

**For the attention of Aimee Llewellyn - KC Health Information Centre.**

A recent KC letter has been brought to my attention, regarding proposed issues of concern in the Bearded Collie. The content of the letter is of grave concern to me.

I have owned and loved this breed for nearly 40 years and in that time have made it my aim to preserve the health and character of this lovely breed, guided by the breed standard and the undertaking appropriate health checks. I have always tried to breed for quality not quantity, enjoyed showing and judged at all levels, including Crufts and Internationally.

I fail to understand the health issue regarding length of legs and back.

The breed standard is to my mind, all encompassing and quite clearly identifies the ideal height to length ratios alongside the ideal height at withers for both dogs and bitches. If these ratios were to alter, the overall shape of the Bearded Collie would change, producing an atypical "cobby" frame unable to cover the ground with the required easy flowing gait and not able to work all day as was originally asked of it. Would this not be a "Health Issue"?

A judge that understands the breed and its required standard, should be able to assess proportions (despite the coat), the dogs ability to carry out the work for which it was originally bred and deal with deviations in the appropriate way.

As for excessive length of coat, I believe our breed standard yet again covers this admirably. I do not believe we should be imposing regulations that will further encourage trimming and sculpturing as is seen abroad and unfortunately is already beginning to creep into the UK circuit. Perhaps the improvements in present day nutrition has some bearing on the coats?

I would be very interested to know from where these concerns may have originated and would like to believe that the Kennel Club are anxious to provide the research / evidence to share in an open discussion with the breed members.

Maureen Betts  
Pipadene Bearded Collies