



## **November 2019 – Cymru mobility team**

Welcome to the November newsletter from Guide Dogs Cymru. The content of this email can also be heard via a recorded message. Dial 0118 337 3803 for English and 0118 337 3821 for Welsh.

### **A successful year**

We are reaching more people than ever across Wales with our range of services. We recognise that there are people waiting, but a lot of work is going on behind the scenes to ensure that we are building resources.

We are on target to achieve 47 new guide dog partnerships this year across the whole of Wales with the co-operation of other Guide Dogs teams. Our My Guide service has helped 113 people including friends and family members. Our Habilitation Specialists have worked with 60 children and young people, and we've delivered orientation and mobility services to 80 people.

### **Staff news**

We are all set to welcome a new GDMI to our team. Sian Menai Jones, a Welsh speaker, is originally from Pwllheli, but has been working with Guide Dogs in Forfar and Welwyn. She replaces Richard Llewelyn, who has moved to the Bristol team.

Two new members of staff have joined the Guide Dogs Cymru team as Operations Support Co-ordinators. Rebecca Newton and Anne Davies are based at our centre in St Mellons alongside Charlotte James and supervisor Natasha Maskall.

An experienced orientation and mobility specialist has joined us. Steve Trust replaces Ann Mudd, who has returned to GDMI duties. We also welcome back Samantha Paoloni, habilitation specialist, who is returning from maternity leave to rejoin the Children and Young People's Services team at the start of December.

## **Christmas arrangements**

We've been advised that December 17 will be the last day to order dog food for guaranteed pre-Christmas delivery. Please make sure that you order enough food for the holiday period.

The Guide Dogs Cymru office will shut early from 1pm on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. If you need to make contact urgently on either afternoon, the out of hours number will be 0345 143 0127. On other days, the Guide Dogs Cymru team will be contactable on the normal office number, although we will have reduced staff over the festive period.

## **Christmas thank you**

We're inviting volunteers to join us for a hot drink, mince pie and live music at the Virgin Money Lounge in central Cardiff on December 10. The event runs from 6.30pm-8pm and has been organised by our Cardiff fundraising group. Guide Dogs Cymru staff will be on hand to show their appreciation, and we'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers throughout Wales for the support they give us all year round. There are lots of events coming up all over Wales – contact [Jacquie.hughesjones@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:Jacquie.hughesjones@guidedogs.org.uk) for details.

## **Experience days**

New applicants for the guide dog service are being offered the chance to find out more about dog welfare and the matching process at a series of experience days being planned for 2020. Life With A Guide Dog is a one-day course run by Nathan and Charlie, and new applicants will receive a phone call inviting them to the event closest or most convenient to them.

## **North Wales surgeries**

Surgeries are being organised across North Wales, giving service users the opportunity to discuss any queries or concerns they might have about their dogs. Three surgeries have already taken place in October and November, and more are planned for the new year – dates and locations to be advised nearer the time.

## **Bus passes**

Don't forget to reapply for your concessionary bus pass before December 31, when existing cards cease to be valid. You can apply online at [www.ffw.wales/travelcards](http://www.ffw.wales/travelcards) or ring 0300 303 4240.

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