

We first came across the Great Swiss Mountain Dog, also known as Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, when searching through a dog breed book. We were looking for a family dog that was safe with children and animals, large enough to deter unwanted visitors, but above all not aggressive. The Swissy fitted the bill exactly.

Unfortunately after more research, we discovered that there were only a few Swissies in the country and none of them were at that time breeding. We made the decision to import a bitch and start a breeding programme ourselves.

I (Sue) have bred many different types of dogs during my life so have a wide range of experience. However, Swissies are far more difficult to breed than any other breed I have had. Swissies are very demanding dogs that require a lot of time and effort and as such are not suited to first time or novice owners.

Our first bitch, Rita, arrived from France in 2006 having already been mated and produced the first litter of GSMD's to be born in the UK. She was a very loving dog and settled in remarkably well to life in the UK. Rita is no longer with us but we kept her daughter, Anya, who is still with us today. (June 2015)

Our dogs have free run of four acres of ground allowing them the space they need. They are crate trained as puppies but once fully house trained, usually at about 3-4 months, they are never crated again. They live in our house in their separate annexes where they can always see us which is what Swissies enjoy. Most of the time the doors are open so they are free to be in or out, as they please. They normally choose to be where ever we are.

We have separate kennels where they go on days when we are out all day for instance at shows or other social events. The kennels have a small paddock attached so they can roam around freely but can be shut into an isolation kennel, if necessary, i.e. if one of the bitches is in season.

When Steve and I go away overnight we always have a house sitter which is usually a family member who knows the dogs well and can be trusted.

Our young dogs are well socialised and trained. We take them to shows and many Swissy and other events. Showing our dogs is very important to us as breeders as we are very keen to promote the breed and breed according to the breed standard. Health and temperament is also a major priority. Steve and I have never shown dogs previously so the show scene is a new experience for both of us. Steve handles our dogs and some of our owners dogs at the shows and does a very good job.

We do not believe in in-breeding or endless repeat matings or the overuse of one particular stud dog as these practices do nothing to help establish a new breed. Instead we carefully choose stud dogs, mainly from overseas, to widen the gene pool and improve on our own bitches. We have excellent contacts all over the world with many of the top breeders and we strive to maintain the breed for what it was originally bred for, as a working dog.

We do not breed just to produce pets, or for profit, but instead we try to improve on our dogs and our aim is to produce quality dogs, fit for purpose, with excellent health and temperaments that also make fantastic pets as well.

We do not take deposits until the puppies are born and usually the puppies are all reserved within the first two weeks as we always have a waiting list for puppies. We are constantly importing new lines into the UK, some of which are co-owned by us but living with families and sometimes we just help others to import. We support these families and are here to offer help and advice when and if needed.

When we sell puppies we keep in contact with the owners for the life of the puppy. We are always on hand with help and advice if needed. We send out a monthly newsletter to keep everyone up to date with all the Swissy news. We have made many new friends in the Swissy world, many of whom are now considered amongst our best friends. We are generally, a big, happy family.

We have many visitors which takes up much of our time so we are now encouraging people to come and visit on one of our Open Days. These are set days, which are well advertised in advance, where families can come along and meet us, our dogs and our puppies (if we have any) in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. This is not a day for us to sell puppies, but instead a day to talk about the breed to see if they would be suitable for your family. We are here to answer any questions you may have regarding Swissy ownership. We plan on holding two Open Days each year so please look out for dates.

We hold a comprehensive database of all the UK GSMD's which contains information collected over the last 10 years +. Any health issues are recorded along with date and cause of death where known. The database holds details of all the UK dogs and 1000's of overseas GSMD's. To date (June 2015) there have been 4 deaths from bloat in the UK all of which were imported dogs. None of the dogs bred in the UK belonging to the GSMD Club members have so far died from bloat. There has been one litter, bred by us and born in the UK that has produced epilepsy, so all that litter have been withdrawn from the breeding program and all the owners notified. For a large breed Swissies are generally very healthy and their expected lifespan is 9 years. Some Swissies have reached 13 years and many reach 10 or more.

The welfare of our dogs is paramount to us. We try not to be over dogged as Swissies like a lot of attention. We take great care in training them usually to Gold standard of the Good Citizen Award scheme. Once a bitch has finished breeding we like to find a suitable family home where she can be loved and cared for either as the only dog or sometimes with another dog. Our Swissies are well socialised, well travelled and well trained, which means they are ideal to re-home. This arrangement proves to be so much better for the dogs as they adore one to one attention.

We are members of the GSMD Club and support the club wholeheartedly. We love our dogs and only want what is best for them. Please feel free to contact us if you require any additional information.