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The Dog A.I.D. Magazine

THE PUPPY EDITION

SUMMER 2020



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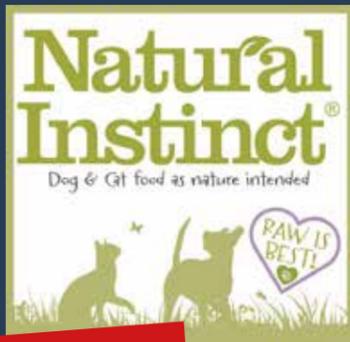
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Road, Shrewsbury,
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Registered Charity in England and Wales with Registered Number 1178719



Paws for Coffee...

with Chair Sandra Fraser

unprecedented

[uhn-pres-i-den-tid]

adjective

without previous instance; never before known or experienced; unexampled or unparalleled:an unprecedented event.



So many communications and emails that have been coming into the office begin with the words during these unprecedented times. And they are right; there is no history of this type of pandemic in our lifetime.

We have had to trust the Government to do the right thing.

The Prime Minister has had to make unpalatable decisions that at first seem archaic and hard to cope with. His decisions however will have been made by gathering advice from people around him that have experience in fields that they excel in. Actions will have been swift and uncompromising. In hindsight he may not have got it exactly right or followed the best time scale because these are unprecedented times. The speed at which shutdown came was because the Government was acting in the best interests of the country and every individual in it

With no intention of making light of the current situation I feel the charity have been running a parallel situation. Faced with an unprecedented situation the Trustees had to recently make an unpalatable decision in the best interest of the charity. Swift action was required and as the situation had never been part of our history there was nothing to base our actions on, only the guidance of others.

No one person can make far reaching decisions on their own, there needs to be trust that decisions made were done in collaboration and in the very best interest of the charity.

Out of crisis comes opportunity.

The Coronavirus has given rise to the opportunity for so many people to rally round, help others with delivering food, and do random acts of kindness. You begin to see that the world is full of good people despite the few who want to flout the rules of the stay at home message.

So the charity will use the crisis and take the opportunity to work and deliver in different ways.

Our new Head of training and Development Rachel (see page 4) is already delivering on her objectives and keeping in contact with clients and trainers through social platforms. Do take the opportunity to join in one of the virtual coffee sessions, they promise to be a great source of information and help. We all welcome Rachel to the team. The team can also be seen on page 4.

When the lockdown is ended we hope to be working in a more versatile and accessible way, in the meantime we will do our best to help as many clients where we can through the lockdown with training programmes and challenges to support as many as possible whether in training or fully qualified.

The double page spread on puppies is I think a great help to those who have taken on puppies recently and also something to save for the future for others. Our thanks to all the trainers who gave their help in putting this together, they have such a wealth of knowledge.

Don't forget to nominate your trainer for Trainer of the Month when you send in your monthly reports. We would still like to see those even if

you are not able to get out training; you may be working on something at home. Is your trainer helping you in other ways? Let us know.

By the time this lands on your mat I hope that there will have been some relaxing of lockdown, then we will be working towards getting back to a new normal whatever that is. We will get the office up and running as soon as possible. Until then some will continue to work from home.

Membership is due and as informed last year will be increased to £30 and we are offering different ways of paying to make it easier for all. You will see on page 5 a copy of the membership renewal, which will be sent to you individually by email. If you haven't received it by end of June please contact admin@dogaid.org.uk and it can be reissued.

Our supporters Natural Instinct have made a great offer for all trainers they will now receive a 20% discount. For those using their product it will be a great benefit. We take this opportunity to thank them once again for all their support over this year and for this great consideration for our trainers.

As we move forward we will try to find a dry complete food to partner with for those unable to use a raw diet.

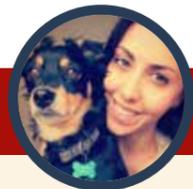
I hope you enjoy the newsletter; I look forward to welcoming many of you to the workshops when we are able to run them. However, we may have to take the opportunity to devise a different way of working to keep clients protected.

Keep safe and well.



Hello from us at Dog A.I.D.

