

## **South West and Wales region: puppy raising update June 2025**

Hi All, Leah Rogers here, and I am the Puppy Raising Operations Manager for the South West and Wales region.

### **Puppy Raising Operations Manager message**

In this month's puppy raising newsletter, we've shared a video on the theme of 'positional cues.' Under this theme, the video looks at resolving common issues when it comes to training your puppy on positional or stationary cues (stand, sit, down). I encourage you to watch this useful video.

Some key takeaways:

- Keep learning on positional cues short and always end on a positive note
- Remember that your puppy will pick up on unintentional cues like a finger point or an eye movement, even a hand towards the training pouch!
- When further developing positional cues, these will first be performed in front of you before progressing to your left-hand side; this will take time, and your Puppy Development Advisor will be able to help you with this when the time comes.
- Remember to practice these cues elsewhere like on pavements, shops, parks etc, however before this, try adding different distractions in the current environment (at home). Remember to train for the environment not in the environment.

Positional cues are an important skill for your puppy to learn so they can become a future guide dog. Why is this? Think about when a dog sits, if you are not able to see, you may give the dog the cue to move forward and if the dog is not sat in the right position you could end up going in the wrong direction or even walking into danger like a road. An example of this is a puppy that is anticipating a reward will come across the handler as they are anticipating the reward coming from the handlers right hand side, by adjusting the handler's position further forward, having the treat bag out of



sight or a few kibbles hidden in your pocket, you can then adjust the dog to achieve a straight sitting position. Another way to achieve this is to use a wall or a straight line to help keep the puppy straight so that their back end does not swing out enabling them to achieve a straight sit position. Puppy Development Advisors will cover these positional cues with you on individual visits and puppy classes. If you have any questions about this then feel free to chat this through with your Puppy Development Advisor.

## **Puppy Development Supervisor update**

We recently recruited a new Puppy Development Supervisor to support myself and the other Puppy Development Supervisor, Mel Wharmby, with the day-to-day running of the schemes and management of staff. This appointment will be effective up until the end of March 2026 when my role as Puppy Raising Operations Manager is due to finish. I therefore I would like to congratulate Lucy Avery on her recent appointment, and I am sure you will all wish her well in her development within this role.

## **Scheme visits**

Some of you may have observed that I have been travelling around meeting some of you out on schemes and at puppy classes. I am planning to continue to do this over the next year or so. In fact, I will be visiting Jersey in July/August so I can meet the puppy raisers that are on the Island and help with recruitment of new puppy raisers in the area.

Thank you for all you are doing and look forward to seeing you all soon,

**Leah Rogers**

**Puppy Raising Operations Manager - South West and Wales**

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