



Adrian Dornford-Smith
Chair
Spanish Water Dog Club

Rockmount
10 Carmorn Road
Toomebridge
BT41 3NX

028 7965 1979
07817 217 265
chair.swdc@gmail.com
spanishwaterdogclub.co.uk

Ethics Committee

Description

The club now has an Ethics committee. This was voted in by the committee and is currently up and running (for a month or so). However as a major change in the running of the club the committee believe that the membership should be given an opportunity to vote on its continued existence.

The operation of the Ethics Committee is outlined below.

Currently the positions are held by the following people...

Chair of the committee and club committee representative – Rachel Leighton-Jones.

Ethics Liaison – Rachel Cooper, 07855 474414, email ethicsliaison@swdc.uk

Committee Member – Julian Noad

If you have any concerns about ethics surrounding SWDs, the club, members etc. then please get in touch with Rachel Copper (the current Ethics Liaison). If you feel that there is any conflict of interest with the current Ethics Liaison, then please get in touch with another member of the Ethics Liaison or failing that a member of the main committee. This report can be kept anonymous if you require and the Ethics Liaison will be the only person who has your name or other personal details. Obviously we would encourage anyone to allow their name to be forwarded to the committee if necessary.

This is the current situation and you have the opportunity to vote for this to continue or against if you would like it dissolved.

We are also looking for another two stand by members of the committee, who would sit in the event of a conflict of interests with any of the sitting members. If you would be interested in this (or being on the main Ethics Committee in the event of a current member standing down), then please get in touch.



Background

It is imperative that the club builds up and maintains a reputation for integrity in terms of the ethics of dog ownership and breeding. Previously there was no clear defined method for members or anyone else to raise concerns over the ethical behaviour of club members or the club itself.

In the era of social media it is more important than ever that as well as upholding ethical standards, the club is seen to be upholding ethical standards.

We now have a defined and transparent method for anyone concerned to be assured that the club has the ethics of ownership, handling and breeding of dogs as its utmost priority.

This needs to be a semi-independent system for this to be achieved. It needs to have the confidence of everyone that they can raise concerns (if necessary anonymously) and these will be dealt with to the highest standards possible.

The Ethics Committee fulfils these requirements.

1. Makeup

- a. The Ethics Committee shall consist of three members, at least one member to be a member of the SWD club Committee.
- b. One member of the Ethics Committee shall be designated Ethics Liaison and this person will be the first point of contact for anyone with concerns over any aspect of ethics with the club. They shall take enquiries and deal with any concerns or reports of breaches of the club's Code Of Ethics.
- c. The three members and the post of Ethics Liaison shall be agreed by the committee and the Ethics Committee makeup may be changed at any quorate meeting of the Committee.
- d. If any member(s) of the Ethics Committee are involved in any instance to be investigated they shall declare this and step down for that investigation. The Committee will then appoint temporary replacement(s) to the Ethics Committee.
- e. The membership of the Ethics Committee will be reviewed by the committee at least annually, but may be reviewed at any time the committee see fit.

2. Methodology

- a. Should the Ethics Liaison deem it necessary (and if in any doubt that it is necessary) they shall convene meeting(s) of the Ethics Committee.
- b. To be quorate all three members of the Ethics Committee meeting shall be present.
- c. Meetings may be conducted face to face, or by remote meeting systems (e.g. Zoom etc.) as deemed fit by the Ethics Committee.
- d. The Ethics Liaison shall report any communications and decisions to convene the Ethics Committee to the Club Secretary (who will inform the rest of the Committee as they deem required).
- e. The Ethics Liaison (and Ethics Committee members) will keep the anonymity of concerned parties as they think fit.
- f. The Ethics Committee will then gather any required information or evidence; this will normally be done by the Ethics Liaison.
- g. Any information and evidence will be considered by the Ethics Committee. This shall only be made available to the Committee at the discretion of the Ethics Committee and may or may not be included in the recommendations to the Committee as the Ethics Committee deems fit.
- h. Once the Ethics Committee is satisfied it has reached a conclusion in a particular instance, the Ethics Liaison will report their findings and recommendations to the Committee. The Committee will then vote whether to act on the recommendations. If the Committee does not vote to act on the Ethics Committee's recommendations, the Ethics Committee may reconvene and change the recommendations or at its discretion take no further action.
- i. In the event of an appeal by members concerned in any incident a temporary Ethics Appeal Committee shall be convened, consisting of three members selected by the Committee, none of whom should have been on the Ethics Committee involved in the initial investigation.
- j. The temporary Ethics Appeal Committee shall act in the same manner as the Ethics Committee. It is recommended that they act independently to the Ethics Committee but may at their discretion request information from the Ethics Committee. They will also report their recommendations to the Committee for ratification.

3. Possible results

- a. The Ethics Committee may recommend a wide range of actions. These shall include (but are not limited to)...

Asking for the member's resignation.

Calling an SGM in accordance with club rule 7 with the intention of removing an individual's membership of the club indefinitely.

Calling an SGM in accordance with club rule 7 with the intention of removing an individual's membership for a limited time.

Calling an SGM in accordance with club rule 7 with the intention of removing an individual's membership until remedial action is taken.

Reporting any findings to the Kennel Club.

Removing an individual or kennel from the Club's breeders list.



Recording any information in an Ethics Committee Log which may be considered in future instances.

No action.

- b. In all cases the Ethics Liaison shall inform the committee and seek their backing for any proposed action.
- c. Should the Ethics Committee not reach a unanimous decision, the Ethics Liaison may optionally take a majority decision, but this must be reported to the Committee when the recommendations are presented. At this point the Committee shall take into account that the recommendations were not unanimous when considering whether to adopt them.
- d. Normally the Ethics Liaison will report any actions and outcomes to the interested parties (once these have been ratified by the Committee). The Ethics Liaison may delegate this responsibility if the Liaison Committee thinks this is prudent and the Committee agrees.
- e. The club may make public (either by way of the Ethics Liaison or the Secretary as appropriate) any committee agreed recommendations of the Ethics Committee.

Guidance

The committee should take very seriously any decision reject the recommendations of the Ethics Committee as this will impugn its independence.

The membership of the Ethics Committee does not have to be taken from the club membership and may be taken from anyone with concern for ethical behaviour in the canine world who the Committee think would make a good addition to upholding standards.

None of the above requires adoption at an A.G.M. and therefore the Ethics Committee should be brought into operation as soon as possible to help build the reputation of the club. However as a major change to the running of the club, it will be voted on at the next A.G.M.

The operations of the Ethics Committee should be as open as possible. However it is important that anonymity of anyone who wishes it be maintained to encourage everyone to report any concerns to us (rather than social media).

The Ethics Liaison would be the first point of contact for any issues involving ethics. This should include self-reporting of accidental breaches of the code of ethics. It is also suggested that any self-reported incident be dealt with sympathetically by the Ethics Committee (we all make mistakes!).