

Puppy Price Survey Results

The Chow Chow Breed Council were asked by the Kennel Club to suggest the average price that puppy purchasers might expect to pay for a pet quality chow chow puppy. The information would be used to provide more information on which to base decisions when would be puppy buyers are viewing the wide variety of web sites that offer puppies for sale.

This survey was designed to provide more detailed information than price alone, to demonstrate what puppy purchasers might expect to receive when they collect their puppy in terms of paperwork, vaccinations, microchipping and health testing of sire and dam. We also investigated how many of the respondents were members of the Assured Breeder Scheme and looked at price variation by region and by the package offered by the breeder.

The primary reason for the survey was to ascertain the average price for a pet puppy. 13 of the 68 respondents chose not to give any more information than their regional details. The overall average price for a pet puppy was **£1,513.64** with prices ranging from less than 1,000 to less than £2,500 with breeders offering a wide variation in what they supplied with the puppy and health testing of parents.

General Results

The majority of responses 30.88% were from the North East area and the Midlands 27.94% responses from Ireland were included in the Scotland responses (14.71%).

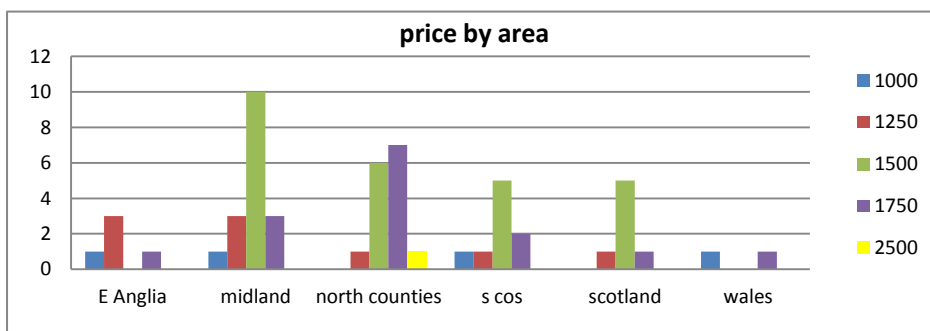


Fig 1 shows the variation in price by area, (e.g., 10 respondents in the Midlands would charge £1,500 for a pet Chow puppy shown in GREEN)

As indicated in fig 1 the Midlands (17) and Northern Counties (15) provided the most responses, whilst Wales (2) and East Anglia (5) were not well represented. With more responses the results from these areas may have been different. It was noted that 4 respondents expected to sell puppies for less than £1000; 2 only two of the puppies sold for less than £1,000 would be registered, and only 1 would be microchipped prior to sale (fig 2). At the time of writing it is not a requirement for puppies to be microchipped before the point of sale, however only 21 of the 68 respondents said they would microchip their puppies prior to them going to their new homes.

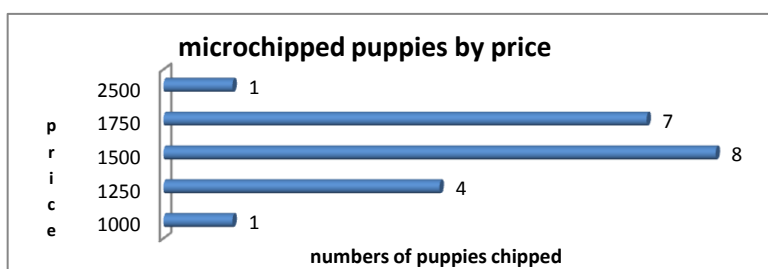


Fig 2 shows the breakdown of puppies by price that would be microchipped prior to sale

37 respondents indicated that they would provide free insurance with their puppies at point of sale (fig3)

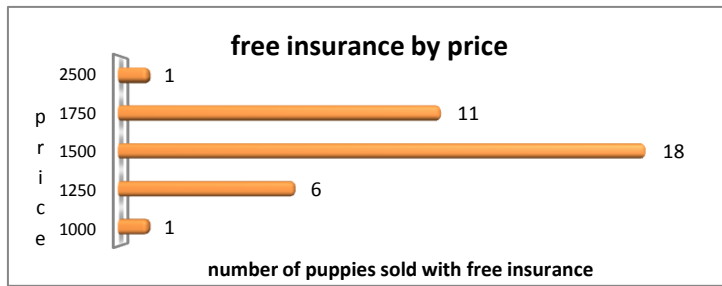


Fig 3 shows how many breeders offer free insurance to cover the puppy for the first few weeks in their new home

