

One Voice

February 2022

Key messages for staff and volunteers



Unless explicitly stated the statistics in this booklet are based on 2019 figures. These figures are a more accurate reflection of the work we do than those of 2020/21, when COVID-19 had a significant impact on our ability to deliver some of our services.

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Who we are and why we exist



We are Guide Dogs. And 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 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.

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.

The scale of the challenge we face



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- **1 in 5** people will live with significant sight loss in their lifetime.
 - Every **six minutes** in the UK, one more person loses their sight.
 - Every day **250** more people join the **2 million** already living with sight loss and this number is set to double by 2050.
 - **Six million** people are estimated to be living with sight-threatening eye conditions.
 - In 2021 nearly **100,000** people will be told they are losing their sight.
 - There are **28,000** children (under 18) who are blind or partially sighted in the UK.
 - Every day around **four** children in the UK are registered blind or partially sighted.
 - **73%** of people with sight loss of working age are unemployed.

How we can help: our services



Help for adults

- Information and advice
 - My Life Skills
 - My Sighted Guide
 - Guide dogs
-

Help for children and families

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



x2

With new services, new technologies and our amazing staff, volunteers, dogs, and supporters, we will change more lives than ever before.

By 2023 we will double the amount of support we provide.

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, speak to someone from our friendly team today for more information.

Call Guide Line on **0800 781 1444** or visit our website **[guidedogs.org.uk](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk)**

250,000

In 2021 we provided more than 250,000 people with information and advice about sight loss through our website and Guide Line.



Our information and advice service can help you with:

Finding the right services for you

We have a wide range of services, with and without dogs, and can help you access support from other organisations. By understanding what you want from life today and tomorrow, we can help you plan to achieve it. And we'll support you every step of the way.

Dog care and welfare

If you're partnered with one of our dogs, our dog care team can help with any questions about your dog's health, training or wellbeing.

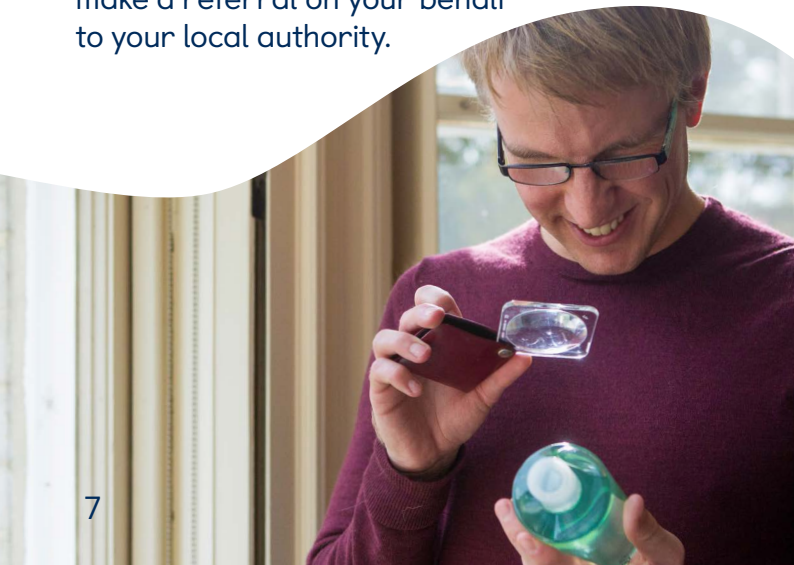
Advice on guide dog access refusals

Have you been refused access or faced potential discrimination with your guide dog? Our team is here to support you. We can help you understand your rights, give you practical information and emotional support.

My Life Skills

It all starts with a conversation. Our experts will work with you to develop a package of support that's just right for you.

After developing a plan together and agreeing our services are right for you, one of our specialists may visit you at home. If you are considering applying for a guide dog and need to improve your cane skills, we may be able to offer some top-up training. If you haven't had any cane training before, we can make a referral on your behalf to your local authority.



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.

My Sighted Guide

Our sighted guiding service connects you with a locally trained volunteer. They can help you to get out and about, and do more of the things you like, whether that's walking in the park, shopping or going to a football match. If your friends and family want to get involved, we can also grow their confidence with guiding training.



1,296

In 2019 we matched
1,296 people with
a sighted guide.

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.



4,800

In 2019 we created
685 new guide dog
partnerships and
supported 4,800
partnerships
in total.



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, a member of your family, 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 **guidedogs.org.uk**

Our information and advice service can help you with:

Family support

Our team is here to give advice and emotional 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 can offer independent and tailored advice to help your child receive the educational support they are entitled to. From supporting you when you are choosing the right nursery, school or college, to working with teachers and special education staff or advising on assistive technologies.

Technology grants and sensory toys

For children with sight loss, technology and sensory play is vital. Our expert team can provide personalised advice to help you choose the right technology or sensory toys for your child's age and stage. We can offer grants to help buy the specialist technology or sensory equipment your child needs.

We also have a range of sensory packages with toys carefully selected by our experts for different age ranges.



2,845

In 2019 we helped
2,845 children learn
essential life skills so
that they can navigate
the world around them
confidently and safely.

My 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 for this service.

My Time to Play

Our My Time to Play service helps children with a vision impairment aged 0–4 develop 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 a virtual programme on Zoom where you can join other families for structured, fun and supportive group sessions from the comfort of home. We are currently rolling out in-person sessions where you can meet other families and get support from our habilitation specialists.



CustomEyes Books

No child should miss out on the joy of reading and we can produce books in large-print, tailor-made to suit your child's eye condition. 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.

