1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Home boarding is defined as the carrying on of a business at a premises of any nature (including a private dwelling) of providing accommodation for other people’s dogs. It covers boarding overnight and as well as day crèche facilities. The business must be in the geographical area covered by Reading Borough Council.

1.2 Reading Borough Council may inspect the premises at any reasonable time to ensure the licence conditions are being followed.

1.3 The Licensee or applicant will be guilty of an offence if:
   a. A boarding establishment is operated without a licence
   b. The establishment is found not to be complying with the conditions specified in the licence by Reading Borough Council.

1.4 Where the licensee or applicant is guilty of an offence, they may be prosecuted. Where convicted the licensee/applicant may be subject to a fine at level 2 and/or imprisonment and the revocation of the licence.

1.5 Where a person is convicted of any offence under this Act or any other animal related legislation, the court may disqualify him from holding a boarding establishment licence.

1.6 Reading Borough Council can refuse to grant a licence. The applicant has the right to appeal this decision to the Magistrates’ Court.

2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

2.1 Unless otherwise stated, these conditions shall apply to all buildings and areas to which dogs have access and/or which are used in association with the business of boarding of dogs.

2.2 If premises are located in a residential area, the premises must be maintained and managed so as to be suitable for the boarding of dogs in such an area.

2.3 The licensee must conduct the business to the satisfaction of the Authority, in such a way as to prevent noise and/or smell nuisance to neighbouring premises.
2.4 The Licensee must ensure that the establishment is covered by adequate and suitable public liability insurance and, where necessary, adequate and suitable employers liability insurance.

2.5 A written training policy for all persons involved in the business must be provided. Systematic training of staff must be demonstrated to have been carried out. Persons involved in the day to day running and operation of the business shall have undertaken training in canine first aid.

3. LICENCE DISPLAY

3.1 A copy of the licence and its associated conditions must be made available to each client.

4. NUMBERS & TYPE OF ANIMALS

4.1 No dog registered under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 or dog hybrids registered under the Dangerous Wild Animal Act 1976 (e.g. Wolf Hybrids) must be accepted for home boarding.

4.2 Entire males and bitches in season or bitches due to be in season during the boarding, including resident dogs must not be boarded together.

4.3 Puppies that have not completed their course of inoculations must not be boarded.

4.4 When puppies have completed their inoculations they can only be boarded in the same premises as other dogs including resident dogs with the written permission of the owner of the puppy. Puppies must only be socialised with 1 other dog at a time including resident dogs. Puppies include dogs up to 6 months.

4.5 The licensee must state the maximum number of dogs (resident and boarded) that they wish to look after during the day/overnight on the application form. The application form must be accompanied by a plan (photos and floor plan) of how the dogs would be boarded if they had to be separated during their stay because of aggression or infectious disease. The Licensing Authority reserves the right to reduce the maximum number of dogs if the application does not meet these goals. If a maximum of 1 boarded dog and no resident dogs is required this plan is not necessary. The maximum number of dogs will be entered on the licence certificate. This licence covers a single time period of up to a year and will expire on 31st December each year.

4.6 Only dogs from the same household may be boarded at any one time unless the licence holder has secured the specific written consent of each household to confirm that they are content for their dogs to be boarded with others.
4.7 Dogs must be separated in secure areas when left unattended and must also be fed separately. Dogs should be separated according to family groups ie. those dogs that normally live together.

4.8 There should be a trial familiarisation period relevant to the type of boarding required.

4.9 A resident cat should have its own secure safe space and where relevant access to outside.

4.10 There must be a robust risk assessment relating to the risk associated with loss of control when walking dogs in a public place where they may encounter ‘other’ dogs off lead.

5. FACILITIES

5.1 Dogs must live in the home as family pets. There must be no external or internal construction of buildings, cages or runs.

5.2 There must be adequate space, light, heat and ventilation for the dogs.

5.3 As far as reasonably practicable all areas/rooms within the home to which boarded dogs have access, must have no physical or chemical hazards that may cause injury to the dogs.

