

North East region: puppy raising update June 2024

Welcome to the latest puppy raising update from the North East region.

Team news

The big news for the team this month is that our lovely Puppy Development Advisor (PDA), Lucy, married her fiancé, Will, at the weekend. Many of the team were able to join the festivities and it was an amazing day.



Arranging fostering/boarding over the summer

As we head into summer, please make sure to let us know of your holiday plans. This is so we can have enough time to arrange fostering/boarding for your puppy while you're away. **If you're arranging fostering/boarding yourself with another puppy raiser or fosterer, you must inform us via Guide Line (0800 7811444), of the dates and the details of who is fostering/boarding your puppy so insurance can be transferred at the appropriate time for the stay.**

The next few months...

Can you bring your availability for another puppy forward?

Nature, as is often the case, has provided us with a busy few months with lots of our guide dog mums producing larger litters. It means we have plenty of young pups moving from their mums in July and August. September and October are likely to be quieter months so if you are coming back from a break and are ready to have another puppy, please let us know asap so we know all the homes we have available, and when. Also, if there's any possibility that you can be a little flexible with your availability - such as a few weeks earlier - it will help us even more with how we allocate puppies to available homes. If this is something you can do, please let your PDA know.

Opportunity to look after younger pups for a few weeks at a time

We have some amazing puppy raisers who are experts at looking after puppies in those first few weeks and getting them well on their way to being house trained and settled overnight, which makes life easier for those puppy raisers whose other commitments can make those early weeks an extra challenge.

If you are interested in looking after the younger pups on a temporary basis for a few weeks, please let us know and your PDA will discuss with you. This can be a great role for volunteers who thrive on a short-term challenge and/or can't fully commit to puppy raising for the standard duration.

Volunteer puppy raisers needed in the North East region

We are looking for more puppy raisers in **Northumberland, North and South Tyneside, North Yorks, and Hull**, 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.



“People often approach us when we are out walking and ask me what puppy raising entails. I tell them you get all the joy of having a dog and none of the stress or the bills. All you've got to give is your time.” Thomas, Puppy Raiser.

Equipment: medical shirts, inflatable collars and car harnesses

Whilst we are always looking for opportunities to re-use equipment that is in good condition, we are currently focusing on items that have had a big surge in popularity, and the medical shirts and inflatable collars (for use post-surgery) and car harnesses fall into that category. We have been able to supply each PDA with some medical shirts of different sizes and therefore we would ask when your pup is booked in for spay or castration, that you check in with your PDA prior to the day to **arrange to borrow the appropriate item to support your pup post-surgery**. Many vets will automatically plan to supply a medical shirt or similar and will charge for this, so if you are able to send your pup to the vets with an appropriate item to be used that can help to save Guide Dogs money.

If you have a medical shirt that is still in good condition at home, please could you wash it and return to your PDA so we can build up our stocks and ensure more volunteers can borrow an item at the correct time. Equally, if



you have any inflatable collars or car harnesses that are no longer in use, please return these to your PDA.

Transition into training webinar

Last week, we held our first webinar to discuss what happens at the end of puppy raising and the processes around your puppy moving into training. We invited puppy raisers with pups 10 months and over and had a very good attendance. The feedback so far has been very positive and the team working on the webinar have some ideas to tweak the presentation to improve it. The provisional date for the next webinar is Monday 2 September. If you missed the first webinar and September will be too late because your puppy would have already moved into training, please ask your PDA to send you the link to the first recording.

And finally....

Now that Guide Line is up and running for communications both by email and phone, we will be winding down the NE mailbox at the end of June. It means from July (next week), all your enquiries should go through Guide Line: 0800 7811444 or information@guidedogs.org.uk.

Thank you all for your continued, amazing support.

Janet Champion

Canine Assisted Services Operations Manager - North East

Document ends.