

KICHIGAI KEESHONDEN

INFORMATION  
BOOKLET



# KICHIGAI KEESHONDEN

Kichigai is a small family run kennel  
occasionally breeding a litter of puppies.

Our dogs all live with us as members of our family, living in the house with  
our children.

This information pack is given to any person who enquires in to  
purchasing a Keeshond puppy from us. As breeders we feel that the more information  
that a prospective purchaser can gain before  
actually getting the puppy, the more aware they will be of the  
responsibilities of owning a puppy.

If you go on to purchase a puppy from us you will receive a detailed diet sheet and all  
the information on your puppy including a full

pedigree and if relevant registration documents. Plus microchip of your puppy

Although we would always like to have a puppy for everyone who wishes one, we can-  
not guarantee that at the time of asking or even from the next litter that there will be a  
puppy available. Puppies can be booked many months in advance and we always like  
to make sure people are aware that we have

no control over how many puppies are born in any one litter.

All our breeding goes through the Keeshond Club Epilepsy Scheme.

Will all readings being below 26%

Since the introduction of a DNA test for PHPT all breeding will be from Negative  
dogs/bitches either by test or decent.

## Contact Details

Colin & Karin Hickson

Kichigai House

43 Eastway

Castle Donington

Derby DE74 2PN

01332 811311

+44 (0) 1332 811311

07895324177 (Karin's Mobile)

Email: [karin@kichigai.co.uk](mailto:karin@kichigai.co.uk)

[Http://www.kichigai.co.uk](http://www.kichigai.co.uk)

**THE KEESHOND**  
**(DUTCH BARGE DOG)**



This is the Dutch National Breed used as a watchdog on barges in Holland. During the French Revolution, a man called Kees de Gyselaer led the patriots. This man was a great dog lover and owned a dog-called Kees. Kees became the Symbol of the patriots and gave the breed its name.

The Keeshond dog was originally brought to England by Mrs Wingfield-Digby, where it was to reside in the magnificent surroundings of Sherborne Castle in Dorset. In October 1925 Mrs Wingfield-Digby was fundamental in the starting of the “The Dutch Barge Dog Club”.

The name was changed a year later to “The Keeshond Club” in 1926 at the request of the Kennel Club. Whilst on holiday with her family she then,

Miss Hamilton-Fletcher, stopped in a village called Zaandam and stayed for a week buying her first Keeshonds thus the start of the first ever Keeshond kennel VAN ZAANDAM KEESHONDS

It is to this lady and others like her that we owe so much as without them we could not have the breed that we all love and admire in the UK today.

The Keeshonds general appearance is a short, compact body, confident carriage, thus giving the square outline on the body desirable to breeders. The

A large ruff should be present around the neck, shoulders and chest giving the impression of a lion's mane. The body should be compact with a short straight back, with a good spring of ribs and depth of brisket.

A Keeshond should have a well-feathered tail curled over its back forming a part of the overall outline of the dog. The tail should be light in colour with a black tip.

Movement should be brisk, straight and sharp. When viewed from the back the hind legs should be strong and muscled with the pasterns parallel to each other. The front legs should be straight turning neither in nor out. The feet should be cat like with black nails and cream in colour

The colour is a mixture of Grey and Black with a thick undercoat of pale grey or cream. Standing 18 inches in the dogs and 17 inches in the bitches

The Keeshonds coat although consisting of two layers an undercoat of soft thick, light coloured hair and an abundant outer coat of straight harsh, grey shaded hair. It is surprising how easily the coat is kept in good condition. The best thing you can do for your Keeshond is to regularly groom him, this giving you the contact with him and the chance to check for any abnormalities on your dog's body. If your dog has been trained from an early age he should find the grooming process an enjoyable experience. Bathing need only be done as necessary as the Keeshonds coat keeps its self clean with regular grooming.

