



Operating Procedures & Risk Assessments –

Updated February 2024

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This is a working document and is available on request. A copy will be uploaded on to the Vik's Wags and Walks (VW&W) website and will be updated as required.

1. General boarding policies

The home boarding dog licence issued to VW&W must be clearly and prominently displayed in a public facing area and can be found on the wall on the reception area, just inside the front door. My name and number of VW&W Animal Activities licence is prominently displayed on the business website.

The premises are of sound construction and only registered tradespeople will be used to complete works.

The licence issued states the maximum number of dogs that can be home boarded on the premises, for Vik's Wags and Walks this is 3 dogs.

All policies will be pointed out to clients any they may take away a hard copy if desired. If it is deemed that boarding can no longer continue due to extremes of temperature or any other emergency, the client and/or emergency contact will be required to collect their dog. Written consent is obtained prior to boarding.

Dogs will sleep in the downstairs area and have use of the kitchen and living areas. Boarding dogs are not permitted upstairs. They have access to a large L shaped sofa, a chair, and soft surfaces as well as the kitchen area which can be used as an open pen.

Owners are encouraged to provide their own dog beds and a comfort item such as a blanket that smells of home to help the dog relax. Dogs can be crated overnight if the dog is already habituated to a crate and if the owner's consent is given on the Permissions Sheet. Doors and extra tall dog gates between living room and kitchen areas can separate dogs overnight. Resident dogs sleep upstairs.

Dogs are not left alone in any 24-hour period for more than 3 hours. Dogs that suffer from separation anxiety and prone to barking are not left alone and the adult resident and emergency key holder can provide company if the licensee must be out for a period. Dogs can accompany the licensee if appropriate. All dogs are thoroughly assessed, and allowances made. If dogs are left alone, they are separated from resident dog and any other boarding dogs unless client has given consent and the radio left on for company. Barking is monitored and action taken if dogs bark for a period of time.

2. Record keeping

All boarding is subject to a meet and greet and the boarding forms being fully completed. Specific boarding forms must include name and address of client, dog's name, breed and colouring, microchip number, age, vaccination / titre dates, flea and worming treatment dates, insurance and vet details, temperament of dog, consent for

dogs to be walked, housed and fed with other dogs, exercise expectations, medication, allergy details, and any other relevant details.

All records previously have been paper based and stored under lock and key, with scans of material held on secure password protected cloud drive. All records are kept on a central spreadsheet on the secure cloud drive. All records are confidential, the records are encrypted, and a suitable firewall and virus protection software is installed. All records must be viewed with data protection in mind. The records will be regularly updated. The records will be available to the licensee and emergency contact. The records will be retained for three years and securely archived after this time.

3. Health and safety within the home

Health and safety will be always maintained within the home. All dogs are to be housed in a suitable environment, which is always kept clean and safe.

All electrical equipment including smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarm are tested weekly and repaired or replaced as required. All gas equipment is to be inspected and maintained by a qualified engineer yearly. The house is inspected daily for any repairs needed. The garden will be inspected daily for any repairs needed. All gates will be checked once a day minimum for wear and tear. A regular cleaning regime is in place and home is maintained. All health and safety aspects will be considered when cooking/cleaning and dogs will be kept away from heat sources or being able to ingest anything. All boarders are part of our family and are looked after to the high standards that we look after our own animals. All bins are stored in a cupboard, behind a door and the garden bin is stored at the farthest point from the house.

4. Cleaning and Disinfection procedure

General cleaning will be done daily, and a good state of cleanliness will be maintained. All sides wiped down before and after use, floors swept daily, food and water bowls washed daily, throws and bedding washed every three days. A thorough dust, polish, vacuum and disinfect will be done on a weekly basis, when a boarding dog enters and when a boarding dog departs. Any spillages/accidents will be cleaned up as soon as seen. The garden will have excrement removed a minimum of once daily and food preparation areas will be cleaned before and after preparation. An antibacterial cleaner and antibacterial wipe with kitchen roll will be used to maintain areas.

