



One Voice



2025–2026

Key messages for staff and volunteers

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Who we are and why we exist



We're here to help people with sight loss live the life they choose.

Children and adults. Friends and family. Whoever you are, our expert staff, volunteers and life-changing dogs are here to help you:

Live actively. Our people and dogs can help you get out and about with confidence, going wherever school, work, or play takes you – and knowing that your sight loss won't hold you back.

Live well. Our experience and understanding can help you through the emotional challenges of sight loss as well as the practical ones, introducing you to an inspiring community of people with similar experiences and giving you the support you need to be your best self.

Live independently. The advice and skills we provide will give you the freedom to live life on your own terms, in your own way, so that you can achieve your hopes and ambitions, and do all the things that make you... you.



The scale of the challenge we face

- ▶ There are **2 million** people living with sight loss in the UK and this number is set to double by **2050**. (Deloitte, 2017)
- ▶ **1 in 5 people** will live with sight loss in their lifetime. (Deloitte, 2017)
- ▶ Every day **250 people** start to lose their sight in the UK. This is equivalent to one person every six minutes. (Deloitte, 2017)
- ▶ Nearly **three quarters** of people who are registered blind or partially sighted of working age are unemployed. (Slade et al, 2018, Employment and Sight Loss)
- ▶ There are **28,000** children (under 18) who are blind or partially sighted in the UK. (RNIB, 2022)



Facts about sight loss

More than half of people with sight loss say they feel anxious about the future.

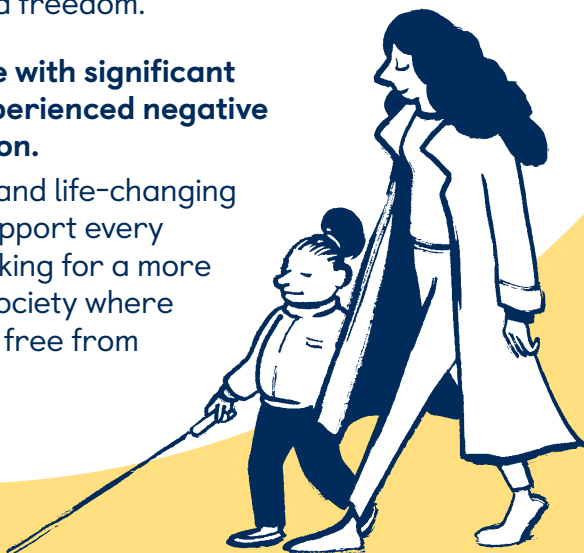
Adjusting to life with sight loss can be incredibly difficult. We're here to help people make sense of what's happening, to talk and listen, and provide practical advice and support.

Nearly half of people with a vision impairment can feel isolated and cut off from the people and places around them.

Feeling isolated has a huge impact on a person's mental health and confidence. For many people our guide dogs and our services are the key to a life of independence and freedom.

More than half of people with significant sight loss say they've experienced negative attitudes or discrimination.

While our specialist staff and life-changing dogs provide practical support every single day, we're also working for a more inclusive and accessible society where people with sight loss are free from barriers and judgement.



Two thirds of parents say there isn't enough support at the point of diagnosis.

Discovering your child has a vision impairment can be a worrying and confusing time. Our experienced and caring Family Support team is here to listen and help, whenever a family needs support or advice.

80% of parents feel their child's vision impairment has a negative impact on their ability to form friendships.

Our Guide Dogs My Time to Play sessions and Family Events provide a space where children can build their confidence and make life-long friends. Our Habilitation Specialists also work with children and schools to put in place a wide range of support to promote friendships.

Nearly 4 out of 5 parents are concerned that their child's future career will be limited by their vision impairment.

Reaching key milestones is much harder for children with a vision impairment. Every day a child goes without support can affect their development. For children and their parents, early intervention is life-changing.



How we can help



Our services

Help for adults

- Information and advice
- Life Skills
- Guide dogs

Help for children and families

- Information and advice
- Life Skills
- Guide Dogs My Time to Play
- CustomEyes Books
- Tech for All
- Family Events
- Guide dogs
- Buddy dogs



Help for adults

Information and advice

Our experts can help you to live actively, independently and well with sight loss.

Whether you're asking for yourself or a member of your family, call **Guide Line** on **0800 781 1444** to speak to someone from our friendly team today.

We can help you with:

- Finding the right services for you.
- Dog care and welfare if you're partnered with one of our dogs.
- Advice on guide dog access refusals.