There is some trimming to do on the Keeshond but this can achieve good results if time is taken over it. The feet are the main area, which needs trimming you, do this by trimming the excess hairs which grow between the pads then you trim around the feet to give them a neat appearance. The nails need to be trimmed to keep them short.

The legs are trimmed to give a nice neat appearance, trimming all straggly hair on the feathering on the front legs. The hind legs have the hair on the back of the leg up to the hock neatened.

You will need some brushes and a good metal toothcomb. You start by parting the hair down to the skin and brush through removing all knots with the comb. Always brushing the coat towards the head. Lifting the coat as you go the end result will depend on how much time you take on the grooming.

Fan the tail out making sure that there are no knots.

When you have finished let him shake and admire the finished dog.

The Keeshond should only need a good stiff weekly brushing to keep the coat in top shape.

Keeshonds love to show off and make fantastic show dogs wanting to please their owners all the time. Many children have showed Keeshonds (thus making them an ideal junior handling dog).

A Keeshond will if treated with respect give you years of unconditional love and

Its sturdy, intelligent and adaptable characteristics make for the ideal companion and guard dog. A Keeshond will naturally protect the family children although he has not been trained for it. Although very loyal they can be as stubborn as any child when they do not wish to do something.

There are two clubs for the UK Keeshonden. Holding Championship and open shows with a variety of other activities

### **The Keeshond Club**

The Club Secretary

Mrs Beryl Henman

Foxifayre

10 Church Street

Rothersthorpe

Northampton

NN7 3JD

01604 831974

[Beryl.henman@onetel.net](mailto:Beryl.henman@onetel.net)

### **North of England Keeshond Club**

Mrs R Burgess

Bridge Cottage

West Scafton

Leyburn

North Yorkshire

DL8 4RT

## THE KEESHOND BREED STANDARD

A Breed Standard is the guideline which describes the ideal characteristics, temperament and appearance of a breed and ensures that the breed is fit for function. Absolute soundness is essential. Breeders and judges should at all times be careful to avoid obvious conditions or exaggerations which would be detrimental in any way to the health, welfare or soundness of this breed. From time to time certain conditions or exaggerations may be considered to have the potential to affect dogs in some breeds adversely, and judges and breeders are requested to refer to the Kennel Club website for details of any such current issues. If a feature or quality is desirable it should only be present in the right measure.

### General

- Appearance:** Short, compact body, confident carriage. Fox like head with small, pointed ears, alert expression, large ruff, well feathered tail curled over the back.
- Characteristics:** Sturdy, intelligent and adaptable, ideal companion, good guard, shows boldly.
- Temperament:** Bold, alert, friendly with marked guarding tendency.
- Head & skull:** Well proportioned, wedge shaped when seen from above; from side showing definite stop. Dark muzzle equal to length of flat skull. Neither coarse nor snipey. Nose black.
- Eyes:** Dark, medium size, almond shaped, obliquely set. Well defined 'spectacles' shown as a delicately pencilled black line slanting from outer corner of eye to lower corner of ear, coupled with distinct marking and shading forming expressive short eyebrows.
- Ears:** Dark, small, ivy-leaved in shape. Erect, velvety texture. Well set on head, neither too wide nor meeting.
- Mouth:** Jaws strong, with a perfect regular and complete scissor bite, i.e. the upper teeth closely overlapping the lower teeth and set square to the jaws. Lips black.
- Neck:** Moderately long and arched, covered with thick, profuse coat forming large ruff.
- Forequarters:** Shoulders well sloped. Straight front of medium width with good bone.
- Body:** Short, compact, length from withers to tail equal to height at withers. Well sprung in rib. Good depth of brisket.
- Hindquarters:** Strong muscled, hindlegs straight when viewed from behind. Hock showing slight angulation when viewed from side, profuse light coloured trousers down to hocks.
- Feet:** Well padded, round, cat-like, tight, cream in colour; black nails.
- Tail:** Moderately long, high set, tightly curled over back, double curl highly desirable. Light plume on top where curled, with black tip, carried closely at all times.
- Gait/Movement:** Clean, brisk, straight and sharp.
- Coat:** Harsh off standing, straight. Dense ruff, well feathered on forelegs and profuse trousers, not feathered below hock. Soft, thick light-coloured (not tawny) undercoat. Never silky, wavy or woolly, nor forming a parting on back. Any shortening of the coat which alters the natural outline should be penalised, with the exception of feet and pasterns which may be lightly trimmed.
- Colour:** A mixture of grey and black. Undercoat very pale grey or cream (not tawny). All shades of grey acceptable, body hairs black tipped. Shoulder markings well defined and all markings definite. Forelegs and hocks cream with no black below wrist or hock. Pencilling accepted.
- Size:** Ideal height Dogs 45.7 cm (18 inches); Bitches 43.2 cm (17 inches)
- Faults:** Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree.
- Note:** Male animals should have two apparently normal testicles fully descended into the scrotum.