Antibacterial handwash will be available by all sinks and wipes. Dogs can be hosed down and washed outside in good weather or using a Hozelock Porta shower with warm water to clean dogs after walks. Grass will be disinfected every two weeks in summer months and monthly during winter months. Gravel will be hosed down every two weeks and disinfected as needed. All dogs will be removed when cleaning is taking place.

5. Transportation Policy

Dogs can be collected by arrangement and use of my vehicle, insured for business use, will be used to transport dogs to local walking areas. The vehicle is regularly checked and maintained and serviced as needed. The car has a Large dog sized Trank9 transportation box in the boot, suitable for use by up to 2 medium sized dogs or 1 large dog. This will only be used by 2 dogs from the same household who are used to travelling with each other, otherwise its one dog in the crate. The back seat has a full seat cover hammock and can accommodate one dog wearing a well-fitting chest harness secured by a seat belt clipped to harness. Vet bedding and towels are used in the vehicle and are changed between dog uses, washed at 60 degrees Celsius. The car is vacuumed and disinfected weekly. Any rubbish or bags of excrement are disposed of in the appropriate bins. Dogs will be removed when cleaning takes place.

6. Feeding procedure

All dogs are to be fed separately, unless expressly permitted by owners to eat together. Dogs are watched and assessed during mealtimes to make sure they are eating their food. Guzzlers of food will be recommended alternative feeding methods such as secure area scatter feeding or slow feeders. Slow or reluctant eaters of food will be assessed to ensure they are able to chew their food and are not suffering any kind of pain or trauma that is stopping them from eating. Some dogs like human company while eating, others prefer to hide away in a safe place so this will be noted and adhered to ensure their comfort and security. Dogs will be fed separately and at different times to resident dog. Unless stated all dog food is to be provided by the client. Clients are asked to give written details on timings, amounts and kinds of bowls dogs eat from. Bowls and feeders may be provided by the client but there is an additional supply of spares available for use. All bowls are cleaned in the dishwasher or hot washed manually. The food will be stored in secure plastic containers in the fridge, the bottom drawer of the freezer in the utility room area or in clean secure plastic containers in the plastic cupboard in the utility room. Dogs' food intake will be monitored per meal and advice sought from a vet if the dog continues to refuse food after 48 hours.

Multiple water bowls will be provided to allow every dog to drink water from bowl at the same time if required and water is changed twice daily. All bowls will be cleaned in the dishwasher daily.

No food will be left down and will be removed and disposed of in the outside bin after each meal. All bowls will be lifted and placed in the sink to be hot washed manually. There is a dedicated dog food prep area and is to be washed before and after food preparation. All basic hygiene rules will be adhered to by anyone preparing food.

7. Enrichment activities

All boarders will have access to enrichment activities within the home and garden. Kong wobblers, enrichment games, rope toys, tuggies, lick mats, soft agility equipment, snuffle mats, paddling pool. Dogs on restricted exercise or other reasons will have the chance to interact using quick and simple brain teaser ideas to challenge themselves mentally such

as hide and seek using covers, scent detection can provide low impact physical workout which is both stimulating and tiring. They also provide a great opportunity for low arousal bonding and interaction time with the licensee. Lick mats and snuffle mats are a great way to expel energies while using minimum physical exercise and help to mentally stimulate dogs by using their natural instincts. All toys will be supervised and agreed with client prior to boarding.

Further enrichment ideas include targeting practice, which may be a hand or other target such as a soft foam mat. All dogs will be checked over physically and all equipment will be checked for suitability prior to use. A paddling pool will be provided in shaded areas for use with shallow water for dogs to cool off in warmer months. The paddling pool will remain shallow and its use will be always supervised. A ball pit can be used for interactive play and finding games. The equipment will be inspected prior to use and cleaned or discarded as necessary. Grooming and interaction will take place naturally, multiple times per day. All dogs will live as part of the family and will interact with all members throughout the day and evening.

