



Rare Varieties Cavy Club Rules 2023:

1. Name: The name of the Club is the Rare Varieties Cavy Club and its membership is open to any person interested in the breeding, keeping, exhibition and promotion of unique Guide Standard breeds, Full Standard breeds (without a specialist breed club) and serious experimental New/Emerging breeds (Non Standardised) cavies.

2. Club Objectives: Our club aims to encourage the breeding, keeping, and showing of unique Guide Standard breeds, Full Standard breeds (without specialised breed clubs), and serious experimental New/Emerging breeds (Non Standardised) cavies. We want to protect and advance the interests of these cavies and their enthusiasts. To achieve these goals, the club will:

- Work with the British Cavy Council to establish clear Standards of Excellence for all our cavies, acting as goals for breeders, exhibitors and guidelines for judging.
- Promote proper judging practices for our cavies, ensuring they're evaluated according to our standards.
- Organize Rosette shows throughout the year in various locations in the UK. These events will showcase a wide and varied range of cavies that are supported by us as a club. These will include points, rosettes and pen cards for claiming championship points.
- Support shows that include classes for our supported cavies, ensuring diverse opportunities for enthusiasts to showcase their stock.
- Award Championships to cavies that excel at Open shows, as defined in Rule 9.
- Keep members updated on our activities through Cavies Magazine and regularly publish a 'Handbook' containing club rules, officer lists, winners' information, and articles on breeding and showing cavies that we as a club support.

3. Membership: We offer different membership options, such as:

- Adult
- Partnership (limited to two people)
- Senior Citizen
- Juvenile (ages 7 to 16)
- Family Membership (two adults and three juvenile children)
- Life Member.

Membership subscriptions are due at the beginning of each year, you can pay your membership from October to ensure you keep your membership running. Make sure to renew your membership to enjoy all the benefits and voting privileges.

4. Club Officers: Our club is led by a group of dedicated individuals, including the President, Chairperson, General Committee Members, and Secretary/Treasurer (combined office). They make up the Executive team. Other officers include an Auditor, BCC Representative/s, RVCC Standards Committee Members, and Scrutineers. Executive meetings can be called by three officers, and elections for club officers are held every two years. Existing officers are automatically included unless they opt out. Scrutineers will not hold any other position within the club and not attend any meetings. Scrutineer(s) position(s) are not connected with the Club. The election of the BCC reps will take place after all other voting, this then enables the members to know who they can vote for – as the BCC rep needs to be an Executive member.

5. Club Judges: Anyone can put forward a nomination for a new judge, they must have been an adult member for the past three years and have consent from the nominee. The members then elect fifteen Club Judges every two years through a ballot. These judges are usually experienced breeders, past breeders, and club members. The result of the election will be communicated through Cavies Magazine and also on our website and social media.

6. Vacancies in Club Positions: In case of vacancies among Officers or Club Judges, temporary replacements will be selected until the next election. The next person in the previous ballot is usually chosen.

7. Club Support at Shows: We will support a variety of club shows (where requested and approved), throughout the country, that feature our supported cavies by providing rosettes (approved Rosette Shows) and pen cards (available to paid-up members). Shows that are supported will be listed in Cavies Magazine and also on the club website.

8. Club Shows: We hold a minimum of seven Rosette Shows (stock shows) each year, with additional Point Shows. Entry is open to non-members, but only fully paid-up members can receive points and certain awards. We aim to have a stand-alone Trophy Show once a year. The Trophies are only available to paid up members. The schedule and locations of shows are determined by the club's Executive Committee and will be advertised through the clubs social media, website and Cavies Magazine. Rosette Shows will be held under National Cavy Club Show Regulations.

9. Championships: Owners of Full Standard breeds (without a specialist breed club) Guide Standard breeds, New/Emerging breeds can apply for Championship Certificates from the Secretary. These certificates are awarded to cavies that have won five First Prizes in Adult, Intermediate, or Young Breed Classes (or approved classes such as AOV classes and Challenges) at Open Pen Shows under at least three different Judges from specific judging organizations. To qualify, there must be a minimum of four entries in the Breed Class (or approved classes). Only two of the five qualifying wins can be in young classes. The cost for Championship Certificates is £2.00 plus postage. Double Championships Similar to the above, but requiring ten First Prizes under three different Judges. Treble Championships Similar to the above, but requiring fifteen First Prizes under three different Judges.

10. Perpetual Trophies: Our Full Standard, Guide Standard and New and Emerging Trophies awarded at the RVCC AGM remain the property of the Club. Only members who joined the Club before the show's judging commencement are eligible for these trophies. Winners must ensure the safekeeping of the trophies and return them before the next year's show or within 30 days of a request by the Secretary. Failure to return trophies results in replacement costs. Damaged trophies also require payment for repairs or replacement.