54,000

In 2024, we answered more than 54,000 calls providing expert information and advice.



Visit our website [Guide Dogs](#) for a wide range of helpful resources, including information about eye health and eye conditions, advice on technology for a vision impairment, and useful life skills such as tips for getting around, managing your home and making the most of your vision.



**3.45
million**

In 2024, there was 3.45 million clicks to access our digital information and advice content.

How we help

It all starts with a conversation. After visiting you at home, our specialists will work with you to develop a plan and agree what services are right for you.

We can also help you to navigate the wealth of information and advice that Guide Dogs offers, and recommend other services and organisations that might be helpful.

Guide dogs

Our guide dogs give people with sight loss the confidence to get out and about safely. Whether it's helping them get to work, to a regular exercise class or to the shops and back, they provide life-changing, practical support every single day.



3,200

In 2024, we created 518 new guide dog partnerships and supported a total of 3,200 partnerships.

Life Skills

We're best known for our life-changing guide dogs, but there is so much more to us. Our team of Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (VRS) provide personalised support, giving people the tools, knowledge and confidence to navigate life with sight loss more easily. Our VRS can help with a whole range of skills and ambitions, from orientation and mobility training that can include cane skills, to advice on tools, technology and techniques that can help you get out and about more easily, manage around the house and help with everyday tasks.

We also support people who are waiting to be matched with a guide dog, so that when we find the right dog, we can be sure they're prepared.

7,000

In 2024, we provided more than 7,000 training sessions covering tech, travel and life skills.



Help for children and families

Information and advice

Our experts can help you to live actively, independently and well with sight loss. Whether you're asking for yourself, or your child, speak to someone from our friendly team today for more information.

Call Guide Line on **0800 781 1444**

or visit our website [Guide Dogs](#)

Our information and advice service can help you with:

Family Support

Our team is here to give advice and support from the moment your child is diagnosed with a vision impairment. Our experts can share their experience to build your whole family's knowledge and confidence and provide tools that are right for your child's specific needs.



Education Support

Our specialist team offers information and advice for children aged 0-7 years, helping parents and carers to make informed decisions regarding their child's education.

We also partner with the Thomas Pocklington Trust to provide advice for students navigating primary, secondary, further and higher education.



860

We supported families more than 860 times through our Family Support and Education Support services in 2024.

Life Skills

We're here to help your child learn and practise skills that are important to daily life, confidently and safely. Our Habilitation Specialists support children and young people of all ages with a vision impairment.

We can support their physical development and learning in the early years. For older children, we help with navigating streets safely, getting around at home or school, preparing food, handling money, using technology and managing their appearance as they grow older. This training will give your child invaluable practical skills and improved mobility for life.

We also offer tailored courses for children with additional and complex needs. These include early motor skills, sensory development and body awareness. And we can also support them to understand and move around different environments. Please note that this service is commissioned through local authorities, or parents can use a child's personal budget.

5,900

In 2024, we helped children with a vision impairment to learn essential life skills more than 5,900 times, so they can navigate the world around them confidently and safely.



Guide Dogs My Time to Play

Our Guide Dogs My Time to Play service helps children with a vision impairment aged 0–4 develop a broad range of skills through play. It provides parents with the opportunity to network, share experiences and pick up skills and knowledge to support their child's development. We offer in-person and virtual programmes led by our Habilitation Specialists, where you can join other families for structured fun and supportive group sessions. In-person sessions are held in community venues across the UK and virtual groups allow families to attend from their own home via Zoom.

1,800

In 2024, our Guide Dogs My Time to Play sessions were attended more than 1,800 times by children and family members.



CustomEyes Books

No child should miss out on the joy of reading. We can produce custom-made books, with font size, spacing, paper colour and more, all tailored to suit your child's individual needs. We have a range of books available, including non-fiction and popular fiction titles. We can also provide National Curriculum revision guides for home and school.

And now parents and grandparents with sight loss can order our children's books, so that they can enjoy the experience of reading to their child or grandchild.



6,800

In 2024, we made more than 6,800 bespoke, large-print books, so children with sight loss can enjoy reading just like their friends.

Tech for All

For children with a vision impairment, technology and sensory play is vital. It develops learning, creativity, life skills, confidence and independence.

We believe all children with sight loss should have access to the technology they need – both to support learning at home and to just have fun exploring the activities and interests they enjoy.

That's why we provide grants for a wide range of devices, technologies, software and sensory toys to use at home. Our expert team can also provide personalised advice on the best technology to support your child's needs.