8. Exercise Policy

All individual needs will be assessed and addressed, for example older dogs having a less intense type and duration of exercise. Dogs under a year old will have 5 minutes of exercise for every month of their life, twice daily. Jumping on to and off from high surfaces is not permitted and floor covering are to be used should any dog have trouble on slippery floors. Foam mats and material rugs are available to provide additional traction where required on high traffic routes or at corners and turns into doorways. Adult dogs in good health will have a minimum of two walks per day. One long walk of 60 minutes +, with the owner's permission, can include exercise time off lead and a shorter walk for a minimum of 20 minutes later in the day. Every care will be taken to ensure dogs individual needs are met with agreement with the client. The walk locations can include the local parks, woodland adjoining my property and recreation areas, footpaths along more rural routes and fields or pavement walks around the estate. Use of secure exercise field can be hired locally if a dog has poor recall or requires privacy. All walking equipment must be provided by the client, we encourage force free equipment including X or Y shaped harnesses and soft leads. Extendable leads are not permitted due to unreliability and health and safety concerns for dogs, users and members of public. All equipment provided must be in a clean and safe state and will be inspected prior to use. I have spares of strong leads and harnesses should the equipment provided be deemed unsafe for use. All walks and equipment use are agreed with clients using the dog boarding information form.

Each dog must have a collar or harness with an ID tag showing clients name, address and number. Boarding dogs will wear an identity tag showing our name, address and contact telephone number. No more than four dogs per person will be walked at any one time. All dogs will be assessed and make sure they are a compatible group. All dogs will be walked in a safe controlled manner and will not cause any disruption to other people or

animals. VW&W has public liability insurance with Protectivity which includes cover for my spouse, to walk up to six dogs at one time. Every precaution is taken to maintain a safe walk and all walks are familiar and considered safe.

When the boarding dogs aren't being walked, they have access to the garden. The garden has two outer gates so there are two physical barriers to the outside. The fencing is six-foot timber fencing that is inspected daily. The garden is sectioned off and a safe grassed area is provided for dogs. Lighting is provided if its dark outside and the gate is lockable on both sides. Dogs are fully always supervised in the garden and any excessive barking is stopped immediately using distraction techniques. Clients are asked in writing to confirm their dogs can have use of the garden with resident and visiting dogs, always supervised.

In the case of extreme weather, the type and level of exercise will be modified and possibly access in the garden restricted. In cases of extreme heat, the boarders will have shortened walks early morning and/or late evening in the woodland adjoining my garden. Dogs will be walked on lead and encouraged to be calm and take regular water and shade breaks. Additional mental stimulation and enrichment activities will be provided at home and cooling measures will be implemented such as black out curtains, cooling fans and ventilation to ensure inside rooms remain cool throughout the day. Cooling coats and mats are available for use and patios will be hosed regularly to ensure they remain cool until the shade comes round early afternoon. Brachycephalic breeds (shortened heads and snouts), very young, elderly, overweight and dogs with additional needs will have limited exercise, be closely monitored and have access to always blowing fans and cooling measures.

In the case of snow and cold temperatures exercise will be limited and ideally clients will provide coats for dogs. Boarders will be dried off and central heating used to ensure they remain at a comfortable temperature. In blizzard or very icy conditions dogs will stay in the home and enjoy enrichment activities, including cuddles on the sofa. All paws will be rinsed after walking on pavements due to gritting. Dogs will be monitored closely and if they appear to be in distress or not enjoying the weather, we will return home. In very wet conditions walks will continue unless the dog appears to be unhappy or in distress. Dogs will not be walked in thunder and lightening and will pursue enrichment activities and distraction techniques used. The radio, tv, curtains and low lighting will be used if dogs become upset by storms.

If dogs are boarding at a time when fireworks are expected, then walks will take place in daylight hours and will be home before dusk. Access to the garden will be on lead whenever there is peace from fireworks.

9. Monitoring Health and Welfare

Dogs will be physically checked over every day from nose to tail for lumps, bumps, redness, swelling, discharge, scabs, blood, slime, itchiness, gurgling, stretching, bloating, coughing and wheezing and any other signs shown out of the ordinary. The coat and paws will be inspected after every walk for mud, debris and grass seeds. After walks in

winter paws will be rinsed off after walks and in summer special attention taken to ensure there is not heat damage or sunburn.

