



* 35th Anniversary

Let's Go!

Winter 2025

**Future
life-changers**
Introducing our
new Doodle litter

**Bringing
training closer
to home**

How community
training will help
create more
partnerships

PLUS
**My Amazing
Puppy**
Give a gift that
changes lives this
Christmas

**“I started living life without
feeling held back by fear”**

Jane reflects on regaining her confidence and independence thanks to her canine partner Walshy

Proudly supporting



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 Let's Go! Winter 2025

Celebrating our journey and embracing the future

This year we've marked a very special milestone for Canine Partners - 35 years of training life-changing assistance dogs.

It has been a year of celebration, reflecting on everything we have achieved since 1990 and the incredible partners, supporters, volunteers, staff, and dogs who have joined us on our journey.

But it has also been a year of change. As demand for our assistance dogs grows, we must evolve to enable us to support more people than ever before.

As well as training and partnering our dogs through our National Training Centre, we've started to work in local communities alongside the people who need our support. We've also created new career paths, Canine Home Assistance and Canine Companions, so our dogs can help people with different needs, in different ways.

And of course, growth means more dogs, and more volunteers! So, we've been

busy expanding our already successful breeding programme and recruiting more volunteers to help train and foster our puppies.

But the change doesn't stop there, in 2026 we will be unveiling improvements to our National Training Centre, along with a refreshed look and website.

One thing that will never change is our dedication to our partners, our dogs, and our community. Together we can make the next 35 years even more life-changing.

I hope you enjoy reading all about these exciting changes in this issue of Let's Go!

Warmest wishes,

Lucy Eldred
CEO, Canine Partners



The power of partnerships

Meet Jane and canine partner Walshy

In April 2009, everything changed for me when I became seriously unwell with a spinal abscess and meningitis. My husband, Richard, was told I was unlikely to survive overnight. But against all the odds, I did.

Three months in hospital was followed by five months in a spinal rehab unit. When I finally came home, I was faced with the devastating reality of never walking again. Overnight Richard went from being my husband to also being my carer.

I'd been a teacher and a keen tennis player with a busy, active life. Suddenly, I was a wheelchair user, adapting to a world of carers, house adaptations, and access barriers I'd never had to think about before. The physical changes were enormous, but the emotional impact was just as great. My independence disappeared, my confidence vanished and I felt isolated.

“

The life I once loved disappeared and my world felt smaller.

Then, in 2011, just as I was starting to adjust, I received another devastating blow when I was diagnosed with

breast cancer. That was the lowest and most difficult period of my life.

Later that year, while recovering from surgery, I was encouraged to attend an independent living exhibition in Glasgow. I wasn't sure I wanted to go, but I'm so glad I did. In the middle of the exhibition hall was a black Labrador in a purple jacket, demonstrating tasks for Canine Partners.

“

In that moment, I knew I wanted a canine partner. It was a turning point in my life.

Nearly two years later, I was partnered with Damson, a beautiful Golden Retriever. It was love at first sight. Damson helped with everything – picking up



Jane with
canine partner
Walshy and
retired Damson



walking in the woods, visiting town, or out with friends. We've been together for over two years now and he's my right-hand man in every way. He's helped me heal after losing Damson and allowed me to continue to live the life I love. With Walshy, I feel like myself again. I smile more, I laugh more and I don't focus so much on what I can't do - he gives me a reason to get up every morning.

dropped items, retrieving my phone, bringing me my wheelchair, even helping me undress. But more than that, she gave me back my confidence. I started going out again, meeting friends, travelling, and living life. With Damson by my side I no longer felt trapped at home in tears. Instead, I looked forward to each day.



Jane and Walshy live in Scotland, which is the location of our first community. By bringing our work into local communities, we can reach more people like Jane, delivering the help they need, exactly where it's needed most.

We shared so many adventures together - talks, coffee mornings, even a bit of TV! Damson wasn't just my partner; she was my best friend. When she passed away in 2024, aged 13, I was heartbroken. I was so lucky to have had her.

But Canine Partners' support lasts a lifetime, so before Damson passed I'd already been partnered with my second canine partner, Walshy. Damson and Walshy shared my home together for nine months and it felt like she was gently passing him the baton.

