

## **Boarding Catteries and Kennels**

All the general physical requirements of heat, light and ventilation; as well as local authority regulations apply to commercial boarding facilities. This section contains information specific to boarding catteries and kennels, and includes examples of common design systems.

### **Kennel Location**

Ideally, a commercial kennels should be located close enough to a built up area to be accessible, but not so close that noise pollution from the kennels becomes an issue for nearby residents. Good car parking facilities and access should be provided to cater for clients who do not live nearby.

Wherever possible, the kennels should be built with the sleeping compartment facing north and the run area facing south (towards the sun); this will both facilitate drying of the runs after cleaning and rinsing, and prevent the sleeping compartment from overheating during the day. It is also desirable for the runs to face away from active areas, to prevent dogs being disturbed more than necessary by passing traffic. Therefore, since the runs should face south, ideally the entrance / exit of the facility should be located to the north.

### **Building Materials**

Concrete is commonly used as flooring throughout the kennel as it is cheap, hardwearing and hygienic. Under-floor drainage must be designed and installed before concrete is laid.

The kennel walls are usually built from brick and mortar (or the cheaper but less attractive concrete breeze blocks), although fibreglass and other modern materials are increasingly being used.

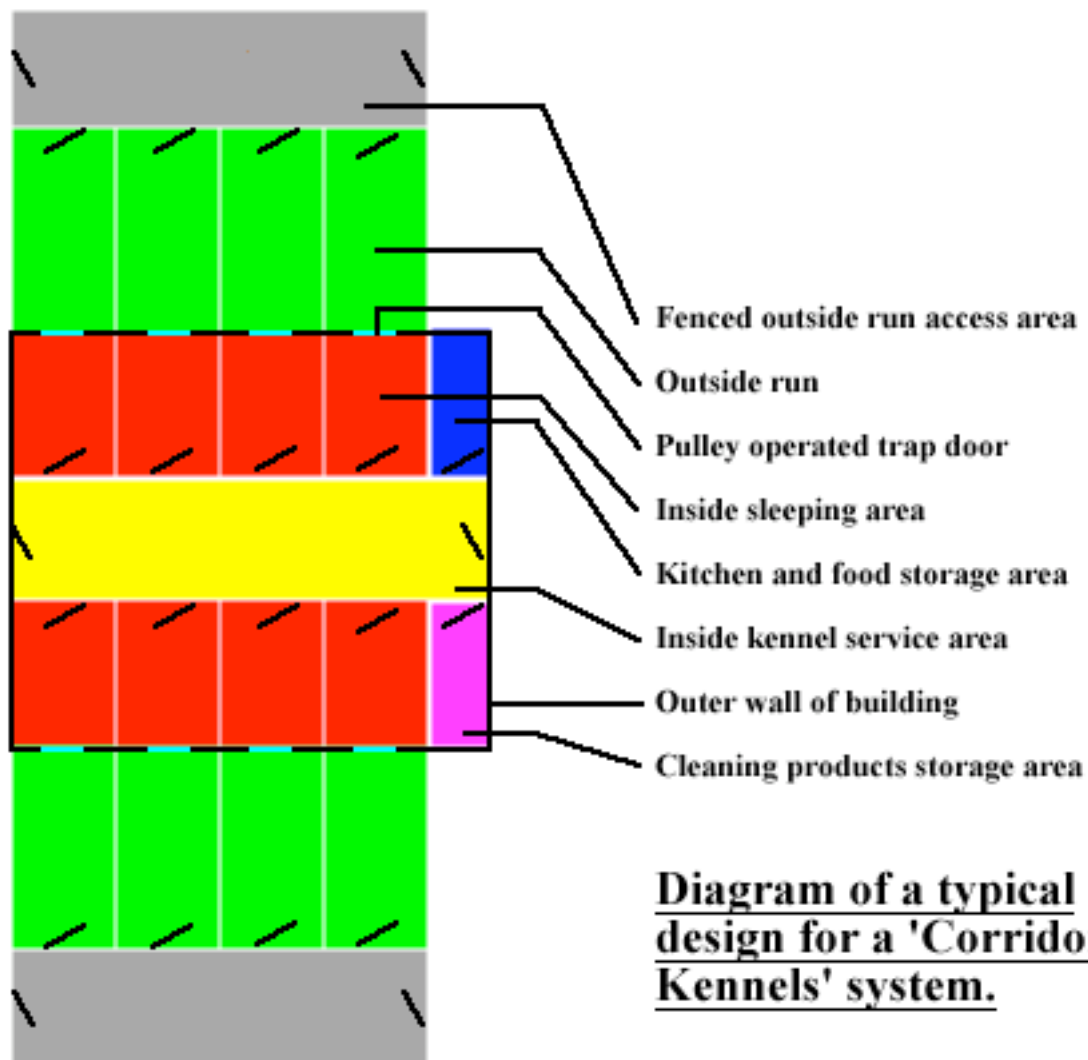
Wooden kennels are unsuitable as they are harder to disinfect and are vulnerable to damage from chewing.

