

Midlands and East region: puppy raising update August 2025



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

Puppy Raising Operations Manager's message

I have recently celebrated my four-year anniversary with Guide Dogs, and I cannot believe how quickly time has flown. I wanted to acknowledge the massive efforts and achievements of both my team and our volunteer puppy raising community in developing our puppies with their progression into training or breeding. I continue to be extremely grateful and proud of all we achieve as a region and wanted to again send my thanks to you all.

In my last update, I wrote to say I could not believe it was the summer quickly approaching and as I write this update I am now preparing for my two little people to go back to school with my eldest about to start secondary school!! I am not sure where the time goes.

Just as a reminder with the hot weather in the summer please be mindful of our [hot weather advice](#) and if you have any concerns around how your puppy is managing this or if you need more information, please contact Guide Line and we will provide you with further information.

Negotiating doors and doorways: an update from Puppy Development Supervisor, Jenny Mee

A key skill to start teaching our pups is calm and patience around different types of doorways, sometimes referred to as ‘door manners’. If we **instil patience and a ‘pause’ at each door that requires opening from the very early days**, it will become normal for your puppy to wait while their handler manoeuvres into the best position so they can negotiate any doorway safely for themselves and their puppy. This is the same for a guide dog and their guide dog owner, so an essential skill for us to start to teach. So how do we start? Anytime a pup is on lead, try to pause before each doorway, and reward with a treat for a calm wait or stand. After a second or two say ‘ok’ and let them walk through.

Ideally, we want to keep them on our left and avoid them rushing through before us. But you may need to adapt your method slightly for different types of doors (automatic, hinged, revolving, gates etc). And remember we want to set our dogs up for success, so if they are struggling to get it right, we may need to make it easier for them. For example, a young pup may not have the self-control to wait while the back door to an exciting garden is fully opened so we could build it up gradually and release them earlier after a short pause, with your hand on the door, opening it fully as you release them. Or even do some practice of waiting calmly for treats while the door handle is touched and moved, without always opening the door!

Puppy raiser recruitment

I am so grateful for our puppy raising community and for both our new volunteers coming into our community and for returning puppy raisers.

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

I know I asked in previous updates for volunteers to come forward, but if anyone else would like to help us promote Guide Dogs and recruit more



puppy raisers across the region, please email me at anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk.

If you're happy to help, one of our Communications Officers will reach out to you and discuss the different ways you can promote puppy raising! If you're planning to attend any events or do media work with your pup, please speak with your Puppy Development Advisor to discuss suitability and your pups' needs.

A massive thank you to our puppy raisers who have kindly helped us out recently at a local event. 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.

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 questions/query/concern is a silly one and would welcome talking to you:

- anna.standing@guidedogs.org.uk

Please do continue using Guide Line as your first point of contact for support, if needed, between classes and visits, please use the following contact details:

- 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. And as we are now using Guide Line nationally to support the entire puppy raising community, we would like to continue for this service to grow and support everyone - and we can only do this through your feedback and comments.

Just a final note to say there will be coffee sessions arranged before Christmas, please look out for these dates coming from your Puppy Development Advisor.

I look forward to seeing you all soon, please never hesitate to contact me.

Take care,
Anna

Anna Standing

Puppy Raising Operations Manager - Midlands and East

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