

# LEAD ON

**Magazine of Seeing Dogs**

**A working name of The Seeing Dogs Alliance**

***Training Dogs to Guide Blind and  
Partially Sighted People***

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Editorial

*By Jane Anderson*

**Dear Reader**

**Although we are now a quarter of the way through the new year, it is the first opportunity to wish you all Best Wishes for 2026 and hope it has treated you well so far.**

**I would just like to remind everyone how you can support ‘The Seeing Dogs Alliance’, without spending any extra money yourselves. Please see further on in the magazine about ‘Give as You Live’ and ‘The Pets at Home Reward Card Scheme’, from which ‘The Seeing Dogs Alliance’ can benefit financially and with vouchers to spend in store.**

**Since the last edition of ‘Lead On’, we have had another qualification and new partnership and another puppy join the ranks. You can hear about them and all the other trainee Seeing Dogs and Puppies further on.**

**The Charity continues to spread the word about ourselves and to get ourselves more widely known. It is always looking for new supporters, individual and corporate. If you have any ideas regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact us.**

**As we start to see the flowers growing anew in the garden, let us continue our good work in trying to provide Seeing Dogs and new futures to the Visually Impaired.**

**Enjoy your read.**

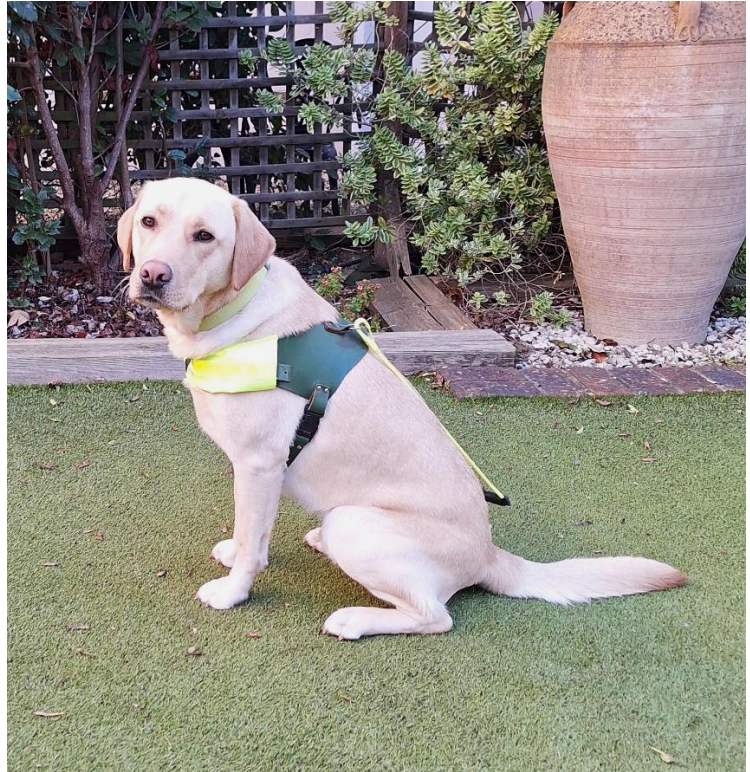
**Regards**

**Jane Anderson  
Editor**

**Training clients in the month of January can always be fraught with weather issues. Snow, ice and rain can make a training course arduous and hard work but that wasn't the case this time for Liam and Proctor.**

**Due to other training commitments, Liam joined me in Gillingham to commence his training, staying at a local hotel, whilst we covered all the main training aspects, before we both headed up north to finish off the training in his home town.**

**A pleasing standard of work was seen 4 weeks after qualification, with Liam showing a good understanding of Proctor's needs and handling requirements. A great start to their partnership.**



**Figure 1. Proctor in full harness at qualification**



**Figure 2. Liam and Proctor**

Trainee Seeing Dogs

Sadie

*By John Grave, Instructor*



**Figure 3. Sadie in a garden**



**Figure 4. Sadie sitting on the patio**

**Sadie has consistently produced a pleasing standard of work. She is a lovely natured fun dog who enjoys her work but also loves to play with other dogs.**

**She enjoys stepping out in harness and has a good awareness of her responsibilities to the role. Given time to settle in I'm sure she will make a great Seeing Dog.**

Harry

*By Jane Madigan*

**Harry has started his formal training, living in a village in Northamptonshire and loving country living!**

**He is a delightful boy, who loves his routines and walks around the village. He learns very quickly and is already stopping and standing at the down kerb and up kerb. He learns his routes fairly quickly and always questions me when we change the way we are going. He is very affectionate and enjoys calm strokes, when we are out and about, especially when we have to stop and stand for anything. He is good in the house and loves to lay at my feet and have ear strokes.**

