

Support Dogs' charity magazine

# Aura

Summer/Autumn 2019 Edition 34



**“Having Wadsley has made a huge difference to my confidence levels and quality of life.”**

Brogan, seizure alert client

**AURA FEATURE STORY ON PAGE 10-11**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**How Judith's second rescue dog turned into a hero hound**  
Read more on page 8

**Lovable Labrador Iggy turns Louis's life around**  
Find out more on page 12

**supportdogs**   
For Autism. For Epilepsy. For Disability



# Volunteering with Support Dogs

## Puppy socialisers

- Do you live within an hour's drive of our centre in Sheffield and are at home the majority of the day?
- Could you provide a home for a gorgeous support dog puppy from the age of 8 weeks for 14-16 months.
- Full support provided. We can arrange a temporary home for your pup when you go away or in an emergency.
- All food, bedding, toys and equipment will be provided.
- Medical expenses and insurance is covered by Support Dogs



## Collection tin coordinators

We need volunteers across the UK to place collection tins in their local community  
Help raise vital funds and awareness of our charity



## Be a Support Dog speaker

We are looking for volunteers across the UK to help raise awareness and give talks to groups about our work.

You will need your own transport, able to attend training twice a year at our Sheffield centre and handle all the booking arrangements.

## Could you lend a hand at our fundraising events?



We need volunteers to help with fundraising events across the UK. These range from small bucket collections to large country shows.

**For more volunteer opportunities, & details please get in touch**  
**www.supportdogs.org.uk**  
**phone 0114 261 7800**

MESSAGE FROM RITA...

## How to save a life

Epilepsy affects a huge number of families in the UK; well over ½ million people are currently diagnosed with the condition. For over 20 years, our charity has been helping people with epilepsy, through our pioneering seizure alert programme.

We train our support dogs to provide an incredible 100 per cent reliable warning before a client has a seizure. This warning is also consistent in its length. So, if a client receives for instance, a 25-minute warning from their support dog, they know it is always 25 minutes before they are to have a seizure, giving them time to prepare and get to a safe place.

A preliminary scientific study released in March reported some evidence that dogs are able to detect the onset of a seizure through scent. However much more work needs to be done. Our charity is currently involved in further research to pinpoint exactly what it is that our dogs are picking up. This could be a next step in understanding how dogs can further support people living with uncontrolled epilepsy.

Dogs are very good observers of humans. Dogs know what is going to happen when you pick up their leash - their behaviour indicates this. Their behaviour can also change when they pick up on more subtle cues. This maybe indeed be a smell, or this could also be preceded by a behavioural or another form of physiological change in the client that occurs before an oncoming seizure. There is still much more to be learnt.

The impact of our epilepsy seizure alert dogs isn't just life changing, it is life-saving. Almost 1,000 people die each year following a sudden, unexpected seizure. We are keen to increase awareness of our work to those who could benefit most of



all from it - those with a confirmed diagnosis of epilepsy and have very regular seizures. Our clients need to have at least 10 seizures a month to be accepted on our programme, however we know thousands of individuals experience many more than this.

While scientific research catches up to understand the reasons why our seizure alert dogs have been predicting seizures for over 20 years, we ask for your support in increasing awareness to those who could most benefit from our work, and to those who could help our charity to grow its resources and help more people.

*Rita Howson*

Rita Howson  
Chief executive

## About Support Dogs

It's Support Dogs' passion and commitment to ensure that people affected by autism, epilepsy and physical disability can enjoy a greater level of independence. We aim to do this by providing, training and supporting registered assistance dogs.

We provide:

**Autism assistance dogs** for children aged three to ten years with autism. The dogs are trained to provide safety for the child and reduce stress in social environments.

**Seizure alert dogs** for people with epilepsy. The dogs are trained to provide a hundred per cent reliable, 10-55 minute warning prior to the onset of an epileptic seizure, which enables them to get to a place of their choosing and take control of the situation.

In some instances it has been reported that seizure alert dogs have also been shown to reduce seizure frequency.

**Disability assistance dogs** for people with physical disabilities. The client's own pet dog is trained to perform tasks which are specifically tailored to their individual needs; examples of these tasks include:

- Opening and closing doors
- Raising the alarm
- Fetching the post
- Loading and unloading the washing machine
- Assisting with dressing and undressing

Support Dogs is a registered charity and does not charge for its services. However we rely entirely on voluntary donations and receive no government funding.

