

Midlands and East region: puppy raising update June 2024



Hi all, I'm Anna, the Canine Assistance Services (CAS) Operations Manager for puppy raising in the Midlands and East.

I can't believe we're fast approaching the summer and nearing the end of June (fingers crossed for some summer weather). How are we already halfway through the year?!

I wanted to express my thanks to you all for coming forward and supporting us as a region for our busy period over the summer months for both fostering and summer placements. I'm delighted to say that we can place all our July pups in new homes and are now planning for our August pups. I cannot thank you all enough for offering your home and time to us.



If anyone can **help with any summer fostering** for us, please contact us via Guide Line and let your Puppy Development Advisor (PDA) know so they can best support our puppy raising community over our busy holiday season.

If you have **booked any holidays**, please do let your PDA know as soon as possible which will help us to organise fostering for your puppy in good time.

Recruiting puppy raisers

I'm so grateful for our puppy raising community: those new volunteers joining us and our returning puppy raisers.

We continue to recruit new volunteers into our puppy raising community and often ask you - our puppy raisers - for help with advertising/radio interviews/TV appearances or adding posters/leaflets around the region.

In our last newsletter, I asked for any puppy raisers interested in helping us to promote puppy raising to the public to get in touch. Our Communications Team will normally arrange a chat with you to find out about how and why you became a puppy raiser and talk to you about the different media and PR opportunities. If this sounds like something you'd like to do, please email me at anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk.

While I'm at it, we're currently **looking for more puppy raisers in Derby, Staffordshire, North Norfolk, and Milton Keynes** to help us socialise and raise future guide dogs. If you can lend us a hand in finding more volunteers like you, please request a [Volunteering Champion Pack](#), which contains everything you need (posters and leaflets) for spreading the word in your area. We also know that it's common for members of the public to ask puppy raisers about their guide dog puppy when out and about. If this often happens to you, why not refer them to our website for further information, including how to apply.

A massive thank you to our puppy raisers who have kindly helped us out recently at local events both the Big Help Out held at Midlands Regional Centre and at our café take over at Blenz in Whitnash, Leamington. I have included a few snap shots from these events below.





We always welcome the opportunity to attend any events/places where we can recruit more volunteers so if anyone has any ideas or potential recruitment opportunities, please do contact me to discuss.

Coffee dates for the diary

I really look forward to the coffee sessions that we have running in our region and hearing about your puppy raising, and of course your feedback. I also really enjoy some of the stories I hear about our pups and the journey that they take and meeting new volunteers. I love meeting up with everyone in person and I am hoping as well to pop into more puppy classes to meet as many of our puppy raising community as possible.

The summer sessions have been wonderful. It's great to see so many of you and for us to chat, support each other and experience new things. This time we were lucky in Peopleton to welcome the Vision Rehabilitation team and will be planning for them to attend other areas in the coming sessions.

Within our region, we'll be holding several quarterly coffee sessions throughout September and October. We hope to have a guest speaker at these events. Further details will be sent to you via your PDA.

If you are new to our community, please do come to the events below. Here are the dates/venues for your diary:

- Virtual coffee session: Thursday 10 October, 10am-12pm. This is an informal drop-in session (no agenda), so please join us. The Zoom link for this session is below and the invite will be from anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk. Join our Zoom session (link): [Virtual coffee session](#). Meeting ID: 941 6873 3104. Passcode: 605011.
- Wednesday 25 September, 10:30-12:30: Harbury Village Hall-South Parade, Harbury Leamington Spa CV33 9JE.
- Tuesday 8th 10.30-12.30: Peopleton Village Hall, Main Street, Peopleton, Worcestershire WR10 2EG.
- Thursday 26th September 11.30-1.30: Collingham, Phoenix Community Hall, 47 Station Road, Collingham Newark, NG23 7RA.
- East regional coffee session (Norfolk, Suffolk, Peterborough) - TBC.

Just a reminder, these are informal sessions, so please speak to your Puppy Development Advisor (PDA), if you would like to bring along your puppy and they will discuss with you further. If you would like to attend, please let myself or your PDA know. Any feedback on these sessions would be greatly received and I look forward to seeing as many of you who can make it at these events.

A reminder to use Guide Line

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 also welcomed.

Please do contact me directly through Guide Line or drop me an email if you would like to discuss anything further, please remember no question/query/concern is a silly one and I'm happy to hear from you:

- anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk

Please remember to continue using Guide Line as your first point of contact for support, if needed, between classes and visits:

- 0800 7811444; or
- information@guidedogs.org.uk



If you'd like to share any feedback on your experience of using Guide Line, please send this to myself (anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk) or Hannah Peck (hannah.peck@guidedogs.org.uk).

Your feedback allows us to continually improve the support that we provide you. We're now using Guide Line nationally to support our puppy raising community. We would like for this service to continue to grow and support us in puppy raising, which can only happen through your feedback.

Just a final note to say, I hope whatever you have planned for the summer period, that you all have an enjoyable time, please look out for the summer weather information as well (fingers crossed for the British weather).

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

Anna Standing

CAS Operations Manager - Midlands and East

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