

Let's Go!



Canine Partners

Amazing dogs. Transforming lives.

Winter 2023

Inside

Meet Penny and canine partner River, hear from an applicant waiting for his canine partner successor, and go behind the scenes with our Advanced Training Team.



WE BELIEVE PETS & PEOPLE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

At PURINA® we believe in the magical and unique connection between pets and humans and when people and pets bond, life becomes richer.

This belief is placed at the heart of everything we do and we're passionate about finding ways to make this bond stronger. Our commitments to pets include, helping advance nutrition through the products we make, championing the role of pets in society and working towards a waste free future.

We've been proud supporters of Canine Partners since 2000. Like them, we know just how transformational your relationship with your pet can be – and how much love and joy that can bring to your life.

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Your Pet, Our Passion.™

Welcome to our Winter 2023 issue of Let's Go!



CEO, Alex Lochrane, talks about new beginnings and looking forward to an exciting future.

What a year this has been – my first with the honour and privilege of leading this amazing organisation! There have been plenty of emotional highs and lows and, whilst we have said some difficult – and sad – goodbyes, we have also said some equally exciting and inspiring hellos. Canine Partners' new chapter has well and truly begun and has been very specifically marked by the relocation of our head office to our National Training Centre in the Midlands. While it has been a period of dramatic change for the charity, I am filled with a sense of optimism and excitement for all the opportunities and possibilities ahead.

Our teams have continued to do what they do best: providing specialist training for our dogs; creating amazing partnerships and bringing new puppies into our programme. The Breeding Team is thrilled to have welcomed several fantastic litters, including our first, Canine Partners-bred, litter of Labradoodle puppies.

The continued support from our incredible community is the driving force behind our vision, that every disabled person lives their life to the full. Without you, none of this would be possible: every donation, volunteer hour and positive word spurs us on to create more life-changing partnerships. I know times are tough

because of the cost-of-living crisis, but I have been truly humbled by your ongoing loyalty, dedication and energy towards Canine Partners.

This issue of Let's Go! is full of heart-warming stories which I am delighted to share with you, including Penny and canine partner River's story, on page four. In order to create the most successful partnerships, at the end of the dog's advanced training, partners are invited to a two-week residential at our National Training Centre. On page six, we go behind the scenes with our Advanced Training Team as they share what happens during these courses.

Christmas is just around the corner and if you're feeling festive, you can buy Christmas cards via the enclosed form, tickets to our Carol Services on page 14 or find out how you can double your donation to Canine Partners via The Big Give Christmas Challenge on page nine.

The most important part of the CEO's job is to say thank you and so, please accept my heartfelt thanks to you all for your support, from all the amazing team at Canine Partners; we couldn't do what we do without you! I hope you enjoy this issue of Let's Go! Magazine.

Alex Lochrane

This issue is kindly supported by our Platinum Business Club members Nestlé Purina Petcare and Pets Corner

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Partnership story

Penny
and
River

Penny was partnered with her second canine partner, River, in July 2021. This is her story.



“ Having a dog will completely change anyone’s life but having a canine partner is extra special. ”

“I have Osteogenesis Imperfecta Type 3, also known as Brittle Bones, which means I can break a bone without trauma and dislocate very easily. I’ve fractured my bones over 200 times so need to be careful in my day-to-day activities to avoid injuries.

“I applied to Canine Partners after always wanting a dog and the independence I could see that they bring. As a child I saw other people with my condition who had assistance dogs and, in my head, I said “One day I’ll have an assistance dog.”

“In 2017, I received a very exciting phone call to say I’d been matched with a 20-month-old Golden Retriever named Imogen, who

I nicknamed ‘Immy’. My heart absolutely melted when I first met Immy, she looked stunning and had sweet, gentle, soulful eyes.

“She loved to work and would get so excited to do tasks, so every training session was certainly fun! Sadly, at the end of 2020, she had to retire due to medical reasons.

“I re-joined Canine Partners’ waiting list and was so excited when I received the exciting call again to say I’d been matched with a two-year-old yellow Labrador X Golden Retriever. River made my transition to a successor dog easy as she’s such a tactile, loving dog.



Read more of Penny’s story on our blog caninepartners.org.uk/pennyandriver



“I remember having Immy lying next to me, having a sense of relief knowing that if I did drop something she would be able to pick it up for me.

“This gave me a sense of independence when most of my other independence had been taken away.”

