

Enhancing the Welfare of Retired Greyhounds in Residential Kennels





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ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This guide applies to Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) licensed greyhound trainers' residential kennels. It provides recommendations on how to enhance the welfare of retired or resting racing greyhounds housed in residential kennels by applying suitable environmental enrichment and effective kennel husbandry and management systems that promote good health.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

GBGB is committed to the principle that every greyhound should have a good retirement following their racing career. For most, this means transitioning from life in a residential kennel to settling in a domestic environment as a pet. A racing owner or trainer may, however, decide to keep their greyhound within the racing kennel for part, or all, of their retirement.

This decision could be for various reasons, such as managing a long-term medical condition, due to a specific behavioural trait, or because a trainer simply wishes to keep them under their care as a pet. Some greyhounds may also stay within their racing kennels temporarily while they recuperate from an injury or wait for a permanent retirement placement.

Environmental enrichment is a key part of day-to-day kennel management. As part of their kennel inspection process, all GBGB-licensed trainers' residential kennels must have an environmental enrichment programme in place to ensure that all their greyhounds' emotional and physical needs are suitably met.

This document aims to support the ongoing care of any greyhounds who are not currently racing to optimise their overall welfare. It provides guidance to ensure that these kennelled greyhounds are provided with appropriate, ongoing enrichment and husbandry tailored to their individual physical and mental health needs.

Aims of this document

This guide supplements both the kennel specifications (**PAS 251:2017 – Specification for Greyhound Trainers' Residential Kennels**) and the comprehensive advice outlined in the **GBGB Code of Practice for Greyhound Residential Kennels**. This guide should be used in conjunction with these documents, and other documents that have been highlighted in bold throughout.

As well as providing ideas and techniques to meet the behavioural and emotional needs of long-term kennelled greyhounds, it focuses on preventative healthcare to support trainers to provide these greyhounds with an environment and the necessary enrichment for them to enjoy a good life.

A holistic approach to welfare

Animal welfare relates to the physical health and emotional well-being of an animal and how it copes with the environment within which it lives and experiences.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 outlines the five key 'welfare needs' for animal welfare: a suitable environment, a suitable diet, the ability to exhibit normal behaviour patterns, the ability to be housed with or apart from other animals, and protection from pain, suffering, injury, and disease.

Building on the five 'needs', as stated within this legislative framework, the concept of the five 'domains' evolved. This document follows the five 'domains' model to better understand the key areas (domains) of animal welfare: nutrition, environment, physical health and behavioural interactions, that all influence an important fifth domain which is the animal's emotional well-being or mental state:



An individual greyhound needs good psychological health, as well as good physical health, to achieve good welfare.

Using this model allows us to consider welfare holistically, understanding the complex interactions between each of the five 'domains' that determine an individual animal's overall quality of life. If any of the five domains are not suitably addressed, the animal's overall welfare and well-being will be compromised.

It is also important to understand that the welfare of an individual animal can vary from one point in time to the next as the different emotions it experiences during its lifetime, whether they be positive or negative, can fluctuate and change. It is the balance between these different emotions and life experiences that influence an individual animal's overall quality of life.

Promoting positive experiences

The ambition for every greyhound is to give them the plentiful positive welfare experiences they need to thrive. As well as a suitable diet, this means an environment where they can express their natural behaviours, and have opportunities to enjoy appropriate enrichment and regular, positive interactions with humans and other compatible dogs (as appropriate).

Providing greyhounds with and promoting positive experiences (e.g. playfulness, engagement, exploration) while avoiding or minimising stress and negative experiences (e.g. fear, pain, frustration) is important to ensure good welfare.

As a greyhound retires, it is especially important to recognise that their regular form of exercise through racing and the associated opportunity to express their natural chasing behaviour (i.e. chasing the

mechanical lure around a racetrack) will be removed. Suitable alternative avenues must be provided for retired greyhounds to help them maintain not only their physical but also their emotional health. This can be through engagement in other appropriate forms of natural behaviour expression, as well as through positive social interactions.

All racing and retired greyhounds must be given opportunities throughout their entire lifetime to:

- Suitably exercise and maintain physical fitness.
- Play and appropriately interact with people and other compatible dogs (as appropriate).
- Make choices about their environment, such as choosing to engage with preferred toys, opting to access outside runs, or deciding whether to explore in a paddock or to choose to exercise and play.
- Experience environmental variety, such as access to different spaces, sights, smells and textures.

These opportunities offer individual greyhounds an element of decision-making, and provide stimulation and a level of control over their surroundings, which can enhance behavioural diversity and optimise well-being.



Photography by Jason Bloomfield/Kelli Windebank

CHAPTER 2: PREVENTATIVE HEALTHCARE

Preventative healthcare is an essential aspect of maintaining a greyhound's physical and emotional health. There are key aspects of care, however, which require particular consideration when looking after long-term kennelled greyhounds.

Further information about all aspects of preventative healthcare can be found within the **GBGB Code of Practice for Greyhound Residential Kennels**, which includes the provision of appropriate vaccinations, suitable parasite control and biosecurity.

Annual vaccinations

All greyhounds in the kennel, including retired greyhounds, must have up-to-date vaccinations. Regular booster vaccinations are vital to help protect greyhounds from dangerous and potentially fatal infectious diseases.

Your veterinary surgeon will be able to advise you on an appropriate recommended vaccination schedule for kennelled retired greyhounds, considering each individual greyhound's health and circumstances.

Worming and flea treatments

Worms can be a common problem for kennelled dogs. The most common worms that dogs may be exposed to (e.g. roundworms, tapeworms) live in the intestines and can cause damage to the lining of the gut but, in adult dogs, they are not usually serious and can easily be treated. Lungworm (i.e. *Angiostrongylus vasorum*), however, which live in the heart and lungs, can cause serious health issues and can even be fatal.

