

GBGB Responsible Homing Policy

Overview

GBGB is committed to the principle that every racing greyhound should have a long, happy, and healthy retirement. Owning a racing greyhound carries a responsibility that goes beyond its racing life and it is the last registered owner's obligation, as per Rule 18 of the GBGB Rules of Racing, to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for their greyhound's retirement.

Meeting this responsibility means that the racing owner, or delegated person, has carried out due diligence on the homing placement of their greyhound and is confident that the greyhound will have a safe and secure retirement where its ongoing welfare needs will be met.

This Policy sets out the necessary conditions for any greyhound exiting GBGB licensed racing and the retirement destinations available. In all scenarios, the greyhound's health, welfare, and future quality of life must be the primary consideration.

Reporting a retirement

The last registered owner of a GBGB registered greyhound is required to inform GBGB of its retirement destination by completing a GBGB Greyhound Retirement Form or reporting the retirement via the GBGB Owner/Trainer Portal. This must be fully and accurately completed and the GBGB notified within 28 days of the greyhound retiring from racing (Rule 18).

The Retirement Form must be countersigned by the new owner of the greyhound or homing charity representative or, if reporting the retirement online, full contact details including a valid email address must be supplied. By doing so, the new owner or charity permits GBGB to contact them to verify their details and to ensure all is well with the retirement placement.

During the follow-up on the greyhound's retirement placement, GBGB will record the new owner's details against the greyhound's microchip on the GBGB Registry. This will ensure that the new owner can be contacted and reunited with their greyhound should it stray.

If a racing owner does not submit a greyhound's Retirement Form within the required timeframe or has submitted false, misleading, or inaccurate information, this will result in disciplinary action.

Conditions of retirement

Before each greyhound enters its retirement destination, the following shall be observed:

- The greyhound must be homed in good condition, with up-to-date vaccinations and up-to-date flea and worm treatment.

- Any periodontal disease present in the greyhound must be treated appropriately prior to it being homed.
- A valid vaccination card signed by the veterinary surgeon must accompany each greyhound.
- If a greyhound is being placed in the care of a homing charity or a new pet home, the greyhound shall be neutered/spayed prior to being transferred to its retirement destination. If a bitch is in season, she should remain with the trainer/owner until the season has finished and then suitable arrangements must be made for the bitch to be spayed.
- The new owner or homing charity must be provided with veterinary and behavioural information about the individual greyhound by its owner/trainer, including any ongoing health issues, previous injuries, and specific behavioural traits.

Retirement destinations

The following options are available to racing owners retiring their greyhound from GBGB racing. The racing owner must contact the GBGB for further guidance if their proposed retirement destination does not match any of the following listed options:

A: The greyhound is retained by its racing owner/trainer

GBGB welcomes racing owners or trainers who wish to take their retired greyhound home with them as a pet. Once GBGB is in receipt of the completed Retirement Form and proof of neuter/dental check, the owner's GRS contribution will be refunded.

If the retired greyhound is to be kept as a pet by the trainer in their residential kennels, the trainer must be aware of the specific husbandry requirements that it will need throughout its retirement years. These greyhounds will fall under the remit of GBGB's Stipendiary Steward and Regional Regulatory Veterinary Surgeon kennel inspections.

If a GBGB licensed trainer intends to keep a greyhound at their premises for breeding following their racing career, the stud dog, bitch, and any puppies accommodated in GBGB licensed residential kennels will fall under the remit of GBGB inspections. The racing owner's GRS bond contribution will be retained by GBGB until the greyhound either moves to an approved GRS homing centre, an independent homing organisation which is not GRS-approved or is successfully independently homed by the trainer/racing owner.

If a greyhound is to remain in the care of their racing trainer while it awaits homing (e.g., if waiting for a space in a homing charity to become available or if the greyhound is recuperating from an injury prior to being homed) the racing owner must record this on the GBGB

Retirement Form and confirm the address of where the greyhound will be kept during this period. This must be at either the trainer's licensed residential kennels, another GBGB-licensed kennel or a kennel licensed by the local authority.

The greyhound's racing owner must update GBGB on their greyhound's final retirement placement by sending GBGB a second, fully completed Retirement Form. GBGB will retain the owner's GRS contribution until this time.