## Conditions of Export

As we are dealing with living animals, no litter can be guaranteed nor can a time scale for the availability of when, we will be able to say we have a puppy.

Because of the commitment to our breeding program, we only export the best quality pups, as these pups carry on our breeding program in the country of export. Therefore until pups are 7 wks old we cannot guarantee any export will take place.

### Export of a Kichigai Keeshond is only available under the following conditions

- A deposit of 50% of the purchase price of the puppy is paid once the puppy is made available for export and the balance is paid (Cleared funds) either 1 week before delivery or on Collection.
- All expenses involved in arranging for export are met by the purchaser, these include but not limited to Vet costs, Vaccines, export Pedigree and transfer costs to UK KC, cost of transport.
- Buyer must either arrange personal collection of puppy (we do not ship to unknown destinations) or Pay travelling costs for Karin to deliver said puppy
- Buyer is responsible for making all airline reservations for them and the puppy to go home. Kichigai will make all necessary investigations on buyer's behalf if needed.

## SALES AGREEMENT

Kichigai Keeshonden (Breeders) offer for sale a pet quality Keeshond Dog/Bitch further described as

“\_\_\_\_\_”

Microchip Number

K.C Registration Number: Whelped\_

Sire: \_\_\_\_\_ Dam: \_\_\_\_\_

To (Purchaser)

Address

The Purchaser wishes to purchase the described Keeshond for the sum of £ be paid upon receipt of the puppy and before K.C. Registration is released, under the following warranties and conditions, no other warranties or conditions are either expressed or implied

Breeder guarantees that the above-described Keeshond is a purebred keeshond, registered with the Kennel Club (K.C) and that the breeder will supply registration certificate.

Your puppy will be microchip in your presence either on first visit, if after 7 weeks or on day of sale with dual registration ( both breeder and new owner on registration ) this will then be logged with Pet Log with a copy given to Purchaser.

Breeder also guarantees that this animal is in good health. The animal may be returned for any reason to the breeder within 48hrs and a full refund will be given. After this time no refund will be given, unless furnished with a full vets report stating condition warranting return, the purchaser will also give full consent to the breeders having contact with purchasers vet regarding this animal. (this will be at purchasers cost) Purchaser shall assume full responsibility for the health of the above described Keeshond.

Purchaser shall assume full responsibility for the health of the above-described Keeshond.

The purchaser agrees to secure such vaccinations as the breeder or Purchaser's veterinarian recommends.

The Keeshond described above is sold as pet quality and is not guaranteed to be free of any show-disqualifying faults nor guaranteed to be of such quality when grown as to warrant breeding from it. Therefore all pet quality Keeshonds sold by the breeder come with the following restrictions

Progeny not eligible for registration.

Not Eligible for Export Pedigree

Purchaser further agrees that this Keeshond will not be used for breeding:\*

Before the age of 2 years before the breeder has assessed its breeding quality when the breeding restrictions can be lifted, this will only be done on breeder receiving copies of all tests available whether voluntary or compulsory available to the breed at the time\*.