11. Annual General Meeting (AGM): An Annual General Meeting of Members will be held each year, the venue and date to be decided by the Executive. The Secretary/Treasurer will present to the General Meeting: (a) An Annual Report, and (b) an audited Statement of Accounts. Items for the Agenda of the AGM (other than changes to Rules, for which see Rule 14 below) must be in the hands of the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the meeting to ensure that resolutions are formulated clearly and can therefore be discussed properly. Any other matter to be discussed at the AGM will be at the discretion of the Chairperson, who may allow such discussion or not, without giving reason for his verdict but always guided by the principle that his decisions should be in the best interests of the Club. Matters at the AGM will be decided by a simple majority of those attending. In the event of a tie in voting, the Chairperson, who may not vote, will have the power of exercising a casting vote.

12. Exceptional General Meeting (EGM): Any four members of the Executive, or twelve members may by written request to the Secretary call for an Exceptional General Meeting, for which the Agenda must be specified. The Secretary will consult the Chairperson as to the date and venue for this meeting, which must be convened within 30 days of the request. The Secretary will give all members at least 14 days' notice of the time and place of the meeting and of the Agenda. Matters at the EGM will be decided by a simple majority of those attending. In the event of a tie in voting, the Chairperson, who may not vote, will have the power of exercising a casting vote.

13. Procedure for Recognition of a New Breed by the RVCC, the Subsequent Move to Guide Standard Status and Ultimate Full Standard Classification: The RVCC will ensure that a formal process exists for the development of New Varieties to Guide Standard and if appropriate Full Standard. The RVCC should support only those breeds that it believes have the ultimate potential to develop to Full Standard status. The Standards Committee will consider all potential changes to Guidance Notes, Guide Standards and Full Standards, this being the purpose for which the Standard Committee exists. Guide Standards and Full Standards will be formulated by the Standards Committee, after appropriate consultation with breeders of the variety and then presented to the Executive Committee before submission to the BCC. Agreed proposals for changes go to the BCC, which may agree, modify or reject them according to the voting majorities specified in its Rules.

13.1. NEB classes at RVCC shows will be confined to varieties for which there are Guidance Notes agreed by the RVCC Standards and Executive Committees and the BCC. These Guidance Notes will outline the genetic basis for the variety and the significant features for breeding and judging the cavy.

13.2. Once the breed has progressed to a level that the breed can achieve consistency and has been recommended to proceed, the exhibitors will apply for a formal meeting of the Standards Committee.

13.3. Having given notice to the RVCC Standards Committee Co-ordinator or RVCC Secretary at least 2 weeks prior to an appropriate show date. The exhibitor provides an application to the Committee that contains the genetic information as well as development plans and what they feel the breed will accomplish and what makes it a new variety as well as presents a team of three age groups to a quorum of the RVCC Standards Committee at the next available RVCC Rosette Show (classes on the RVCC Show Schedule 'New/Emerging Breed' classification are available for this purpose), or a larger venue show (larger venue shows to be determined by the RVCC General Committee). The RVCC Standards Committee need to agree that the cavies seen are a distinct and true-breeding variety kept by a minimum of two breeders and are appropriate for consideration to move towards RVCC supported status. On acceptance of the breed as supported by the RVCC, the RVCC Standards Committee will work on a draft 'Guidance Notes for Judges and Exhibitors'. The draft wording will then be presented by the RVCC to the next BCC Meeting for consideration.

13.4. At an appropriate time following approval of the 'Guidance Notes for Judges and Exhibitors' (minimum 12 months) the RVCC Standards Committee compiles a written Guide Standard for the breed and may gain assistance from the principle breeder of the variety or a representative of the interested RVCC members.

13.5. To move a breed from 'New/Emerging Breed' classification to Guide Standard status a proposal is made to the RVCC Standards Committee, which is then taken to the Executive Committee, a minimum of three breeders of this variety are required.

13.6. The proposed Guide Standard is presented to a meeting of the British Cavy Council who may accept, modify or reject the Guide Standard proposal. If accepted, the Guide Standard is published in the cavy press and from the pre-agreed date the breed will enter the Guide Standard classification at all shows.

13.7. After a minimum of two years from the date of original approval by the RVCC a proposal can be made to the AGM of the RVCC that the breed is ready for a Full Standard. To move to the next stage members attending the AGM vote in favour of the application or alternatively a postal ballot will be held with a favourable outcome.

13.8. The RVCC Standards Committee consider the existing Guide Standard and whether it should be clarified in any way. Only then are points added for the various qualities of the breed.

