



## **WHAT TO EXPECT**

Thank you for considering fostering a dog with us. By fostering you are giving a rescue dog the chance of a happy life.

**You MUST have a secure garden with 6-foot fencing in order to foster.**

**We do not send foster dogs to homes with children under 5 years old.**

When you foster your dog or puppy you are signing up to foster him or her until they are adopted, whether by you or another family. We ask that you work through any issues together with us. They are shelter dogs and will be far from perfect when they arrive.

You should be prepared to contact and meet potential adopters for the dog. If you encounter issues, we may not be able to move your dog straight away, on occasions it can take several weeks sometimes to find a place. You may be asked to help with transport.

You should always be able to separate your foster dog from any children and/or other pets and make sure that they are always supervised with both. Dogs are often **not tested with children and/or cats or other pets.** Even dogs that have been tested with cats may chase unfamiliar cats in their foster home.

If you do decide to adopt your foster dog, we ask that the adoption fee is paid in full, straight away. Dogs will remain available for adoption until paid. If you are considering adopting, please make sure you have the adoption fee available.

The following advice is provided in conjunction with the Terms & Conditions you agreed to when you applied to foster.

We permit a maximum of two foster dogs per family.

There is usually an opportunity for you to meet the dog before committing to fostering them.

## **WHAT YOU WILL NEED**

You will need some equipment for your new foster dog. We can supply anything that you need. Please let us know if you need help with anything.

### ***WE RECOMMEND***

Harness & Lead

Adjustable collar and ID tag

**NEVER AN EXTENDING LEAD.**

Crate (always go bigger if unsure)

Old towels and blankets for a bed

Two bowls, one for food and one for water.

Food of your choice (see feeding advice below)

Toys/chews

Shampoo (any dog shampoo)

You can get almost everything second hand or free from Facebook, free cycle, marketplace, friends or family. We do have donation points across Hampshire where such items are stored and can help with providing equipment if necessary.

There is no need to buy anything fancy. Especially not a bed which could end up chewed, peed on or destroyed. Plastic dog beds are durable, resistant to chewing and easy to clean

Identity tags can be found cheaply on the internet. We get ours from eBay. They must contain your house number, your postcode and your last name. We always add phone numbers. We don't add the dog's name because this means tags can be reused.

## **SETTLING IN**

### ***LEAVE A LEAD ON WHEN YOU ARRIVE HOME***

Leave a short lightweight lead trailing when you first arrive home in case you need to move your new rescue dog off of, out of or into anywhere This will eliminate the need for you to grab for their collar, which could be scary to an already stressed dog that doesn't know you.

### ***FOOD & WATER***

Make sure they have access to fresh water in a place where ideally, they don't have to turn their back on a room to drink, so not in a corner. If they feel anxious about

their surroundings, they may be reluctant to drink if they can't see where everyone is while doing so.

Offer them food shortly after they arrive but for the first few days at least, maybe longer, feed little and often rather than big meals. Ideally scatter their food over a small area to prevent them wolfing it down and to encourage them to engage in naturally calming behaviours like snuffling and sniffing. Feed them separately to resident dogs.

### ***TIME, SPACE & PATIENCE***

When your dog arrives, they may be very stressed. They will need at least a few days for these to even begin to come down so please do make these first few days very calm.

Most dogs sleep a lot during the first 24 hours and it's important to give them the opportunity and a safe place to allow them to do that. This alone can prevent all sorts of problem behaviours in the first few days. Make sure they have a place they can be that is away from lots of noise and if necessary, give them separate time from resident dogs to have a break and process all that has happened to them. If they are fearful when they arrive and don't wish to interact then leave them to choose their space and don't keep encouraging them to make friends. They will come around in their own time but if you keep trying to make them do things you could increase their anxiety and make the process of them settling take much longer.

