

Fostering for NESSR

for the dogs

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About NESSR

What is NESSR?

Northern English Springer Spaniel Rescue (NESSR) is a specialist non-profit making breed rescue that has been running for over 20 years and is a kennel club registered rescue and a registered charity.

What does NESSR do?

We primarily rescue and rehome discarded, unwanted and neglected English Springer Spaniels. It is an unfortunate fact of life that whilst arguably among the most cuddly of puppies, some young Springers find their welcome disappears as fast as their youth. After Christmas, Cynthia Turvey of Springer rescue receives a nightmare number of calls from people whose puppy from Santa has turned into the dog from hell.

But it is not only the young who suffer. In today's modern society an increasing number of older dogs have to be rehomed due to their owners divorcing, losing their jobs, emigrating, or other such 21st century related problems.

Does NESSR just help Springer Spaniels?

Some of our volunteers have experience of other breeds like Cavi's and Cockers. NESSR will help other breeds of dogs when it has the capacity and expertise to do so.

Where is NESSR based?

NESSR does not own a rescue centre or kennels. All the dogs are looked after in our volunteers own homes. This enables us to get to know the dogs and assess them before they are rehomed.

NESSR works primarily but not exclusively in the North East of England and Scottish borders.

However NESSR endeavours to help any Springer in need regardless of geographical location, thanks to a network of dedicated volunteers we are able to rescue springers from across the UK. If we are unable to help we try to find another rescue that can.

How do dogs come to NESSR?

The majority of dogs come directly to NESSR from their owners who are looking to rehome them due to a variety of reasons. NESSR also takes strays from pounds and occasionally helps other rescues when asked.

When owners hand over their dogs they are asked to sign a surrender form which means that the dog belongs to NESSR.

How does NESSR find new homes for the dogs?

Thanks to the growth of the internet NESSR takes advantage of websites to "advertise" the profiles of the dogs in it's care. This means we get enquiries from all over the UK for our dogs. NESSR also has a long standing reputation

in the North East and many people come back to NESSR looking for a new companion, when their NESSR springer passes over the bridge. We also get a lot of word of mouth recommendations.

What is NESSR's neutering policy?

NESSR neuters all dogs and bitches unless our vets feels it would be detrimental to their health. Puppies are homed with a strict neutering agreement which we do check up on.

How does NESSR fund it's work?

NESSR is a non-profit making organisation. We fund our work from

- Donations made when people adopt a dog
- Donations given by our supporters
- The sale of items made by volunteers
- Raffles and Tombolas
- The New NESSR Weather Lottery
- Online auctions and competitions on our Forum and other websites.

How is the money spent that is raised for NESSR?

100% of the money raised for NESSR goes towards the direct work of rescuing and rehoming dogs. All of our "staff" are volunteers. We do not have a rescue centre, volunteers look after the dogs in their own homes. We pay for food and veterinary treatment of all the dogs that come into NESSR's care.

About the NESSR Dogs

Where do the dogs come from?

- Pounds - strays that are picked up by the dog warden, we will have no history of them.
- Rehomes – Owners who have surrendered dogs to us due to a wide variety of reasons. Ideally we would have a full history of the dogs but sometimes we are not always told the truth.
- Other rescues – Occasionally we are asked to help other rescues with springers that have come into their care.

What should I do if I hear about a dog that needs a rescue space?

If you hear about a dog that needs a rescue space and you would like NESSR to help then you must contact Cynthia immediately. She will then speak directly to the owner, pound, vet or person who is in possession of the dog to decide if NESSR can help. Under no circumstances must you take a dog in on behalf of NESSR without prior approval of Cynthia. Failure to gain Cynthia's permission will mean that the dog may not get NESSR back up.

What sort of dogs need fostering?

NESSR has dogs of all ages that need fostering. Predominately we have a need for carers for dogs over the age of two because these are often slower to home. We do get young dogs in and so some of our foster carers look after these.

Can I foster a puppy?

We do not get many young puppies in, when we do they are usually homed quickly to carefully selected homes. Older puppies do sometimes need foster carers in which case we would contact you to ask if you were willing to help.

What issues do the rescue dogs have?