A total of 23 respondents would either ensure that the puppies had received either their first vaccination or were fully vaccinated prior to going to their new home (fig 4)

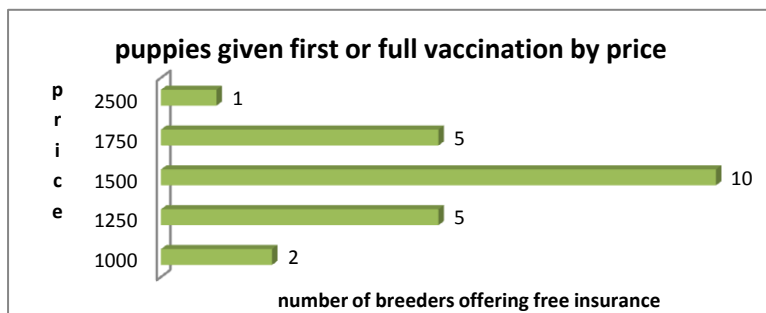


Fig 4 indicates the number of breeders offering first or vaccination of puppies before they leave for their new homes

13 breeders chose not to say if they would supply either a diet sheet or food parcel, moreover 2 of respondents selling puppies for less than £1000 indicated they would not supply diet sheets, and 1 would not supply a food parcel of the food the puppy was currently eating (fig 5).

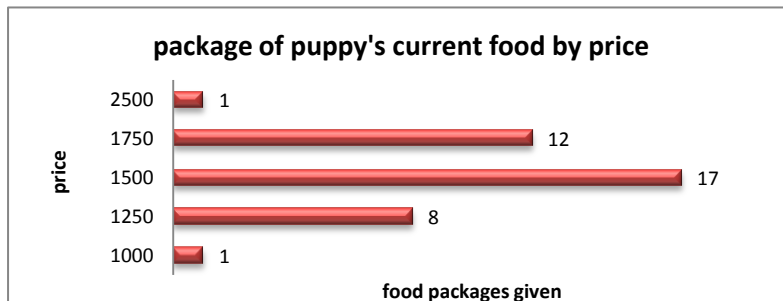


Fig 5 shows the number of breeders that supply a package of the puppy's current food by price.

25 respondents chose not to indicate if they were members of the ABS scheme of the remainder 9 said they were member of the ABS and 33 said they were not members (fig 6). There was no obvious relationship between price and membership status.

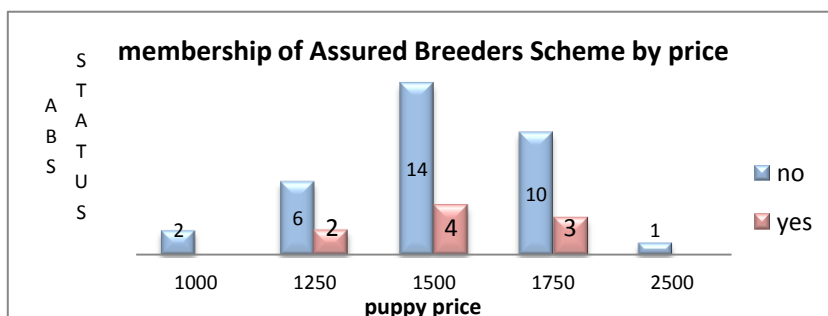


Fig 6 illustrates ABS membership status of those that responded, showing variation by the price of puppy.

HEALTH TESTING

9 respondents indicated that they would have had the SIRE/father (fig 7) of their litter assessed under the Chow Chow Bronze Health Scheme Assessment (fig 7) and 8 would expect the DAM/mother of the litter to have been health assessed under the scheme (fig 8).

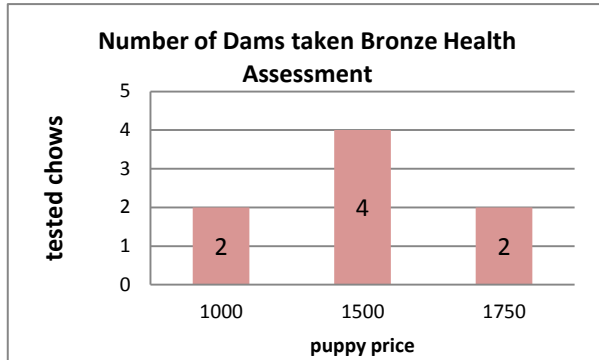
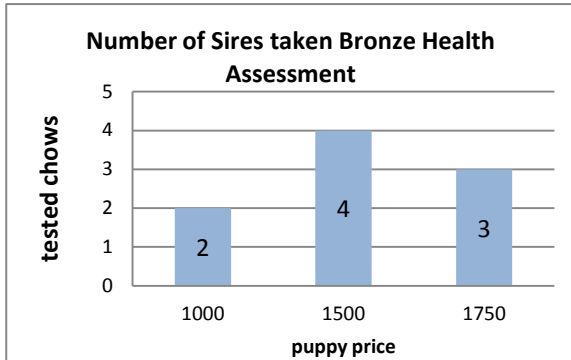