As with all racing greyhounds, it is important to worm kennelled retired greyhounds regularly using an effective product to address worm infections. There are various products available to protect against both intestinal parasites and lungworm in dogs. The risk of worm infections can vary with geographical location and the dog's lifestyle, so it is recommended you contact your veterinary surgeon for advice on what product would be most suitable and their recommendations regarding frequency of the required dose which should be risk-based and reflect the greyhound's exposure to parasites.

Regular grooming will help identify if your greyhound has fleas or ticks. There are also various antiparasitic products on the market to prevent and treat flea burdens. The most effective products can be prescribed by your veterinary surgeon, who will be able to advise you on the best and most appropriate product for your circumstances, and how often to use it, which should also be risk-based. Some flea products also offer protection against ticks, mites and worms. Alongside grooming, regularly changing and washing bedding (as applicable) is an important aspect of controlling and reducing the risk of flea burdens.

Nutrition and weight management

Good nutrition is key to every greyhound's overall health and wellbeing. Nutritional requirements vary as they progress through the various stages of life.

An appropriate good quality, nutritionally balanced diet that meets the biological requirements of the individual animal (considering its age, activity level and individual health status) is required to maintain good physical health. Insufficient or inappropriate food can compromise welfare by increasing the likelihood of ill health and can cause stress and changes in behaviour.

Maintaining a greyhound's ideal body weight is important, especially as they age. If a retired greyhound has osteoarthritic changes, maintaining their recommended body weight can help avoid excess weight on their joints and can help to minimise further wear and tear on the joints in the long term.

Hydration is also extremely important. All greyhounds must always have access to fresh, clean water.

Bloat

Bloat (acute gastric dilatation and volvulus) is a common non-infectious cause of sudden death in kennelled greyhounds. As a deep-chested breed, greyhounds are more susceptible to bloat which is a very serious, life-threatening condition.

To help prevent bloat, it is very important to not feed greyhounds directly before or after exercising. Greyhounds should be given at least an hour and a half

before and after exercising to rest, and either settle down or digest their food.

If you see any of the following signs or behaviours after your greyhound has eaten, they may be suffering from bloat. Immediately contact your veterinary surgeon – time is critical, so prompt action is vital:

- Gut bloating/distended stomach
- Anxiety
- Pacing, unsettled behaviour
- Problems breathing
- Dribbling or drooling
- Trying to be sick, without the production of food material
- Pain around the stomach

Grooming

Greyhounds must be groomed regularly. Regular coat brushing is especially important for retired greyhounds as this will not only help keep their coats healthy and in good condition, but it is typically an engaging and pleasant enrichment activity for them to enjoy and offers a form of positive social interaction with their handlers. It is also important to regularly check retired greyhounds' nails and trim them as required.



Photography by Greyhound Racing UK

Greyhounds are used to being groomed throughout their racing careers, however, it is important to always provide them with the opportunity to move away or 'opt out' of grooming, even if it is something they have previously enjoyed.

Dental health

Good dental health is key to the overall health of every greyhound. The greyhound breed is vulnerable to tartar build up and, as such, it is very important to both monitor all kennelled greyhounds' teeth and take proactive steps to maintain good dental hygiene. This is especially important for retired greyhounds.

As greyhounds age, they are more predisposed to developing poor dental health such as tartar (calculus) build up, gingivitis, and tooth decay. The **GBGB Guide to Greyhound Dental Score** (see page 6) is a simple way to check and score greyhounds' dental health.

Any greyhounds with teeth having grades 2, 3 or 4 require veterinary attention. Delaying veterinary attention will allow the dental disease to progress which can lead to serious medical complications. If the dental health of any greyhound deteriorates, contact your veterinary surgeon. Dental scores of 0 and 1 may be maintained, or improved, through regular, appropriate dental care provided at the kennels.

Maintaining good dental health through, for example, regular teeth brushing will help to ensure that teeth and gums remain healthy. Once dental disease has been allowed to progress it can be difficult to manage. Your veterinary surgeon should be contacted if you have any questions about greyhound dental health or concerns about the dental hygiene of any retired greyhounds.

GBGB's Responsible Homing Policy requires that any periodontal disease present in a greyhound must be appropriately addressed before they are homed.

Tooth brushing

Brushing the teeth of greyhounds is one of the most effective ways to maintain oral health. Their teeth should be regularly brushed, ideally every day. Never use human toothpaste which can be harmful to dogs; only use toothpaste designed and marketed specifically for dogs.

Gently brush the outer surfaces of all teeth in a circular motion with a toothbrush, paying attention to the back

molars where plaque tends to build up. Introduce brushing gradually to ensure your greyhound is comfortable and relaxed during the process.



Dental chews and toys


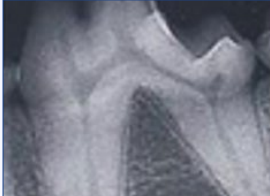

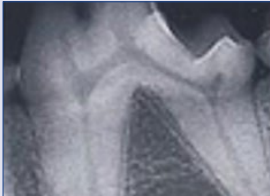









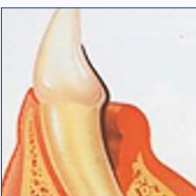
In addition to brushing, offering greyhounds appropriate dental chews/treats, ridged chew toys or suitable beef bones to gnaw/chew can help reduce tartar buildup. These can help clean teeth, massage gums, and satisfy the dog's natural chewing instinct. As well as being a form of enrichment offering both physical and mental stimulation, regular use of these items can complement brushing and reduce the need for veterinary dental attention.

