



# Sprout

Sprout's great  
qualities

Pupdate 5

# Welcome to your June Pupdate

**I hope you are well and enjoying the start of summer. I'm sure you are looking forward to finding out the latest update from your sponsored puppy.**

Your support is vital to help our future life changers complete their training and support a person with sight loss. We're proud to create so many partnerships through our guide dog and buddy dog schemes, and to be continuing this throughout 2022.

We really appreciate that the past few months have been really challenging in lots of ways, so we are so grateful that you have continued to support us by sponsoring a puppy. On behalf of everyone at Guide Dogs, I'd like to say a huge thank you.

Because of you and your amazing ongoing support, we can continue to make life-changing partnerships possible!

Yours sincerely,



**Chris Allum**

Puppy Sponsorship Manager



# Sprout's new career



**“Hello, it’s  
Natalie here  
and I am a  
Canine Assisted  
Partnerships  
Specialist at  
Guide Dogs.”**

In your last Pupdate, Sprout’s trainer Natalie mentioned all of the skills that she and his other trainer Sue were working on to help Sprout on his journey to become a guide dog. They were focusing on improving his consistency, as he was sometimes a little bit overconfident and would constantly stop on his training walks. Although his trainers were working really hard, they found that Sprout had low motivation to actually do the tasks he would need to do with a guide dog owner. He would rely on his trainer a bit too much and he would get distracted by the things around him.

Unfortunately, we haven’t seen any improvements in these behaviours. Every dog is unique, and we soon realised that Sprout would be better suited for an alternative career as a buddy dog.

## **Buddy dogs**

A career as a guide dog might not be quite right for every dog, and some will undergo a career change to become a buddy dog for a child living with sight loss. Buddy dogs can significantly improve a child’s wellbeing, like helping with exercise and building confidence,



which in turn helps them to become more independent and create better relationships with others. Although a buddy dog isn't a mobility aid in the same way that a guide dog is, they have an incredible impact on the lives of the children they are matched with.

## **Sprout's previous skills and experiences**

During his training, Sprout was great at a lot of crucial skills that will help him as a buddy dog. He tended to struggle with guiding-specific tasks, but his personality and temperament make him perfect for his new career! He's very confident in new environments so he'd be able to go anywhere with his new family. He can travel on any type of transport too; some dogs might struggle with loud buses, but Sprout settles really well.

He's also so affectionate. He loves to be cuddled or get any kind of affection, so he would love a family who would give him a bit of fuss. He's very playful so he could definitely keep up with children that have lots of energy! He can play for hours, but he still settles down well for a snooze once he's tired himself out. He's a real cheeky chap and is lots of fun.



Find out about Sprout's career change.  
Scan the QR code with your smartphone or go to:  
**[guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-sprout](https://guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-sprout)**





## Next steps

I'm pleased to say that Sprout passed his buddy dog assessment with flying colours, and we're now looking for his perfect match. We have a few families currently waiting for a buddy dog, so once I've got someone in mind, I will visit them to make sure that the home environment is right and to introduce them to Sprout. Sprout is a brilliant boy and I have full confidence that he'll be an amazing companion to a child with a visual impairment.

**I'm looking forward to updating you on Sprout's new career in his next Pupdate!**



## Behind them every step of the way

A guide dog puppy's training journey could not have been possible without our fantastic volunteer puppy raisers. They do an incredible job of building the best foundation for our puppies before they head off to Guide Dogs Training School. One of the best parts of puppy raising is knowing that when the pup moves to training school, they will hopefully go on to change the life of someone with sight loss.

**To find out what a day in the life of a Puppy Raiser is like, listen to Kirsty and Phil's experience at [guidedogs.org.uk/puppyraiser](https://guidedogs.org.uk/puppyraiser)**



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