“I’m sure both my dogs have helped stop many fractures because I’m no longer having to try to reach down or over-stretch for things.

“When I was a call handler for the police my canine partner was able to accompany and support me at work. It was always so beneficial emotionally to be able to give my dog a little stroke when things were very stressful.

“Before having a canine partner, I would frequently get patronised when I was out in public. When I’m out with River most of my interactions with people are positive and definitely less patronising. This has had a huge impact on my mental health, as I finally feel seen for myself rather than being treated like a child.

“I’ve always enjoyed having my sidekick next to me on my adventures. Immy accompanied me on many trips and River has crammed just as much in. Everything feels a little bit better when I have River by my side, even simple things.”

“Both my dogs have made a huge difference in my life. I wasn’t expecting Immy to come into her own as quickly as she did because within 10 days of bringing her home, I fractured my arm and my leg.

“This was the first time I fully understood how much of a lifeline a canine partner would make to my life.”

“Recovery before having a canine partner was very different. It was stressful being on my own and I worried that if I dropped the TV remote or my mobile then I wouldn’t be able to do anything about it until the next care visit.

Donate to our winter appeal 2023

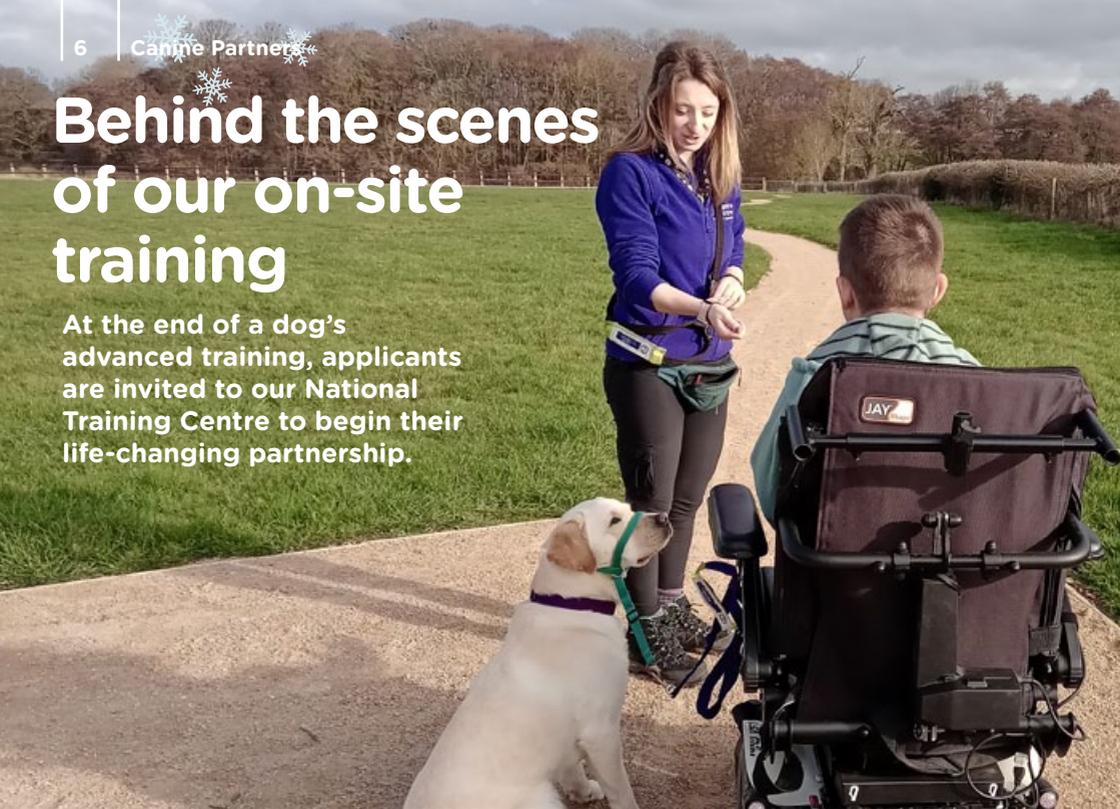
to help around 100 people on our waiting list receive their canine partner. Please visit caninepartners.org.uk/winterappeal2023

scan me



Behind the scenes of our on-site training

At the end of a dog's advanced training, applicants are invited to our National Training Centre to begin their life-changing partnership.