Diet and hydration

A balanced diet and adequate hydration also play a role in dental health. High-quality kibble can help reduce plaque build-up compared to wet food, as the action of gnawing on the biscuit can help clean the teeth. Fresh water should always be available to ensure appropriate hydration, which supports overall health, including that of the gums and teeth.



GUIDE TO GREYHOUND DENTAL SCORE

GRADE 0	 <p>A healthy mouth. Gums (gingiva) are pink and firmly attached to bone. No bad breath evident.</p>	 <p>Normal bone surrounding roots of the tooth.</p>	<p>These are the healthy teeth of a young dog.</p> <p>Aspire to keep all greyhound teeth in this condition.</p> <p>Good dental hygiene routines started young should make it possible.</p>
GRADE 1	 <p>Gums remain healthy, tartar (calculus) accumulation is visible on teeth.</p>	 <p>X-rays show no change.</p>	 <p>Already developing early signs of dental disease.</p> <p>This should be a totally reversible condition by effective cleaning/scaling and/or providing hard chews/bones on a regular basis.</p>
GRADE 2	 <p>Moderate gum inflammation with bleeding. Some gum recession. The build-up of bacteria causes bad breath.</p>	 <p>Bone loss is evident.</p>	 <p>Getting out of control.</p> <p>If treatments and regimes as stage 1 are not effective at this stage, then professional cleaning under a general anesthetic may be needed to prevent further progression of the disease.</p>
GRADE 3	 <p>Severe inflammation of the gums, deep pocket formation, repulsive breath odour.</p>	 <p>10 – 30% bone loss around roots resulting in a loose tooth.</p>	 <p>Veterinary treatment is required to relieve the discomfort of this painful condition.</p> <p>Loss of form may occur but left untreated, progression to Grade 4 will occur and serious complications may occur as a result of the bacterial infection such as liver, kidney or heart disease or even a fractured jaw.</p>
GRADE 4	 <p>Severe damage to the gums, pocket formation, teeth loose. Overwhelming breath odour due to the bacterial infection.</p>	 <p>Over 30% bone loss around the root of the tooth.</p>	 <p>Advanced tooth decay.</p> <p>This greyhound will not be vaccinated and/or will be removed from the race strength for veterinary treatment before resuming racing.</p>

CHAPTER 3: ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENT

Individual greyhound well-being during each life stage (i.e. from birth, through racing and into retirement) is influenced by their physical environment and, importantly, the types of experiences they encounter within their environment.

Environmental enrichment uses different kennel husbandry and management practices, including the design of kennel units and exercise paddocks, to promote appropriate natural behaviour expression, play, rest and sleep. It aims to provide suitable opportunities for animals to display various natural behaviours, encourage positive social interactions and promote effective use of the animal's living space and physical environment.

Appropriate environmental enrichment is especially vital for any retired or resting greyhounds who no longer receive the additional stimulation and social encounters associated with regularly visiting a racecourse.

Enrichment within a kennel environment can take various forms:

PHYSICAL	■ Modifying the greyhound's physical environment and space.
SOCIAL	■ Allowing opportunities for contact with other compatible dogs (as appropriate) and people.
NUTRITIONAL	■ Using food to encourage natural foraging behaviour.
OCCUPATIONAL	■ Giving the dog a 'job' to promote both physical and mental motivation.
SENSORY	■ Stimulating the dog's sense of sight, sound, smell and touch.

Incorporating daily enrichment

As well as the kennel environment itself, daily kennel management practices are key factors that determine a greyhound's overall well-being.

Although many greyhounds enjoy the routine and structure of kennel life, a predictable and potentially

limiting kennel environment can predispose some individuals to boredom and frustration and may lead to the development of unwanted behaviours. Through small adjustments to kennel husbandry and the kennel and paddock environment, it is possible to make the kennel experience more stimulating and provide greater environmental choice.

In addition to completing typical routine daily kennel husbandry tasks (such as feeding, and cleaning), dedicated time should be allocated every day to offer each greyhound specific enrichment opportunities.

This could be:

- Thirty minutes or more of appropriate exercise and providing opportunities for different types of exercise (e.g. lead walking, exploring in a paddock, or paddock play sessions).
- Thirty minutes or more of reward-based behaviour (e.g. obedience) training time, which can positively influence well-being.
- Thirty minutes or more of different forms of positive engagement with people.

The well-being of each greyhound must always be the primary consideration in all aspects of kennel husbandry and management, including the implementation of environmental enrichment.

Individual greyhounds can respond differently to the various types of enrichment. To be beneficial, environmental enrichment must be tailored to each greyhound's physical health and abilities, as well as their character, temperament and circumstances. Offer types of enrichment they prefer and will engage with, and which are appropriate for that individual greyhound's health status and situation.

All offered enrichment (e.g. toys, social encounters, reward-based training) must be suitable, safe and closely monitored to ensure their implementation and use have a positive effect on the individual greyhound's well-being and that they do not inadvertently cause any frustration or anxiety.

If any of the activities or items used as part of an enrichment program result in greyhounds becoming fearful, anxious, frustrated or unhappy, then they should not be continued and alternative forms of enrichment used.

Types of enrichment

i. Physical enrichment

Exercise

Regular exercise in a suitable environment is important for all ages of greyhounds as it is both physically and emotionally stimulating and has overall health benefits. The type and level of exercise must be appropriate for the age and the individual greyhound's physical health and behavioural characteristics.

