

## **Annual Health Report 2020-2021**

### **On Behalf of the UK Japanese Shiba Inu Breed Clubs**

#### **Introduction**

I think we can all agree that it has been an eventful and difficult year. COVID-19 continued to have a profound effect on everyone's lives. We are just starting to see our hobby return to a degree of normality. The show scene is starting again in full force with a fully packed diary until the end of the year. Enjoy your time back in the ring, be humble, and enjoy the time spent back with your showing friends!

You may be wondering what this document you have received is and what purpose it serves. All breed clubs are required to submit to the Kennel Club, alongside the AGM and accounts information an Annual Health Report. The overriding purpose of this report is to give owners, breeders, the Kennel Club, and veterinary professionals open access to reliable, evidenced based information on Japanese Shiba Inu health. This will be provided annually to both clubs towards the end of each year. Beyond the historical breed club politics, I hope we can all agree that every one of us love this breed. Everyone wants to preserve the Shiba, have healthy dogs and minimise health complications. I have hope that we can all collaborate on health and welfare together and be proactive rather than reactive to emerging issues as the guardians of this breed. Developments in veterinary science, theriogenology and genetics continues to race ahead and it's imperative we are ahead of the curve and not left behind.

A thankyou to our previous Breed Health Coordinator, Belinda Roskell. Belinda was the Health Coordinator for many years and instigated the glaucoma eye testing within the breed. I hope you will all join me in thanking Belinda and I'm sure she will continue to provide valuable input in the future.

#### **Website**

The pandemic has also had an impact on our anticipated progress with our website creation and input of historic breed data. This was mainly due to time pressures and difficulties in obtaining the historic information. It can be found at the following address: [www.shibahealth.co.uk](http://www.shibahealth.co.uk). Reporting functions for illness and health conditions and mortality are now available as well as previous data on primary glaucoma testing. This currently covers the new 0-3 scoring method

however affected/unaffected pre 2016 will be added in due course. Long term, we hope to turn the website into a primary resource for breeders, owners, and veterinary professionals alike with breed specific information.

### **Breed Surveillance Survey**

Discussions with the Kennel Club Health team are currently underway to complete a breed surveillance survey in early 2022. This will be sent to all Kennel Club registered owners of the Shiba and I hope as many people as possible will submit a report for each of their animals. The survey will be pushed to various social media channels and groups to provide as wide of a sample size as possible. More information on this will be coming at the beginning of 2021 and the results will be open access for everyone with a summary available on next year's annual health report.

### **Breed Health and Conservation Plan**

Breed Health and Conservation Plans were introduced by the Kennel Club in 2016. They are designed to identify health concerns in a breed using evidence-based research from a wide variety of sources. These include:

- Hip Dysplasia Scheme
- Eye testing Scheme
- KC Purebred dog health surveys
- Insurance data
- Scientific Publications and research
- Breed-specific health surveys
- ACVO data
- VetCompass data

Our provisional Breed Health and Conservation Plan was submitted to the Kennel Club Health Team in May 2021 for approval. Discussions between the Breed Clubs and the Kennel Club then form the next stage which will include an action plan to address any issues raised. A copy of the Breed Health and Conservation Plan will be available on the website once we hear back from the Kennel Club.

## Genetic Diversity

Concerns with regards to our genetic diversity have been present since the KC Pure Breed Dog Survey in 2014. In the population analysis undertaken by the Kennel Club, an estimated effective population size of 81.9 was reported. This figure is deemed as low and unable to support a genetically diverse population.

