

## **GCCF Guidance for Breeder Scheme members and Scheme Assessors**

This guide is designed to expand upon the rules of the GCCF Assured Breeder Scheme (the GCCF BREEDERS SCHEME Standard) by outlining recommendations for Breeders (SCHEME BREEDER). It is for use by GCCF Breeder Assessors when assessing facilities and compliance with the scheme rules, but is also designed to assist members, by suggesting ways in which outcomes may be achieved. The scheme is not prescriptive and it is recognised that a pragmatic approach is needed with breeders using the many varied types of accommodation and facilities available.

### **1) Legal requirements and contracts**

Members of the scheme are expected to comply with all legal requirements. Membership of the Scheme must be made clear to the buyer and clear details of the breeder must be recorded on the contract of sale. Where a SCHEME BREEDER is breeding in partnership with another SCHEME BREEDER, a separate membership of the GCCF BREEDERS SCHEME should be maintained in the joint names and the circumstances of the arrangement should be made clear to the buyer, including who bred the kittens, where they were reared and who owns and has responsibility for them along with the right to sell them.

**1.1) Local requirements.** Some local authorities have bye-laws that apply certain conditions relating to Cat breeding. This is more likely to apply in urban areas or where large numbers of Cats are involved, but nevertheless it is the member's responsibility to be aware of any local laws and understand which apply to them. Members should have an understanding and acceptance of local legislation.

Care should be taken where deposits are taken as a deposit may be treated as part payment of a binding contract that has come into existence. Where a deposit is taken, the terms of that deposit should be clearly stated in writing and should set out the rights of both parties. A failure to do so could result in a legal dispute for breach of contract and a claim for damages even if the deposit is returned. Legal advice should always be obtained if there is any doubt.

### **2) Information and advice for buyers**

Documents should be provided to the buyer which should be of sufficient content to give a reasonable basis of Kitten rearing. As a guide it would not be unreasonable to expect the member to provide 500 200 words on each topic. The member may wish to provide supplementary documentation, such as a book, leaflets, manufacturer's information or DVD. Where used, this information should be clearly referenced in the member's own documentation so that there is no room for doubt as to whether the information has been provided.

**2.1) Socialisation and Habituation information.** This information must be in a written format and should be presented in a manner that is easy for the buyer to understand, and in accordance with best practice. This should include information for owners on how to gradually introduce their new Kitten to the range of experiences they are likely to encounter as adults. This should include specific advice about the introduction of potentially fearful noises, such as fireworks and hoovers, meeting new people of different ages, being handled, travelling in a car, and meeting other cats. Information should emphasise the importance of gradual exposure of kittens to new experiences.

**2.2) Features and Characteristics information.** Members are expected to understand the breed specific points of the breeds that they are breeding and are required to pass this knowledge on to the buyer. The member should provide sufficient information to assist the buyer in gaining an insight and understanding of the breed so that they are given a reasonable indication of the expectations that pertain. This should include areas such as health, life expectancy, temperament, size etc. The documentation should not be limited to the cat as a kitten but should include expectations throughout the cat's lifetime. As previously outlined, if the member provides supplementary documentation, such as a book, leaflets, manufacturers' information or DVD, this information should be clearly referenced in the member's own documentation so that there is no room for doubt as to whether the information has been provide.

**2.3) Grooming information.** Grooming information should be provided to ensure that the purchaser is aware of the likely grooming regime that needs to be practised to ensure that the cats remain healthy and in good condition. It should include an indication of the likely time that is required for example on coat maintenance or bathing, and should also include areas such as teeth, nails and eyes etc. It should also include information regarding parasite detection and control. In the case of long haired breeds this information is likely to be more in depth than shorthair breeds. In breeds that are likely to require specialist or professional grooming, this should be pointed out, together with any cost implications.

