

Forward



Celebrating 90 amazing years!

Guide Dogs anniversary special commemorative edition

Inside: photos of our RHS
Chelsea Flower Show garden

Special feature: the
history of Guide Dogs

Find out who's won our new
Lifetime Achievement Awards



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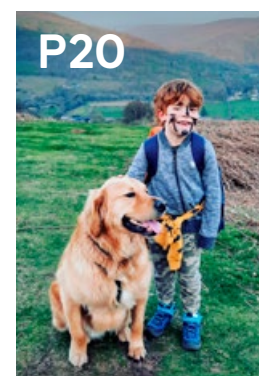
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Editorial contributions:

Send your stories to Forward by email to forward@guidedogs.org.uk or by post to the Head Office address below. Unfortunately, due to the volume of ideas we receive, we cannot acknowledge every item. We reserve the right to edit or refuse.

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A welcome from Tom



It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this special 90th anniversary commemorative issue of Forward magazine. We have a wonderful feature detailing our history on pages 36-37, including an interview with the granddaughter of our very first permanent guide dog trainer (and the first editor of this magazine), Captain Nikolai Liakhoff.

We've organised some fantastic activities to mark our anniversary. Our front cover features some brilliant moments from this year's celebrations, including images taken by world-renowned photographer Andy Gotts. You'll find more of Andy's amazing work on pages 12-13. Another highlight was our garden at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show – find out more on pages 28-29.

While we've been celebrating everything we've achieved in the last nine decades, we're also thinking about the next 90 years and beyond. Investment in our sites and staff continues, with our new Academy revolutionising how we recruit, train and develop our people to deliver the guide dog service (see pages 30-31).

Driving this initiative is the need to provide more life-changing partnerships. We're extremely mindful of how long some people have waited for a guide dog, a situation sadly still hindered by the delays Covid-19 brought

to our breeding and training programmes. We believe we're on the right path to our goal of creating 1,000 guide dog partnerships a year, and building a legacy we can all be proud of.

Speaking of legacies, the official opening of our new South West Regional Centre in Bristol in early July saw Princess Alexandra pass on her patronage of our charity, a role she has held since 1957, to Sophie, Countess of Wessex. I'd like to thank the Princess for her decades of dedication to Guide Dogs, for which we are very grateful.

Others who deserve recognition for the time they have given to this charity are the four Trustees who stepped down at our AGM in September. Amanda Ariss, John Wriighthouse, Polly Shute and Dr Michael Nussbaum came to the end of their tenures and I'd like to thank them for the part they've played in shaping Guide Dogs into the charity it is today.

Finally, you may remember that my wife Charlotte and I care for Dolly, one of our guide dog mums. At the start of this year Dolly had a litter of pups who are doing really well with their Puppy Raisers. They're nearly a year old and so will start formal guide dog training soon. Charlotte and I can't wait to see whether 2022 will bring another litter of guide dog puppies into our lives!

Christmas is coming and if you're feeling festive, don't forget that you can buy tickets to our Christmas Wishes Concert. There's more information on page 7 of the News section.

Happy holidays to all, and here's to a wonderful new year.

Tom Wright CBE
Chief Executive
Guide Dogs
@TomwrightUK on Twitter

News

Thousands take part in our Guide Dogs 90 Appeal

Our 90th anniversary celebrations throughout October saw thousands of our supporters celebrating this special occasion by taking on a 90-themed fundraiser for the Guide Dogs 90 Appeal. We had dog lovers walking 90km with their canine companions while proudly wearing their Guide Dogs 90 bandanas, schools using our resources to teach kids about Guide Dogs' history, workplace bake sales and all sorts of challenges across the country. The creativity and passion from our fundraisers shone through each and every activity, raising money to help us be there for the next 90 years. It's not too late to get involved! Find out more at guidedogs.org.uk/appeal.

**1931
2021**

**Guide Dogs
90 Years**



Marking more than 60 years of service supporting Guide Dogs

Princess Alexandra has stepped down as Guide Dogs' Patron after more than sixty years in the role. The announcement was made at the official opening of the South West Regional Centre in Bristol in early July. Thanking the Princess for her contribution and commitment to the charity, Chairman Jamie Hambro said: "We are incredibly

honoured to mark, and to thank in person, Princess Alexandra for her wonderful contribution over the last sixty-seven years, first as our President, then since 1957 as our Patron." The Princess has been succeeded as Patron by Sophie, Countess of Wessex, who also attended the ceremony.

The Guide Dogs Shop is back

Guide Dogs Shop is back with a new look and exciting new products, including lots of new branded merchandise, and better-than-ever Christmas gifts for the family. Shop the full range online at [GuideDogsShop.com](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/shop), or in our 2021 Christmas catalogue. We're celebrating 90 years of Guide Dogs in style with a special collection of gifts and homeware, featuring exclusive artwork inspired by the classic railway posters of the 1930s. Visit [GuideDogsShop.com/90years](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/shop/90years).



A warm welcome to Frankie

This summer we welcomed Frankie, who'd travelled more than 1,000 miles from Croatia to the West Midlands to become a guide dog mum. After health and temperament checks, 18-month-old Labrador Frankie, originally known as Frka, moved into her new home with Diane and Gordon Fowkes in Nuneaton. Guide Dogs is a founding member of the International Guide Dog Federation, which is made up of more than 90 guide dog organisations. Members often exchange breeding dogs to ensure genetic diversity, and in June 2019 we provided a guide dog school in Croatia with a black Labrador called Amba.



My Sighted Guide – we couldn't do it without our volunteers

The coronavirus pandemic and the resulting need for social distancing brought understandable disruption to our My Sighted Guide (MSG) service, where we partner sighted volunteer guides with adults with sight loss to access their local area. As restrictions have lifted across the UK, our community teams have worked tirelessly to get MSG partnerships back out and about and at the time of writing, more than two thirds of partnerships have begun meeting up again. If you're an MSG volunteer, you should have heard from us by now to confirm if you wish to continue as a guide, and we're also focusing on progressing volunteer applications as fast as we can. If you haven't heard from us, please get in touch via volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk.

Christmas Wishes Concert – 2021's most heart-warming celebration!

We're delighted that our Christmas Wishes Concert returns this winter, and it'll be sure to get you in the festive spirit! Enjoy a wonderful night of yuletide cheer supported by Royal Canin and hosted by broadcaster Nicky Campbell. There will be stunning vocals from Classical Reflection, inspiring stories, a celebration of 90 years of Guide Dogs and much, much more. You can either come along to the live concert on Tuesday, 14 December in Marylebone, London (with Covid-19 safety measures in place), or cosy up on the sofa and watch a special recording that will premier online for virtual ticketholders on December 21. Find out more at [guidedogs.org.uk/christmas-wishes](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/christmas-wishes).



The VI Charity Sector Partnership marks one year of working together

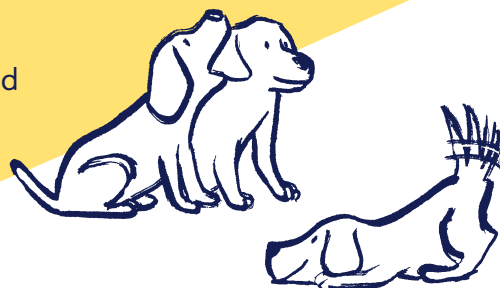
When the Covid-19 pandemic started, Guide Dogs and seven other leading UK sight loss charities started working together to ensure that people with sight loss got the help they needed. To build on the benefits they had found in joining forces, in October last year the charities named their collaboration the VI Charity Sector Partnership. The seven other charities are Blind Veterans UK, Glaucoma UK, Macular Society, Retina UK, RNIB, Thomas Pocklington Trust and Visionary. The aim of the partnership, which has just marked its first anniversary, is to implement initiatives across the UK charity sector which improve the lives of blind and partially sighted people and those at risk of sight loss.



Celebrating 10 years of our National Breeding Centre

As well as 90 years of UK guide dog partnerships, this year we're also marking 10 years since our National Breeding Centre opened its doors in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. Now re-named the National Centre, more than 10,000 guide dog puppies have been cared for under its roof in the last decade. Breeding staff and dogs moved to the centre on 3 May 2011, and its official opening took place on 11 October.

Matthew Bottomley, Guide Dogs' Head of Breeding Operations, said: "The centre houses the largest assistance dog breeding programme in the world. We're very proud of our amazing centre, staff and volunteers and look forward to the next decade."



Greta and Dorie help their owners say 'I do'!

When Laura Hill and Calum Briars got married this summer, their guide dogs Greta and Dorie had important roles in the wedding party. Greta, a German shepherd/retriever cross, wore a pink cape with the words "Furry Bridesmaid" as she accompanied Laura down the aisle, while yellow Labrador Dorie sported a bandana

fashioned into a dinner jacket as he waited at Calum's side. Laura and Calum met while studying at Hereford College and decided to apply for guide dogs after setting up home together in Hengoed, South Wales. Laura said: "We were paired with our dogs in 2019 and qualified just a week apart. The dogs get on brilliantly and love playing together."

Tech for All empowers children with sight loss in everyday life

Over the summer we launched our Tech for All pilot, which provided free assistive technology to those aged between three and 18 with a vision impairment in the UK.

The pilot helped more than 3,200 under 18s, with many applicants also wanting to find out more about our other services for young people. Emma Foulds, Guide Dogs' Director of Marketing, Digital and Influencing, said: "Technology can be a great enabler for children and

young people. For those with a vision impairment, tech gives them a sense of normality, confidence and independence. We've launched Tech for All to empower them." We're reviewing the pilot and will have an update in the new year, to find out more visit guidedogs.org.uk/techforall.

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Technology can be a great enabler for children and young people.

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Guide Line – a first port of call for your queries

Guide Line continues to help the public, existing and potential service users and sometimes our volunteers with questions or information about our range of services. Guide Line is staffed by 19 advisers along with three supervisors, one operation lead and one manager – with more than 170 years of combined experience of working at Guide Dogs, including 50 years of guide dog owner

experience. Most advisers have come from an operational community team background, dealing with puppy raising, dog health, My Sighted Guide and fundraising. There are also four on-call dog health and welfare specialists supporting Guide Line staff with dog health issues every day. Call Guide Line on 0800 781 1444 (Monday – Friday, 9am–5pm) or email information@guidedogs.org.uk.

Guide Dogs in the media



In early September, BBC Radio 4's The Listening Project included a conversation between guide dog owner and fitness instructor, Jaina Mistry, and Rachel Sutton, mother to vision-impaired young service user Nell. They discussed independence, mobility, challenging people's perceptions and the Paralympics. Their conversation is still available on BBC Sounds; search for 'The Listening Project'. The episode is dated 5 September, with their chat starting at the nine-and-a-half minute mark.

An episode of BBC Two's Gardeners' World in August featured guide dog owner Sarah Davison, who designed and manages her sizeable garden with no sight. The garden in Hinckley, Leicestershire, is also a quiet space for her guide dog, Willow, to potter and relax while off-duty. The programme's still available on iPlayer, search for episode 23 and watch from nine minutes in.

Our Tech for All service received widespread coverage in September, as we reported that more than half of

UK parents feel judged by others for allowing their children to use phones and tablets – so-called 'tech shaming'. Instead, we highlighted how technology can actually open up a child's world, especially if they are vision impaired. Blind TV personality and Guide Dogs supporter Amar Latif spoke about Tech for All on GB News, BBC Radio 5 Live, Radio Scotland and a host of regional radio stations, plus our report appeared on local news websites including Belfast Live, Cambridgeshire Live and Leicestershire Live.



In August we released survey results which found that 65 per cent of dog owners had plants in their gardens which are toxic to their canine companions. The story was covered online by the Daily Mail, the Daily Express, the Daily Star, Yahoo! News, Metro and The Sun, plus a host of national radio stations including Talk Radio, Magic Radio, Hits Radio and Rock FM. Our survey also proved popular with local and regional radio stations across the UK, from Glasgow-based Clyde 1 to Swansea Sound in South Wales.



On the campaign trail



Equal chances, the right support

Earlier this autumn we published a report which sets out recommendations for how specialist services for children and young people with vision impairments can be improved across areas like healthcare and education.

Our report was put together by a group of external, independent experts that we formed, known as a policy commission. Our commission brought together young people with lived experience of vision impairment, parents and families, and frontline, specialist professionals. We're grateful to our commission members for their time and input, and to everyone who shared their story with us.

We're now working with decision-makers, including Members of Parliament, to ensure our policy recommendations are supported. We're determined to secure change to ensure services are more joined-up, available across the country and that parents and families have access to high-quality information and advice. Our recommendations set out what's needed to build a better pathway of support and services, empowering every young person with a vision impairment to grow up living a happy and independent life.

Visit guidedogs.org.uk/campaigns for more.

Tactile warning strips are essential on all station platforms

We continue to take forward our campaign on the important issue of tactile warning strips at railway stations. We're campaigning for these warning strips to be installed at every railway station.

