



SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER SOCIETY

Information Pack



***See what the Society can offer you
and your Golden Retriever
through its Training Centre
at East Malling, Kent***

Welcome to the Southern Golden Retriever Society

Hello! If you are reading this Information Pack, you either already have a Golden Retriever, or you are getting one in the near future, and would like to know more about the benefits of joining and training with the Southern Golden Retriever Society at East Malling.

Obviously, we think you have made a great choice in having a Golden Retriever and hope you join the SGRS to enjoy the wide range of training and activities that you and your Golden can be involved with. Being a member of the SGRS is also a great way to meet like-minded dog lovers and perhaps make good friends for years to come. And if you have a particular practical or organisational skill that might be useful to the Society, please let us know!

The SGRS was set up in 1977 to promote and perpetuate the Golden Retriever breed in the areas of Kent, Surrey, East and West Sussex, Hampshire and London South of the Thames. Its aim is to ensure you have a Golden that fits in well with your own family life and the wider society. The key to achieving that is to have a well-behaved dog!

General Obedience Training The SGRS is a supporter of the Kennel Club Good Citizen Award programme and trains handlers and dogs at East Malling Village Hall through its four levels:- Puppy Foundation, Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards.

All our experienced trainers have Golden Retrievers that they have seen through to Gold standard and beyond. For our achievements in training, the SGRS was awarded, in 2018, the Kennel Club registered

Breed Club
Training
Award.

Once the
Gold Award
has been
achieved
you and



Kennel Club Good Citizen Gold Award achievers at the SGRS training Centre, East Malling

your dog can progress to East Malling's own SGRS Platinum Award – which, when passed, will mean you have a dog to be really proud of!

The rest of this Information Pack includes details of the training classes that are held at East Malling and how to join the SGRS. As your dog's training progresses you will have the chance to branch out into the many other activities detailed later in the Pack, and also see the additional social activities that SGRS members can join in with.

So where does all this happen and what are the fees?

The Kennel Club GC Award Scheme and SGRS Platinum training takes place at East Malling Village Hall, 14, New Road, East Malling, ME19 6DD Kent. ***See the later 'contact section' for details of how to keep in touch to check if training is changed for any reason.***

All the Kennel Club GC classes are £30 per calendar month and Platinum £5 per session.

During the summer months, some of these classes above might be held not far away at the orchard of our Society Chairman, Sue Ashley, in Offham, Kent. Directions will be given to you.

The training begins.

You will have been advised when we first meet you what training class you need to join. The chances are you have a puppy and will start with the Kennel Club Puppy Foundation and Bronze classes.

Your first training class will be free, and if you decide to continue we will ask you to pay your £30 per calendar month training fees in advance by bank transfer. Full details of how fees are calculated and paid by either New or Existing Members are on the last page.

Please wait in the lobby until your class is called. The register for your class will be by the door as you come in. Please sign in beside your name with a tick for that week.

Whether you are a first timer, or a member returning to training after a break, it is always best to arrive a little earlier than your class start time to let your dog have a few minutes outside on the recreation area to 'spend a penny' before training starts. ***We do ask that any handlers attending any of our classes keep their dogs on lead outside both before and after their classes. We cannot have a situation where several Golden Retrievers are let loose together and cause havoc with other dog walkers!!***

If friends or family come along to watch you and your dog training they are more than welcome to do so – as long as they are not a distraction for your dog who should, of course, be only interested in you!

If you are in the Puppy Foundation class you will be given a booklet which you give to your



trainer each week. They will record your puppy's progress during training, note what is achieved and in time present you with your Puppy Foundation Award.

Your East Malling Training and support Team is, from the left,

Jenny Elsey, David Wimsett, David Jarrett, Mollie Newman, Louise Cooke, Sue Ashley, Rob Battell, Karen Menter and Sue Fowler.

Health and Safety at East Malling Village Hall.