Chief Executive: Rita Howson

Chair: Barry Brackner

Honorary President: Angela Rippon CBE

Patrons: The Earl & Countess of Scarborough  
Elaine Paige OBE

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To sponsor a dog today call Support Dogs on

**0114 261 7800**

to donate visit

[www.supportdogs.org.uk](http://www.supportdogs.org.uk)



# Ruby: Kim's small miracle

Pintsize pooch Ruby is proof that when it comes to being a successful support dog, size doesn't matter.

Newly-qualified disability assistance dog Ruby causes quite a stir in the streets of South Shields when she goes out with her owner Kim Phillips.

The tiny Border Terrier - who fitted in the palm of Kim's hand when she was just a week old - doesn't fit the stereotype of what an assistance dog looks like.

*"Ruby is such a cute-looking dog and everyone is amazed when they see her in her Support Dogs' jacket," says Kim. "People are so used to seeing Labradors and Retrievers, and have never seen a Border Terrier wearing a service dog jacket before!"*

Ruby is Kim's first support dog, and is helping her to get on with the independent life she has craved for the past 30 years, since a motorbike accident robbed her of both her health and a promising career.

*"I was the first female deputy master carpenter to work in West End theatre and was on track to really do well, when I had my accident while I was back home in the North East, on holiday," recalls Kim, who was in her late 30s at the time.*

Kim injured her back, legs feet, and particularly her shoulders, and for months and then years after struggled to regain her health.

*"It was just one thing after another. Until the accident I'd never seen the inside of a hospital, but afterwards I was in and out all the time, being passed from pillar to post, as they tried to find out what was wrong with me," she says.*

*"I was in great pain, lost all my mobility, and I couldn't even stand up - the harder I tried the weaker I got. It was an awful time."*

After a two-year spell as a hospital inpatient, in 2000 Kim was finally diagnosed with ME or myalgic encephalomyelitis, a chronic condition that causes extreme muscle pain and exhaustion. She also has dystonia, a condition that leads to uncontrolled and painful muscle spasms.

She had to move from her flat to a

council bungalow, and once she had more space she and her carer Sylvia decided to get a dog. She adds: *"I grew up with dogs and have always loved them. When the last dog I had died back in the 1980s I was heartbroken and said I'd never have another one and took me almost 20 years before I did."*

Unfortunately the first rescue dog she took in proved to be vicious and had to be sent back. But with Ruby, Kim struck gold. *"Because of my circumstances I really needed a puppy that I could bring up, and we got Ruby at eight weeks; she was a gorgeous little thing. Then I found Support Dogs after searching on the Internet. I've always liked training dogs and I liked the idea that they involved you in the training - they didn't do it all for you."*

Ruby showed a natural aptitude for working, being quick, intelligent and quick to learn and absorb new tasks. *"She's dead keen to learn and she's blossomed as a working dog," says Kim. "It's the little things - for example my shoulders are very bad, so when she picks things up for me she puts her paws in my knee so I don't have to lean forward. She makes life easier for me;*

*more bearable."*

Ruby's support for Kim inside and outside the home has also made life easier for Sylvia.

*"Since I've had Ruby I'm more confident in going to the shops on my own; people make way for me and move out of the way. It's a completely different experience, and as a result Sylvia is a lot happier for me to go out by myself," says Kim. "And Ruby will pick up the post and help me take my jacket off, which frees Sylvia up to have more time on her own. Ruby acts as her deputy."*

With Ruby by her side Kim has plans to do more than she was previously able; she is a life-long Buddhist and is planning to set up a meditation group in the area. And she hopes to be able to give talks about her favourite charity and raise awareness of its work.

*"I'm so grateful to Support Dogs for what they have done for me. They've been invaluable," she says. "Not only are they interested in and love their dogs, but they are also very aware of people with disabilities, and adapt to your needs. Their attitude is a breath of fresh air."*





# CAN YOU TAKE ON A CHALLENGE?

Help us change the lives of those with autism, epilepsy and disability by taking part in these brilliant challenges. For more details please email [fundraising@supportdogs.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@supportdogs.org.uk) or ring 0114 2617800.



## Twenty-one Marathons and counting!

In April, Patrick Harfield will be tackling the London Marathon for the 21st time. This in itself would be a feat for most people but Patrick also runs in a 7ft tall dog suit, all in aid of Support Dogs!

Patrick became involved with Support Dogs when his brother was matched with a seizure alert dog, Aura. Seeing the life-changing impact Aura had on his life has been all the incentive he needs to take on this massive challenge and raise nearly £30,000 for our work.

