

# YOUR ASTRA PUPPY

## Our deposit and selection process

Astra Sheepdogs Ltd has over 30 years' experience of successfully helping to match our new owners to the puppy with the most perfect character for your lifestyle, experience, and goals.

### **Pup Selection criteria**

Colour and coat and aesthetic do not have an impact on the dog's adult character, working ability or suitability for one's work/pet requirements – believe me, I know from vast experience that it is far easier to live with the wrong aesthetics than the unsuitable match of character and work ethic/ability. We don't get to choose our human family so make every effort to get it right with your canine family and workmate.

**Healthy dogs.** We have recorded health issues within our bloodlines for over 30 years and have researched/studied every defect and health problem ever shown up in my dogs in a naive attempt to try to thwart nature to prevent further health issues in future litters. In 2014 we started and run the extensive encyclopaedia on Facebook [ISDS Bordercollie - Health Forum](#).

No disrespect, but if you want a pup based initially on aesthetics or are unwilling to continue to learn everything possible about your dog's needs and health with an open and reasonable mind, please move on elsewhere, at my age, I personally only have time to work with those who have the same level passion and dedication as I have.

For those special people, if you want the most suitable dog for your lifestyle and work needs, you have now found the most forward thinking, knowledgeable and helpful breeder of border collies in the world, dedicated to the quest of producing better and better working sheepdogs.

If you don't appreciate the truth, I will not apologise for my abruptness, so please excuse our passion, it makes me black and white and I tell it like it is, you may not like it that I am not your friend, I am the mother of your ASTRA SHEEPDOG and will go to all levels to protect them and help you protect them, as if they were my own human child.

### **Welcome to the start of your ASTRA SHEEPDOG JOURNEY.**

As the breeder, we are likely to keep one or more puppies from the litter. You will not get a choice of pup until we have made our selections. Because we select primarily by **character**, to ensure the puppy has the potential to do the job it is required to do — which for us, is first and foremost, will be sheep work, we will choose which pups we are offering for sale as close to eight weeks as possible, occasionally this will be 10 weeks. Sometimes we know, earlier if we will not keep specific pups and these will be available for you to select.

We will select up to 4 pups to “grow on to sheep exposure” sometimes this process takes us up to 16 weeks of age, at which our second-choice pups, are then offered for sale, usually for export, as they will

have been vaccinated for rabies at 12 weeks and often kept by us till 16 weeks whilst making our own choice.

Because our dogs are bred to work sheep, we do prefer that our pups are placed with **people wanting to work their dog on sheep and/or doing some competitive performance dog sports** like agility, heel work to music, obedience, working trials, Treibball, rally obedience or service dog work such as search and rescue, or dogs for the disabled, etc.

If you are primarily wanting a family pet, please expect that we will most likely select the puppy for you which we think is best suited to you and your family, and you may well not have any choice, this is because you will require a pup with the potential to SETTLE without loads of work, many of our pups will do this but some of our litters will be high drive herding lines whilst the majority will have been bred to include the valuable "Off Switch, we will NOT offer a "pet only" home a pup we do not think will have the ability to CHILL. Over 30 years, 100's of our puppies have made fantastic active family pets so please still apply if you think you can offer a pup lots of brain training and everyday family tasks and varied activities.

## **Warnings**

Although it might appear so, we **do not breed** specifically for the dog's **colour and looks**. Though we enjoy all the different looks border collies have to offer, our top criteria in breeding are temperament and working ability with equal importance placed on health and everything else will follow.

It is understandable that you wish to select your puppy because it has a specific colour or markings, we strongly advise that you should make the puppy's character the primary driver in the selection process.

**The wrong character is much harder to live with than the wrong white markings, coat colour or coat length.**

We reserve the right to charge more or even refuse a sale, if a buyer insists on having a specific colour without sufficient regard to character and working ability, as it reduces the chance of you getting the absolute best character pup for your needs.

**Providing the character is suitable, we will endeavour to help you choose a puppy whose colour and looks you prefer, should one be available.**

We have the same reservations regarding the selection of a **male versus female** puppy.

