



Comet

Training school

Pupdate 3

Welcome to your October Pupdate

I hope that you and your family are well and enjoying these beautiful autumn months.

Thank you so much for supporting Guide Dogs by sponsoring a puppy. Considering the current economic challenges, we are so grateful for your continued commitment; you form an integral part of the Guide Dogs family. Your generosity is helping children and adults living with sight loss to live independent and confident lives.

Every day 250 more people join the two million already living with sight loss in the UK, and this number is set to double by 2050. Our services are needed now more than ever. Our guide dogs and buddy dogs really do change lives, and we couldn't breed and train these incredible dogs without you. Thank you.

I'm pleased to share your sponsored puppy's latest Pupdate with you and I hope that you enjoy reading it.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Allum
Puppy Sponsorship
Manager



Comet's arrived at training school



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**Hi, it's
Sian here,
Comet's
trainer.**
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I've been working as a Guide Dogs Mobility Specialist for about eight years, and I absolutely love my job! No two days are the same and it's always exciting when new dogs arrive at training school. I love getting to know each dog – they've all got different personalities and learn in different ways.

Comet's arrival

On Comet's first day at training school, he was a little bit quiet and uncertain, but that didn't last long! He soon started to come out of his shell and his fun, cheeky personality began to shine through. It wasn't long before he'd learnt to jump out of his pen, make his way to the kitchen, and help himself to a snack!

Comet arrived with an excellent foundation, thanks to his Puppy Raiser, Bridget's, hard work. He was already confident with skills including 'sit', 'down' and 'settle'. Bridget had also introduced him to the 'bucket game', which is an excellent tool that allows dogs to have choice and control when participating in activities such as veterinary checks or grooming. Comet knows that when he focuses on the bucket and the activity continues, he gets rewarded, and when he looks away this is an indication that he needs a break.

New skills

I've started introducing Comet to some new skills including platform training. This involves asking Comet to walk towards a low platform and stand with all four paws on it. Comet is making great progress with this and has already learnt that when he stops on the platform he gets a tasty treat! We've also been working on food manners, as Comet can sometimes be distracted by food that is dropped by mistake or that's already on the floor; I'm teaching him a lot of self-control around anything exciting so that he can remain focused on his important job.

When he arrived, Comet's recall was already very good, although he can be distracted by other people or dogs if he's excited. We've been using a hand target – where you hold your hand out in a fist for a dog to use as a focus point – to practise recall and to teach Comet to come back to my side rather than in front of my legs.

Out and about

As well as beginning training for more specific tasks, I've been introducing Comet to his new neighbourhood. We've been going on residential walks together to practise his loose-lead walking now that he's in a new environment.



Find out how Comet is settling into training school by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-comet



Every day, we also take a trip to a local grassy area which is fantastic for free running. This is a short 10-15 minute drive so is also a great opportunity to practise travel. Bridget had done fantastic work with Comet around the car, so we're working to build on this now. For example, I ask Comet to wait until I say it's okay before he jumps into the car, and then to spin around and look at me.

Looking ahead

Over the next few months, I will continue introducing Comet to all the skills he will need for his future role. He's really smart, so I'm sure he's got a bright future ahead of him. I'm loving working with Comet and can't wait to update you in your next Pupdate in February!





Thanks to your amazing support, you are helping puppies like Comet move to training school and learn from our guide dog trainers, who will teach them the specialist skills they need for their future role. **Your sponsorship donations contribute towards our guide dog and buddy dog services, costs which can include:**

£8 could support a guide dog partnership for a day.

£16 could buy a coat for one of our puppies in training.

£25 could fund an hour's training for a guide dog.

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