Children .. are of course welcome at all the classes held at East Malling but they are the responsibility of their parents/guardians at all times.

No child is allowed into the kitchen or the loos unattended.

For everyone. We suggest that handlers wear flat shoes with 'grippy' soles. Trainers or good walking shoes are safer than flimsy slip-ons and Flip Flops are a definite NO!

Handlers should avoid wearing anything that could distract your dog during training such as flappy garments or unattached treat bags.

Make sure you have a sensible treat container with decent soft smelly treats in it! There are recipes available for Liver Cake and 'fish fancies' on the last page should you wish to make your own.

Your dog should be rewarded quickly when it gets things right and works well (One of our senior trainers often asks when we forget to treat our own dogs after they have done something really well 'would you work for nothing?')

A trouser or gilet pocket is often best and the easiest to access. By the time you have tried to get a treat out of a plastic bag or a zipped-up 'bum bag' your dog will have forgotten what they are being praised for!

If you need to use the toilets, an SGRS helper will hold your dog until you return.

Your Dog. If your puppy has been sick more than once, or coughed/spluttered during the day, or seems to be a bit 'off colour' and not doing what it might usually do during the day (play, eat, go for a walk etc.) then ***please do not come to training.*** For one thing, your puppy's natural defences against infection may be lowered, and for another, we do not want to spread any illness to others.

If you are in any doubt please stay at home and, if you have the chance, ring your class trainer or Sue Ashley, who will no doubt tell you that you are doing the right thing.

And if your puppy seems really 'off colour' we suggest you contact your Vet for professional advice. Your puppy will no doubt be grateful to have some recovery time before the next lesson.

When you and your puppy return to training, you will pick up from where you left off.

The Kennel Club Tests and more

After a period of time the trainers of the Bronze, Silver and Gold classes will decide if their trainees are ready for their tests.

Although there is no compulsion to take these tests, they are an indication of the progress you and your dog have made since your training started and we do encourage them to be taken. Although you will have been training for some time before we assess that you are ready for your KC tests, ***you will have had to attend four out of the six classes immediately prior to the tests being taken in order for you and your dog to be happy and confident on the day.***

Nobody 'fails' these tests. You either succeed, or are simply 'not ready'. If you miss out on one of the tests there will always be an opportunity to re-take it in the near future. There is no extra charge for taking a test.

If you succeed in achieving the 'pass' standard you will be awarded a Kennel Club certificate, a very nice rosette and have your photo taken to be shown on the SGRS Facebook and website pages.

And when, finally, you achieve your Gold Award, you can continue with our own follow on SGRS Platinum Classes which are charged at £5 per class attended. You might also get an invitation to attend some of the later mentioned SGRS Display Team training sessions and perhaps land up joining that much admired group of handlers and dogs.

There are also opportunities, often while moving through the levels of the KC award scheme, to get involved with Gun Dog training or ring craft for showing. Speak to your trainer or Sue Ashley to find out more about these additional activities which are detailed further on in the Pack. You should find that the disciplines learnt in one area of training are more often than not, useful in other training activities.

And finally about training ...

Everything the SGRS offers at East Malling is there to help you have a happy, well-trained dog in a happy family. At the end of the day, whatever you decide to do, or not to do, we would be delighted to have you with us.

ONE MORE IMPORTANT THING – we don't like to think of you going home worrying about something. Please share your concerns with any of the Team who will make sure you are given the right advice or encouragement to help you feel better about your concerns before you leave. The Team all have dogs, and have all been through what might seem a long process of training their dogs in classes, or at home, to a standard to be proud of. It is a journey, but between us we will try to make it as enjoyable as we can – for you and your dog.

