

Annex A – original request dated 14 August 2025

I am attaching what is a standard reply to MPs from Lord Hanson of Flint. I have seen extracts of this letter many times, signed off by various people. Recently it has had extra paragraph information added re the welfare of the dogs at MBR Acres during heatwaves. I want to highlight: “These documents require contingency plans for temperature extremes and mandate daily welfare check by competent personnel” and “Recent reports regarding MBR Acres have been carefully examined. The welfare and care of the dogs at this facility are monitored, and we remain vigilant in assuring welfare through our regulatory processes.”

Also extracts from MPs letters are:

1. As you know establishments licenced to breed protected animals under the legislation governing animal testing are required to comply with the published Code of Practice, which sets out standards for the appropriate care and accommodation of animals. This includes dogs. It may help to know that the Animals in Science Regulation Unit conducts both announced and unannounced audits to ensure establishments are complying with the terms of their licences, the Code of Practice and the law.

Liam Conlon MP

2. ASRU is responsible for ensuring that establishments operate within the law and meet their obligations under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. If any breach has occurred, it is essential that this be fully investigated. Given the nature of the concerns—particularly around the welfare of animals in potentially extreme temperatures – I would advise, if not already done so, to report the matter to the RSPCA. They have the authority to investigate potential breaches of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which applies to animals used in science when they are not undergoing procedures under licence. Their involvement could be crucial in ensuring independent oversight of the situation on the ground.

On behalf of Charlotte Cane MP

3. Please rest assured that we have looked into the concerns around the MBR Acres site, and James certainly does share your concerns about animal well-being and the need for more ethical testing.

On behalf of James McMurdock MP

4. I welcome that the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA) provides protections for animals bred in the UK for use in scientific procedures. I am aware that all establishments licensed to breed protected animals under ASPA are required to comply with the published Code of Practice, which sets out standards for the appropriate care and accommodation of animals, including dogs.

Nusrat Ghani MP

5. Thank you for contacting me about your concerns regarding the welfare of beagles at MBR Acres during the recent hot weather. I fully understand the strength of feeling on this issue and appreciate you taking the time to highlight your concerns with me. While I am not in a position to comment directly on the specific allegations made, I have noted the concerns you have raised about the conditions and welfare of the animals at the site. I will ensure that your communication is passed on to the relevant ministerial colleagues at the Home Office for their information and consideration.

Daniel Zeichner MP

Code of Practice for the Housing and Care of Animals Bred, Supplied or Used for Scientific Purposes

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7ee67ce5274a2e8ab48e98/CoPanimalsWeb.pdf>

Section 3, Chapter 5: Dogs Page 98:

1.2 Temperature

Dogs may be maintained within a wide temperature range provided that their welfare is not compromised. It is advisable to prepare suitable contingency plans to deal with extremes of temperature, seen occasionally in hot summers or cold winters, to ensure that a comfortable environment is maintained for the animals. A temperature range of approximately 15°C to 24°C (as determined by the investigator and justified as necessary) is appropriate when precise control is required for dogs under procedure. It is advisable to ensure that outdoor pens provide shelter against adverse weather conditions. As puppies have limited thermoregulatory control in the first ten days or so of life, it is advisable to provide additional local heating within the whelping enclosure. New-born puppies require a local environmental temperature of 26–28 degrees C for at least the first five to ten days of life.

Section 3, Chapter 1: Advice applicable to all animals

2.2 Ventilation (these are extracts)

The purpose of the ventilation system is to provide sufficient fresh air of an appropriate quality and to keep down the levels and spread of odours, noxious gases, dust and infectious agents of any kind. It provides for the removal of excess heat and humidity. For cats, dogs and primates, 10 to 12 air changes per hour may be adequate. Re-circulation of untreated air should be avoided. It is advisable that the ventilation system is designed so as to avoid harmful draughts and noise disturbance while delivering air as evenly as possible throughout the holding area.

Here are my questions specific to the dogs housed at MBR Acres in extreme weather conditions be it hot or cold.

1. Per Lord Hanson of Flint - daily welfare check by competent personnel, Please confirm is this just a once in a day check? Is it scheduled to be at a particular time when heat is at a maximum? What exactly comprises a welfare check? Is this just a walk past or each dog thoroughly examined?
2. What happens when the staff leave, and only security guards are site. How is the dogs welfare monitored? For instance, is there CCTV in the sheds with at least one person monitoring it outside of working hours?
3. Is a temperature log kept for each shed? If so, are multiple readings taken throughout the day and in different areas of the sheds?
4. As regulators when there is extreme weather does MBR Acres send across copies of their temperature logs? Have these logs ever shown interior heat to exceed 24 degrees C or temperatures below 15 degrees C?
5. As dogs are specially protected species and each must have its own record, for those that have died in MBR Acres has this ever been noted as due to extreme temperatures?
6. If temperatures notified to ASRU have been outside the range of the COP what action has been taken?
7. Can you confirm that MBR Acres only has air circulation units as opposed to air conditioning i.e. cooling capacity.
8. Are readings taken of air quality, is the system compliant with minimum ventilation rates (in litres per second)? Air circulation unit compliance, is governed by Building Regulations Part F. The regulations specify minimum ventilation rates. Employers are legally required to ensure adequate ventilation in the workplace, including the proper functioning of air circulation units. This involves providing sufficient fresh air and removing stale, humid, or contaminated air. Compliance involves maintaining ventilation systems, regularly checking air quality, and ensuring adequate fresh air

supply, which is generally recommended to be between 5-8 litres per second per occupant.

9. COP - Section 3, Chapter 1: Advice applicable to all animals, 2.2 Ventilation – how many air changes are there per hour?
10. Why do staff leave early on hot days? If the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 are not being met then neither is that ok for welfare of the dogs. Note that employers must provide a reasonable indoor temperature and ensure sufficient ventilation. Under regulation 6 employers must 'ensure that every enclosed workplace is ventilated by a sufficient quantity of fresh or purified air. Does ASRU examine Health and Safety assessments? There's no law for maximum working temperature, or when it's too hot to work, because every workplace is different. However, all workers are entitled to an environment where risks to their health and safety are properly controlled. Heat is classed as a hazard and comes with legal obligations like any other hazard. Employers must keep the temperature at a comfortable level and provide clean/fresh air.
11. What automated heating system does MBR Acres had. Is this compliant with ensuring 24/7 temperatures of 15 degrees C or above? Have ASRU noted any instances of minimum temperature not being met? Note this must be at least 13 degrees C for staff doing physical work or 16 degrees C if no physical effort - Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) L24.
12. If this Establishment does have air conditioning in any of the sheds or workplaces is the cooling capacity above 12W? If so, are there regular energy efficiency inspections under the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations 2012.
13. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 says employers must ensure that working conditions are safe, including air quality and temperature. Whilst this law is for staff clearly what is not suitable for humans is also not for dogs. Do ASRU examine Health and Safety Executive reports?