In 2020, we are looking for runners to join Patrick in the London Marathon - dog suit optional! Get in touch with us on [fundraising@supportdogs.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@supportdogs.org.uk) or 0114 261 7800

## Great North Run Sunday 9 September



Have you ever wanted to run the iconic Great North Run or want to set yourself the challenge of completing the 13.1 mile course? We have places available in this world famous-race. We ask our runners to raise a minimum of £300 with a £25 registration fee (only payable when we offer the place). We will be with you every step to the finish line with help and advice, a Support Dogs running vest and unrivalled cheering on the day!

## London Triathlon 27 - 28 July



Swim, bike and run challenges don't get better than this! We have places available in the world's largest triathlon, the London Triathlon in July. With a variety of distances to choose from, it doesn't matter whether you've never done a triathlon before or are an Olympic champion - there is an event for everyone.

## Peak District Challenge 13 and 14 July



Explore Derbyshire's finest scenery on this trek through the stunning Peak District with 25km, 50km and 100km route options. Fully supported and a glass of fizz when you finish, this is a real gem of a challenge!



## CHALLENGES FOR YOU AND YOUR DOG

### Dog Jog

Across the country June - October



All dogs (and their humans!) whatever breed or size, can take part in this fantastic, fun, relaxed 5km dog jogging event. It's all about getting involved, having fun and enjoying the great outdoors with your favourite four-legged friend!

### CanIX

Across the country Autumn - Spring



Fantastic cross-country running events for you and your dog. Taking place across the country in woodlands, parkland, beaches and green spaces, you can take on a range of distances from 2km to 10km. Look out for a special Support Dogs event in October!

### K9 Challenge

8 September



Run or walk five kilometres through beautiful woodland in Brighton's Stanmer Park with your four-legged pal. Support Dogs is the official charity of this event so come along to meet us.



## What else can I do?

Whether you are looking for a fun run, obstacle course, cycle race or mountain to climb, there are a whole host of events to choose from on our website [www.supportdogs.org.uk](http://www.supportdogs.org.uk)

**Planning your own challenge?** We can help! We can arrange for an indoor bike to come to your workplace, for t-shirts for the team or help with planning your event - get in touch with us on [fundraising@supportdogs.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@supportdogs.org.uk)

**Can you wear our dog mascot suits?** We also have dog mascot outfits available for those of you brave enough to take on a run wearing one and make a real show of your fundraising efforts.

**Contact us on [info@supportdogs.org.uk](mailto:info@supportdogs.org.uk) or call us on 0114 2617800**

## Skydive

Any day throughout the UK



The sky's the limit with this ultimate fundraising adventure.





# Fudge – Judith’s second rescue dog turned hero hound

Client Judith talks about the difference her ex-rescue-turned-support dogs have made to her life.

Eight years ago Judith Margolis adopted Alfie, a rescue dog from Wood Green Animal Shelter near Cambridge, and who was trained by Support Dogs to make a massive difference to her life.

The former Open University lecturer had to retire early after developing a progressive neurological condition called cerebellar ataxia, which affects co-ordination and speech and by 2006 had left her in a wheelchair.

The pair formed a great partnership, with Alfie giving Judith back the confidence she had lost. The little Lhasa Apso gave Judith the motivation and strength to start living again, and Alfie found a new, loving, home.

Now Judith is having a second shot at giving an unwanted dog another chance. Sadly, after many devoted years, Alfie had to retire from active service early as he started going blind, although he continues to live with Judith as her much-loved pet.

This time Support Dogs sourced a

replacement dog from rehoming charity Blue Cross, and Judith and her new disability assistance dog Fudge, a Border Terrier/Pug cross, have now qualified as a new partnership.

Fudge came to Blue Cross animal rehoming centre in Thirsk when he was 14 months old. His owners could no longer care for him and he needed a special home that could accommodate his busy behaviour needs.

Rachael Myers, training and behaviour coordinator at Blue Cross in Thirsk says: *“We could see Fudge was a highly intelligent dog who needed jobs to do. We felt he would be best placed in a working home so that he would not get frustrated or bored. He was such a fun character and loved by everyone during his time here at Blue Cross. We are delighted that he is now happily in a new home where his busy nature is being put to such good use.”*

*“Fudge is completely different from Alfie,”* says Judith. *“He’s far more*

*enthusiastic, is very good outdoors and has fantastic recall. He brings me my slippers, helps with undressing, opens doors and pick things up. He is also a wonderful pain killer; at night he sits on my legs and his warmth and pressure helps so much with my leg pain that I have been able to come off one of my painkillers. They were making my head fuzzy and it’s great to think clearly again.*

*“He is the most loving, adorable dog I have ever had. He sits on my lap all the time, and loves to be stroked. I’ve had lots of dogs in the past but never had one quite like Fudge.”*

Alfie has now got used to sharing the house with a young pretender.

