



Guide Dogs Futures: raising puppies (accessible slides)

Introduction

Slide 1 (title slide): Guide Dogs Futures: Raising puppies

Guide Dogs Futures webinar series
18 February 2021

Hosted by: Damion Afflick

Panellists: Jessica Stubbens, Gavin Miles, Kat Gunn, Becky Hunt

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Slide 2: Welcome to Guide Dogs Futures: Raising puppies

We'll cover:

1. The world of sight loss, right now
2. Types of services available for people with sight loss
3. The common theme for support services
4. How we'll better support volunteers and their pups
5. Introducing 'Ethos'
6. Coming soon: Puppy Raising for Excellent Partnerships
7. Taking care of puppies
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9. Q&A
10. Close and thank you

Research, facts and figures

Slide 3 (new section): The world of sight loss, right now

Slide 4: Sight loss can affect anyone, at anytime

1. Every six minutes in the UK, one more person loses their sight
2. Every day, 250 more people join the 2 million already living with sight loss

3. And this number is set to double by 2050

Slide 5: Having a visual impairment is on a huge and varied spectrum

There are over 2 million people living with sight loss. Here are the main causes of their sight loss:

- 39% Uncorrected refractive error
- 23% Age-related macular degeneration
- 19% Cataract
- 7% Glaucoma
- 5% Diabetic eye disease

Slide 6: Everyone's sight loss journey is different, including their support needs

[Images of a girl sat in a field, a man sat in a darkened room, an older couple kissing on the beach, and a mother cradling her child]

Slide 7: Today, the impact of COVID-19 on people with sight loss has led to increased inactivity, isolation and loneliness

Our research shows that isolation and social distancing on people with a vision impairment results in lower levels of 'activity' during COVID-19:

- 84% are "much less" active in terms of mobility.
- 62% experienced reduced activity related to work, study and volunteering.
- 60% experienced reduced exercise, hobbies and other activities.

Sight loss organisations and services

Slide 8 (new section): So, what type of services are available for people with sight loss?

Slide 9: In the last 50 years, sight loss support services have grown in response to the wide-ranging needs of people with a visual impairment

- Isolation
- Independence
- Reading materials

- Information and advice
- Mobility skills
- Digital inclusion
- Support groups
- Entertainment
- Reasonable adjustments
- Emotional support
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Assistive technology

Slide 10: RNIB: from accessible reading formats to multi-media services

[Image of the RNIB logo]

Slide 11: Thomas Pocklington Trust now supports blind and partially sighted people to live in their communities and to pursue the same opportunities in education and employment

Moved from being a specialist housing provider to an organisation that supports and empowers blind and partially sighted people of all ages to live the life they want to lead.

[Image of the Thomas Pocklington Trust logo]

Slide 12: Founded in 1987, the Macular Society offers a growing list of services to support its service users

- Advice and Information service
- Counselling
- Local support groups
- Working age and young people
- Patient information
- Telephone befriending
- Treatment buddies
- Skills for Seeing
- Access to treatment

- Genetic support service

[Image of the Macular Society logo]

Slide 13 (new section): What's the common theme?

Slide 14: In recognition of people's various support needs, sight loss organisations have diversified their services and improved the 'customer' experience

- [Image of an ear icon] Person-centred approach
- [Image of a menu icon] Options for different services
- [Image of a mobile, table and laptop icon] Accessible information & guidance
- [Image of two people with two arrows icon] Connections or companionship
- [Image of two arrows forming a circle icon] Ongoing support

Guide Dogs

Slide 15 (new section): At Guide Dogs, we're here to help as much as we can

Slide 16: We've been helping people with sight loss for nearly 90 years

[Images of a guide dog, a screenshot of the information and advice section of the Guide Dogs website, a My Sighted Guide volunteer with their partner, and a Guide Dogs member of staff answering the telephone]

Slide 17: Our guide, buddy and companion dogs help adults and children with sight loss in different ways

[Images of different types of service users with guide, companion and buddy dog]

Slide 18: To better support our dogs life-changing journeys, we're making improvements to how we – staff and volunteers – raise our puppies



[Images of a Guide Dogs member of staff using a computer, another kneeling down with three puppies, and a man with a guide dog in training]

Ethos

Slide 19 (new section): Introducing ‘Ethos’

Introducing ‘Ethos’ - Becky Hunt, Canine Science Research Associate

Slide 20: What is Ethos?

- A new bespoke dog behaviour monitoring system.
- Designed to meet Guide Dogs needs and maximise dog wellbeing.
- Ensuring we capture accurate and timely behaviour data to support our dogs along their life-changing journeys.
- To support all our canine services - guide dogs, breeding dogs, buddy and companion dogs and adopted dogs.

[Image of a close-up picture of a Golden Retriever puppy]

Slide 21: How will Ethos affect me as a volunteer?

- Guide Dogs value the input of all our volunteers that raise and look after the dogs in our programme.
- We are therefore asking Puppy Raisers, Fosterers and Breeding Dog Holders to complete behaviour questionnaires at set time points along a dog’s journey.
- This information is vital to the work we do, and we really need your help!