Walshy is playful, cheeky and makes me laugh every day. We're always out



FUNDING THE FUTURE APPEAL

When I first suffered my spinal injury, life looked very bleak. Thanks to Canine Partners, I've had two amazing dogs who have transformed my life, but there are so many others still facing the same challenges I once did.

By donating to our Funding the Future Appeal this Christmas, you will help Canine Partners train more life-changing dogs like Damson and Walshy, giving more people the chance to regain their independence.

To find out more and donate, visit caninepartners.org.uk/winterappeal2025 or scan the QR code.



Working in local communities

Bringing independence closer to home

Expanding our work into local communities will allow us to tap into the incredible skills of our trainers, supporting dogs from puppyhood all the way to partnership – right in the heart of the communities they will benefit. It will help us create more life-changing partnerships without relying solely on our National Training Centre in the Midlands.

Canine partner Ivy was one of the puppies who trialled this new approach. Her Partnership Trainer Ellie shares her experience of training Ivy in the community.



Between 14 and 16 months, most dogs leave their Puppy Training Volunteer to continue their training at the National Training Centre, fine-tuning the skills that will transform lives. Ivy was fostered by volunteers Judith and Nick in the south as part of our new community work. Together we trained Ivy locally, which gave her real-world experience of busy streets, shops, and public transport, while building on her task work. We also worked closely with our local puppy satellite (a group where pups meet regularly for classes to practise obedience, social skills and the core task work) taking Ivy to classes to socialise with other dogs and learn in a group environment.



When Ivy was ready for her Partnership Placement Course (the final stage of training where the dog and new partner spend two weeks learning to work together and build their bond under the guidance of our Assistance Dog Trainers) we ran it in

her partner's home rather than at the National Training Centre. This meant no long journeys for either dog or partner and allowed Ivy to practise all her tasks in the very environment where she would live and work. Being trained in her home setting helped her settle quickly and strengthen her bond with her partner.



Ivy is now a fully jacketed canine partner and watching her journey has been incredible. Ivy's journey has shown us how working in local communities will help us support more people - making it more flexible, more personal and rooted in the communities we serve.

Of course, training is only part of the story. Keeping our dogs happy and enriched every day is just as important. At home, I do that with my own dog, Daisy. On the next page, we share one of our favourite enrichment activities!

DIY with Daisie

Create a sniffmas treat your dog will love

Meet Ellie's dog Daisie. She loves enrichment activities and one of her favourites is a snuffle mat. With Christmas coming up, here is an easy and fun way to make one at home - the perfect festive gift for your four-legged friend.

What's a snuffle mat?

A snuffle mat is a brilliant way to encourage natural sniffing and foraging, while also keeping dogs mentally stimulated.

What you'll need:



A sink mat or rubber mat with holes



Scissors



Fabric strips (approx. 4cm x 25cm)

Top tip: Fleece works best or recycle old T-shirts. Avoid thick, fraying fabrics or anything with buttons/embellishments.



Daisie, Dog Ambassador and Ellie's best friend!



1. Thread a strip of fabric down through one hole and back up through the next, then tie a tight double knot. Keep going until the row is full.



2. Turn the mat over and repeat in the opposite direction.



3. Continue strip by strip until all the holes are filled. The back should look neat and covered.



4. It's snuffle time! Hide kibble or dry treats among the fabric and let your dog snuffle away. For a festive touch, try red, green and white fabrics, or spell out the first letter of your dog's name.

Remember: Always supervise your dog while using their snuffle mat and regularly check it for any signs of wear or damage.

Find more tips on our blog - visit caninepartners.org.uk/snufflemat or scan the QR code. Make sure to share your snuffle snaps on socials and don't forget to tag us!



Expanding our breeding programme

The next generation of canine partners

Our Breeding Programme is central to our work - without dogs there is no Canine Partners. As we evolve the charity to support more people, our breeding programme must also change and grow.

We currently have 10 active broods across the UK. Around 80% of puppies are bred by Canine Partners. This allows us to carefully manage temperament, health and key skills.

In 2023 we welcomed our first Doodle litter (Labrador x Poodle crossbreeds), bred so we can support people on our waiting list with allergies.

Introducing different breeds and collaborating with other ADUK (Assistance Dogs UK) charities allows us to broaden the range of skills and strengths our dogs can offer, ensuring individuals are partnered with a dog best suited to their needs. We recently received a German Shepherd puppy from Guide Dogs as part of this collaboration.

