

Midlands and East region: puppy raising update October 2024



Hi All, its Anna here, and I am the Puppy Raising Operations Manager for the Midlands and East.

We are fast approaching some festive holidays such as Halloween, Diwali and Christmas, please look out for tips on how to support your pups during these festive periods. I have included below a few group activities and festive classes that have been happening in our Worcestershire and Lincolnshire schemes.



Please also chat to your Puppy Development Advisors if you feel you need further advice or support for your pup during these times.

It's hard to believe that we are nearing the end of 2024 and what a great year this has been in puppy raising and in the Midlands region.

For those who know me well, Christmas is my favourite time of the year, there are 'can I put the tree up' conversations in my house already!



As I write this newsletter, we currently have 323 pups in our region. And so far, this year, we've already placed 272 pups, which is incredible. This could not have been achieved without your support, effort and commitment to us as volunteers and for that I am so grateful.

Following on from one of our coffee sessions, I had feedback that as a community you would like an update on our pups as they progress to different stages of their guide dog journey.

From September, we saw the following dogs progress into training: Machi, Myra, Dusty, Augusta, Joss, Cece, Frankie, Carol, Peter, Dave, Trelfa, Mason, Carl, Tebbutt, Hope, Miller, Ruby, Alfie, Karin and Ulay.

In September, we also saw in following dog progress into their potential career as a breeding dog: Thistle.

From October, we saw the following dogs be accepted and some already progress into training: Brian, Thor, Johnny, Hugo, Dann, Frank, Bert, Oak, Dune, Hilly, Reg, Skipper, Chris, George, Sanders and Westley.



We also saw in following dogs in October (at the time of writing) progress into their potential career as a breeding dog (completing assessments): Laurie, Alisa, Tilly and Elise.

Excitingly, we have also seen the qualification of the following dogs into guide dog partnerships across the Midlands region since September: Layna, Prince, Nala, Molly, Pippa, Keddy, Samira, Dusty, Yukiko, Sutton, Holly, Harriett, Rosie, Stephen, Indris, Paxton, Whisp, Ivy and Trish.

We have also had Helen accepted from puppy raising as a buddy dog within our region which is wonderful news for Helen and her alternative career.

A huge well done to everyone who helped support these dogs to progress and become life-changers but a special thanks to their puppy raisers and the Puppy Development Advisors who helped support them whilst on scheme.

Can you help us promote puppy raising?

Welcome to any new members of our community who have joined us recently, I hope you find your new volunteering role enjoyable, rewarding and full of puppy cuddles. We are delighted as a community to welcome you!

As we continue to recruit new volunteers into our community, we often need to reach out to the puppy raising community to support with advertising/radio interviews/TV appearances or adding posters/leaflets around the region.

In my last update, I know I asked for any puppy raisers to come forward if anyone would be interested in supporting us with the above to help us promote Guide Dogs and recruit puppy raisers. If that sounds like you, please email me at anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk.

If you are interested in supporting us, our Communications Officer will talk you through the different ways you can promote puppy raising to the public. I would always advise you to speak with your Puppy Development Advisor to discuss the possibility of your puppy being involved in any promotional activity as they will need to assess suitability and your pups' needs.

Coffee dates for the diary

I really look forward to the coffee session that we have running in our region and hearing about your puppy raising, and of course your feedback. I especially love our Christmas catch ups as we near the end of the year. This year, we will be running a coffee session and a Christmas Quiz.

It's wonderful to see so many of you in person and/or virtually on our quarterly catch ups too. Thank you for making the time to attend and share your thoughts and views, it's wonderful to see our community supporting one another. I hope you have enjoyed over the year our guest speakers which of course included guide dog owners sharing their experiences.

I continue to be grateful for all the energy, support and kindness that you all demonstrate as volunteers, and I cannot thank you all enough for the support you give both myself and the Midlands Puppy Development Advisor team.

Within our region, we'll be holding several quarterly coffee sessions In December.

Here are the dates/venues for your diary:

- **Virtual coffee session:** Monday 9 December, 2:30pm-4:00pm. This is a drop-in session (no agenda), so please come and join us. We will be hosting a Christmas Quiz. Zoom details/links: [virtual Christmas coffee session](#) (Meeting ID: 960 9514 2348, Passcode: 841588).
- Wednesday 4 December, 10:30am-12:30pm. Harbury Village Hall- South Parade, Harbury Leamington Spa CV33 9JE
- Thursday 12 December, 10:30am-12:30pm. Peopleton Village Hall, Main Street, Peopleton, Worcestershire WR10 2EG.
- Date (TBC) - details will be sent by your Puppy Development Advisor. Collingham, Phoenix Community Hall, 47 Station Road, Collingham Newark, NG23 7RA.

Just a reminder, these are informal sessions, so please speak to your Puppy Development Advisor, 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 Puppy Development Advisor 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 continue using Guide Line as your first point of contact for support or sharing updates about your puppy, including information about their weight, spay/castration dates, if needed, between classes and visits, please use the following contact details:

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

If you would like to discuss anything further, please remember no questions/query/concern is a silly one, and I'm more than happy to talk to you:

- anna.standing@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).

Remember your feedback allows us to continually improve the support that we provide you. As we are now using Guide Line nationally to support the puppy raising community, we would like for this service to grow and support us in puppy raising and we can only do this through your feedback and comments.

Introducing our new Local Volunteering Attraction Coordinators

Melaine Brown



Hello volunteers in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.

My name is Melanie Brown, and I am the Local Volunteering Attraction Coordinator for your area, my role is to recruit all types of volunteers for Guide Dogs, including puppy raisers and fundraisers. I have worked for Guide Dogs for over 12 years, and I know how important volunteers are to the Charity, if it weren't for you and your

support, we would not be here.

Thank you all for your support to Guide Dogs.

Melanie

Verity O'Donnell



Hi everyone,

My name's Verity O'Donnell and I'm the Local Volunteering Attraction Coordinator for the Midlands Regional Centre and also the National Centre. I've been with Guide Dogs for just over 20 months now and was the Volunteering Coordinator for the National Centre, previously.

My role is to recruit volunteers for the many

different roles we offer at Guide Dogs and my particular focus is on attracting more puppy raisers, breeding dog volunteers and fundraisers to join the wonderful team of existing volunteers, such as yourselves, that we are lucky enough to be supported by.



The areas I cover are Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk so a big patch and I am very much looking forward to meeting as many of you as I can over the coming weeks and months.

Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do for Guide Dogs, which is very much appreciated; we simply couldn't deliver our life-changing services without you.

Verity

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

Anna Standing

Puppy Raising Operations Manager - Midlands and East

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