

THE FATE OF AN EX-RACER



RSPCA

Each year about 10,000 racing greyhounds are 'retired' at the age of four in the UK. Tragically, 'retirement' can mean they are humanely destroyed, shot, drowned or exported to a hot country to race in terrible conditions. Some owners simply abandon the dog once it is no longer able to earn its keep. These dogs will either die on the streets or get picked up by local authority pounds or are rehomed by animal welfare rescue charities. These fates are unacceptable and the rehoming organisations simply cannot cope with the numbers of greyhounds desperately in need of good homes.

Some owners do make provisions for their dog's retirement, by either keeping the dog as a pet or by rehoming it independently or with the help of a charity. Animal welfare charities are always available to give advice, but cannot guarantee an immediate home and so owners wishing to rehome their dog this way should contact the charity as early as possible. The animal welfare charities receive no government money, and rely entirely on public support and volunteer time to find greyhounds good homes and carry out home checks.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THE GREYHOUND FORUM AND APGAW PLEASE CONTACT:

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LET'S WORK TOGETHER



GREYHOUND RESCUE WALES COVER: ROBIN CULLEY/RSPCA PHOTOLIBRARY

Members of the National Assembly for Wales and animal welfare organisations founded the All Party Group for Animal Welfare in 2000. The group's inaugural meeting discussed the welfare of racing greyhounds after their racing career and commissioned a study. In 2003, following the publication of that report, the Welsh Greyhounds Forum was set up. Members from both the industry and animal welfare organisations meet to discuss the needs of greyhounds in Wales.

A dog should never be purchased on impulse, make sure you find out what the implications are for owning any dog. Contact one of the organisations listed below for advice about greyhounds.

- Dogs Trust: 01656 725345
- Greyhound Rescue Wales: 07071 881068
- RSPCA: 0870 3335 999

For information about racing a greyhound please call:

- Bedwellte Race Track: 01443 831072
- Swansea Greyhound Stadium: 01792 579368
- Valley Stadium: 07961 995760



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru National Assembly for Wales

All Party Group for Animal Welfare



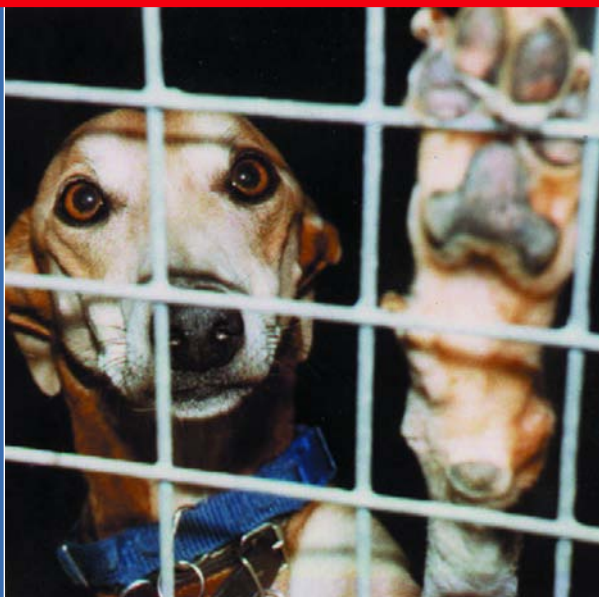
Owning a greyhound

“Give them the life they deserve”

by **THE WELSH GREYHOUNDS FORUM:**

Bedwellte Race Track, Dogs Trust, Greyhound Rescue Wales
RSPCA Cymru, Swansea Greyhound Stadium, Valley Stadium

HISTORY



GREYHOUND RESCUE WALES

The word 'grey' in greyhound is an old Saxon term for a running dog and is not a reference to the animal's colour.

The greyhound is one of the oldest purebred dog breeds and has barely changed in centuries, unlike many modern breeds of dog. Paintings of greyhounds can be seen inside the pyramids as these dogs were companions to the Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt.

Greyhounds have been bred to hunt by outrunning their quarry, but in spite of their fearsome speed (they are the 18th fastest land mammal) they are gentle and sociable animals. They are healthy dogs and can live for 12–15 years when well cared for.

Registered greyhound racing began in the UK in the 1920s and has been a major spectator sport ever since. However, greyhounds retire from racing at about 4–5 years of age, so there are always many ex-racing dogs looking for permanent, loving homes.

OWNING A RACING GREYHOUND

It is important to know that owning a racing or retired greyhound will cost both time and money.

The welfare costs will include:

- routine veterinary fees
- insurance
- specialised feeds and supplements
- transport to and from the tracks
- coats for walking, training and racing
- entry fees
- time – walking, training, trialling and lay-off time for a bitch in season.

It is also important to give consideration to the dog's future when its racing career is over at the age of four. As greyhounds make excellent pets many owners keep their dogs, which is usually the best outcome for the dog.

The three racing tracks in Wales are unregistered and independent and so the Welsh Greyhounds Forum exists to help protect greyhound welfare. The Forum is looking at setting up welfare measures for Welsh racing greyhounds such as a fair and independent form of identification, and increasing the number of homes available for retiring dogs.

“Talk to the tracks before deciding on getting a greyhound for racing – you may be surprised, there is less money in it than you might think. We also urge people to consider the dogs’ long-term future so as to give them the life they deserve.”

Lorraine Barrett AM,
Chair of the Welsh Greyhounds Forum



All Party Group for Animal Welfare

THE FAMILY PET



ANDREW FORSYTH/RSPCA PHOTO LIBRARY

Ideal companions – greyhounds love company.

They can often be quite lazy dogs, and like to spend their time snoozing in a warm part of the house. Like most dogs they don't like to be left alone for long periods of time. Greyhound owners must be responsible; they are athletic dogs and some are capable of jumping a six-foot fence, and initially ex-racing dogs may chase smaller animals until they are socialised.

A greyhound's star qualities:

- **gentle** – they tend to be confident and outgoing
- **happy on the lead** – two 20-minute walks a day is enough
- **docile** – they are used to an inactive kennel life
- **adaptable** – they can be housetrained very quickly
- **feed** – they are rarely fussy eaters
- **pedigree breed** – as yet there are no pedigree associated problems
- **non-stick coat** – it's true, they come back from walks clean
- **size** – they are leggy, but are quiet dogs and sleep in their own beds.