Physical and psychological resilience is important for retired greyhounds. Long-staying kennelled greyhounds should be offered varied types of suitable exercise so that they can encounter and experience different scents, sights and sounds, and explore different environments, as well as have opportunities to be sociable with people and other greyhounds (as appropriate). This could include off-lead exercise in a paddock, lead walking in different places (e.g. through a village, in fields or woodland) and interactive play either with another compatible greyhound or dog (as appropriate) or with a human carer.

Access to a suitable paddock to enable play, physical activity and exploration is a type of enrichment commonly employed at greyhound residential kennels. This can provide greyhounds with suitable opportunities to perform strongly motivated canine behaviours, including but not limited to sniffing, exploring, digging and playing. Paddock areas should be sufficiently large to enable full stride extension when free running as this can facilitate a positive emotional, as well as physical, state.

Exercise paddocks of different surfaces or substrates (e.g. deep litter, grass, sand) can not only offer environmental variety but can also allow for the expression of specific natural behaviours such as exploration and digging. Many greyhounds will often enjoy digging in grass paddocks or sandy paddock areas.

Play is a useful form of exercise for dogs. Interactive play is important and should be scheduled into the daily kennel routine – play can encourage individual greyhound exercise, activity and socialisation with

people and other compatible dogs (as appropriate). Suitable play can also reduce stress, encourage bond building and help dogs learn new skills.

Sufficient opportunities for daily exercise are also important, however, for any greyhounds which are resting and or recuperating. It is recommended to liaise with your veterinary surgeon regarding the level and type of play and exercise that would be suitable for resting or recuperating greyhounds, taking into account their individual health status and age. If you are caring for any greyhound which is under veterinary instruction to not be exercised or have restricted exercise, consider offering suitable alternative forms of environmental enrichment and mental stimulation following advice from your veterinary surgeon.

Kennel and paddock enrichment

All GBGB residential kennels must comply with kennel standards set out within **PAS 251:2017**. The following advice builds on these standards to offer specific environmental enrichment ideas for retired or resting greyhounds.



There are various ways in which you can enhance a greyhound's physical living area to provide additional enrichment. Small changes can make a significant impact on a greyhound's overall wellbeing.

The provision of a quiet environment has been shown to have beneficial effects on the well-being of kennelled dogs. Providing an environment that allows all greyhounds to obtain good quality, undisturbed sleep and rest is fundamental for good welfare. Sufficient good-quality sleep enables peak performance, supports immune function and learning, and is key to promoting positive well-being.

Due to familiarity with kennel routines, greyhounds kennelled long-term may rest more when they are left undisturbed, and older greyhounds (like pups) need plenty of opportunities to rest.

The type of appropriate kennel unit furniture will differ between individual greyhounds according to their specific needs. All kennel accommodation should provide a comfortable bed area with sufficient, appropriate bedding to encourage good-quality sleep. Within the kennel unit, the raised bed area must be large enough to comfortably accommodate the greyhound/s (i.e. a maximum of two greyhounds per residential double kennel unit, or a maximum of one greyhound per single kennel unit).

The provision of sufficient, suitable comfortable bedding is also important. Older greyhounds, or those rehabilitating from injury, for example, may need to be provided with a lower bed front or deeper bedding to ensure their comfort.

Offering opportunities for seclusion and rest within a kennel unit can be useful to provide individual greyhounds with the option to withdraw from view in circumstances that they may find troublesome (e.g. if strangers visit the kennel environment). It also enables them to choose to be seen by other greyhounds or people in the kennels, should they wish to engage and interact. This may be achieved, for example, through the use of raised beds and bed fronts, and by using kennel unit side partitions with solid lower sections. Providing several different appropriate places to rest and lay can also offer greyhounds another opportunity for choice.

For the individual greyhound that prefers to be housed alone, solid sections on lower kennel unit side panels and paddock fencing can also be helpful to offer them the opportunity to control their view of other greyhounds.

Consideration should be given to providing appropriate areas for greyhound rest and for hiding from the view of other greyhounds and people in paddocks. This can be achieved by providing suitable shelters which, in addition to providing protecting from weather extremes, will give a greyhound the option to remove itself from sight if it is anxious about a specific situation.

Flooring

Another consideration is the different types of kennel flooring and paddock substrates, as they can impact greyhound welfare (for example, concrete surfaces can

be cold in winter, but hot in warm weather). With this in mind, in the summer you could consider creating shaded or sheltered areas within the paddock areas where there is a raised bedding/resting area to offer greyhounds the choice to remove themselves from direct sunlight and the heat of the concrete surface. Appropriate pieces of carpet that are of a suitable size for a greyhound to lie or walk on can also be useful to offer some protection from hotter flooring surfaces in warm weather.

If a greyhound is retiring into a new pet home beyond the kennel environment, offering them the opportunity to encounter the different types of flooring that they may experience in their new home (e.g. solid hard floors, mats, carpet, lino) will help to build their resilience and confidence and help facilitate their adaption to the domestic environment. However, be mindful that flooring types should not be too slippery for greyhounds to stand on.

Play

Dogs typically enjoy play and will often happily play either on their own or with other compatible dogs (as appropriate for the individual dog) and people. A desire to engage in spontaneous play can be indicative of positive emotional wellbeing. While it is a natural canine behaviour, not all greyhounds may be used to playing but it is important to provide them with regular opportunities to do so as offering these opportunities can enhance welfare. Older dogs may, in general, wish to play less than their younger counterparts.

Toys

Toys can encourage both physical and mental stimulation and engagement. Used within the kennel itself and in the paddock area, toys are a simple and helpful way of stimulating a greyhound, enhancing behavioural diversity and adding variety to their day. Greyhounds should be allowed to interact with a variety of suitable toys to initiate play and encourage exercise.



