

**MEETING OF THE AGILITY LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD AT 10.00AM ON
TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2026 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

A G E N D A

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

ITEM 2. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Liaison Council is invited to note that there were no matters arising or results of recommendations from the Board.

ITEM 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2026 (copies previously distributed).

ITEM 4. HEALTH AND WELFARE

The Liaison Council will receive a presentation from Miss F McDonnell (Head of Canine Wellbeing) to discuss health initiatives at the Royal Kennel Club.

ITEM 5. YOUNG KENNEL CLUB & DOG TRAINING

The Liaison Council is invited to note a verbal update from Mrs H Lawrence (Head of Education and Dog Training).

ITEM 6. PANEL UPDATES

The Liaison Council is invited to note verbal updates from the following panels:

- a. Judges/Trainers Panel
- b. Show Organisers Panel
- c. Equipment Panel
- d. Young Royal Kennel Club Panel
- e. Measurers Panel
- f. International Agility Panel

ITEM 7. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP

The Liaison Council is invited to note a verbal update from Mrs J Gardner following the April meeting of the Activities Judges Sub-Group.

ITEM 8. COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS AND REPORT

The Liaison Council is requested to discuss the results of the Agility Liaison Council Community Survey (January 2026).

The survey was conducted to gather insight from grassroots competitors across all levels of involvement in the discipline. Its purpose was to better understand the views of the Agility community, identify what participants value most about the discipline, and establish the key priorities for the Liaison Council. The findings will help shape the Liaison Council's future work while informing communication, planning, and the ongoing development of the discipline.

ITEM 9. RISK ASSESSMENT

The Liaison Council is invited to review the risk assessment for agility shows.
(Annex A refers)

ITEM 10. NUMBER OF SHOW LICENCES

Under the previous Liaison Council, it was recommended that the Royal Kennel Club introduce limits on the number of licences issued for shows, taking into consideration both geographical proximity to other shows and the total number of licences issued to an individual club within a calendar year. It was considered that reducing the number of shows would better support consistent progression through the grades by encouraging competitors to gain appropriate experience at each level before progressing.

The proposal was supported in principle by the Activities Committee, however it was considered that specific recommendations would be required to progress this further.

The Liaison Council is requested to revisit the proposal in light of the feedback, consider the potential benefits and implications of introducing such measures, suggest specific recommendations and determine whether the Council wishes to reaffirm or withdraw its previous recommendation.

ITEM 11. PROPOSALS

The Agility community is invited to share any ideas which might help to improve or develop the discipline.

To submit a proposal or discussion item, please use our online form so the Agility Liaison Council can discuss and review the suggestion further prior to the next meeting. Submissions are accepted at any time of year via the online form: [Liaison Council Agenda Item](#).

ITEM 12. DISCUSSION ITEMS

The Liaison Council is invited to note that any items submitted by members of the public, which are not featured on this agenda, or have not been communicated back to the submitter, have not yet received sufficient public consultation. These items will therefore continue to be consulted on, with the intention of bringing them forward for consideration at a future Liaison Council meeting.

a. Course Changes Between Classes

Following the public consultation, the Liaison Council is requested to discuss whether guidance should be introduced recommending that, where the same dogs are likely to compete in multiple classes, the courses should be substantially different.

Where multiple classes are run by the same judge through the day competitors who have already negotiated a similar layout may gain an unintended advantage through prior experience of the lines, handling decisions and challenges presented. Whilst minor amendments, such as adjusting obstacle angles or making slight alterations to the dog's path, may provide some variation, these changes may not be sufficient to remove the advantage gained from an earlier run.

It is suggested that guidance should encourage approximately 75% of the course layout to differ from any earlier course used by the same competitors. This could be achieved by reordering key obstacles (such as contacts or weave poles), introducing different entry and exit challenges, altering the flow of the course, reversing the direction of the course or using a substantially different overall layout.

The intention of this is to promote fairness and consistency within competition, particularly where qualification for a prestigious event is at stake, by ensuring that courses present a genuinely new test for all competitors maintaining integrity of the competition.

b. Measuring Method Review

Following the public consultation, the Liaison Council is requested to discuss whether consideration should be given to replacing the current measuring hoop system with a single piece of measuring equipment capable of accurately measuring dogs across all height categories.

The current system requires separate sets of measuring hoops for different height categories, which can represent a significant cost for measurers and may require the maintenance and storage of multiple pieces of equipment. A single, universal measuring device could provide a more streamlined approach, reduce equipment requirements and improve accuracy and consistency of measurements.

c. Grade 1 Clarification

Following the public consultation, the Liaison Council is requested to discuss whether the wording of the Grade 1 progression regulation should be reviewed to more clearly reflect the intended application.

The current wording does not explicitly state that a dog which achieves one qualifying win with one handler and a second qualifying win with a different handler would progress. Whilst the current practice appears to be understood and applied consistently, this is not clearly set out within the regulations and so can cause confusion, particularly as Grade 1 handlers are those who are just starting out within the disciplines.

The absence of clear wording has resulted in a number of enquiries and ongoing online discussion within the agility community. Reviewing the wording to accurately reflect the intended interpretation and current practice would remove ambiguity, improve transparency, and provide greater clarity for competitors, helping to ensure the regulations are applied consistently.

d. Warm Up Jumps

Following the public consultation, the Liaison Council is requested to discuss whether guidance or a regulation should be introduced requiring at least one height-adjustable practice jump is made available for competitors at licensed agility shows.