**2.4) Feeding information.** Members must provide a guide to the buyer Scheme for feeding requirements for the Kitten. This should include information regarding the diet that the Kitten has been fed to date and recommendations and advice for the future. Ideally the member will also provide a supply of food, identical to that which the Kitten has been fed, sufficient for 5 days. The feeding instructions should also include recommended feeding times and quantities of food together with recommendations on the type of food and the quantities required giving an indication of when increases or reductions may be required throughout the Cat's life stages. Whilst it is understood that the requirements may vary from Cat to Cat, a guide to the breed's average or expected requirement should be provided. If reference is made to manufacturers' feeding instructions then this should be made clear in the member's own documentation.

**2.5) Worming programme.** The breeder should follow advice from their own veterinary surgeon regarding worming and should advise the new owner to seek further advice from their veterinary surgeon regarding future treatments. Information should be passed to the owner on the worming regime that the Kitten has received to date and will ideally include exact dates that treatments were administered and details of the product used.

**2.6) Immunisation regime.** Information should be passed to the owner regarding immunisation that the Kitten has received to date including a vaccination record card. In addition, should any Kitten have received any veterinary treatment prior to sale then this should be disclosed to the Kitten buyer in writing together with details of any future treatment or care prescribed by a Veterinary Surgeon.

**2.7) Registration Certificate.** A certificate of registration and properly completed pedigree must be passed to the new owner at the time of sale. Copies of the certificate for any mandatory health tests must be given to the new owner.

**2.8) Insurance.** A valid insurance policy should be commenced to cover the Kitten at least for the first four weeks from the date of sale to assist in covering the cost of unexpected veterinary treatment. The breeder is not expected to give advice on the types of policy available.

**2.9) Microchip.** All kittens must be microchipped before going to their new homes. Instructions for transferring the details to the new owner must be provided or the transfer process initiated on-line if applicable.

### **3) Documentation**

**3.1) Breeding records.** The breeder should maintain an accurate record of the cats that they have kept and sold. These records should be maintained for a period of 10 years. Records should include: copies of registration certificates, microchip numbers, parentage (pedigrees), dates of litters and details of kittens produced, identification details, date of transfer to new owner and date and cause of death. For cats currently in ownership, further records of veterinary treatment, immunisation and any other relevant data and material should be kept. Ideally each member should have an available system that contains an easily referenced record, such as a basic filing or record system.

A record of kitting should be kept. This should record the details of times of birth and weight of kittens. Any exceptional events should also be recorded. Exceptional events may include but are not limited to, difficult or problematic births, retained placentas, inertia or malformed kittens.

**3.2) Veterinary practice.** Details of the member's regular veterinary surgeon should be available during an assessment visit. It is not usual practice for contact to be made, but the GCCF does reserve the right to contact the vet where it is considered appropriate. The member should have an arrangement in place with a vet, so that health issues, particularly in the case of emergency, may be dealt with promptly.

**3.3) Record of Cats.** A member should be aware of all the Cats that they have on the premises and/or that they have responsibility for. A formal record should be available, documenting details of each animal's registration number, registered name, sex, date of birth, parentage and colour. Ownership records must also be kept including date of birth, transfer, and purchaser details. Mating details must also be recorded including dates of matings, details of kittens produced, and dates of death and reason for death of kittens (if known). Health records must also be kept of health screening test results. Such information should be held in an easily referenced source such as a register if applicable. Further records should also be kept including information of when treatments, immunisation, or worming is due etc. The number of Cats kept and owned by the member should be recorded. This should include any animals living off the premises and should include kittens and adolescents. It should be established if there are any other Cats that are kept away from the premises either temporarily or permanently.

**3.4) Statement of experience.** This provides the member with the opportunity (in a maximum of 50 words, to provide an insight to the buyer of their breeding knowledge and aspirations. This information is made publicly available and should not include negative or critical statements, or anything which is likely to attract criticism of the Scheme Breeder, the GCCF or of the GCCF Breeder Scheme. It should also be accurate at the time of writing and should, wherever possible, not be date sensitive and should be kept up to date. The statement of experience provided by the member will be reviewed during an assessment visit where it will be checked and confirmed for accuracy and current relevance.