Their importance was reinforced by a tragic and fatal accident in February 2020 at Eden Park station in London, involving a vision-impaired man who fell from the platform and was struck by a train. That platform did not have tactile strips, which assist blind and partially sighted people in finding the platform edge. A third of station platforms on Great Britain's rail network do not have this essential surface installed.

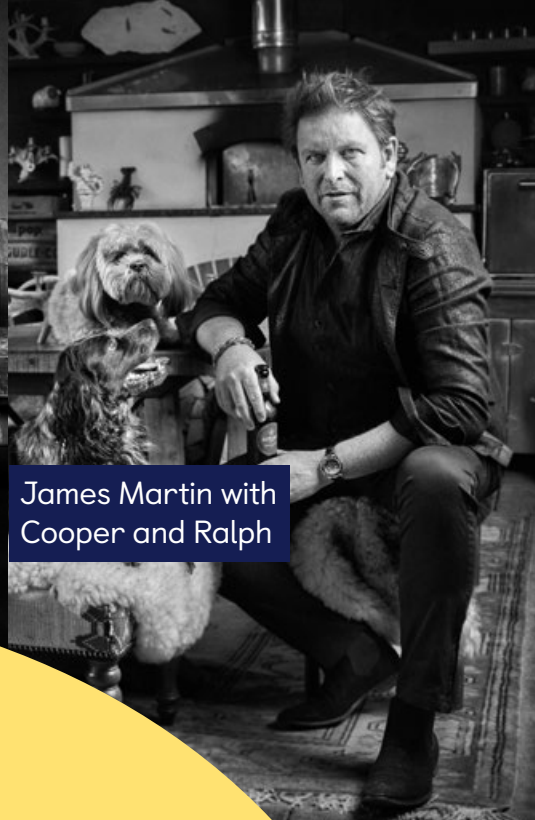
We're campaigning for warning tactile strips to be installed on all platforms within the next three years. People with sight loss need to be confident that they can use train stations independently. In response to our campaigning, Network Rail and the UK Government have started to speed up their tactile installation programme but we'll be keeping the pressure on to ensure this essential work is completed as soon as possible.



Lee Mack with Ludo



Wendi Peters with Edie, Dorothy and Ted



James Martin with Cooper and Ralph

Paw-traits of the stars

As part of our 90th anniversary celebrations, celebrity portrait photographer Andy Gotts created a series of stunning images of the UK's most famous faces with their beloved dogs.

The world-renowned photographer teamed up with Guide Dogs and its A-list supporters to shine a light on the stars' most loyal supporters – their dogs.

Andy, who's famous for his portraits of Hollywood icons such as Paul Newman and George Clooney, volunteered his time to photograph the dog-loving celebs. We then released his striking pictures to the media to launch the 2021 Guide Dogs Appeal to fund life-changing services for people with sight loss.

Andy said: "Needless to say, for my career sight is important, so I have always thought that

helping a charity like Guide Dogs that supports people with a vision impairment is something I would love to do."

David Walliams, who was photographed with his border terriers Bert and Ernie, said: "Guide Dogs is such an amazing charity and is one of the first charities you hear about as a child. My dogs mean everything to me so I can only imagine

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My dogs mean everything to me.
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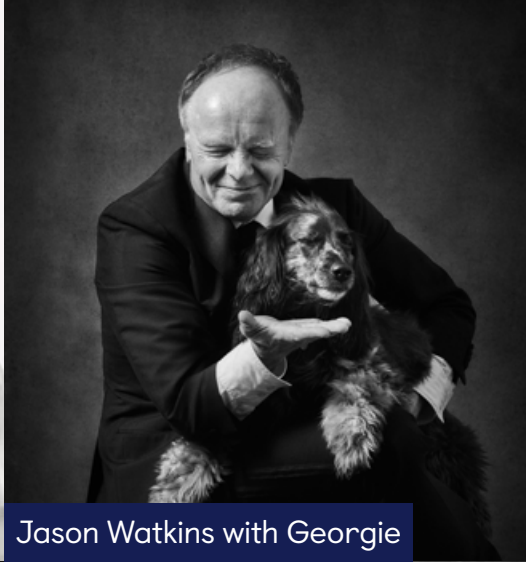
the incredible bond a person has with their guide dog. I'm delighted to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the first four guide dog partnerships."

Actor Phil Daniels, who posed with his Spanish rescue dog Chico, said: "My dog has been very important in my life. I lost my partner nine years ago to cancer when Chico was a young dog and he has been my companion ever since and is 14 now and still going strong.

"I think the Guide Dogs charity do an amazing job raising awareness, funds and sponsorship getting the message across that we need more guide dogs."



Tilda Swinton with Louis



Jason Watkins with Georgie



Star news

Beverley Knight with Zain



Phil Daniels with Chico



Jess Impiazzi with Witchert



Nicky Campbell with Maxwell, Misty and Maisie



David Walliams with Bert and Ernie



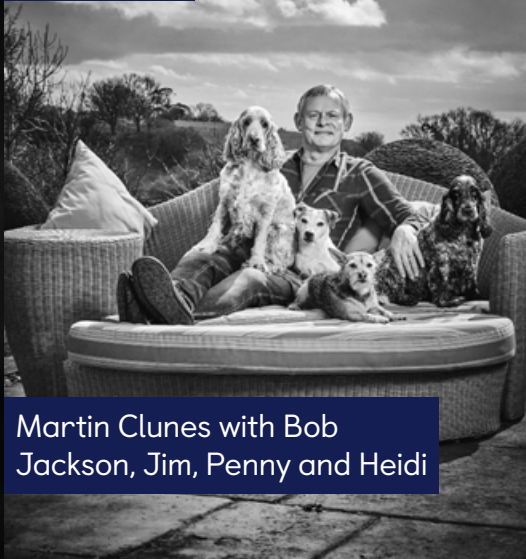
Dion Dublin with Maggie



Chris Packham with Sid and Nancy



Simon Cowell with Squiddly, Diddly, Freddy and Daisy



Martin Clunes with Bob Jackson, Jim, Penny and Heidi



Sir Derek Jacobi with Daisy

A sparkling event to remember!

Our 2021 People Awards was the perfect culmination of almost a year-long celebration of our 90th anniversary, especially our Guide Dogs 90 series of stories which profiled a few of our supporters and service users – past and present.

On 11 November, our annual People Awards returned to our National Centre (with Covid-19 and social distancing guidelines in place) with a special 90th anniversary-themed event. We celebrated the volunteers, staff and service users whose contribution, achievements and brilliance over the past 12 months and beyond have inspired and touched the lives of so many people.

On the day, we were joined by many of our wonderful nominees and Guide Dogs staff and trustees who presented awards to our

winners for each of the categories. There was also an array of celebrity supporters who sent congratulatory video messages in honour of our 90th anniversary and guests.

If that wasn't exciting enough, we introduced a special new award category – The Princess Alexandra Award for Lifetime Achievement – to commemorate the patronage of HRH Princess Alexandra who stepped down as Patron in July after more than sixty years in the role. Congratulations to all the winners and nominees!

Service user awards winners

Inspirational Person of the Year – Mel Griffiths

Guide Dog Partnership of the Year – Jaina Mistry and guide dog Laura

My Sighted Guide Partnership of the Year – Lorna O'Mahoney (service user) and Gill East (volunteer)

Inspirational Young Person of the Year – Arthur Howson

Volunteer awards winners

Person-Centred – Adrian Cobie

Expert – Ruth Evans

Optimistic – Ian Wallace

Partner – Ceridigion/Powys/S Gwynedd Group

Lead by Example – Sian Healey

Engage – Cardiff Group

Staff awards winners

Person-Centred – Jo Howell

Expert – Karen James and Sarah Newton, Health & Safety Team

Optimistic – The Shrewsbury team

Partner – David Smith

Lead by Example – Amanda Bennett

Engage – Vashti Holland



Overall volunteer winner – Sian Healey

Sian is naturally good at leading by example. She recently became the fundraising coordinator of the Cardiff group in what's been a difficult year, and helped to develop a sense of togetherness – a theme which runs through everything she does. With a knack for raising awareness of Guide Dogs and fundraising, she's started numerous creative initiatives: from art projects and creating a photographic wall of guide dog owners, to engaging local schools and community groups, and building relationships with local businesses. As a guide dog owner herself, Sian has also designed tactile greetings cards which are proving increasingly popular.



Overall staff winners – The Shrewsbury team

Lauren, Laura, Jodie and Howard helped an anxious guide dog owner, whose dog was due to retire, to relocate abroad for their dream job. The team understood the challenges and tailored support so the owner felt prepared, reassured and confident in a new country. They created the perfect new guide dog match, and helped with the legal issues of taking a guide dog overseas. They delivered bespoke My Sighted Guide training to the owner's support officer, developing the officer's understanding of how a guide dog works, and learning new routes safely. The team also helped with the practical challenges of relocating, even arranging for in-country mobility training.

Overall service user winner – Jaina Mistry and guide dog Laura

After losing her sight aged 17 – following a sudden allergic reaction in 2002 – Jaina's world turned upside down but as she began to recover, she pursued a new direction in life. Over the next few years, Jaina completed various health-related courses. In time, she became interested in fitness but struggled with her independence, initially not wanting a guide dog as she feared dogs.

However, after meeting a friend with a guide dog, Jaina decided to face her fears and started her guide dog journey. During their nine-year partnership, Laura played a vital role in helping Jaina develop her fitness career and was with her every step of the way. In 2014, Jaina qualified as England's first blind female fitness instructor.





Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award winner – Bryan Garnham

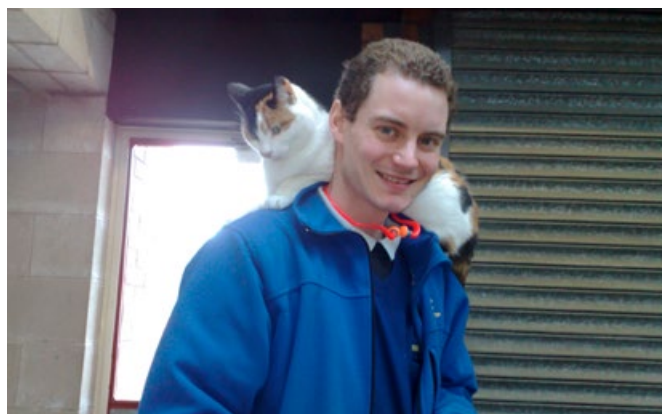
Bryan has a long history of supporting Guide Dogs. Described as the “stalwart” of the Bury St Edmunds branch, Bryan has been fundraising for Guide Dogs for more than 50 years – with his branch raising more than £1m. He began in the early 1960s and kept supporting Guide Dogs throughout his naval career, and later, while running a local fish and chip shop.

He’s since devised countless fun and inventive ways to raise money and awareness of Guide Dogs, from inventing and playing deck golf on the Royal Yacht Britannia with square balls, to renovating and selling donated bikes to raise £5,000 towards a Name a Puppy fund.

Over the years Bryan has supported many Name a Puppy fundraisers, including naming the original Edmund puppy and their successor, Edmund II, which he promoted on Radio Suffolk.

In 2019, Bryan was awarded a British Empire Medal for his fundraising work and later nominated and won two Guide Dogs awards, including the national volunteer award for the ‘Lead by Example’ category.

To ensure a fitting tribute for Bryan, his fundraising group are working on having a guide dog puppy named Yoyo, after his nickname in the Navy.



Staff Lifetime Achievement Award winner – Robert Coop

Robert’s career at Guide Dogs started as a dog care volunteer in Bolton aged just 14. At 16, he was employed full time and, after 25 years with Guide Dogs, he’s become a highly respected member of the team. He’s passionate and committed to his role in supporting each dog’s journey to become a future life-changer. Robert often goes above and beyond: one winter, he walked through seven miles of thick snow and bad weather from Bolton to Atherton to ensure the kennelled dogs were cared for.

His enthusiasm, support and commitment also extend to people. As a tutor, Robert has trained numerous dog care staff, Guide Dog Trainers and Guide Dog Mobility Specialists in their dog care modules, and he’s imparted his knowledge to many dog care volunteers. In the past, when he’s given talks on dog care to service users visiting the Bolton centre, he has also served them meals, kept them company in the evenings and assisted in taking them out – and always with a smile.

Outside of his day job, Robert also contributes to fundraising events by constructing display items out of his own pocket; he once recreated a winter wonderland scene for a Christmas fair.

Find out more

Search ‘People Awards’ on our website – [guidedogs.org.uk](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk) – for more on our winners, runners up and event photos.

The highs and lows of volunteering in a global pandemic

Here we share the key themes from our 2021 Volunteer Impact Assessment, which tells the story of volunteering for Guide Dogs during a time of unprecedented challenges.

Every two years, we conduct comprehensive research with volunteers and staff to understand their contribution and to find out what the volunteering experience is like for everyone. A big thank you to the 2,793 volunteers and 661 staff who took the time to complete our fourth Volunteer Impact Assessment earlier this year.

