



# Name a Puppy New Product Volunteer Q & A

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## Change to the Product Questions

**Why are we changing the Name a Puppy product and what a does a supporter receive?**

The Name a Puppy product has been in its current format for over 10 years. It was in desperate need of a refresh to reflect the developments in our service provision, to reduce the functional challenges we were having and to embrace the digital world we now live in. We'd also experienced unacceptable waiting times for the naming and placement of our pups for our supporters, and the need for geographical placement was restricting our ability to name or sponsor every guide dog pup, which is our long-term aspiration.

Our original product was designed to follow a pup on its journey purely to becoming a guide dog when a young pup may become a guide dog mum/dad, buddy dog or a guiding role might not be suitable for them. The new product accommodates every potential outcome for our dogs and can manage the varied training times and journeys that one of our pups may follow.

We have created our communications to be donor centric rather than dog stage driven, can also provide additional imagery and our Name a Puppy supporters all find out the end of the story - what the pup they have named has become - two points of feedback and frustration we frequently receive from our donors.

**How were the decisions made concerning the changes?**

All the decisions made to the Name a Puppy product were not made lightly or quickly. Discussions with our working groups made up of current, past and future Name a Puppy supporters, as well as our staff and volunteers, started over 12 months ago. All feedback was taken into consideration. Proposals were presented back to the groups multiple times, each time using their input and comments to shape the Name a Puppy offering further.

Once we had a solid proposal it was taken to supporters for testing, their feedback taken into account and included, helping us to create new Name a Puppy.

### **I am a volunteer, why wasn't I asked about the changes?**

With over 1400 volunteers we couldn't ask everyone. However, we made sure we had a representative from every region and devolved nation and ensured our working groups had visually impaired representation too.

### **What are the main differences of the new Name a Puppy product?**

Instead of following a pup to a set stage in their journey, our new product is all about the level of personalisation, frequency, and type of communications that a supporter receives. It celebrates all our dogs' roles, and every supporter will now find out the end of the story.

Pupdates include imagery, increasing the number of photographs received by the supporter on every level. Communications are based on a supporter timeline rather than the dog timeline/stages, which can be varied and have historically created significant breaks in communications to our supporters. Supporters can also choose what updates they wish to receive and in which format. A quick reference guide to what a supporter receives for each level has been produced for your ease of reference.

### **Why have you kept the price points the same?**

Originally the feedback we received from the focus groups indicated that there was the potential to increase the price points. However, with the impact of the pandemic, it was decided to keep the price points the same. We felt this was the right decision for both our supporters and the organisation.

### **Why do we have new names for each of the levels, particularly as the price points have remained the same?**

Different names were created for two reasons. Firstly, to demonstrate that there has been a change to Name a Puppy. Secondly to bring the names of the levels in line with our updated terminology. Donate a Name is now called 'Name'. Walk is now called 'Raise'. Learn has become 'Train' and Guide is now called 'Transform'.

### **Why have the school's levels been removed?**

With our old product we had two specific Name a Puppy fundraising levels for our Schools and Youth groups. The reduced price point for this audience didn't reflect the true costs to us of raising our dogs. The reduced price point was only applied to two of our naming schemes (not all four), creating a big financial jump for these supporters, if they wished to choose our old Learn £10k level. We reviewed the full range of products collectively and will be operating four naming levels for our supporters to choose from.

### **Why has the in-person visit been exchanged for a digital meeting for the £5K level?**

The most overwhelming feedback from our supporters was that they wished to find out the end of the story, this was more important to them than meeting the puppy in person.

Digital options introduced during the pandemic have proved incredibly popular, as they are open to more people, when larger groups have come together to fundraise to Name a Puppy.

As an organisation, Guide Dogs has the aspiration to have a sponsor (Sponsor a Puppy or Name a Puppy) for every puppy leaving the National Centre and progressing to Puppy Raising. In person visits require specific geographic placement, which would make it impossible for us to achieve this ambition, as our donors and puppy raisers wouldn't geographically match.

### **Why has the second visit been removed from the £10k/£50k Name a Puppy Levels?**

The second visit was proving hard to facilitate for our account managers and supporters. The training location is determined on where the need is most and can't be predicted at the point of naming and placing the puppy. This can create significant geographic challenges.