Photography by Nathan Hunt

Toys should be selected that are safe for greyhounds, durable and well-maintained and be of a type that the particular individual greyhound will engage with. It is advisable to always supervise greyhounds when playing with toys. Toys should also be regularly checked for their safety.

Many toys benefit from human involvement to make them more exciting and engaging, so scheduling specific play time with individual greyhounds is important. Individual dogs will have preferences for different types of toys (e.g. food puzzles, tug toys, squeaker toys, tennis balls) and some may be motivated more by the act of holding, chewing or the movement of the toy.

Rotating the use of a selection of toy types that the individual greyhound likes to engage with will help to make sure their interest is maintained and they do not become bored. Some greyhounds, however, may find the scent and smell of a certain toy comforting and the removal of them stressful, so be aware of this. Care should also be taken to avoid resource guarding.

While changing toys regularly can help to keep an individual greyhound stimulated, on the first introduction of a new toy (or any other form of environmental enrichment), the individual greyhound should be closely observed. If a greyhound shows any signs of anxiety or distress towards a certain toy, the item should be removed. If a greyhound does not positively interact with a toy, it will offer no enrichment benefit to that individual and should be taken away.



Chews

Chewing is a natural canine behaviour which, as well as being rewarding for the dog, can also support good dental hygiene. It is important to offer an appropriate avenue for greyhounds to display this normal behaviour by giving them safe and age-appropriate items to use. This could include providing long-lasting edible items (e.g. appropriate beef bones, suitable dental chews), or tough inedible chew toys such as traditional **Kongs®** (the 'strong' type of Kong®, which is usually black coloured, is recommended for adult greyhounds). In all cases, ensure that whatever item you provide a greyhound with to chew is safe for them and supervise their use.

ii. Social enrichment

Greyhounds are typically social animals that need and value company. Generally, racing greyhounds are used to different types of positive social interactions, such as those that may be experienced when visiting the racecourse as well as during regular grooming by their caregivers. When retired from racing, greyhounds lose the regular social enrichment associated with going racing, so is important to ensure they receive regular positive social interactions to help further develop and maintain their social skills and for their general well-being.



Greyhounds can gain a sense of security and enjoyment through social contact with other compatible greyhounds (as appropriate) and with their human carers. All social interactions must consider the individual greyhound's specific social requirements. During all interactions, it is important to consider each greyhound's different personality and behaviour and accommodate for their specific social needs.

Taking greyhounds out on daily lead walks, grooming, interactive play between greyhounds and humans, being housed in pairs (as appropriate for the needs of the individual greyhounds and if the two greyhounds are compatible), as well as training sessions with kennel staff (e.g. obedience training), are all examples of different types of social enrichment.



Interactions with humans

Enjoyable social interactions encountered between dogs and people can enhance canine welfare. All kennelled greyhounds – both racing and retired – must participate in an appropriate, engaging kennel enrichment programme which incorporates regular positive human interactions.

Kennel staff should have positive contact with each greyhound every day through a range of interactions, which could include verbal praise, petting, play and grooming. Not only are these one-to-one sessions important for each greyhound's well-being, but they also help promote the continued learning of fundamental life skills which can support the greyhound's transition into a domestic environment in its retirement.

If an individual greyhound is anxious in human company, there must be a gradual and slow introduction to contact with people undertaken using appropriate positive reward techniques, built upon slowly over a period of time and they should be allowed space to be able to retreat or remove themselves during these encounters.

Training

Reward-based training can offer both physical and mental stimulation and it is a great way to encourage and enhance socialisation and provide retired and resting greyhounds, in particular, with a new focus.

Greyhounds can be taught new behaviours such as 'down', 'sit', 'leave', 'fetch', 'drop' and 'paw', all of which may help facilitate homing and the transition from the kennel environment to a domestic setting. The teaching of other skills that may be beneficial to support the smooth transition into a domestic lifestyle could also be useful, for example how to calmly walk on the lead or how to ascend and descend a small flight of steps.

Positive, reward-based techniques should be used which offer the greyhound something it enjoys for performing the required behaviour. Depending on the individual greyhound, this could be a food reward, verbal praise, petting, or interaction with a preferred toy. This reward may change for individual behaviours, or depending on the location the behaviour is being trained in.

All staff should understand the principles of behaviour training and the need for patience and kindness to promote a positive relationship with the individual greyhound. Physical punishment, or any other aversive techniques, must never be incorporated into any form of greyhound training. Poor training and handling techniques will negatively affect an animal's welfare and can result in the development of unwanted behaviours associated with stress and fear.

Socialisation

The environments and types of experiences greyhounds encounter can influence their social development and are central to their wellbeing during every stage of their lives.

Socialisation is the process by which greyhounds learn social skills and how to be calm and relaxed with and around people and animals, new objects, sights and sounds. This is done by slowly and positively exposing the greyhound to these experiences.

The bulk of the socialisation process should take place between weeks five to sixteen in a pup's life, so the rearer of the litter plays a key role. However, for any greyhounds which are going to remain long-term in residential kennels, socialisation should be considered an important ongoing aspect of their care.

For greyhounds who will be eventually retired to a new pet home, it is vital to incorporate socialisation into the kennel enrichment planning so that the greyhounds are gradually and carefully introduced to the various new experiences, objects and noises they may encounter in the future in a domestic home, enabling them to acclimatise and learn how they should appropriately interact and respond.

This could include, for example:

- If they are not used to stairs, introduce them to a small flight of stairs or steps using appropriate rewards so they are accustomed to walking both up and down them.
- Slow exposure to some of the sounds and new objects they may encounter in and around the home such as a vacuum cleaner, bicycles, lawnmower, hairdryer, washing machine, TV or radio.
- Allowing them to explore different types of soft and hard flooring such as carpets, lino and tiles, although the flooring type should not be too slippery for them to stand on.
- Setting up a sofa or seating area somewhere in your kennel building, if space allows, so that they can become used to relaxing in an appropriate and comfortable greyhound bed in this social setting.

