



## **New horizons**

In your last Pupdate, you heard how Cookie had settled in well at training school and had learnt new skills with her Trainer Jo. Since then, Cookie has unfortunately experienced some health concerns relating to a bacteria she picked up affecting her gut which has resulted in her harness training being stopped to safeguard her health and wellbeing.

Cookie has received ongoing veterinary care and assessments from our Dog Health team to get her back to full health. She has responded well to medication and an adjustment to her diet and we're pleased to say she is already feeling a lot brighter. However due to her condition and the adjustments needed to maintain Cookie's health, a career as a working guide dog is not well suited to her needs, so we are now considering if Cookie would be better suited for an alternative career such as a buddy dog or a companion dog.

Buddy dogs and companion dogs have hugely positive effects on the wellbeing of children and adults with visual impairments. While they aren't mobility aids like guide dogs, these friendly and well-trained dogs offer companionship and can help to build confidence to enjoy an active lifestyle. These services are currently offered to homes where there would be assistance of a sighted family member to help care for the dog, so they may be more suitable career paths for Cookie.

We appreciate this is unexpected news but hope you can understand that Cookie's health and wellbeing is our number one priority. Cookie has already mastered vital training skills and is such a bright and responsive dog, so we hope she will continue to have a positive impact on the life of someone with a vision impairment.

## **Update from Cookie's Fosterer**

"While Cookie's health recovers, her fun and lively personality hasn't stopped shining through. She's got bundles of energy and is always up for a good play. Cookie is very sociable; she is great around kids and anyone that is willing to give her some cuddles and attention. I've noticed she will nuzzle her nose on to me when she wants a stroke or a tickle on her tummy! Whenever I take Cookie out for a walk in a park, she loves to investigate new sights and smells. She's always making me laugh with her funny expressions and noises she makes, she's a joy to have!" Krysia, Cookie's Fosterer