900

In 2024, we provided more than 900 grants to help families access technology for their child.



Family Events

Every year we host a UK-wide programme of family activity days. Here your child and their siblings can play and take part in activities together – alongside other children with sight loss. Meanwhile, parents can share experiences, support each other and access specialist advice from our Children's Services Team. We also host an early diagnosis weekend to support families at this critical time.

Guide dogs

Our guide dogs give people with sight loss the confidence to get out and about safely. Whether helping young people to get to school or college, a sports club or to meet their friends, they provide life-changing practical support every single day.



Buddy dogs

Our buddy dogs bring a canine friend into the lives of children with sight loss. By helping them build confidence in themselves and trust in their surroundings, these dogs have a hugely positive effect on a child and their family's wellbeing.

330

In 2024, we partnered 44 children with a buddy dog, helping to improve their confidence and wellbeing, and supported a total of 330 partnerships.



How the public can support us



Donate

We rely on donations to continue our life-changing work and there are many ways for you to donate.

These include:

- **Sponsoring a guide dog puppy**, enabling you to watch them grow from a six-week-old bundle of fur to a fully qualified guide dog.
- **Leaving a gift in your Will** helps us provide the guide dogs of the future, as well as expand other services such as our Vision Rehabilitation Specialists, so thousands more people can lead confident, independent and fulfilling lives.
- **Playing the Lucky Lottery or Guide Dogs Raffle**, which give you the chance to win big whilst making an amazing difference to people with sight loss.
- **Raising funds to Name a Puppy**, whether for a school, business or in memory of a loved one.
- **Make Every Cuppa Count** by hosting a coffee morning or bake sale for Guide Dogs. We also have a range of ways that you can raise funds while at work, home or school.
- **Making a simple one-off donation** by visiting our website.

Find out more at: [How you can get help](#)



Volunteer

Volunteering with Guide Dogs is life-changing – and not just for the people we support.

We have an amazing community of 17,500 volunteers, who gave around 12 million hours of their precious time in 2024.

Our volunteers get to have amazing experiences that you genuinely couldn't find anywhere else. Get involved by:

- **Nurturing and caring for our amazing dogs**

Our young puppies and our dogs in training need loving homes while they learn their vital skills. And our guide dog mums and dads need care and support to help them provide the next generation of guide dogs.



- **Supporting your local community**

Help at your local Guide Dogs centre, join our community campaigning for the rights of people with sight loss, or share your own personal experience of sight loss to help raise awareness.

- **Raising the funds that make it all possible**

Meet new people by joining one of our fundraising groups, host your own fundraising event or take on a sponsored challenge.

We have almost **80** different volunteering roles and we're so grateful for any time you can give us whether it's months, days or hours. However you choose to get involved, you'll be making a real difference.

The Volunteer Information Point (VIP) is the place for volunteers to find out all the relevant information about their role, their team and news from the wider charity including any urgent updates. **Guide Dogs VIP**

Sign up here to help promote volunteering in your community.



Campaign

We campaign to make sure children and adults with sight loss can live actively, independently and well. We work to remove barriers to this, and champion best practice when we see it.

Our campaigning work covers a range of issues, from making sure children with sight loss are able to access the services they need, to ensuring public transport and streets are as accessible as possible.

We couldn't do this without our 35,000 campaign supporters across the UK. From signing petitions and sharing posts on social media, to writing to their MPs and going out to collect signatures on our behalf, our campaigns community help us to drive change.

To get involved visit: [Guide Dogs Campaigns](#)

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a high-visibility orange and black safety vest, is seated in a motorized wheelchair on a paved sidewalk. She is positioned next to a black car. A black guide dog, wearing a yellow high-visibility harness, stands on the sidewalk next to her. In the background, there is a two-story residential building with white walls and dark window frames, and a brick wall on the right side of the frame.

36,000

In 2024, our campaigners took more than 36,000 actions on a range of issues, including signing petitions around access rights for guide dog owners and emailing MPs.

Learn how to guide a person with sight loss

We provide free training to people who are interested in learning how to guide a person with sight loss – teaching them how to guide with confidence, skill and empathy.

Our training gives people the confidence to know how to act when they meet someone who is blind or partially sighted, and the guiding techniques to help them if they need it.



