QUEEN’S CORGI AND OLD ENGLISH SHEEPDOG BOUNCE BACK

The Queen’s favourite breed of dog, the Pembroke Welsh Corgi, and the Old English Sheepdog have experienced a surge in popularity in 2015 and are no longer considered to be at risk of dying out, according to Kennel Club breed registration statistics.

The native British breeds were once at risk of disappearing from streets and parks around the UK after numbers fell so low that they were put on the Kennel Club’s ‘Vulnerable Native Breeds’ and ‘At Watch’ lists.

The latest figures were released ahead of Crufts on 10th-13th March, which showcases Britain’s vulnerable native breeds, and gives dog lovers the chance to meet the breeds to find out why they are worth saving.

In 2014, the Pembroke Welsh Corgi was considered vulnerable, for the first time in the breed’s history, with only 274 puppy registrations. The breed has since had a 34 per cent increase in registrations from 2014 to 2015 and has moved from the Vulnerable Native Breeds list to the At Watch list.

The Old English Sheepdog, which was popularised by the television adverts for Dulux paint, has also seen a boost in numbers, up by 22 per cent from 405 puppy registrations in 2014 to 495 in 2015, meaning that it is no longer included in the At Watch list.
Whilst these two breeds are experiencing a revival, things are not looking good for the Bedlington Terrier, as the breed is now on the At Watch list for the first time in the breed’s history after registrations dropped to 395 new pups in 2015.

In addition to the Bedlington Terrier, the English Setter and Irish Terrier are now officially on the Kennel Club Vulnerable Native Breeds list, which includes those native dog breeds with fewer than 300 puppy registrations annually, meaning they fall below the minimum number needed to ensure that a breed’s population is sustainable.

In total there are 29 breeds on the Vulnerable Native Breeds list, including the Skye Terrier, Kerry Blue Terrier, Sussex Spaniel and Field Spaniel. The Otterhound has the lowest registrations, with only 34 registrations in total for 2015.

There are seven breeds on the At Watch list, because they number between 300 and 450 registrations a year, including the Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier and the Bearded Collie.

To put the registration figures for these breeds into perspective, the most popular breed in the UK, the Labrador Retriever, had 32,507 puppies registered in 2015.

Caroline Kisko, Kennel Club Secretary, said: “Whilst it is good news for the Pembroke Welsh Corgi and Old English Sheepdog, we are concerned that the English Setter and Irish Terrier are dropping in numbers and the Bedlington Terrier is now included on the At Watch list for the first time.

“Vulnerable native breeds are dog breeds originating in the UK and Ireland which have been identified by the Kennel Club as having annual registration numbers of 300 puppies or fewer. We compile the list in order to raise awareness of some of our oldest and historically best loved breeds of dog, which are struggling to compete with newer breeds that are more fashionable.

“Crufts is coming up and this is a great opportunity for people to discover the 216 breeds recognised in this country, as currently half of all dogs registered in the UK are from the top ten breeds, with the other lesser known breeds sadly trailing far behind.”
Thinking about getting a dog? Head to the Discover Dogs area (hall 3) at Crufts 10th-13th March at the NEC Birmingham where you can meet and greet around 200 breeds of dog.