Dog's food intake and general demeanour will be assessed continuously and assessed on a daily sheet. Dogs showing signs of stress will be given their own space and time to find their safe space be this in the garden or in a self chosen den behind the sofa, and every effort to use low level lighting and comforting music and sounds. They can also have comforting items such as their blankets and beds from home. All clients will be asked about their dog's demeanour on the dog boarding form. Unless in exceptional emergency situations all dogs will be existing walking clients and will come for a meet and greet in my own one to see their interactions within my family home, including resident dog and children and their suitability assessed. Techniques will be discussed with owners to how to best comfort their dog and achieve a calm atmosphere. Pet remedy plug ins can be deployed in the downstairs room to promote relaxation. All observations about dog's health and welfare will be recorded on the main spreadsheet. All dogs will be handled gently, and reward-based training methods will be used. All clients will be advised that any equipment provided by them must be maintained and not be an aversive training tool. The use of choke chains, shock collars, prong collars, anti bark collars, half choke collars and any equipment I feel to be aversive is strictly prohibited and all clients will understand we will not use them. No aversive methods will be used.

If dogs are boarding during the periods fireworks are in use I will allow them to find their safe place be this cuddles on the sofa or a den made of blankets behind the sofa and I will use television, radio, lighting to try and provide them distraction or comfort, whichever works best. Dogs will only be let in the garden on leads, during quiet periods and will be supervised throughout. Walks will be taken only in daylight hours.

10. Other animals

All boarding dogs will have met resident dog out in the open on a walk in a mixture of both on lead and off lead situations, if appropriate. A meet and greet session with the resident dogs at VW&W premises will take place, and a half day / full day trial for the dogs to get used to us. Dogs will initially enter the garden and be allowed to sniff around before resident dog joins them in the garden and be allowed to sniff and get used to each other until we feel they can safely interact. Resident dog will be able to exit to upstairs within the house or to farther part of the garden if needed.

11. Disease control and prevention

Clients will provide medical details prior to the stay and appropriate treatment will be agreed. All dogs must be in good health for a minimum of 7 days prior to boarding. Dogs that have stomach upsets or anything considered infectious will not be permitted and their boarding will be cancelled.

If any dogs show signs of infection, their space will be limited to the customised isolation area until the dog can be collected by their emergency contact or the client. I have a

Preventative Healthcare Plan in place with my local vet and they have agreed, if possible, to house a dog suffering with an infectious disease in their isolation unit until such a disease is brought under control and or/upon return of their owners. I will contact the owners and the emergency contact and will take the signed vet release form, giving permission to seek care for their dog at their own vet or my nominated veterinary practice. I would supply the owner's written consent form, their own vet's details and an up to date copy of their dog's vaccination record.

The client will be asked to come and collect their dog and if they cannot, their emergency contact will come to collect. This will be agreed prior to boarding. Resident dogs will be housed away from the isolation area and will access VW&W property using the front entrance to ensure separation. All necessary steps including clothing will be disposed of or washed in the outside machine at 60 degrees Celsius. All soiled bedding will be washed at 60 degrees Celsius using antibacterial cleaner or disposed of at the waste disposal site. All water and food bowls will be separated and washed in boiling water and further cleaner with an antibacterial solution. All advice will be taken from our vets with the handling of the boarder. All other boarding dogs will be asked to be collected too. All toys will be washed and disinfected between boarding dogs.

12. Death or escape of an animal

If any boarding dog becomes or unwell or dies during boarding the client will be informed immediately and asked to come to the boarding establishment. All actions will be taken under advice from our vet. Deceased dogs will be taken to the client's vets to await the return of their owner.

If our vet feels that a dog must be euthanised consent will be obtained prior to or the interests of the dog considered. Every effort will be made to contact the owner and the emergency contact, but the welfare of the dog comes first. Any euthanasia must be performed by a qualified vet.