#### **4) Facilities**

The facilities available and the routines in place will be wide ranging and may vary according to the environment, situation and numbers of Cats kept. However all facilities should fulfil the scheme requirements.

**4.1) Overall situation and available space.** This will often be dependent on the number and type of Cats kept, the location of surrounding properties and the proximity of other local amenities. Many breeders keep their cats in domestic premises where the cats live within the family environment which is perfectly acceptable providing all other requirements are met. Cats kept in domestic premises should have free access to more than one room during the course of the day and there should be a specific bed and facilities available.

**4.2) Structure.** Cats should be kept and housed in accommodation that is appropriate to ensure the welfare of the occupants. This may be within domestic premises such as within a family home, or in separate, purpose built animal housing or other appropriately adapted buildings (cattery). Where separate housing is provided, it should be constructed in such a way as to provide a safe and secure environment for the Cats. There should be no projections or rough edges liable to cause injury. Where washing out or hosing is appropriate, all areas (to include all cattery floors, exercise areas, passageways and kitchen areas) should not be subject to pooling and be able to dry easily. The cattery doors should be strong enough to resist impact and scratching and should be capable of being effectively secured. Areas that are subject to chewing, urine spraying or other damage should be repaired or replaced regularly. Where metal edging is used, this should not present a risk of injury to the Cat. Carpeting or other soft materials where soiling routinely occurs should not be used unless they can be adequately cleaned and dried.

**4.3) Lighting.** Lighting should be provided to exercise and sleeping areas so that all parts are clearly visible. Where practicable this should be natural light. Adequate supplementary lighting should be provided throughout the establishment. Lighting must be switched off at night time to allow proper sleep patterns.

**4.4) Temperature control.** Cattery units must be constructed so as to provide protection from adverse weather conditions and extremes of temperature. Devices used for heating and cooling must be safe and free from risk of burning or electrocution and manufacturer's instructions should be followed. Open flame appliances should not be used. Heat and cooling sources should be safe and comply with all regulatory requirements for both the animals and people on site. Where temperature is liable to variation, a thermometer should be used. Permanently fitted thermometers should be placed where it closely simulates the conditions experienced by the occupants. Heating should be provided to ensure the temperature does not fall below the minimum. It is recognised that high external ambient temperature may make it difficult to achieve the ideal temperature at all times. High temperatures should be alleviated by providing additional air movement. Temperature of the sleeping area should be relevant to the breed/type of cat (for most this is likely to be between 15-25 degrees).

**4.5) Ventilation.** Adequate ventilation must be provided to all interior areas without the creation of excessive draughts. It must also be possible to regulate changes in temperature. Ventilation in the indoor accommodation of all Cats should provide sufficient fresh air of an appropriate quality; keep down the levels and spread of odours, noxious gases, dust and infectious agents of any kind; and provide for the removal of excess heat and humidity. The ventilation system should be so designed as to avoid harmful draughts and noise.

**4.6) Size of quarters.** The accommodation areas should be large enough to allow both separate sleeping and activity, and cats should be provided with separate sleeping and exercise areas. Sleeping and accommodation areas should be sufficient and increased in relation to size and number of cats, such that both the length and width are sufficient for all the cats to lie outstretched at all angles with neither their tail or nose touching the walls or another individual. The height of the cattery unit (both house and run) must be full height to allow easy human access. The recommended minimum house floor area is 16 sq ft i.e 4' x4'. It is recommended that the queens quarters should be a minimum of 3' height and have a floor area of not less than 8 sq ft i.e 4' x 2'.

Important note:

These sizes are not prescriptive. The assessor's own expertise, opinion and common sense will be applied, and consideration given to the daily routine in place, the breed, temperament and activity levels of the animals kept.

Queens with litters should be provided with additional space.

**4.7) Bedding.** Beds and bedding should be provided and be suitable to allow cats to be comfortable. Beds and bedding should be capable of being easily cleaned, disinfected and sited away from draughts. All bedding material in use should be clean, non-irritant and dry. The use of raised beds and the facility to move out of other cats' sight should be provided where appropriate.

