

25 things you should know about Guide Dogs

The big picture

- We have been providing guide dogs to blind and partially-sighted people for over 75 years.
- We are a world leader in breeding and training guide dogs.
- We employ around 1,000 professional staff in the UK.
- The charity is supported by over 10,000 volunteers, including puppy walkers, brood-stock holders, dog boarders and thousands of local fundraisers.
- We fund major research projects aimed at enabling blind and partially-sighted people to make the best use of any remaining vision they may have.
- We campaign to make the streets safer for all blind and partially-sighted people and to stop guide dog owners being refused access to shops, restaurants and taxis – it's illegal but it still happens!
- 180,000 blind and partially-sighted people in the UK never go out alone because they're not supported in gaining the skills and confidence they need. We're campaigning hard to change this.
- The guide dog service is entirely dependent on voluntary donations.



Our dogs



- Guide dogs receive their basic training at one of our four national Guide Dogs Training Schools.
- Every year we breed over 1,000 guide dog puppies.
- We constantly review our breeding programme to ensure we are providing the best dogs for the job.
- The most widely used breed for guiding is a labrador/retriever cross, but we also use other breeds, including German shepherds.
- We place and support retired dogs with voluntary 'adopters'.
- Dogs unsuitable for guiding are often found alternative careers with other assistance dog organisations.
- Guide Dogs works with Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and Dogs for the Disabled to train 'dual-purpose' dogs.
- We invest extensively in research into dog health and wellbeing.
- Dogs wearing a brown harness are in training; those wearing a white harness are qualified and working with their blind or partially-sighted owner.

Our services

- We are currently supporting around 4,500 guide dog partnerships in the UK.
- We deliver our services through 28 district teams across the UK.
- The working life of a guide dog is about six and a half years, and many guide dog owners have several dogs during their lifetime.
- The cost of a guide dog to its new owner is a nominal 50p, to ensure that no-one is prevented from having one by lack of funds.
- We make a lifetime commitment to provide guide dog owners with a guide dog for as long as they need one.
- Through our Vision Support Services, we support thousands of blind and partially-sighted people in getting to grips with life's practicalities – getting around safely on their own; cooking the dinner; mowing the lawn...
- We provide one-to-one help to blind and partially-sighted children, ensuring they can make the most of their education and join in games, clubs and playground activities.

Where our money comes from

- The guide dog service is run entirely on voluntary donations, and two thirds of our income currently comes to us in the form of legacies. Our thousands of supporters raise money through a huge variety of fundraising activities, including:
 - A network of local branches holding events in their communities
 - The 'Sponsor a Puppy' scheme
 - The Guide Dogs Lucky Lottery
 - Regular cash appeal mailings
 - National raffles
 - Social events
 - Events in schools
 - Corporate support
 - Legacies, and gifts given in memory of a loved one
 - Charitable trusts and foundations
 - Challenge events
 - Recycling mobile phones and printer cartridges



You can find out more at www.guidedogs.org.uk
Call us on 0870 600 2323 (calls charged at national rate)
or email guidedogs@guidedogs.org.uk

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Moving forward together



Guide Dogs

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