



**INFORMATION
ON THE
COCKER SPANIEL
RE-HOMING AND RESCUE SCHEME**

ABOUT THE COCKER SPANIEL CLUB

The Cocker Spaniel Club is the Parent Club of the breed and was founded in 1902 with a membership of 35. Today, there are over 1500 members (both home and overseas). The Club holds annual Championship Show at Malvern in July as well as the now well-established Puppy Match held in January (for those Puppies who have won a Puppy Class at Championship Shows throughout the year). From 2004, the Match will also include a Veteran competition (for those Cockers who have won a Veteran class at a Championship Show). There is in addition an annual point's competition to find Cocker of the Year and Cocker Puppy of the Year, much sought after titles. Educational seminars are also organised from time to time. The Club co-ordinates a Rescue Scheme for those Cockers needing to be rehomed and also monitors hereditary problems in the breed, with an eye-testing session held at each Championship Show and the publication of an annual Welfare Report (detailing dogs that have been eye-tested and/or hip scored and listing those dogs that have been found to be affected with PRA or have produced a confirmed case of FN). All members receive a copy of the annual Year Book, a highly collectible publication detailing the Club's activities for the past year together with photos of members' Cockers. The Club also has a flourishing Field Trial Section which organises two annual Field Trial events.

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INFORMATION FOR RELINQUISHING OWNERS

Re-homing your Cocker Spaniel

Unfortunately for some owners, there is a time when there is no solution other than making a decision to re-home your Cocker Spaniel, whether it is a puppy or an adult. This could be for many reasons: domestic or personal (i.e. allergies, bereavement, separation, work commitments); behavioural or problematic (i.e. barking, behavioural, biting, chewing, destructive, hyper-active); or because the dog has not turned out to what one expected.

The first step to make is to contact the breeder (a responsible breeder will take back a dog they have bred at any point in its life) OR the Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme to seek advice on what to do next. Finding the right home for your dog involves a lot of effort and patience, a donation for the re-homing of your dog would be appreciated by the Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme.

Before re-homing your unwanted Cocker Spaniel, your decision must be given a lot of thought and consideration - once your pet is re-homed, you are not entitled to ask for the dog to be returned.

How The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme works

The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme has voluntary representatives throughout the UK (as detailed on the back cover of this leaflet), who are able to advise on how the re-homing process works.

On contacting an Area Representative, full details of the present owner will be taken including name, address and telephone number. All relevant information about the Cocker Spaniel to be re-homed will be requested, i.e. age, colour, sex, fully inoculated, neutered/spayed, microchipped, temperament, obedience, sociable with people or other dogs, any health issues and the reason for re-homing. It is important that the Area Representative receives honest and full details about the Cocker Spaniel to be put up for adoption. If your dog shows signs of aggression or defensive over something to the point of snapping or biting, you must realise that you are putting other people at risk and indeed yourself if there is a legal problem. The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme cannot accept the re-homing of a dog which has bitten anyone or showing signs of aggressive or untypical temperament. If deemed necessary, the decision of euthanasia of any re-homed/rescued Cocker Spaniel must be made by a Veterinary Surgeon in conjunction with the Area Representative and Regional Co-Ordinator. As hard as it is to face, putting a potentially dangerous biting dog to sleep is often the only safe and responsible option to take.

To assist the re-homing procedure of your Cocker Spaniel, the Area Representative will ask you to complete a Relinquishing Form to give as much background information on your dog as possible. This will enable the Area Representative to ensure the most suitable home is found for your Cocker Spaniel.

When your Cocker Spaniel is to be transferred over to the Re-homing and Rescue Scheme you will be asked to sign the Waiver of Ownership form. If the dog is jointly

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owned, both parties are required to sign this form. On signing the Waiver of Ownership the owner/s must be aware of their warrant and confirmation of the Cocker Spaniel to be re-homed and declaration that the dog is of sound temperament and has not bitten anyone.

After the Waiver of Ownership form has been signed and the transfer has been made, the owner has no remaining rights to the dog, is not entitled to any information as to the whereabouts of the dog's new home or temporary accommodation and has no claim for any payment for or in respect of the dog.

Aims & Objectives of The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme

The aim of The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme is to find a permanent and loving home for the Cocker Spaniel in need. Each dog is assessed with regard to physical fitness and temperament. Every potential home is carefully checked as to the suitability for the particular Cocker Spaniel to be re-homed. The Re-homing and Rescue Scheme does not operate on a "first come, first served" basis but rather to ensure that the Cocker Spaniel is matched up as far as possible with the most suitable new owners and home.

An Adoption Questionnaire is completed by the prospective owners to enable the Representative to ensure the most suitable home is found. If possible the prospective home is vetted by the Area Representative or a satisfactory reference (either written or verbally) will be obtained from a Veterinary Surgeon regarding the suitability of the person/s wishing to adopt the Cocker Spaniel.

Prospective owners will be advised that the adopted Cocker Spaniel cannot be used for breeding purposes and where appropriate should be spayed or neutered. Registration and pedigree papers are not handed over to the new owners. Vaccination certificates or medical history of the dog may be given to the new owner without disclosure of the previous owner's name and address.

A donation to The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme will be asked to be made by the prospective owners. Cocker Spaniels offered to the Re-homing and Rescue Scheme will not be purchased and will not be advertised in the national or local press.

The welfare of the Cocker Spaniel in need of re-homing is the first priority and any decisions taken will be in the best interests of the dog.

How you can assist in the Re-homing of your Cocker Spaniel

Your unwanted Cocker Spaniel will be much more appealing if they are clean and healthy, while in your ownership the dog is your responsibility. If they are in need of a bath and a trim, try to arrange this before the re-homing takes place. If they haven't had a check up within the last twelve months, take them to your Veterinary practice for a full check up. It is much more desirable for potential adopters to give a home to a Cocker Spaniel in good condition than taking on a dog which needs attention through the lack of care.