In the case that a dog escapes from the home or on a walk every effort will be made to find the dog and both the emergency contact, and the client will be contacted immediately. All local vets will be contacted along with the dog warden. The use of social media such as Doglost and Dogateers may be used if client consents. The business insurance company (Protectivity) will be contacted as soon as possible.

13. Emergency Care Boarding for Dogs

If the boarding establishment becomes inhabitable due to lack of heating (unlikely due to two sources of heat) owners will be contacted and asked to come and collect their dogs or emergency contact will be asked to collect their dogs. All clients will be informed of this prior to boarding.

If the establishment is out of use for any reason owners will be contacted and asked to collect their dogs or emergency contacts will be asked to collect their dogs. All clients will give written consent prior to boarding. If the temperature is extreme either hot or cold every measure will be taken to ensure the establishment remains habitable. Fans,

cooling mats, floor hosing and wet towels will be used in the summer but if dogs continue to struggle boarding will be halted and the client or emergency contact will be asked to collect their dog.

In the event of extreme weather including flood, snow and drought every precaution will be taken to make dogs comfortable. It is unlikely that natural flooding would occur as we are on a hill, but all dogs will be evacuated following emergency services advice. In case of extreme snow advice will be taken from emergency services and forecasts. Fans and extra refreshment will be provided in the case of drought.

14.Waste disposal

All dog faeces will be removed from the garden ideally as soon as it appears, into a small secure bin situated in the garden and a full check and clean will be carried out daily. The waste from the bin is disposed of using one of the many council provided dog waste bins situation with in 100 metres of the back gate. Heavily soiled bedding will be disposed of in the main bin.

15.Fire Policy and escape plan

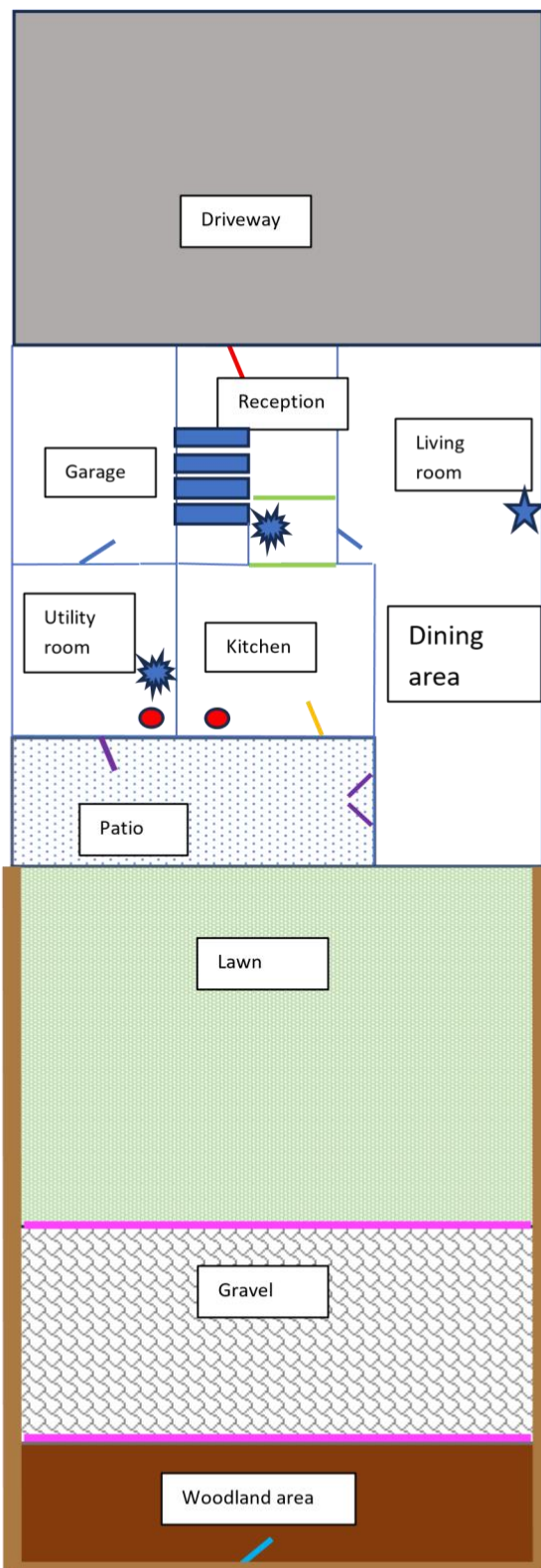
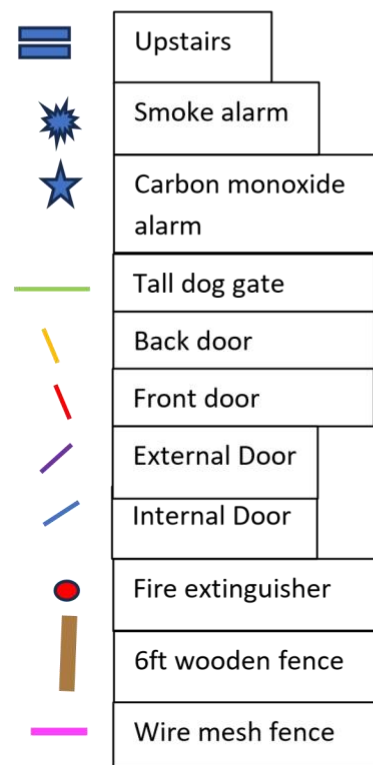
The establishment has three fire extinguishers, one in the kitchen, one in the utility room and one located upstairs. There are three smoke alarms, one in the utility room, one at the bottom of the stairs and one at the top of the stairs. There is one carbon monoxide detector located in the living room. All are inspected and tested weekly and changed as necessary.

