



# THE BONDING OF BABY BLU

A STORY OF BABY BOARS, BONDING, AND NEUTERING

Here at The Nest, it is our policy to neuter all boars up to the age of 3 years. Carrying out the procedure is essential for numerous reasons. The main reason for this is that it prevents any accidental breeding, but also it means they can safely live with a sow at any point in their life. We always neuter pairs of boys. One reason is that should they ever fall out with each other (as boars often do), they can quickly be bonded with girls. The other purpose is, more commonly, when one of the pair dies, the bereaved single companion can then be bonded with a sow, rather than go through stressful and difficult boar bonding.

When owners approach us for help with a single un-neutered boar, we do offer a bonding service. This service includes the boar coming and staying with us at the Nest for about a week. This way, he can meet a few potential companion boars, and we can assess if a bond is going to be possible. Hopefully, they will leave with a new friend.

Sometimes we don't have any boars available who will tolerate living with another boar, or the boar coming for bonding is particularly dominant. If we have baby boars at the time, this can solve the problem. Older boars nearly always make good 'uncles'! They readily accept baby boars. The adult will tolerate the young boar trying out his dominance usually by the time their hormones kick in, at around four months.

We separate baby boars from their mums at three weeks, when they become sexually mature. Ideally, the older boar will then come to stay at the Nest, and the baby will go straight from mum to



NEWLY NEUTERED

NEWBORN BLU WITH HIS MOTHER AND SIBLINGS

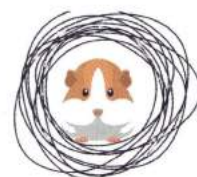
NEWLY BORN  
BABY BOY BLU



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BLU WITH HIS  
‘UNCLE’ BOAR

their new ‘uncle’. At this age, no formal bonding is needed. As the baby is still very young, we keep the pair here for a week to establish that the baby is eating and drinking well on his own. After this time of assessment, they can leave together for their forever home.

Babies only leave us so young for this specific reason. All other babies are kept until 6 to 8 weeks before homing. As the baby boars are going to live with a family that already has a piggy, they have the necessary experience; rather than a family brand new to piggies. As with all our adopters, they can come back to us for advice at any time.

Before adoption, we have an agreement with the owners that the baby boars, once old enough, will go back to the Nest, together with their adult friend, to be neutered. They can return at a time that suits the owners. Many actually choose to do this while they are on holiday and book the pair into our boarding shed. Boars need to be over four months and 600g, and the testicles need to have descended.

When the pair come back to us, we like to keep them at the Nest for at least five days; they arrive the day before the vets’

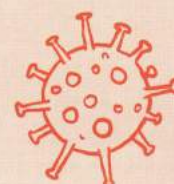
appointment for the surgery. Afterwards, we then like to give a painkiller for three days, keep an eye on the wound and check that the boys are bright and eating well before they can leave us.

Sometimes owners will opt to neuter their original boar at the same time as the young boar. By doing this, whichever piggy is left alone in the future can be bonded with a girl.

The actual surgery is very routine to our vets, and we generally have an average of 4 or 5 boars neutered a week. We have had occasional problems with infections after neuter, but it’s usually resolved with a course of antibiotics. The very young boars rarely have issues. They bounce back the next day as if nothing has happened.

When collecting the pair after their stay, owners will be shown the surgery site. We explain what to look out for, and if there are any problems, again, they can contact us with any concerns.

We find this works well for us. It’s a natural bond for older un-neutered boars, and it reduces the need for more tricky boar bonding. It’s also a less stressful way to bond boars; the result being a happy pair of piggies and a happy family.



## Coronavirus UPDATE

Our neutering policy has had to change due to COVID-19; at time of writing, we aren’t exactly sure how it will work out. Our vets have said they are unable to carry out any routine operations for at least the next two months. We appreciate that neutering dogs, cats and rabbits are more critical than piggies, so we will happily wait. We think that pairs of boars will not be neutered, but we will aim to try and neuter a single boar. We will seek to have pairs of boys back for neutering, but whether this is practical or not will remain to be seen.