Welcome newest members



Welcome newest members



Rachel Rodgers
Training and Service Delivery Manager

Rachel started as Head Dog Trainer/Service Delivery and Development Manager at the end of March 2020.

Before coming to Dog A.I.D, Rachel worked as a manager for both the RSPCA and most recently Dogs Trust in their Dog School. While running dog training classes for Dogs Trust, Rachel won Animal Trainer of the year at the 2018 National Animal Star Awards. Rachel has over 10 years experience training animals in both a domestic and zoological setting, including training dolphins and sea lions in the Caribbean.

Rachel is an accredited dog trainer with the A.P.D.T (Association of Pet Dog Trainers) and A.B.T.C (Animal Behaviour Training Council) and is working towards her Certified Clinical Animal Behaviourist status with the A.P.B.C (Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors).

In her spare time Rachel loves to take part in pet trailing and man trailing sessions with her Portuguese rescue dog called Rico. Rachel is working from home and covering both admin and monthly reports until we can return to the office.

Email Rachel.Rodgers@dogaid.org.uk

Jennifer Smith
Fundraising Lead

Picking up any emails to events whilst working from home and researching funding opportunities. With a background in fundraising for an international military welfare charity, Jenn is passionate about enabling and supporting people with disability. She has recently renovated an 18th Century barn conversion in Shrewsbury and lives with her husband, parents and doggies! A Member of the Institute of Fundraising, Jenn says her husband (a double above knee amputee) is her inspiration to help others achieve their full potential.

Email jennifer@dogaid.org.uk



Samantha Hight
Senior Administration Officer

Samantha joined the charity August 2017. She is your initial contact for enquiries and is responsible for matching potential clients to trainers. Sam also organises our Workshops. She lives north of Shrewsbury and has two dogs.

Sam is currently on furlough but all her work is being picked up by Charlie whilst she is working from home.

Email admin@dogaid.org.uk



Ann Hill
Events & Fundraising Officer

Ann is currently on furlough, her emails are being picked up by Jennifer.

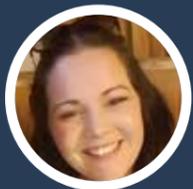
Email events@dogaid.org.uk



Julia Farrington
Administrative Assistant

Julia has increased her workload to include monthly reports, as Julia is currently on furlough; monthly reports are being monitored by Charlie. Julia is a former A&E Nurse who lives close to the Welsh border in Shrewsbury, with her two children. She admits to having a cat (!) but redeems herself by being auntie to a young Collie.

Email julia@dogaid.org.uk
reports@dogaid.org.uk



Charlie Evans
Finance Officer

Charlie looks after the bookkeeping. Outside of the office she enjoys spending time with her husband, 2 young children and of course her springer spaniel, Cooper.

Email bookkeeping@dogaid.org.uk



Membership Renewals

For Dog A.I.D (Assistance in Disability)

This is just a reminder that your membership is due. You do not have to complete any forms this year, you will be sent an invoice by email.

If you have not received an invoice by the end of June please contact the office bookkeeping@dogaid.org.uk

All trainer's membership will automatically be renewed unless you tell the office that you are no longer volunteering for us.

Thank you for your continuing support.



Trainer of the Month February 2020

I am delighted to have been selected as February's Trainer of the Month. It is so lovely to have been nominated - Thank you so much!

I can indeed receive flowers. I am taking sensible precautions but not self-isolating. I will forward a picture of me with the flowers for the FB pages.

I am finding the Dog AID work truly rewarding and enjoyable and very much appreciate the recognition.

Stay safe and keep well!

Kind regards,

Odette Pidcock



Christine Meaney



Carole Husein



Scott Allen



Heather Stevens

September 2019

October 2019

November 2019

January 2020

Being a trainer...

For Dog A.I.D (Assistance in Disability)

I haven't always been a dog trainer; I have previously worked in retail (family business), further education as a qualified tutor (Hairdressing, Barbering, English, Maths and IT), writer of educational exam materials and as an assessor. I have worked with people across a range of ages, skills and abilities. All of this has provided me with invaluable experience in teaching, learning and communication, which I utilise throughout my dog training.