*“They didn’t get on at first, then Fudge wanted to play but because Alfie is blind he couldn’t see his body language,”* says Judith. *“Now they co-exist happily together in their own little bubble.”*

Judith is able to drive a specially adapted car, and although she can no longer



Credit: Martin Phelps Blue Cross

work, she keeps active, describing herself as a ‘serial volunteer’. She’s a support worker for the local MS Society branch, and is chairman of Disability Cambridge, going into the office twice a week with Fudge, who’s become a big favourite with colleagues.

**“Support Dogs have changed my life,” she says. “Without a dog I wouldn’t be able to go anywhere. It’s great that Fudge can help me around the house but more than the tasks is that fact that he enables me to go anywhere.**

*“I used to lecture in front of 300 students, but the illness knocked the confidence out of me. Having a dog has reversed that. I’m no longer invisible. When you’re in a wheelchair people don’t talk to you. But when you have a dog, people stop and chat. Especially when it’s a cute little thing like Fudge!”*

## Support Dogs – giving unwanted dogs a second chance

Support Dogs prides itself on being the charity that gives unwanted pets a second chance to become successful working dogs, transforming them into lifesavers.

Support Dogs received more than **4,400 requests for its services in the past 12 months** from individuals and families in need, and has a long waiting list. It recruits prospective assistance dogs from a variety of sources including other Assistance Dogs UK charities, rescue centres, council dog pounds, and unwanted pets. Partnerships with rescue charities such as Dogs’ Trust and Blue Cross are increasingly important in order to meet rising demand.

**Do you know a dog who needs rehoming?**

If you’re looking for a new home for your dog (between the ages of 15 months and three years) or know of someone who is, please speak to a member of our team today on **0114 2617800**.



Disability assistance dog Kevin, another ex-rescue dog.



Perfect partnership: Judith and Fudge

Credit: Martin Phelps Blue Cross





# A BETTER LIFE FOR BROGAN

Seizure alert dog Wadsley is helping Brogan Evans to get back to the lifestyle she enjoyed before she was diagnosed with epilepsy.

Before wonder-dog Wadsley came into her life, Brogan Evens was struggling to cope with up to four seizures a day.

Now recently married, Brogan, aged 23, can look forward to a near-normal life, safe in the knowledge that Wadsley will give her a 100 per cent 48-minute advance warning of an oncoming epileptic seizure.

As well as gaining profound peace of mind, Brogan has been able to resume an active lifestyle and can now go swimming and climbing mountains. She can even play rugby – with Wadsley sitting by the touchline and making sure she's safe to continue by giving her a clean bill of health at half time!

Brogan developed epilepsy at the age of 17, when at one stage, she had up to 14 seizures a day. The cause was unclear, but she remembers sustaining a head trauma when she was 13 when, doing a back flip, she landed on her head and had to spend time in a neck brace.

At that time she was given the all clear; however since then she has suffered an array of problems, and her hopes for a career in the army as a dog handler had to be shelved.

*“My life before Wadsley was miserable;*



*I was depressed as hell,” says Brogan. “I was on medication but it wasn’t working, nothing was working. I knew what life was like before and I wanted that back. I couldn’t do anything. I couldn’t have a bath or a shower in case I had a seizure and drowned or fell and banged my head. I couldn’t cook or leave the house; so many of things that people take for granted I wasn’t allowed to do any more.*

*“I missed the independence I had before epilepsy.”*

Brogan applied to Support Dogs for a seizure dog when she was 20, but due to huge demand the programme was closed at that time, and she didn’t hear anything for two years.

*“Support Dogs was the last port of call for me, but I had given up hope a week before someone from the charity rang me to invite me to their open day,”* says Brogan.

That phone call was the beginning of a completely new chapter of Brogan’s life. With the help of her Support Dogs’ instructor, Brogan and Wadsley began intensive training. Brogan says that it was always easy to put her absolute trust in Wadsley as the smart, fox-red Labrador never missed a seizure, right from the start.

She says: *“He picked it up so quickly. I met Kevin, Bodie and Wadsley, who were all prospective dog partners, and had three seizures while I was at the training centre and Wadsley knew something was wrong – he was staring intensely at me.”*

Although she had grown up with dogs, Brogan found it difficult to adapt at first to being with a canine companion 24 hours a day, but gradually the pair formed a successful partnership, graduating in February this year. Her seizures have reduced to about eight a month, with Wadsley alerting Brogan by persistently nudging her with his nose.

Brogan moved to Birkenhead to live with partner Sam, a firefighter whom she married in November last year, and after completing an apprenticeship in sports coaching is now looking for a job.

