



Guide
Dogs

Sponsor
a Puppy



Lily

Lily has become
a life changer!

Pupdate 6

The perfect match!

Charlie and Lily

Charlie was born extremely premature. My husband Paul and I were told he had a very low chance of survival; there were a few nights when doctors told us we should say goodbye. But after 84 days, our miracle baby Charlie came home from the hospital.

Charlie is 10 now and has nystagmus, which causes his eyes to wobble, making depth perception difficult for him. This means that he struggles with steps and kerbs and finds it hard to catch things like balls. Charlie also has ocular albinism, so sunlight can really hurt his eyes, and he struggles to identify movement in shadows. He also has autism.

When Charlie was first diagnosed with his visual impairments, we didn't stop to think about what it meant. We'd already been through so much; we were just grateful that he was alive. Now that he's a little older, I'm much more anxious about the future. Charlie's biggest passion is trains, and he would love to be a train driver when he grows up. Even though we aren't sure what the future will hold for him, we always tell Charlie he can do whatever he sets his mind to. He's been defying the odds since he was born and we're so proud of everything he's achieved so far.

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Hello, I'm Lucy, and I'm excited to tell you that Lily has been partnered with my family as a buddy dog.

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Welcoming Lily

We'd already been in touch with Guide Dogs as they'd been helping Charlie to learn mobility skills and providing large print books for him through the CustomEyes service. One day I was speaking to them about Charlie having a guide dog in the future, and they told me about the buddy dog programme. As soon as the service was explained, I knew it would be perfect for Charlie.

We went to an experience day with Natalie, a Canine Assisted Partnerships Specialist, and met a beautiful GS. Charlie loved throwing the dog's toy; it was wonderful to see him come out of his shell a little. We were all sad to leave the Guide Dogs centre that day, as we'd fallen in love with the dog we met. Luckily, a few weeks later, we got a call from Natalie telling us we'd been matched with that same dog: it was Lily!



A perfect match

Lily has already made such a difference for Charlie. Because of his autism, he can sometimes get stuck in his own bubble, but having Lily around helps to bring him out. He'll always ask us when it's time to feed her, and he's enjoying the new responsibility of caring for her. She's opening up his world.

Charlie and Lily are complete opposites, but that's why they're perfect for each other. Charlie can get anxious about leaving the house, but Lily loves getting outside. Because he was born premature, Charlie has low muscle tone and gets tired easily, so he has a specialist trike which has support straps and a parent handle for safety. Since Lily arrived, Charlie asks us every day when we're going to take her out for her walk! He loves riding his trike with Lily trotting along next to him; she always keeps an eye on him. Charlie is so much more confident now.

Trainspotting

Charlie is so proud of Lily and tells everyone about what they get up to together. Trainspotting is one of Charlie's favourite activities, and Lily is a fantastic trainspotting dog. She's always calm and quiet at stations; not even the fast trains faze her. It's amazing to watch, and it means that Charlie feels he can share his interest with her – they've become best friends.

Thank you!

Lily has already made such a massive difference to us; she fitted into our family perfectly, and now we feel complete. We can't thank you enough for sponsoring Lily. She's changed our lives! Thank you.





Learn more about Lily's personality by scanning the QR code with your smartphone or going to:

guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-lily





See how much Lily has grown

We have been taking pictures and videos of Lily since her was born so you can see just how much she's changed.

To watch your exclusive video, please visit guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-lily and if you'd like to hear more from Sponsor a Puppy, why not visit our social media pages.



Find out more about how we manage and respect your data at guidedogs.org.uk/privacy or call **freephone 0800 953 0113** to request a printed copy. Please use this number to tell us if you have changed your mind about how we contact you; including telling us that you do not wish to receive occasional direct mail about Guide Dogs.