Therefore, as most of the time these visits are not completed (at the supporter's request), the focus groups felt that a second visit added no additional value for our higher-level supporters.

### **Why are we not concentrating on the pups becoming a Guide Dog anymore?**

We are known best for our guide dog service, but we are so much more. Our buddy dogs and mums & dads are also incredibly important too. It is impossible to determine if a young pup will go on to become a guide dog in the future and we therefore need to be transparent. A dog doesn't need to have a harness to change a life.

**I don't feel comfortable communicating the changes to the Name a Puppy supporters we work with.**

The Community Fundraising Relationship Manager will speak to all the current Name a Puppy supporters and make them aware of the changes, offering them the choice to move to the new Name a Puppy if they wish, or as they are already fundraising to Name a Puppy, they can choose to stay on the old Name a Puppy product that they signed up for.

## **New Product Detail Questions**

**How do we get the new Name a Puppy leaflet?**

The new leaflets are now available to order from Regional Supporter Care [communityfundraising@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:communityfundraising@guidedogs.org.uk) we also have a digital PDF that can be emailed.

**What will happen to my Name a Puppy Supporters?**

Any supporter currently fundraising to Name a Puppy can choose to stay on the old product or move across to the new equivalent level. Your Community Fundraising Relationship Manager will be contacting all current Name a Puppy fundraisers to discuss the new levels and see what they would like to do. Any supporters who are currently receiving updates will continue on the old level. If you are worried or have any queries about the Name a Puppy supporters in your area, please speak to your Community Fundraising Relationship Manager.

**What about our visually impaired supporters, now there is more imagery included as part of the product?**

We have built in better functionality to our database to record and gather the wide range of preferred formats. Any update including imagery will also have a 'visual experience' which is a far more in-depth description than standard alt text descriptors, which will be provided in the format of their choice.

**What is a video montage?**

A selection of photographs showing how the puppy has grown, with a voiceover talking about the progress and collated into a short mini video. We can also add captions for hearing impaired supporters, or as a storyboard with visual experience descriptions for visually impaired supporters if they choose.

**How many updates will the Name a Puppy supporter receive?**

The new product will be concentrating on the frequency of updates rather than the quantity. Our supporters will have consistent regular communications from us,

the frequency and personalisation will differ from level to level. Every dog has a unique journey, and their future roles could be decided at any point during puppy raising or training.

E.g. – A **NAME** level dog could become a stud dog at 14 months. The supporter would receive the 'Puppy Days' & My Exciting First year' fact sheet before the final pupdate. If the dog went on to be a guide dog they would receive 'Puppy Days', My Exciting First Year' & Training Time' fact sheets before the final pupdate.

**Won't the supporter be disappointed if the pup they named is rehomed?**

We encourage our supporters to understand that a role within Guide Dogs is not right for every dog. The new Name a Puppy leaflet and Our Dogs leaflet celebrates our career change dogs and manages the expectations of our supporters from the start. The story of Guide Dogs goes with them always and in many cases, they stay within the Guide Dogs family as fundraisers. The money the supporters raise is not restricted to the puppy and is put to use straight away where it is needed most. Please note the Transform level (£50k) is the only level where we will guarantee that the puppy they name will go on to become either a guide dog, buddy dog or a mum or dad. So for these supporters only, if the puppy/dog they have named is rehomed at an early stage, the Name a Puppy Team would start the process of offering the supporter the opportunity to name a further puppy if they wish, in line with our updated Name a Puppy policies. For any of the other levels we would not expect a replacement to be required. In extreme cases such as a puppy or dog passing away during sponsorship the Name a Puppy team will flag any replacements that may be offered under our updated replacement policy to the account manager

## **Potential Supporter Questions**

**Can I switch to the new product? I have named a puppy and have received several pupdates.**

Unfortunately, this is not possible. If a supporter is already receiving updates, they will continue to do so in line with the old product level they are on.

**I have a supporter who is doing a £2.5k or £5k level who is willing to drive anywhere so that they can meet the puppy they have named in person - what do we do?**

We'll need to explain to the supporter that unfortunately this is not possible as part of the naming level that they have chosen to do. The only levels that have the option for an in-person visit is our £10k Train or £50k Transform levels. If you

are uncomfortable having this conversation, please speak to your Community Fundraising Relationship Manager who will be happy to help.

