

# ALL ABOUT ASTRA

## What you need to know about ASTRA border collies and Astra Sheepdogs Ltd.

At Astra Sheepdogs Ltd. we have been full-time professional breeders for the last 30 years. We have been licensed for over 20 years (previously in Scotland), and by Shropshire Council for 7 years (licence number 23/00318/AIAL) and are inspected regularly.

We love our dogs, and their welfare and health is of paramount importance to us. This is not just because they provide our complete livelihood and future; we care for them to the best of our ability. The proof is in the fact that for many years we have averaged nine puppies per litter, three more than the national average for the breed. This can only be achieved with healthy bitches who live a stress free, happy life.

### A licensed business

English puppy breeding legislation is now very detailed and requires extremely high standards of theory and practical care and facilities to be met.

Technically, you are a breeder the instant your first litter is born. We believe that for the protection of the puppies and their new owners, every single litter of puppies produced and sold should meet those same licensing standards and, in effect, be fully traceable back to the breeder.

In our opinion, breeders should not be allowed to treat this important and sometimes, life-threatening process as a hobby without full training, understanding and appropriate experience. The fact that we are licenced confirms that we are operating as a recognised business with consumer protection, which you will not get if you purchase from a private individual.

### Our dogs and how we care for them

All our bitches and studs are chosen for their natural herding ability, ease of training and powerful ability to move sheep. They also are DNA health tested and, most importantly, all have wonderful natures. Many of our dogs go back 8 or 9 generations to our foundation girls and boys in 1994, so we know our bloodlines better than most breeders would, giving us history to be able to reasonably predict working ability and health.

All our puppies are born and raised in our home until at least six weeks of age, sometimes longer. They then move to purpose built large runs right next to our house so they can still come in and socialise with us. You'll be able to see videos and pictures of them socialising with us on the google photo albums on all the litter pages [on our website](#).

Because we have a larger than average set-up and try to cover all the needs of our dogs and puppies, we often employ extra staff during busy puppy-rearing times so we can be sure of giving our dogs the essential one-to-one time with a human every day.

When we are not expecting visitors, the dogs also spend most of their days out in small family groups playing with each other or being trained to work sheep. Sometimes we receive several visitors in a day, certainly in a week, so our pups will normally get more attention and socialisation than most litters from smaller (hobby) breeders.

We hide nothing: you are welcome to make an appointment to view our puppies and judge for yourself. Please be aware that our dogs are kept part-time in kennels, and we use crates as part of the house-training process.

## See our pups in action

Our [YouTube channel](#) has many videos of our previous puppies and young dogs going to sheep. The best place to see our current litters is on the litter pages [of our website](#) or on our [ASTRA Sheepdog Centre Facebook page](#).

Looking for a family pet?

***We mainly breed our ASTRA border collies to produce the next generation of quality working sheepdogs to work on farms around the world, not to supply family pets.***

It is a fact that not all border collies make perfect pets. Despite this, due to our experienced and proven selection process, most of our puppies *do* make great pets — but they need direction and dedicated owners to achieve this. We are not looking to breed specifically for a growing pet market and are in the process of reducing the number of border collie litters we produce.

We will in the future only breed pure registered border collies to provide us replacements to our own sheepdogs, we will then keep a few pups from each litter and select from the boys and girls we like the best and feel can make the best contribution towards the improvement of the shepherd's dog.

To provide suitable active families amazing pets we have for the last 5 years used some of our more laid-back border collie girls — in between their sheepdog training and other work — to help breed Border Colloodles (Border collie x Poodle) to give families a purpose-bred, health tested active pet.

This is an amazing cross between the border collie and the poodle and comes in toy, miniature, and standard sizes. We have now been breeding these for over five years. They are very popular and proving to be a better active family pet than either pure parent.

For more information, please visit our dedicated website, [Shamari Family Friends](#).