Against a backdrop of paused volunteering roles, temporarily furloughed staff (including volunteer managers or key contacts), several lockdowns and ongoing social distancing – the findings reveal the impact on volunteering. Understandably, Covid-19 has led to a slight drop in contact from volunteer managers with many volunteers feeling unable to contribute to Guide Dogs in their usual way because of government guidance and/or changes to their personal circumstances. However, the findings also demonstrate how we've prioritised the safety and wellbeing of our volunteers,

reached more volunteers with national communications and provided much-needed information to new volunteers.

How we're using this research
Across Guide Dogs, we're using this research to inform our local, regional and national action plans.

We're already investing in technology and developing volunteer learning, support and training to improve the overall volunteer experience. Alongside this, we're piloting a more community-based style of volunteering to help bring volunteers from different roles closer together to know each other better, offer peer-to-peer support and discover new volunteering opportunities.



Highlights:

84% of volunteers across all roles feel that their wellbeing was considered by Guide Dogs throughout the pandemic.

98% of new volunteers had been given information about how to safely carry out their role.

A **14%** increase in volunteers now receiving national communications/news (strategy updates and new initiatives) who previously wanted it but didn't get it.

Areas for improvement:

80% of all volunteers overall feel their key contact values their contribution (compared to 87% in 2019).

76% of our volunteers are engaged with Guide Dogs (compared to 83% in 2019).

76% of volunteers rate their communications from Guide Dogs – a mix of national and local communications and contact from volunteer managers – as good or excellent, based on a scale of clarity, timeliness, frequency and sufficiency (compared to 82% in 2019).

You gotta role with it!

Did you know that almost half of our 14,000 wonderful volunteers have more than one role?

Raising puppies and funds

For eight years, Sue Ward has volunteered as a Puppy Raiser. She first became interested in the role after sponsoring a puppy for years, but it took a little encouragement from husband Alan to get in touch with us. Sue tells us how she sees all her volunteering roles as part and parcel of puppy raising: "I met other Puppy Raisers who were already fundraising. They would invite me and my puppy to local fundraising events. And I thought why not? I can do that."

Eventually, Sue had several fundraising roles and also became a volunteer speaker, but she doesn't view her different roles as separate or distinct. Sue said: "All my other volunteering roles are really part of being a Puppy Raiser because if I'm speaking to communities, fundraising or emptying collection boxes, it's all good experience for my puppy to socialise in different environments."

Sue is currently raising her seventh puppy, Rhubarb. But this time it's different. She's one of our first Puppy Raisers to use Puppy Raising



Sue Ward with
Chloe and Rhubarb

for Excellent Partnerships (PREP) – our new standard way to raise our puppies which prepares them for their adult training and their future roles as life-changers.

Sue said: “To be honest, we’ve been doing this since 2013 and you get set in your ways – you know what’s expected of you and how you do things. However, PREP has shown me that it’s all about the puppy and that’s how it should be. It’s definitely a much better way of learning. I’ve learnt how to understand my puppy and what they’re thinking. It’s excellent!”

Outside of puppy classes, PREP learning and resources are delivered through an online learning tool called Kallidus. For Sue, it took some time to get acquainted with using new technology. She added: “I think I’ve now mastered Kallidus! I’ve completed all the first exercises. It’s definitely easier and quicker than going through a book!”

For our 90th anniversary, Sue is helping to organise a fundraiser in Chesterfield with lots of tea, cakes, and of course, Rhubarb!

“

I met other Puppy Raisers who were already fundraising. And I thought why not? I can do that.

”

Lauren Romer and Daniel Bateman



A devoted double act

Lauren Romer and her partner Daniel Bateman both started volunteering with Guide Dogs in 2016 just after Lauren lost the last of her vision. Back then, they didn’t know about the range of volunteer roles available but wanted to give back to Guide Dogs for the years of help. Together, they’ve taken on volunteer training roles which directly help service users.

Daniel said: “We were trying to give back to Guide Dogs through our early roles in fundraising, because over the years with help from the charity our confidence has grown in a number of areas – particularly for Lauren. As we’ve become more adjusted to Lauren’s sight loss, we’ve tried to move into roles where we can directly help other service users by delivering training.”

During the pandemic, the couple went online to continue delivering My Sighted Guide training. Lauren said: “The advantage of us being a couple is that we don’t have to social distance – so we

could demonstrate sighted guiding techniques practically for those who were sighted, alongside audio description for those with vision impairments.”

Accumulating volunteer roles like this has only added to the couple’s overall volunteering experience. Lauren said: “The roles we both do are very varied, so we feel we gain and use different skills across the different parts of the organisation.”

Daniel said: “As a fundraiser, the ability to talk to people about the services Guide Dogs provides first-hand, because we help deliver them, is fantastic. It makes it much more engaging. It’s similar when we are volunteering as speakers. We get lots of questions, and our varied roles mean we often know the answers. Particularly with Lauren being a guide dog owner!”

To find out more about Sue or Daniel and Lauren, search ‘our volunteers’ on our website – [guidedogs.org.uk](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk).

Rubin's story





The last two lockdowns brought about by the coronavirus pandemic turned out to be a lot of fun for one family in South Wales, all thanks to a new four-legged friend.

Golden retriever Vesper was an instant hit with Eve Hellier-Smith and her children, Rubin and Molly, when he arrived at their home in Crickhowell in October last year.

Vesper was placed with the family as part of our buddy dog service, which enables children and young people with a vision impairment to enjoy the benefits and friendship of a well-behaved dog.

Rubin, aged seven, has nystagmus and is registered blind. He has no sight at all in his right eye and limited vision in his left. His sister Molly, who's eight, is fully sighted.

The family, whose hobbies include paddle-boarding, hiking and wild swimming, began sharing Vesper's

adventures via his very own Instagram account, **vesperbuddydog_adventures**, which has more than 1,100 loyal followers.

Not only has Vesper proved a hit on social media, but the family has helped to raise the profile of Guide Dogs' buddy dog service by appearing on the sofa with Holly and Phillip on ITV's *This Morning*, and sharing their story in other national media such as *Best* magazine and the *Daily Mail* online.

Eve said: "Vesper has given Rubin more confidence when we go out and about. If we stop for a rest while Vesper is off the lead, Vesper comes straight back to check that Rubin is OK."



"At home, Vesper enjoys cuddles with Rubin and if he's tired, they lie next to each other on the floor. Rubin and Molly love spending time in the garden with him playing tug of war or fetch."

Guide Dogs began rolling out its buddy dogs scheme in Wales last summer and Eve applied immediately. "Four months later, we had Vesper," she said. "I was surprised and grateful at how quickly it all happened, especially during the Covid crisis."

"We attended a couple of online webinars to find out what buddy dogs were all about, then we went to Leamington Spa for a short training session. I feel very well supported by Guide Dogs and can ask for advice whenever I need it."

Four-year-old Vesper was a good fit for the family's

outdoor lifestyle. "He never wants his walks to end," said Eve. "When the children were off school, we were able to explore and go on adventures to places like The Sugar Loaf mountain in nearby Monmouthshire."

"I enjoy wild swimming in the River Usk, but if it's too high I go to the Keeper's Pond in Blaenavon. I've tried Vesper on the paddle board but it was too wobbly for him! I put the children in wetsuits and they paddle. They've been

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I hope many more families living with sight loss will benefit from this amazing service when they realise how well behaved these dogs are.

”

swimming once or twice but it gets cold quickly."

Vesper originally followed the same training path as a guide dog, but the change of career to buddy dog suited his affectionate nature. Eve said: "I've taken Vesper into town alone for a couple of trial runs, and he's a different dog with his buddy dog jacket on. It's as if he reverts to guide dog mode, and it takes my respect to a different level. I'm looking forward to taking Rubin out and knowing that Vesper is going to be fine in busy situations."

"I would love it if Rubin could have a guide dog in the future, and he will learn so much from Vesper. I hope many more families living with sight loss will benefit from this amazing service when they realise how well behaved these dogs are – so different from an ordinary pet."

Learn more about buddy dogs through our discovery sessions

A buddy dog brings a new friend into the life of a child or teenager with sight loss and can help build self-confidence, trust and have a positive impact on wellbeing, among other benefits.



These are dogs that, after starting their training, are not quite suited to being a guide dog but make ideal pets as they are friendly and well-behaved.

For families considering whether a buddy dog is right for them, Guide Dogs runs monthly discovery sessions to find out more. These half-day webinars provide an overview for parents of what's involved in caring for a dog, information about the service and the application process, as well as an understanding of what a buddy dog is and how they are different to a guide dog (for example they don't have the same legal access rights as a guide dog and can't be used as a mobility aid). There's also the chance to ask questions to help with deciding the best way forward.

Verity de Winton, Support Dogs Lead, explains: "We know from our buddy dog families

that these dogs can totally transform family life – bringing benefits that go way beyond the child.

"However, owning any dog brings responsibilities and commitments, so as well as showing people the difference one of our buddy dogs might make, we're also honest about some of the less glamorous elements – like walking them in the cold and the wet! Discovery sessions are a great way of getting to know prospective owners and deciding together on the next steps."

Joanne Howell, a Canine Assisted Partnership Specialist, adds: "Families often tell us how useful they find the sessions in helping them to make up their minds on whether a buddy dog is right for them. They sometimes find that there are benefits they hadn't thought of

and get a better idea of what's involved. The webinars can also be a good way to make contact with other families who may be having similar experiences and challenges."

After the discovery session, parents complete an application form if they want to continue the process and learn more about dogs and their behaviour through follow-up development and in-person experience sessions – where appropriate giving children the opportunity to meet a stuffed toy dog before interacting with a real dog when everyone's happy that's the right next step.

Find out more

To book on to a discovery session or for further details, contact Guide Line on 0800 781 1444.

Supporters



Maria Novell

Maria Novell
Fundraising &
Commercial Director

Dear supporters,

It's been wonderful to hear about all the fantastic fundraising you've been doing, now that Covid-19 restrictions have lifted and life is returning to normal.

Whether it's something simple like having your beard trimmed like Arthur Wheeler, or you're determined to name nearly a whole litter of guide dog puppies like Scarlett Elliott, we're thankful for your dedication to helping people with sight loss to live actively, independently and well.

Sending you best wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy new year.



Mel

▲ Mel Griffiths from Nottingham wanted to mark Guide Dogs' 90th anniversary year and set off in May for our Walk Your Socks Off event, raising £5,257. Not long after completing her challenge, her father passed away and Mel named a puppy Neil after him. For October's Guide Dogs Appeal, Mel continued to fundraise in memory of her dad, a dog-lover who was passionate about Guide Dogs' work as Mel has been supported by seven guide dogs over 32 years. Mel's husband is also a guide dog owner, and her current guide dog is called Elsa.

▼ Alan Spink from Darlington, County Durham, raised £5,000 to name a guide dog puppy Maggie after his late wife. Alan, who's aged 90, raised the money by painting more than 600 pet portraits over the past five years. He took up watercolour painting after taking early retirement from teaching in 1986. Alan said: "My wife Maggie was my childhood sweetheart from the age of 14 and passed away a few years ago after a battle with dementia. It's great to be able to raise funds for such a worthy cause – we had two pet Labradors whom we loved dearly, so it's also in memory of them. It was wonderful to meet puppy Maggie and I really hope she becomes a successful guide dog."



Alan

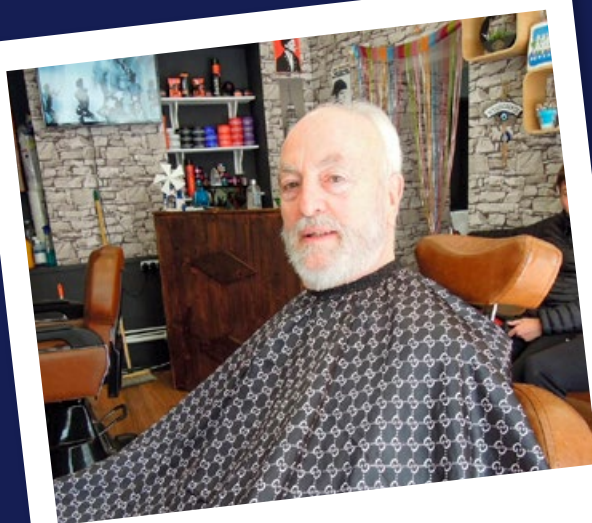


▲ “An experience I’ll never forget” – that’s how blind action man Nige Hughes of Wrexham described his 10-mile Tough Mudder challenge in September. Nige plunged into ice-cold water and scrambled through a “rat sewer”, guided by friends Lee Butterworth and Matt Clarke. The trio raised more than £6,400 for Guide Dogs, including £1,500 match funding from their employer, HSBC. They will now name a puppy Tandem to bring back memories of their 200-mile sponsored cycle ride from London to Paris three years ago. Nige is no stranger to extreme sports and goes skiing every season, and he also enjoys running and cycling. He said: “My fifth guide dog, Torch, passed away unexpectedly in June, so I’m on the waiting list for a new dog. In the meantime I get around with a long cane, but I don’t like using it. When you have a guide dog, it’s more natural to go out.”