I also continue to learn, from working with all of my clients and their dogs. My Dog A.I.D. clients have contributed greatly to making me be more creative in my training sessions. One size doesn't fit all and so I adapt and develop - it's important to be flexible to be able to meet the needs of individuals. As an able-bodied person I can move quickly, pick up a small treat between finger and thumb, run to step on the lead of a straying dog and reward right on cue! But not everyone can do this and so my observation skills and creativity come into play, to see how I can best help.

I love the fact that I am helping owners to get the most from their dogs. I love to see their confidence build as they achieve. It's so rewarding when they want to get out and about with their dogs. I also love it when they say "You're training me aren't you, not my dog!" That is what it's all about - giving owners the support, skills, confidence and information they need, to train their own dogs.

We know that, as a charity, Dog A.I.D. is unique in that we work with people with physical disabilities, who have their own pet dog. This to me is a huge plus and a definite advantage over other assistance dog charities as the bond between owner and dog is already being established. Also, the dogs are usually familiar with the home environment, including changeable routines, the specialist equipment used by their owners, and the comings and goings of personal assistants. As an assessor and a trainer for Dog A.I.D. this also

helps me when completing Initial Assessments. I can see the dog in a real-life environment and observe how the dog is coping, reacting and interacting.

In December 2014 I was accepted as a volunteer trainer for Dog A.I.D. UK. I officially started training with a client in April 2015. My first client was Jill who is a wheelchair user and at the time, had an Italian Spinone called Minnie as her trainee assistance dog. I had met Jill and Minnie previously, when they attended Puppy Training classes.

We took part in the 'Client and Trainer' workshop weekend at Stoke Mandeville Stadium in April 2015. Jill trusted me to take care of her and Minnie that first weekend and from then onwards my journey with Dog A.I.D. began in earnest!

Living with a disability, where you have no idea how much energy you will have for the day's events, where the thought of leaving the house fills you with dread, or when your limbs will just not do as you ask, is draining to say the least. Fortunately, some of the necessary support can come from a pet dog. The psychological support is as important as is their role in physically assisting their owners with task work.

I soon realised that for many clients the support of their well-trained dog to fetch, carry, open doors and even make them smile, gives them the determination to achieve and to stay strong.

During my first 18 months I was fortunate to work with a group of four clients. Each 'team' (owner and dog), were unique in how they worked, how they learnt and what they wanted from their dogs. Plus... they all had a fabulous sense of humour and a determination to succeed! The support within this group contributed immensely to the success of the training sessions. I also had my work cut out in keeping them under control! We would meet once a week for two hours, usually at

a local community centre. We were lucky as this building was wheelchair accessible, had a kitchen and also had an enclosed outdoor area too. I planned my training for each session (knowing it could all be abandoned for something entirely different!) and worked with the group as a whole and also on a one to one basis, for specific tasks. It was and still is, very important that each session is enjoyable for the client/s and for me. I always want my clients to feel comfortable and at ease with the training but I don't shy away from pushing them that little bit further!

In July 2016 my husband and I had a fabulous opportunity to buy a property where I could work 'from home' as a dog trainer. It was something I had wanted for a very long time. Using community centres and village halls is okay, but it was hard work, setting up each session, loading everything back into my van and then cleaning the room before leaving.

In December 2016 we moved from the hustle and bustle of town life in Cheshire to the quiet country life in a small village in Lincolnshire. This happened in December 2016 and meant I had to leave behind my amazing Dog A.I.D. clients. However two of them had successfully achieve Qualified Assistance Dog status and I was able to leave my two remaining clients in the capable hands of fellow trainers. I'm pleased to say that twelve months on those two remaining teams also achieved Qualified Assistance Dog status.

There were no Dog A.I.D. trainers in my local area of Lincolnshire so I soon found myself with another group of clients, keen to start their training. I now have five great client/dog teams, who (up until Covid -19) I work with on a weekly basis. We work here on site in the training barn and out in the fenced paddock or we plan a trip out to a local garden centre or seaside town. It's important to vary the training for the benefit of the clients and their dogs.

You can't beat 'real life' for putting training to the test! Plus, with the training barn on site we can better prepare each owner and dog team for these outings.

