

GUIDE
DOGS



Alfie

Pupdate 5

A new partnership

Alfie's new home

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Hi, my name is Michael and I'm the proud, new owner of Alfie! This is my story...

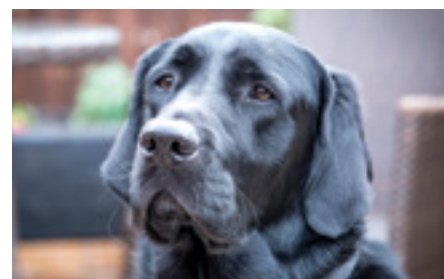
I've been registered blind since birth due to a condition known as Reinopathy of Prematurity. I had some slight vision remaining until I was around 20 years old but today, I don't have any vision remaining at all.

As a child I was scared of dogs and so a guide dog wasn't the first option for me. Guide Dogs provided me with long cane training so that I could still get about on my own but, to put it bluntly, I hated the cane! I kept walking into things and it just didn't agree with me. Although I am not the kind of person to give

up easily, I had started to avoid using it and often the only time I would leave the house was to pop to the local shops. I had no independence and it was a very difficult time for me.

A life-changing moment

My mum got chatting to a man who had a guide dog and we were invited to a local Guide Dogs event, to meet guide dog owners and their dogs. We had the opportunity to talk to people who shared their experiences of having a guide dog. After meeting so many lovely dogs I realised I no longer feared them and hearing about all of the amazing experiences they had given people, I thought 'wow, this really is something I need to do!'. So, I got my first guide dog in 1976 and have never looked back! Alfie is my 9th guide dog and what a little life-changer he is - I can't begin to explain how much of a difference he makes to my mobility, confidence and independence.



Part of the family

Alfie and I carried out our partnership training in Cardiff over a few weeks. This training reminded me of all the commands and knowledge I need to ensure Alfie can guide me safely and successfully. I very much enjoyed the training and it set us up for a long and happy partnership together.

Alfie settled into life at home, with my wife and I, straight away.

He has such a laid-back nature which is useful as we have a big family who visit us often, including 4 children and 3 grandchildren. It can be a little busy here at times but Alfie loves the children and always soaks up the attention!

(Continued overleaf)



One of Alfie's favourite things to do is play with his soft toys. He loves to go up to his toy box and take out each toy one by one, and then lies on his back with a toy in his mouth!

Confidence and independence

The biggest difference Alfie makes to my life is the confidence I have to get out and visit new places. I love to go on a big walk every day and I couldn't do that with the cane, but now I can go anywhere as I have complete trust and faith in Alfie as my guide.

He's enabled me to continue having an active lifestyle and busy social life - and my wife doesn't worry when I am out on my own anymore! Soon we are going on a family holiday to centre parcs and I just can't wait. Alfie gives me so much confidence and independence, which means I can truly enjoy visiting new places and spending time with those I love.

Thank you so much to all of you who sponsored Alfie. He's a brilliant dog and I'm looking forward to the years ahead with him by my side.

See how much Alfie has grown

We have been taking pictures of Alfie since he was born so you can see just how much he's changed.

To see your exclusive video, please visit

[guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-alfie](https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/puppy-alfie)

and if you'd like to hear more from Sponsor a Puppy, why not visit our social media pages.



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