▼ Arthur Wheeler from Richmond, North Yorkshire, raised £336 when he organised his very own TMB – Trim My Beard – event over the summer. Arthur found a local Turkish barber to tidy up his year-old lockdown beard, and decided to raise money for Guide Dogs at the same time as he’s a volunteer. Arthur handed over his donation to the Dales & District Group.



Before



After

Supporters

▼ Lisa Halley and her guide and hearing dog, Jumble, raised £1,050 when they completed the Glasgow Kiltwalk in September. Lisa, from Dundee, was born deaf and was diagnosed with Usher syndrome aged 21, which means she could eventually lose her sight completely. Lisa said: "Jumble and I completed the 16.5-mile route of the Kiltwalk

and Jumble was just amazing as always. The sponsor had a competition where if you took a photo with their kilt, you could win £500 to donate to your chosen charity, so Jumble and I gave it a go. When we received the news that we'd won, I got emotional as I know how much this money will mean to Guide Dogs."





Thank you Mansfield Chad!

► Ten-year-old Scarlett Elliott didn't stop smiling when she finally got to meet the guide dog puppy she had named Max. Their meeting was delayed due to Covid-19, so Scarlett was delighted when Puppy Raiser Jan Merrett gave her a photo album of Max as a young puppy. Scarlett, from Ashford in Kent, raised the money by organising events like opening her family garden to visitors, and she even enlisted support from local businesses. Scarlett chose the name Max in memory of a much-loved family friend's dog, and has since raised another £5,000 to name a puppy Sophie in memory of her cousin. Scarlett's new target is another £5,000 to name a guide dog puppy Moxy, after her family's cat who passed away aged 16.



Scarlett and puppy Max

An annual golf day at Drumoig Golf Hotel in St Andrews, Scotland, in late August raised more than £17,000. The event, in its tenth year, was organised by local Puppy Raiser Danny Rooney. Danny said: "It was a great team effort. We have so many people, local businesses and golf clubs to thank, especially those who made us so welcome. Nearly 150 golfers took part, travelling from as far as

London, Belfast and Dublin. We also had 18 fantastic volunteers, including two guide dog owners, who made sure all the golfers were looked after. We had a visit from six-month-old guide dog puppy Drumoig, whom we raised the funds to name from our last golf day. It was great for the golfers to see her on her journey to becoming a fully qualified guide dog." Danny's golf day returns in August next year.

Share the fun

Would you like to have your fundraising fun recognised in these pages? We'd love to hear about how you've raised money for Guide Dogs. Send details to forward@guidedogs.org.uk or by post to Forward magazine, Guide Dogs, Hillfields, Reading Road, Burghfield Common, RG7 3YG. Don't forget to include a high-res photo!

Guide dog puppies and celebrities give our 90th anniversary Chelsea garden some flower power!

The jewel in the crown of our 90th anniversary celebrations was our very first garden at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show. The artisan garden turned heads (and hearts) – attracting celebrities aplenty, thousands of visitors and even winning a silver medal.

As the show opened its doors, the garden was visited by two VIPs – our 90th anniversary guide dog puppy, Flash, and guide dog puppy Chelsea, who was named after the event. Both met the world's media and our celebrity supporters, plus famous faces including Monty Don, Fiona Bruce, Alan Titchmarsh, Nick Grimshaw, Dame Maggie Smith and Dame Judi Dench all enjoyed some guide dog puppy cuddles.

There was plenty of media exposure of the garden, too. From the BBC's daily live coverage, to the broadcaster's round-up programmes in the evening, the garden seemed to be on air for much of the show's week-long duration. Weather presenter Carol Kirkwood also learned just how strong a guide dog puppy can be when Flash pulled her over live on BBC Breakfast!

Designed by Chelsea gold medal and People's Choice Award winners, Adam Woolcott and Jonathan Smith, the garden explored the charity's 1930s origins when the very first guide dog owners – four veterans blinded in the First World War – were matched with their dogs. This conceptual sensory garden illustrated a journey from loneliness and despair into a world of enrichment, acceptance and joy.

In one corner, a rusted barbed wire sculpture of a man sat alone in a stone hollow, representing fear and isolation. The planting surrounding the figure – which was wearing a WW1 tin hat with a gas mask case at his side – was deliberately dark. A second metal sculpture of a man with a guide dog appeared a few metres away at the top of the garden's sloping path, standing upright, confident and full of hope. Nearby was a signpost pointing to a better future, reading 'Living the life I choose'.

A 1930s bench was placed in the centre of the garden, where guests could sit to enjoy the bright, colourful flowers (sight), fragrant blooms and herbs (smell), fruit trees (taste), tactile wild grasses (touch) and the babbling stream (sound) to engage and stimulate the senses.

Jonathan said: "We wanted this garden to be not only nostalgic, but also to have a real emotional feel about it, to give people an idea of how important guide dog partnerships are."

Adam added: "This was our favourite garden of all that we've ever designed! It made such a difference and we have learnt so much from some truly inspiring people. It was an emotional journey that often had us in tears, hearing people's stories of overcoming isolation and gaining independence with their guide dog at their side. We're proud to be associated with such an amazing charity!"





Wire sculpture of a man, full of hope with his guide dog



Garden designers Jonathan Smith and Adam Woolcott



Fiona Bruce



Barbed wire sculpture of a man



Monty Don



Dame Maggie Smith



Flash



Alan Titchmarsh



Sophie Raworth and Carol Kirkwood



Tom Allen



Dame Judi Dench



Path through the garden

Introducing Guide Dogs' Academy

Academy is our new way of recruiting and developing Guide Dog Mobility Specialists and Trainers to help reach our goal of 1,000 new guide dog partnerships a year.



Demand for guide dogs is only set to grow in the future and this means we'll need a bigger workforce to keep pace with training our dogs, matching the right dog with the right person, and supporting new and existing partnerships.

With most of our dog-related roles distinct to us, Academy is our answer to this challenge and is revolutionising how we recruit, train and retain Guide Dog Mobility Specialists (GDMSs) and Guide Dog Trainers (GDTs) so we're well-placed to help the increasing number of people with sight loss.

Julian Harris, Project Academy Resourcing Lead, said: "This is a big shift in our approach to recruitment. We've been really proactive, focusing on finding people with the skills and behaviours we need, rather than previous experience of dog training. We know we can train people to be great dog trainers. Through the Academy we will ensure that our people also have the right skills to meet the needs of our clients and so increase the support we're able to provide.

"Most importantly, they need the right mindset, with the capacity to learn and develop. We've also provided more information up front, so that people have a really clear idea of what the job involves before applying and can decide

whether it's right for them. That means we're getting people with the right skills and a passion to be part of what we do, which ultimately increases the number of vision-impaired people we can reach through our work."

We will be taking on and training 200 new GDMS and GDT staff over the next five years, and broadening our approach to recruiting talented and diverse people with relevant life and work experience. We've always looked for people who have a natural affinity with dogs, and that hasn't changed, but we have learned that experience of working with any animal is beneficial, along with a mindset of teaching, coaching and helping others reach their potential – whether that's the dogs themselves, our colleagues, or our guide dog owners. If our learners can bring those skills, our expert Technical Learning Specialists (TLSs) can teach them the rest.

Emma Mellor, a Technical Learning Specialist based in Shrewsbury, said: "I was a Guide Dog Mobility Specialist before and always loved the tutoring part of my role. Now I'll be dedicated to coaching three new recruits, working with four dogs, throughout their learning journey.

"I think learners will really benefit from the peer support of learning together and having

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I think learners will really benefit from the peer support of learning together and having a consistent and structured programme.

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a consistent and structured programme. It's a great way to learn and will help us train our quality staff more quickly."

To help find the GDMSs and GDTs of the future, we partnered with recruiter Charity People to develop a website to give people in-depth information and insights up front, including a comprehensive candidate pack, and videos getting behind the scenes of these iconic and life-changing roles. The response so far has been incredible with 1,000 applications to date.

Our first intake of learners will start over the next few months at our regional centres across the UK. They'll be embedded within our delivery teams but working through the Academy framework, so they are alongside their colleagues from the outset. They will be trained to the highest international standards and put through a new competency-based training programme which combines practical learning, digital content, workshops and observations plus peer, group and self-directed learning. At the end of their formal training, new staff will be ready and confident to move across to delivery teams, continuing their development and gaining experience in the field.

Our technical staff have worked relentlessly over the last 18 months to deliver services in

really difficult circumstances. The need for our Academy was identified well before the coronavirus pandemic struck – and these creative solutions are building on the planning and work of many years – but by providing such a boost to our GDMS and GDT workforce, it will be key to us matching as many partnerships as possible in the future.

What do these roles involve?

Guide Dog Trainers (GDTs) train our guide dogs after they leave their Puppy Raiser, teaching them the skills and behaviours they need to support a person with sight loss. For example, how to navigate public transport, locate certain objects and find a bench in a park.

Guide Dog Mobility Specialists (GDMSs) work with both people and guide dogs, providing specialist advice and ongoing support for new and existing partnerships. This might involve coaching a new partner before they get their guide dog to matching suitable guide dogs and helping with any problems.

What's in a name?

Veteran Craig Lundberg knows the importance of having the right name – something with meaning behind it. The father-of-three was so moved by how much his first guide dog, Hugo, helped him rebuild his life after he lost his sight in horrific circumstances that he called his first son Ben Hugo. Craig now has his second guide dog, Comet, who was named through Guide Dogs' Name a Puppy scheme.

Craig was on his second tour of duty in Iraq with the 2nd Battalion Duke of Lancashire Regiment in March 2007 when he was hit by two rocket-propelled grenades. The former Lance Corporal had to be carried to a helicopter by a fellow soldier, flown back to Basra and placed in an induced coma. It was touch and go whether he would survive.

After a 12-hour operation to remove shrapnel, Craig woke up in a German hospital, where he was told that his sight was gone. He was transferred back to the UK and once discharged, had to start rebuilding his life.

Craig said: "My Army career was over and I was only 22. I didn't want to be vulnerable. I was determined to still make something of my life even though I couldn't see."

Craig threw himself into sport, completing the London Marathon in 2008 and playing blind football for England. Travelling from his home in Liverpool to Hereford twice a week for training prompted him to apply for a guide dog, and Craig qualified with black Labrador cross Hugo in March 2009.

Craig said: "Hugo just made travelling around so much easier. I'd grown up with dogs and liked them but having a guide dog just felt like a real safety net, I was never lost any more."

Craig has also turned his professional life around, investing his compensation money into property and learning how to refurbish houses. He now owns an estate agency franchise, managing more than 150 properties.

After Hugo retired, Craig qualified with black Labrador Comet in 2019. Comet adores Craig's children just as Hugo did, and allows Craig to get to work, do the school run, or be anywhere he needs to be without relying on others.



Find out more

To find out more about naming a guide dog puppy, visit [guidedogs.org.uk/nameapuppy](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/nameapuppy) or call 0800 953 0113.



Celebrate the memory of a loved one by dedicating a star this Christmas

As Christmas fast approaches we would like to send you our best wishes and hopes for a Christmas where you can enjoy the festivities and spend much-needed time with family and all the special people in your life.

Christmas can also be a time when our thoughts turn to those who are no longer with us. It can be especially poignant to share those memories and honour what was important to our loved ones at this time of year.

That's why every Christmas, at Guide Dogs, we run a Guiding Stars campaign where you can dedicate a star to commemorate someone special and take comfort in knowing this memory has contributed to our work helping people with sight loss to live the lives they choose.

This year, our Guiding Stars pack includes two stars – one to keep and one to either post back to Guide Dogs to be displayed at one of our offices, or you could add an image of the star and your message to our online dedication page at guidedogs.org.uk/guidingstars.

This can be a wonderful way to remember a beloved person, pet or guide dog at this special time of year. Last year, we received more than 3,000 beautiful Guiding Stars and thanks to the kind donations included with them, were able to name a guide dog puppy who will one day be a future 'Guiding Star' to someone with sight loss, helping them live their life to the full.

To find out more, call 0800 953 0113 or visit guidedogs.org.uk/guidingstars.



A day in the life of...

Natalie Glew, Canine Assisted Partnership Specialist

Support dog expert Natalie Glew joined Guide Dogs in 2019 and finds families in the Midlands their perfect four-legged friend, whether that's a buddy dog for a child with sight loss or a companion dog for an adult who has sighted support at home.

As one of five Canine Assisted Partnership (CAP) Specialists across the UK, Natalie helps family members through every step of the process, from discussing the initial application and if a buddy or companion dog is the best option, through to ongoing aftercare and an annual check-in once the dog is living with the family.

Natalie said: "I've always been fascinated by the dog and human bond and studied animal behaviour at university before working as a dog trainer and behaviour consultant at Blue Cross and Dogs Trust.