The two main exits, front and back doors are kept free of obstructions and can be locked from the outside and the inside. There is an additional exit from the back of the living room area via the conservatory doors. In case of a kitchen fire the front exit can be used onto the drive, in case of a living room fire the exit points could be to the front or rear of the property.

The escape route is detailed on my floor plans. In the event of an evacuation the dogs will be put on lead and led to exit the property using either the front or the rear exits. The dogs can be secured inside the car at the front of the property and at the farthest end of the garden from the rear, towards Birchanger Woods.

All gas equipment is inspected yearly and services by qualified gas safe engineers. All electrical and gas equipment is visually inspected and tested when used. The designated key holder lives a 2 minute drive away and can be contacted at all times in case of emergency.

Floor plan



16. Vaccination/Titre testing, flea and worming treatment

Vaccinations

All clients must bring with them and show up to date vaccination records or titre test results. All boarding dogs must have had their primary vaccinations two weeks prior to boarding. All vaccinations must have been given by a qualified vet and be licensed in the UK.

An up-to-date veterinary vaccination record must be seen to ensure that dogs have current vaccinations against canine parvovirus, canine distemper, canine adenovirus/infectious canine hepatitis, leptospirosis and other relevant diseases.

Parvovirus – a highly contagious, potentially deadly disease that causes severe vomiting and diarrhoea. After an initial primary course, parvo vaccination is usually necessary every three years.

Distemper – a very serious, often fatal disease that affects several different organs in the body including the guts, heart, immune system, lungs, brain and nerves. After an initial primary course, distemper vaccination is usually necessary every three years.

Infectious Hepatitis – a virus that attacks the liver, kidneys, eyes and blood vessels. Infectious hepatitis spreads in bodily fluids and can survive in the environment for up to a year. After an initial primary course, infectious hepatitis vaccination is usually necessary every three years.

Leptospirosis – a bacterial disease that causes serious illness by damaging vital organs such as the liver and kidneys. In humans, leptospirosis is known as ‘Weil’s disease’. After an initial primary course, leptospirosis vaccination is usually necessary every year.

If you fail to provide proof of vaccinations or if the vaccinations are found to be incomplete, we will refuse admission and you will be liable to pay the full booking balance if dog is not able to be boarded.