I have learnt over time that to make any progress I must work to support each of my clients in so many ways - it's not just about helping them to train their dogs. I often need to help build up their confidence and self-belief. At times I have to persuade clients to trust in their dogs. I work with them to develop their communication skills and teach them to realise their capabilities in training their own dogs. I teach clients to 'read' their dogs - to know when their dog is at ease and is engaged in the training, how to capture a behaviour, to shape a behaviour, to recognise when the training isn't working, why and what to do about it. I love the challenge of all this and sometimes I wish there were more hours in the day to give.

But...as a volunteer trainer you can also feel quite isolated. There are a lot more of us out there now, covering much of the U.K. but still the opportunities to meet up don't happen very often. The Trainers Workshop weekends, held at Stoke Mandeville Stadium provide one such opportunity and over time I have attended many of these events, taking part in the learning, training and delivery of workshops.

I have also found the role of volunteer trainer difficult at times as I want to give 100 per cent but also have had to learn when to pull back. When you give your time you want success but I have to be realistic. I have done initial assessments where I have been unable to accept the applicant and their dog onto the training course. That is a very difficult decision and one that I can never make without much thought and consideration. I know I can turn to Sandra Fraser to seek her advice and guidance, just to be sure any decision I make is fair and justified.

There are many benefits for me too, as a Dog A.I.D. trainer. It is a role I thoroughly enjoy. I learn to adapt my teaching for each individual team. I am continually amazed at the determination of my clients, despite the sometimes-overwhelming odds they face. I see the positive impact the training has on their lives and their dogs. The thrill I get from seeing a team progress, gaining skills and confidence, is just fantastic. And...I feel very proud to be part of this small charity working hard to make a positive difference.

If you know a dog trainer who you think would be interested in supporting our charity please ask them to contact Dog A.I.D. UK. Their interest will be more than welcome.

Peta Brandwood



Jessica & Amber March 2017



The Cheshire Dog A.I.D. group Nov 2016





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A barking bag allows you to carry everything you need, with treat pockets, a poo bag dispenser, mesh pockets for water and soggy toys, and much more. The red paw print bag reflects the charities colours but they come in a range of water-resistant fabrics or luxury leather.

“ I finally have enough space to carry extras which makes dog walking even more fun and safe! The separate pockets give you plenty of room for the essentials and the clips are ideal for attaching whistles and clickers. I'm absolutely over the moon at seeing something that has been so well thought out and at a reasonable price. ”

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Barking bags are please to support Dog Aid and we promote this wonderful charity with each bag we sell.

Dog A.I.D. Thanks our NHS, carers & key workers



As part of our remote training during lockdown we have been setting our clients training challenges.

One of these was the "Thank You Challenge". This challenge not only tested food refusal, otherwise known as "leave it" skills for our dogs currently in training but also gave them the opportunity to thank the NHS, carers and other key workers who are working tirelessly to keep us all safe, healthy and fed during lockdown.

Lots of our dogs, clients and even trainers got involved. Producing some fantastic images, which we shared in a video montage across all our social media.

This was to great success as it enabled Dog A.I.D. to talk live on BBC Radio Shropshire to presenter Clare Ashford about our work during lockdown.



DOG-G8

www.dog-g8.com

We are finding many people with disabilities love our Dog-G8, as it allows the front door to be opened easily, without the added worry of where are the dogs! Dog-G8 is strong and reliable and very easy to fit, you can use our superb stick tabs on UPVC doors, so no screws required. Dog-G8 is also fully manufactured in the UK.

One Lady who purchased a Dog-G8 is Vivienne and she says:

“At present I have an Assistance Dog called Elsa and as she has now passed 10 and I have to think about the future.

Elsa is a Goldendoodle and last year I agreed to purchase a puppy of the same breed which arrived in March. I bought the Dog-G8 in anticipation of the arrival of our puppy. It seemed to us to be most suitable to stop the puppy rushing out of the front door if someone knocked.

My husband found it quite easy to fit especially following advice from Peter Maxted the designer of the device.

