



SPA

Cavin Today we have come to visit, I suppose, what you would describe as an animal sanctuary. It's a very heart rendering place. I've walked round and it seems that we should be talking really about responsible dog owning, and today we've come to meet a very caring lady. Perhaps you would like to introduce yourself and tell us something about this place.

Sarah My name is Sarah Dench and I have been dog walking here probably for the last nine months. I now come once a week and a lot of the other volunteers come more often. One particular gentleman comes three times a week. The main aim of the dog walking is just to get the dogs out.

Cavin Can I ask you at this stage how does one apply to actually become a dog walker?

Sarah You just come along any day of the week in the afternoon because the S.P.A. is only open between two and five. One of us, or one of the S.P.A. members of staff will be here to show you what to do. Everybody is very welcome and it's just a matter of wearing your oldest clothes and, um, being enthusiastic.

Cavin Is it any previous experience in dogs necessary?

Sarah Well a love of dogs obviously, and understanding for the predicament they're in, but we are absolutely desperate for more dog walkers, because between 50 and 60 dogs here. They're locked in their kennels day after day after day after day. The S.P.A. staff never take them out because they have other jobs to do. So if we are going to get these dogs out its down to volunteers and only volunteers and on average now, even with the amount of dog walkers we have, the dogs get out for probably two to three days a week, probably half an hour at a time, which is no way long enough. So we're desperate for more dog walkers. You don't have to have to come every week. You don't have to come on the same day every week. You don't have to come every week. Just come whenever you've got a spare half hour. Just pop along here it's a very good way of meeting other people, French and English, and since being in France I've really been looking around for some volunteering work to do, with the very little French I had always stopped me volunteering in other areas. But the dogs don't

mind what language you speak as long as you are calm and kind and take them for a walk.

Cavin Can I just ask you as well, if someone feels that they could actually own a dog or take a dog away, is there an expense involved, because these dogs need to have veterinary treatment, be chipped and have injections? Could you give us some idea on what the cost would be?

Sarah The cost in monetary terms is anywhere between €80 and €140 depending on the age of the dog. In other terms it means a life long commitment and it must be a life long commitment. There's no good getting these dogs out and giving them a chance of a second home maybe a third maybe a fourth home and bringing them back two weeks later. So we do encourage you to take it very, very seriously. Bring everybody from the house in which they are going to live in. All your children and your other dogs and your cats so they meet everybody and before you actually sign on the dotted line you're absolutely sure that this is the dog for you and you are the person for the dog.

Cavin So this is really part of a responsible bonding process. Would you agree?

Sarah It's certainly a part of the initial bonding process and you mustn't forget that also, as part of being a responsible dog owner, it's choosing the right dog. It's the life long commitment to that dog and also don't forget the expense during that dog's life. The vet's, the worming, the chip and the Frontline.

Cavin And how do you see your future endeavours?

Sarah Our future endeavours are:~ (a) to flag up that this place exists, (b) To move as many dogs into homes as we can from here and we've formed an association and we've got a website on www.libertepourchiens.com or send us an email on infor@libertepourchiens.com We also, we're saying what responsible dog owners should do, but we as a responsible rehoming association, we would like to have every dog that we re-home spayed or neutered, because if you look at a lot of websites there are still lots and lots and lots of people breeding, there's puppies for sale, puppies being given away. People should really, really think before they breed from their dogs. You should just come here and we are one of many, many, many dog refugees in Brittany and there are so many unwanted dogs. Please, please don't just add to the problem.

Cavin Well thank you Sarah for letting Spotlight on Brittany to come and share this time with you. I promise you Ladies and Gentlemen it's a very heart rending experience. But if you want more information why don't you call us on www.spotlightonbrittany.fr