### ***PREVENT OVERWHELM***

Avoid having lots of visitors to the house during the first few weeks. Let your new arrival settle, get used to their new environment and get used to you before you start introducing more new people. Visitors tend to want to excessively fuss because they will know you rescued this dog. All this attention from so many strangers can cause dogs to feel anxious. Let your dog choose to interact with any visitors when they do come, but if they don't want to then leave them be and ask your visitors to ignore them. You should be able to tell how comfortable they're feeling from their body language. If they're happily leaping around your new visitors, then it's more likely they will enjoy a fuss, but if they're hesitant and unsure, it is REALLY IMPORTANT that you let your dog set the pace for new introductions. If you try to encourage them to make friends, you can MAKE them scared of new people and this can take months to change once established.

### ***SAFETY***

Keep them on a lead, preferably a long line in the garden for the first few days, some dogs can be very panicked by all they've been through & their new surroundings and you want to be sure they have no intention of trying to escape. Some dogs have been reported to jump 6-foot fences and if you have any gaps in your fencing, you can be sure your dog will find them!

### ***BELT & BRACES ON YOUR FIRST WALKS***

Double lead your rescue dog when you first start walking them outside, in case they panic and slip a collar or harness. The best combination is harness and lead with a

second lead attached to the collar or a slip lead. A slip lead is only there as a back-up if anything goes wrong. Many rescue dogs will panic if you use a lead that tightens around their neck so make sure the slip lead is only used as a backup emergency. Choose a quiet location.

### ***TRAVEL***

Please make sure that your dog is safely secured in any vehicle. Either by using a seat belt attachment clipped to their harness, a crate or having them secured behind a dog guard. Please make sure that your dog is restrained regardless of where they are positioned and cannot bolt from the vehicle when you open the door or boot.

## **TOILET TRAINING**

Your rescue dog may not be toilet trained. Even if they were toilet trained in their previous home, this could change due to stress or a new environment.

Take your rescue dog out to the garden when they arrive (on a lead) to see if they want to toilet. Following on from this take them out to go to the toilet as soon as they wake up, after each meal and every couple of hours for the first week (every hour if a puppy) this will lessen the risk of accidents in the house and give you the opportunity to praise and reinforce all toileting outside. This will increase the likelihood they will quickly learn where they are supposed to go to the toilet and reduce the degree of accidents in the house.

## **VET CARE/HUSBANDRY**

Your dog may not be up to date with treatment for fleas and worms.

Your dog may not be fully vaccinated.

Your dog may not be microchipped.

Your dog may not be neutered.

### ***DISEASE TESTING***

Should your rescue dog be originally imported from overseas we will carry out testing for brucellosis.

### ***BATHING & GROOMING***

Your dog may need a bath. How soon this can happen will depend on how your dog reacts to being handled. Some dogs are okay to be bathed sooner, others may take days or even weeks to bathe.

You will need shampoo for dogs. Please rinse the shampoo thoroughly.

Over the coming weeks and months your dog may change their coat. Good nutrition and grooming will help. You should brush your dog daily if they will tolerate it. The type of brush you use will depend on the dog's coat.

### ***SEEING A VET***

If you think your dog needs medical attention, ASK THE TEAM.

We are unable to authorise any payments for veterinary treatment which have not been agreed in advance.

### ***DIARRHOEA***

Diarrhoea may be expected for up to 10 days. Even if you see a bit of blood do not be alarmed. This can be due to stress and a change of diet. Please keep the diet consistent and avoid too many treats.

We recommend fresh cooked chicken as treats.

### ***KENNEL COUGH***

Even dogs vaccinated for kennel cough can catch kennel cough.

Kennel cough is VIRAL and CANNOT be treated with antibiotics. There is no need to visit the vet for kennel cough. Kennel cough almost always resolves itself within 10 days. If your dog has kennel cough, please keep him away from other dogs as it is contagious like a human cold.

The first signs of kennel cough are a hacking, persistent cough. Your dog may bring up some white foam.

### ***NEUTERING***

If your dog is not neutered, we will carry out neutering in accordance with UK veterinary advice and based on the development of your dog.