Every dog is different and will display different behaviours. Some are more difficult than others. You will need to be clear about what you can handle and what you can't so that we know which dogs to place with you.

Most dogs come in are easy and a dream to look after but there are always a few that have some issues which may need to be assessed.

Some behaviour you might expect to see;

- Poor recall
- Jumping up
- Food aggression
- Chewing household items
- Separation Anxiety
- Barking & Whining (especially at night)
- Lack of housetraining
- Nervousness with people and/ or other dogs
- Over boisterous

- In ability to switch off and relax so on the go all the time
- Counter Surfing
- Stealing food

We are always on hand to give advice about any behaviour, so please do not struggle on alone.

Fostering for NESSR

Thank you for giving your time and home to a NESSR dog. Our Foster Carers are vital to the charity as it enables our dogs to receive first class care in a home environment whilst their needs are assessed and they are prepared for rehoming.

What is expected of NESSR foster carers?

We expect all our foster carers to provide a good level of care for our dogs. This includes providing them with a warm dry bed (inside your home unless otherwise agreed). This includes providing food and water and exercise. Basically to treat the dog as if it was your own but with in our guidelines and using common sense.

How long will the dog stay with me?

From the moment a dog comes into NESSR our aim is to assess them and to rehome them as quickly as possible to meet the needs of each dog. For some dogs it may be a matter of days for others it will be weeks or months. Before you take on an individual dog it will be discussed roughly how long we expect that dog to be in your care. If you are only able to offer a set time period then please let us know at the start.

How much will I know about the dog before it comes to me?

You will know everything we know. But please bare in mind that sometimes we are not always told the truth by previous owners. Also some dogs will display different behaviours when they are no longer in familiar surrounding. You will need to give your Foster Dog time to settle. Some do so instantly others can take longer.

What happens if the Foster Dog does not get on with my own dogs?

We will have already asked you what sort of dog will suit your own family circumstances however, dogs can be unpredictable and sometimes they do not get on. There may be a few minor gumbles when the foster dog first comes into your home. Where possible let them sort it out themselves BUT if the fights escalate please let us know ASAP. We will either advise you how to deal with the situation and/or arrange to have the dog moved.

What happens if the Foster Dog is aggressive towards me or my family?

If a Foster Dog starts showing aggression to you or any other family member then we must be informed IMMEDIATELY. We will advise you on how to deal with the behaviour. If there is a chance that you or anyone else could get bitten and hurt then we will take action to remove that dog. Usually when this happens they end up with Cynthia or another very experienced dog handler for an in depth assessment.

Where should the foster dog sleep?

We would prefer it if foster dogs are kept either crated at night or kept in a room, such as a kitchen with a dog bed. Ideally you should not let a foster dog have the run of the house or sleep on your own bed or bedroom. This is for a variety of reasons

- Not all foster dogs are 100% housetrained so it will prevent potential accidents at night.
- Not all foster dogs have lived in houses so may feel uncomfortable with that much freedom.
- Foster dogs may chew so it will prevent items being destroyed.
- If we don't know the full history of a dog it is safer to keep it in one room rather than your own bedroom.
- A new home may not wish to let the dog sleep on their bed so will find it hard to settle the Foster Dog into it's forever home if it is given too much freedom whilst in foster care.

What should I feed the foster dog?

Normally foster carers feed the foster dogs what ever they feed their own dogs. However if you raw feed it might be better to keep the foster dog in a complete food as this is what most new owners will want to feed their dog. If the dog needs a special diet or a particular food we will tell you this. NESSR will pay for the dogs food if you wish.

We advise that you feed the foster dog separately to your own either in a crate or another room, this is to prevent any disagreements over food.

How should I exercise the Foster Dog?

It is usual to keep a new dog on lead for the first few days, unless advised otherwise you will then be able to let them off alongside your own dogs. HOWEVER sometimes we know that a particular dog has serious recall issues, in which case it will be advised to keep them on lead unless you can let them off somewhere secure.

DO NOT LET ANY FOSTER DOGS OFF LEAD AROUND LIVESTOCK SUCH AS SHEEP.

Can I bath and groom the Foster Dog?