**I have a supporter who doesn't have the technical ability or means to do a digital meeting - but very much wants that experience?**

We have a range of solutions for supporters who may not be as confident or even have access to the digital world. Supporters can join a digital visit via telephone, via friends/family technology (they would get an invite too), or we can invite them to an office where the account manager and supporter can join the digital meeting with the Puppy Raiser together. Give your Community Fundraising Relationship Manager a call, they'll be happy to support and find a solution that will work for them.

**I am a Name a Puppy Visit Coordinator, will I still have a role now?**

Absolutely, our higher-level Name a Puppy supporters still have an in-person visit, although the donor can choose the digital option if they prefer. We're also going to need your help co-ordinating and hosting our digital/virtual visits.

## **Transition to the New Product Questions**

**A supporter has just sent me their naming form, can they do the new product instead?**

Every supporter who returns one of our old naming forms will be asked if they wish to proceed with the old product, or if they would like to choose the new product instead. You'll be pleased to know that many of our supporters have already chosen to do this.

**A supporter enquired about Name a Puppy several months ago but has only just committed to a Name a Puppy - old or new?**

Each scenario could be a little bit different, so please speak to your Community Fundraising Relationship Manager in the first instance who will be able to advise.

**I have a supporter who Named a Puppy a couple of years ago and wishes to do another on the same basis - what do I do?**

We'll need to be honest and explain that the product has been updated since they last named a puppy with us. Chat them through the changes to Name a Puppy highlighting the key differences and benefits. The supporter will then need to decide if they wish to proceed to Name a Pup on our new product or not. If you are not comfortable having this conversation, please speak to your Community Fundraising Relationship Manager who will be more than happy to have the conversation with them.

**What about supporters who have been repeat multiple Name a Puppy supporters - how are we going to explain the £5k visit has been exchanged with a digital meeting?**

We'll be honest with all our supporters explaining the changes and the differences between old and new. The in-person visit has been exchanged for a digital visit and video montage at the £5k price point, images are now included, and they'll also find out the end of the story too. For our multiple NAPPERS who are actively fundraising towards a Name a Puppy, we will honour the old product, or they can choose to move to the New Product (we have had a few who have already chosen to move to new). Your Community Fundraising Relationship Manager will be happy to talk to any multiple NAPPER.

## **Schools and Youth Group Questions**

**What happens to schools already working towards the old targets, will we honour these?**

We will give every supporter who is currently fundraising to name a puppy on our old products the choice to move to our New Product if they wish. If they would prefer to stay on the level that they originally signed up to, we will honour this for up to 2 years from the date their Name a Puppy fund record was opened.

**Will Schools/Youth receive a visit at the £2,500 level?**

With the Name a Puppy new Product, none of our supporters will receive either an in person or digital visit at the £2,500 price point. Digital visits are available for £5k+ levels with the choice of in person visits for our £10k and £50k Name a Puppy supporters.

**What if a school no longer wishes to support us as it costs too much?**

We really hope that this won't be the case but appreciate for some moving from a £1,500 price point to £2,500 may be beyond their fundraising means. The Puppy Graduation Scheme at £300 is also an alternative for all schools and youth groups and may be more suitable if this is the case.

**Will the lower price points for schools be replaced with anything else?**

The Schools and Youth team are currently exploring alternative options for the £1,500 price point, nothing has been decided at this time. The Puppy Graduation Scheme at £300 is also an alternative for all schools and youth groups.

**How do you expect a Brownie group to raise £2,500, particularly as they will no longer receive a visit?**

As you'll be aware the size of the group doesn't determine their fundraising capabilities or aspirations. We have many examples of Brownies and smaller youth groups raising beyond £2,500 and we've also had individual young children fundraise to Name a Puppy generating over £10k.

We have a full range of fundraising resources that our supporters can use to help them with their fundraising, and groups can also book one of our incredible speakers free of charge. This provides the opportunity to interact with one of our amazing dogs and really brings the story to life of how their support is helping us. Youth groups can choose the naming level they wish to fundraise to, or may wish to consider our special Puppy Graduation scheme as well.

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