We have four training programmes:

- **Introduction to Sighted Guide Training** – live, online training with one of our experts, for anyone wanting to learn how to guide someone with sight loss.
- **Friends and Family Sighted Guide Training** – a live, in person and online session, specifically for those who want to help a friend or family member with a vision impairment.
- **Top 10 Tips for Sighted Guiding** – a short, on demand video for people who want to learn the basics quickly.
- **Community and Corporate Sighted Guide Training** – tailored, in-person sighted guide training for workplaces, community groups, universities and charities that provide services to the public.

We also offer a 'train-the-trainer' model for organisations that are regularly onboarding large numbers of new volunteers or staff. This will enable you to become a certified Guide Dogs Sighted Guide Training Delivery Partner for two years, during which we'll provide ongoing support and regular check-ins.

To help us make the world a more inclusive place by learning this simple skill visit:

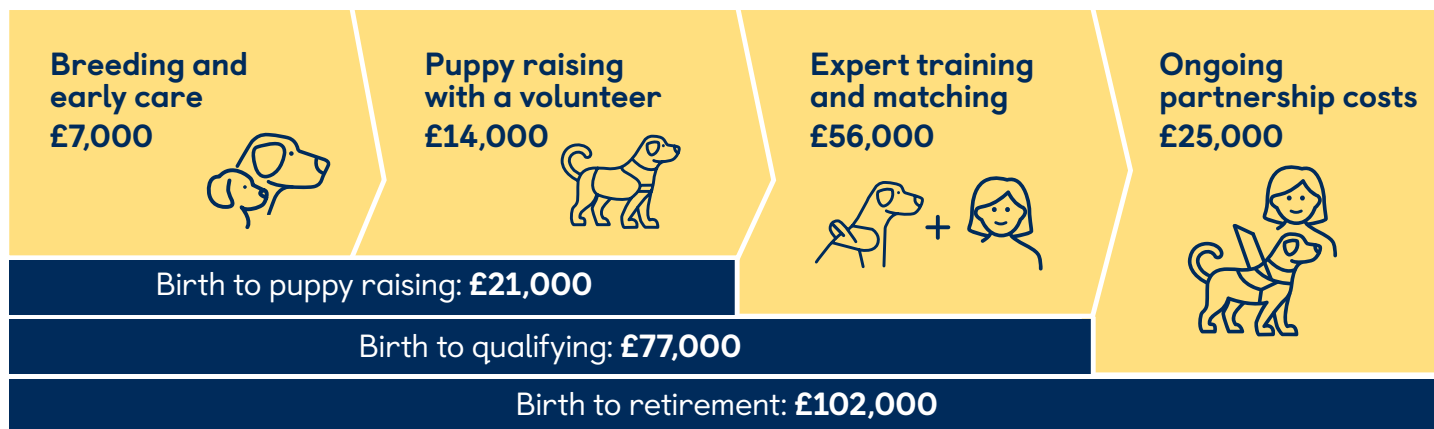
Sighted Guiding

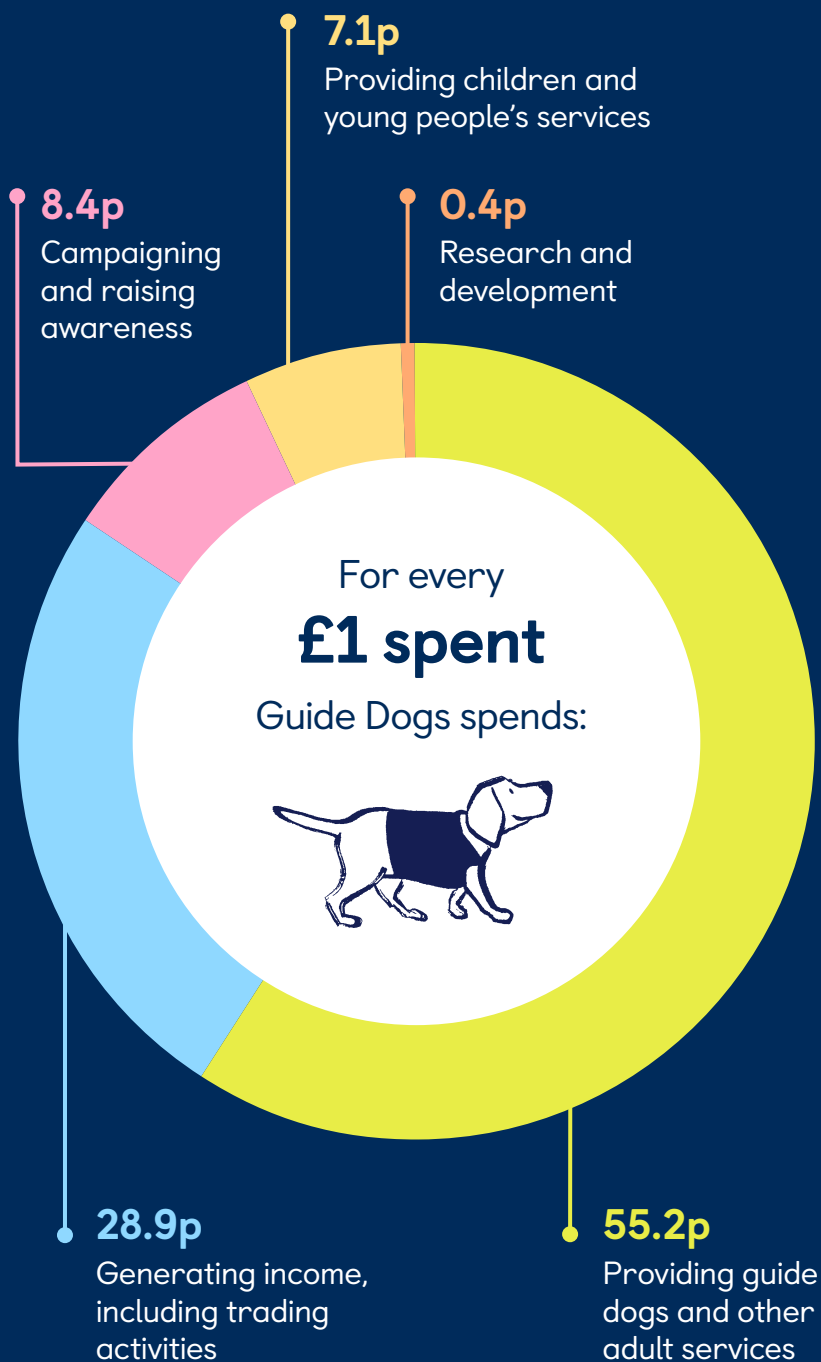


The cost of a guide dog

Did you know our guide dog service is funded entirely by charitable donations?

We cover all expenses relating to our dogs, including food and vet bills.





Fast facts about Guide Dogs

- ▶ The UK's first guide dog partnerships qualified in **1931**. Since then, thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers and supporters we've matched more than **38,000** guide dog partnerships and transformed the lives of thousands more through our other services.
- ▶ We're the largest employer of specialists dedicated to helping children and young people with sight loss learn, grow and access the same opportunities as everyone else.