Yes you may need to bath the dog when it first comes to you. However, normally we would advise that you make sure the dog trusts you and is happy to be handled before you subject it to the stress of grooming. Remember this dog may never have seen a brush or comb before. If the dog clearly does not like it and is stressed then stop.

How should the Foster Dog travel in my car?

We advise that foster dogs are kept either crated, behind a dog guard or restrained with a car harness when travelling in a car. This is in accordance with the law and also to keep you, other passengers and the dog safe during transport.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Decisions to move a dog

From time to time we may feel that a dogs needs would be best met with a different foster carer. This is not a criticism of your care or abilities but sometimes it becomes clear that there are issues or behaviours that may be best looked after with an experienced carer. Or a bitch may have come into season and we feel it would be less risk of the dog was moved to a more isolated home. What ever our reasons we will discuss this with you BUT the final decision is ours so if you are unable to help with transporting the dog to it's new carer we will arrange for this to be done.

We recognise that you will make a bond with your foster dog but we have been involved in rescue for over 30 years so we do know what we are doing and the dogs are always our no. 1 priority.

Foster Dogs & Veterinary Treatment

What is a NESSR Dogs needs veterinary treatment?

If a dog in your care needs non-emergency (eg not immediately life threatening) veterinary treatment then you must contact Cynthia to discuss your concerns and for authorisation. NESSR will only pay the vet bills for a dog where it was previously authorised or where it was treatment for a life threatening emergency. Cynthia may wish to discuss the treatment plan with the vet before authorising treatment. This is to ensure that it is necessary and some drugs we may be able source cheaper than your vet.

If the dog has had an accident or has collapsed and it is life threatening take to the vets immediately and try to contact Cynthia or one of the other rehoming co-ordinators. If you can not contact any of the co-ordinators leave a message and a contact number for you and the vet but proceed with veterinary advice.

Who pays for the NESSR foster dogs vet bills?

NESSR will pay for the vet bills where we have authorised it. We may wish to discuss the treatment plan with the vet before authorising it or receive a quote for treatment prior to authorisation. NESSR is a charity, our funds are limited, we will never refuse treatment to a dog that needs it but if we need to we will move a dog to receive more cost effective veterinary treatment elsewhere.

When you are taking a dog to the vet please make it clear to them that the dog IS NOT INSURED and that treatment is paid for out of charitable funds.

What is NESSR's Vaccination Policy?

It is our policy that ALL NESSR DOGS be rehomed with their vaccinations up to date. Therefore if a dog comes in that needs a booster or needs their vaccinations restarting you will be told this and asked to take them to the vets for this. Our policy is not negotiable.

What is NESSR's neutering policy?

It is our policy that ALL NESSR dogs be rehomed neutered unless they are too young or there is a medical reason why neutering can not take place at that time. Where dogs are rehomed unneutered it is always with a very strict neutering agreement. This is not negotiable.

If you are fostering a dog that is not neutered Cynthia will contact you and your vet to arrange a time to have the dog go for it's operation. It is important that it is done as soon as possible to speed up rehoming.

Note: Bitches in Season

If you are caring for a bitch that comes into season you must inform Cynthia immediately and restrict the dog to the house. Under no circumstances must you take that dog out, let it off lead or allow any contact with an entire male

dog. If you suspect at any point that a bitch in season may have accidentally mated with an entire dog you must contact Cynthia immediately.

NESSR Rehoming Guidelines

How are NESSR dogs rehomed?

When a dog comes in we may already have a home in mind with someone who has been homechecked. If this is the case we will tell you. If we do not have a home waiting and the dog does not need a long assessment we will advertise their profile on the NESSR forum straight away.

People then call the relevant rehoming co-ordinator who will arrange the relevant checks. If you know someone interested in the dog you are fostering then they must fill out the application form and contact the relevant re-homing co-ordinator. Under no circumstances must you rehome the dog yourself or promise the dog to a person. Every applicant is assessed by a rehoming co-ordinator.

What checks does NESSR carry out on new homes?

All new homes are thoroughly vetted. We carry out homechecks, vet references and where necessary personal references.

When assessing a potential home we are looking for how that home will meet the needs of the springer in our care. What may suit one springer may not suit another so we will consider people who

- Work
- Have children
- Live in a flat
- Working dog homes

What if I decide I would like to keep the dog?