We are sure it will do what we want but, as we collected the puppy the day the lockdown instructions were issued, no one has actually yet knocked at our door”



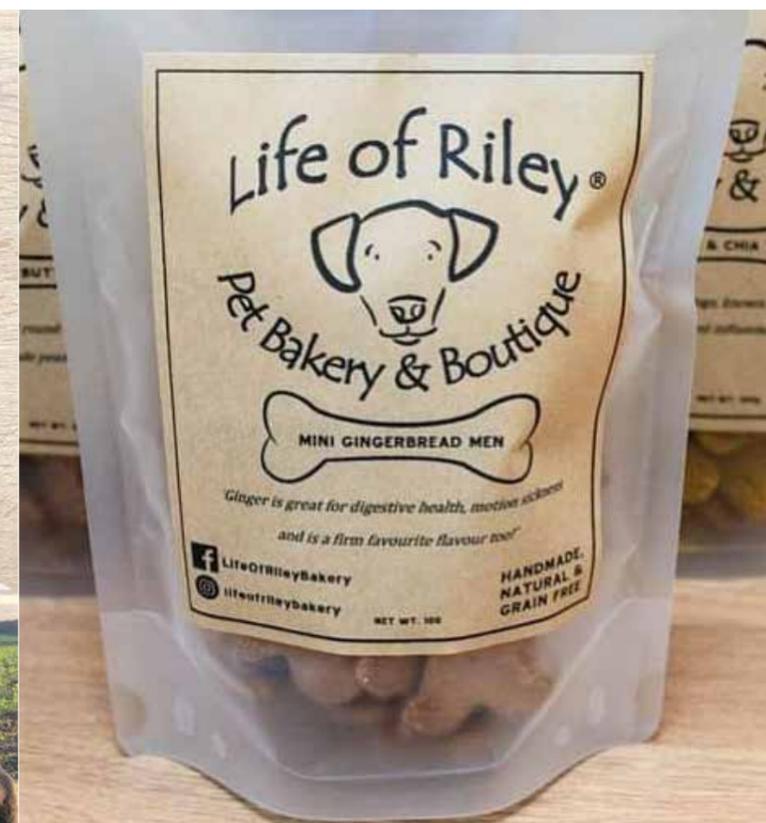
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Puppy

Our Dog A.I.D. volunteer trainers provide their best tips for life with your new puppy.

Toilet Training

One of the key things to get right from the start is toilet training.

Trainer **Emma Davis** advises:

This is what toilet training should look like! Shoes by the door ready to slip on, treats ready prepared to pick up on the way out. Toilet training is hard. You need to be prepared! There can be no excuses! No matter the weather! You must escort your puppy outside. At a young age, you should be carrying your puppy outside. Letting them take themselves out doesn't work, you HAVE to be with them. Also, top tip; carry your puppy outside, don't wait for them to trot outside as they'll probably go to the loo before they even make it outside!



When they're outside stand with them but be boring. It is very easy for a puppy to forget what they're outside for. If you end up playing with them they can come straight back in and have an accident in the house. As soon as they toilet outside, reward them with lots of fuss and praise. You can even start adding a cue such as "busy busy" when they actually start to pee.



Fliss Winters adds that she feeds her pups outside in almost all weather as they always need to piddle and poo immediately after eating so if they're already outside, they learn to go outside much quicker! This can be really helpful in getting your dogs used to toileting outside and on different textures. All key for their socialisation.

Best Books on Puppy Training

"Easy Peasy Puppy Squeezy"
By **Steve Mann**

"The Perfect Puppy"
By **Gwen Bailey**

"After You Get Your Puppy...
The Clock is Ticking"
By **Dr. Ian Dunbar**

"Perfect Puppy in 7 Days: How to Start Your Puppy Off Right"
By **Dr. Sophia Yin**

"Life Skills For Puppies: Laying the foundation for a loving, lasting relationship"
By **Helen Zulch**



Socialisation

Socialisation isn't just about getting your pup to meet lots of other dogs and people. Socialisation is also about emotional well-being and building emotional robustness. This is important for all pups but especially for those working towards being an assistance dog!