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Please do not expect an Area Representative to take your unwanted Cocker Spaniel immediately, this is not always feasible, there could be a delay in finding the right home or they already have other Cocker Spaniels in their care on a waiting list for re-homing.

At the time of transferring your Cocker Spaniel over to the Re-homing and Rescue Scheme it would be welcoming for the Area Representative to receive a useful note of the dog's traits, likes and dislikes, favourite toy or game, together with all feeding ingredients, dog toys, bedding, collar and lead. The Area Representative will pass this note on to the new owners when an adoption is taking place. This could help the settling-in period for the Cocker Spaniel to become easier for the new owner and less stressful for the re-homed dog. A donation from the relinquishing owners would be most appreciated towards the funding of the re-homing and rescue scheme.

Now, more than ever, in his parting days from you, the Cocker Spaniel deserves your best efforts.

INFORMATION FOR ADOPTIVE OWNERS

What is a Rescue Cocker Spaniel?

A rescue Cocker Spaniel is not necessarily a dog recovered from a life threatening situation but a dog that has had another owner prior to adoption. These dogs are re-homed for many reasons. Sometimes the reasons are personal (allergies, bereavement, divorce/separation, work commitments) but there is a time when the reason is with the dog himself (behavioural problems like barking, biting, chewing, disobedient). Some behavioural problems can be caused by the mismanagement of a dog as a youngster and with time and guidance the problems could be remedied. Occasionally, puppies are available but usually most of the re-homed or rescue Cocker Spaniels are adult.

The Advantages and Disadvantages of a Re-homed or Rescue Cocker Spaniel

The Area Representative finds out as much as is possible about the Cocker Spaniel which is up for adoption. Of course, some of this information received depends on the honesty or availability of the previous owners. This is followed up by the Area Representative based on their own experience and assessment of the dog.

Advice is given to adoptive owners on how to deal with any problems, though sometimes this can be more difficult than expected. Occasionally, there are dogs which are put forward for re-homing without knowing anything about him. Giving a home to an unwanted dog can be emotionally, physically and financially challenging! It can also be very rewarding and the home you offer may help to convert a canine delinquent into the perfect pet!

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Some re-homed/rescue Cocker Spaniels can be insecure at first and may like to sleep with a comfort item in its bed (an old, worn item of clothing and/or cuddly toy). It is advisable to establish house rules in a kind but consistent manner from day one, don't keep changing commands or sleeping arrangements and don't allow things "just for now".

Cocker Spaniels which have lived in kennels a long time may experience problems with housetraining. Treat this and other behaviour problems from his past sympathetically but firmly - and immediately. You cannot "make up to him" for the previous experience the dog has endured. Positive, reward based training, which encourages him to want to please you, is the most reliable method. Seek guidance from a local dog training club or your Area Representative.

If a Cocker Spaniel has been badly treated in his previous home, he may have short or long term health problems. You may need to work closely with a vet, so make sure you register with one as soon as possible. Veterinary insurance may be advisable immediately as it may be difficult to get this arranged if the dog develops long term health problems later.

Your re-homed/rescue Cocker Spaniel may seem to settle down with no difficulties, but then develop unexpected behavioural problems some time later. See this as part of his adapting to a new life rather than a personal failure or rejection. Continue your usual training routine and seek advice from your Area Representative or local dog training club if you need extra help or support.

What to know before offering a Cocker Spaniel a home

Your Area Representative should be able to advise you on various questions, such as:

- how many previous homes has he had?
- why did he leave them?
- why is he being re-homed now?
- how old is he?
- is he house trained?
- is he used to car travel, children or other pets?
- is he neutered, microchipped, wormed or inoculated?
- does he have on-going health or behavioural problems?

Don't be hesitant to enquire about any problems the Cocker Spaniel may have before the adoption takes place. Wait until the right dog comes along, but remember there could be a waiting time factor if the Area Representative has no Cocker Spaniel lined up or waiting to be adopted. If, when you are offered a Cocker Spaniel, you have any doubts about whether this is the right Cocker Spaniel for you, then it isn't. You will not be pressured into adopting any Cocker Spaniel that doesn't "feel right for you".

Prospective adopters will be asked to sign an Adoption form and make a donation to The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme, the amount should be appropriate to the age/health of the dog as well as the financial circumstances of the prospective owner/s. Donations help to cover The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing

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and Rescue Scheme's expenses such as food, kennelling fees and veterinary attention for the dogs under their care. You may consult your Area Representative if you are not sure what amount to donate.

In most cases, The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme will consider paying for inoculations, microchipping and neutering/spaying. The payment of further veterinary treatment will be decided on an individual basis. The adopter will be responsible to keep routine vaccinations up-to-date and not allow the dog to become out of control or allow the dog outside their premises unattended.

All re-homed/rescued Cocker Spaniels come without registration/pedigree papers and you have to sign an agreement not to breed from them. Certificates of vaccination, microchip and/or medical history of the dog will be given to the new owner without disclosure of the name/address of the previous owner. On-going support or advice will be provided if problems should arise in the future, the Area Representative from whom you adopted the Cocker Spaniel should be contacted in the first instance.

If, for any reason, you decide after some time you cannot keep the adopted Cocker Spaniel, you must contact your Area Representative to return the dog to them rather than re-homing it yourself.

The Cocker Spaniel Club Re-homing and Rescue Scheme reserves the right unto itself to repossess the adopted dog and rescind all ownership rights if at any time there is evidence of neglect, maltreatment or breach of legal obligations with regard to the re-homed/rescued Cocker Spaniel.