## **MICROCHIPS**

Your dog's microchip will be registered to the charity. You do not need to re-register it. We will ensure that when adopted, your dog's microchip is re-registered to their new owners. There is no additional cost for this.

## **FOOD**

You are free to feed your dog whatever you choose. We do ask that you take the time to look at food reviews at [www.allaboutdogfood.co.uk](http://www.allaboutdogfood.co.uk) because there are some very poor-quality foods which should be avoided.

We ask that you avoid Bakers, Wagg, Pedigree, Frolic and own brand supermarket foods where possible. We can provide food if necessary. Please just ask.

We do not recommend rice or pasta being fed.

The team consists of several qualified pet nutrition specialists who are more than happy to give you help and advice.

Water should always be available.

## **RECOMMENDED DON'TS**

Don't keep fussing over your new arrival, they will most likely not be used to it. Although you may feel you are showering them with all the love they have missed out on and comforting them during their stress of being in a new home, they can actually find this quite stressful. Give them time and space.

Don't bathe them for at least a few days unless they are content to be handled. Your new arrival may pong a bit. Please refrain from putting them through the additional stress of being bathed for at least a few days unless it is **ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY** for medical reasons. This is a very intrusive and often scary experience for a dog. They have no idea who you are or where they are and may not cope at all well with being manhandled into a bath or shower. This kind of overwhelm in the first few days of arriving could easily cause trauma for your new arrival and the development of more deep-seated issues (fearfulness, mistrust, reactivity) Once a few days have passed you will have a much better idea of how your dog might cope with this experience.

Don't allow them to follow you everywhere and have access to all areas of the house for the first few days/weeks. Often dogs will not be used to all the home comforts we offer them and if you allow them free reign over everything, you could find them developing resource guarding behaviours over all the new & wonderful 'stuff' they find at their paw tips. Plus, it can help prevent the development of separation anxiety by providing them with their own room that you leave now and again just to go to other areas of the house. In addition to this, an anxious dog can feel more anxious if they have too much space.

Don't let them on beds or sofas for the first few weeks. Again, this can instigate resource guarding, which once it starts to happen, is more difficult to stop than if you can prevent it from starting and being practised in the first place. Resource guarding of sofas and beds is a very common problem during the first few weeks and has led to the return of newly adopted dogs, so please help make your adoption be as successful as possible and follow this advice.

Don't reinforce ALL attention seeking behaviours. This can often be an insecurity-based behaviour and you could enhance the possibility of separation anxiety and owner possessiveness being created by always giving in to their demands for

attention. Give them plenty of attention once they're settled in but try to avoid **always** responding to their demands for it.

Don't mess about with your rescue dog's feet – this is a very sensitive area (instinctively) for dogs, leave grooming, bathing and rubbing with a towel until they are a bit more familiar with you and a relationship of trust has been established. Your new rescue may smell quite unpleasant, and whilst some will tolerate being bathed, it could be another stressor for them on top of an already stressful time! if you can leave it a couple of days, they might feel more comfortable about you doing it.

**Don't take your rescue dog for walks for a few days.** They need time to decompress from everything that has happened to them before overwhelming them further with all the sights, sounds and smells of the outside world. We feel they need walks every day to be happy, but many dogs will not be used to our busy environments and find them scary & stressful, on top of the already stressful experiences they have been through leading up to their arrival with you. They will be tired enough with processing all that has and is happening to them, they need time to settle to get ready to take on the environment outside. (Google - Stress or trigger stacking in dogs for a more detailed explanation about this)

**Don't Let your rescue dog off the lead for AT LEAST several weeks** but probably much longer & with some never. Hire a secure field if you want to give them a good run around. Please do not risk your dog's life because you want to enjoy the sight of them 'running free' many dogs are very easily spooked and it wouldn't take much for them to bolt. In addition to that many of them have a **very high prey drive** and although they may seem like they're going to hang around with you, one whiff of something interesting and they could well be disappearing into the distance!