**4.8) Kitting and rearing facilities.** Each Queen should be provided with a designated area separate from other cats prior to kitting. The kitting area should be maintained at an adequate temperature (approximately 15°C to 25°C). The facilities should cater for the maximum number of kittens and take account of breed size and litter size. An area should be provided within the kitting area where a queen can rest away from her kittens. The box should contain bedding to ensure a soft surface for the queen. The box must be constructed of easily cleanable material and must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected between litters. The use of wood is acceptable for a kitting box as long as it has been treated to render it impervious with paint or varnish. The box should be large enough for the queen to lie full length and for her kittens to exercise before they are big enough to leave the enclosure. There are a wide variety of kitting boxes and pens available and all must meet this basic criteria with respect to space and ease of cleaning. The queen must be able to leave the confinement of the kitting box at all times. Bedding should be of soft material that may be covered by absorbent material. Veterinary Fleece is recommended as it effectively wicks moisture away and is machine washable. The use of newspaper alone is not acceptable. Sawdust and straw must not be used. Cleanliness of the kitting area and surrounding areas is paramount and all materials used in the construction and maintenance of these areas should be capable of being easily cleaned on a regular basis.

## 5) Health and safety

**5.1) Storage and preparation of food.** Suitable facilities, hygienically constructed and maintained, should be provided for the storage and preparation of food for the Cats. Refrigeration facilities should be provided where fresh and cooked meats are stored. Food contamination must be avoided. A sink with hot and cold running water should be available for washing kitchen utensils and eating and drinking vessels. Food must be adequately protected against pests and vermin.

**5.2) Cleaning routine / disease control.** All cattery areas, corridors, common areas, kitchens etc must be kept clean and free from accumulations of dirt and dust so that disease control is maintained and the Cats are comfortable. A routine cleansing schedule should be implemented and should include daily, weekly and monthly cleansing and disinfection which should incorporate an approved formulation effective against micro-organisms responsible for feline diseases. Hot and cold water should be available at all times. A list of approved disinfectants can be found at: <http://disinfectants.defra.gov.uk>. Disinfectants must be used at the correct dilution. Cats should not be returned to cattery areas before they are dry and/or rinsed (unless a disinfectant is used that is declared safe by the manufacturers in such conditions) and particular care should be given to restrict Cats from areas where cleaning chemicals and disinfectants have been recently used. Isolation facilities or other adequate facilities to prevent the spread of infectious disease between isolated animals and other animals should be available where appropriate. Effective bio security measures should be in place and understood by all staff in all circumstances, e.g. when Cats are introduced or reintroduced. Isolated animals need to be effectively barrier nursed and evidence of veterinary involvement will be expected. In large breeding establishments, a quarantine area should be provided in which any newly introduced Cats can be kept for 14 days. Where new Cats are introduced, the kennels must be cleaned and disinfected between occupants. This also applies to visiting queens.

**5.3) Excreta and soiled materials.** Facilities should be provided for the proper reception, storage and disposal of waste. Particular care should be taken to segregate waste arising from the treatment and handling of Cats with infectious diseases. If any doubt exists, the member should check with the Environment Agency or local authority for up to date guidance.

**5.4) Staff levels.** The maximum number of Cats that can be reasonably kept at any one time is limited to the number of staff available.

As a guideline it may be considered that a full time attendant may care for 20 Cats. However, this is dependent on the facilities available. Staff numbers should be of concern only when there is evidence that the standards maintained or the condition and behaviour of the animals is being compromised, or where an unrealistic routine is being maintained. Supervision must be by a suitable and competent person, who must be at least 18 years of age and must be available to deal with emergencies. All members, and any others involved in the care of the cats, should be aware of and be familiar with the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cats and relevant legislation. They should have a sound working knowledge of cat breeding and be aware of good practice.