### **Types of Kennel Design**

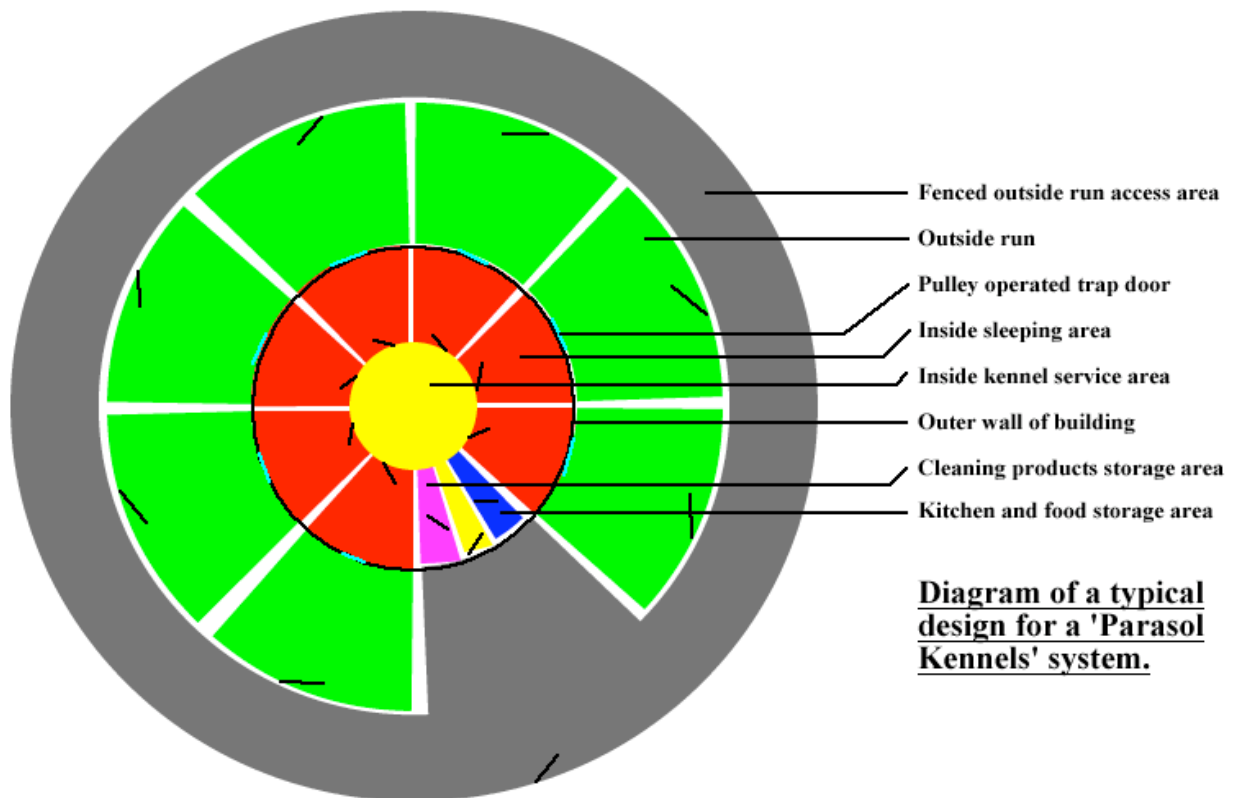
There are many different systems of kennel design currently in use; with subtle variations depending on the individual preferences of the designer, time period when the kennel was built, availability of land and building materials, and available finances. Where kennels are constructed in renovated or adapted existing buildings, the design will depend on the size and shape of the existing buildings. The following are demonstrations of the main designs of purpose built kennels commonly used today.

