

South West and Wales region: puppy raising update December 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's message

How can we manage our pups in a social situation, especially when visitors arrive? One of the key things to remember is - am I setting my puppy up for success and how do I do this? All puppies love to see visitors; dogs are social creatures and love to greet people in an enthusiastic way even if they have only been gone for a few minutes. This is because dogs live in the moment and have no concept of time.

So, how can I do this?

- Set up your environment. This could mean putting up baby gates to manage your puppy away from the front door. If your puppy is away from the access point it will be easier for you to open the door to visitors without having to manage the puppy too. If you don't have baby gates, then consider using the lead or another family member to have the puppy on the lead away from the door.

- Communication. Have you briefed your visitors beforehand? Do they know what to do when they enter your house? How visitors behave around your puppy is important too.
- If it's a visitor that you are not anticipating arriving, how do you manage this? You could add a note to your door. This way they can read what you want them to do before they even knock or ring the doorbell.
- What if my puppy reacts to the doorbell? You could practice minimising your puppy's reaction to the doorbell by using a recording of the doorbell and pairing it with food so that it becomes a positive or if it's already a very positive thing then you could play it consistently throughout the day so that it just becomes normal to the puppy and nothing different happens when it's heard.
- Let's talk about the puppy, how can I manage them? We have already mentioned baby gates, try adding a frozen Kong or bone when your puppy is behind the gate, so they're distracted when the person enters the house. Again, get your visitors to ignore the puppy when they enter your home so that nothing is reinforced.
- Once your puppy is settled and you want to introduce them to your visitor then maybe consider using the lead and following the "four feet on the floor" procedure to set your puppy and visitor up for success.

National online learning session

The national online learning is now live, and we have already had sessions on Fireworks and Adolescence which has proved to very popular indeed. Look out for future sessions which you can book through Kallidus.

New Puppy Development Advisor for Wales

We have recently been looking for a replacement Puppy Development Advisor for our Welsh scheme after Hannah Reed left Guide Dogs. As you can imagine the role of Puppy Development Advisor is a very sought after

position within the organisation, and we were delighted to receive so many applications for the position.

Last week, we successfully completed our assessment day where we identified a new Puppy Development Advisor for Wales. All will be revealed in our next regional update!

Festive socials

The season is upon us again when Puppy Development Advisors will be holding their annual festive socials/parties.

I know that you all enjoy these as they are a great way to get together and chat about your pups and enjoy some festive spirit.

My Puppy Development Supervisors and I will be attending as many events as possible so that we can meet you all and chat about all things puppy raising.

Can I please remind you to be mindful with your puppies at these events as there may be other puppies there that they don't know, therefore remember to give them space and if needed leave the area if your puppy is displaying any signs of anxiety or stress.

Reminder: dog welfare at Christmas

As we approach the festive season can I just bring your attention to your puppies' welfare at this time. It's important to remember that although we love all the food/decorations etc these can be potential hazards to our puppies.

Please look at the PDF below to remind yourselves how to manage your pups at this time of year:

- [Christmas.pdf](#)

Guide dog puppies enjoy Halloween

Recently some of our guide dog puppies in Hampshire visited Sunnyfields Farm to experience some spooky happenings (pictured below).

Puppy Development Advisor Leanne Kelly said: “It was great for our pups to experience this which will set them up for the future, I would like to thank Sunnyfields Farm for allowing us access to the farm for the day so that the pups can experience everything that was on offer.”

If you have any photos of your puppy experiencing any environments, especially unconventional, please feel free to share these with your Puppy Development Advisors, so we can add them to future newsletters.



It just leaves me to say a big “thank you” to you all for all the hard work you have put into puppy raising, fostering, and/or fundraising this year! Without you all we could not make a difference to people with sight loss to live the life they choose.

Also, a big thank you for all the support you give to our Puppy Development Advisors. I know that they really appreciate everything you do for them,



from driving pups around to those last-minute fostering requests, it does really help them in their day-to-day management of their schemes.

It just leaves me to say I hope you all have a fantastic Christmas and a happy New Year.

Please contact me with any of your questions/queries at leah.rogers@guidedogs.org.uk.

Leah Rogers

Puppy Raising Operations Manager - South West and Wales

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