Our Doodles



Doodle mum Rosa safely delivered eight healthy puppies as part of our expansion programme, and from their earliest days they showed exactly what our breeding programme is designed to achieve: healthy, confident puppies with the potential to change lives.

Earlier this year, three of the litter, Havana, Hank and Ruby, became fully-jacketed canine partners. Rosa was there to see them begin their partnerships, alongside the dedicated Dog Breeding volunteer, Nicola, who welcomed the puppies into the world and cared for them for their first two months.

Two of the puppies are continuing their journeys with ADUK charities Guide Dogs and Seeing Dogs Alliance, while Harvey and Jake remain in training with us and are due to be partnered later this year. Harvey is being trained in the local community in Lincolnshire.

Last year, Rosa welcomed her second litter – four Doodle puppies who are already making great progress with their Puppy Training volunteers. We can't wait to watch them follow in their siblings' pawprints and go on to transform lives.



Havana, Hank, and Ruby

Give a gift that changes lives.



Robin

Woof! I'm Robin - a cheeky pup in training to become an assistance dog. My days are full of play and discovering the big wide world, but most importantly, I'm learning the skills I'll need to one day transform someone's life.

My best friend Holly is on her own training journey too and we love hearing about each other's adventures.

This festive season, you can give a gift that really matters - a My Amazing Puppy sponsorship! From just £5 a month or £60 a year, you can support us, follow our journey and see how we're growing, learning and having fun.



Holly

Your sponsorship includes:

- Follow our adventures, mischief and training progress with regular 'Pupdates'
- A personalised certificate
- A welcome pack with a cuddly soft toy puppy



Sponsor both of us for £10 a month or £120 a year, and you'll also get a My Amazing Puppy water bottle - perfect for showing off your puppy pride!



Order by 15 December for Christmas delivery. Visit myamazingpuppy.org.uk, scan the QR code or call 01530 225930 to start your sponsorship today.

**my
amazing
puppy**



Keeping tails wagging this Winter

Winter wellbeing tips from Veterinary Nurse Hayley.

From icy mornings to shorter days, winter brings extra challenges for our four-legged friends. Hayley, our Veterinary and Wellbeing Manager, shares her top tips for keeping dogs happy and healthy during the cold weather.



Hayley's top tips:

1. Winter walkies

Cold weather can be a shock, especially for some coat types (such as greyhounds), puppies, or older dogs. When the weather grows colder, start with shorter walks and gradually build up, or opt for two short walks instead of one long one. Keep an eye out for signs that your dog is growing cold or distressed, and if they get wet or begin shivering bring them inside immediately.

2. Dark nights

As the clocks change, nights grow longer, and fireworks season begins, it's best to stick to daytime walks. If you do need to venture out after dark use reflective or LED gear to stay safe.

3. Toileting in the snow

If your dog hesitates to go outside, clear a small patch of garden or find a sheltered spot. If possible, go outside with them, and reward them afterwards to help them feel confident and positive about braving the chill.



4. Watch for hazards

Be mindful of rock salt and antifreeze. Rock salt can irritate paws and upset stomachs if licked; antifreeze is highly toxic. After walks, wipe and dry your dog's paws to remove residue.



5. Keeping warm

Make sure your dog has warm blankets in their bed to keep them warm and cosy (but be careful not to overheat crates or pens). And get them comfortable wearing a waterproof or fleece coat on chilly walks.

6. Indoor activities

Shorter days don't mean less exercise! Play indoor games like 'find it,' practice training, or use enrichment toys such as Kongs, chews, or snuffle mats. Why not make your own with help from Ellie and Daisy on page 6!

Carol Services 2025

After their fantastic success last year, our festive Christmas Carol Services are back for 2025.