5.4 There must be sufficient space available to be able to keep all dogs separately if required.

5.5 When moving dogs by car, a suitable vehicle with a dog guard, seat belt restraints or secure crates in the rear must be provided.

5.6 Dogs must not be kept in crates within the dwelling or outside of the dwelling, except with the written consent of the owner and then only for short time periods of less than 1 hour in 24 hours for the purpose of feeding or a short rest period.

5.7 Clients must be encouraged to provide each dog with its own bedding, bowls, grooming materials etc. These items must be cleaned regularly to prevent cross-infection. The Licensee however should also be able to provide extra bedding material if necessary.

6 CLEANLINESS

6.1 All bedding areas must be kept clean and dry.

6.2 All areas where the dogs have access to, including the kitchen etc. must be kept clean and free from accumulations of dirt and dust and must be kept in such a manner as to be conducive to maintenance of disease control and dog comfort.
6.3 All excreta and soiled material must be removed from all areas used by dogs at least daily and more often if necessary. Particular care should be taken to segregate clinical waste arising from the treatment and handling of dogs with infectious diseases. The final route for all such waste shall comply with current waste regulations.

6.4 Measures must be taken to minimise the risks from rodents, insects and other pests within the premises.

7. FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES

7.1 All dogs shall have an adequate supply of suitable food as directed by the client.

7.2 Fresh drinking water must be available at all times (unless advised otherwise by a veterinary surgeon) and the drinking vessel cleaned daily. The water must be changed at least twice a day.

7.3 Where necessary, eating and drinking vessels must be provided, and where so, they must be capable of being easily cleansed and disinfected to prevent cross-contamination. They must also be maintained in a clean condition. Feeding bowls must be cleaned or disposed of after each meal and each dog must be provided with its own bowl.

7.4 Food must be stored hygienically in appropriate containers and be inaccessible to dogs.

8. DISEASE CONTROL, ISOLATION AND VACCINATION

8.1 Adequate precautions must be taken to prevent and control the spread of infectious and contagious disease and parasites amongst the dogs, carers and visitors.

8.2 Proof must be provided that boarded and resident dogs have current vaccinations against Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis (Canine adenovirus), Leptospirosis (L. canicola and L. icterohaemorrhagicae), Kennel Cough, Canine Parvovirus and other relevant diseases. The course of vaccination must have been completed at least four weeks before the first date of boarding or in accordance with manufacturer instructions. A record that this proof has been supplied must be kept on-site throughout the period that the dog is boarded. No dog with a known infectious disease must be boarded.

8.3 Advice from a veterinary surgeon must be sought in case of signs of disease, injury or illness. Where any dog is sick or injured, any instructions for its treatment, which have been given by a veterinary surgeon, must be strictly followed.
8.4 Dogs showing signs of any disease or illness shall be isolated from any other dogs until veterinary advice is obtained. There must be sufficient facilities within the licensed premises to ensure effective separation of any sick animal.

8.5 Following an episode of infectious disease during any stay, the premises must undergo a reasonable quarantine period as specified by a Veterinary Surgeon before new boarders are admitted.

8.6 A well-stocked first-aid kit suitable for use on dogs must be available and accessible on site and in any vehicles used as part of the business.

8.7 The Licensee must be registered with a veterinary practice that can provide 24-hour help and advice. The clients own veterinary practice must be known and consulted if necessary.

8.8 Precautions must be taken to prevent the spread of fleas, ticks, intestinal parasites and other parasites in both boarded and resident dogs. Proof must be maintained of all routine and emergency treatment for parasites, ticks and fleas.

8.9 The premises shall be regularly treated for fleas and parasites with a veterinary recommended product.

9. SUPERVISION

9.1 A fit and proper person with relevant experience must always be available to exercise supervision and deal with emergencies whenever dogs are boarded at the premises. This person must not have any conviction or formal Cautions for any animal welfare related offence.

9.2 Dogs must be visited at regular intervals, as necessary for their health, safety and welfare, and must not be left unattended for longer than 3 hours at a time.