B. The greyhound is placed in the care of a Greyhound Retirement Scheme (GRS) approved homing centre or other animal charity

GBGB assists racing owners/trainers by approving homing centres through the GRS that are proven to provide good quality accommodation and that take all measures to ensure that the greyhounds in their care find a suitable home.

A GRS bond (paid for jointly by the greyhound's racing owner and GBGB) is attached to each newly registered greyhound and is transferred to the approved homing centre to assist with the costs associated with finding the greyhound a new home.

Alternatively, a GBGB licensed owner/trainer may choose to home a retired greyhound with an independent homing organisation which is not GRS-approved. In this scenario, the GBGB licensed owner would receive a refund of their GRS contribution from GBGB on receipt of the greyhound's Retirement Form (co-signed by the charity) and proof of neuter/dental check.

Prior to, or at the point of transferring their greyhound, the racing owner/trainer must provide the homing centre with the individual greyhound's clinical history including ongoing health issues or previous injuries, and their specific behavioural traits.

C. The greyhound has been given or sold to a new owner or breeder who is now its owner

Homed to a new owner as a pet:

If a racing owner/trainer decides to find their greyhound a home independently of an approved GRS centre or other animal charity, the racing owner/trainer must undertake due diligence regarding the new owner and their facilities and circumstances.

Caring for any pet is a long-term commitment which comes with a long-term financial commitment, therefore, greyhounds must never be advertised as 'free to a good home'.

The following must be adhered to when independently homing a greyhound:

- The greyhound must be homed with the appropriate health and behaviour advice and documentation to facilitate a successful retirement.

- A home visit should be carried out by the racing owner/trainer to ensure a safe and appropriate environment will be provided and to ensure the available facilities and situation match the needs and requirements of the individual greyhound. A home visit may not always be necessary, such as in cases where the new owner is personally known to the racing owner/trainer (e.g., a family member, friend, or a trusted person who has previously homed a greyhound from them and who has previously had a home visit).
- Before taking home a greyhound, new owners should always meet the greyhound they wish to home – appropriate, controlled, supervised and safe introductions should take place.
- The GBGB licensed owner/trainer must verify the new owner and their residential address. If they are renting, the new owner must show written proof that they are permitted to have a dog in their property according to their tenancy agreement.
- A lead, collar and muzzle should be supplied with the greyhound, as well as printed advice that details information to new owners on how to look after a retired greyhound.
- The racing owner/trainer should be available for the new owner to contact for any advice or to discuss any issues that may arise with the greyhound they have homed.
- A returns policy must be agreed upon with the new owner so that if the homing is unsuccessful for any reason, they can return the greyhound to the trainer/racing owner or be provided with information on suitable homing centres which can assist.

The owners' GRS contribution will be refunded to the racing owner once GBGB has received the completed Retirement Form, proof of neuter/dental and once the new owner has been contacted by GBGB to confirm the successful homing.

Given or sold to a breeder who is now its owner:

If a greyhound is to be given or sold for breeding, GBGB requires the full details of the new kennel/breeding establishment. As with all retirement placements, the trainer/owner must have carried out due diligence on the breeder and must be confident that they will provide suitable welfare standards. GBGB works with Greyhound Racing Ireland and the Irish Coursing Club to monitor GBGB-registered greyhounds that travel to Ireland for breeding.

GBGB does not find it acceptable that greyhounds should be leaving a GBGB-regulated environment with clear safeguards around environmental standards and kennel inspections to enter an unregulated racing environment in which such protections are not in place and where welfare standards cannot be verified.

The exportation of greyhounds to jurisdictions where welfare standards cannot be verified is also unacceptable. If GBGB becomes aware that licensees may be involved in such activities, this will be investigated as a disciplinary matter. If a greyhound is to be sold with the purpose to race in regulated racing outside of Great Britain or Ireland, the owner/trainer must contact the GBGB prior to the greyhound's movement.

Responsibility of the Racing Office

The Racing Manager must ensure that the necessary Greyhound Retirement Detail Report is correctly submitted to update the individual greyhound data held by the GBGB Registry, as per Rules 195(ii) and 194(vii). Racecourses should also remind the owner/trainer to promptly submit their Retirement Form to the GBGB and to keep a copy for their records.