London



Thursday 4 December
7pm (doors open at 6.30pm)
St Mary The Boltons, SW10 9TB

Loughborough



Sunday 7 December
3pm (doors open 2.15pm)
All Saints Church, LE11 1EE

Arundel



Thursday 11 December
6.30pm (doors open 5.45pm)
Arundel Cathedral, BN18 9AY

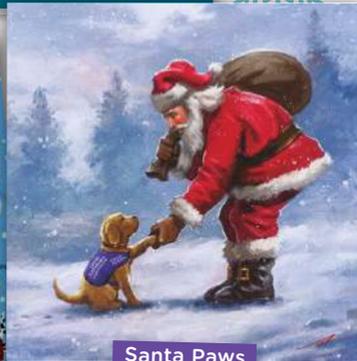
Email fundraising@caninepartners.org.uk or scan the QR codes to find out more and reserve your tickets.



Season's Treatings!



12 Dogs of Christmas



Santa Paws



Together for Christmas

Our beautiful range of charity cards is perfect for friends, family, and anyone who loves dogs as much as you do.

Every pack you buy helps us train more incredible assistance dogs.

You can explore our wider selection and order online by scanning the QR code, visiting caninepartners.org.uk/cardshop, or by calling 01227 811 673*.

*Phone lines are open Monday to Friday, 8:30am - 5pm (until 4pm on Fridays). Please note that all orders are processed by our fulfilment partner and cannot be placed at our National Training Centre.

£5
a pack

Life behind the lead: A week with a Puppy Training volunteer



Meet Leslie, who is helping guide puppies on their journey to become life-changing assistance dogs

Leslie from Leicestershire has been volunteering with us for three years, since losing his beloved wife. "I wanted to continue helping others in a meaningful way," he said. "That's when I discovered Canine Partners were looking for volunteers."

He welcomed his first puppy, Candy, four months later. After 18 months, Candy left for Assistance Dog Training. Leslie recalls seeing her partnered for the first time: "I watched a lady in a wheelchair cross the car park with her dog by her side. My coordinator mouthed, 'It's Candy.' I was in tears, overwhelmed with pride."

Leslie's second dog, Violetta, is now in training getting ready to be partnered, while his newest pup, Ada, is just beginning her journey. "From early socialisation to learning good manners, every second with Ada is an adventure."



Candy



Violetta



Ada

My week with Ada

Monday

Ada and I begin our day with breakfast before heading into the garden. She spent some time exploring and playing, before we have a short training session practising "sit" and "stay".

Tuesday

Ada comes with me as I go about my day, making the role really flexible. Today we popped to a local café and had a walk around the park. She was well behaved meeting new people and seeing cyclists for the first time; although she did try to chase a squirrel! These little everyday moments are perfect for practising her focus and training in real-life situations.



Wednesday

Wednesday is puppy training class with our wonderful Puppy Coordinator, Katie. Surrounded by other pups, Ada practised recall, walking politely by my side and settling in busy spaces. Even with lots of distractions, she stays focused...most of the time!



Thursday

Today I took Ada to her puppy physio session, which involves lots of stretching, balancing and navigating small obstacles. Starting these exercises young helps keep her muscles and joints strong - an important part of growing into a healthy, happy dog.



Friday

It's my job to make sure Ada has lots of socialisation, so I'm always looking for ways to help her experience new things and build her confidence. Today, we explored a quiet nature trail together. Ada practiced walking calmly on the lead, which she loved. Lots of sniffing new scents, we even met a few friendly dogs along the way.



Weekend

By the end of a busy week, Ada has grown in confidence while having plenty of fun along the way. The weekend is the perfect chance to discover new experiences - we go on longer walks, play games and squeeze in a few training sessions.

Puppy Training Volunteers like Leslie guide each pup through their crucial first year, helping them gain confidence, learn good manners, and build strong foundations for the life-changing tasks ahead.

Volunteer for us

Your time can change lives

Our Volunteer Manager Louise talks about how our partnerships wouldn't be possible without our amazing volunteers.



Every day I get to see the incredible difference our volunteers make - they are the heartbeat of our charity. Without them, none of the life-changing work we do would be possible. And with demand for our dogs growing, we need more volunteers than ever before.

Volunteering with us is flexible and rewarding. Whether you want to work directly with our dogs or support our work behind the scenes, there's a role for you.

Dog roles:

- Guide a puppy through their first year
- Support dogs during their next training stage at our National Training Centre
- Provide a safe, loving home for dogs needing short-term care
- Help raise the next generation of life-changing assistance dogs

Support roles:

- Inspire others by sharing your story at events and in the community
- Lend your skills to help our charity grow
- Start or join a local group to raise funds or awareness of our work.