**Time spent in the back garden doing obedience, to maintain his listening skills, have helped Harry overall in responding, more readily, to the many distractions in the village. Once a week, he gets to free run in a secure dog field, on the edge of the village, which is also next to horse gallops. His first look at horses passing by, was calm and curious, before his attention was back to playing with his Kong and sniffing the previous occupants. His recall is good.**

**It's early days for Harry in the 'big boys club', so we will see how he progresses, once he has recovered from his recent neuter.**



**Figure 5. Harry in the garden**



**Figure 6. Harry in the garden**

Glen - 6 Months to 10 Months

*By John and Sue Ferguson*

**Since our last update at 6 months, Fox Red puppy Glen continues to grow into a young dog and now weighs in at a healthy 25.8 kg. Glen completed his Kennel Club Puppy Foundation level soon after our last update.**



**Figure 7. Smiling Glen**

**As the intensity of his Socialisation, Obedience and Familiarisation training increased, there was inevitably more focus on Glen's lead walking, surface work on various different surfaces, traffic noise familiarisation, travel and new experiences.**

**Glen continued at weekly Puppy Classe's for obedience training, in addition to the work done at home or in outdoor locations locally. Glen has adapted well in most scenario's presented to him.**

**Glen experienced his first Christmas at home and was surprised as to what nice things he found in those parcels, that mysteriously appeared by the Christmas tree, on Christmas Day. Glen enjoyed helping us to open them.**

**Some of Glen's more adventurous trips out included: a pre-Christmas visit by train to the West End in London, The Charles Dickens Festival in Rochester, Ikea Lakeside, the seaside promenade in Tankerton Kent and a community meet up in a church.**

**These enabled experiences of trains, buses, waterfowl distraction, revolving doors, crowded streets, street entertainers and general lead walking, whilst ignoring other dogs, cyclists and people. He also practiced his sit and stay work. Glen did very well in all these situations to keep focused. It's not all work though and Glen regularly enjoys rest and relaxation off lead in his favourite local parks, including reward free runs in King George Park Sittingbourne Kent, after his weekly puppy classes. Glen's off lead recall and return from dogs remains excellent at this time in his development.**



**Figure 8. Glen sitting at the till at the supermarket.**

**Glen is now 10 months old and very much resembles a young dog rather than a puppy, though Glen still, currently, retains his puppy enthusiasm, affection and cheekiness. Glen's coat is a stunning shade of Red and still retains some puppy softness and a more pronounced wavy streak of fur along his back. He is a handsome, happy chap.**

**A couple of weeks back Glen successfully completed his Kennel Club Bronze level certificate and will start on his Kennel Club Silver level in the near future. Well done to Glen, he worked hard at it.**

**The next few months will see Glen moving more into his teenage period of development and then thereafter adulthood. There are subtle signs Glen is improving on some of his work, leading towards the next stage of his life and we are hopeful to give Glen more extensive work and experiences of life, plus of course still much fun in the coming months, before he moves on to training.**

Bella

*By Jane Anderson*



**Figure 9. Bella looking at her Puppy Walker**

**Bella, a Red Fox lab, is now 9 months old and weighs 20kg. She has a gentle nature and has matured into a very responsive and calm dog.**

**Nothing seems to phase her, although she does give a definite look of disgust if her Puppy Walker sneezes!**

**She is confident in the street, supermarket, shopping centres and on various modes of transport. She is less hesitant on stairs and is no longer distracted by pigeons or dogs.**

**She continues to attend puppy classes and will soon be assessed on the Kennel Club Bronze Good Citizen Award.**

**She is walked off the lead when in the park and will walk close or return when requested to do so. In the coming months, we hope to attend the Ideal Home Exhibition and several County Shows with her.**

**We are still receiving compliments on her good behaviour and we will definitely miss her when she moves to an instructor for Seeing Dog training.**