9.3 The Licensee will be required to make a robust assessment of the risks of home boarding to include the risk to or caused by children who are likely to be at the property. No home where there are children under 5 years of age will be licensed unless there is a robust risk assessment around how the separation of dogs and children will be maintained.

9.4 Only people over 16 years of age are allowed to walk the dogs in public places.

10. EXERCISE

10.1 Dogs must be exercised in accordance with their owner’s wishes. If dogs are taken off the premises, they must be kept on leads unless with the owner’s written permission.
10.2 The Licensee must clean up after any dog in their care has fouled.

10.3 There must be access to a suitable outside area. Where the dog is being boarded, the area / garden used must only be for use by the homeowner (not shared with other residents) and must be kept clean.

10.4 The outside area of the premises where the dog is being boarded or any place where the licensee has control over the land and is used as part of the business must be totally secure and safe. Fencing must be adequate to offer security to prevent escape and be safe, with no dangerous sharp objects or protrusions. Gates must be able to be locked.

10.5 Precautions must be in place to ensure that dogs do not escape through any exit door when opened.

10.6 Dogs must wear a collar and identity tag during their time in boarding. The tag must display the name and emergency telephone number of the boarder.

10.7 The Licensing Authority & Dog Warden Service must be informed within 1 working day if a dog is lost.

11 FIRE / EMERGENCY PRECAUTIONS

11.1 Appropriate steps must be taken for the protection of the dogs in case of fire or other emergencies.

11.2 The occupier of the property must be aware of the location of the dogs in the property at all times.

11.3 Careful consideration needs to be given to the sleeping area for dogs to ensure that they can be easily evacuated in the event of a fire, without putting the occupiers of the property at risk.

11.4 Fire detection equipment must be provided in accordance with general advice given by the Fire Safety Officer. The home must have at least 2 working smoke detectors located at the top & bottom of the staircase, or other appropriate location.

11.5 All doors to rooms must be kept shut at night.

11.6 All electrical installations and appliances must be maintained in a safe condition. No dog must be left in a room with loose or trailing cables / wires.

11.7 All heating appliances must be free of risk of fire as is reasonably practicable. There must be no use of freestanding gas or oil appliances.
11.8 A relative, friend or neighbour within 5 minutes travelling time must have a spare set of keys and access to the premises in case of an emergency. These details must be made available to the Licensing Authority.

11.9 In the event of serious incident such as a house fire, long term loss of utilities, serious illness of Licensee or quarantine of the home, arrangements must be made to ensure the dogs are safe, secure have adequate welfare until they can be returned to their owners or a responsible adult that has been nominated by the owners.

12. **CLIENT AGREEMENT AND REGISTER**

12.1 The Client must sign an agreement for their dog(s) to be home boarded. The agreement should contain as a minimum:
   a. Name of dog and microchip number
   b. Description, breed, age, gender of the dog and whether intact or neutered
   c. Name, address and telephone number of owner or keeper
   d. Name, address and telephone number of emergency contact person whilst boarded
   e. Name, address and telephone number of dog’s veterinary surgeon
   f. Permission to seek veterinary treatment
   g. Proof of current vaccinations, medical history and requirements
   h. Health, welfare, nutrition and exercise requirements
   i. Permission to walk dog off lead where applicable
   j. Permission to be boarded with other dogs including resident dogs if applicable
   k. Permission to be boarded with a resident cat if applicable.

12.2 A register must be kept of all dogs boarded. The information kept must include the following:
   a. Name of Dog
   b. Date of arrival
   c. Date of departure.

12.3 For repeat boarders the client agreement must be updated annually. Sooner, where there has been a change in contact details, dog behaviour or medical care required.

12.4 Such agreements & the register should be available for inspection at all times by an officer of the Licensing Authority or a veterinary surgeon.

12.5 The agreement & register must be kept readily available for a minimum of 2 years and kept in such a manner as to allow an authorised officer easy access to such information.

12.6 If medication is to be administered, this must be recorded on a separate medical sheet.
12.7 Where records are computerised, a back-up copy must be kept. The register must also be available to key members of staff of the establishment at all times.