When an applicant nears the top of the list and a suitable dog becomes available, the dog's Advanced Trainer will invite the applicant for a matching visit. After the matching visit, the applicant will usually have a maximum of eight weeks before attending on-site training.

.....
On-site training is a two-week residential course, which takes place at our National Training Centre. One of the main purposes of the course is for the partnership to begin building a relationship and getting to know each other without the usual daily distractions at home.

Training is a mix of both theory and practical work and each applicant will train with their new canine partner under the guidance of one of our highly skilled Advanced Trainers.

We aim to make training as bespoke as possible for each partner by training in environments relevant to their lifestyle, both onsite and offsite, and focusing on the key tasks that will be required.

Most practical training sessions are one-to-one with a trainer, with some group work included. Typical training sessions involve learning key skills such as:

- Loose lead walking
- Off-lead exercise
- Working around distractions e.g. other dogs and members of the public
- Basic tasks, such as opening/closing doors, picking up dropped items and safe use of lifts



The applicant will also learn how to continue their dog's training and how to ensure their dog's welfare needs are being met, as well as what motivates their companion. It's not all work though, and there are plenty of rest breaks and time for the applicant to bond and play with their dog.

There are usually two to three partnerships on a training course so that we can place as many dogs as possible. This also allows applicants the chance to socialise with other people who are training with their new canine partner.

Our on-site residential accommodation is run by our fantastic Housekeeping Team, who endeavour to make our applicants as comfortable as possible during their stay. The course is fully catered, and our accommodation is specifically adapted to meet most people's needs.

Could you help us create more life-changing partnerships?

Fosterer volunteers play a vital role in supporting our dogs through Advanced Training. To find out more about the role and to apply, please visit [caninepartners.org.uk/foster](https://www.caninepartners.org.uk/foster)



Play today and help train more amazing dogs to transform lives

Get your paws on our prizes

£10,000 up for grabs every week

★ £1 to play

Just £1 to enter and you could join our weekly winners ...

You can enter online at:
lottery.caninepartners.org.uk



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Enter by calling
 01628 200 343

Applicant story

Stephen Brookes



Stephen is currently on the waiting list for a life-changing canine partner. This is his story.

“In 2008, my world changed dramatically when a motorbike accident left me with a life-changing spinal cord injury. I am paralysed from the shoulders down, which means that I need to use a wheelchair full-time and require 24-hour care.

“I had served in the Royal Navy for 15 years, a life that was filled with structure and a strong sense of purpose. The switch from military life to spending over a year in hospital and rehabilitation was abrupt and the transition was challenging. I had to adapt to a new home as my old house couldn't be adapted to my needs, and the loss of my military career was another significant blow.

“I was introduced to Canine Partners during my rehabilitation. Considering the difficulties I was facing at the time, I was amazed by what these dogs could do.

“My first canine partner, Major, was an energetic black Labrador. While Major was a great dog, our partnership faced some challenges, and it became evident that I required a different match to fully benefit from having an assistance dog.

“I was then matched with Kizzie, a Labrador Retriever cross, who became my second canine partner. She was not just a companion; she was my lifeline for seven years. With Kizzie by my side, I could have a more active role in my young daughters' lives. Her presence meant

my wife, Nichola, could just be my wife, instead of needing to take on additional caring responsibilities.

“Kizzie provided much-needed emotional support, helping me navigate the challenges that arose from my injury. Her companionship allowed me to connect more deeply with my family and provided a distraction from the chronic pain. Even at night, Kizzie's presence eased my nightmares and fears, offering reassurance and comfort.

“One of the most significant benefits of having an assistance dog was the boost in my confidence. I could venture outside, knowing that Kizzie would help me if I encountered difficulties. She could retrieve dropped items, stabilise my position if I leaned too far, and even alert others in case of an emergency.

“Sadly, Kizzie passed away in 2021 after enjoying her retirement. After losing Kizzie, I decided to apply for another canine partner and I'm now on the waiting list for a successor dog.

“Life without Kizzie has been challenging. I really miss her.”

“While I am grateful for my care team, I miss the independence that having a canine partner provided. Everyday tasks, like buying a coffee, now require assistance, reminding me of my dependence on others.

“As I get older, my need for support will only increase. I know that I will always need a canine partner by my side.”

Read more of Stephen's story on our blog caninepartners.org.uk/stephens-story

The Big Give Christmas Challenge 2023

From Puppy to Partnership

Christmas Challenge

Big Give



One donation, twice the impact

This year we are aiming to raise funds to train more life-changing assistance dogs for people like Stephen.

