

## Kennel Angels - Making a Difference



As an animal rescue charity, AAR are constantly looking for ways to improve the prospects of finding forever homes for their rescued dogs. Many of these dogs turn out to be wonderful, loving and loyal pets despite the trauma they have gone through. Foster homes provide a great opportunity to help a dog to grow in confidence and build trust, but sometimes there aren't enough foster homes to go around. The dogs then have to be put into private kennels until a foster home can be found. This can take weeks or months and although these souls are fed, given treatment and cared for, opportunities for stimulation that will benefit their long term are scarce.

Many of the dogs have not had the luxury of a loving home life, some have been



physically abused or starved and the majority have the additional mental scarring of being dumped or abandoned. The purpose of a Kennel Angel is to start the process of socialising or re-socialising the kennel dogs, helping them to overcome their fears.

Being a volunteer Kennel Angel is totally flexible, each one

putting in the time and effort that is convenient for them and involves initially visiting the kennels and meeting the dogs, getting to know them and gaining their trust. This may be once a week, or more if time permits. Socialising plays an important part in preparing the dogs for a foster or forever home. Kennel Angels work with one or more of the dogs and provide opportunities for them to experience different situations such as: walking on a lead; visiting markets or cafés; going on short car journeys (sometimes to the vets), or simply sitting, talking to and spending time with the animals. Obviously, giving treats or rewards is an important part!

It is, of course, useful to have experience of dogs, but most importantly to love them. It is an ideal opportunity for people who can't commit to fostering or adoption to interact with a dog or dogs, and becomes therapeutic to both parties. This rewarding opportunity is open to residents or non-residents who may spend several weeks or months in Spain. Kennels are based in Puente Don Manuel and Riogordo so anyone within travelling distance who is interested can find out more by contacting AAR at [axarquia-rescue@hotmail.com](mailto:axarquia-rescue@hotmail.com).