## WHAT TO EXPECT FOR THE FIRST FEW WEEKS?

When your rescue dog first arrives with you, it is important to be 100% aware and realise they **will need time to adjust and settle**. If I took one of my dogs and left them in a strange house where they didn't know anyone, I would expect them to be unsettled, upset, confused and stressed, and to display any range of behaviours which they would not normally display.

I would expect all this from a dog that has **never** had any upset in their life and has lived knowing nothing but love, safety and security. So, imagine how much worse it is for a rescue dog.

Some dogs cope with all of this remarkably well, but some don't, and it would serve adopters and fosterers better to assume that they won't cope and behave and handle them accordingly. That way, you are far more likely to prevent problems than if you assume they will be fine, or that they will be grateful for this wonderful life you

have offered them and don't provide them with the necessary consistency, boundaries and structure that they **need** at this most unstable of times.

## **IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER IN ORDER TO PROVIDE STRUCTURE IN THE EARLY WEEKS**

Have **all the equipment** you might need ready for when your dog arrives. That way you will be prepared.

Keep **YOUR** behaviour consistent. Your rescue dog will learn much quicker from knowing what is expected of him. Avoid confusing him by making sure everyone in the house is doing the same things.

**Provide a secure, safe place** for him to be left alone. Start doing this as soon as your dog arrives, even if only for 5 or 10 minutes at a time while you go elsewhere in the house. The more times you can repeat this from day one, the better your dog will cope with being left when you must go out for longer periods.

Establish a **routine** as much as possible and as quickly as possible. Your new arrival can gain a lot of confidence and reassurance from having a routine in place and knowing what to expect and when. This can help them settle more quickly and there will be plenty of time to develop their resilience to changes in routine once they are more settled.

## **TRAINING**

We have several accredited trainers on the team to provide you with consistent and FREE help and support. We only use force free training methods.

You have access to FREE online 4-week training clinics with [www.adolescentdogs.com/online-dog-training](http://www.adolescentdogs.com/online-dog-training)

There is a choice of courses available for you to complete with your foster dog.

You will only get out what you put in, early training will set your foster up for a much brighter future.

**Expect some problems** in the early settling in period and **be prepared** for it to be a bit stressful and unsettling for **everyone in the house** to start with.

You will find many training resources within the Foster Group on Facebook. We can provide all and any of these via email to you. Please just ask.



Dogs are particularly impressionable when they first arrive in a new environment, and how well you manage their behaviour during this transitional period will have a direct effect on how quickly they settle and become a well-adjusted member of the family.

Please plan to invest time during this period to socialise, teach and get acquainted with your new dog and his/her unique character.

### ***Possible Problems You May Encounter***

Resource guarding

Separation Anxiety

House soiling

Demanding Attention

Snatching at food

Escaping

Running off

Fear of new people

Fear of other dogs

Counter surfing

Bin Raiding

Not liking a lead being put on.

Pulling on the lead or not wanting to move when the lead is on

Stress behaviours (Chewing / Shredding)

Digging

If there is anything you are concerned about or unsure of, please discuss this with your us BEFORE you get your dog.

## **CONTACT US**

A group chat will be set up for you with members of our team who will provide help and support. Often, we are available outside of our usual opening hours.

Our opening hours are.

- Monday 10am – 6pm
- Tuesday 10am – 6pm
- Wednesday 10am – 6pm
- Thursday 10am – 6pm
- Friday 10am – 6pm
- Saturday 10am – 4pm
- Sunday 10am – 4pm

[www.phoenixrehomeing.co.uk/contact](http://www.phoenixrehomeing.co.uk/contact)

## **FURTHER RESOURCES**

Online dog training clinics [www.adolescentdogs.com/workshops](http://www.adolescentdogs.com/workshops)

Trigger Stacking: <http://www.woofliketomeet.com/category/about-adoption/trigger-stacking/>

Introducing dogs to each other: <http://www.woofliketomeet.com/2016/01/introducing-new-dogs-a-step-by-step-guide/>

## **WHEN IS MY DOG READY FOR ADOPTION?**

Some dogs are ready for adoption in just a few days. Other dogs may take many weeks, months or even more than a year to be ready to leave with a new family.