"Now I'm at Guide Dogs, I spend a long time talking to people about their specific needs and then look at the dogs available nationally to find the best match. We take many considerations into account such as how busy the household is, the child's age, any complex needs and even what colour dog they will be able to see most easily.

"Sometimes the dog just coming into the family is enough, while others are open to taking on a dog with a particular behavioural quirk or health condition.

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I love seeing what a huge difference the right dog placed with the right family can make to people's lives.

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"We support people with that through tailored training and explain all about how to care for their dog in our virtual group sessions.

"Once a suitable match has been made, it's very rewarding to watch the special relationship that families develop with their dog. A child might be timid to begin with, for example, but they grow to love their buddy dog, gain confidence and really come out of their shell.

"One little boy didn't go outdoors much but I showed the family how to teach the dog fetch. They've now formed a fantastic friendship and he enjoys getting out into the garden to throw the ball, which is good for his motor neurone skills. Another of our buddy dogs has been taught how to apply deep pressure using his chin to help bring a child with autism out of meltdowns.

"Adults most value the companionship of a dog but there are lots of other benefits. One former guide dog owner, who missed having a dog but didn't think they could cope with a puppy, found an older, well-trained companion dog slotted right into their lifestyle, helping them exercise more, meet new people on walks and feel less isolated.

"It's such a fascinating area – I regularly take part in seminars and webinars on animal behaviour and animal assisted therapy to stay up-to-date with all the latest developments, and I love seeing what a huge difference the right dog placed with the right family can make to people's lives."

“

I've always been fascinated by the dog and human bond and studied animal behaviour at university before working as a dog trainer and behaviour consultant at Blue Cross and Dogs Trust.

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Improving how we handle your data to give you a better experience of Guide Dogs

Guide Dogs has started a project which will be key to improving the experience of every service user, volunteer and supporter in the coming years.

The aim of the project is to have a single source of data, rather than different databases for different groups. This means we can be more efficient and effective with our donors' money, our volunteers' time and efforts, and we can support people with sight loss in new ways. It will also help us continue to manage data in line with the latest regulations.

Called 'Project One', this vital work will be taking place behind the scenes over the coming years, so while you may not see an immediate change, in the longer term you should have a better experience of how your data is handled as part of the Guide Dogs family.

Guide Dogs' Chief Information Officer Gerard McGovern said: "We're investing in the way we manage our data because it has a huge impact on everything we do at Guide Dogs.

"Our core system is based on 20-year-old technology and wasn't designed with the current digital world in mind.

"We realise this is not a small undertaking in terms of resources, but we firmly believe the benefit will enable us to support more people.

"This investment is long overdue, and we look forward to capitalising on the many benefits to do more to support people with sight loss."

90 years and counting

Two innovative women, four incredible dogs and a lock-up garage in Merseyside: humble beginnings for an incredible charity!

It was 1931 when Muriel Crooke and Rosamund Bond started training dogs to support servicemen who had lost their sight due to mustard gas attacks in the First World War. Inspired by projects in America, Germany and Switzerland, these remarkable women organised the training from a humble lock-up garage in Wallasey, Merseyside. Back then, the idea was pretty radical, but the impact was immediate.

Allen Caldwell was partnered with a dog called Flash, GW Lamb with Meta, Musgrave Frankland with Judy and Tomos ap Rhys was matched with Folly. All four dogs were German shepherds, as Muriel and Rosamund loved the breed. In October 1931, these first four guide dog partnerships qualified together. Within six months of meeting their new guide dogs, all four men reported finding a freedom and independence they had not known since before the war. Three years later, the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association was formed and we've gone from strength to strength since.

Thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers and donors over the years, we've partnered more than 36,000 people with a guide dog and transformed the lives of thousands more through our other services.



Other milestones in our 90 years of history:

1933

Our first permanent Guide Dog Trainer, Captain Nikolai Liakhoff, started work (pictured above left).

1940

Edmondscote Manor in Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, became our first permanent training centre.

1943

The very first edition of Forward magazine was published with Capt Liakhoff as editor.

1956

We began recruiting volunteer Puppy Walkers, and last year we re-named the role Puppy Raiser.

1960

Capt Liakhoff started our world-class breeding programme.

1965

Our partnership with the children's television show Blue Peter began with the introduction of guide dog in training, Honey.

1965

The opening of our Forfar Training School in Scotland by our then Patron, Princess Alexandra.

1970s

The opening of Tollgate House in Leamington.

1984

Centres in Belfast and Cardiff opened.

1986

Redbridge training school opened.

1990s

We started awarding ophthalmic research grants, investing in eye health and new technology projects.

1931 2021

Guide Dogs
90 Years



1991

Hillfields, near Reading in Berkshire, became our central office.

1996

We began offering habilitation services.

2011

Our National Breeding Centre (now known as the National Centre) opened near Leamington.

2013

Our My Sighted Guide service launches.

2017

Blind Children UK and Guide Dogs became one charity, making us the UK's largest provider of services for children with sight loss.

2019

We launched our By My Side strategy to see us to 2023 and beyond!

A tribute to Captain Nikolai Liakhoff – Guide Dogs' very first permanent Guide Dog Trainer

It's no exaggeration to say that Captain Nikolai Liakhoff's passion and determination to make a success of the UK's guide dog training programme was so strong that it's reached down through three generations of his family.

Born in April 1897 in Russia, he served in the military before becoming an instructor for L'Oeil qui Voit (The Seeing Eye) in Switzerland in 1931. When the school moved to America in 1933, he joined Muriel Crooke and Rosamund Bond in England.

Forward spoke to Capt Liakhoff's granddaughter, Olga Bibikoff, who said: "British guide dog training started with a lot of difficulty. People didn't have much knowledge of dogs in those days as they didn't have so many domesticated pets. Suddenly, blind people were being asked to put their trust in a dog. Everyone was wondering 'how can this work?'."

"Captain Liakhoff knew that if they didn't get the trust of the public and of blind people in those first few crucial years, it never would have taken off."

Not content with overseeing solely guide dog training, Capt Liakhoff started our breeding programme, and he was also the first editor of Forward magazine. Olga added: "He was a Fellow of the Royal Zoological Society, and he was known world-wide



Above: Olga Bibikoff (L) and her daughter Marianna; inset Capt Liakhoff with daughter Catherine

for his animal psychology work." Such was his dedication, he was awarded an MBE in 1953 for his services to Guide Dogs.

Capt Liakhoff's two daughters, Tatiana and Catherine, both grew up to play important roles within Guide Dogs. Olga's mother, Catherine, and father Michael Bibikoff were guide dog trainers, and Michael was in charge of Leamington in the 1950s.

Olga grew up surrounded by everything Guide Dogs and when her mother passed away, Olga decided to "take the reins to be part of Guide Dogs in my own way". She preserves a vast collection of her grandfather's correspondence, notes, articles and photographs from Guide Dogs' past at her home in Oxfordshire.

Olga's daughter, Marianna, has clearly been bitten by the Guide Dogs bug – she chose to raise money for Guide Dogs when she ran the London Marathon in October.

Congratulations to our new partnerships

New partnerships are listed by community team.
Each listing details owner, guide dog, town, breed,
Puppy Raiser, Breeding Dog Holder and Fosterer.
Warm congratulations to all our new qualifiers.

Belfast

Margaret Bell & Biscuit from Dundonald LxGR.
Moirra McCully from Airdrie, Mark Berman from Glasgow *
Christina Kearney from Shrewsbury. Mrs Laura Stewart from Dundee.
Jim Cosgrove & Cormack from Newtownards LxGR.
Joyce Wallace from Glenrothes * Deborah Carruthers from Lichfield.
Mrs Phillippa McCreight from Holywood.
Stacey Mackey & Poppy from Ballynure GRxGR.
Ricky Flanagan from Belfast * Michael Jones from Leicester. Mrs Louise Neill from Alcester.
Sean McMurtry & Zayn from Newtownabbey. GRxGSD Orrlene McMillen from Bangor * Mrs Catherine Egan from Worcester. Mr Richard Hambleton from Carrickfergus.

Birmingham

John Barron & Lottie from Milton Keynes LxGR. Hanli De La Porte from Abingdon * Mrs Tricia Collier from Warwick. Mr Gregory Hall from Southam.

Linda Bozward & Hope from Worcester L.
Helen Seaman from Appleby Magna * Beryl Wyrko from Leicester.
Ms Wendy Medlicott from Coventry.
Linda Bragg & Wendy from Belper GRxGR.
Gemma Wilks from Alcester * Amanda Adkins from Buckingham. Mr Paul Black from Solihull.
Mrs Pauline Williams from Warwick.
Kelvin Duncan & Spencer from Bournville GR *
Mrs Barbara Stone from Kenilworth. Mrs Felicity Stratton from Warwick.
Lucy Edwards & Molly from Milton Keynes GRxGR. Helen Grohmann from Bournemouth, Keri-Ann Adams from Southampton * Lisa Partridge-Davis from Evesham. Mr & Mrs Greg & Lee Butler from Banbury. Miss Sarah Poskitt from Warwick.
Marc Hands & Fergie from Cheltenham GRxGR. Suzanna Hitchcock from Northampton, Linda Whitwell from Northampton * Chris Cavanagh from Cheltenham.

Derrick Hazlehurst & Phebe from Malvern L.
Carole Prior from Rugby * Lucy Anne Chandler from Gloucester.

Lynn Hewitt & Kate from Nottingham GRxL. David Knight from Llanelli *
Mrs Geraldine Barrott from Leamington Spa.

Cherie Hodgson & Lenny from Hereford L. Sheila Ross from Bristol *
Margaret Lyson-Marshall from Southam. Mr Adam Grinsell from Halesowen.

Trudy Hopkins & Una from Redditch GRxL. Joe Dostal from Dartmouth *
Sue Davy from Oldbury. Mr Michael Rudge from Solihull. Mrs Hannah Knowles from Bromsgrove.

Michael Kelly & Nicky from Nailsworth GRxGSD. Debra Coleman from Gloucester * Joe Bourne from Nuneaton.

Christopher Lane & Spencer from Birmingham L. Elizabeth Bullimore from Pontypool *
Ann Buxton from Leicester. Mrs Kim Roberts from Stratford-upon-Avon. Miss Samantha Harding from Birmingham.

Lauren Monument & Flo from Gloucester GRxL. Margaret Rose from Wantage * Katie Webb from Redditch. Princess Marinda Sands from Brierley Hill.

Sarah Palmer & Nate from Tewkesbury GRxGSD. Paula Carr from Dursley * Lorna Morgan from Birmingham. Mrs Jo Bartley from Rugby.

Barry Steele & George from Sutton Coldfield GRxGR * Howard Dorrell from Worcester. Mr Gerard Belfield from Birmingham.

Cardiff

Elise Clement & Barney from Port Talbot GR. Pete Gilbert from Berkeley * Julian Graeme Paynton from Banbury. Mr Michael Rudge from Solihull. Mr Neil Parke from Cardiff.

Alan Hughes & Jasper from Swansea GR. Robert Cassidy from Torquay * Susan Griffiths from Derby. Mr & Mrs Wetherell from Birmingham. Mrs Sue Phillips from Cardiff.

Daniel Owens & Robbie from Mochdre LxGR Helen Lewis from Bristol * Mrs Tricia Collier from Warwick.



Philippa Scholes & Dawn from Porth L. Alan Jones from Ammanford * Martin & Paula Hendrick from Telford. Miss Amanda Hancocks from Daventry.

Coventry

Judith Bowers & Sherlock from Northampton GR. Jo Dudley from Wellesbourne * Sheila Northover from Derby. Mr & Mrs Greg & Lee Butler from Banbury.

Tony Ellis & Fred from Northampton GRxGSD. Paula Carr from Dursley * Helen Sergison from Dudley. Mrs Laura Peake from Leamington Spa.

Lydia Hayden & Rotary from Birmingham GR. Judith Cartwright from Brixham * Lynne De Melo from Melton Mowbray. Mr Mark Edwards from Warwick. Mrs Florence Ravenhall from Rugby.

Brian Kerrigan & Magic from Coventry L. Pat Hill from Leicester. Christine Willson from Nuneaton * Ruth Roache from Solihull. Mr Matt Jones from Warwick.

Michael Murch & Flick from Leicester GRxGSD. Anna Adams from Daventry * Helen Sergison from Dudley. Lynn & David Waters & Allardyce from Leamington Spa.

Violet Newbold & Pippin from Wellingborough LxGR. Rachel Tobin from Malvern * Helen Elbourne. Mrs Sheila Hemming from Evesham. Mr Peter McCrone from Leamington Spa.

Jonathan Spencer & Bexley from Rutland GR. Helen Roberts from Kenilworth * Lynne De Melo from Melton Mowbray. Mr Mark Edwards from Warwick. Ms Hannah Ratcliffe from Warwick.