fig 7 show how many MALE chows have been tested fig 8 shows how many FEMALE chows have been tested under the Chow Chow Breed Council Bronze Health Scheme

22 breeders responded relating to hip scoring the SIREs of their litters of which a total of 16 Sires would be hip scored under the BVA/KC hip scoring scheme with the majority being found in the less than £1,500 price range (fig 9). In comparison 21 responses showed that only 12 of the dams would be hip scored.

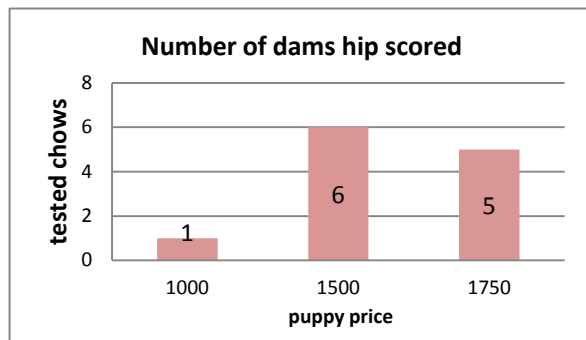
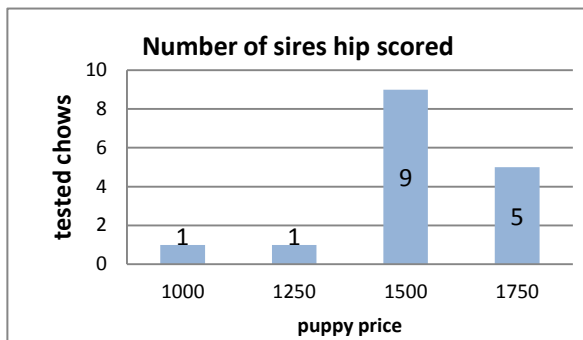


Fig 9 Number of sires that have been hip scored

Fig 10 number of dams that have been hip scored

A total of 22 responses were received relating to elbow scoring for Sires of which 8 Sires would be elbow tested (fig11) under the BVA/KC elbow scoring scheme and of the 21 responses for the Dams 9 would be elbow tested (fig 12)

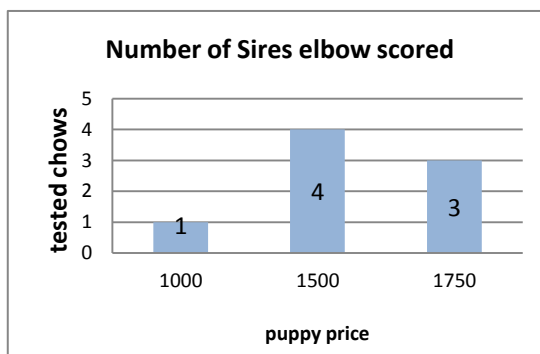
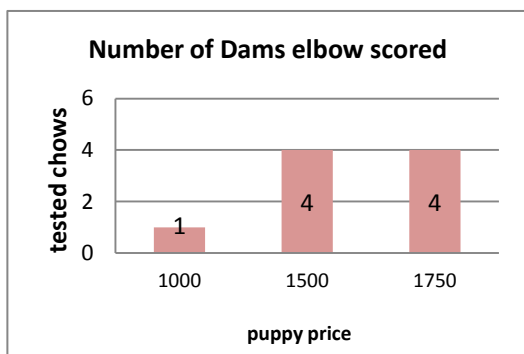


Fig 11 numbers of sires that have been elbow scored

fig 12 numbers of dams that have been elbow scored

7 of the 22 responses chose to use Sires that have been assessed under the BVA/KC eye testing scheme (fig 13) compared to 21 responses for Dams of which 6 would have been eye tested (fig 14).