If you're interested in volunteering scan the QR code or visit caninepartners.org.uk/volunteering

Celebrating our amazing corporates

At Canine Partners, we're lucky to have an amazing community of corporate supporters who share our passion for transforming lives. These relationships go far beyond financial support - they help us reach new people, tell our story and raise the vital funds that make our work possible. We're delighted to have welcomed the support of some fantastic new companies this year.

Persie

Persie Distillery, a family-run small-batch spirit producer in Scotland, were inspired to support us after seeing our dogs in action at the Chatsworth Country Fair. In March, they launched their special-edition Golden Retriever Gin at Crufts, donating £1 from every bottle sold to help us continue our life-changing work. It's the perfect gift for gin lovers this Christmas! Buy yours here: persiedistillery.com/golden-gin



Become a corporate supporter today and help us create more life-changing partnerships. We offer dedicated support and a fun range of ways to get involved. To learn more, contact our Corporate Team at corporate@caninepartners.org.uk



Professional Talent Recruitment are specialists in connecting the right people with the right roles. They now generously donate a percentage of their monthly placement fees to Canine Partners.



Our newest supporter, Inkfiredesign, is a proudly disabled-led marketing, design and technology agency. The team are already full of creative fundraising ideas and we can't wait to see their plans come to life.



We're hugely grateful to The Screwfix Foundation, whose generous grant funded much-needed hoists at our National Training Centre. This essential equipment supports people with physical disabilities to move safely and with dignity, whether transferring from a wheelchair to a bed or chair, or when using the bathroom. Ensuring our training centre is fully accessible and comfortable allows our partners to work confidently with their dogs in the best possible environment.

Remembering Colonel Alan Jukes OBE



In July, we were saddened by the passing of our long-standing friend, supporter and benefactor, Colonel Alan Jukes OBE.

A founding Trustee of Canine Partners, Alan and his late wife Caroline were passionate about our work and were instrumental in the growth of the

charity. Their generosity enabled us to purchase our Southern and National Training Centres and modernise our website; as well as supporting our Big Give campaigns between 2016 and 2021.

Alan was also President of our Legacy Pledger Club, helping to inspire others to support Canine Partners through future gifts and ensuring a lasting impact for generations to come.

In his memory, a new puppy has been named Alan. At just four months old, he's starting his journey and taking the first steps toward becoming a life-changing assistance Dog.



Leave a Legacy. Transform a Life.

I'm Louie the Legal Labrador, your Legacy paw-guide! Did you know 50% of our income comes from gifts in Wills?

We receive no government funding. Every partnership we create is only possible thanks to kind supporters who give through donations and legacies. By remembering Canine Partners in your Will, you could give a disabled person independence, confidence and companionship for life.

Our Gifts in Wills Guide takes you through everything step by step. Plus, with our partner Farewill, you can even write your Will for free – quickly, simply and with complete peace of mind.



For more information or to request your free Gifts in Wills Guide, **scan the QR code** or get in touch at legacies@caninepartners.org.uk

**Christmas
Challenge
2025**

Big Give

2 to 9 December 2025



One donation, twice the impact.

This December, donations made to Canine Partners via The Big Give Christmas Challenge will be doubled at no extra cost, meaning your donation will have twice the impact.

Doubling your donation via the Big Give will help more people like Wendy.

Wendy was born with a rare condition called Recessive Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa. Even the slightest touch blisters her skin, and internal scarring makes everyday tasks like bending or picking up things painful.

For decades, Wendy relied on her husband Peter for 24-hour care.

But Wendy – and Peter’s – lives were transformed when she was partnered with canine partner Edward, affectionately known as Teddy.



Wendy and canine partner Edward (Teddy)

“

Canine Partners has helped remind me that life is still there to be lived.

“Teddy wasn’t just a dog, he was my lifeline. He helped me get dressed, retrieve things I dropped, open doors and stayed with me during hospital visits. One night, he saved my life by alerting Peter when I was choking. He gave me confidence and a life I never thought was possible.”

Scan the QR code below or visit caninepartners.org.uk/thebiggive2025 to find out how you can **double your donation** for free between 2 and 9 December 2025.

Need help with the Big Give? Call our fundraising team on **03456 580480** or email supportservices@caninepartners.org.uk

