



Willow

Making steady
progress

Pupdate 5

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



Thank you

for sponsoring Willow



“Hello, it’s
Charlotte
here, Willow’s
trainer.”

Willow has had a few struggles with her training, but I’ve been working on perfecting the skills that we’ve worked on together already. We’ve spent lots of time together and I’m glad that there have been improvements already!

Growing in confidence

Since coming to training school, Willow has been showing some inconsistencies in her guiding work where at times she isn’t sure of herself. We were hoping this would improve over time as her confidence grew. It’s still an area for her to work on, so we’ve decided to spend a little more time with her before moving her on to advanced training.

Staying focused

I have been working on Willow’s dog distraction. She used to stop and stare at other dogs, but I’m delighted to say that she’s now doing much better! She now walks past dogs right next to her without stopping or even looking away from the task at hand. What’s more, now that her dog distraction has improved, her recall has too! She loves to retrieve toys and I’m able to keep her engaged so she’s more consistent.

Willow does get a little bit distracted by all the different things to smell when training. Although she is improving, it's something that I'm paying a lot of attention to as when she starts to sniff, it can affect how she walks on the lead. Food and clicker training works – she's a very intelligent dog and knows that the clicker means she has shown the right behaviour. I'm pleased with how she's progressing with it so far.

Out and about

Since your last Pupdate, Willow and I have been on trains and buses together! I was so pleased with her on the train because she settled so calmly. We need to practise the buses a little bit more as the noise can make Willow a little bit restless, but she's been doing really well.

I'll be working closely with Willow to improve her confidence, and I'd like to take her on a trip into London to try out the Tube.



See how Willow is getting on at training school:
guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-willow

Willow's future

I think that Willow would work well with a guide dog owner who benefits more from short, regular routes than long ones. I could definitely imagine her with someone a little bit older with a busy social life who sees lots of people and pops to shops at a leisurely pace. Willow is a very funny little character – I find that she's actually more like a cat than a dog! She loves attention and affection on her own terms and the bonds she forms with people are really special. I think she would make a wonderful companion for someone one day.

Look out for your next Pupdate to see how Willow is progressing and what her future will hold!





See how much Willow has grown

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

Please visit guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-willow and if you'd like to hear more from Sponsor a Puppy, why not visit our social media pages.



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