4,000

In 2019, we made 4,000 tailor-made books, enabling children with sight loss to enjoy reading just like their friends.



1,095

1,095 people affected
by sight loss attended
our family support
events in 2019.



Tech for All

Tech for All provides children aged 3–18 with a vision impairment with a free Apple iPad or iPhone to use outside of school. Each child is supported by a digital learning programme, to make sure they get the most out of their device. We know how important these devices are to your child's development – both to support their learning at home or to explore the activities and interests they enjoy.

Family events

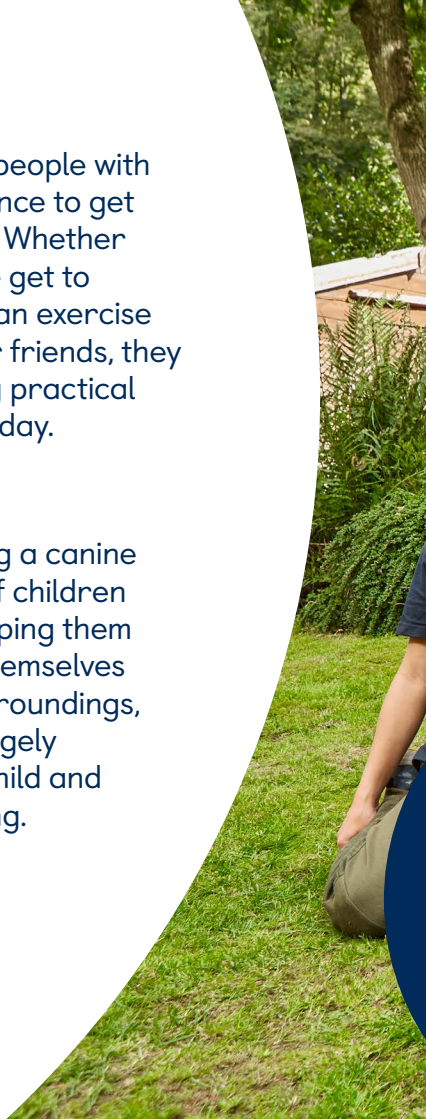
Every year we host a UK-wide programme of family activity days. Here your child and their siblings can play and take part in activities together – alongside other children with sight loss. Meanwhile, parents can share experiences, support each other and access specialist advice from our Children's Services 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 get to school or college, to an exercise class 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.





52

In 2020, 52 children were partnered with a buddy dog, helping improve their confidence and wellbeing.

How the public can support us





42

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** from just £1 a week, watching 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 guide dogs of the future, as well as expand other services such as My Sighted Guide, 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.

- **Raise funds to Name a Puppy**, whether for a school, business or in memory of a loved one.
- **Making a simple one-off donation** by visiting our website.

We have a range of ways that you can raise funds while at work, home or school. Find out more at:
guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help



Volunteer

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

We have an amazing community of **14,000** volunteers carrying out **23,500** roles and giving around **13 million** hours of support each year.

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

Working directly with people who have sight loss

Whether it's popping to the shops together or meeting friends, you could help someone with sight loss live the life they choose.

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.

Raising the funds that make it all possible

Join one of our **450** fundraising groups, host your own fundraiser, take on sponsored challenges, and help make sure fundraising resources get to the people that need them. In 2020 our community fundraisers raised over **£4 million**.

We have **100** 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 relevant information about their role, their team and news from the wider charity including any urgent updates.

guidedogs.org.uk/vip

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 **28,000** amazing volunteer campaigners. 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 **[guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/campaigning](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/campaigning)**



How every £1 raised is spent by Guide Dogs

- The UK's first guide dog partnerships qualified in 1931. Since then, thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers and supporters we have partnered over **36,000** people with a guide dog and transformed the lives of thousands more through our other services.
- In 2019 we provided support **9,650** times for children with a vision impairment and their families.
- It costs **£75.7** million to deliver all our services.
- It costs **£34,600** to breed and train a single guide dog.
- It costs **£54,800** to support a guide dog from birth to retirement.



54p

Providing guide dogs and other adult services

8.5p

Campaigning and raising awareness

5p

Providing children and young people's services

0.5p

Research and development

32p

Generating income, including trading activities

* This breakdown is based on 2019 figures.

Fast facts about Guide Dogs

- You don't need to have lost all your sight or be registered as blind or partially sighted to be partnered with a guide dog or benefit from our services.
- We are 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.
- There is no upper or minimum age for our guide dog partnerships. In 2020 our youngest guide dog owner was **14** and our oldest was **97**.
- We are world leaders in puppy socialisation: breeding and training more dogs than any other organisation in the world.

- In 2019 we welcomed **1,135** potential guide dogs in to the world.
- At any one time we are responsible for **8,400** puppies and dogs. We are one of the only organisations globally that breeds and nurtures dogs throughout their lifetime.
- We generally have two main breeds, Labrador 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

£8

could support a working guide dog partnership for a day.

£16

could buy a coat for one of our puppies in training.

£125

could buy a Starter Kit for a new guide dog owner, containing everything they need to start a life with their new guide dog.

£237

could buy a child with a vision impairment an iPad, to help them with their education and transform their learning experience.

£24

could pay for an hour's advice and guidance from one of our Specialist Education Support Officers.

£332

could provide eight weeks of Early Diagnosis Support to a child with sight loss and their family.

£44

enables us to produce a tailor-made, large print book for a child with sight loss, so that they can enjoy reading just like their friends.





How to contact us

For help and support visit

guidedogs.org.uk/getting-support

or call our Guide Line on **0800 781 1444**

To find out how you or your

company can support us visit

guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help

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