

# Midlands & East Puppy Raising update

## Introduction



My name is Anna Standing and I am the Canine Assistance Services (CAS) Operations Manager for Puppy Raising in the Midlands and East.

I joined Guide dogs in 2021 having previously worked within the local authority working with children, young people and families and have volunteered for numerous charities which has fuelled my passion for volunteering. What I love about my role is being able to support both volunteers and my team to achieve the best outcomes for our dogs and the community we support.

I manage a team which consists of Puppy Development Supervisors (PDS) and Puppy Development Advisors (PDAs), listed below. We have been very fortunate to have recently been able to expand our team taking on four new PDAs and are opening open two new areas, Norfolk & Suffolk and Derbyshire in order to further grow the community of puppy raisers in our region. We have 15 PDAs and 2 PDSs.

## News and updates

In Puppy Raising we are very fortunate to have Guide Line who are supporting us in our region to act as the front door for all volunteer queries/questions and concerns. We appreciate that this is a significant change and it's been wonderful to see people adapting to this and working with us. This change allows our Puppy Development Advisors time to work more closely with you all and it is reducing their workload to enable them to offer more support directly to volunteers. We have a dedicated duty PDA daily to cover any urgent requests and can provide support as needed.

It is very important for us as a team that you get the support you need as a volunteer and therefore we ask that you continue to contact Guide Line as your first point of contact on 0800 7811444 or [doghealth@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:doghealth@guidedogs.org.uk).

We have also been running quarterly coffee sessions with guest speakers from Early Training and from our community team to discuss partnerships and support once a dog progresses into training and beyond.

## **Local events**

I will shortly be sending out dates in September for our Quarter 3 session where I hope colleagues from our breeding team will be able to attend and answers any questions/queries that you might have. Any feedback on these sessions so far would be greatly received and thank you for attending and your contribution.

## **Meet the team**

### **Rachel Bagley**

My name is Rachel and I re-joined Guide Dogs as a Puppy Development Supervisor in September 2022 and support the Midlands and East region managing a team of Puppy Development Advisors.

I enjoy the variety in the role - that no two days are the same and the balance between being out and about and home working. I also enjoy seeing pups and volunteers progress.

### **Jenny Mee**

My name is Jenny and I am a Puppy Development Supervisor covering the whole of the Midlands but based in Leicestershire. I manage a team of PDAs as well as a few of my own pups and PRs, with a special interest in the trickier dogs who need extra behavioural support.

I have been at Guide Dogs for two years and love my job! Seeing the relationships develop between volunteers and pups is amazing, I feel privileged to share their highs (and lows!)

## **Rowena Dowsett**

My name is Rowena, I have worked at Guide Dogs for 15 years, 12 years of that as a PDA. I cover Peterborough, Cambridge and some of Hertfordshire and Suffolk.

I love that the job is working with both people and puppies, and still feel very privileged to carry out this role.

## **Claire Purr**

My name is Claire, I have been at Guide Dogs for 4 years in August. Prior to starting in my role I was a Puppy Raiser, Boarder and My Guide. I had a lovely but very cheeky puppy called Chloe who was named after Northampton Mayor's Assistant, after they had raised money to name a group of puppies.

The favourite part of my role is puppy placement day, who doesn't love a puppy cuddle on a Thursday morning! I also enjoy seeing our pups grow and develop especially watching them learn, they are all amazing and such special dogs.

## **Terri Barnett**

My name is Terri and I have been working for Guide Dogs for 1 month and will be covering South Derbyshire and surrounding areas! I am really enjoying learning all about PREP and shadowing my fellow PDAs seeing how the core learning integrates to the physical job role.

I have spent a day working with the GDMS which was very eye-opening and enabled me to see how and what the puppies progress onto during STEP, and how I can help achieve this working alongside volunteers in my role as a PDA. I am really looking forward to developing the scheme in my area and can't wait to meet all the PRs and the cute puppies!

## **Steph Cupitt**

My name is Steph and I started at Guide Dogs in May. I will be covering the new North Derbyshire scheme. So far I am really enjoying my role, getting to know everyone and the puppy raisers and enjoying shadowing and learning what the PDA role entails.

## **Vanessa Best**

My name is Vanessa and I have been working for Guide Dogs for 27 years. The area I cover is Nottingham. I enjoy seeing the puppy raiser and puppy's relationship develop throughout the year and the progress they both make.

## **Jay Baker**

My name is Jay, I'm new to Guide Dogs and joined at the start of June 2023 as a Puppy Development Advisor for the Norfolk and Suffolk area. At the moment I'm enjoying meeting the team and getting to know my new role.

## **Vicki Johnson**

My name is Vicki and I have been at Guide dogs for 3.5 years but in the PDA role for just over a year. I cover local areas to the MRC - Leamington, Warwick, Stratford, Southam and surrounding villages.

I love working with the amazing volunteers who give their time and dedication to support the puppy through its first year of life. It is great to watch the puppy raisers' confidence grow and the puppy develop and mature into super life changer, in so many ways.

## **James Booth**

I'm James, I've been at Guide Dogs for just under a year and I cover North Gloucestershire and South Worcestershire. My favourite thing about the role is hearing an excited Puppy Raiser tell me about the progress they've made with their puppy's training.

## **Lindsey Partridge**

My name is Lindsey Partridge and I have been with Guide Dogs a little over a year. I cover some of the south areas of the midlands such as Daventry, Banbury, Bicester and Milton Keynes. Of course spending most of my work days around people and puppies is absolutely amazing; another of my favourite parts about the role is the huge variability between each days, and all the different challenges that each pup overcomes and the mental stimulation that comes with that.

## **Nichola Geraghty**

Hi, I'm Nic & I am a Puppy Development Advisor for Birmingham, Lichfield & Tamworth. I am almost a year in post and am a returner to Guide Dogs, having previously worked as a Dog Health & Welfare Technician for 3years+. I love the variety of the role and working with a great team of staff, volunteers and of course, puppies!

## **Hannah Fox**

I am Hannah, I cover the Worcester and Wyre Forest areas and have been working with Guide dogs for 10 months. I really enjoy working with volunteers and creating our own little community with new and experienced puppy raisers. I also enjoy endless puppy snuggles!

## **Rebecca Roberts**

Hi my name is Beccy and I have been full time 24 years and 2 years, and before that a Tollgate late runner and weekends - so 26 in total.

Covering - Solihull, Shirley, Kenilworth, Balsall Common, Coventry, Bedworth Nuneaton.

I love watching the puppies grow and develop into their own character and seeing proud puppy raisers as their pup becomes a Guide Dog.

## **Hannah Thompson**

My name is Hannah and I have been at Guide Dogs a year, so still fairly new! But I love the role and have some amazing new volunteers in and around Lincoln. I enjoy the variation of the job - no two days are the same and sometimes you have to react quickly to deal with issues that come in, but I love supporting the pups and volunteers on my scheme and seeing them succeed.

## **Fay McAllister**

Hi, I'm Fay and I joined Guide Dogs at the beginning of May. I am one of the PDAs for Norfolk and Suffolk, and am looking forward to developing a Puppy Raising scheme in the area full of amazing volunteers and gorgeous puppies!

## **Jennie Sutton**

Hi I'm Jennie, I am coming up to my one-year anniversary with Guide Dogs. My favourite part of my role is being able to work with the wonderful volunteers & puppies across Leicestershire.

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