We ask that the dog is.

Walking on the lead

Sleeping through the night

Toilet trained or in the case of puppies making good progress.

Is in good health.

Social enough to meet prospective adopters.

When you believe your dog is ready, let us know and we will ask you to write up their advert.

This should include:

Their age, breed/s and brief background if known, size, whether they are cat/child tested (up to what age), how they are with people/visitors, what sort of home they are looking for, whether they would benefit from living with/without another dog. How they travel if known/where they sleep. If escape risk highlight 6ft secure fencing is a must. Include a short write up about their personality and what makes them unique, as well as any ongoing training needs adopter will need to commit to.

## **WHEN YOUR DOG IS ADVERTISED**

We will need GOOD photos and videos of your foster dog in order to advertise them for adoption.

We will pass you contact details of people we think could be suitable for your foster dog. Those applicants will have gone through our application process. Please do not give preferential treatment to friends or family members, they will need to go through the same application process as everyone else.

We ask that you contact applicants AS SOON AS POSSIBLE PLEASE them to talk about your dog. If all seems well, invite them to meet and walk the dog. If not suitable tell us, we will inform them. Delays in contacting them mean they ring, email, text and comment on social media posts because they haven't heard anything.

Meeting a dog is no guarantee of adoption. After any successful meeting we will arrange home checks for suitable applicants. If you do not think an applicant is suitable, cancel further meetings with them and TELL US! Applicants must travel to meet our dogs AT LEAST TWICE. All family members living in the home must meet a dog and be happy to proceed with the adoption.

### **WE DO NOT PERMIT SAME DAY ADOPTIONS.**

ALL APPLICANTS MUST GO AWAY AFTER A MEETING TO CAREFULLY CONSIDER ADOPTION. WE WILL DISCUSS WITH YOU HOW THE MEETING WENT AND WHETHER YOU CONSIDER THE APPLICANT A GOOD MATCH FOR YOUR FOSTER DOG.

Having a successful home check is no guarantee of adoption.

IN THE CASE OF MULTIPLE APPLICANTS, WITH YOUR HELP WE WILL CHOOSE THE MOST SUITABLE FAMILY FOR THE DOG.

## **TRIALS**

We offer approved adopters the opportunity to take our dogs on a 7 day, no obligation trial.

For trials to take place we ensure that the adoption fee is pre-paid in full and that a trial contract is completed and signed by the potential adopter.

**Please do not agree or suggest any trial periods to an adopter without first speaking to the team.**

A trial document template is available and is adjusted for the individual dog's needs and sent out and agreed with the prospective adopter before the dog leaves. A team member will complete the trial contract and provide it to the potential adopter.

It is important that any official emails or contracts are sent to applicants from the team. This enables us to keep a record of contact with applicants and takes the pressure off of our foster carers.

## **ADOPTION**

The adopter will have their post adoption training session completed by one of our accredited trainers. This is done in person where possible but may be carried out online via a video call.

Adopters need to complete an adoption contract online. This can be found at [www.phoenixrehoming.co.uk/forms](http://www.phoenixrehoming.co.uk/forms).

If the applicant has declined a 7-day trial this must be documented in the adoption contract.

Once the contract is received, the team will reregister the microchip into the new adopter's details and activate 5 weeks FREE pet insurance with Agria. T&Cs for the insurance will be sent to the adopter directly.

We will ask for good photographs of the dog for their adoption post.

#### In Summary

- At least 2 visits (must meet the whole family)
- Payment in full
- Trial contract
- Adoption contract
- Good photographs and videos
- Activation of 5 weeks free insurance
- Reregistration of microchip
- Training referral