



Fern

Fern's settling in

Pupdate 1

Welcome to your October Pupdate

I hope you're enjoying these beautiful autumnal months.

Thanks to supporters like you, we can provide our incredible life-changing services. It's estimated that six million people in the UK live with sight-threatening eye conditions, and more than two million of these are living with sight loss that has a significant impact on their daily lives. At Guide Dogs, we want to support as many people as possible through these life-altering changes, providing the right services to help everyone.

Did you know that training and partnering our wonderful guide dogs isn't all we offer? We also provide support to adults through our My Sighted Guide service which partners trained volunteer guides with a person with a visual impairment. For children and young people, we offer a fantastic range of support, from companion dogs via our buddy dogs scheme to personalised, large print books through CustomEyes Books. Our expertise means we can make life-changing differences to those affected by sight loss, enabling them to live actively, independently, and well – however they choose. Thank you for helping us to do this with your generous support.

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

Yours sincerely,



Steph Potter
Puppy Sponsorship Manager



Thank you

for sponsoring Fern



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**Hello, it's
Paul here,
Fern's Puppy
Raiser**

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This isn't my first time raising a life changer! I've raised two other Guide Dogs pups before Fern: Oakley and Orla. It's amazing how individual each dog is, and Fern is the youngest puppy I've welcomed into my home so far, the other two pups were slightly older. Post lockdown I made the decision to retire and was looking for something to fill my newly freed up time. I came across a social media advert for Guide Dogs puppy raisers, it was perfect timing, so I applied. Being a puppy raiser is very rewarding. I enjoy having Fern's company and knowing that when she moves along in her journey, she will be going on to do something great!

Welcoming Fern

I'm happy to tell you that Fern has settled into home life well and we have a great relationship. The first few nights were a little difficult as she kept waking up in the middle of the night. She was a bit unsettled, so I'd keep her company until she went back to sleep, but she slowly got more comfortable and now sleeps through the night with no issues. Fern is an early bird and gets up around 5am. I like being a puppy raiser as it gives me a reason to get out of bed early, but I wasn't expecting 5am!

I do really enjoy these early mornings now and knowing that Fern is always there to greet me before we start our day is a massive plus.

Lovable Fern

Fern is such a wonderful girl, she's always excited to meet new people. Sometimes she can be a bit overexcited, and this is something we're working on, but I'm not worried as she is still so young. She is such a lovable pup and is always pleased to see you. She loves attention and gives the best puppy cuddles. Fern is very curious and happy; she really enjoys being in the park and is making great progress with her recall. We have visited a few different parks for free runs, some included a small car journey. Being in the car doesn't faze her at all. Fern loves to play with toys, her favourite is her long soft toy snake, she runs around dragging it along and it trails behind her because she is still so small.

Learning new skills

Fern and I have been to a few puppy classes. This is where she learns new skills and socialises with other puppies in training.



Hear how Fern is settling in with Paul by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-fern



Scan me

One cue from puppy class we are working on is 'hello'. This is where you introduce the pup to a person for a short time and then ask them to refocus on you and settle down. This is useful as Fern gets so excited meeting new people and this skill helps to get her attention back on me.

Looking ahead

Over the next few months, I'll continue to work on all of Fern's skills and cues. I'll be focusing on introducing Fern to as many new environments as possible, giving her lots of new experiences as she grows. I'm excited to see her progression.

Thank you for sponsoring Fern. I've loved building a bond with her. I can't wait to update you in your next Pupdate in February!



Where is Fern on her Pupdate journey?



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Our volunteers

We wouldn't be able to train our life-changing dogs without the help of our volunteer puppy raisers and fosterers. Once our puppies are 7-8 weeks old, they will go to live with a puppy raiser. These wonderful volunteers provide a loving home and the vital foundation needed for the pup's future role. They introduce early training, socialisation, and a variety of new environments. After 12-16 months, our dogs move on to training school, where they learn guiding skills. Evenings and weekends are spent with our fantastic fosterers who care for the dog, reinforce training, and drop them off to training school each day! **To find out more about volunteering, please visit guidedogs.org.uk/GDvolunteer.**



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