Any purchaser who moves out of the UK permanently and supplies documentary evidence will have its endorsement of export removed. All members of the armed forces will automatically have this endorsement removed on production of his service I.D card.

Purchaser further agrees that all mating\* will be put through the Keeshond epilepsy scheme run by the Keeshond Club. Only matings which fall below the 26% will be acceptable any mating which is above this is unacceptable and therefore should not be done.

Purchaser further agrees only to use PHPT Negative (either by test or Decent) dogs/bitches in their breeding program.

These are conditions of the lifting of the Endorsements.

Purchaser further agrees to take proper safeguards for the care and safety of the animal sold herein, including but not limited to, a fenced yard if allowed outside off lead, proper shelter including reasonable access to the house, adequate feeding, sufficient exercise and training sufficient to make the dog a good companion.

Purchaser agrees to allow Breeder to see the animal at six months of age to assess the progress of the animal. At this time the Breeder will show Purchaser how to properly maintain the coat, and give tips of training and feeding.

The Purchaser confirms that the aforementioned Keeshond is not being bought for a third party and will remain in their possession. If at any time the Purchaser is unable to keep the animal it must come back to us for rehoming. The purchaser agrees that at no time will the dog be sold to another person even if the transfer documents are not transferred to the new owner.

The Breeder recommends that the six week free insurance given with the aforementioned Keeshond be continued after the initial six weeks to ensure that the animal always has the best veterinary care available.

Any other conditions \_\_\_\_\_

It is stipulated by and between both parties that failure to comply with the conditions of the Sales Agreement will result in the animal being returned to Breeder, and that in case of the animal being permanently returned to Breeder due to lack of compliance by Purchaser herein, Purchaser shall forfeit all monies paid on the animal and shall sign over the registration papers immediately to Breeder. The animal, if returned, must be returned at a time set by Breeder. Any failure to return the animal will necessitate the breeders filing for breach of contract under civil law the purchaser will be liable for all costs involved.

## FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS CONTRACT

ABreeding constitutes the bring together of two animals resulting in a litter of pups even if that breeding was unintentional, the pups are sold as unregistered pets

The canine Epilepsy scheme must be used for all breeding the purchaser agrees that it will be used

PHPT is now a disease that if we test for can be irradiated in the breed very quickly, by only using Negative dogs/bitches the gene cannot be carried to the offspring

The foregoing Sales Agreement, dated and consisting of three pages, including this page is in accordance with our understanding and we agree to the terms thereof.

\_\_\_\_\_Karin Hickson/Colin Hickson either to sign on behalf of breeders

KICHIGAI KEESHONDS

E-mail [Karin@keeshond.org.uk](mailto:Karin@keeshond.org.uk)

<http://kichigai.keeshond.org.uk>

# FAQ Sheet

## Prefix

This FAQ sheet is taken from an American based Keeshond Kennel and although many of the contents are relevant, there are some of the Medical conditions, which in this country are not.

In the UK there are at present no specific tests, which your dogs Have to have before a mating takes place.

Although these conditions are not widespread in the UK we felt that to ignore the information given here and to withhold it would be negligent on our part.

If you have any questions regarding this please feel free to contact us.

Although at present the DNA test for PHPT is not compulsory before a breeding takes place. We have had our breeding stock tested and from 2007 only be using Negative by test or decent dogs within our breeding program.

More information on PHPT can be obtained from ourselves or the breed clubs websites.