**Figure 10. Bella waiting for the train**

Paddy

*By Ian + Kristine Bjarnum-Green*

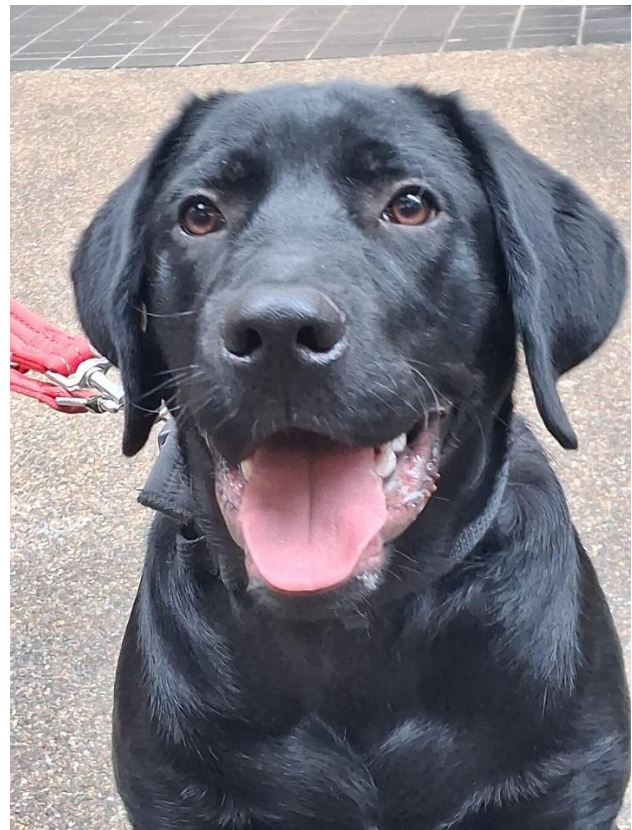
**Paddy is now seven months old and has been enjoying a lot more outdoor life over the last couple of months, both through walks and free runs. He is a big boy now and likes everyone to know he is in the house by joining conference calls and team meetings, or joining in with the cooking, whether it's Christmas or just everyday cooking!**

**His newest interest is to study the birds in the garden and to try and understand why the lawn mower makes an odd noise.**

**He is not happy at all when his outdoor space is clean and tidy, as he jumps around it (no harm done to the dog).**



**Figure 11. Paddy with his puppy walker on a trip to Cambridge**



**Figure 12. A portrait of Paddy.**

Jensen

*By Leasyl Kavanagh*



**Figure 13. Jensen**



**Figure 14. Jensen in a field**

**Black Labrador, Jensen will be seven months old in March and continues to be a very sweet natured puppy. He still loves his toys, plays happily on his own and is always keen for a game of tug.**

**We have caught the train a few times and he settles well even with the distraction of commuters wanting to say hello. Free runs are lots of fun with him and his recall is very good.**

**Jensen is a pleasure to live with and has been a lovely overnight guest for his boarders.**

Dora

*By Emma Mann*



**Figure 15. Dora relaxing**



**Figure 16. Dora on her bed**

**Dora has just turned 6 months. Dora loves her training and is doing so well.**

**She has been on the train and will be venturing into London next week. She comes with me to the post office and to do our weekly shop at the supermarket, as well as meet ups with friends at the coffee shop. Being so adorable, everyone wants to say hello to her (and you can't blame them!) but she is doing really well at ignoring all the attention and concentrating on the job at hand.**

**I'm pleased to say that the stairs are not scary anymore and she tackles any staircase, up or down, with ease.**

**At home she is a joy and loves playing with her housemates, Beau and Saffron, but the love of her life is Grandma's Cockapoo, Bertie. They are inseparable once together.**

Dawn

*By Krystyna Marshall*



**Figure 17. Dawn in the garden with the cat**

**Hi, my name Dawn and I have been described as a sweet, assertive, busy and very cuddly puppy. I'm a bit of a mix with mum being a labrador x golden retriever and dad being a golden retriever.**

**At the moment, I am trying to get the hang of our routines and toilet training, but I'm hoping everything will fall into place soon and so do my puppy walkers! I've been spending time making friends with the resident cat called Jam, although, she is quite picky about the games we play. I know that because she regularly taps me on the nose if she isn't keen on the game.**



**Figure 18. Dawn settled in the coffee shop.**

**I've been on a couple of outings to meet new friends and had a look round our local Tesco, which was really interesting, with shiny trolleys and lots of food smells. Hoping to be out and about properly soon.  
Love Dawn**

Meet up at Spitalfields

*By Jane Anderson*

**On a blustery Monday morning in early March, Puppies and Puppy Walkers belonging to Instructor Louise Casey, travelled from Essex and Harrow and met up at Spitalfields.**

**What an impressive bunch we all were. We drew a lot of smiles and ‘oos’ and ‘aahs’ from the public. The puppies maintained very good behaviour and the puppy walkers chatted and swapped tips on puppy walking. Of course, we all walked around the market too.**

