



Sponsor
a Puppy

A close-up photograph of a golden retriever puppy's face. The puppy has light golden fur, floppy ears, and its mouth is open in a happy expression, showing its pink tongue and teeth. The background is a soft-focus green field.

Sprout

Training School

Pupdate 4

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



Sprout

has arrived at Training School!



Settling into training school

Sprout has settled in well to training school. He's a boisterous fellow and was quite a handful at first but he's come a long way already. He spends his evenings and weekends with his foster family, including their 6-year-old twins, who are absolutely besotted with him. His time is spent free running in the woods and he loves a good sniff around in the undergrowth.

I love Sprout's personality; he's a real character and never fails to make me laugh. He's so much fun to work with. In another life, he would have made a great comedian! He just exudes happiness and confidence; nothing fazes him at all.

A clever dog!

Sprout is very intelligent and he picks up new skills quickly. He's already comfortable wearing his harness and has no problems putting it on. He has been on the obstacle course and did really well – it's important for guide dogs to be able to confidently navigate their owner around hazards.

“Hi! It's Natalie here, one of Sprout's trainers. Sue and I have been working to progress Sprout's training now that he has arrived at training school.”

Sprout is very good at staying focused and is not easily distracted when working. This definitely makes training a lot easier. There are so many potential distractions when we're out on training walks but he doesn't bat an eye. He's already confident at finding lowered kerbs and stopping to allow for safe road crossing.

Looking forward

Sprout is such a lovable boy, although he does have his quirks! He's not a fan of having his ears checked so Sue and I will be continuing to work on this with him. It's crucial for him to become comfortable with this as it is important for his welfare, so I have been teaching him 'chin rest'. This involves asking Sprout to rest his chin in my lap and rewarding him when he does. We're gradually increasing the length of time he does this and will then start to introduce touching his ears. The main thing is that we ensure the experience is positive for him as well as letting him choose when he wants to move away.



Watch Sprout navigating a pedestrian crossing:
guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-sprout

Over the next few months Sue and I will be continuing to teach Sprout all the guiding skills that he will need. We'll be focusing on increasing consistency as he can sometimes be a little bit overconfident, and he has previously shown stopping behaviour on walks which does seem to be improving. We've also been working on getting in and out of the car – he knows exactly what to do but sometimes needs a little encouragement as he likes things to be on his terms!

We're happy with Sprout's progress so far and look forward to updating you in your next Pupdate.





The matching process

Every person and dog is unique, so matching a guide dog to an owner is a complex and carefully managed process. Our trainers take into account a person's needs including lifestyle, walking speed and height.

Once a match has been made, our trainers spend several weeks training the guide dog owner and dog together, learning their common routes and making sure their partnership is a success.



/SponsorAPuppy



/SponsorAPuppy



/sponsorapuppygd

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.

Registered charity in England and Wales (209617) and in Scotland (SC038979).GD0629 12/21 Sprout PD4