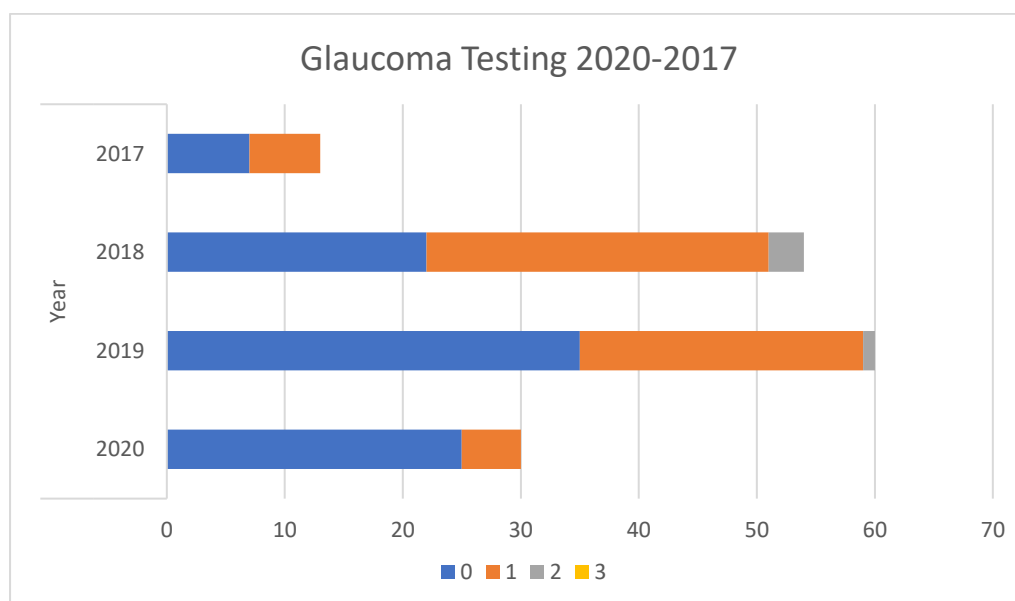
Developments in Asia between the Japanese Kennel Club (an FCI member) and the NIPPO registry are likely to have a profound effect on the availability of Japanese imports to the country therefore further reducing diversity within the UK population.

Although the situation is complex due to agreements between the FCI and the Kennel Club, with continued lobbying and communication hopefully we can prevent the loss of these dogs from UK breeding programmes.

## Glaucoma Eye Testing

The table below details eye testing results between 2017 and 2020. We have had no dogs scoring a Grade 3 since the inception of the new scoring scheme to date.

In 2020 all dogs tested where graded at 0 or 1. Testing for this year was reduced due to the COVID pandemic and difficulties in arranging testing, however the results are indeed encouraging to see.



## **Changes to the Eye Testing Scheme KC/BVA/ISDS**

We continue to be a Schedule A breed under the Eye Scheme for goniodysgenesis. Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 the Eye Panel Working Party, the Kennel Club and the British Veterinary Association announced changes to the Eye Scheme. The biggest change was the removal of Schedule B and changes to the frequency of testing.

### Change to recommended frequency of eye screening

- For KC Assured Breeders, all breeds on Schedule A must be eye screened within 12 months prior to the date of mating. The Assured Breeder Scheme rules will be altered to ensure that they accurately reflect this.

Source: <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/media-centre/2019/december/kennel-club-and-bva-announce-changes-to-chs-eye-scheme-for-2020/>