For many competitors, the opportunity to use a practice jump forms an important part of their dog's physical and mental warm-up routine prior to entering the competition ring. Whilst general warm-up exercises can prepare a dog for activity, they do not fully replicate the mechanics and physical demands of jumping. Consequently, asking a dog to perform its first jump only once it has entered the ring may increase the risk of injury.

A practice jump would provide handlers with an opportunity to assess their dog's movement in a controlled environment before competing. This may assist in identifying any signs of discomfort, stiffness or altered movement that could otherwise be overlooked once the dog is on the start line. Providing this opportunity supports a proactive approach to injury

prevention and reinforces the importance of safeguarding dog's health and welfare.

In addition to the physical benefits, a practice jump may also assist dogs in preparing mentally for competition by channelling focus before entering the ring. Similar facilities are commonplace in other sports, such as equestrian show jumping, where warm-up obstacles are recognised as an important element of preparation.

e. Microchips

Following the public consultation, the Liaison Council is requested to discuss whether show organisers should have the option to verify a dog's identity through microchip scanning at agility competitions, where considered necessary and practical.

Shows rely on the honesty and awareness of competitors to ensure that the correct dog is presented for competition and that dogs subject to restrictions or bans are not entered or brought onto show premises. At present, show organisers have limited ability to verify a dog's identity in a fair and objective manner. Any concerns based solely on the appearance of a dog could result in subjective decisions and may lead to inconsistent or potentially discriminatory outcomes.

A potential solution would be for show processors to collect a dog's microchip number alongside its registered name at the point of entry, for example using information recorded by the show processor. This information could then allow show organisers, where appropriate, to use a microchip scanner to verify a dog's identity. Such checks could support the confirmation that the correct dog is competing, assist in ensuring that dogs subject to restrictions or bans are not participating, and provide a consistent method of addressing concerns when they arise.

It is suggested that any use of microchip scanning should initially be optional for show organisers, recognising that many shows do not have sufficient resources or personnel available to undertake checks and that if a show intends to use this process, it should be clearly stated within the schedule, so that competitors are aware in advance of the possibility of checks taking place.

Consideration would need to be given to the practical implementation of this process, including timescales for show processors to introduce the collection of microchip details and for competitors to provide this information for their dogs. As microchipping is already a legal requirement for dogs in the UK, there is an existing framework that could support this approach.

It is suggested that the intention of this is not to introduce routine checks at every show, but to provide show organisers with an objective and welfare-focused mechanism to address concerns when required. Helping to

support the integrity of competition and protect the interests of all competitors.

f. Weave Marking

Following the public consultation, the Liaison Council is requested to discuss whether the current marking criteria for weave poles should be reviewed to provide greater clarity, consistency and consideration of welfare.

It is suggested that the marking of weaves is amended so that a dog must complete the full set of weave poles correctly, with no allowance for being placed back into the weaves part way through an attempt. In addition, any exit from the weave poles should be treated as a refusal, bringing the marking approach in line with that of other obstacles and providing a clearer and more consistent application of faults.

A maximum of three attempts to complete the weave poles is also suggested as this would provide a clear limit on repeated attempts, avoiding excessive physical and mental pressure on the dog and reducing the time taken by some partnerships to complete courses. It is considered that this approach would improve consistency in judging decisions and ensure that the regulations support fair competition.

g. Collars

Following the public consultation, the Liaison Council is requested to discuss whether the current wording and guidance relating to collars worn by dogs competing in agility should be reviewed to provide greater clarity and consistency.

The current regulations are intended to support safety by reducing the risk of collars, or features attached to collars, causing injury or interfering with a dog's movement whilst competing. However, feedback from competitors, including recent discussions within the agility community, suggests there may be some uncertainty around how collars with integrated features should be assessed. Similar collars have been permitted in some circumstances but not others, indicating that the current wording may allow for differing interpretations.

From a safety perspective, the primary considerations are whether a collar presents a risk of snagging, has excessive bulk, restricts movement, or contains features that could cause injury. A close-fitting, secure collar that is non-dangling, flush in construction and does not interfere with the dog's performance may present no greater risk than the current standard flat collar noted in the H regulations.

Shows are often held in open environments where dogs may become separated from their owners, and the ability to identify or locate a dog quickly may be an important factor in ensuring their safe recovery. Some collars incorporate discreet identification or tracking technology, which, where securely integrated and not protruding or creating additional risk, may support overall dog welfare without affecting performance.

It is suggested that consideration is given to clarifying the regulation wording of acceptable collars based on functional safety characteristics rather than specific types. This could include guidance that considers whether a collar is secure, flush-fitting, non-protruding, non-restrictive and does not present a risk to the dog or other competitors.

Specifically, clarification is sought on whether a flat, non-restrictive collar containing an integrated electronic tracker (such as an AirTag), where the device is securely enclosed within the collar and is not attached by a ring, loop or dangling attachment, would be considered acceptable under the H regulations.

ITEM 13. STRATEGIC 5 YEAR PLAN

The Liaison Council is invited to review the Strategic 5 Year Plan and to discuss any progression.

(Annex B refers)

ITEM 14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

ITEM 15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the Liaison Council's next meeting will be announced in September 2026.

THE ROYAL 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