



## Guide Dogs 2011

# Our partnerships and dogs

- We breed more than 1,200 guide dog pups each year and we are committed to the care and welfare of all our dogs
- Guide Dogs has removed the minimum age for guide dog ownership and in 2011 plans to create 17 young people guide dog partnerships
- Guide Dogs is helping over 4,800 blind or partially sighted people to get more mobile, through the guide dog service and our Vision Support Services
- Guide Dogs is developing a Buddy Dog service in hope of helping even more blind and partially sighted people. The pilot is focusing on children and young people providing the chance to build vital communication and mobility skills
- Our new state of the art breeding centre in Warwickshire will increase our capacity to breed puppies from around 1,200 annually to 1,500
- Our new breeding centre is essential to Guide Dogs' future, as it will allow us to help more blind and partially sighted people lead independent lives
- Guide Dogs has been around since 1931, times have changed, but we're still getting on with the job
- In the UK there are over 4,500 guide dog owners
- Guide Dogs aims to be supporting 6,500 partnerships by 2020
- We have created nearly 30,000 life-changing guide dog partnerships in 80 years
- 10-12 months of puppy walking and 8 months of specialised training is required before a dog is qualified to guide blind or partially sighted people
- Every person and dog is unique, so matching a guide dog to an owner is a complex and carefully managed process. Our trainers take into account a person's needs – walking speed, height and lifestyle – and look for a dog that will be a good match
- We aim to provide new applicants with a guide dog within six months, and existing guide dog owners within three months
- We make a lifetime commitment to each guide dog owner to provide them with a guide dog for as long as it is a suitable and safe means of mobility. This means guide dog owners could have eight or more dogs in their lifetime
- We regularly visit newly qualified guide dog owners to see how they are getting on and to provide advice and support
- The average working life of a guide dog is around seven years
- In 2010, we trained over 790 guide dog owners, of which around 33% were new clients
- In cooperation with other organisations we train dual purpose dogs that provide assistance to visually impaired people with additional disabilities
- By 2015 Guide Dogs aims to reach and help 64,000 people
- We aim to create 800 partnerships in 2011
- In 2011 we aim for around 1275 pups to start their journey to become a guide dog
- In 2011 we are working with other assistance dog organisations to train 4 specific dual qualified dogs: 2 seizure alert dogs, one wheelchair dog and one bio-detect dog