



Guide  
Dogs

Sponsor  
a Puppy



# Fern

Fern's getting  
out and about

Pupdate 2

# Welcome to your February Pupdate

**We're excited to share your sponsored pup's recent news!**

We can't thank you enough for supporting Guide Dogs by sponsoring one of our incredible dogs. Did you know that nearly three quarters of people of working age who are registered blind or partially sighted are unemployed? At Guide Dogs, we are determined to support the independence of people with sight loss by providing them with the skills and services they need to pursue the life they choose. It's because of kind people like you that we're able to continue doing this. Your support really does make a huge difference!

In 2022, we supported over 4,060 guide dog partnerships and nearly 700 My Sighted Guide partnerships, a service which connects a locally trained volunteer with a person with sight loss. Our fantastically trained dogs and our wonderfully dedicated volunteers help people get out and about while also boosting their confidence. We couldn't provide these services without supporters like you – thank you.

I can't wait for you to read your puppy's latest Pupdate, and I hope you enjoy finding out what they've been getting up to!

Yours sincerely,



**Steph Potter**

Puppy Sponsorship Manager



# Thank you

## for sponsoring Fern



“  
**Hello, it's  
Paul here,  
Fern's Puppy  
Raiser.**  
”

### **Sweet Fern**

Time has flown by with Fern! She's still the same lovable dog. Our bond has grown stronger, and she likes to find me for cuddles. She's so playful; when I receive visits from my family, she gets very excited. During the colder months, Fern and I like to walk in the woods, and she usually jumps in the fallen leaves. On rainy days, her legs get quite dirty, and once she gets back home, cleaning her paws becomes a little tricky, as she enjoys playing with the towel. To keep her distracted, I leave some kibble on the floor so she'll focus on that instead.

### **Never stop learning**

Since your first Pupdate, Fern has settled down a lot when out and about. Her recall is amazing when she's on a free run with just me, but sometimes she gets distracted when she sees people or dogs she doesn't know. I'm working on getting her to focus on me – when she's on the lead, her dog distraction has already improved. She can usually get past another dog without too much fuss, focusing on the kibble I'll give her.

Now Fern is getting older, it's easier for her to spend small amounts of time alone at home. Her food manners are also good, and she'll sit and stay, waiting calmly for her food to be placed in front of her, until she hears the cue 'okay'.

Fern loves puppy classes too! It's an opportunity for her to meet other pups and play. Sometimes she's more interested in them than the class, but she does everything I ask of her. She's doing great!



## New places and experiences

Fern's becoming more confident and eager to explore her new surroundings. Together we've been to restaurants and cafés, and walked through the busy town centre. She's heard the sound of children playing and motorbikes passing by, and she isn't fazed at all by traffic. She takes everything in her stride! Fern has been wonderful at the shopping centre as well; she just seemed curious while observing everything around her. She did a fantastic job navigating the stairs and going in the lift. I'm so proud of her!



Fern travels well by car and can now jump inside the boot without my help. I've also started to travel by bus with her, and she's learning to settle in a safe place close to me.

Before travelling by train, I want to make sure she gets accustomed to the station environment and getting on and off the train, avoiding the gap.



Learn more about the places Fern has been exploring by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

**[guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-fern](https://guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-fern)**



**Scan me**



## Looking forward

In the coming months, I'll be continuing to work on Fern's recall and her dog distraction, and practising the cues she's already learnt. Watching her grow brings me pure joy, and I'm enjoying being by her side as she prepares for training school. We're creating lasting memories, and I'll never forget her first experiences.

**Thank you for sponsoring Fern. I can't wait to update you on her progress in your next Pupdate in June!**



## Where is Fern on her Pupdate journey?



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## What is PREP?

Puppy Raising for Excellent Partnerships (PREP) is our bespoke puppy-raising programme that guide dog pups follow while living with their puppy raisers. PREP was designed in consultation with volunteers, staff, training behaviour consultants and canine research staff. It's based on Positive Reinforcement Training (PRT) which focuses on rewarding good behaviour and creating positive associations with new experiences. PREP treats each pup as an individual and helps to support their physical, behavioural, and emotional development.



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