The couple enjoy long walks on the beach near their home, and climbing mountains, and Brogan has started to swim regularly, with Wadsley acting as lifeguard on the poolside.

After getting consent from both her GP and neurologist Brogan has also started to play rugby union for local club Birkenhead Park Panthers. She is not worried about the risks of having a seizure during a game as Wadsley is inevitably on hand.

*“Because he is used to going everywhere with me he has separation anxiety and wants to run around and have fun with me when I play rugby and barks when I leave him with someone on the touchline, so I got him a small pink pop-up tent to sit in during the game,”* explains Brogan.

*“He can still detect a seizure even though he can’t see me. Games of rugby are 40 minutes each half so at half time I run over to his tent and he lets me know if I’m OK or if I’m going to have a seizure – if the latter I get in the tent with him and have the seizure.”*

When he’s not working Wadsley loves running around on the beach just being a dog, but *“when he has his jacket he is the most focussed sensible dog ever.”*

Adds Brogan: *“Having Wadsley has made a massive difference to my confidence levels – people are always coming up to me and talking about him, which I’ve now got used to and enjoy. And I’ve had a huge improvement to my quality of life. All the things I couldn’t do before I can quite happily do now. My mum bought me a bath bomb for Christmas because I could have my first bath, and of course Wadsley was in the bathroom, keeping an eye on me.*

*“The number of serious seizures has gone down – I have two to four a week – partly because I’m less stressed, and because I’m able to go out and live my life, which I couldn’t do before. Emotionally I’m in a much better place too, and none of that would have happened if it wasn’t for Support Dogs and my best friend Wadsley.”*

**“I’m less stressed... and emotionally I’m in a much better place too. None of that would have happened if it wasn’t for Support Dogs and my best friend Wadsley.”**



To find out more about our seizure alert programme go to:  
[www.supportdogs.org.uk](http://www.supportdogs.org.uk)





## Lovable Labrador Iggy turns Louis' life around

Youngster with autism Louis gains in confidence and fitness thanks to his devoted assistance dog.

Looking at Louis and Iggy snuggled up together on the sofa, they look like any other young boy and his much-loved pet dog. But put a blue Support Dogs' jacket on the big yellow Labrador and he's transformed into a canine hero, a fully-trained, hard-working autism assistance dog, keeping Louis safe as soon as the pair leave the house.

Mum Kelly, who has watched her eight-year-old son blossom since Iggy came into the family's life, explains: "People often ask me what they are like together. In the house Iggy is a pet dog like any other typical dog; sometimes they play together and sometimes they ignore each other. The partnership comes together when he gets his jacket and they go out.

**"As soon as we put on his coat Iggy knows he is working now and Louis knows as well. They both change their behaviours when they go out. In the home he is a family pet; when they go out they are working."**

Louis was diagnosed with autism and global developmental delay five years ago. The little boy was not engaged or

responding to the world around him and was very withdrawn. Because of his delayed ability to speak he was often frustrated at his inability to communicate. He also had very poor balance and would often fall over, so much so that he used a wheelchair when he went out - partly because of his balance and partly to stop him running off - as he also, like many youngsters with autism, had no sense of danger. He required 24-hour care as he often didn't sleep during the night, and family life for Kelly, dad Mostyn, and elder brothers William and Joseph was tough. During an internet search to try and find ways to help their son, his exhausted parents found Support Dogs, and were accepted onto the autism assistance programme. Kelly did the initial training at

their Sheffield training centre, before Iggy and Louis were introduced.

*"The training went really well and Iggy settled straight away," says Kelly. "The Support Dogs' trainers and instructors were absolutely brilliant. In the beginning they asked me about Louis and when they found Iggy they started training him to just for Louis and all his quirks, which we really appreciated.*

*"When I was doing the initial training I was taking photos of Iggy to show them to Louis and telling him what I was doing so he would be well prepared. He understands more than he can communicate and he knows that Iggy is his dog because we told him."*

One of Iggy's benefits has been to make Louis fitter and more independent. "Autistic children can't play out like other children, and they lack exercise, so going for long walks and getting him out of the wheelchair means he is much more active and fitter, so that's great from a health point of view.

*"Having Iggy is an excuse to go outdoors and we go for long walks in the village. Louis doesn't like a harness so he has a belt around his waist which is attached to Iggy. Iggy steadies him and reassures him, and Louis touches his back for reassurance.*

**"There also a social aspect when we are out and about as Iggy attracts a lot of attention. Members of the public come up and ask questions; not everyone knows about autism assistance dogs, and it helps Louis to be sociable. People who would not normally talk to Louis now talk to him, so he's improved his social skills, although his speech is still very basic."**

Many children with autism find it difficult to make friends and form relationships, but Louis has a small circle of friends - mainly

girls who want to mother him - according to his mum, at his small village school.