Other Classes and Activities

Gun Dog Training. Golden Retrievers are, of course, first and foremost, gun dogs. To satisfy their natural ability to retrieve, we encourage members to attend our own SGRS Junior and Intermediate Gun Dog classes training days. Live birds are not used for these classes! We use canvas dummies which replicate the size and weight of real game birds. The earlier stage Gun Dog classes might be held in Offham or at other local venues if permission is granted by the landowner. Fees may vary. Show ability in this area and you could be

invited to join and train with more advanced and privately run Gun Dog groups who visit training sessions around the Southern Counties. The SGRS also run Working Tests and a Field Trial annually for those who progress in this activity. And there are plenty of Working Tests that you could enter throughout the year run by other gun dog societies

Ring Craft. We run Ring Craft classes once a month at East Malling for those who wish to learn the skills of how best to show your dog in front of a show judge. The fee is £5 per class. You could show your dog at local all-breed shows or perhaps Golden Retriever Open and Championship Shows. Who knows, you might have a Crufts Champion one day!



Fun Activities. It's not all work and no play with the SGRS. We hold fun summer and Christmas parties for the dogs, and try to arrange an Annual Fun Day that's open to the public as well as SGRS members. Some training sessions or tests may also be accompanied by a social BBQ or buffet meal.



The Southern Golden Retriever Society Display Team.

If you and your Golden have achieved your Kennel Club Gold Award, there is a possibility of being invited to train with the Southern Golden Retriever Display Team.



You may have already seen the Team live, or on TV, at Crufts, performing their formation obedience routines.

The Team also perform at many events around the South of England

It's a wonderful group to be a member of and perhaps one day you and your dog could be part of it too.

The Southern Golden Retriever Society Display Team train in the grounds of **Culverstone Village Hall, Kent**. Training usually begins outdoors in January and runs throughout the year until mid-October. Members of the Team are also expected to join the Platinum classes at East Malling or specific training sessions set up just for Display Team members.



The Southern Golden Retriever Society Display Team 2026

The Golden 'Look'.

Having a Golden gives you the opportunity of showing our breed in its best light with proper grooming and trimming.

You can keep your dog's coat looking good with regular brushing that takes out moulting hair, and with proper trimming of the coat, paws, nails and tail. Advice on how to go about this is readily available from our Training Team and, if you wish, arrangements can be made for your dog to be trimmed by experienced trimmers of this breed.



Joining the SGRS

If you have read this far and still want to join our Society and begin your training at East Malling, we will give you a membership application form on your first visit.

Decide whether you need a joint membership for two people or single membership.

If your dog is registered as 'jointly owned' on the Kennel Club Registration, you should take out joint membership with the SGRS.

If you select 'single membership' you are the only person permitted under SGRS Insurance to train or work your dog at any SGRS run activities.

Joining fee

The joining fees are currently £12 for a couple and £8 for an individual. This will be added to your first month's training fee. ***When you submit your membership application form, please leave the proposer and seconder section for us to complete.***

Annual Membership subscription.

The ongoing annual membership subscriptions, which run from January to December, are currently £12 for a couple and £8 for an individual. Our preferred option is for you to pay this by an annual standing order, which we will give to you.

The SGRS 100 Club

You might also consider joining the Society's 100 Club.

This is for a draw held four times a year with four lucky members winning £100, £50, £30 or £20 at each draw.

Any surplus after the prizes are paid out goes to the SGRS Health Fund. Please ask if there are any spaces available (there are only 100 members) and, if there are, it's just £12 a year to be included. ***If you are interested, and there is a space, we will give you a Standing Order form.***

SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER SOCIETY – EAST MALLING TRAINING

Your first training session will be free. Following your free week, fees for Puppy Foundation, Bronze, Silver and Gold award classes are £30 per month (irrespective of whether there are four or five Wednesdays in the month) except for December and March each year when the charge will be £15.00 to take account of the two weeks Christmas holiday and the closures in March for Crufts and the SGRS AGM.

If there are less than four Wednesdays in your first month (excluding the free introductory session) then your first month's fee will be either £7.50, £15.00 or £22.50 depending on whether there are 1, 2 or 3 Wednesdays remaining.