13.9. The status of all NEB and Guide Standard varieties should be formally reviewed by the Standards Committee at intervals of no longer than two years and recommendations made to the Executive Committee for any changes that might be required. In normal circumstances a period of at least two years but no more than five would be expected to elapse between the approval of Guidance Notes for an NEB and a proposal to the BCC to move to Guide Standard. Likewise, at least two years but no more than five will be expected to elapse between granting of Guide Standard status and a recommendation to move to Full Standard.

13.10. The proposed Full Standard is presented to the BCC, who decide if the Full Standard is acceptable and have the jurisdiction to accept, modify or reject the Full Standard. Finally, after the Full Standard is published in the cavy press and from the pre-agreed date the breed will enter the open section at all shows. This proposal is put forward as a result of issues with the previous procedure, where a large number of people asked to debate the often complex issues of standards in a short span of time may not be appropriate. Also the timing that decisions made by the Standards Committee after the AGM would have to wait, potentially delaying things by up to 18 months or involving an expensive postal ballot.

14. Alterations to Rules: No alteration, deletion or addition may be made to these rules except by a majority of votes cast at an AGM of the Club or by any changes and additions decided by the British Cavy Council. Any existing or new rules of the Club must not conflict in any way with British Cavy Council Rules. Notice of any proposed change to the rules by a member must be advised to the Secretary 28 days before the Meeting, to allow time for the Executive to consider its position and make a recommendation to members. On any matter of urgency that infringes this condition, the Chairperson has the discretionary power to include any such proposal on the AGM Agenda for discussion by the members present, if he/she considers that the Rule change is in the best interests of the Club. A simple majority of those voting is necessary before rules can be changed.

15. Dissolution of Club: The Club can only be dissolved or merged with another Club with the consent of an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting called to discuss this issue, and with the consent of two-thirds of the members voting in a subsequent postal ballot to determine the matter. In the event of Dissolution, the property of the Club shall be disposed of to best advantage and any monies resulting after payment of all debts will be allocated to all members of not less than two years standing. In the event of Merger, the same course may be followed; or the Executive may determine to pass on the property or monies of the Club to the Club with which it is merging.

16. Complaints Procedure:

a) Any member who wishes to make a Complaint must lodge this with the Chairperson within 30 days of knowledge of the event or action that is the subject of the Complaint, stating the nature of the Complaint and enclosing a deposit of £25.

b) Complaints made to the Club must relate to either a breach of Club Rules or to discreditable conduct relating to unique Guide Standard breeds, Full Standard breeds (without a specialist breed club) and serious experimental New/Emerging breeds (Non-Standardised) cavies, either at a show or in the public arena. This may include 'Showing Misdemeanours', 'Judging Misdemeanours' (if such are susceptible to proof) and 'Unacceptable Behaviour' (which may include abuse of an official position, abuse of Club property, foul and abusive language, violent conduct etc.)

c) The Chairperson will ensure that an Investigation Panel is set up to hear the Complaint. This will consist of a Chairperson and three other members of the Executive. The Chairperson of the Investigations Committee need not be the Chairperson of the Club. Any member of the Executive that has prior personal knowledge of the substance of the Complaint will not be eligible to sit on the Panel hearing the Complaint, or attend any subsequent Appeal.

d) The Chairperson of the Investigation Panel should undertake the following procedure in investigating a Complaint:

- Ensure that he/she obtains from the Complainant a written statement of the Complaint, together with the details of any witnesses.
- Contact any witnesses and obtain statements from them.
- Notify the person who is the subject of the Complaint asking for a written statement, either admitting the Complaint and pleading mitigating circumstances (if any) or refuting the Complaint, along with the details of any witnesses that they may wish to cite.
- Contact such witnesses and obtain statements from them.
- The Chairperson will acknowledge the initial complaint within 14 days.
- The Chairperson will notify the person who is the subject of the Complaint within 14 days of receiving the written Complaint; and will give this person 14 days to respond to the allegations made in the Complaint.

e) The Chairperson of the Investigation Panel may then seek to act as mediator resolve the matter with the agreement of both parties. If this is not possible, he/she will within 28 days convene a meeting of the Investigation Panel, and will give all interested parties at least 14 days' notice of this hearing. These parties will be offered the opportunity to speak on their own behalf, and they may also bring witnesses to the hearing; but all of these costs will be at their own expense.

f) Once the Panel has heard all the evidence relating to the Complaint, it will deliberate upon the matter and decide whether the Complaint is upheld or not. It will then determine whether the £25 deposit is to be forfeited, in the event of the Complaint being found to be ill-founded, or whether any disciplinary action is required as a result of the Complaint. (If the evidence so indicates, this action may be against the Complainant as well as, or instead of, the person who is the subject of the Complaint).

g) The Chairperson of the Investigation Panel will make known the findings of the Panel to both parties, along with any disciplinary action, within 7 days of the hearing. He/she will additionally inform them of their rights of Appeal under Rule 17 below.