For larger premises where staff are employed they should receive adequate training to ensure that they understand all aspects of Cat care as outlined in the standard document and within these guidelines and should be aware of all standard operating procedures. Where necessary a documented training plan should be available and standard operating procedures adopted. (*This may not apply to many small hobby breeders*)

**5.5) Emergency procedures and risk assessment.** There should be an appropriate emergency evacuation plan and fire warning procedure in place. Where appropriate and in premises where staff are employed, this should be posted where staff may become familiar with it. This procedure should include instructions on dealing with an emergency situation and how and where Cats are to be evacuated. There should be adequate means of raising an alarm in the event of a fire or other emergency. Precautions should be taken to prevent any accumulation of material which may present a risk of fire. Members should be able to demonstrate an understanding of any risks that are present and

that they have adequate plans to deal with situations that may arise. Immediate evacuation procedures should be tested as far as is reasonably possible, to ensure their effectiveness. Any fire extinguishers should be sited appropriately, in working order and within any given expiry date. All electrical installations and appliances should be maintained in a safe condition. There should be a residual current circuit breaker system on each cattery block.

**5.6) First aid kit.** When more than 20 cats are kept, a fully stocked first-aid kit suitable for use on cats and kittens should be available and accessible on the premises. It should be kept fully stocked at all times. A veterinary surgeon should be consulted concerning its contents and a competent member of staff should be in charge of its maintenance.

**5.7) Security.** All gates, gate fastenings and locks should be of sufficient construction to prevent escape or damage by the occupants. All fencing should be in well maintained condition.

## **6) Cats' welfare**

**6.1) Water and food.** All Cats and kittens should be supplied with adequate food suitable to their age, breed, activity level and stage of breeding cycle. Kittens should start the weaning process as soon as they are capable of ingesting food on their own. The food offered must be appropriate for the stage of development of the kittens. Weaning should normally commence at 3-5 weeks old. The weaning process should be gradual and aim to be completed by the time the Kitten is 6-8 weeks old. Care should also be taken to allow the queen gradually to reduce the production of milk. The initial diet may be liquid progressing to solid food over the ensuing period. Kittens should initially be offered food up to five times a day, or have a suitable dry kibble available at all times, and care must be taken to ensure that all kittens are eating. Monitoring weight gain and physical condition is important. Food intake should be monitored to ensure that each Cat receives an adequate quantity of food. Adult Cats should normally be offered at least two meals per day, and in accordance with veterinary advice and food manufacturers' recommendations. 'Ad lib' or continuous feeding may be used. Adequate routine cleaning procedures should be in place to ensure that the environment remains clean and free from infectious diseases. A standard operating procedure to administer this should be in place. For a small hobby breeder SOPs may not be appropriate.

Cats should have access to fresh clean water at all times. This should be checked at suitable intervals and changed daily. In catteries with more than one occupant there should be sufficient filled water bowls. Eating and drinking vessels should be suitable bowls that must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected to prevent cross-contamination. They should be maintained in a clean condition.

**6.2) Kitting and rearing.** Queens should be bred only within the rules of the GCCF. These normally provide for a queen to not be mated until she is a minimum of 9 mths old and have a maximum of three litters in two years with a minimum of 26 weeks between the birth of litters. Queens should be moved to kitting facilities in adequate time to allow them to familiarise themselves with their environment. Facilities must be adequate, secure, safe and capable of providing the range of temperatures suitable for both kittens and the queen. Special care should be taken that there is nowhere unsafe or out of reach that the queen could attempt to move her kittens to. Queens due to kitten in the next 24 hours should be observed regularly, either in person or via other means, e.g. closed circuit television, at least every 4 hours until kitting has commenced. Once kitting has commenced they should be checked at least every 30 minutes until all kittens have been born and checked. Bedding should be changed no later than 24 hours after kitting has finished and the kitting box maintained scrupulously clean. Multiple layers of bedding should be avoided to reduce the risk of suffocation or crush injury. A single fitted layer of veterinary fleece is recommended.