Adds Kelly: *"What Louis doesn't have are friends at home. He can't go out and play, so at home Iggy is his best friend. He's an undemanding friend - Louis doesn't require Iggy to talk! You don't get small talk from Louis."*



Louis and Iggy qualified as an autism assistance dog partnership in May last year, but Kelly and Mostyn have been charting the pair's progress since their first-ever meeting the previous year through a series of touching You Tube videos, following them on trips to the beach on the Yorkshire

coast near their East Yorkshire home, visits to Chatsworth Country Fair, even trips to the dentist and to local firework displays. In one Louis happily plays in the river with elder brother William, and off-duty Iggy romps and splashes with another yellow Labrador.

The youngster goes to a mainstream school which has been very supportive, and Louis has one-to-one teaching assistant. The You Tube videos have proved useful - when pupils are asked what they did at the weekend, Louis can't talk or write about it, but his teachers have watched the videos and know exactly what the little boy got up to.

Life for Louis and his family has improved in a way they could not have imagined before Iggy and Support Dogs came along.

*"Iggy is canine royalty, everyone loves him, and rightly so; he's had a massive impact on Louis' and all of our lives, says mum Kelly. "Support Dogs are amazing in what they do - and that they help so many children like Louis. We'd do anything for Support Dogs."*

To find out about our autism assistance programme go to [www.supportdogs.org.uk](http://www.supportdogs.org.uk)

Louis, with mum Kelly and autism assistance dog Iggy.





# Puppy coordinator Zoe Ellis talks about how her job makes a difference

## Can you explain your role?

My role involves working alongside our valued volunteer puppy socialisers, assisting them in the training of our puppies through classes and training visits, and providing advice for them as and when required. I will be sourcing our next generation of puppies to join Support Dogs, as well as being responsible for going through the training and assessment process for new puppy socialisers.

It's very important that our puppies are well-socialised and ready to start full-time training at about 14 months old. That means our pups have to get used to meeting lots of people, lots of dogs and all that life holds; from busy roads to the countryside, from noisy shopping centres to quiet offices and restaurants.

## What's a typical day like?

No two days are the same as a puppy coordinator. There may be days where I am out visiting a pup and their socialiser or arrange for them to visit the centre to do any required training, or catch up and see how they are getting on from a previous visit, and advising or providing any further training techniques that may be required. From these visits I create a training diary so that I am able to refer back as needed and keep note of what we have done. On other occasions I will make phone calls to my socialisers to ensure everything is going well and ask if there is anything I can help with.

On days where I am in the centre there may be occasions where I am asked by another trainer to help with something they are teaching one of their dogs. This might be anything from greeting a dog, to being a person the dog goes to whilst they are being trained to fetch help. This in itself is rewarding as it allows you to see the progress of a dog in training and the fun they have whilst learning new things.

## What do you like best about your job?

I love the 'hands on' side of my role, going out and visiting socialisers and seeing the dedication and hard work they have put in to our puppies, but at the same time seeing the development in the pups, and them learning new behaviours, and of course playing games with them, whether that be a game of fetch, tug or seeing them out on a free run.

## What's been your most satisfying moment so far?

Working with and seeing one of my pups overcome an undesired behaviour. There is still progress to be made but he has come so far in such a short period of time. He is a joy to work with and his socialiser has put in a lot of work and dedication to ensure this behaviour stops being a habit. He loves to learn new things and picks them up quickly which has helped his progress.

## Why is your job so important?

I see my role to be just one cog in such a big wheel. I, along with the puppy socialisers, help to bring more dogs through our programme to progress onto the next stage in training, helping to meet the needs of those requiring an assistance dog, to make a difference to their lives.



Pup-in-training Sally

# A big thank you for your Fantastic Fundraising

Support Dogs relies 100 per cent on voluntary donations. We are privileged to have some amazing supporters who give up their time, skills and energy to raise funds to enable our charity to continue with our work. We wish we could list everyone, but there is sadly just not enough room. But here is just a flavour of some of the ways some very kind people have helped.

**Everyone involved in the year-long fundraising as part of 'Can't stop running for the Hills'** who raised a massive £2,632 by taking on the Three Peaks Challenge, three spartan races and a triathlon!

**Sheffield University Music Department Society** (pictured above right), for organising and running a play-a-thon with 12 hours of non-stop music **raising a whopping £540!**

**Lisa Porter** raising an amazing £1,260 for our work in memory of her daughter.

**Sixth form students at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School** in Ashbourne who held a karaoke session and sang their way to a **£30 donation!**

**Sofia Michael** who swam five miles in December **raising a brilliant £335** for our work after hearing about us through her school.