Stephen Wykes & Jet from Northampton LxGR. Jillian Boyes from Northampton * Lisa Smith from Warwick. Mrs Kim Roberts from Stratford-upon-Avon. Miss Lynn Docherty from Rugby.

Edinburgh

Colin Clarke & Hale from Bathgate STPxL. Alan Kerr from Tillicoultry * Mary Smith from Moreton-in-Marsh 1. Mrs Linda Landsberg from Milton Keynes 2. Mrs Nikki Henry from Carnoustie

Laura Rose Cluxton & Sadie from Alloa L. Margaret Blackhall from Perth * Sarah Allen from Nottingham. Miss Clare Powell from Evesham. Miss Elaine Thomson from Arbroath.

Fiona Garner & Grace from Dunipace GRxL. Elizabeth Wyroslawski from Bathgate * Margaret Langford from Warwick. Mr Colin Murray from Forfar.

Kay Hamilton & Ettie from Aberdeen GRxL. Alan Strange from Edinburgh * Miss Adelle McGregor from Dundee.

Gillian Henderson & Eira from Tranent L. Alicia Huntley from Newtownards * Michael Drabble-Jones from Henley-in-Arden. Mr Raymond Carruth from Prestwick. Mrs Kerry Walker from Montrose.

John Howie & Jack from Dalkeith GRxL. Nicola Seguin from Aberdeen * Margaret Reynolds from Rugby.

Gordon Love & Denis from Larbert GRxGR. Nancy Bumpass from Newport-on-Tay * Elizabeth Evans from Droitwich. Mrs Louise Neill from Alcester. Mr Ryan Milne from Forfar.

John Alistair Lyle & Diesel from Crieff GR. Hilary McDowell from Edinburgh * Dawn Parsons from Wallingford. Mr Paul Black from Solihull. Ms Jacqueline Gould from Forfar.

Robert James McNab & Denzel from Dundee GRxL. Rebecca Deal from Falkirk. Judith Smith from Stirling * Claire Stalder from Bicester. Mr & Mrs Wetherell from Birmingham. Miss Alison Glen from Forfar.

Allan Milne & Maddie from Forfar L. Susan Deacon from Dunfermline * Beryl Wyrko from Leicester. Ms Wendy Medicott from Coventry. Mrs Victoria Robb from Forfar.

Amanda Mulvanny & Debbie from Edinburgh GRxGR. Anne Hutton from Cupar * Elizabeth Evans from Droitwich. Mrs Louise Neill from Alcester. Miss Gayle Jackson from Forfar.

Jessie Quin & Hudson from Edinburgh GR. Ruth Coker from Dulnain Bridge * Alison Nuttall from Redditch. Mr Mark Edwards from Warwick. Miss Emma Cuthill from Montrose.

New partnerships

Gwen Stein & Bella from Innerleithen GRxGR. Kathryn Coad from Edinburgh * Courtney Adam from Southam. Miss Jennifer Emslie from Edinburgh. Miss Karen Dear from Forfar.

Binnie Taylor & Amber from Montrose LxGR. Gillian McCracken from Kilmarnock * Donna Isard from Coventry. Mrs Vicky Chapman from Arbroath.

Reise Watson & Duke from St Andrews GRxGSD. Anne Clark from Tayport * Gloria Jayne Walton from Birmingham. Mr Christopher Osborne from Forfar.

Roberta King Nicol White & Zaza from Arbroath LxGR. Cheryle Casher from Stonehaven * Tina Warner from Warwick. Mr & Mrs Kieran & Nicola Ingham-Burroughes from Leamington Spa. Mrs Lisa McDonald from Forfar.

Exeter

Hoby Allen & Lady from Praze GR. Angela Kendall from Birmingham * Susan Griffiths from Derby. Mr & Mrs Wetherell from Birmingham. Miss Heather Gelder from Rugby.

Esther Bradford & Mia from Exeter LxGR. Josephine Daykin from Taunton * Tammi Curran from Rugby. Mrs Jane Hargrave from Daventry.

Robin Carr & Trish from Helston L. Lindsey Watts from Coventry * Jane Adams from Rugby. Mrs Lana Taylor from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mrs Sylvia Romer from Leamington Spa.

Tracy Chapman & Lindsay from Delabole LxGR. Rob Bradshaw from South Petherton * Julie Andrews from Tamworth. Ms Liza Page from Exeter.

Susan Clark & Kelly from Bristol GRxL. Mel & Simon Green from Chippenham, Linda Dytham from Calne * Alaine Powell from Birmingham. Miss Charlotte Stephens from Bristol.

Colin Dando & Dean from Bristol GRxGR. Heidi Earle from Letchworth Garden City * Elizabeth Evans from Droitwich. Mrs Louise Neill from Alcester. Mr Andrew Christopher from Bristol.

Christine Dean & Aston from Wincanton L. Trevor Buckle from Lichfield * Miss Nichola Dowbiggin from Warwick.

Stephen Hartley & Kingsley from Tavistock GR. Penny Hall from Bideford * Sue Wilkins from Rugby. Mrs Catherine Egan from Worcester.

Justin Homewood & Oasis from Bristol GRxL. Rosy Whitwell from Kidlington * James Ward from Leamington Spa. Mr Mark Edwards from Warwick.

Glenn Johns & Patsy from Plymouth L. Joanne Naughton from Swansea, Patrick Hartery from Barry * Donna Hunt from Lutterworth. Mrs Sally Thomas from Worcester. Ms Wendy Finch from Exeter.

Rosie Keast & Cooper from Plymouth L. Sue Taylor from Plymouth, Susan Underwood from Plymouth * Margaret Lyson-Marshall from Southam. Mrs Ann Taylor from Teignmouth.

Theresa Lawson & Ena from Tavistock L. Richard Browning from Cowbridge * Lucy Anne Chandler from Gloucester.

Ryan Moreland & Jamie from Llanishen GR. Anne Cole from Swindon * Julian Graeme Paynton from Banbury. Mr Michael Rudge from Solihull. Miss Hannah-Jayne Smith from Bristol.

Joanne Mountstevens & Jean from Minehead GR. Malcolm Tyler from Beaminster * Ian Plenderleith from Solihull. Mr Michael Rudge from Solihull. Ms Paula Mills from Exeter.

Eric Shackelford & Stella from Bridgwater GRxL. Sarah Veasey from Leicester * Layla Champion from Solihull. Florence Ravenhall from Rugby.

Neil Stewart & Percy from Torpoint L. Jean White from Yelverton * Angela Bass from Birmingham. Mr Alan Lowe from Coventry.

Darren Walker & Fred from Exeter L * Mr Guy Mitchell from Exeter.

Gregory Whitford & Jiver from Torquay GRxL. Gregory Coomber from Crewkerne * Sue Padget from Kettering.

Carole Woodman & Rita from Truro GRxL. Nicky Maisey from Cheltenham * Katie Webb from Redditch.

Glasgow

Cheryl Bradshaw & Nellie from Glasgow GRxL. Kara Wilson from Rosyth * Mr Michael Rudge from Solihull. Mr Archie Kennedy from Stonehaven. Mrs Violet Murray from Motherwell.

William Cherrie & Duncan from Airdrie GRxL. Moira Cocker from Aboyne * Margaret Langford from Warwick. Mr Andrew Ward from Hamilton.

Olivia Gibson & Hector from Grangemouth GRxGR. Craig Herbert from Glasgow * Howard Dorrell from Worcester. Mr Thomas Gordon from Larkhall.

Lynn Gordon & Jumble from Bellshill GRxL. Nimmi Whitelaw from Glasgow * Jo Bater from

Derby. Mrs Carol-Anne Kennedy from Hamilton.

Graham Gunning & Peggy from Glasgow L. Norman Reidie from Edinburgh * Angela Bass from Birmingham. Mr Alan Lowe from Coventry.

Marjory Hughes & Charlie from Forfar GR. Sheila Marshall from Kinross. * Gillian Seager from Chipping Campden. Mr Paul Black from Solihull. Ms Deborah McCullam from Brechin.

Caron Jones & Qantas from Wick LxGR. Lesley Murray from Kirkcaldy * Lucy Cooper from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mrs Fiona Duncan from Dundee.

Isabelle McGrath & Yang from Glasgow GRxL. Ross McLearnie from Glasgow * Jessica Macgregor from Banbury. Mr Michael Rudge from Solihull. Mrs Carey Pegrum from Hamilton.

Jacqueline Valente & Paddy from Glasgow GR. Jade Angus from Carnoustie * Andrea Kane from Leamington Spa. Mrs Cherie Butler from Forfar.

Jennifer Worrall & Snowball from Bellshill GRxL. Alex Kemp from Livingston * Mrs Moyra Gibb from Larkhall.

Hull

Graham Philip Brown & Frank from Hull GRxL. Neil Hodgson from North Shields, Thelma Brown from Hexham * Edwina Griffin from Worcester. Miss Emma Seed from Leeds. Miss Jayne Dale from Beverley.

Laura Hudson & Urwin from Beverley LxGR. Vee Freir from Edinburgh * Jane Roberts from Wellesbourne. Miss Sarah Sheasby from Bromsgrove. Miss Claire Lamb from Beverley.

Tom Langan & Yana from Kirkella GRxL. Anita Cull-Roy from Wirral * Jessica Macgregor from Banbury. Mr Michael Rudge from Solihull. Miss Joanne Mallett from St. Helens.

David Morton & Ziggy from York GR. Linda Patricia Myatt from Bradford * Alison Nuttall from Redditch. Mr Mark Edwards from Warwick. Mr Roddy Horton from Beverley.

Patricia Welton & Nellie from Whitby GRxL * Caroline Butler from Evesham. Mr Andy McDonald from Liverpool. Dr Kamlesh Prajapati from Beverley.

Gerry Woolfenden & Phillip from Hornsea LxGR. Lynne Sedgewick from Derby * Jane Roberts from Wellesbourne. Miss Sarah Sheasby from Bromsgrove. Mr John Gregory from Manchester.

Leeds

Jonathan Bennett & Angus from Barnsley GRxL Pam Purdue from Nottingham * Mr Adrian Claxton from Warwick. Mr & Mrs Catherine & John Wilkinson from Manchester. Mr Marcelo Miranda from Leeds. Dr Wendy Baird from Sheffield.

Linda Hanson & Whitney from Bradford LxGR. Lisa Dunn from Leeds.

Andrew Holmes & Utah from Barnsley LxGR. Malcolm Sproul from Glasgow * Jane Roberts from Wellesbourne. Miss Sarah Sheasby from Bromsgrove. Mrs Claire Maher from Manchester. Mrs Emma Walsh from Leigh. Ms Joan Windle from Sheffield.

Jill Kessell & Poppy from Northallerton L. Christopher Heap from Bedale * Catherine Tee-Barrowclough from Northampton. Miss Jade Fawcett from Knutsford. Mrs Amy Fletcher from Bolton. Mr James Spillings from Ripon.

Beverly Vaughan & Mabel from Doncaster LXSTP. Vivien Baker from Chelmsford * Mr Paul Sharp from Coventry. Mr Andy Coote from Buckhurst Hill.

Liverpool

Andrew Connah & Jay from Chester GRxL. Lesley Batchelor from Macclesfield * Tina Williams from Southampton. Mr Paul Crowe from Kenilworth. Miss Christine Davies from Liverpool.

Jamie Branford & Rebel from Liverpool GRxL. Jane Tucker from Sandbach * Miss Christine Davies from Liverpool.

Mark William Evans & Clara from Winsford GRxGR. Enid Coomber from Crewe, Glynis Telford from Northwich * Lindy Howlett from Bromyard. Mrs Louise Millard from Lutterworth. Mr Piers Callan from Wirral.

Anna Manning & Jane from Chester LxL. Sue Phillips from Macclesfield * Sue Lancaster from Bedford. Mr Geoff Whiteman from Coalville. Ms Amanda Yeo from Manchester.

Stephen Porter & Janet from Liverpool LxGR. Alison Syner from Macclesfield * Christina Kearney from Shrewsbury. Miss Sophie Fielding from Liverpool.

Monica Price & Teri from Wallasey GRxGR. John Sullivan from Oldbury * Suzanne Polton from Rugby. Mrs Andrea Gill from Northampton. Miss Rachael Abraham-Roth from Wigan. Miss Rebecca Billinge from Manchester.

Lynette Proctor & Dubs from Wirral LxGR. Suzannah Freeman from Liverpool * Rebecca Jackson from Kidderminster. Mrs Jennifer Hindle from Leigh.

Isabella Theophanous & Judy from Liverpool GRxL. Brenda Jackson from Stockport * Steve Giles from Leicester. Michelle Grogan from Manchester. Mrs Theresa Shenton from Wigan.

Sangeeta Uppaladinni & Wendy from Alsager GRxL. June Collins from Northwich * Lyn Bushell from Daventry. Miss Rachel Bristow from Liverpool.

London

Liam Archer & Usher from London LxGR. Stephen Lee from Eastbourne * Jane Roberts from Wellesbourne. Miss Sarah Sheasby from Bromsgrove. Mr Roy Burgess from Chingford. Miss Emerline Su from London.