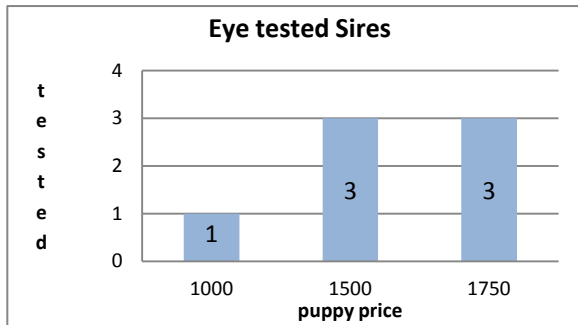


Fig 13 numbers of Sires that have been eye tested

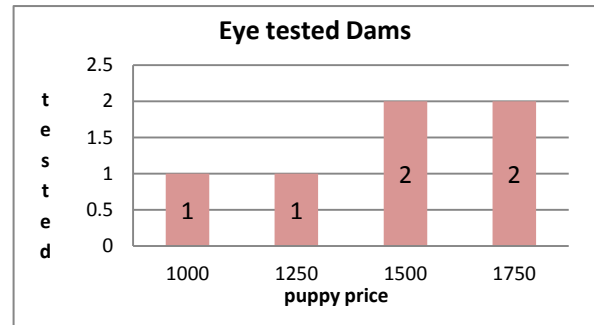


Fig 14 number of Dams that have been eye tested

Summary

The average price one would expect to pay for a pet chow chow puppy is approx. £1,500 although prices were found to range from less than £1,000 to £2,500. There was a wide variation of puppy prices for all areas with little appreciable difference in what puppy purchases could expect to receive with their puppy. It must be noted that the option 'less than £1,000' does not suggest that this is the lowest price a person may pay for a puppy, and caution is advised. Parents, at least the mother, should be seen with the puppy. Only two of those offering puppies for less than £1,000 offered registration papers and were proportionally less likely to provide food parcels or diet sheets, or to microchip and vaccinate their puppies prior to sale. They were less likely to have the parents health tested although one respondent offered all of these items including registration papers for a puppy selling at less than £1,000.

The responses to the health question section was significantly lower than the responses to area and price, however this may reflect that breeders were responding with a future litter in mind and at that point did not know which dog or which bitch they would be breeding from, therefore they were unable to answer the health section.

Microchipping is an optional extra at this time and breeders or new puppy owners are advised to have puppies chipped as soon as possible, even in the best regulated households' accident happen and puppies escape, microchipping is one way of increasing the chances of getting your Chow returned to you. Microchipping will become mandatory in 2016 in England and Wales, it is already mandatory in Northern Ireland.

Those charging between £1,250 and £1,750 are proportionately more likely to offer better 'packages' in terms of paperwork, microchipping, insurance and health testing regardless of the area in which they live.

Proportionately more responses were received from the Northern Counties and the Midlands, whether this is due to more breeders living in those areas or simply that more were willing to participate is not known. Had there been more responses from the outlying areas a different picture of prices and puppy packages might emerge.

In conclusion:

Buyers are advised to exercise caution when purchasing Chow Chow Puppies. There are numerous websites advertising pedigree puppies that make claims about health testing, registration and paperwork that may not be what they seem to be, it is important that would be purchasers see the puppy with its mother and expect to receive registration papers from the Kennel Club when they collect their puppy.

The majority of those breeders participating in the survey charged between £1,500 and £1,750, for a pet chow chow puppy and within this price range were more likely to provide a comprehensive package when the puppy goes to its new home. Few breeders are members of the Kennel Club Assured Breeders Scheme although offer more than the Kennel Club require for inclusion on the scheme.

Chow Chows regularly come in Red, Black, Cream, Blue and Fawn. In each case they may be 'shaded' with lighter fur on their furnishings and tail or they may be whole/self-coloured. They do not come in brindle or merle these coat patterns are linked to serious health issues and are not recognised by the Kennel Club or dedicated chow chow breeders. They are not rare they are highly undesirable. Red, black and cream are most commonly seen at this time, blues and fawns are less common mainly because breeders are less likely to show these colours, fawns may range from a pale silvery fawn through to a dark cinnamon colour, in the same way that a red may be anything from pale gold to a deep mahogany, this colour variation is normal.

The best place to look for a puppy is through the Kennel Club puppy list, talk to the breeders and be prepared to wait, most good breeders have waiting lists and don't breed very often.

Pauline Lock (Chow Chow Health Officer)