For one week only, any donation you make to Canine Partners via the Big Give website will be DOUBLED!

Save the dates to your calendar! By donating between **28 November and 5 December**, YOU can help us build brighter futures.

Scan the QR code between **28 November and 5 December** to give directly to our Big Give Christmas Challenge.

scan me



Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for updates.



Exceptional nutrition costs less than a cup of coffee*

Here at Pets Corner we believe in better value through quality. With better quality, meatier foods you feed less per day, and can even save money on supplements and vet bills.

Scan below to find out more



12 YEARS PROUDLY SUPPORTING

 **Canine Partners**
Amazing dogs. Transforming lives.

*BASED ON THE DAILY COST OF A 15KG DOG AND TYPICAL HIGH STREET LATTE COFFEE PRICE SEPT 2023.

Corporate support at Canine Partners

The support we receive from our corporate partners is essential in helping us to train and provide assistance dogs for adults with physical disabilities.



David Wilson Homes and The Barratt Foundation

We were delighted to welcome Andy Button-Stephens, Head of The Barratt Foundation, and John Dillon, Regional Manager of David Wilson Homes, to our National Training Centre, where they presented us with a cheque for £50,000 to support our work.



Breedon Group Plc

Thanks to the wonderful support of Breedon Group Plc, WJ and Spray Tanker, we were able to resurface the access road at our National Training Centre in July.

Caremark Ltd

Caremark Ltd Joint CEO, Lisa Fyfe, paid a first visit to our National Training Centre to meet with our CEO, Alex Lochrane. Lisa toured the facilities and heard a talk from one of our wonderful partnerships, Kate with canine partner May. Caremark Ltd make an annual donation which supports our work and also their sponsored dog in training, Fudge.

Collins Property Recruitment

Collins Property Recruitment (CPR) held their annual charity football five-a-side tournament at Powerleague, Battersea. An incredible £16,240.25 was raised to support CPR's sponsored dogs, Howard and Jeffrey.

Join our Business Club and enjoy the exclusive benefits of Platinum, Gold or Silver membership. To find out more, please visit caninepartners.org.uk/business-club

 **BUSINESS CLUB**

Partnership story

James and Spud

James, 81, was partnered with canine partner Spud in June 2018. This is his story.



“My name is James and I have Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyradiculoneuropathy. My disability affects my limbs, with no movement below the knee and very limited dexterity in my hands. I get very tired and suffer with pain in my joints.

“My main problem is lack of mobility – I can walk short distances with a stick; however, I normally rely on a mobility scooter. My manual dexterity is very poor, which means that I’m slow at doing things, I struggle with picking things up that I’ve dropped, and I fall quite a lot and find getting up very difficult. I like being independent, so it was frustrating that I might have to rely on others.

“In 2018 I received a phone call from Canine Partners asking me to meet Spud. I couldn’t believe that such a handsome dog was going to be my canine partner. He was friendly,

cooperative and settled in at home very quickly – our Aftercare Assistant was delighted by how quickly we bonded.

“Our partnership has exceeded all my expectations; I’d not expected such depth to our relationship. It’s not just that he does things for me, it’s that the partnership involves mutual respect and support.”

“Spud has provided structure to my day – he allows me to do things that I previously found difficult and he’s always there for me, willing to help.

“When I compare life now to how it was before Spud, he enables me to live my life as fully as possible, given my disability. Thanks to Spud, I’m more self-sufficient and don’t have to rely on others as much. My wife is less concerned about leaving me on my own when she goes away.

“Spud gives me the confidence to go out on my own. We go on lots of walks and I feel better for being out in the fresh air. He also accompanies me on visits to gardens and we’ve organised several disabled rambles. People talk to me because of Spud which means I’ve made so many friendships – after church each Sunday there is a queue of people wanting to say hello to us!

“Our partnership became even more important during lockdown where we spent many happy hours rambling far and wide.



“Spud and I have been together now for five years. His arrival has allowed me to broaden my horizons and take more responsibility for my life.”

“Canine Partners has become such a large part of my life. They’ve given me so much and I really wanted to give something back, which is why I’ve become more involved in fundraising and raising awareness for the charity.”

my amazing puppy Could you gift someone like James their canine partner this Christmas?



Cranberry

Sponsor Sprout or Cranberry

and follow their journey through the first 12 months of training to become a fully trained assistance dog.