**Georgie and Aaron** who got married in October and thoughtfully **donated £100** to our charity in lieu of wedding favours.

**Bob Sutcliffe** who sold his beautiful paintings and postcards in aid of our work, **donating £420.**

**Lesley Lacey and her dog River** who took part in the Santa Run in London **raising a festive £330.**

**Nicola Tyson** who organised a fabulous 10th birthday party for her dog Bonnie and all her four-legged friends, **raising £230.**

**3rd Ilkley Brownies** who **raised a brilliant £80** whilst completing their Disability Awareness badge.

**Sheffield Hallam University Students' Union Band** who provided festive spirit to Sheffield train station playing carols and **collecting a merry £247.**

**Iris Smith** who generously **donated £85** as a present to herself for her 85th birthday.

**Rotary Club of Wortley** who not only **donated £1,000** but also selected Support Dogs as their charity of the year.

**Jenny McCabe** for taking on two half marathons in just six months for Support Dogs.

The fantastic team at **Natilik** for **raising over £10,000 this year!**

If you are inspired to help our charity please email [fundraising@supportdogs.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@supportdogs.org.uk) or phone **0114 261 7800**

## How you can help...

Does your workplace have a charity of the year, or are you or your school or group looking to support a charity? Choose Support Dogs and make a real impact with a doggy difference! There are many ways to get involved:

- We relish the opportunity to talk to groups, societies and clubs about our work and have a team of dedicated volunteer speakers available to visit.
- We take huge pride in our partnerships with schools, helping young people gain an understanding of how our dogs help people and transform lives. Our clients and dogs can come along to assemblies or class visits, enabling school children to hear their experiences first hand, and to interact with our dogs, which is always very popular!
- Can you place collection tins in your local area and empty them every three months? This simple way to fundraising raises an average of £35 from each tin - get in touch with us and we will send you all you need.
- Ask for one of our loose change boxes to make your spare pennies help us make a big change to someone's life.





# Could you leave a legacy to Support Dogs?

A donation left in your will can make a lasting difference in so many ways.



**SMILE**

Left by:  
**S McCree**  
15 December 2018

**SAFETY**

Left by:  
**P Beaney**  
5 March 2018

**CONFIDENCE TO LEAVE THE HOUSE**

Left by:  
**E Longney**  
29 April 2018

**TRAINED AUTISM ASSISTANCE DOG**

Left by:  
**G Bailey**  
7 January 2019

One in every four support dogs has been trained thanks only to the kind donations, both small and large, left to us by individuals in their will. This support has been vital to our charity for over 25 years.

If you would like to make a difference to lives of those affected by some of the most challenging conditions, while also helping us to give dogs a second chance, then please consider leaving a donation to Support Dogs in your will.

By donating in your will you are leaving the legacy of a working support dog partnership that will completely transform a family's life and often that of the dog too, with many of our support dogs starting life in rescue centres or as unwanted pets. You can of course specify in your will whether you would like your support to go to help our work in general or for a specific area of our work, perhaps for **autism, epilepsy or disability**.

Leaving a legacy does not mean leaving out loved ones. After providing for those who matter most to you, you can make a gift to the charity to fit your own personal circumstances. There is further information below about the different types of gift you can leave to charities in your will below.

If you would like to speak with us about leaving a gift to support dogs please contact Danny Anderson on: **0114 261 7800** or email **danny.anderson@supportdogs.org.uk**

To take advantage of the **Free Will Review Service** or talk to them about a special offer on Lasting Powers of Attorney you can call:

**Freephone 0800 852 1999** or email: **contactus@mcclure-solicitors.co.uk**

## Make a will for free and consider a gift to Support Dogs

Making a will is one of the most important things that you can do to ensure that your estate will go where you want it to when you are no longer here.

With this in mind, Support Dogs have partnered with McClure Solicitors to offer you a free will service. You can get your will done free of charge, whether your circumstances are simple or complex. All they ask is that you consider making a donation to Support Dogs.

A will usually costs around £150 for

a single client and £240 for a couple. Using the McClureservice means that your wishes will be carried out without any confusion. It also means that your estate will usually be administered quicker and with less expense than if you died intestate (without a will). You might also consider leaving a bequest to our charity but of course that is entirely up to you.

Support Dog would like to encourage all its members who don't already have a will to take up this very generous offer from McClure Solicitors. In doing so, you

can plan for you and your family's future and at the same time you can support our charity's valuable work.



