



Derek

Growing up

Pupdate 2

Welcome to your February Pupdate

I do hope you and your family had a lovely Christmas and New Year.

As we try to return to normality and adapt to the new world that we find ourselves in following the turbulence of the last two years, our wonderful trainers and volunteer puppy raisers have dedicated themselves to helping our puppies on their journeys to become life-changing guide dogs. They continue to learn and progress, and we're so proud of how they have been doing in their training so far, and we're excited to find out where they'll go next. I hope that you enjoy your Pupdate, finding out what your wonderful puppy has been up to for the last few months.

I'd like to thank you so much for supporting us by sponsoring a puppy. We need people like you to be able to change the lives of people with sight loss, and we couldn't be Guide Dogs without you.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Allum

Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Derek continues his journey



**“Hello, it’s
Glynis here,
Derek’s
Puppy Raiser.
Welcome to
his second
Pupdate!”**

I have enjoyed watching Derek grow and mature over the past few months. He’s certainly changed a lot in this time.

Unfortunately, Derek has had some health issues affecting his legs, which have slowed down his progress slightly. He’s been on restricted exercise so getting out has been a challenge. Despite this, he’s making steady progress and is now returning to a normal exercise routine so I’m excited to see what the next few months will hold!

Life at home

Derek is a joy to train and have at home. His enthusiasm for learning knows no bounds and he’s been picking up new skills quickly. He loves his food, which definitely makes training easier! He’s growing fast and I think he’s going to be a very big dog – he’s certainly no longer the small fluffball that he used to be, and people are often surprised when I tell them he is still a puppy.

Derek is still a massive fan of squeaky toys; the squeakier the better! His latest favourite is a new clownfish toy which squeaks; he thinks it is absolutely wonderful. He’s a very playful boy; he will often dig toys out of his toy box and bring them to me to play – who am I to say no?!

New experiences

We've been continuing to visit lots of new places and Derek takes it all in his stride; he's a very confident boy. He loves a visit to the shops and he is quite happy to sit patiently and take in his surroundings whilst I browse the shelves. He's a bit of a cheeky chap though, and will try and seek attention from members of the public!

I'm delighted to say Derek has now mastered 'self-settle'. When I sit down, he happily settles himself by lying down beside me without needing to prompt him. I recently visited a busy rugby club with him, and he settled beautifully under the table. It was a very proud puppy raiser moment!



Looking ahead

Derek is getting used to public transport and has been on a couple of bus journeys where he settled well. He does tend to rush on and off the bus because he is so excited, which is something we'll be focussing on in the coming months.



See the new environments Derek has been exploring:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-derek

It's important for guide dogs to be able to calmly and confidently navigate all forms of transport.

Due to his restricted exercise, he has been showing signs of separation anxiety, as he was never really left alone while he was recovering. I'm working really hard on this with him now that he's feeling better but it's quite a slow process so I'm hoping he'll improve over the coming months.

Derek has been a joy to have, and I'm excited to update you in your next Pupdate!





Training – puppy to qualified guide dog

It takes around 20 months of training to transform a pup into a qualified guide dog. The pups learn basic skills and are introduced to new surroundings with their Puppy Raiser. They then venture on to Guide Dogs Training School, where they learn the foundation tasks required of a guide dog. The final stages of training focus on their partnership with a new owner, where they learn specific skills tailored to their owner's specific needs.



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