



## **Tail Docking**

We hope that this guide will provide useful information for you with respects to tail docking and dew claw removal in England. In 2007, The Animal Welfare Act banned tail docking other than for medical reasons or for some working breeds, providing there is evidence that the puppies may be used for work in the following areas:

- Law enforcement
- Activities of the armed forces
- Emergency rescue
- Lawful pest control
- The lawful shooting of animals

There is a requirement for documentation to prove that the pups may be used for work. The following evidence is acceptable in order of preference:

- Armed forces identification
- Emergency rescue identification
- Police identification
- Prison service identification
- HMRC identification
- Evidence that the owner of the dog, or an agent or employee of the owner most likely to be using the dog, will be using the dog for work in connection with lawful pest control.
- A current shotgun or firearm certificate issued to the owner of the dog, or to the agent or employee of the owner most likely to be using the dog for work in connection with the lawful shooting of animals;
- A letter from a gamekeeper, a land-occupier (or his agent), a person with shooting rights, a shoot organiser, a club official, a person representing the National Working Terrier Federation, or a person engaged in lawful pest control, stating that the breeder of the dog whose tail is to be docked is known to him and that dogs bred by that breeder have been used on his land, or on his shoot, or for pest control.

If you have one of the above documents, we can proceed with the docking procedure. By law, the docking must take place before the pups are 5 days old; as a practice we prefer to carry out docking between 2 and 4 days old. It is a good idea to phone us on the day of whelping to book your appointment. We can offer a visit to your house to perform the docking procedure, however we do prefer to do it here in the practice where possible. We will ask you to confirm the length of the dock you require, please note that we generally only remove the end third of the tail, however we would take up to half at your request (but no more than this).



To comply with the law, the pups will need to be microchipped by the time they are 12 weeks old. It is good practice to microchip them at the same time as the docking to verify the identity of the pup at the time. We do accept that you may choose to do this at a later date, but we will withhold the docking certificates until they have been chipped to ensure the protocol is followed.

### **Dew claw removal**

It is not acceptable within our code of conduct to remove the first digits of the forelimbs unless the particular appearance/anatomy of the claw invites possible damage. This is because this digit is still a functional digit and performs a variety of functions. In some circumstances we can remove the hind dew claws.

If you have further questions regarding tail docking or dew claw removal, please give us a ring and we will happily discuss it with you.