Brian Clayton & Charlotte from New Malden GRxL. Gill & James Blatch from Huntingdon * Neil Smith from Northampton. Mr Adrian Claxton from Warwick.

Hannah Matin & Wendy from London LxGR * Miss Shelley McCluskey from Hook.

Emma Mitchell & Tigger from London GRxGR. Gail Saunders from Oxford * Chris Cavanagh from Cheltenham. Mrs Lara Smallshaw from Woodford Green. Mrs Sue Meadowcroft from London. Charmaine Morby & Dobby from London L. Annie Read from Swindon * Linda Atkins from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mrs Lin Lisle from Alcester.

John Osborne & Vixen from London GR. Fiona Jones from Sawbridgeworth * Helen Cookes from Nuneaton. Miss Fabia Howard-Smith from London. Mrs Liz Smithson from London.



New partnerships

Reshi Ramlakhan & Skye from London L. Glyn & Mark Adelaye/Skinner from Herts * Joy Davis from Leicester. Mr Justin Bentley from Banbury. Mr Brett McFadden from Barking.

Claire Randall & Dalton from Orpington L. Josefine Van Der Dussen from Woodman Lane * Mrs Nicky Langford from Woodford Green.

Julia Schofield & Humphrey from Twickenham LxGR. Linda Dytham from Calne * Ian Plenderleith from Solihull.

Anna Louise Smith & Gemma from London LxGR. Mavis Backhouse from Whitstable, Susan Piekos from Chatham * Fiona & Debbie Reedy & Baird from Evesham. Mrs Lynn Richards from Coventry. Mr Eugene Lynch from London.

Kathryn Stewart & Daisy from London L. Gina Cashmore from Sawbridgeworth, Robert, Sara & Christian Allmey & Lowe from Rickmansworth * Ms Kate Tolley from London. Miss Larry Whitbread from London.

Maidstone

Taz James Ahmad & Trine from Brighton GRxL. Diana Clarke from Newbury * Laura Sardelli from Northampton. Mr Michael Rudge from Solihull. Mrs Yasmin Dolin from London.

Marilyn Baker & Arlo from Tonbridge GRxGR. Janina Rooney from Brentwood * Lisa Partridge-Davis from Evesham. Mr & Mrs Greg & Lee Butler from Banbury. Mrs Alison Chattenton from Maidstone.

Andrew Best & Bear from Forest Row L. Philip Shorthouse from Rochester, Lynn Lumsden from Rochester * Jessica

Macgregor from Banbury. Mrs Heather Redman from Maidstone.

Rosemary Carter & Simba from Seaford GRxL. Sarah Bailey from Maidstone * Katie Webb from Redditch. Miss Sarah Bailey from Tonbridge. Mrs Jessica Massey from Maidstone.

Sarah Denham & Caddie from Northfleet LxGR. Elizabeth Endacott from Deal * Pamela Nash from Northampton. Mr Ian Crewe from Nuneaton. Mrs Trudy Cornford from Maidstone.

Linda Fitchett & Ralph from Gillingham L. Jodie Noakes from Watford * Margaret Lyson-Marshall from Southam. Mrs Claire Rotter from Maidstone.

Daniel Hajas & Anna from Hove GRxL. Margaret Broadstock from Hastings * Alaine Powell from Birmingham.

Christine Noble & Vikki from Folkestone LxGR. Patrick O'Callaghan from Chatham * Julie Andrews from Tamworth.

Graham Oulton & Teddy from Hove GR. John Hudd from Colchester * Sylvia Burgess from Buckingham.

Jackie Page & Babsy from Burgess Hill L. James O'Halloran from Chatham * Beryl Wyrko from Leicester. Ms Wendy Medlicott from Coventry. Mr Alfred Pickard from Maidstone.

Ian Pascoe & Gabriel from Hailsham GRxL. Helen Grover from Sittingbourne * Sue Padget from Kettering. Mr Simon Randall from Maidstone.

Paul Smith & Pasha from Maidstone GSD. Susan Langdon from Hartley * Alexandra Willetts from Worcester. Mr Simon Cope from Maidstone.

Manchester

Nicola Askew & Unity from Thornton-Cleveleys GRxL. Jackie Lancaster from Burnley * Natasha Aylott from Birmingham. Mrs Lynne Jones from Stratford-upon-Avon.

Stephen Banks & Bertie from Atherton GRxGR. Trevor Cowling from Yarm * Rachel Hardiman from Leamington Spa. Mrs Andrea Gill from Northampton. Mrs Shirley Jukes from Wigan.

Sarah Brandt & Pepsi from Altrincham LxL. Leslie Leach from St Helens * Sue Lancaster from Bedford. Mr Peter Meads from Warwick.

Dawn Marie Bridgehouse & Jade from Ashton-under-Lyne GRxL. Maureen Southern MBE from Gateshead.

Ashley Carruthers & Pilot from Workington GRxGSD. Susan Taylor from Wirral. * Fionne Jones from Milton Keynes. Mrs Emma Porter from Liverpool. Miss Gail Ferrier from Carlisle.

Christine Coucill & Cindy from Bolton GRxL. Maureen Evans from Warrington * Mr & Mrs Wetherell from Birmingham. Mr Gary Kelly from Bolton.

Kieran John Dean & Polo from Bolton GRxL. Pamela Reeve from Nantwich * Mrs Anna Trotman from Bolton.

Carol Gradwell & Wenna from Lytham St Annes LxGR * Elizabeth Cook from Warwick.

Pawel Trafas & Pepper from Carlisle GRxGR. Mary Cheadle from Stafford, Diane Dickinson from Preston * Howard Dorrell from Worcester.

Laura Whitaker & Jasmin from Stockport GRxL. Clair Regan from Manchester, Lynda Hamblet from Bolton * Natalie Durrant from Redditch.

Jean Young & Lawrence from Accrington GRxGR. Margaret Kenworthy from Holmfirth * Miss Nicola Ainsworth from Atherton.

Newcastle

Hasnat Ali Abbas & Sarah-Ann from Middlesbrough L. Barry Cornes from Hexham * Tim Hunt from Northampton. Mr Geoff Whiteman from Coalville. Mrs Laura Gallagher from Middlesbrough.

Craig Blackbird & Paige from Houghton-le-Spring LxL. Anita Blackburn from Consett * Sue Lancaster from Bedford. Mr Peter Meads from Warwick. Mrs Sarah McCarthy from Middlesbrough.



Jean Coates & Karlie from Kirkby Stephen GRxGSD * Robert & Joanne Chambers from Redditch. Mrs Catherine Egan from Worcester. Mr Darren Ainsley from Gateshead.

Darren Cook & Abby from Consett LxGR. Adrian Grieve from Hillsborough * Mr & Mrs Straker from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mr Alastair Holmes from Newcastle upon Tyne.

Julie De Paulle & Giles from Blyth GRxL. Gil Gray from Gladsmuir * Mrs Gillian Low from Forfar.

Tina Dodd & Orla from Scarborough GRxL. Hazel Norrie from St Andrews * Howard Dorrell from Worcester. Mr Paul Crowe from Kenilworth. Miss Danielle Causby from Manchester. Mrs Anne Jones from Sheffield.

Joanne Hewitson & Rosie from Hartlepool L. Alan Strange from Edinburgh * Philip Crowther from Evesham. Mrs Kim Roberts from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mrs Dorothy Robinson from Middlesbrough.

Linda Jobson & Ishka from Near Rothbury LxGR. Evonne Holder from Arbroath * Gill Moss from Banbury. Miss Amanda Hancocks from Daventry. Mrs Helen Redhead from Newcastle upon Tyne. Mr Mark Willis from Gateshead.

Sonya McGuire & Zola from Darlington GRxL. Jennifer Emslie from Edinburgh * Mrs Anne Watson from Kenilworth. Mrs Amandine Bernard from Arbroath. Mrs Jennifer Hinks from Redcar.

Pauline Morphet & Kaleigh from Ferryhill GRxGSD. Brenda Lackie from Perth * Robert & Joanne Chambers from Redditch. Mrs Catherine Egan from

Worcester. Miss Claire Kinnaird from Dundee.

Leslie Oliver & Illya from Sunderland LxGR. Linda Lane from Castle Douglas * Regina Cardo from Kingswinford. Miss Sarah Sheasby from Bromsgrove. Miss Alison Glen from Forfar. Mrs Helen Redhead from Newcastle upon Tyne.

David Pickering MBE & Zaffa from Middlesbrough GRxGSD. Sheila Dickson from Montrose, Jacqueline Hamilton from Montrose * Mrs Catherine Egan from Worcester. Miss Zoe Cartwright from Forfar.

Melissa Robson & Hawkins from Stockton-on-Tees GRxGR. Fiona McKervey from Stonehaven, David Kemp from Forfar * Mrs Barbara Stone from Kenilworth. Mrs Kim Fraser from Arbroath. Mr David Troup from Forfar. Mrs Sharon Warner-Reid from Sunderland.

Darren Tambin & Tait from Durham L. Pauline Martin from Perth, Kathleen Rae from Perth * Mrs Kim Roberts from Stratford-upon-Avon. Miss Fiona Brunton from Forfar. Mrs Jan Stephenson from Chester Le Street.

Lillian Turnbull & Shona from Haltwhistle GRxL. Pam Ferguson from Dundee * Steve Giles from Leicester. Miss Arlene Etchels from Forfar. Mrs Gill Crowe from Chester-le-Street.

Phillip Ward & Elton from Newcastle upon Tyne GRxL. Margaret Robertson from Edinburgh * Ms Carol Stewart from Dundee.

Paul Whiting & Rover from Hartlepool GRxGR. Shelagh Davidson from Burntisland * Howard Dorrell from Worcester.

Miss Linden Cartwright from Newcastle upon Tyne.

Gayle Williams & Reg from Hartlepool L. Sandra Buchan from Dundee * Philip Crowther from Evesham. Mrs Kim Roberts from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mr Gregor Murray from Dundee. Mr Stephen Bowser from Redcar.

Nottingham

Catherine Ball & Chandler from Lincoln L. Madge Nightingale from Birmingham * Jackie Elliott from Warwick. Miss Amanda Hancocks from Daventry. Mrs Jane Cornish from Warwick. Mr Brian Shucksmith from Lincoln.

Samantha Gunn & Val from Grimsby L * Phillippa Dobson from Solihull. Mr Alan Lowe from Coventry. Miss Fiona Roberts from Leamington Spa. Mrs Patricia Fullen from Lincoln.

Chris Handrick & Walker from Nottingham L. Helen Dagnall from Shrewsbury * Mrs Maria Harvey from Shipston-on-Stour.

Iris Peel & Ruby from Nottingham L * Mrs Maria Harvey from Shipston-on-Stour. Mrs Sue Rickaby from Nottingham. Mr Trevor Peel from Nottingham.

Lisa Robinson & Envii from Nottingham GRxL. Barbara Floyd from Newark * Mrs Alison Sheldon from Nottingham.

Christopher Spowage & Sheena from Sleaford GRxL. Angela Pettitt from Dursley * Neil Smith from Northampton. Mr Adrian Claxton from Warwick. Miss Maggie Wheatley from Leamington Spa. Mrs Helen Lincoln from Lincoln.

Sarah Wynn-Jones & Maggie from Buxton GR * Christine Fowler from Southam. Mr & Mrs Greg & Lee Butler from Banbury. Mr Tim Woods from Nottingham. Mr Stephen Butler from Nottingham.

Peterborough

Thomas Clark & Frodo from North Walsham GRxL * Sandra Boden from Rugeley. Mrs Louise Millard from Lutterworth. Mr Andrew Sheridan from Warwick.

Grayham Forsythe-Fields & Kes from Norwich LxL * Sue Lancaster from Bedford. Mr Geoff Whiteman from Coalville.

Richard Lampard & Macbeth from Felixstowe L. Yvonne Hopkins from Shipston-on-Stour * Mrs Julie Trent from Leicester. Mrs Joanne Careless from Warwick.

Paul Monaghan & Chester from North Walsham LxGR. Donatella Bovington from Bushey Heath * Leslie Johnson from Redditch. Mrs Julie Trent from Leicester. Mrs Paula Elliston from Lakenheath.

Carrie Reilly & Julie from Bury St. Edmunds LxGR. Lorna Nimmo from Cheltenham * Tammi Curran from Rugby. Mrs Jane Hargrave from Daventry. Mr Andrew Walling from Warwick.

Isabel Stoney & Dinah from King's Lynn L. Sue Packer from Westbury * Mrs Paula Elliston from Lakenheath.

Kerry Watson & Jingle from March LxGR. Norma Stent from Bath * Lisa Smith from Warwick. Mrs Kim Roberts from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mr Mick Canham from Coventry. Miss Jacqueline Henry from Corby.

