

25 things you should know about Guide Dogs

The big picture

- We have been providing blind and partially-sighted people with the freedom and independence a guide dog gives for 75 years.
- We are a world leader in breeding and training guide dogs.
- We employ around 900 professional staff in the UK.
- The charity is supported by about 10,000 volunteers, including puppy walkers, brood-stock holders, dog boarders and thousands of local fundraisers.
- We fund major research projects looking into the prevention and cure of eye disease.
- Guide Dogs campaigns for the rights of the blind and partially-sighted community, particularly on mobility and access issues.
- Thousands of blind and partially-sighted people do not receive the rehabilitation services they desperately need. Our 'Rethink' Rehab campaign is alerting politicians to this fact and pressing for major new investment.
- Guide Dogs requires over £50 million a year to continue its work.
- We receive no government funding and our services are entirely dependent on voluntary donations.



Our dogs

- Guide dogs receive their basic training at one of four national Dog Supply Units.
 - Every year we breed over 1,000 guide dog puppies.
 - The most widely used breed for guiding is a labrador/retriever cross, but we also use other breeds, for example German shepherds.
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- It costs around £10 per day to breed, train and care for each guide dog.
 - We place and support retired dogs with voluntary 'adopters'.
 - Dogs unsuitable for guiding are often found alternative careers with Dogs for the Disabled, Hearing Dogs or the police.
 - We constantly review our breeding programme to ensure we produce the best dogs for the job, using the best traits from different breeds.
 - We invest extensively in research into dog health and wellbeing.

Our services

- At any one time we support about 4,700 guide dog partnerships in the UK.
- We deliver our services through 29 district teams.
- 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 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.
- We provide expert rehabilitation services to blind and partially-sighted adults and children across the UK through our Vision Support Service contracts with local authorities.
- We are leading a national Rehabilitation Project which will result in major improvements in services to blind and partially-sighted people of all ages.

Where our money comes from

- The guide dog service runs 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 raising money in their communities
 - The 'Sponsor a Puppy' scheme
 - The Guide Dogs Lucky Lottery
 - Regular cash appeal mailings
 - National raffles
 - Social events
 - Shades Day
 - Corporate support
 - Legacies and gifts to remember the life of a loved one
 - Charitable trusts and foundations
 - Challenge events
 - Recycling mobile phones, printer cartridges and stamps



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

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. Registered Charity No. 209617. Registered Office: Hillfields, Burghfield Common, Reading RG7 3YG. The text of this brochure is available in Braille, on tape, disk and email.

CELEBRATING **75** YEARS

moving forward together



Guide Dogs