

Is it all work and no play?

While our guide dogs have a very important job to do, they also have a wonderful quality of life. They are independent, intelligent animals, and experience has shown that our dogs enjoy guiding or they simply wouldn't do it!

Having said that, we always make sure that our puppies in training have time to relax and have fun. In fact, we use interactive toys and play as a key part of the training – it helps stimulate the minds of our youngsters, laying the groundwork for their future skills.

The welfare of our dogs is of paramount importance to us. We provide ongoing support throughout their working life, which means they get the specialist nutrition they need and receive the best health care. We also spend up to three weeks on partnership training, to make sure that we've matched the right dog with the right owner.

Find out more at www.sponsorapuppy.org.uk

**In your next Pupdate: It's graduation time!
Meet Gilbert's new owner and find out how their
partnership training is going**

Guide Dogs is a working name of The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, Registered Office: Hillfields, Burchfield Common, Reading, Berkshire RG7 3YG. A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (291646) and a charity registered in England and Wales (209617) and Scotland (SC0038979).

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PupGilbert#0911/PD4



Pupdate 4

Advanced training



Gilbert's nearly qualified

GUIDE
DOGS



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A PUPPY





Gilbert's training continues...

Gilbert has now started his advanced training which involves bringing together all of the skills that he has learnt before he's matched with a blind or partially sighted person.

We had quite an action packed couple of hours when we visited Gilbert and David, Gilbert's Guide Dog Mobility Instructor. The first stop was Kenilworth town. Here David and Gilbert walked in and around the supermarket, walked down the bustling high street and practised crossing a busy road at the pedestrian crossing.

Gilbert is very kind, intelligent and has wonderful social behaviour. He's great at avoiding street furniture such as wheelie bins and has a great kerb approach. "He's what you would call a 'good all-rounder'" said David.

The final stop on our visit was to Gilbert's boarders, Roy and Pearl. When Gilbert isn't training he lives at Roy and Pearl's house. Boarders play a massive part when it comes to the training process and if it wasn't for them we simply wouldn't be able to train as many dogs as we do. "Boarders really are un-sung heroes" said David, "Roy and Pearl have housed over 70 dogs so we have a lot to thank them for. It's like they run a 'guest house' for dogs!" laughed David.

Big congratulations to Alex Sharkey below, who spent the morning with Gilbert after winning the "your favourite dog" competition for Gilbert!



My new skill... a confident 'stop'

When we walked around the busy town Gilbert demonstrated his strong and regal 'stop'. This is an important skill for a guide dog, so Gilbert is most definitely moving in the right direction!

View the winning competition entries from Pupdate 3 at www.sponsorapuppy.org.uk/competitions