New partnerships

Reading

Janet Dunn & Willow from Crawley LxGR. Jackey & Kevin McLoughlin from South Ockendon * Claire Webster from Sutton Coldfield. Mrs Jackey & Kevin McLoughlin from South Ockendon. Ms Toshiko Tani from Reading.

Shivani Verma & Jean from Ashford L. Amanda Thornton from Wokingham * Mr Kevin Wooldridge from Reading.

Shrewsbury

Emma & Rosie from Tamworth GRxGR. Kathleen Underwood from Telford. Mrs Maggie Meyrick from Shrewsbury.

Sarah Burrows & Corry from Wolverhampton GR. Rachel Gregory from Nottingham * Lisa Castle from Redditch. Mrs Joanna Bromwich from Shrewsbury.

Stacey Caffrey & Wendy from Stoke-on-Trent GRxL * Ellen Dicken from Kenilworth. Mrs Louise Neill from Alcester. Mrs Emma Trevor-Jones from Shrewsbury.

Tracey Clarke & Loki from Shoreham-by-Sea L. Sue Robinson from Whitley Bay * Sonia Evans from Waterloooville. Mrs Julie Trent from Leicester. Miss Gemma Connolly from Wigan.

Mark Gaffey & Peanut from Stoke-on-Trent GRxL. Sally Wade from Huddersfield. Lorraine Cryer from Leeds * Mr Robert Clarke from Stockport. Mrs Michelle Grogan from Manchester.

Julie Langford & Charley from Stafford L Mike Greenwood from Burton upon Trent * Tim Hunt from Northampton. Mr Geoff Whiteman from Coalville. Mr Paul Richards from Shrewsbury.

Jessica Luke & Pebble from Stafford L. Hannah Campbell from Kinross. Rita Wilson from Kinross * Angela Bass from Birmingham. Mr Alan Lowe from Coventry. Miss Danielle Causby from Manchester. Mrs Jacky Ruston from Telford.

Nathan Marsh & Selmo from Wollaston GRxL. John Batchelor from Stafford * Margaret Langford from Warwick. Mr Robert O'Connor from Manchester.

Southampton

Julie Banks & Jessie from Ashford LxGR. Veronica Bartlett from Sandhurst * Helen Elbourne. Mrs Sheila Hemming from Evesham.

Sarah D'Souza & Ribble from Chippenham L. Alleyne Barlow from Plymouth * Mrs Julie Charlton from Southampton.

Megan Gibson & Peggy from Salisbury LxGR * Mrs Tricia Collier from Warwick. Mrs Katie Hayward from Southampton.

Nicola Hull & Bumble from Broadstone L. Karon Thomas from Pontypool * Sarah Kite from Birmingham. Mrs Lana Taylor from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mrs Nicola Merrick from Eastleigh. Mr James Gordon Watson from Southampton.

Peter Sheath & Laika from Southampton LxGR. Carrie Garrett from Cardiff * Helen Elbourne. Mrs Sheila Hemming from Evesham. Mark Bolton from Romsey.

John Welsman & Benji from Petersfield GRxGR. Carol Harris from Kingsbridge * Amanda Adkins from Buckingham. Mr Paul Black from Solihull. Mr Steve White from Eastleigh.

Michael Wilkins & Sutton from Trowbridge LxGR * Helen Evans from Redditch. Mr Mark Angel from Romsey.

Welwyn Garden City

Angela Armin & Jumble from Romford LxGR. Linda Daniel from Brentwood * Lisa Smith from Warwick. Mrs Kim Roberts from Stratford-upon-Avon. Mr Paul Murphy from Woodford Green.

Kate Crofts & Bertie from Colchester GSD. Myriam Steadman from Manea.

Jenny Crone & Tuxedo from Grays LxGR. Catherine Myall from Ipswich * Mrs Tricia Collier from Warwick. Mr Robert Tremeer from London.

Keith Davies & Ziggy from Colchester L. Ann Wackett from York * Jackie Ellison from Coventry. Mark Simpson from Nuneaton. Mrs Kwai White from Beverley.

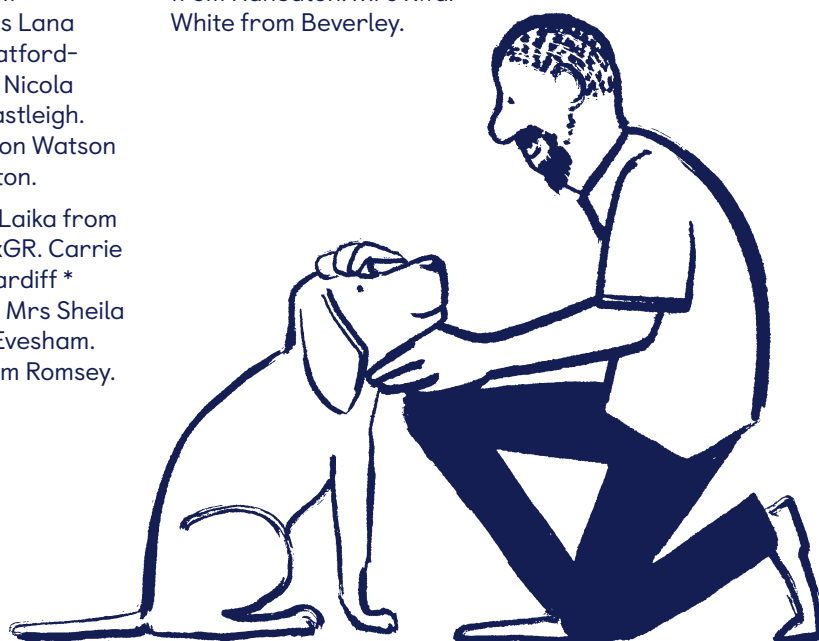
Steven Hale & Violet from Watford LxGR. Raymond Brett from Welwyn Garden City * Julie Andrews from Tamworth. Mr Raymond Alan Davis from Woodford Green.

Emma Hillyard & Archie from Biggleswade L. Jacqueline Gardner from Potters Bar * Margaret Lyson-Marshall from Southam.

Lucy Morris & Harti from Clacton-on-Sea L * Angela Bass from Birmingham. Mr Alan Lowe from Coventry. Mrs Karen Chesterman from St. Albans. Mrs Lesley Gilbert from St. Albans. Mrs Helen Read from Great Dunmow.

Anthony Sharp & Idris from Ilford LxGR. Richard Bussien from Harleston * Regina Cardo from Kingswinford. Miss Sarah Sheasby from Bromsgrove. Miss Jennifer Turner from Loughton.

Christine Turner & Guy from Westcliff-on-Sea GRxL * Sue Davy from Oldbury. Mr Adrian Claxton from Warwick. Mrs Helen Seaman from St Albans.



Breeding stock qualifiers

Akira * 01.04.21 * GSD
* Bitch * Mr & Mrs
R Chambers from
Redditch. Mr J Powis
from Chelmsford.

Cookie * 13.05.21 * GRxGR
* Bitch * Mrs M McDonnell
from Warwick. Mrs T
Brown from Hexham.

Daisy * 13.05.21 * GSD *
Bitch * Mrs L Moore from
Plymouth. Mrs Victoria
Rash from Kenilworth.

Donald * 27.04.21 * GSD
* Stud * Mrs S Kemp
from Atherstone. Mrs A
Brogan from Glasgow.

Happy * 27.04.21 * GRxGR
* Bitch * Mrs S Thomas
from Daventry. Mrs V
Rowell from London.

Holly * 13.05.21 * L *
Bitch * Mr H Dorrell
from Worcester. Mr C
Garbutt from Darlington.

Honey * 12.04.21 * GRxGR
* Bitch * Mrs S Thomas
from Daventry. Mrs J
Hutton from Chelmsford.

Ishka * 12.04.21 * GRxGR *
Bitch * Mrs A Sparks from
Sutton Coldfield. Mr J
Tosh from Aberdeen. Mr D
McKeown from Glenrothes.

Maggie * 27.04.21 * L *
Bitch * Mrs S Bailey from
Tamworth. Mrs J Kandler
from Wells. Mrs Tricia
Collier from Warwick.

Patsy * 27.04.21 * L *
Bitch * Mrs S Bailey from
Tamworth. Mrs C Worlidge
from Farnham. Mrs Tricia
Collier from Warwick.

Pickle * 12.04.21 * L *
Bitch * Mrs D Sandham
from Stafford. Mrs S
Jay from Burntwood.
Mrs Jane Hargrave
from Daventry.

Vali * 12.04.21 * GR *
Bitch * Mr S Lines from
Leamington Spa. Mr B
Killick from Sheerness.



My love for Derek

I've been sponsoring guide dog puppies for more than 20 years, and was really happy when I heard that my latest puppy was called Derek, as it was my late father's name.

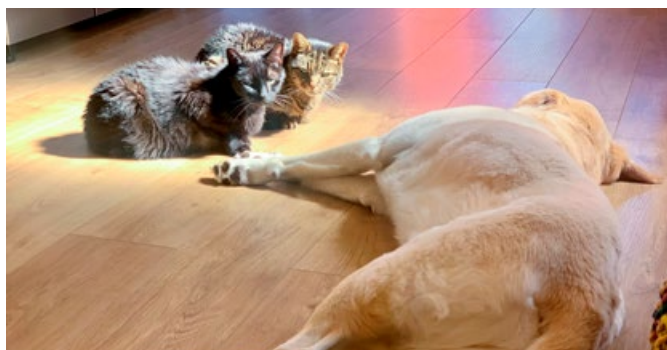
I've been a lifelong dog lover since my parents bought me a cocker spaniel for my first birthday. Growing up, I always thought I'd have a dog when I was older, but sadly I couldn't have one due to my lifestyle. Sponsoring guide dog puppies is my way of having a dog!

When I saw that guide dog puppy Derek was being used on a lot of Guide Dogs marketing material, I felt very proud that they'd chosen 'my' dog. My dad loved dogs, too, so it felt like everything had come together. Each time I see puppy Derek I hope that he is behaving himself, succeeding in his training, and I wish him good luck. I loved Derek very much... And still do today.

Dr Caroline Cordery,
North Cheshire



Caption competition



Lynette Proctor's retired guide dog Pippa is trying to enjoy a nap, but it looks like Lynette's two cats, Foz and Monty, have other ideas. Lynette lives in Liverpool with the trio and her guide dog, Dubs.



The last competition winner is Kathy Mitchell, from Sheffield, with the caption "Well, he did say there was a leak in the kitchen that needed attention." Congratulations, Kathy!

What would you caption this photo?

Send your suggestions to: Forward, Guide Dogs, Hillfields, Burghfield Common, Reading, RG7 3YG or email forward@guidedogs.org.uk with your name, address and a daytime phone number. The winner gets a £10 Marks and Spencer voucher.

Competition rules

This competition is open to anyone resident in the UK, except employees of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, their families and anyone connected with the competition. No purchase necessary. Proof of posting cannot be accepted as proof of delivery. No responsibility can be accepted for entries delayed, damaged or mislaid or wrongly delivered. Illegible entries will be disqualified. Only one original entry is allowed per envelope. The winners will be notified by either post or telephone and the results will be published in the next issue of the magazine. The winners must agree to the publication of their names, photographs and any publicity, if requested. In all matters concerning the competition the Editor's decision is final. No correspondence can be entered into. Entry implies acceptance of the rules. The closing date for the competition is **31 January 2022**.

Supporting Guide Dogs through our partners – at no extra cost to you

We work with some fantastic partners that are committed to helping you make a real difference in the lives of people with sight loss through everyday activities, at no extra cost to you.

Shopping

The loyalty schemes for shoppers at Pets at Home (VIP Club) and Marks & Spencer (Sparks) enable you to support Guide Dogs simply by shopping at no additional cost to you. Members of the Pets at Home VIP scheme help raise vouchers that we can use for our guide dogs in training. And M&S will donate a penny every time you shop using your Sparks card online.

When you shop with AmazonSmile, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price on eligible purchases when you select Guide Dogs.

The Virgin Red rewards club lets you earn points through

numerous everyday brands, which you can choose to donate to Guide Dogs.

Disposing of a vehicle

If you wish to get rid of an old car, Giveacar will collect and dispose of it for you, with proceeds donated to us when you choose Guide Dogs.

Browsing online

You can even turn browsing the internet into donations for Guide Dogs with Tabs for Good by Good Loop – simply by downloading the Good Loop Chrome plugin.

Find out how you can support us through our partners at guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/donating.

Players of People's Postcode Lottery help children with sight loss by supporting buddy dogs



Since 2018, the wonderful players of People's Postcode Lottery have raised an incredible £3.5m in support of Guide Dogs.

The latest project that players are supporting is our buddy dog service for 12 months. This will help up to 150 children or young people and their families.

A buddy dog lives with a family as a companion and friend. Buddy dogs support children's development by helping them grow their confidence, reduce their isolation and significantly contributes towards their development in relationships and life.

The funding also supports the assessment process, online training and in-person workshops that teach the responsibility of caring for a dog and creating confidence.





WHATEVER HELPS YOUR CAUSE

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