



Douglas

Taking time to rest

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Welcome to your February Pupdate

The colder months are nearly behind us and spring is just around the corner.

The UK's first guide dog partnership qualified in 1931. Since then, we have matched over 37,500 people with a guide dog – that's at least one new partnership every day for the last 94 years. Our dogs help people with sight loss to get out and about safely, providing life-changing support every single day. They help people with visual impairments to enjoy the freedom and independence many of us take for granted.

1 in 5 people will live with sight loss in their lifetime. By sponsoring a puppy, you're helping us provide vital services, from mobility training to assistive technology and more, that enrich the lives of adults and children with visual impairments. None of this would be possible without supporters like you!

I hope you enjoy reading the latest news from your sponsored puppy. Thank you for being a part of their journey.

Yours sincerely,

Steph

Steph Potter
Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Thank you

for sponsoring Douglas



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**Hello, it's
Caroline here,
Douglas'
Puppy Raiser**

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As I mentioned in Douglas' last Pupdate, he's not been his usual self. Douglas has been less playful, and less motivated. He's quite sleepy and some days can be a little irritable, which suggests that he's not feeling well. We've paused Douglas' training for now; instead, my focus is on helping him to feel as happy and relaxed as possible, and reporting any unusual patterns in his behaviour to his vets and the team at Guide Dogs.

Ongoing investigations

I've been given lots of support from Lucy, Douglas' Puppy Development Advisor, as well as the medical team at Guide Dogs and my local vets. We've been to the vets quite a lot recently as Douglas has been having scans and tests so that we can try to work out what's making him feel out of sorts. Unfortunately, it's still a bit of a mystery so it's an ongoing process to get to the bottom of it.

We've been trialling Douglas on some pain medication recently, and it's been interesting to see the difference it's made for him. He'd become quite subdued but since starting the medication, he's started to perk up more. It was when he started pinching tea towels again that I knew he was feeling better!

While it's lovely to see Douglas with a little more energy, it's still important that we find out what's causing him discomfort, so that will remain our focus. Until then, Douglas will stay on rest, taking a break from his training.

Challenges

One of the challenges I'm facing now is that Douglas is showing discomfort when he's handled at the vets. Because of this, he's starting to anticipate being touched by the vet and has developed some general body sensitivity. To ensure that this doesn't escalate, I'm doing lots of work with Douglas around being handled by different people. At home, we're going back to basics. For example, we've been using the bucket game during grooming as this gives Douglas the opportunity to indicate when he's had enough; while he's looking at the bucket of kibble, it's a sign that he's happy to keep going and I'll keep grooming and feeding him. When he looks away, I'll stop grooming him and he can have a break. He seems to trust me and Lucy as he's known us a long time; it's unfamiliar vets that he's becoming a little wary of.



Hear how Douglas is doing with Puppy Raiser Caroline by going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-douglas

New places

While Douglas is on rest, I've been trying to find different places we can visit together to keep him stimulated and break up his usual routine. We've been on lots of days out together. One of his favourites are visits to a local horse rescue centre where he loves to watch the horses and they like watching him too! Douglas definitely has his favourites, and if they peer out of their stables at him then he'll reach up to nuzzle them. He's such a gentle boy!

Thank you

It's an absolute pleasure raising Douglas, I'm so proud of him. As much as I've been worried about him recently, knowing that his sponsors are rooting for him has lifted us both up on the hard days. Thank you.

Keep an eye out for an update on Douglas in your next Pupdate in June.





Guide dogs' health

When caring for guide dogs, or guide dogs in training, it's important to remember that they can be impacted differently by various treatments or conditions compared to a pet dog. For example, any ailment affecting the area where the guiding or training harness is fitted may mean taking a break from work or training until they've recovered. Our dogs also spend a lot of time out and about, often in urbanised environments where surfaces are harder. If a dog is experiencing any discomfort in their joints, it can be uncomfortable to walk on these surfaces so they may need a break if this is the case, too.



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