**Corridor kennels** are probably the most widely used form of kennelling system, and are suitable for medium to large establishments. They consist of a central covered service corridor from which the sleeping areas of the kennels can be accessed, and an outside (often uncovered) area from which the runs can be accessed. The advantages of this type of kennel are that the dogs are able to see each other, access to runs can be controlled individually, and feed and grooming facilities can be sited under the same roof as the kennels. However, the type of bed used can be limited by the often long and narrow sleeping area. Several blocks of corridor kennel may be used to increase housing,

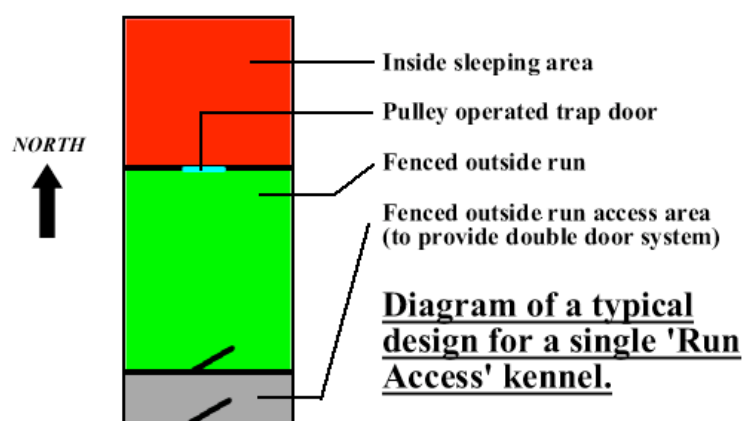
which has the advantage of limiting potential disease spread but may increase the required staffing level as at least one staff member is required in each block.



**Circular or 'Parasol' kennels** are similar to corridor kennels except that the kennels radiate around a small round central service area rather than a long straight service area. This means that the dogs are able to see each other, and that the staff member is able to see more of the dogs from the same position than would be the case using a corridor kennel system. The disadvantages of this system are that the use of space is less efficient due to the round building leaving wasted ground space, and that the maximum size of each block is limited by the size of the central service area. As with corridor kennels, feed and grooming facilities are sited on the kennel block, and more than 1 block may be used to increase the maximum housing capacity.



**Run access kennels** are a design of kennel most commonly used by private owners of small numbers of dogs. They consist of one or more single kennels, designed so that access is through a single door usually into the run area, with a sleeping area beyond the run. This type of kennel is cheap and readily available pre-packaged, but has poor access, little control over the environment and is time consuming to maintain.



**H-Block kennels** are a specialist, compact design system for the housing of large numbers (80+) of animals under one roof, the design of which is covered under the Specialist Kennels section.

The run and sleeping areas of the kennels in each type of design can be separated by means of a pulley-operated trap-door system, to facilitate unimpeded access to the kennels and runs. This mechanism is extremely useful in helping to prevent animals escaping during cleaning and feeding etc.