Annual vaccinations consist of; Lepto (Named either Novibac Lepto 2 or Canigen L2) is the annual booster and has no wait period to come in. It lasts 1 year. If it’s the first time or it has expired, then your dog will get 2 jags (2-4 weeks- a restart).

DHP - Every three years, a dog should get the DHP vaccine (named either Novibac DHPi, Novibac DHP or Novibac Pi). These cover Distemper, Parvovirus, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis and Parainfluenza. If the 3 years has expired, then this also must be done twice within 2-4 weeks (a restart). This also forms part of the ‘fully vaccinated’ status. Like KC, should be done 7 days in advance.

Titre Testing

Certification from a veterinarian of a recent protective titre test may be accepted instead of a booster vaccination as required by the establishment. The certificate must state that it is valid for the current period of boarding.

Titre testing is a means to assess the antibody levels of a particular individual's blood. Unfortunately, this doesn't accurately indicate their overall immunity or level of protection against disease. The blood tests would only tell the antibody levels at the time of sampling, not in 1, 2 or 6 months time. A dog would need titre testing for Parvo Virus, Adeno Virus, Distemper and Leptospirosis.

Flea and Worming Treatments

All boarding dogs must have been treated with appropriate flea, worming and tick prevention medication prior to boarding. If any dog appears infected, they will be treated using medication from their vets and at the owner's expense. All clients will be aware of the policy prior to boarding. If an infestation is discovered all bedding, throws, soft furnishing will be washed and treated with a treatment recommended by our vet. Any areas the dog has been treated appropriately.

17. Medication policy.

Customers must provide all medication for their dogs in a plastic labelled box. Labelled with dogs name, frequency and dosage. The outside fridge can be used to store medicines if needed. All medicines must be returned to the client when boarding ceases.

18. Puppies under 1 year old procedure.

Toilet trained puppies are welcomed, and all puppies must have completed their primary vaccinations. Puppies are treated like one of the family and experience as much of everyday life as possible. Puppies spend lots of one-on-one time with the licensee and are given the opportunity to socialise with people and other friendly assessed dogs. Regular toilet breaks are given to encourage toilet training. All puppies are fed separately in a safe area and supervised throughout their stay.

Note is taken of the recommended exercise regimes and puppies are encouraged to walk off lead in safe areas with the owner's consent. The use of a training line is permitted to ensure a safe walk. Owners are encouraged to provide harnesses for puppies on training lines, but a stock of harnesses are kept for such occasions. Increased feeds are adhered to and toileting habits are closely monitored. Puppies are examined and handled regularly to acclimatise them to regular contact in case of a vet visit.

The right kind of socialisation is encouraged and any play between dogs is closely monitored and an intervention if play becomes too raucous. Basic force free training techniques are used to help puppies continue to develop during their stay.

19. Neutering policy.

All clients are advised that we prefer dogs to be neutered prior to boarding. If boarders are unable to be neutered, they will be boarded on their own or with another dog from the same household. If a bitch comes into season during her stay advice from our vet will be taken. No intact males will be permitted on the premises if an unneutered bitch is on the premises.

20. Emergency procedures.

If any boarding dog is injured or becomes unwell immediate treatment will be sought with either our vet or if local the clients vet. Consent will be obtained from the client to make decisions based on the vets advice. Clients will be contacted and their emergency contact wherever possible before any treatment is given. Consent to make decisions based on the vets advice will be given.

The business phone and personal phone will have all relevant numbers as will the spreadsheet.

If a dog is injured on a walk the dog will be taken to the nearest vet and emergency treatment will be given. Clients will give consent for emergency treatment to be carried out. The client or emergency contact will be contacted at the earliest opportunity. A first aid kit is kept in the van and an emergency first aid course has been attended.

If the boarding licence is revoked while boarding dogs are staying the client or emergency contact will be asked to remove the dogs immediately. All clients will be informed of this prior to boarding.

In case of any emergency the named contact will take over the care of the animals and have access to the central spreadsheet and business phone. The spreadsheet will have all details needed and all clients will be contacted.