Jenny Mee reminds us to be selective about socialisation. Sometimes owners over do it because they worry about socialising their puppy, and end up with nervous or over stimulated pups. The key thing about socialisation is that whatever the dog encounters during the timeframe of 12-16 weeks is their reference point for life. We need to control their exposure and make good, positive associations with things. Bad experiences would also be remembered so go slowly and at your pup's own pace.

Training classes can be really good for basic training and socialisation, but have a good chat with the trainer first and try to go and watch a class before you take your puppy. That way you can ensure training is positive and effective, group sizes are not too big and play sessions are well managed to ensure effective socialisation, resulting in happy, polite puppies!

If you're unable to attend classes due to lockdown and social distancing, that doesn't mean you can't socialise your puppy. It is just as important to get pups used to different sounds, sights and textures (see left).

Clare Grierson recommends the phone app called "Sound proof puppy" - as part of socialisation get puppies used to a variety of sounds.

<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/sound-proof-puppy-training/id700513321?mt=8>

If you don't have access to the app, Dogs Trust also have a collection of sounds called "Sounds sociable" and "sounds scary" on their website. These were created by dog behaviourist Sarah Heath and come with a free booklet on how to use them successfully. <https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/help-advice/dog-behaviour-health/sound-therapy-for-pets>

If you're waiting for vaccinations, take your pup out in your arms or a proper puppy carrier and let them experience the sounds, sights and smells of the outside world!



Things to ensure your puppy likes!

People of different ages, races, heights, body types and genders. Also people with different outfits and appearances such as; hats, glasses, beards and facemasks!

Children, even if you don't live with them for the unexpected movements and high pitched noises they make.

Dogs of different breeds, sizes and ages. These will have different play styles that your puppies can learn from. Only do this post vaccination and keep interactions short and positive.

Noisy household items including the dishwasher, vacuum, hairdryer and lawnmower and other noises such as; fireworks, thunder and gunshots.

Quieter objects that can also cause problems include: umbrellas, balloons, garage doors, skateboards, shopping trollies and wheelie bins.

Let them watch traffic from a safe distance such as; cars, motorbikes, tractors, HGV lorries and cyclists.

Textures: concrete, sand, long grass, short grass, wet grass, tiled floor, wooden floor, laminate flooring and carpet. Feeling these under their paws as a young pup helps prevent these things being scary when they're older.

Although when you first get your puppy toilet training and socialisation are key, there are some fundamental skills which you can start developing. These will underpin many of the assistance dog tasks they go on to master later in life.

Tugging

When your pup is very young and small remember to be gentle! When teething and mouthing they may show interest in chewing on soft toys which can be used to start the tugging behaviour. Letting the dog win doesn't make them the boss! It actually ensures they enjoy the game. Try not to end these sessions with taking the toy off the dog gratuitously as we don't want the dog to become protective over their toys. If needed swap the toy out for a treat after the game is finished.

Targeting

This foundation behaviour can be very helpful later in life. You can start by teaching your pup to target an open hand. Puppies are naturally inquisitive. If you hold a hand out they may come over to sniff it. When their nose makes contact with your hand, simply mark and reward this behaviour. You can then increase the duration their nose has to be touching your hand before you reward.

Successor Dogs, What could possibly go wrong?

By **Keith Warwick**

My father used to say that dogs, "Don't come out of the womb ready trained." How right he was. A follow on dog must be given the opportunity to learn. As trainers we refer to "Nature and Nurture". Puppies have certain behaviours that are predetermined. These behaviours or instincts are influenced predominantly by genetics. This is "Nature". In our training and socialisation we influence and encourage behaviours, this is "Nurture".

The desired "Nurture" part of learning doesn't just happen! Often my wife would hear me say, "He'll never do it, he's not as good as my old dog!" Unfortunately I was comparing my new dog who has had no opportunity to learn, with my old dog who had the benefits of many years of interaction and training with me. I was setting the bar too high. Carol, my wife once said, "You can't unscrew the head off the old dog and put it on the new one!" Again wise words. Because I was keen to progress, I was expecting too much of my dog and wasn't giving him the opportunity to learn from the beginning.

Our new dogs offer us so much opportunity to learn from previous mistakes and get things right. We have a blank sheet of paper. Care needs to be taken in what we do and what we 'write' otherwise we will struggle to succeed, the blame lies fairly and squarely with us, not with our dogs!



