



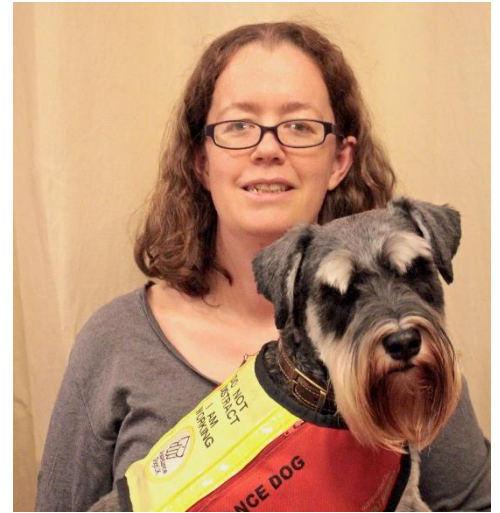
Meet Our Clients | Case Study

Teresa and Sam

Teresa, 38, from North Somerset has various medical conditions including Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS) and Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (PoTS).

She has trained her pet dog Sam, with the help of Dog A.I.D., to become her fully qualified Assistance Dog.

This is her story . . .



As a previous healthcare professional, Teresa often comments that Sam is her 'dogtor', having helped get the underlying diagnosis for her various medical issues pulled together. Sam is a five-year old miniature Schnauzer that Teresa had from an 8-week old puppy.

"My shoulder first became fully dislocated on a dog walk and I was later told I had shoulder instability, leading to a long cycle of physiotherapy and the identification of a number of health issues including EDS and PoTS.

At a disability exhibition I enquired initially about fostering Assistance Dog puppies. I was gently asked why I hadn't considered applying for a dog myself, which was where the journey began. After researching various charities, I found Dog A.I.D. who seemed the perfect option as they help you train your own dog.

We were both accepted by Dog A.I.D. in early 2016 and after commencing one to one work with our voluntary trainer, we qualified in November 2017. It was Remembrance Saturday with the 11am bugler silence and an unprecedented squirrel challenge, whilst out having a party in the park!

Sam has turned his paws, with a swish of his beard, to most tasks – many times without even being asked. He can help with emptying the washing machine, opening doors, picking up things I drop such as keys, cards, coins and receipts. He fetches the remote and phone, even bringing his own toys back from the garden! He also senses chronic flare ups of my sinus infections, something he is not formally trained to do; often stopping them developing into chest infections due to my asthma.

Every day it helps enormously to have that sense of independence that my Assistance Dog Sam is by my side. I often get asked if I need any help, so now with a smile on my face I can say that Sam has it covered, often giving a demonstration to show just how amazing his skills are.

It has taken me some years and tough times to get through to feeling that with Sam paw in hand, I can see the light of a new life ahead; albeit a very different life to what I had expected. I have met people I never would have met, found different ways of managing challenges and sometimes just getting through the day ahead. I no longer either struggle to pick up dropped items or risk breaking things whilst trying to do so.



Training Sam alongside my Dog A.I.D. trainer has further strengthened our bond. I had always wanted a dog and my husband often commented on my dogdar to notice any dog in the vicinity. The time was never right until we moved into a house with a good garden and my husband ended up working from home. Little did we know how much of a major part Sam would come to play in our lives.



Dog A.I.D. has had a huge and positive influence on us all. We like the ethos of a small charity and the benefit of having a local professional trainer, as well as taking part in yearly training workshops with the wider Dog A.I.D. community. I have represented the Charity at Crufts and done things I would never have imagined doing years ago. Sam is a total superstar, as well as a Dogs Monthly front page model, and I look forward to our adventures together in the years to come.



Sam ... The Superstar Schnauzer!

By helping us to transform lives, you are helping many more people throughout the UK just like Teresa

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Please consider supporting our work today in whatever way you can ...

Thank You

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