**6.3) Cats' physical appearance.** All Cats should be in apparent good physical condition with no sign of illness or ailment, and should be identifiable by its appearance, as defined by the GCCF breed standard. Whilst health should always remain a priority, it should be an aim to produce kittens that are both typical in appearance and temperament so that the Kitten buyer is able to make an informed choice and select a Cat that is able to match their expectations. If obvious signs of injury, illness or

disease are apparent, evidence of veterinary treatment should be recorded. Cats should be examined daily, at least by observation, and should be physically examined weekly for any evidence of parasites, signs of ill health or injury which, if found, should be acted upon.

**6.4) Health.** The member should have a veterinary health plan for their Cats as agreed with their veterinary surgeon. As a minimum, this should include an annual examination by the veterinary surgeon, immunisation, and regular treatment for external and internal parasites where required. All health and veterinary treatment must be recorded. Routine health screening should be performed to ensure that the health status of breeding stock is current and in accordance with GCCF registration policy for the breed concerned. Breeders are expected to make their own informed decisions regarding the various risks posed by current infectious disease and must be able to demonstrate that they have taken appropriate action to ensure that their animals are sufficiently protected. All cats must be fully vaccinated in accordance with GCCF rules. The frequency of such boosters should be carried out as directed by a veterinary surgeon underpinned by recommendations by the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA). Other methods such as antibody measurement (titre tests) are available which may also indicate a need or otherwise to offer additional protection, but again should be employed under the direction of a veterinary surgeon. For the avoidance of confusion the following definitions are provided;

**Immunisation:** to render immune; not liable to danger, protected from a disease or infection because of the presence of specific antibodies which act against the antigens concerned;

NOTE: Veterinary insurance may be dependent on the vaccination regime employed and this should be confirmed with the breeders' insurance company to ensure compliance and continued cover.

**Health screening** - the intention of testing for inherited disease is to improve genetic health and this can only be achieved by selecting the best breeding stock. A primary objective should be to produce Cats which will not be affected by any inherited disease. The registration and breeding policies for each breed sets out the tests which must be carried out before a queen or stud can be bred from. These can be found on the GCCF website. A second, longer term objective, by careful selection of breeding stock, should be to reduce the frequency of a disease mutation from a breed's gene pool, without having a detrimental effect on the coefficient of inbreeding.

Selection of breeding stock. It is recognised that breeders will consider many factors when selecting breeding stock. These will include the genetic and physical health status of the animals, their physical characteristics, their temperament and their relationship to each other. The health of kittens produced must be a priority. The inbreeding coefficient (COI), should be considered prior to mating. The COI can be viewed for your cats on your area on the GCCF website. Ideally and when considering all other relevant factors, breeders should aim to produce kittens with an inbreeding coefficient below 10.

**6.5) Behaviour.** Cats should be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns at all times. This should include social behaviour with other Cats and with people. They should have the opportunity to enjoy exercise and interaction with people. The breeder should be able to recognise behavioural signs of fear or anxiety in their Cats, and take action to remove Cats from situations which cause these responses. Breeding animals should have temperamental characteristics suitable for living in a domestic environment, as well as traits characteristic of their breed, as described in the GCCF breed standard.

**6.6) Exercise.** All Cats should have sufficient exercise for their individual needs to ensure their physical and mental wellbeing.

**6.7) Environmental enrichment.** The member should be able to demonstrate that the Cats receive adequate environmental enrichment. This should include such appropriate daily routine that provides them with the opportunity to express normal behaviour. All groups of Cats should be able to engage in activities including daily play and contact with humans (grooming, training or playing). A written programme showing enhancement and enrichment may be produced, which may include a record of alternated activities. Toys and activity feeders that are changed regularly are ideal

enrichment and should be considered where appropriate. There should be more toys or feeders than there are Cats in the cattery. Where Cats live alone, adequate provisions should be in place to ensure that they have adequate contact with people.

**6.8) Habituation.** As soon as practical, kittens should be habituated to events likely to be encountered upon homing to a domestic environment. This should include the sights and sounds in households, such as appliances, as well as differing substrates on which to walk. Introduction to novel sights and sounds should be gradual such that kittens do not show a fearful response such as being startled or withdrawal. In a domestic environment this may occur naturally whereas in a cattery sights and sounds should be introduced in a structured manner. TV and radio may also be useful. A standard operating procedure to do so should be in place.