# The Keeshond

## FAQ Sheet

### (Frequently Asked Questions)

by Kimberly J. Eashoo

#### Table of Contents

- o Description
- o Recognition
- o History
- o Characteristics and Temperament
- o Care and Training
- o Special Medical Problems
- o Frequently Asked Questions
- o References

#### Description

The Keeshond has been bred for centuries as the ideal family companion and watchdog. Their magnificent appearance and sense of loyalty have made them an appealing breed around the world. Their natural tendencies are such that no special training is usually needed for a Keeshond to act as a watchdog for his home, keeping it safe from intruders. The Kees descended from the same arctic strains that produced the Samoyed, Spitz and the Norwegian Elkhound. Correct pronunciation of the breed name is caze-hawnd, but the Americanized keys-hawnd is also acceptable. Most Kees fanciers will cringe, however, if you mistakenly pronounce, or spell, the last syllable as "hound". Plural of Keeshond is Keeshonden, the "en" ending signifies plural in Dutch. A Keeshond is happiest around people, and will willingly accept any stranger that its owners accept.

#### Recognition

The Keeshond is recognized among the following kennel clubs: AKC, UKC, KCGB, CKC, and ANKC. The official AKC Standard for the Keeshond was approved by the AKC on July 12, 1949. It is not included here due to copyright concerns, but you may write to the national breed club or the AKC for a copy.

#### History

The Keeshond is a very old breed and there is little doubt that the fact it was never intended to hunt, kill animals or attack criminals accounts for its gentleness and devotion. In the 17th and 18th centuries, Keeshonden were used as watchdogs, good-luck companions, and vermin controllers on riverboats, farms and barges. They were known as Wolfspitz (Germany), Chiens Loup (France), Lupini (Italy), and Keeshonden (Holland). During the 1700's, in Holland, Cornelius "Kees" de Gyzelaar, a leader in the Dutch Patriot revolt against the reigning House of Orange, kept one of these dogs as his constant companion. The Keeshond became the symbol of the Patriot Party. This is the basis for the breed name as "Kees' dog", which in Dutch would be "Kees hund". The Patriots' were defeated, however, and many Keeshonden were destroyed to disavow any connection with the failed rebel party. The only Kees that remained were a few on barges and farms. The breed was not revived until nearly a century later through Baroness van Hardenbroek and Miss J. D. Van der Blom.

Throughout the late 1800's, Keeshonden had appeared in England under the names of "fox-dogs," "overweight Pomeranians" and "Dutch Barge Dogs." This British dog was the progeny of the German Wolfspitz crossed with a percentage of Dutch imports.

After the turn of the 20th century, Mrs. Wingfield Digby and Mrs. Alice Gatacre aroused great interest in England and in 1926 an English breed club was formed with "Keeshond" as the official name. With rare exceptions, the Kees in the United States are derived from British breeding.

The first American litter was bred in 1929 by Carl Hinderer of Baltimore, MD. The first Keeshond was registered with the American Kennel Club

in 1930 in the Non-Sporting Group. The Keeshond Club of America, as it was later named, was organized in 1935. Mrs. Virginia Ruttkay pioneered Keeshond breeding in the Eastern US, founding her kennel in 1946. Mr. and Mrs. Porter Washington of California purchased their first Keeshond in 1932, providing foundation stock for many successful Western US kennels.

#### Characteristics and Temperament Coat and Grooming

The Keeshond is a double-coated breed. This coat consists of a woolly undercoat and longer guard hairs. Twice a year, Keeshonden "blow" their undercoats, that is, they shed their undercoats completely. It is a very intense shedding period that can last up to three weeks from start to finish. The good news is that this only happens twice a year. The remainder of the time, Keeshonden are relatively shed free (unlike smooth coated breeds). The bad news is that the shedding period can be rather messy. The hair comes out in large and small clumps. Lots of vacuuming and brushing are in order.

The Keeshond is a very clean and relatively odor free dog. It tends to clean itself like a cat. Even when a Keeshond becomes covered in mud, it will clean itself. Bathing needs are minimal; thorough brushings and/or "dry baths" using a mixture of cornstarch and baby powder often suffices. A full bath may not be necessary more than once per year or when the dog is obviously dirty. Whitening shampoos will bring out the "brightness" of the coat.

