

North East region: Puppy raising update - October 2023

Welcome to the October North East Regional Update for Puppy Raising.



Firstly, I am writing this in the aftermath of Storm Babet and despite the fact the sun is now shining my thoughts are with those who have been so badly affected by the extreme weather.

Despite the fact we have had strange fluctuation in temperature recently, it now feels that autumn is very definitely here which brings the annual challenges of both Halloween and Bonfire Night. Please don't hesitate to discuss any questions you may have about the impact on your pup as different areas experience very different impacts of these

dates. Rebecca will also raise the issues on her regional weekly Zoom calls as the days approach.

Site update

Sheffield

I am pleased to say that the new site at Sheffield is now open and gives the team far more space and facilities to train the dogs. It's still a work in progress to establish the most effective and efficient ways of working on the new site, but the dogs are definitely enjoying the enclosed outside area where they have more space to play and run.



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Volunteer training

Weekly Zoom calls for Puppy Raisers

Rebecca continues to do her regional weekly Zoom calls for our Puppy Raisers and will happily tailor a training session around specific requests so please let Rebecca, or your Puppy Development Advisor (PDA) know if there is anything you would like her to cover.

Monthly Zoom calls for Puppy Raising Fosterers

Monthly zoom calls specific to our Puppy Raising Fosterers have also started, with focus on areas that can be a challenge specifically when fostering (as our fosterers are more than welcome to attend the weekly Zooms as well). For example, some of the subjects discussed in the October call were:

1. Managing transport when it is different to the puppy raiser.
2. Differences in bed-time routine.
3. When information from puppy raiser may be different to fosterer's experience when pup is in a different environment. e.g. Not sleeping at night.

If you are interested in joining these calls, please email NEPuppyRaising@guidedogs.org.uk and we will put you on the mailing list for details.

Team update

In the last newsletter you saw the pictures of our lovely team and I promised I would bring you some information about them. They have been writing about themselves and I have decided to split the personas between this month and the next newsletter:

Gillian Salmon, PDA (North Northumberland, Berwickshire and the Scottish Borders)

"I have a background working in rescue centres and has been a qualified dog trainer since 2017. I am a member of the Animal



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Behaviour Training Council (ABTC), a Karen Pryor Academy Certified Training Partner (KPA CTP), as well as being fully accredited with The Institute of Modern Dog Trainers (IMDT). Joining Guide Dogs in April 2023, I am relatively new to the North East team and am loving my new role. I enjoy meeting all the amazing volunteers and of course, all the cute puppies. I am enjoying expanding my knowledge and putting my new skills into practice.

“When not at work I can be found walking my dog on the beach, with the occasional wild swim thrown in - the dog however doesn’t join me for that! I also enjoy attending our village quiz nights where I usually do alright, if they don’t ask any maths questions.

“After finally giving in to my partner’s requests, I can be seen on the golf course shouting “fore” in all directions. I am a keen cook; I love watching cooking shows and attempting to put the recipes and techniques in to practice, although this isn’t always successful...”

Rebecca Stranney, PDA (Northumberland and Tyneside areas)

“I live with my partner, Dharma, and our 15-year-old terrier, Dita. I was born in Northern Ireland and lived in Cardiff for a decade before moving up to the paradise that is Northumberland. I moved up for the PDA role and have been with Guide Dogs now for just over two years.

“Many of you know Dita from the weekly Zoom sessions. She was a nervous little rescue dog when we first adopted her. Learning how to help her cope in the world and not bark at every dog she met, sparked a career change from training young adults to training dogs.

“Teaching dog body language is my passion. I used to host local charity evenings presenting on body language to local dog owners and businesses for donations. I always say it’s the one thing I think our dogs would ask us to learn. I now enjoy running the weekly Zooms with body language being one of our regular topics.

“My spare time is spent mostly with my little terrier side kick. Our favourite weekend walks are around garden centres. She



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loves the sniffs, and the fact it's warm and dry inside. I can get a bit of shopping done whilst she gets tired out for the day. I also love yoga, listening to podcasts and I always have a good book on the go."

Lucy Williams, PDA (North Yorkshire, County Durham and Teesside areas)

"I've always worked with dogs, starting with running my own business offering walks, one-to-ones, and classes, to working in rescue kennels for three and half years. Eventually, I came to Guide Dogs.

"I grew up in Lancashire, studied in Bristol, spent some time in the Midlands and have now settled in North Yorkshire.

"Most of my volunteers will know that I have two dogs; Zara, a nearly 7-year-old Wire Fox Terrier, love of my life (!), and Hugo, a 1.5-year-old Working Cocker Spaniel (for my sins!). Most of my free time is spent either walking or training them (mostly Hugo). I love Zara's terrier sass, and I love how affectionate Hugo is. I have certainly had to upskill my own training to keep pace with him! I've also developed a healthy respect for all my puppy raisers and fosterers that deal with one puppy after another, as bringing Hugo home at 8 weeks old was one of the hardest times of my adult life!

"That's pretty much me - dogs! I love working with them, but I also love working with their people and have a fantastic group of volunteers and a great team of colleagues at Guide Dogs 😊"

Elise Finney, PDA (East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire areas)

"Hi! I'm Elise and I joined the Northeast PDA team back in August this year, but I started out in Guide Dogs back in June 2021 as a Dog Wellbeing Technician at the Hull training centre.

"I've always known since very young that I wanted to work with Guide Dogs as my Mum has worked here too for nearly all my life.

"If I'm not working with guide dog puppies, you'll often find me competing with my pet dogs in agility or going on long walks in the countryside. And a fun fact about me is that I could



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never pick a hobby as a child so I can do many party tricks, like baton-twirling and ice skating backwards.”

Fi Barrow, PDA (West and North Yorkshire areas)

“Hello, I’m Fi, I live in Otley with my partner and 6.5-year-old rescue lurcher Ollie. I joined the North East Puppy Team in May 2022 and love both my role and working with the rest of the team. The job keeps me busy and when I’m not out and about in my van, or doing things with Ollie, I’m making wedding stationary and other personalised, fun bits and bobs.”

Thank you to our PDAs for taking the time to introduce themselves.

Thanks again,

Janet Champion
Canine Assisted Services, Operations Manager - North East

Document ends.



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