## **Minimum Kennel Sizes**

Each kennel must contain a sleeping area which is 1.5 times the width of the dog curled up, 2 times the length of the dog curled up, and at least 15cm taller than the dog sat up. It is obviously not possible for kennels to be tailor made to each occupant, so usually a number of kennels of different sizes are available in each block. Each dog should be housed in the smallest kennel that fulfils the above criteria wherever possible, as over-large kennels are undesirable.

Variations on the kennel dimensions are extremely common, due to the shape of the available space, building materials, size of intended inhabitant etc. Economies of scale often mean that all kennels in each block (or in each section of block where there is only 1 block) are the same, with different sized animals being housed in different locations.

## **Catteries**

The requirements for catteries are similar to those of kennels except that allowances must be made for the increased prevalence of respiratory disease and increased climbing agility. Similar considerations of accessibility and space apply to the location of the cattery as with kennels, except that noise due to barking is not a factor with cats. The Feline Advisory Bureau (FAB) recommend that catteries should face south west (for sunbathing) and not be located near to dogs. Their website can be found at:

<http://www.fabcats.org>

## **Outdoor Catteries**

This type of cat housing is similar to dog 'run-access kennels' in that both consist of a single point of access into a run area, with a sleeping area at the back. Each cat kennel must have a transparent roof to allow sunlight in but prevent escape, and either 'sneeze barriers' or 0.6 to 1.2m gaps between runs to prevent disease transmission.

'Sneeze barriers' consist of a solid barrier (either opaque or transparent), typically used in place of wire mesh up to a certain height between the run areas of adjacent animals. Its function is to prevent physical contact between animals, and therefore reduce disease transmission (especially respiratory disease).

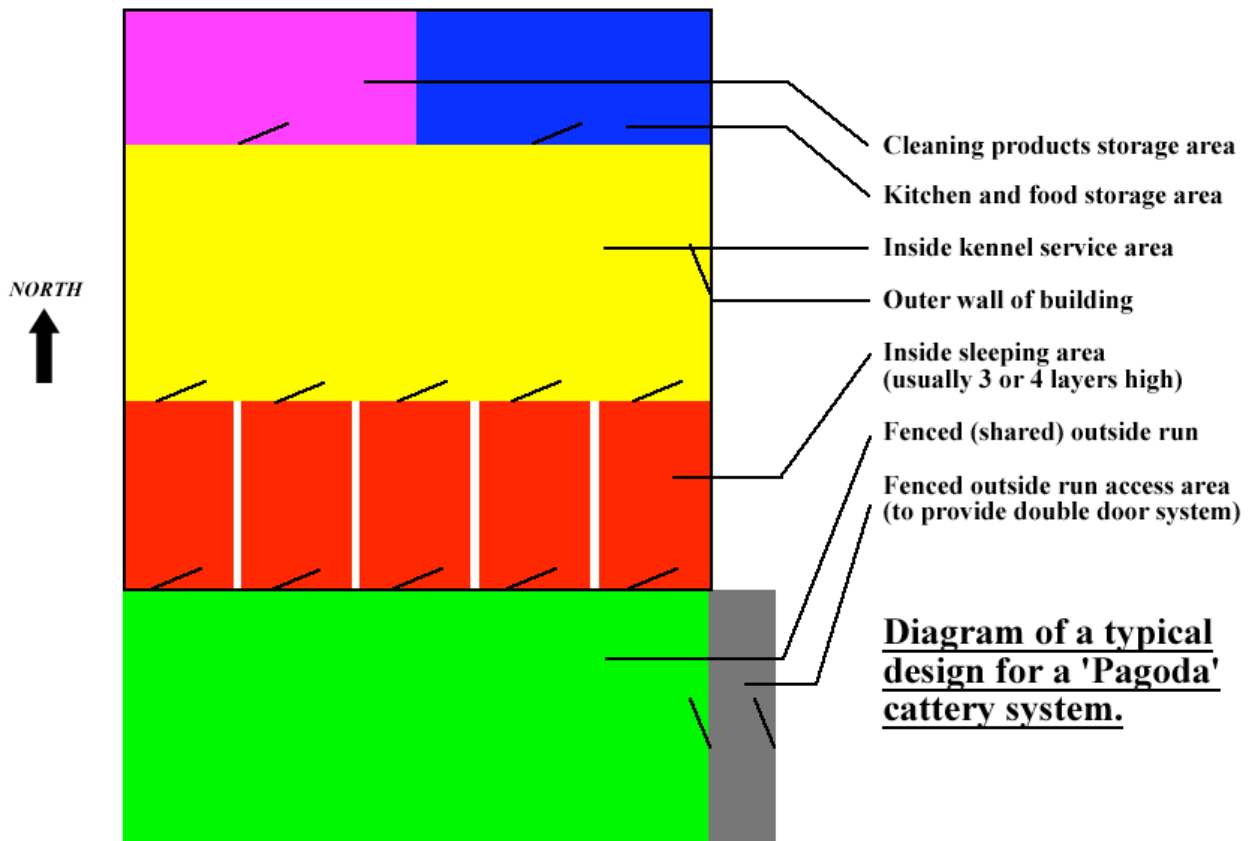
It is also essential to have a double door system of entry to each kennel to prevent cats escaping when the door to their run is opened. Runs should not be built facing each other as cats can become very anxious when in view of other cats.