All new experiences must be positive, gradual and controlled to avoid the development of fearful or anxious behaviours and the progress of individual greyhounds should be closely monitored. If a greyhound shows any forms of anxiety or worry, the new object, encounter or experience should be removed, stopped or lessened to the level that the greyhound becomes calm and relaxed.

Greyhounds need regular, suitable and controlled opportunities to meet and learn how to appropriately interact with other breeds of dogs, how to behave appropriately around different animals (e.g. livestock, horses) and a variety of new people who may look different to them (including children, people with walking sticks, people wearing hats, etc.).

Acclimatising greyhounds, while they are still under a trainer's care, is important to support their transition to life away from the kennel environment. Those greyhounds who are appropriately socialised are likely to make a smooth transition into a domestic lifestyle and therefore be placed into a home more promptly.

Massage

Canine massage therapy can help decrease musculoskeletal pain (such as pain associated with orthopaedic injuries, muscle injuries and degenerative joint conditions, such as osteoarthritis). It can also help reduce muscular stiffness and improve mobility.

Depending on the individual greyhound, appropriate canine massage can be relaxing and can help improve

general demeanour, behaviour and motivation. It can also encourage the development of a positive relationship between the individual greyhound and kennel staff. However, it is important that the greyhound is able to move away or 'opt-out' of such an interaction, even if massage is something they have previously enjoyed.

Basic training and instruction in canine massage should be obtained from a qualified veterinary physiotherapist before canine massage is undertaken, to avoid potentially exacerbating existing physical conditions.

Interactions with other dogs

Whenever possible, and according to the needs of the individual greyhound, greyhounds should be housed in compatible pairs to allow for natural social behaviours. However, greyhounds must be housed according to their specific needs and some individual greyhounds may require being housed singly, on their own.

In general, dogs enjoy play and greyhounds are no exception. Dogs will often happily play either on their own or with people and/or other compatible dogs (as appropriate for the individual dog). Play is a useful form of physical exercise and stimulation.

If their temperament allows, greyhounds should be given regular opportunities to play with other compatible dogs off-lead together in paddocks, as well as being taken on lead walks in the company of other compatible dogs. If a greyhound displays any anxiety in the company of other dogs, they should be gradually introduced and acclimatised to them in a safe, controlled way, at a distance, to build up a positive association.



iii. Nutritional enrichment

Nutritional enrichment can be used to encourage natural foraging and behaviour expression through the use of food as a reward. This can have the added benefit of providing the individual greyhound with a task to do, which may help reduce the display of some unwanted behaviours such as excessive barking and can help prevent boredom.

There are many canine items on the market which can be used with food to promote both physical activity and mental stimulation. These include puzzle feeders (i.e. the greyhound will need to work out how to solve the puzzle to source the food reward within), Kongs® that can be stuffed with food, 'snuffle mats' (which require the greyhound to use their nose to find the pieces of food in between the pieces of fabric) and LickiMat® (upon which wet food is spread for the dog to lick off).

You can also carry out nutritional enrichment inexpensively using items such as rolled-up towels with treats hidden within them, or even by scattering dry kibble in the kennel unit for the greyhound to find. Food treats may also be incorporated into reward-based training such as learning recall in a safe paddock or learning to walk on a loose lead.

It is important to ensure that the food enrichment item you choose to use is safe, suitably durable, well-maintained and appropriate for the individual greyhound for which it is intended. When introducing either new toys or food enrichment items they must be suitable for the greyhound to interact with. Their use should be closely monitored, and they must be able to be suitably cleaned.

It is important to remember that toys or food items may be considered by individual greyhounds as high-value resources, which could lead to expressions of competitive behaviour between individual dogs or humans. In general, food items should only be offered to greyhounds when they are accommodated in secure areas on their own and not in the company of other dogs.

iv. Occupational enrichment

Greyhounds are sighthounds who naturally enjoy chasing. The regular provision of sufficient opportunities for normal behaviour expression including appropriate physical activity is therefore very important. For sighthounds, it is the type of exercise (i.e. short bursts of free running in a suitable safe area), rather than the duration of the exercise period, that is key.

Restriction in their ability to display normal behaviours can not only negatively impact their physical health and athletic fitness but could also affect their emotional well-being and therefore their overall welfare.

Racing greyhounds are performance athletes. In general, an active racing greyhound may go racing approximately once a week, which will naturally stop on their retirement. Without the focus of racing and this form of regular exercise which provides the opportunity to engage in their natural chasing behaviour, retired greyhounds must be offered suitable alternative avenues to maintain their fitness level and show natural behaviours, in addition to being able to enjoy regular positive social interactions.

On their retirement, or during a period of rest and rehabilitation, greyhounds should be given regular opportunities to have an appropriate new focus that they will like participating in to help keep them emotionally engaged and to help prevent boredom. This could include learning new tasks (e.g. reward-based obedience training) or problem-solving.

Food puzzles can provide a sense of motivation and both physical and mental stimulation as the greyhound works to obtain the food treat as its reward. It is recommended to try 'easier' enrichment items (e.g. loosely stuffing a Kong) to begin with and progress the degree of complexity as the dog becomes more familiar with the item to help avoid the risk of any frustration and anxiety development in the dog.

Toys used in a controlled environment that encourage their natural chasing instinct can also help them to safely exhibit their natural chase behaviour.

v. Sensory enrichment

Sensory enrichment includes techniques that can be used to positively stimulate and engage a dog's sense of smell, taste, sight, hearing and touch by incorporating the provision of appropriate sights, sounds, odours and textures into the animal's environment.