**6.9) Homing and re-homing.** Placing kittens into suitable homes must be a priority for all members and suitable precautions should be taken to ensure that there is a reasonable expectation that the purchaser is able to properly care for any Kitten or Cat sold, for the whole of its life. Such precautions will include gaining information about the Kitten buyer, their living and working arrangements, their lifestyle and their expectations. Care should also be taken to ensure that the buyer has an understanding of their responsibilities as an owner and that they have sufficient knowledge and resources to undertake the care of a Cat and have an understanding of the temperament and characteristics of the breed or type of Cat through all its life stages. Breeders may consider producing a standard set of questions for potential buyers to answer prior to sale, and may also consider visiting the home of any potential purchaser prior to sale. If a member has a reasonable doubt that a purchaser is unable to offer a suitable home then the sale should not proceed and the potential purchaser be informed at an early stage. The same care should be taken where members re-home older or ex-breeding Cats. A reference from a veterinary surgeon who knows the purchaser may be a useful means of monitoring suitability. Re-homing should include a requirement to return the Kitten or Cat, if the new owner is unable to continue to care for it.

**6.10) Grooming.** All Cats should be groomed regularly. A grooming routine may include, but not be limited to, inspection and attention to coat, teeth, nails and inspection for parasites. Coats should be kept in a condition that is suitable for the hair length.

## **7) Compliance with Scheme rules**

All members of the GCCF BREEDERS SCHEME are expected to fully comply with the GCCF BREEDERS SCHEME Standard and also with all GCCF rules, regulations, codes of conduct and any advice or guidance. The GCCF Rules and Bylaws are available on the website or on request from the Office. Members are expected to ensure that they are aware of any changes to the scheme standard, its rules and regulations and these will be communicated in communications sent out. It is imperative that a buyer has trust and confidence in buying a Kitten under the GCCF Breeder Scheme. The GCCF reserves the right in its absolute discretion to exclude or remove from the Scheme temporarily or permanently any member whose presence or behaviour is undesirable, unlawful, harmful, or disrespectful to the GCCF Breeder Scheme or its members. Scheme Breeders are referred to the (non exhaustive) list of factors set out below which may be said to affect their standing and may result in suspension or exclusion from the Scheme;

Criminal convictions\*, Threatening behaviour, Misrepresenting or abusing authority, Non-compliance with GCCF Rules and Byelaws, Non-compliance with GCCF Codes of Practice/Ethics/Conduct, Non-compliance with the GCCF Breeder requirements and recommendations AND it may be necessary to extend any suspension or exclusion to a close relative or associate e.g. wife or business partner living in the same household in certain circumstances.

**7.1) Non-Compliance.** Any non-compliance will be dealt with as appropriate and will be dependent on the seriousness of that non-compliance. When considering the seriousness of the non-compliance the following is taken into account.

- a. The effect of the non-compliance being corrected
- b. The likelihood of the non-compliance having an adverse effect

c. How likely the non-compliance is to be detected if it was not corrected.

Non-compliance is assessed on a case by case basis but is expected to be exceptional. Any non-compliance that occurred on more than one occasions would not normally be considered to be exceptional unless the breeder was able to provide compelling reason, which is acceptable to the GCCF Breeder Scheme, as to why the non-compliance occurred.

**7.2) Minor non-compliance.** Minor non-compliance is defined as any point where the member does not meet the standard of the Assured Breeder Scheme. Minor non-compliance will result in a member being provided with an opportunity to comply (normally 60 days or until the next time that the member's procedures are reviewed).

**7.3) Major non-compliance.** Major non-compliance is defined as any point where the member does not meet the standard of the Assured Breeder Scheme, and which materially affects the welfare of the Cats in the breeder's care, could be reasonably expected to affect the health or welfare of puppies or Cats produced and offered for sale, and/or which brings the GCCF or the Breeder Scheme into disrepute. Major non-compliance will result in a member being immediately suspended until the GCCF is satisfied that the member has complied and will continue to comply.