- ▶ We are world leaders in puppy socialisation, and we breed and train more dogs than any other organisation in the world.



- ▶ We're the world's largest assistance dog organisation and in **2024** we were responsible for more than **7,400** dogs across the UK.
- ▶ Each year, more than **1,300** pups start their journey to become a guide dogs.
- ▶ We generally have two main breeds, Labradors and golden retrievers, which we cross to gain the best characteristics of each breed. These make up almost **80 per cent** of our dogs. We also have German shepherds, curly coat retrievers and Labradoodles.



What your donations can buy

£9



could support a working guide dog partnership for a day.

£16



could buy a 'puppy in training' jacket for one of our pups.

£21



could pay for a bespoke, large print book for a child with a vision impairment.

£31



could pay for an hour of specialist training for a guide dog.

£48



could pay for a one-to-one online session with a Family Support Specialist, providing vital emotional and signposting support.

£141



could buy a starter kit for a guide dog partnership, providing everything they need to start their new life together.

£315



could buy an Early Skills and Tactile Bundle, providing a package of toys carefully selected by our experts.

£1,225



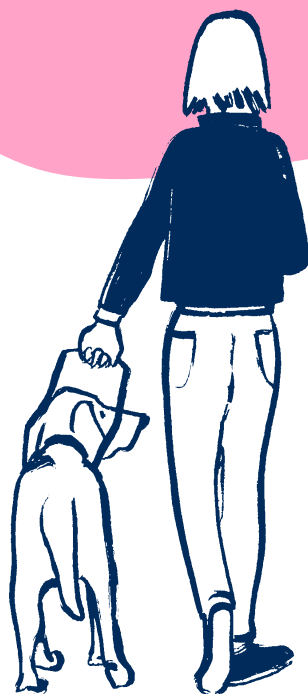
could buy a young person a laptop kit, complete with assistive technology such as Supernova magnifier and speech.



How to contact us

For help and support visit
[Getting Support](#) or call our
Guide Line on **0800 781 1444**

To find out how you or your
company can support us visit
[How you can get help](#)



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