If you are not going to breed and intend to neuter or spay your dog, there is currently no scientific evidence to say that a spayed bitch is better in character or temperament or working ability than a neutered male. (We'd be happy to explain why from the point of view of our experience and studies.)

We also will not be supplying **two puppies of the same age to the same family**.

We do not think this is in the best interest of the family or the puppy/puppies, as time must be spent with each pup individually or trouble will result. We are happy to provide additional information on this subject if requested.

## The matching process

Through many years of experience, we know it is essential for the puppy's character to be well formed (no earlier than seven weeks of age) before we start matching pups to prospective owners' character, requirements, and lifestyle. We do not choose our own puppies before this age, so will not be able to offer you any choice either until we have made our selection.

To help in this matching process, is it very helpful for us to know if there is any pup you will not take under any circumstances — for example a pup with blue eyes, merle, black face, white face etc. If you consciously dislike the pup's appearance it will be difficult for you to adapt to the pup and bring out its full potential to be your next working partner and/or companion.

We do not keep an actual waiting list for the border collies, so please keep an eye on our [Facebook page](#) and [website](#) for details of new-born pups, [we do have a mailing list](#).

You are most welcome to come and visit as often as you wish, if the puppy you want is available and suitable, we will happily reserve that specific puppy (subject to its character being suitable) for you to collect, whenever you place a deposit.

You may place a deposit at any time, by placing a deposit this ensures you are on the LIST to be matched to a suitable puppy when the time comes. Once a litter is born, we will take deposits, if we have not already filled the deposit list.

The deposit is normally non-refundable but is subject to us offering you a **suitable puppy by character**, your deposit is valid for up to 12 months and is transferable to any suitable litter to ensure the best matching process. If we fail to match you to a suitable puppy within this time, we will refund your deposit. (see 'Deposits' below).

When booking a puppy from an available litter, we ask you to choose three puppies in order of preference, to help us match you to your choice of puppy based on its looks once the character is matched.

Final matchings are made in collaboration with you, either by Zoom (using the live webcam) or, **most likely, when you visit us**.

## Deposits

After your zoom call, if you are approved as a potential owner, we will email you with instructions on how to place a deposit and secure a puppy from one of our litters. We will then help you make a final choice based on the character of the puppies at eight to ten weeks of age.

This is a non-refundable deposit and will secure you a puppy for that litter or any other suitable litter. If at 10 weeks there is no suitable pup by character, the deposit is transferred to the next available litter.

We guarantee you a puppy within the following 12 months unless there is none available with a suitable character — in which case we will refund your deposit.

A deposit refund is also available if you have placed this before visiting our property (see Important Note below)

Once we have received your deposit you will be sent our extensive Puppy Instruction Manual.

Once we have matched you to a puppy and arranged a collection date you will be sent login details to our amazing ONLINE 8-week puppy power training course, valued at £499.00 – **you get it FREE.**

### **Collection or delivery of your puppy.**

Puppies will be ready to go to their new homes at no earlier than eight weeks old. Your puppy must be collected by an agreed date or additional charges will be made. (These will not apply if you are purchasing an older puppy.)

Our puppies have been delivered all over the world, often to owners who are looking for their second, third, fourth or fifth ASTRA collie, and we are experienced in all aspects of travel. So please ask us about delivery either within the UK or abroad. We can deliver to a convenient meeting point or direct to your home within the UK.

### **Important note**

We retain the right to refuse to sell you a pup if, at any time before and during collection/delivery of your puppy, we feel you are not sufficiently knowledgeable to provide a reasonable level of care for our puppy, or we feel that you are not understanding and attempting to follow the guidance issued in our emails and Puppy Instruction Manual.

This works both ways: if you are unhappy with the welfare of our dogs when you visit for the first time, you also have the right to be refunded any deposit paid which was made before you visited our property. This claim must be issued verbally whilst you are still on our premises, then sent in writing, and be based on clear evidence that we have not met the minimum licensing and legislation requirements, and not that you just don't like the way we do things like using crates for house training, for example.

We encourage you to be open and honest and tell us your concerns directly during your visit, so we can explain why we do what we do, and why.

Again, we strive to always treat everyone fairly with understanding, and every situation/request is individual and in some exceptional situations we will be happy to refund your deposit.