Once this mastered, you can start to move your target and your pup will follow. Very helpful for getting them to move out of places they shouldn't be without any restraint or picking them up!

Retrieving

Fliss Winters tells us more "I encourage pups to chase a toy or ball held in my hand and gently throw or roll it away after a short chase and encourage them to then return it to me. Before removing it from their mouth I give them a big cuddle, and hold onto the item, waiting for the pup to release it before continuing. Never pursue the puppy, always encourage them to bring it to you and never be quick to remove it. The same applies for anything they pick up, once it's in their mouth, it's a retrieve. I'd rather have everything, good or bad, returned to me (literally have had live frogs dropped on my lap before now!). A treat can be given for a successful retrieve but only once the item is securely in your hand."



Toys & Play Time

Play time is key for getting a good bond with your puppy and can help with some key skills for later in life! Here's some tips from our trainers:

Have a box of toys and give different toys about 2 - 4 times a day so that the pup does not get bored of them.

Have special toys just for play with owners which pup has no access to at any other time.

Switching from excited play to calm is a good practical skill to acquire and a fun game for both of you.



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Top 5 Puppy Tips!

1. Adjust your expectations and let a puppy be a puppy!

Don't forget your puppy isn't trained, they are young and learning. No two dogs are ever the same. Don't expect your puppy to be able to do the same things as your last dog. They may do things differently and at a different pace. Let a puppy be a puppy and enjoy those fun months.

2. Reward the Good, Ignore the bad.

Training a puppy isn't straight forward. There will be mistakes! Don't worry too much about these and focus on when your pup does things you like. Reward the good choices they make like staying near you, toileting outside and responding to their name.

3. Build your bond.

These early months are key for building your bond. Play games with your dog, groom them and gain their confidence on touching their body all over. Don't punish them for mistakes as this will only weaken your bond.

4. Set realistic expectations

Dogs learn very quickly. If they're allowed on the sofa as a puppy, they will expect this privilege to stay the same even when they've grown much bigger. If they're allowed to say hello to every single person as a puppy they will have an unrealistic expectation for when they are older that they should greet everyone. Think carefully about what expectations you allow your dog to develop. If you can't maintain them, change them.

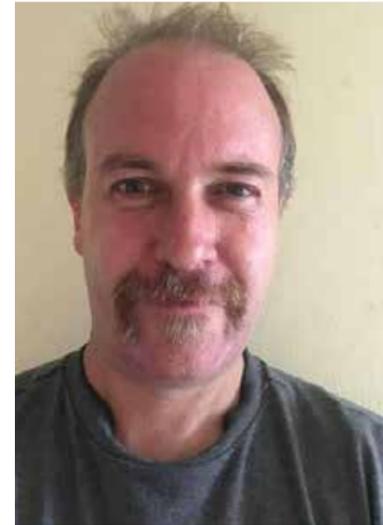
5. Keep it fun!

Keep it fun for yourself and for your dog. Training your best friend should not become a chore. If you are feeling a bit tired or frustrated stop and start again when you feel happier.



Fundraising

For Dog A.I.D (Assistance in Disability)



Moustache Fundraiser!

A huge thank you to Tony Liddell, one of our trainers, has now raised over £300 for us with his beard trimming fundraiser!



Weight Loss Fundraiser!

Our client Donna, who has a dual purpose dog called Kizzy, which is both an Assistance Dog and Guide Dog decided right at the start of this pandemic to lose some weight and support us at Dog A.I.D to give something back after receiving our training.

Donna took on the challenge to lose 12kg in 12 weeks! Well she did just that and smashed both her weight lose target and the amount she wanted to raise! We are very grateful for Donna's support. By doing this she has also raised our profile and awareness to others about the life changing impact an Assistance Dog has. Her trainer Ema is one of our many volunteer trainers dedicated to helping our clients who require an Assistance Dog to enable them to manage their everyday lives.