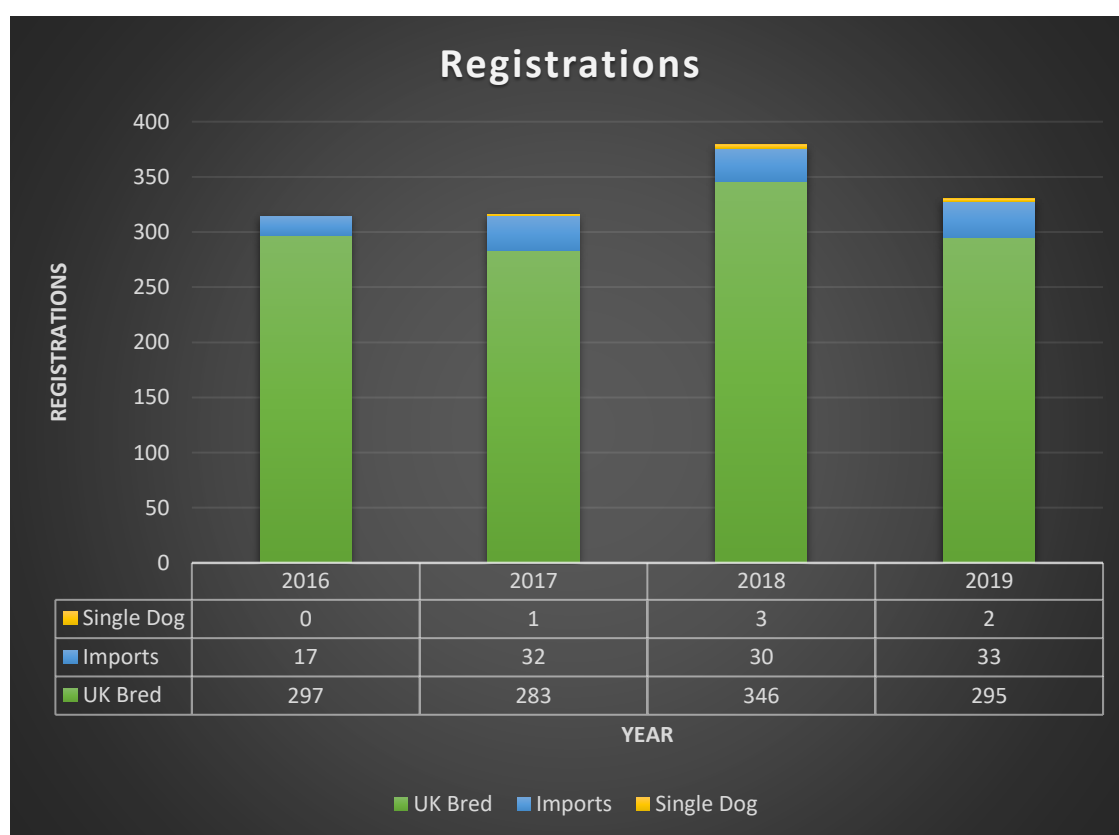
Recent research has provided evidence of progression of goniodysgenesis with age in several breeds, namely the Flat Coated Retriever, Welsh Springer Spaniel, Dandie Dinmont, Basset Hound and Leonberger. The Eye Panel Working Party have recommended that for Schedule A breeds gonioscopy should be carried out every 3 years unless any evidence to the contrary emerges. The first test can be performed in dogs from 6 months of age onwards and current advice is that gonioscopy is performed at approximately 1, 4 and 7-8 years of age.

Concerns have been raised regarding the blanket changes for all Schedule A breeds, with an obvious lack of breed specific data. All evidence currently suggests the incidence of goniodysgenesis and PLA has fallen within the breed due to swift early intervention by breeders. No doubt this will be discussed as part of the Breed Health and Conservation plan so feedback will be most welcome.

A DNA test is also on the horizon with research on genetic indicators suggesting the SRBD1 genetic marker could be an indicator for the Japanese Shiba Inu and the Shih-tzu. A pilot study is also planned at the University of Pennsylvania, ran by Keiko Mivadera DVM PhD DACVO specifically on the Shiba Inu. Further information on this pilot study can be found on the PennVet website [www.vet.upenn.edu](http://www.vet.upenn.edu).

## Gangliosidosis

Gangliosidosis is a fatal neurodegenerative lysosomal storage disease that has been identified in the Shiba Inu for over 20 years. It is a recessive autosomal inherited disease and although prevalence within the breed appears to be low, it is documented that a prevalence of heterozygous carriers in northern Japan is present. Over the last few years carriers have also been identified in Russia and mainland Europe. Our import registrations have increased, mainly due to the free movement provided with the Pet Travel Scheme. In 2016 we had 17 imports to the country. In 2019, this was 33.



Our breeders have been quick to react and testing facilities have been provided to exhibitors at shows. Good breeding principles include utilising tools and facilities such as DNA profiling and it was reassuring to see such a good uptake at the testing table offered at the last Breed Championship Show.

If you have had any dogs DNA tested, we would greatly appreciate a copy of the Laboratory report so we can track the prevalence within the UK population. All data is treated confidentiality and any data provided will be anonymised before

publication and only ever seen by the Breed Health Co-ordinator. Please send your lab reports to the email address available at the bottom of this report.

And finally...

I hope you have enjoyed this small insight into the work currently being undertaken. As you can see many projects are currently underway and I look forward to updating you with the next years progress.

If you have any constructive feedback, suggestions or questions please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Michael Needs

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