An environment with inappropriate sensory stimulation can compromise welfare. This could include excessive loud noise, smells from cleaning or disinfection agents during cleaning, or providing too little suitable sensory stimulation. Offering appropriate sensory information within a greyhound's physical environment can enhance well-being.



This could include:

Smell

Allowing greyhounds to forage, explore and sniff when in paddocks or during lead walks, facilitates motivation, choice and decision-making and can promote a sense of positive well-being.

If there are limited opportunities for walking greyhounds in appropriate natural environments, establishing a sensory garden area at the kennel with suitable, safe plants and herbs for greyhounds to sniff and areas to explore can be beneficial.

It is also possible to encourage natural exploring and normal scent-seeking behaviours in individual greyhounds by scatter-feeding dry kibble as a form of enrichment in a paddock or kennel unit, or by using other appropriate nutritional enrichment items.

Sound

Excessive kennel noise can negatively affect both staff and animals. Dogs are more sensitive to noise than people and prolonged noise in kennel environments can adversely impact individual greyhound welfare through overstimulation and stress. This may result in the development of unwanted behaviours including excessive barking.

Studies have shown that the provision of suitable music (such as classical music) can help decrease stress in kennelled dogs and promote rest and sleep. Dogs should also be provided with a period of quiet; music should not be on constantly and should be of a low volume.

Where possible, consideration should also be given to general kennel management concerning noise levels, for example, opening and closing kennel unit doors gently.

Taste

A good quality, appropriately balanced and nutritious diet is important for the overall health of all greyhounds. Offering suitable food types of different textures (e.g. dry kibble, meat, and soaked foods) can offer variety.

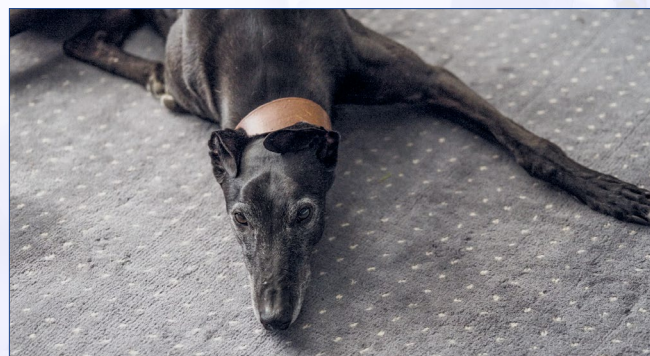
Sight

As well as regular exercise outdoors, greyhounds should be offered opportunities to observe people and/or other greyhounds outside their kennel accommodation to provide visual stimulation. This can be achieved by offering suitable visual access to the environment surrounding their kennel and exercise paddock.

However, it is important to consider that for certain individual greyhounds, the view of other greyhounds (e.g. for those greyhounds that may need to be housed singly) or people (such as strangers visiting the kennel environment) may not be appropriate as it may cause stress or frustration. Greyhounds should be given the ability to decide to either hide from or see people and other greyhounds outside their kennel/paddock. The use of solid side perimeter barriers in paddocks or solid lower panel sections of side partitions in kennel units can offer individual greyhounds suitable refuges and the ability to remove themselves from view in situations or circumstances that they may find challenging.

Texture

In addition to providing comfortable bedding and different flooring substrates within the kennel and paddock environment which can offer the experience of a variety of textures through walking or lying on different surfaces, when selecting materials for enrichment consideration should be given to the other ways you can introduce a variety of textures – for example, soft plush toys, rubber chew toys and rope pull toys, as appropriate.



Enrichment for recovery and rehabilitation

Additional consideration should be given to enrichment for any greyhounds staying in residential kennels while they are resting or recovering from injury or ill health. It is important to consider the emotional, as well as the physical health, of these greyhounds.

It is recommended to liaise with your veterinary surgeon regarding the level and type of exercise that would be suitable for each greyhound, taking into account any health issues on a case-by-case basis. Providing non-slip surfaces for greyhounds to walk on during stages of injury or medical rehabilitation is recommended to help prevent the greyhound from inadvertently slipping.

For any greyhound that is under veterinary instruction to not be exercised or have restricted exercise (e.g. due to ill health, rest and rehabilitation), consider offering suitable alternative forms of environmental enrichment, mental stimulation and reward-based training following advice from your veterinary surgeon.

Greyhounds in isolation facilities

Appropriate social interactions and environmental enrichment must be provided considering the individual greyhound's physical health and age (e.g. grooming, stroking, massage, playing of appropriate music, provision of appropriate toys). Any items such as toys and grooming equipment used for greyhounds in isolation facilities must be able to be easily cleaned and disinfected and must only be used in the isolation unit and allocated to a specific greyhound during its time in isolation. Extra consideration should be given to enrichment in this context to compensate for reduced socialisation.

Each greyhound housed in isolation facilities must be closely and regularly monitored throughout the day for any changes in their health and/or behaviour and a veterinary surgeon promptly contacted for advice as required.



Photography by Jason Bloomfield/Kelli Windebank

CHAPTER 4: OSTEOARTHRITIS

Osteoarthritis is a progressive joint disease and any joint can be affected by it. Through general wear and tear, all retired greyhounds are likely to develop osteoarthritis to some degree as they age. It can, however, be managed in the long term to help make life as comfortable as possible.

Greyhounds suffering from osteoarthritis may show a variety of signs, including:

- A reluctance to jump or climb into or out of their raised bed.
- Stiffness/lameness when getting up from resting, after a walk or first thing in the morning.
- Slow to lower into a sitting or lying position.
- Less enthusiastic on walks.
- Loss of muscle mass.
- Reluctance to remain standing for long periods.
- Twitching when stroked.
- Noticeable changes in posture when standing or moving, such as standing with their legs wider apart than their body, leaning to one side.

