

## Midlands and East region: puppy raising update - October 2023



Hi all its Anna here, and I am the Canine Assistance Services (CAS) Operations Manager for Puppy Raising in the Midlands and East.

We are swiftly approaching the festive period and for those who aren't aware this is my favourite time of the year, although my talk of Christmas does start around February!

Please do look out for communications around events that are happening around this time, and for those who will see me in December I will be full of festive cheer and mince pies, I am sure.

Please also let your Puppy Development Advisor (PDA) know as soon as possible around any fostering requests to ensure we can support any plans that you may have over this period.

As always me and my team want to send a BIG thank you for all the support you have shown us in our region.

We really enjoy meeting with you all and hearing your feedback, it's amazing to see your enthusiasm, passion, and efforts you give to support our community, and this is evident in the pups coming into training.

### Coffee sessions: dates for your diary

Our coffee sessions for me are a highlight of my calendar, I love being able to meet with you all in person and hear from other staff within Guide Dogs and the great work that they're doing. Within our region, we're holding quarterly coffee sessions in December (details below) and will be joined by Dr Helen Vaterlaws-Whiteside, Assistant Director for Breeding, Puppy Raising and



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Science. So, please come along. I'll be wearing my Christmas jumper. Will you?!

Wednesday 6th December, 10:30-12:30pm: Harbury Village Hall- South Parade, Harbury Leamington Spa CV33 9JE.

Tuesday 12th December, 10:30-12:30pm: Newark, Phoenix Community Hall, 47 Station Road, Collingham, Newark NG23 7RA.

Thursday 14th December 10:30-12:30pm: Peopleton Village Hall, Main Street, Peopleton, Worcestershire WR10 2EG.

If you would like to attend any of these informal coffee sessions, please let myself or your PDA know. Also, get in touch with your PDA if you would like to bring your pup along and they will discuss this with you further.

Any feedback on these sessions so far would be greatly received, and I look forward to seeing as many of you who can make it to these events.

As we move forward into 2024 and after the 'Christmas period' I will be looking at other venues around the region to ensure that these are as accessible as possible for you all to enjoy and attend.

A big welcome to all our new Puppy Raisers who are joining our puppy raising community both in our established and newly opened areas, your support is greatly appreciated, and any suggestions/feedback is welcomed. Please do contact me directly through Guide Line or drop me an email if you would like to discuss anything further:

- [anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk)

## Warwickshire Animal Centre visit

Recently, Vicki Johnson, our PDA who covers around the Midlands Regional Centre went with some of her puppy raisers and pups to Warwickshire Animal Centre within the college whilst the students were on holiday. From the looks of the photos, looks like our pups had a great time exploring!



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## Using Guide Line

We're very fortunate, as I have previously mentioned, to have Guide Line who are supporting our region to act as the front door for all volunteer queries, questions, and concerns.

I just wanted to include this as a reminder for you to continue using Guide Line to access support, if required between classes and visits. This also supports our fantastic PDAs to work with you and provide the support needed.



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You can either call Guide Line on 0800 7811444 or by email at [information@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:information@guidedogs.org.uk) (please use this email address from now on).

We can already see that your use of Guide Line as a first point of contact for queries is allowing and supporting our Puppy Development Advisors to have time to work more closely with you all.

We continue to have a dedicated duty PDA daily to cover any urgent requests and can provide support as needed. I also wanted to say thank you for how you have embraced this change to support your PDAs, and this has made a positive difference to their workload.

If you would like to share your feedback on using Guide Line, please can you email myself (details mentioned earlier) or Guide Line Manager, Hannah Peck ([hannah.peck@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:hannah.peck@guidedogs.org.uk)).

Your feedback allows us to continually improve the support that we provide you.

## Introducing our new Volunteering Coordinator, Charlotte



I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce a new member of the Guide Dogs team, Charlotte Hawthorne, who is our new Volunteering Coordinator in Birmingham. I asked Charlotte to share with you a little bit about herself and her role.

"Hi, I'm Charlotte and I am the Volunteering Coordinator for the Birmingham area. I cover

Birmingham, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, and the majority of Gloucestershire. I am new to Guide Dogs and been in the role since 26th June. I absolutely love animals and previously worked in animal rescue as a volunteer coordinator, but I also



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worked on kennels and cattery. Occasionally I am still asked to foster kittens that need that little extra care and love.

“The main responsibilities of my role are to recruit volunteers for varied volunteer roles, I can do this through different mediums which can vary from social media, volunteer bureaus to material distribution. I also do quarterly welcome events, Local Volunteer Awards, organising volunteer socials, attending events, and dealing with volunteer enquiries.

“My days can be very varied which I love, some days I am at a desk contacting local businesses to see if they will advertise a specific volunteer role that I am recruiting for in that area or emailing/speaking to people who have questions about roles. Other days I am exploring areas of the country I have never been too at amazing local events that I wouldn’t have had the opportunity to attend before, meeting fabulous volunteers and raising awareness of Guide Dogs!”

Thank you for reading,

**Anna Standing**  
**Canine Assisted Services, Operations Manager - Midlands and East**

**Document ends.**



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