

# Skye Terrier Health Report 2023

The last few years have been turbulent for the dog world in general and in particular for vulnerable breeds. Demand for puppies soared during the COVID-19 pandemic and this saw a huge increase in the numbers of pedigree dogs being bred and registered during 2021. Skyes too had a good year in 2021 with considerably more pups registered than in previous years. This trend has continued somewhat in 2022 with 56 registrations up to quarter 3 - quarter 4 figures will be confirmed soon.

124 NEW SAMPLES  
STORED SINCE 2019

We've had 124 new samples added to the DNA databank since we last had updated figures from our partners at the Kennel Club Genetics Centre. We now have 785 samples in total. Of these, 84 have reported health conditions, which are listed below.

2022 was also a sad time for the Health Committee, as the Chair and founding member Maud Hawkes sadly passed away following a short battle with cancer. Maud had dedicated much of her life to her dogs, having success in Skyes, Cairns and Beagles. She was critical in establishing the Skye Terrier Health Committee and provided much appreciated support to the research teams at Cambridge University and the KC Genetics Centre. She will be missed.

## REGISTRATIONS - LAST 10 YEARS

2022 - 56 (up to quarter 3)

2021 - 75

2020 - 27

2019 - 59

2018 - 50

2017 - 40

2016 - 28

2015 - 43

2014 - 63

2013 - 17

Yearly average: 44

## Reported conditions

The following conditions have been reported in Skye Terriers:

Hepatitis/hepatic failure/acute onset ascites - 16

Renal dysplasia - 9

Skye Limp - 5

Premature elbow closure/elbow dysplasia - 5

Haemangiosarcoma - 5

Lingually displaced canines - 5

Lymphoma - 4

Kinked tail - 4

Mammary cancer - 3

Luxatin patella - 3

Epilepsy - 2

Pyometra - 2

1 each of the following conditions:

congestive heart failure, thyroid cancer, perineal hernia, malignant oral melanoma, mandibular osteosarcoma, ectopic ureter, pancreatic disease, heart murmur, heart disease (details unknown), congenital ventricle septum defect, craniomandibular osteopathy, squamous cell carcinoma, parathyroid adenoma, tumour on the sciatic nerve, brain tumour, torsion/bloat, mast cell tumour, juvenile arthritis, polycystic kidney disease, hepatoid adenocarcinoma, malignant exoskeletal bony tumour

## Puppy limp

We have again had cases of puppy limp reported throughout the year. The usual advice is to rest the pup and avoid any exercise that would create high impact on their limbs and joints. It may sound easier said than done but limiting boisterous play, jumping up and down on furniture, going up and down stairs, on very uneven ground or steep inclines is the usual course of action. Puppy limp does resolve itself but it can take some time.

## Elbow dysplasia and premature closure

The Finnish elbow project is continuing and Dr Anu Lappalainen continues to offer a Skye Terrier elbow grading service. There is a documents on our website that shows how to x-ray Skye elbows to get a grading and assessment of the joint.

The project so far has found that every dog surveyed that had elbow dysplasia did limp as a puppy. However, not every puppy that limped was found to have elbow dysplasia.

Premature closure is something that is still occasionally reported in the breed. Again, the relationship between puppy limp, elbow dysplasia and premature closure is not fully understood yet and it isn't clear what environmental factors impact on premature closure. It is worth bearing in mind however, that many vets are not experienced in short-legged breeds and while many will recommend surgery at the onset of a limp, it is better to try and give the pup time for the limp to settle - unless there are obvious signs of acute injury or obvious issues with the growth plates!

Dr Lappalainen has recently published an interesting article on front limb deformity, which includes an assessment of Skye Terriers - [Frontiers | Breed-typical front limb](#)

[angular deformity is associated with clinical findings in three chondrodysplastic dog breeds \(frontiersin.org\)](#)

## Hepatitis research

We have had confirmation from the team at Cambridge University that the Hepatitis research project is once again

underway. This is exciting and positive news - we will update you on progress as soon as we are able to do so. Thank you to everyone who has donated to the health fund so far, your generosity is helping to make this

**Don't forget, if you have a litter you will need to DNA swab the puppies before they leave for their new homes.** The Health Committee also has an information leaflet on puppy limp to give to new owners. Please make them aware of the condition and what to do should their pup start limping.

To request DNA swabs, new owner information sheets or kidney scan forms please email [sarahdownes1@gmail.com](mailto:sarahdownes1@gmail.com)

research possible!

If you'd like to donate you are able to do this online via our website - [Health – The Skye Terrier Club](#)

## Seasonal complaints

Seasonal changes can bring with them a host of new complaints that can impact on our Skyes. In Winter, for example, it's always a good idea to wash paws if walking anywhere there could be road grit/salt spread as this can damage paws and cause issues if ingested. Similarly, if walking in woodland be careful of fungus and their spores which can also cause issues if ingested. Often the dog doesn't have to actively eat the fungus, brushing past or standing on it then licking paws can still cause problems.

As we move towards Spring with temperatures warming up be mindful of stinging and biting insects. While most of the

time these will cause only minor irritation for a short period of time, there are rare complications that can occur as a result of a bite or sting. It can be hard sometimes to pinpoint if and where a long haired dog has been bitten/stung but if your dog is showing signs of itchiness or particular discomfort in one area (often a paw or ear, where the hair is thinner) it may be worth getting them checked over with a vet.

Sarah Downes - Secretary



# CONTACT YOUR HEALTH

If you have any questions or concerns about health matters, please do not hesitate to contact the Health Committee. You can do this by emailing the Secretary on [sarahdownes1@gmail.com](mailto:sarahdownes1@gmail.com) or phoning 01773 448162

**Please report any health conditions your dog develops as this helps us to monitor overall health of the breed and inform health testing or health initiatives**