Cranberry is a merry girl who loves surprises.

Sprout is a joyful boy who loves company.



Sprout

From just **£5 a month** or £60 a year you will receive a special welcome pack, including a soft toy, certificate, quarterly Pupdates following your pup’s progress and much more!

★ If you would like to sponsor a puppy, for yourself or as a gift, visit myamazingpuppy.org.uk or get in touch with the team on **01530 225930**.

Order by 8 December for Christmas delivery

Read more of James’s story on our blog caninepartners.org.uk/blog/james-and-spud

Fundraising News

Carol Services

We are thrilled to announce that we will be hosting two Canine Partners Carol Services for you to enjoy this Christmas.



Leicestershire

7 December
6.30pm
(Doors open 5.45pm)
All Saints Church
Loughborough

West Sussex

14 December
6.30pm
(Doors open 5.45pm)
Arundel
Cathedral

Tickets: Adult £15, Child £7

Check out our website caninepartners.org.uk/events and social media or email fundraising@caninepartners.org.uk to reserve your tickets today.



Life-changing support from the Veterans' Foundation

We are very thankful to the Veterans' Foundation who donated £6,000 to fund the first three years of aftercare for an Army veteran and their canine partner. This partnership has now completed their first year and we've been delighted to see the difference having a canine partner has made for this veteran and their family.

Fundraiser builds dolls house to raise vital funds

Bernard's daughter, Susan, has had two canine partners. He has spent the past six years building and furnishing a dolls house to raise vital funds for Canine Partners.

Bernard said: "I'm supporting Canine Partners because of the help they've given our daughter, Susan. My wife and I no longer worry because we know Susan's dog is there to help her. It is a great organisation and we really appreciate the good it does.

"Being interested in history and having worked in restoration all my life, I decided to make a Queen Anne dolls house in 1/12th scale. This was a period when English furniture was made from local timber, oak and walnut, before the arrival of mahogany. There are very few dolls houses on the market like this and the project has led to many hours of enjoyable research!"

The dolls house will be sold at auction and the money raised will be kindly donated to Canine Partners.



Do you have a creative fundraising idea for Canine Partners? Find out how you can get involved by visiting caninepartners.org.uk/fundraising

Tips and Treats!

Pupcakes For your pooch!

This recipe should only be given on special occasions or shared with other dogs.

Best baked in a mini muffin tin or a silicone cupcake tray. If using a metal tin, brush with a little vegetable oil or line with paper cases.

Ingredients:

180g self-raising flour
2 large eggs
1/2 standard tin of tuna
1 tbsp honey
280g soft cheese and small dog treats for decoration

Please ensure your dog doesn't have any food intolerances to the ingredients.

Method:

- 1 Heat the oven to 190°C/170°C fan / Gas mark 3.
- 2 In a large bowl combine all the ingredients and mix well.
- 3 Spoon the mixture into the muffin tin/cases. This should make between 12-15 pupcakes.
- 4 Bake for approximately 25 minutes or until well risen, golden and a skewer comes out clean.
- 5 Allow to cool then decorate with the soft cheese and small dog treats.
- 6



Treat your pooch!

Make a dog tuggy toy

You will need: Fabric. Scissors. A ruler.

Method:

- 1 Cut your fabric into four strips that are between 3-4 inches wide and at least a metre long. You can scale the toy by altering the width and/or length of the strands.
- 2 Tie all four strips of fabric into a single knot at one end and pull it tight.
- 3 Spread the strands into a cross shape.
- 4 Fold the top strand towards the bottom and the bottom strip towards the top.
- 5 Fold the right strand towards the left, posting it through the bottom strand loop.
- 6 Fold the left strip towards the right, posting it through the top strand loop.
- 7 Pull to secure.
- 8 Repeat steps four to seven until you have got the desired length of your tuggy toy.



Make sure that you leave enough fabric to tie it off. When you are finished, tie a single knot, pulling tightly.

Find more tips and treats on our blog caninepartners.org.uk/blog



Be a part of our Canine Partners volunteer community

Do you love dogs as much as we do? Find out more about volunteering with us by visiting caninepartners.org.uk/volunteer



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caninepartners.org.uk

Keep in touch! Keep us up to date with your details so you don't miss out on any future editions. You can update how you hear from us at any time by calling **03456 580480** or visiting caninepartners.org.uk/keepintouch

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