[Image of a laptop icon]

Puppy Raising for Excellent Partnerships (PREP)

Slide 22 (new section): Coming soon: ‘Puppy Raising for Excellent Partnerships’

Puppy Raising for Excellent Partnerships (PREP) - Jessica Stubbens, National Puppy Development Lead, and Gavin Miles, Project Manager.

Slide 23: Puppy Raising for Excellent Partnerships (PREP)

- our new standard way to raise our puppies.
- PREP treats every pup as an individual.
- Investment in our puppies, staff and volunteers.

[Image of a puppy]

Slide 24: It's informed by research and developed by people who know about raising puppies - subject matter experts, staff and volunteers

[Images of the PREP development process - various focus groups and experts]

- Research and focus groups.
- External best practice and research.
- Staff and volunteer input/engagement.
- Subject matter experts

Slide 25: PREP is based on four key principles which bring together new and existing learning and techniques into an easy to follow programme

1. Knowing your puppy
2. Managing for success
3. Teaching foundations
4. Being a partnership

[Image of four puppies sat in a row]

Slide 26: PREP demonstrates how we're continuing to evolve as an organisation

- Recognises that the training methods we use have updated.
- Ensures a standardised approach to raising our puppies.
- Places us at the forefront of puppy development.
- Provides a framework for continuous improvement.
- An investment in professional development for our staff and volunteers.

[Image of a volunteer sat on the floor with a puppy]

Slide 27: And how we're better preparing our pups for any life-changing role that they're naturally suited for

- Meets the needs of our Guide Dog partners.
- Improves the supply chain process.
- Aligns with Standardised Training for Excellent Partnerships (STEP) and incorporates the needs of Buddy and Companion Dog services within the programme.

[Images of a guide dog in training and a guide dog sat in the park with a service user]

Slide 28: From July 2021, we'll begin introducing PREP learning modules to volunteers

[Image of a puppy]

- PREP is set to become our standardised way to raise puppies from July 2021.
- Support from Puppy Development Advisors.
- New learning tool and process to make it easier and more accessible for volunteers.

Dog health, wellbeing and safety

Slide 29 (new section): Taking care of puppies

Taking care of puppies - Kat Gunn, National Dog Health and Wellbeing Lead

Slide 30: Ensuring good health and wellbeing is central to every pup's development into an adult dog

- Physical
- Emotional
- Mental

[Image of young dog smiling at the camera]

Slide 31: For volunteer Puppy Raisers, there are some newly available dog health and wellbeing resources/processes

- New prescription process for dispensing worm and flea treatment.
- Volunteers can call Guide Line for help with dog health and wellbeing queries.
- Dog health and welfare information, guidance and resources (e.g. podcasts, Alexa) available from our website and Volunteer Information Point.

[Image of a puppy prescription form]

Slide 32: And when you're out and about, remember these useful safety tips to keep you and your dog safe

- Avoid putting your dog on social media, especially with clues about where you live.
- Make sure your garden is secure, your gate is locked and adorned with bells to alert you to someone coming in.
- Never leave your dog in the garden unattended.
- Never leave your dog unattended in public, or left visible in a car.
- Work hard on getting a reliable recall, practice it often, and have this in place before letting your dog off the lead, so you can keep him/her close and away from strangers.
- Be wary of people asking information about your dog, particularly if you are alone

Born to Guide

Slide 33 (new section): Born to Guide

Born to Guide - Becky Hunt, Canine Science Research Associate

Slide 34: Born to Guide is a pioneering project to help us better understand our dogs' genes

Born to Guide aims:

- To understand the genetic links to complex diseases and behaviour
- To create genomic breeding values for our breeding programme to produce more healthy and successful dogs



- To share our findings for the wider scientific, academic and dog community

[Image of sleeping puppies]

Slide 35: The project and its outcomes will benefit people with sight loss in lots of ways

Born to Guide to help us breed happy, healthy dogs.

Researchers would be able to identify complex relationships between genes, health and behaviour.

The database we create will benefit our breeding programme today and improve the health of generations of guide dogs to come.

Slide 36: Our aim is to collect DNA from 3,000 of our puppies using saliva swabs

[Images of genome sequencing methods: whole genome sequencing; whole exome sequencing and targeted sequencing]

The Born to Guide project involves:

- Extracting the DNA via whole genome sequencing = really good quality DNA data for each dog
- Developing and use artificial intelligence (AI) and powerful computing techniques to explore and analyse the dogs' genetic data alongside the health and behaviour data
- Seeking external funding for the project
- Long term (6+ year) project

Slide 37: For this project to work, we'll need our volunteer Puppy Raisers to swab and send

- Puppy raisers will be asked to take a saliva swab when their puppy is five months or older.
- Instructions and all the kit you will need is provided by Guide Dogs.
- Any questions please contact borntoguide@guidedogs.org.uk.

[Image of a puppy with a swab on its gums]

Comments and Questions

Slide 38 (new section): Comments and questions

Slide 39: Use the Q&A function to ask questions

Close

Slide 40 (end slide): Thank you for joining us today!

Details of the next Guide Dogs Futures webinar will be published on the Volunteer Information Point and in The Guide e-newsletter.

Any questions? GuideDogsFutures@guidedogs.org.uk

Document Ends.