We will need to know quickly especially if it is a young dog and we are already searching for a home. You will have to have a discussion with Cynthia and to make sure that you are able to meet the needs of that dog for the rest of its life. If she agrees then you will need to complete an adoption form and make a donation.

Who makes the decision as to who gets a NESSR dog?

We will ask you to let us know how the dog is settling and to find out more about its characteristics and behaviours so that we know what sort of home we are looking for. You can not decide who can adopt the dog.

The final decision to allow someone to adopt a NESSR dog lies with Cynthia. All the rehoming co-ordinators will discuss the potential new home with her to get final approval for the rehoming to go ahead.

Does NESSR have an adoption agreement?

Yes, all new homes are asked to sign an adoption agreement. This means that should an owner be unable to look after the dog at any point in the future then NESSR would take it back without question. The agreement also states how we expect a dog to be treated and that it can not be used for dog fighting or breeding.

Does NESSR ask for a set donation when people adopt a dog?

Whilst we do not have a set donation it costs on average £120 to £160 to rescue each dog with some costing much more, so we ask all new homes to reflect this in their donation. People offering for example £50 are asked to reconsider whether they can afford the dog.

Donations must be given at the time of adoption, it can not be sent on later or paid in installments.

What happens when a dog is given to its new owner

If you are new to fostering ideally we like the actual rehoming to be handled by one of our Rehoming Coordinators or an experienced foster carer. If however you end up doing the rehoming you will be sent all the relevant paperwork for the new family to sign. This must be done before the dog is handed over.

The family must also leave a donation either in the form of cash or a cheque (payable to NESSR). We will not accept payments to be sent on afterwards as sadly we know most of the time this rarely happens. If the family can not give the donation at the time of picking a dog up please ring one of the Rehoming co-ordinators immediately. It is likely that we will not allow the dog to be adopted at that time.

Once all the paperwork is signed and the donation given this needs to be sent up to Cynthia ASAP.

Does NESSR check up on dogs it rehomes?

Yes, most of the time NESSR dog owners keep in touch with the rescue, but we do try to keep in contact especially during the first few months a dog is homed. Our adoption agreement gives us the right to check up on a dog if we want to and also to remove a dog if we feel it is being mistreated.

Most new owners keep in contact with NESSR and the dogs foster carer so you will get updates. It is hard to say good bye but the dogs will be happy in their new homes.

**THANK YOU FOR GIVING YOUR TIME TO
HELP A DOG IN NEED.**

Cynthia Turvey

NESSR Fostering Agreement

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

1 The dog remains the legal property of NESSR, all decisions about it's veterinary treatment and rehoming will be made by NESSR.

- 2 The dog will not, under any circumstances, be used for breeding, research, dog fighting or .the purposes of financial gain whilst under the care of it's foster carer.
- 3 The dog will be properly housed with ample living space, clean, warm and dry sleeping quarters.
- 4 The dog will receive appropriate daily exercise and will not be allowed to roam loose unattended. It will wear a collar with an identity disc stating NESSR's name, address and telephone number. (This is now a legal requirement).
- 5 The dog will be properly fed and receive such grooming and approved veterinary or other attention as to maintain it in good health and physical condition.
- 6 The dog will not be left chained/ tied up, confined in a small space or left for prolonged periods without attention.
- 7 The dog will not be handled harshly, receive excessive physical punishment nor be maltreated in any way whatsoever. ALL agreed training will be by humane methods and in accordance with the above.
- 8 The dog will not be sold, given away or released into the care of other person/s other than a representative of NESSR or a new home as agreed by NESSR.

I ALSO AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING TERMS OF FOSTERING

- 1 I will provide NESSR with regular information and updates about the dog whilst it is in my care. I will allow identified members of the NESSR to visit the dog to ascertain it's progress, condition etc: whilst it is in my care.
- 2 If the dog becomes involved in any legal prosecution I will immediately advise NESSR.

I ALSO UNDERSTAND THE FOLLOWING

1. Whilst NESSR have taken reasonable precautions to ensure physical and mental soundness of the above dog, this is not a guaranteed.
2. If I fall breach of the above conditions the dog must be returned without delay or question into the care of NESSR.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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