## **Indoor Catteries**

Indoor cattery design is similar to dog 'corridor kennel' design, except that roofs and 'sneeze barriers' as with outdoor catteries are necessary for cats. Good ventilation is especially important in this type of accommodation as respiratory disease can be a major problem. Transparent partitions between sections of the cattery may also be used to help prevent the spread of disease.

## Pagoda Catteries

This type of cattery consists of several layers of cages making up one face of the outside of a building, with access to the cages from a passage on the inside of the building. There may or may not also be a shared outside run area which is made accessible to each cat (or group of cats from the same home) individually. This type of system is simple to set up and prevents disease spread relatively well, but does not allow much space for cats to move around. It is usually only used for small catteries.



Cat accommodation must be of the correct size, contain a cat bed (possibly on a shelf), a scratching post, toys, water and feed bowls, a litter tray, and a place to lie in the sun (e.g. a cat safe window sill). Each unit must have its own dustpan and brush for cleaning out litter trays, to minimise disease spread.

Approximate sizes are as follows:

Sleeping area – a base of 0.82 m<sup>2</sup> for one cat, 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> for two cats, or 1.85 m<sup>2</sup> for four cats, with a height of 91cm is sufficient (all four cats should be from the same household if kept together).

Exercise area – 1.7 m<sup>2</sup> for one cat, 2.23 m<sup>2</sup> for two, or 2.79 m<sup>2</sup> for four cats, with a height of 1.8m.

Cat safe window sills must be easily accessible by the cat, but allow no opportunity for escape. The glass must either be re-enforced or mesh protected to prevent breakage, and the windows must not be able to be opened more than a few centimetres.

## **Necessary Facilities**

Because of the large scale of most catteries and kennels, the efficient placement of facilities is especially important. Each block should contain electric points, water points, a sink, hot water, a secure storage area, a work area, bins, and cleaning equipment (including secure storage for any possibly hazardous cleaning agents). It is best to have the facilities separated by a door from the rest of the kennels to deny access to escaped animals, but the facilities should be within as short a distance as possible from as many of the kennels as possible to maximise staff efficiency.

## **End of Section**

That's the end of the section on Boarding Catteries and Kennels.

These notes are designed to outline the ideal design of boarding kennels, however it should be remembered that there are a very wide variety of different kennel designs and systems in use, many of which will differ from these guidelines in some respects. In some cases, economical factors may result in accommodation which is not ideal in one or more respects, but is still acceptable housing.