They may also show behavioural changes (e.g. frequently licking the skin over a joint, lying down when eating their food, growling or snapping when being groomed). The earlier signs suggestive of osteoarthritis are recognised, the greater opportunities there will be to intervene and put suitable measures in place to support them.

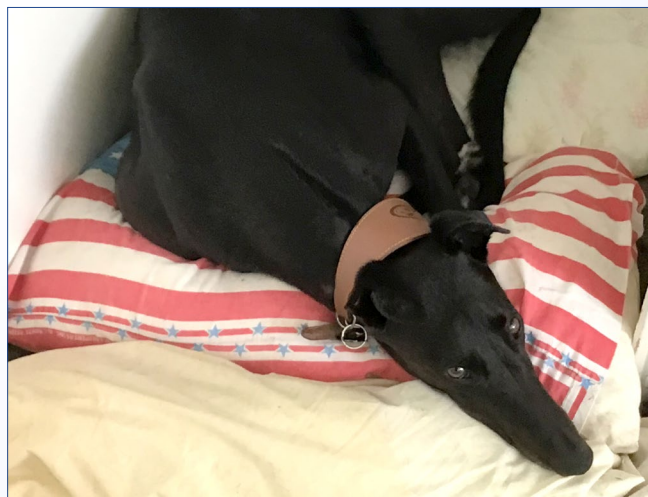
Kennel adaptations

Providing appropriate environmental refinements and adjustments can play an important role in supporting any retired greyhounds that may have osteoarthritis. Small changes around the kennel environment can make a big difference in keeping a retired greyhound comfortable:

- Avoid slippery floors and provide traction to help prevent retired greyhounds from slipping, especially in areas where they may be turning corners or standing for

extended periods (e.g. where they eat/drink). Suitable rubber matting that is easy to clean is an effective way to provide non-slip surfaces in kennels and on the surface of raised beds beneath appropriate bedding.

- Raising food and water bowls off the floor (e.g. by using suitable food and water bowl stands) can make it more comfortable for a retired greyhound to eat and drink. If there is osteoarthritis in the front legs, bending sore joints to lean down to a bowl on the floor may be painful.
- The provision of a comfortable bed where a greyhound can rest and sleep is important. This should be soft, but not too soft, because a retired greyhound who is experiencing joint stiffness may find the instability of a very soft surface difficult to stand on and they may also struggle to have the strength to get up from a lying down position on such a very soft bed. If bed fronts are used, make sure that the front is not too high so that it becomes difficult for a retired greyhound to safely get over. An osteoarthritic greyhound may struggle to pick their feet up as high as they used to.



- In cooler or inclement weather, it is important to ensure retired greyhounds are kept sufficiently warm and dry as cold temperatures can cause a flare-up of arthritic pain. Ensure the kennel accommodation is maintained at the recommended temperature, that each greyhound has sufficient bedding, and that you have suitable coats (waterproof overcoats, fleece kennel coats, etc.). Many greyhounds also enjoy the comfort and warmth of suitable blankets.

Exercise management

Regular, suitable exercise in a safe and appropriate environment is important for all ages of greyhounds, including retired greyhounds. A suitable level of activity can provide both physical and emotional stimulation and has overall health benefits.

The type and level of exercise must be appropriate and consider the age and the individual greyhound's physical health status. For example, shorter frequent walks are preferable for osteoarthritic joints (e.g. two thirty-minute walks a day), but the length and frequency will still need to be determined on a case-by-case basis. Particular attention should also be paid to the quality of exercise or physical activity offered to a greyhound with osteoarthritis.

Osteoarthritic joints cope best with roughly the same amount of exercise each day. There will be some daily, individual variation on how much each retired greyhound is comfortable doing and the weather will also have an influence. Damp, windy conditions and even low atmospheric pressure can make osteoarthritic joints feel more painful, so less exercise should be offered on these days. It is important to offer other appropriate forms of enrichment as exercise reduces.

Pain management

Osteoarthritis is a chronic issue that necessitates appropriate long-term management. Managing pain is the priority in any canine osteoarthritis management plan. Weight management, physical environmental adaptations and exercise modification are part of pain management, but on their own they are typically not enough to provide adequate pain relief (except in the very early stages). Contact your veterinary surgeon to discuss osteoarthritis management and appropriate pain relief medication.

Physiotherapy

Once osteoarthritis pain is appropriately controlled, physiotherapy can help support these greyhounds by helping to restore, improve and maintain mobility, as well as reducing inflammation and musculoskeletal pain. Suitable physiotherapy can also help minimise the rate of further movement loss from the arthritic joint and help maintain muscle mass.

For physiotherapy to be effective, good communication between the greyhound's veterinary surgeon and a

suitably qualified veterinary physiotherapist is important. Your veterinary surgeon will refer the greyhound to a veterinary physiotherapist for a detailed assessment which will inform the development of an appropriate treatment program. A tailored treatment plan, overseen by their attending veterinary surgeon and/or qualified veterinary physiotherapist should be formulated for each greyhound which is specific to the individual greyhound's needs, age, medical history and temperament.

Veterinary physiotherapy programs are typically designed for each animal and each condition, which is why it is important to engage the services of a qualified veterinary physiotherapist. They may recommend treatment including electrotherapies (e.g. therapeutic ultrasound, or electromagnetic field therapy massage), therapeutic exercises, or soft tissue massage. As well as promoting rehabilitation, appropriate physiotherapy can also provide animals with enjoyable social interactions with people.



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