

## **How do you monitor the scheme?**

### **Prior to acceptance**

Applicants' records with GCCF are checked and verified to ensure that the breeder is capable or likely to be able to fulfil all the basic scheme requirements. An appointment is made for an assessment visit to be carried out.

### **Acceptance of membership**

All applications are fully considered. Further information may be required so that we are satisfied the breeder is fully capable of meeting the requirements of the scheme.

An application may be subject to approval by the Breeder Scheme Review Panel.

We reserve the right to refuse an application.

Any breeder who is listed on the GCCF suspension list will not be eligible for Breeders Scheme membership.

### **Registering a litter**

Every time a Scheme breeder registers a litter, the sire and dam of that litter are checked for compliance with the requirements. This includes checking for compulsory permanent identification (microchip) and both sire and dam are checked for mandatory health test results that are relevant to their breed. All the usual GCCF Rules and byelaws must be complied with.

### **Selling the kittens**

Scheme breeders are required to register all kittens. A new owner questionnaire must be provided to the new owner. It helps us keep tabs on how well the breeder is complying with the scheme, particularly on matters that we are unable to monitor in any other way, such as whether the breeder provided advice on feeding, socialisation, parasite treatment etc.

This provides ample opportunity for the kitten buyer to provide information about the whole experience of buying their kitten. Should any issues arise from this feedback, this is taken up directly, and in confidence, with the breeder. Litters and numbers of kittens registered by breeders are monitored and compared with the feedback received.

Upon joining the scheme all breeders sign the following declaration:

*"I understand that by signing this declaration I confirm that I have read and agree to adopt the rules, regulations and practices of the GCCF Breeders scheme and as may be amended from time to time\*. If I breed cats in partnership with either a joint prefix holder or through joint registration, then both parties must be members of the scheme.*

*I accept that in the event of non-compliance, my name may be removed from the list of Breeders Scheme list and I will no longer be entitled to use the scheme literature*

*or display the Scheme logo. I consent to the release of data/information to any relevant authority.*

\*Amendments will be announced and published on the GCCF website and alerts will be provided.

### **Breeder assessor visits**

Upon joining The GCCF Breeder Scheme, every member agrees to allow an Assessor access to visit their premises at any time upon reasonable notice. Occasionally we may have a complaint about a scheme breeder and we ensure that these too are dealt with as a matter of urgency. We also arrange randomly selected visits to ensure that good practices as outlined in the scheme are followed. Every member of the scheme is visited prior to joining and at least once every three years thereafter.

In addition to breeder assessor visits, we ask all kitten buyers to complete the feedback form which will be sent to them at the transfer of registration. This allows the kitten buyer to inform us of the conditions of the premises in relation to the housing of cats and kittens.

### **How are the scheme breeders monitored?**

We take compliance with the scheme's requirements very seriously and have a robust system in place to ensure that members follow standards set by the scheme.

- All applicants' records are checked prior to acceptance on the scheme
- A health screening records check for a member's breed is required
- All members agree to be spot-checked by GCCF throughout their membership of the scheme, in order to ensure our standards are maintained
- We have a team of Assessors located across the UK. As the scheme grows in size, this team is expected to grow
- All new kitten buyers are sent feedback forms. We receive hundreds of feedback forms from new kitten buyers each month; most of the feedback is positively glowing. However, if any concerns are highlighted then we investigate fully and take the appropriate action. In some cases this might include removal from the scheme

### **What happens if Scheme breeders breach a requirement?**

Remember, there are no guarantees with buying a kitten. It is entirely possible that a problem can develop in a kitten that is entirely outside of the control of the breeder or even the owner. However, in the unfortunate event that someone has a problem with a kitten bought from a Scheme breeder, or they believe that a member is not upholding the standards of the scheme, then there is a robust complaints procedure in place.

In the first instance, the problem should be discussed with the breeder. Most responsible breeders want to be made aware of any issues at the earliest

opportunity and may wish to help or attempt to resolve matters or give advice at an early stage. If the breeder is unwilling to help or give advice, then customers can submit a complaint through the normal GCCF complaints procedure which can be found on the GCCF website.

At any time during the investigation of a complaint a breeder may be suspended from using or operating under the scheme pending the conclusion of such an investigation. During such suspension, kittens must not be sold under the scheme.