If you feel like taking on a challenge to help the charity, get in touch with Jennifer who will support you and help spread the word about what you are doing. Jennifer@dogaid.org.uk





AGM

July 2020

Postponement

It is with great regret that due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the board of Trustees have had to make the disappointing decision to postpone our July AGM with a view to holding it later in the year. We have been closely monitoring the Government and WHO advice and assessing the possible risks to our members if we were to continue to hold the event.

This decision was not taken lightly. In line with Charity Commission recommendations and in accordance with our constitution:

Section 11 1) of our Constitution states the AGM should be held in July or as soon as is practical thereafter.

Section 11 1a) states the Secretary shall give at least 42 days' notice of the AGM. Practically speaking as we do not know when the pandemic restrictions will end, we are not able to do this at this time.

Our Constitution does allow for electronic participation for voting and for meetings, but it is felt that there are clients and supporters who do not, or are not able to use electronic methods and this would therefore be detrimental to them. Using video conferencing would also automatically exclude those people.

As soon as we can plan for the AGM, we will contact all clients, trainers and supporters giving the 42 days' notice, complying with and clearly detailing all voting procedures.

We appreciate your understanding that this decision was made in the interests of safety for all.

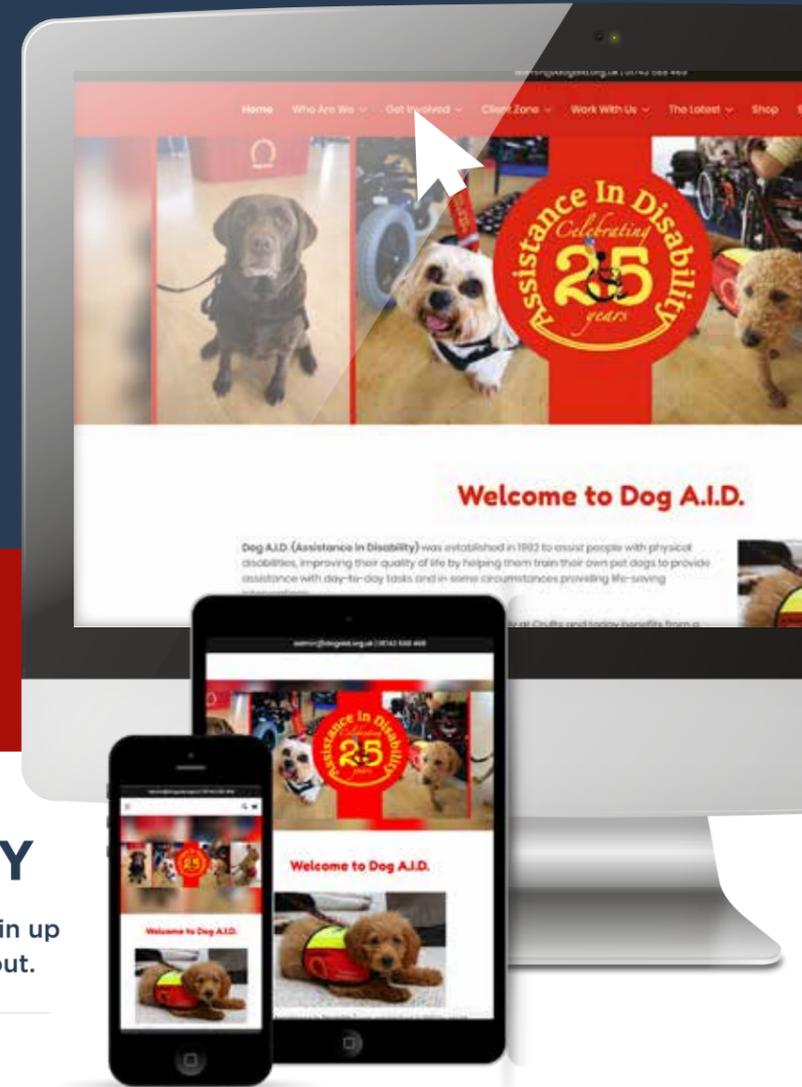
In the meantime, we are putting together this newsletter detailing how the charity is faring at this time and some of our plans for the future.



WAYS TO GIVE

You will find more details of these and other ways you can help us on our website.

dogaid.org.uk



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