Other than during coat-blowing season, the Keeshond needs relatively little grooming. Daily brushing is ideal, but two or three times a week is sufficient; the brushing should be thorough to penetrate the outer coat and remove any loose undercoat. A long pin brush, a slicker brush and possibly a rake are essential grooming tools.

Trimming needs are minimal, and if done should be done so that it looks natural and uncut. The body coat should never be clipped or trimmed except for medical reasons. Their nails should be checked and clipped periodically.

NEVER clip a Keeshond for the summer. After the undercoat has been "blown out," the outer coat provides insulation from the heat and protection from the sun. Exposed skin will be very sensitive to the sun, and will sunburn very easily; this can lead to skin cancer. Regular grooming and constant access to cool water are particularly important in the summer, especially in warmer climates. Temperament The typical Keeshond has an outgoing personality.

It is outwardly affectionate with its family and will accept strangers readily once the owner has showed no concern for the stranger's presence. The Keeshond makes an excellent watch dog, that is, will bark a stern warning any time a stranger approaches the household or one of its members. The Keeshond rarely bites, however, and therefore does not make a good guard dog.

The Keeshond is a very trainable breed, but has a mischievous streak that often results in embarrassment for the owner. Some Kees have done very well in obedience competitions, but most trainers will tell you about the "jokes" their dogs have pulled on them in the ring. Keeshonden are friendly by nature to both people and other dogs. Their demand for affection is moderate to high. The pack-oriented nature of the Keeshond means that they do better when included in the family (pack, from their point of view) than when left outside by themselves. As befits their Northern ancestry, they may enjoy spending periods outside - particularly during cold weather - but their "place" should be inside with the rest of the pack.

The Keeshond is known as the "Smiling Dutchman", which is often displayed as a curled lip or submissive grin. Certain breeds have a propensity for this behavior, the Keeshond is one of them. The grin is a sign of submission and often used as a greeting for people the dog is particularly fond of.

#### Barking, Talking, and Howling

Keeshonden both bark and talk, though they generally do not howl. The alert tone of a Keeshond bark "on watch" will warn all that a stranger is near. Some Keeshonden are more frequent barkers and should be corrected with a "quiet" command. Rarely is a Keeshond a nuisance barker. The Keeshond may also "talk" with a soft "aroo" or "woo-woo" sound similar to the Malamute and Samoyed.

#### Care and Training

##### Feeding

When you pick up your puppy, your breeder should tell you what the puppy has been eating, as well as recommendation as to the best food and feeding frequency in the future. You should try and follow the puppy's diet at the time you collect him from the breeder as best you can, until the puppy is settled in to its new environment. Then you can gradually change the diet to suit your preferences. Sudden changes in diet can severely disrupt the puppy's digestive system and cause gastric distress.

As for the type and "brand" of dog food, basically any reputable dog food manufacturer provides a dog food that is sufficient to keep a dog healthy. However, the premium brands of dog food have the advantage that one can feed the dog less and still get very good nourishment. In addition, stool size and amount is generally less with the premium dog foods. Be sure and pick a frequency of feeding, brand, and type of food to suit your dogs needs.

For show or active Kees, something equivalent to a Science Diet Performance or Eukanuba is in order. For Kees that go for walks and hikes, a Maintenance formula is usually best. Consult your breeder and veterinarian for advice. Housing Keeshonden are happiest when they can share in family activities.

The best arrangement is one in which the dog can come in and out of the house of its own free-will, through a dog door. If a dog door is not possible, then training the dog to go to an outside door to be let out is also very easy to do. Outside, the dog should have a large, fenced yard. The fence should be strong and at least 4 feet tall. Keeshonden do not generally attempt to escape the confines of their yard, but, if left alone for long periods of time or abandoned to the back yard, they can and will perform some amazing feats of escape.

They are prone to dig shallow "wallows" in hot weather; they will typically just turn over a layer of dirt to get to the cooler earth just below the surface. The Keeshond can remain outside in very cold weather. However, you should provide shelter from the elements in the form of a good sturdy house. A good insulated house with nice straw bedding is perfect for Keeshonden that spend most of their time outside. Heating the dog house is usually not necessary.