Fees should be paid at the start of each month and will constitute a place in the class, irrespective of attendance, other than if classes have been cancelled by us or you have advised us (by email to ashley258@btinternet.com) in advance that your dog is sick or in season, when credit for unattended classes will be carried forward to the following month.

Payments should be made by bank transfer to the following SGRS Account:

Account Name: SOUTHERN GOLDEN RETRIEVER SOCIETY

Account Number: 00671862

Sort-Code: 30-92-86

Personal/Business: BUSINESS

Reference: Your dog's name

If you have any problems making the payment or would like confirmation of receipt, please email Valerie Hogg, the SGRS Treasurer, at valerie.hogg@btinternet.com giving the date and details of the payment made.

Fees for the **SGRS Platinum classes**, held on alternate weeks, and **Ring Craft sessions**, will continue at £5 per week, payable on the night.

Tasty Treats!

Do you get excited at the thought of some really special tasty food? Well so do your Golden Retrievers! When you come to training, or go to any special event, make sure you have some treats with you that are not the usual daily tit bit. Golden Retrievers will be more keen to work for you and with you if they know that when they do things right they will be rewarded with something a bit special.

Here are two recipes that have worked wonders with many of our trainees and their dogs. Owners have sometimes 'tweaked' these recipes but, by and large, these seem to work! Use them as part of a selection of treats that might also include bits of cooked sausage, Edam cheese etc.

These recipes avoid wheat, colourants and preservatives – sometimes added to commercial treats.

NEVER, please, use 'biscuit' type treats for training. As well as being a possible choking hazard they can slow a dog down while it stops to crunch them up! Soft and smelly really is best.

1. Liver Cake. **Ingredients:** - 500g of Plain Flour (or gluten free if your dog is too excitable), 500g of lamb's liver, 2 medium eggs, 4/5 cloves of garlic, a teaspoon of Rosemary (optional), plus up to a mug of cold water.

Method. Mix the liver, eggs, garlic and rosemary if used, in a food processor.

Pour the mix into a large mixing bowl. Gradually mix in the flour until the mix just drops off a spoon. If the mix starts to get too 'solid' add water bit by bit to achieve the right texture.

Lightly grease a baking tray and pour in the mixture and smooth it to around 1cm in depth.

Bake in the oven at 180C for around 25 minutes or until the top is golden brown and feels springy to the touch.

When it's cool, turn it out onto a wire rack to cool down fully. Make sure your dog can't get to it!!

When it's cold, cut into sugar cube size pieces (or smaller for a puppy). Get used to being able to break small pieces off the cubes if you think a whole cube is too big! Put around 125g of the cut cubes into several freezer bags, freeze, and take one bag out of the freezer a few hours before you need it. Once out of the freezer the treats will keep in a fridge for a couple of days.

You can also use this basic recipe for Fish Cakes by substituting the liver with 2 tins of sardines (in oil or spring water – not brine) and 1 tin of sardines in tomato sauce.

2. Fish Fancies. **Ingredients:-** Large tin of pink or red salmon, 250g of plain, or potato, flour, 1 tsp of either self-raising flour or Vitamin C powder and 2 medium eggs.

Method. Mix everything, except the flour, together in a large bowl. Add the flour bit by bit, stirring well all the time. Add a little water if the mixture gets too stiff.

Put the mix into a greased baking tray and cook in the oven at 180C for 20 minutes or until the mix feels springy to the touch and coloured on top and leaving the sides of the tray.

Turn it onto a rack and, when it's cool, cut into little pieces and freeze in small portions in freezer bags. Use from the freezer as for the Liver Cake above.

For the odd change you could add a clove of garlic, but most people (and dogs!) find the smell good enough without it. Some people have added a couple of sardines along with the salmon.

Whatever you make, enjoy it and we are sure your dog will too. If you have any special recipes for dog treats yourself, please let us know and we'll share it with others.