**Dora, Paddy, Jensen and Bella did us all proud. We all hope to meet up again soon.**



**Figure 19. Seeing Dog Puppies and their Walkers at Spitalfields.**

**It costs around £20,000 to fully train a Seeing Dog. With generous donations we can continue to provide visually impaired people with independence and mobility, that can be taken for granted. 100% of your donation goes to training Seeing Dogs.**



**Figure 20. Number to text to give £5**

**You can now donate £5 through your phone by texting SEEINGDOGS to 70085.**

**What difference does your £5 donation make?**

- **£5 will pay for a puppy's food, vet care, toys and treats for a day.**
- **£10 will pay for a collar and bells a Seeing Dog has to wear when it is out and about. The bells mean the dog's partner knows where the dog is!**
- **£15 will pay for a grooming kit, keeping our Seeing Dogs smart and presentable. It is essential to groom our dogs to keep them healthy and looking the part.**

#### GIVE AS YOU LIVE

**Another way of raising funds for The Seeing Dogs Alliance is through 'Give as you Live'.**

**'Give as you live' allows anyone to raise funds for their favourite charity when they shop online, at no extra cost to yourself. 'Give as you live' is partnered with 6,000 stores, as well as dozens of providers across insurance, energy and broadband. As a 'thank you' for shopping with these stores, a certain % of your spend is given to the charity of your choice. Each retailer will specify their % 'thank you'.**

**There is NO EXTRA cost to yourself. All you have to do is register with 'Give as you live' [www.giveasyoulive.com](http://www.giveasyoulive.com) and specify your charity (The Seeing Dogs Alliance).**

**The thing to remember is that to get the % thank you, you MUST access the website of the store you wish to buy from, THROUGH the 'Give as**

you live' website [www.giveasyoulive.com](http://www.giveasyoulive.com) . New stores are joining 'Give as you live' daily.

**PLEASE join up if you can.**

Pets at Home

**The Seeing Dogs Alliance can now be nominated as your named Charity to receive your reward points from your Pets at Home Card.**

**Every 500 rewards a person earns on their 'Pets Card', will give the 'Charity' one Life Line point i.e. £1. Vouchers for the Life Line points will be issued 4 times a year, to The Seeing Dogs for them to use.**



Figure 21. Pets at Home Logo

Promoting The Seeing Dogs Alliance

**The Seeing Dogs Alliance has a website – <https://seeingdogs.org.uk> Facebook and an Instagram account.**

**Please share, follow and like all three social media outlets to spread the word. We are expanding our presence across social media, to support our drive for direct to consumer giving.**

**People need to know we're here, who we are, what we do, and why they should care about us. If someone wants to donate money, or time as a volunteer, then why us?**

**The Seeing Dogs Alliance has a Just Giving Page <https://www.justgiving.com/seeingdogs> for donations.**

SUBSCRIPTIONS & DONATIONS

**To give a donation, or to pay your subscription for one or more years by cheque, please use the enclosed Subscription and Donation Form.**

**If you wish to give a donation and/or pay your subscription automatically each year, please complete the enclosed Bankers' Order and return it to us, as we need to keep a record of who pays their subscription or donates by this method. We will send it to your bank. Payments can be made**

monthly, quarterly, or annually by this method. If you want to combine a regular donation with your subscription using this method, £5 of your first payment for the financial year will be considered to be your subscription. The Subscription and Donation Form and the Bankers' Order will also be enclosed with the braille and tape copies, and they will be sent as an attachment to the email copies.

If you are a taxpayer and you haven't given us permission to claim Gift Aid on your donation, we would be grateful if you could complete the Gift Aid Declaration, on whichever of the forms you use, to give us permission to claim Gift Aid. This now includes people who took out a Bankers' Order before January 2013, as we now have a different charity number. We send the Subscription and Donation Form and Bankers' Order to everyone who receives *Lead On*, whether they are subscribing or donating or not, as it saves keeping several lists. If you want to set up a new Bankers' Order, you will need to cancel any previous ones.

You can donate online via our website, [www.seeingdogs.org.uk](http://www.seeingdogs.org.uk) or on [www.mydonatebt.com](http://www.mydonatebt.com). Remember that you can also sponsor a puppy or a dog via our website.

You can donate, or pay subscriptions, by a direct bank transfer, although, if you wish us to claim Gift Aid, you will have to complete a Gift Aid Declaration. Please use your name as the reference, so that we can recognise your payment. Our bank details are sort code 40 52 40, account number 00010645. These details are also on the Bankers' Order.

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Thank you.

*Would you like us to feature YOUR stories and news?*  
**If so, please email your photos and personal stories, by  
1st June 2026, to: [info@seeingdogs.org.uk](mailto:info@seeingdogs.org.uk)**