It should be stressed that leaving a Keeshond outside all the time is definitely inferior accommodations to being inside with the family. Again, problems may develop as the dog becomes bored.

## Training

Training Keeshonden, as any Northern breed, can be a challenge. Unlike other Northern breeds, however, the Keeshond is not nearly as stubborn as it is clever. When training a Kees, it will usually attempt to "make up" things as it goes along to make obedience more interesting. While the dog is usually very pleased with its efforts, the owner can be completely at wit's end. Training Keeshonden requires a sense of humour first and foremost.

## Special Medical Problems

The Keeshond, as a breed, is relatively free of particular breed-related medical problems. The following conditions listed occur infrequently in Keeshonden obtained from a reputable breeder, but occasionally are present in the breed.

**Hip Dysplasia** This is a genetic disorder that affects some Keeshonden: the proportion of 'pet shop' or 'backyard bred' Kees with this condition is significantly greater than Kees obtained from a reputable breeder. Simply put, hip dysplasia is a deformation in the hip joint. The head of the femur does not sit solidly in the acetabulum. The joint lacks tightness, and the condition results in a painful and often debilitating life for the dog. Hip dysplasia is considered to be a moderately inheritable condition. Reputable breeders will have breeding pairs OFA (Orthopaedic Foundation for Animals) certified prior to breeding. OFA certification can be given only after a dog is over 24 months old. Responsible breeding by Keeshond breeders has led to a tremendous decrease in the incidence of hip dysplasia in the breed.

**Subluxation of the Patella** "Slipped stifles" simply means that slipping of the kneecap on the rear legs. This condition, whether hereditary or caused by trauma, can be identified by a veterinarian during an examination. Patellar subluxation is correctable by surgery but because it is hereditary (unless caused by injury) it is not recommended that dogs with this condition be bred.

**Von Willebrand's Disease** A hereditary disorder appearing in some Keeshonden is Von Willebrand's disease (essentially haemophilia), a platelet disorder resulting in mild to moderately severe bleeding and a prolonged bleeding time. Careful pedigree analysis and blood testing have reduced the incidence of this disease by reputable breeders.

**Hypothyroidism** Keeshonden are subject to hypothyroidism and allergic skin diseases, both of which can often be treated. Sometimes skin diseases are a result of thyroid dysfunction. Current research indicates maternal antibodies as a major cause of hypothyroiditis. An untested mother, if affected by the disease and not demonstrating visible symptoms, will have circulating antibodies to the disease. When the foetus begins developing its own thyroid tissue, the antibodies attack brain tissue. In humans, it causes mental retardation but in dogs, it is believed to cause behavior problems. Once the foetus begins nursing, additional antibodies are passed to the newborn in the colostrum, eventually damaging the thyroid gland of the recipient. Studies indicate an euthyroid (normal on medication) mother is no longer circulating antibodies, thereby producing normal offspring. If each female is tested BEFORE breeding, in 5-10 generations, lymphocytic hypothyroiditis could greatly diminish. A complete thyroid panel, including T3, T4, free T3, free T4 and an antibody test are important. A subclinical bitch may not be showing visible symptoms therefore, only a blood test could determine an affected bitch.

**Epilepsy** Keeshonden are not as prone to epilepsy, a neurological seizure disorder, as they once were. Unfortunately, there is no test for this. Ask the breeder if there are any known epilepsy problems with dogs in your Keeshond's pedigree. Ethical breeders will be more than happy to discuss this with you.

## Frequently Asked Questions

How do Keeshonden handle the summer heat?