# Support Dogs' merchandise

### Sitting dogs



Chocolate Labrador  
£11.99



Dalmatian  
£11.99



Yellow Labrador  
£11.99

### Standing dogs



Dalmatian  
£14.99



Yellow Labrador  
£14.99



Collie  
£14.99



Boxer  
£14.99

### Dog key ring

£3.99



### Dog magnet

£3.99



### NEW PIN BADGES!



### Collie

£2.00



### Black Labrador

£2.00



### Yellow puppy Labrador

£2.00



## Order Form

Item	Price	Qty	Total
Lying down dog in jacket <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate Lab <input type="checkbox"/> Dalmatian <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Lab	£11.99		
Standing dog in jacket <input type="checkbox"/> Dalmatian <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Lab <input type="checkbox"/> Collie <input type="checkbox"/> Boxer	£14.99		
Pin Badges	£2.00		
Key Ring	£3.99		
Magnet	£3.99		
Postage	£2.99	N/A	£2.99
<b>Total:</b>			

Name

Address

Postcode

Tel

Email

Payment method Cash  Cheque   
(Please tick)

Please complete the form and return with cash or a cheque payable to Support Dogs to:

**Support Dogs,**  
800 Brightside Lane,  
Sheffield, S9 2RX

Or order online here:  
[supportdogs.org.uk/shop](http://supportdogs.org.uk/shop)



# Sponsor a support dog

When you sponsor a support dog you are helping us to transform the lives of adults and children with autism, epilepsy and disability.

You now have the option to sponsor your dog for just £5 a month, or to purchase one year of sponsorship as a gift for someone special for a birthday or anniversary. You can sponsor any of the dogs below or visit our website [www.supportdogs.org.uk/sponsor-a-dog](http://www.supportdogs.org.uk/sponsor-a-dog) to see more.



IGGY

**Breed:** Labrador  
**Job:** Autism assistance  
**Home:** Yorkshire  
**Birthday:** 6 April



FUDGE

**Breed:** Pug/Border Terrier cross  
**Job:** Disability assistance  
**Home:** Cambridgeshire  
**Birthday:** 29 December



DIGBY

**Breed:** Dalmation  
**Job:** Disability assistance  
**Home:** Nottingham  
**Birthday:** 11 November



ROBBIE

**Breed:** Labrador Retriever cross  
**Job:** Seizure alert  
**Home:** Worksop  
**Birthday:** 24 May



THOR

**Breed:** Labrador Retriever cross  
**Job:** Autism assistance  
**Home:** Yorkshire  
**Birthday:** 1 April



PUPPIES

**Meet our heroes in training!**  
These amazing pups are currently in their first stage of training to become a support dog.



**When you decide to sponsor a dog** you'll receive three updates a year, a sponsorship pack including a special photo certificate of your new pal. PLUS to say a massive thank you, you'll receive a **free cuddly support dog toy!**

## I WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A SUPPORT DOG

IGGY  FUDGE  DIGBY  ROBBIE  THOR  PUPPIES

For Myself  As a Gift  Giftee Name and Address

Name

Address

Postcode  Tel

Email

Monthly Amount:

£5  £10  £15  Other

Bank Name & Address

Acc No.  Sort Code

Starting on

### Make a Difference with a One-Off Donation

£5  £10  £20  Other

I'd like to donate by:  Debit/Credit Card  Cheque (Payable to Support Dogs)

Card No.

Card Holder Name

Valid From  Exp. Date  CV2 No. (3 digits)

Payable to: Lloyds, 14 Church Street, Sheffield, S1 1HP.  
The account of Support Dogs Ltd A/c No. 03938225 Sort Code: 30-97-51 or please send a cheque payable to Support Dogs to the address below.

Signature:

*giftaid it*

### Make your donations worth more at no extra cost to you!

Simply fill out the declaration below and we can claim the tax back on your subscriptions and donations.

YES - Please claim Gift Aid on all donations I have made in the last four calendar years, and until further notice.

Signature

Date

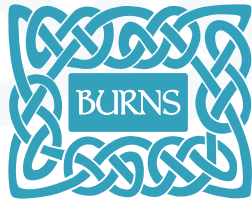
To qualify for Gift Aid, what you pay in income tax or capital gains tax must at least equal the amount we will claim in the tax year (currently 25p for every £1 donated). Please notify Support Dogs if you wish to cancel this declaration.

Please send completed forms to:  
**Support Dogs, 800 Brightside Ln, Sheffield, S9 2RX**



**Thank you for your support**





Proud sponsors of Support Dogs



## Real Food Real Pets

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1800 83 66 96 (ROI)



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