17. Appeals Procedure:

a) Either of the parties to the Complaint may appeal against the findings of the Investigation Panel by writing to the Chairperson of the Club within 30 days of knowledge of the findings of the Panel, stating the grounds for the Appeal and enclosing a deposit of £25.

b) The Chairperson of the Club will ensure that an Appeals Panel is set up to hear the Complaint. This will consist of a Chairperson (who must be different to the Chairperson of the Investigation Panel) and three members of the Executive who were not members of the original Investigations Panel. Again, any member of the Executive that has prior personal knowledge of the substance of the Complaint will not be eligible to sit on the Panel hearing the Appeal.

c) The Chairperson of the Appeals Panel will review the evidence given to the original hearing and the findings of the Investigation Panel, and determine how the Appeal is to be heard. This may involve either a repeat of the original hearing, with all parties and witnesses in attendance, or a meeting of the Appeals Panel to review the evidence and findings.

d) Once the Panel has reviewed this evidence and findings, it will deliberate upon the matter and decide whether the Appeal is upheld or not. It will then determine whether the £25 deposit is to be forfeited, in the event of the Appeal being found to be ill-founded, and whether any disciplinary action is required as a result of the result of the Appeal. Any disciplinary action determined by the original Panel could potentially be increased in severity as well as being reduced as a result of the Appeal.

e) The Chairperson of the Appeals Panel will make known the findings of the Panel to both parties, along with any modified disciplinary action, within 7 days of the hearing. He/she will additionally inform them of their rights to appeal to the British Cavy Council.

f) As soon as is possible after the Investigation/Appeal process has been completed, the Chairperson of the Club will inform the Secretary of the findings and any disciplinary measures imposed. The Secretary will then arrange for brief details of the complaint, the decision and any disciplinary action imposed to appear in the cavy press, so long as this does not threaten infringement of the laws of libel.

18. Disciplinary Action:

Disciplinary action that may be taken as a result of the above Procedures may consist of the following:

- A Warning not to repeat the offence.
- A severe Reprimand.
- Imposition of a Fine of such amount (not exceeding £100) as may be determined.
- Disqualification of an exhibit.
- Suspension from Club Membership for such time as may be determined.
- Termination of Club Membership.
- Disqualification from Office or from Judging Panel for a defined period, which may be for life.
- Disqualification for a defined period, which may be for life, from exhibiting or taking part in any RVCC Rosette/Points Shows.
- Disqualification for a defined period, which may be for life, from membership of the Rare Varieties Cavy Club.

19. Disqualification of an Exhibit for Malpractice: Judges must disqualify any exhibits that they consider has been subjected to practices intended to deceive or give a false impression of merit when judged against the Standard for the breed. When a judge has disqualified a cavy for this reason, he must take the exhibit to the show secretary and obtain, if possible, independent verification by a RVCC, National Cavy Club or Southern Cavy Club judges of the evidence for these practices. Photographic evidence should be obtained if possible. The show secretary should ensure that the exhibitor is notified on the day, or as soon after as is possible, and inform them of the action that will be taken. The officiating judge should ensure that both the Secretary of the National or Southern Cavy Club (dependent upon which Club's rules are being used at the show in question) and the Secretary of the RVCC is informed of the incident and of the details of the exhibitor. On receiving such information on the disqualification of an exhibit, the RVCC Secretary will determine whether the exhibitor is a member of the Club. If so, he will note the alleged malpractice in the Club's records and write to the member in question to invite him/her to give an explanation of the occurrence. The matter will then be placed before the Chairperson to determine if disciplinary action might be required under the Club's Complaints Procedure, Rule 16. In this case the Complaint will be taken as having been made by the judge in question, with no deposit being required.

20. British Cavy Council:

The Club is a member of the British Cavy Council, whose stated objectives are to:

- Adjudicate on the formation and remit of the Specialist Clubs serving the needs of the various breeds of cavy in the United Kingdom;
- Ensure that such Specialist Clubs are properly run in the interests of all of their members and of the Cavy Fancy as a whole;
- Determine the Standards to be applied when judging the various breeds of cavy in the United Kingdom, these standards normally but not in all cases being effected by the discussion of proposals made by the relevant Specialist Club;
- Ensure that such Standards are phrased to be as clear as possible to judges, breeders and exhibitors; offer a difficult but achievable challenge to the breeder and exhibitor; and provide a logical basis for comparisons to be made regarding the relative merits of exhibits of different breeds. The Club fully subscribes to these objectives; and in particular accepts the British Cavy Council Code of Practice for Affiliated Clubs and its regulations on Disciplinary Action Taken by Specialist Clubs against Members.