute £3000 to sequence the genome of three more Addisonian Beardies, with Prof Catchpole contributing a further £1000. Prof Catchpole has now selected the DNA samples and they have gone to Oxford for processing and will then go to Edinburgh Genomics for sequencing, which takes around 6 weeks. So it will be a couple of months before his team has the genomes for analysis.

We are so grateful to all fundraisers but particularly to Liz Gault for her tireless efforts through the making and selling of jams, pickles etc. which has largely enabled us to do this - and of course to you for buying it! It would be great if we could raise the further £3000 or so required to sequence the final three Beardies need for a reasonable comparison.

- **Collie Eye Anomaly (CEA)** - We ran a further CEA clinic in December at the last BCC Championship Show. Optigen no longer offers the 20:20 clinics following a buyout by 'Mars' but the KC now accepts results from 'Petagenics'. Liz Gault contacted them and managed to obtain a 10% discount on testing, making them somewhat cheaper than Optigen at £36 per test. It was further agreed to pay 50% of the cost for the first 10 applicants to the clinic. In the end only 11 attended and the JBLC met half the cost of all those that did attend. The drop off in numbers testing is disappointing and it should be remembered that Beardies in both the USA and Europe, and from different lines, have

been found to be carriers for CEA. In order to eradicate this condition it is imperative that we continue to DNA test **all** breeding stock.

- **Breed Health and Conservation Plan (BHCP)** - In early June Elizabeth Ayrton our Breed Health Co-ordinator together with JBLC representatives met with Katy Evans to discuss the Bearded Collie Breed Health & Conservation Plan, discussing ways the KC and Clubs can co-operate to take things forward. The BHCP looks at the current state of the Breed, regarding registrations, health surveys, any health research and other KC statistics etc and following the meeting the Clubs were asked to consider:

- *Whether they wished to request that participation in the BVA/KC Elbow Dysplasia Scheme should be an ABS recommendation.* Following feedback from the Clubs it was agreed that for the time being we would monitor elbow scores to consider whether to add it as an ABS recommendation in future.
- *Whether Breed Club Code of Ethics points discussed should be a part of the Breed Club recommendations listed for the breed on the Kennel Club's website.* Following feedback from Clubs it was agreed that we would recommend 'that a bitch should not be mated before she is two years of age'.

It was also agreed that we would repeat the Breed Health Survey in February 2019, including an additional question regarding dental conditions. In addition, it was agreed that:

- *The Kennel Club would monitor the Royal Veterinary College's Addison's research*
- *The Kennel Club would assist the breed clubs in determining sire usage limits for the current population size.*
- *The Kennel Club would monitor the SLO study underway at the University of California Davis.*
- *The Kennel Club will review progress with the Bearded Collie breed club representatives in June 2019.*

- **DNA Databank** - The JBLC is now in a position to offer subsidized DNA swabs via Breed Club events, by funding half the cost of the swabs. We are considering other ways to increase samples provided.
- **Bearded Collie Breed Strategy** - The Breed Strategy forms an integral part of the BHCP. We have just published a list of sire usage tables, following the recommendation that sires are used no more than twice per year for current registration levels. The tables will enable breeders to see what sires have been used and how many litters and puppies they have had. The tables start at 2015, before the 'two litter recommendation' was suggested, include 2016 when this recommendation was first discussed and will be done each year subsequently. The tables have been drawn up using the Breed Records Supplements and do not include any litters sired outside the UK. We would encourage breeders to look at a wide range of dogs when choosing a sire and consider those dogs that have not sired any litters at all as yet.

- Other Breed Strategy resources are available on the BCX JBLC Resource page, Club websites and the JBLC Facebook page so do take a look. Results of the 2018 Health survey are also there (on BCX on the JBLC page under 'News'). Furthermore Clubs are doing their bit by offering Special beginners classes at Shows and publicizing the Breed.
- **PAWSCARS 2018** - The BCC approached Paula Brooks to prepare a nomination for the PAWSCARS 2018 awards 'Breed of the Year' Paula prepared the submission together with input from other JBLC members and our Chair Robin Newhouse was happy to propose the nomination. The award considers all initiatives taken by the breed to promote and protect it. We have just heard back that although we were not successful this time we were very close to the winners, and we have been encouraged to re-submit next year.
- **KC Judges Competency Framework Scheme** - Mrs Cath Leighton was nominated in June as the Breed Education Co-ordinator for Beardies, with each Club having a representative from their committee who will liaise with Mrs Leighton in this role. Work has now begun on implementing the requirements for the scheme. A new list of a Assessors has been drawn up - the KC now allows anyone who has awarded CC's to act as an Assessor but it has been agreed by the Clubs that ideally Assessors should be drawn from those that have awarded CC's three or more times. In addition a list of mentors has been compiled. Mentors do not have to award CC's but should be those with long experience in the breed who are willing to guide, mentor and discuss the breed with up and coming judges. If you would like to be considered for this role, please contact Cath. Finally work is underway to run at least one Breed Assessment Day during 2019 following KC protocol.
- **Links with Overseas Clubs** - Contact has been made with overseas Clubs for whom we have details, sending them a copy of our Breed Health Strategy and details of our annual health survey. We have also asked them to share any information or concerns that they themselves may have.
- **KC Breed Liaison Representative** - Toni Teasdale has kindly agreed to continue in this role for Beardies. Breed Clubs, either individually or via the JBLC have the opportunity to submit any concerns to Toni to be shared at the Breed Liaison Council.
- **Correspondence** - The JBLC had been made aware of semen being imported from a non-registered Beardie. It has been agreed that the situation would be monitored along with the progress of any matings.

The JBLC has written to the Kennel Club on behalf of the 6 Breed Clubs regarding concerns over a Judge's understanding of the Breed Standard and conformation of the Bearded Collie, as expressed in their critique produced after their first CC appointment.