Like any dog, to cope with summer heat the Keeshond needs a constant supply of water to drink and shade from the sun. If the dog is allowed inside then it will find its own cool spot (probably on the kitchen or bathroom floor if it is tiled or linoleum floor). Outdoors, the dog will probably dig a shallow hole by turning over a layer of soil to get to the cooler earth just beneath the surface. Some dogs like having ice added to their water to help keep it cool. Some also enjoy a children's wading pool filled with water in the summer time. The Keeshond sheds a lot of coat before summer, as soon as the weather starts to warm up, which also allows them to keep cool. Heavy exercise should be avoided in excessive heat. Curtail exercise times to be early morning or just after sunset. Once the dog is acclimated to his environment, he is usually fine. NEVER clip a Keeshond for the summer. Exposed skin is very prone to sunburn, which can lead to skin cancer. Also, the coat acts as an insulating blanket from the heat as well as the cold. Keeshonden are remarkably adaptable animals. However, one should never try and push a dog beyond his capability to cope with the heat. To do so can be disastrous. One must keep in mind the type of climate the dog is acclimated for and not look for signs of heat stress. Do not ever lock any dog in a car in direct sunlight, or in the shade for a great deal of time, even with the windows down a little for ventilation the heat generated by the dog is still enough to cause heat stress in summer.

What are they like with children?

Due to their gentle temperament the Keeshond is a very good family dog. The Keeshond was bred to be a family companion, after all. They enjoy the company of children, though common sense must be used when introducing any dog to young children. Keeshonden are generally patient by nature and will tolerate young children fawning over them, but this should be strictly supervised for the sake of the dog as well as the child. With these caveats in mind, since Keeshonden love attention, well behaved children get along wonderfully with well mannered and socialized Keeshonden.

What are they like inside a house?

Keeshonden, aside from the occasional invasion of masses of fur when they are shedding coat, are excellent house dogs. They are extremely clean dogs. They are very sure-footed and in no way clumsy around furniture. They will often pick out a favorite sleeping spot and stay there for hours. Favorite spots seem to be tiled and linoleum floors in warm weather, soft pillows or beds at other times. The dog may seek out drafty areas and possibly lie in front of doors with cold drafts during the winter.

How much exercise do they need, and what kind?

The Keeshond does not require a great deal of exercise, which makes the breed an excellent companion for apartment dwellers. A daily walk would suffice for most Keeshonden, although if you are "up" for a game of Frisbee or ball, the Keeshond will gladly oblige. Keeshonden have participated in many dog sports such as sledding, Agility, Flyball, Scent Hurdle Racing, Frisbee and have recently been recognized as a breed eligible to compete for Herding titles. The level of activity of your Kees really depends upon how much you wish to do with the dog.

Do they shed a lot?

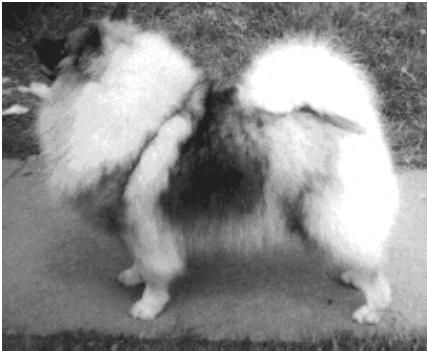
Keeshonden blow their undercoats twice per year. They do not typically shed year round like many dog breeds. When they do blow their coat, they lose lots of hair (several grocery sacks full per week).

THANK YOU TO KIMBERLY FOR KINDLY ALLOWING ME TO REPRODUCE THIS ARTICLE

Some of our dogs either owned or bred by us. Including our  
Foundation stock

## The Girls

Diamond



Grace

Kacie



## The Boys

Fred



Alec



Dylan

Zorro





### **Contact Details**

Colin & Karin Hickson

Kichigai House

43 Eastway

Castle Donington

Derby DE74 2PN

01332 811311

+44 (0)1332 811311

07895324177 (Karin's Mobile)

Email: [karin@kichigai.co.uk](mailto:karin@kichigai.co.uk)

[Http://www.kichigai.co.uk](http://www.kichigai.co.uk)