

London Mobility Team Newsletter

Summer 2016

Welcome from the team

The sun's out (hopefully!) and we have lots to tell you about in our latest London Team newsletter, the highlight of which is the celebration of our lovely volunteers with our Local Volunteers Awards ceremony. We also have news of some great fundraising opportunities and important information about travelling in taxis with guide dogs. Enjoy!

Rob Harris, Engagement Manager



Winner of one of our Local Volunteer Awards, Malcolm, with guide dog in training, Lewis

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Guide Dogs London, Walkden House, 10 Melton Street, London, NW1 2EB

Tel: 0845 372 7415

Email: london@guidedogs.org.uk

Website: www.guidedogs.org.uk/londonteam

Please note that calls to this number cost 3p per minute plus your phone company's access charge.

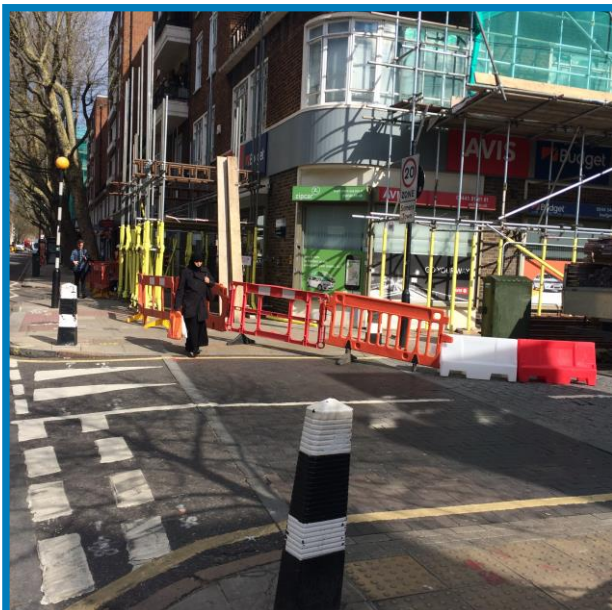
News

The latest from the London team

Guide Dogs campaigned with the RNIB outside their Judd Street offices to highlight plans by Transport for London to remove a zebra crossing as part of a cycle superhighway extension. Guide dog owners David Blunkett and Lord Chris Holmes were among those who braved the rain. We are yet to hear whether the calls for action will pay off.



The rain won't stop the campaign!



An example of bad roadworks

Engagement Manager Rob Harris has been working with Thames Water so that their staff are aware of best practice when it comes to setting up roadworks, ensuring the safety of people who are blind or partially sighted. A mock street was set up at their annual conference and delegates were invited to use a cane and blindfold to navigate examples of best and worst practice. Everyone found the experience enlightening, so let's hope that's reflected in future works around the city.

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News

The latest from the London team

The London engagement team delivered a sight awareness session to staff at the Playhouse Theatre in the West End as part of Access Week. They also took the opportunity to bucket rattle during and after performances, raising an amazing £3,000. The theatre is ready and waiting for people with sight loss to visit.



Dave Kent with Chad and theatre staff



Rachel with her guide dog, Samson, and Rob

Congratulations to guide dog owner Rachel Mentiply for completing the London Marathon along with her guide runner, Engagement Manager Rob Harris. As well as the run, they raised more than £8,000 – enough for them to be able to name a puppy.

Follow and like Guide Dogs at:



[facebook.com/guidedogslondon](https://www.facebook.com/guidedogslondon)



[@GuideDogsLondon](https://twitter.com/GuideDogsLondon)

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Engagement



Access to taxi and other private hire vehicles continues to be a problem for guide dog owners in the greater London area. Engagement Officer Dave Kent thought it may be useful to remind you of your options should you encounter a problem when booking a taxi in London. You do not need to mention the fact that you have a guide dog when booking a journey, however it is a courtesy to state you have an assistance dog.



Dave using a taxi with his guide dog Chad

Guide dogs should be accommodated in the foot well between the front seat and rear passenger seat with the harness removed. At no time should the dog be allowed onto the passenger seats.

If you are unfortunate enough to be involved with a taxi access denial, please try to remain calm and state your right to travel. It may also be helpful to carry your formal guide dog identification in the form of the Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK) passbook or access card. If you do not already have a passbook, please contact the support team here at the London mobility team.

Register your complaint with the public carriage office at Transport for London immediately, giving details of taxi company name, time of booking, any booking reference or registration plate plus any other information that could be useful. Transport for London (TfL) will investigate the incident and will prosecute the offender if there has been a violation of the law. There is a six month legal imperative to bring an action against an offender. So, the earlier you register your complaint, the more time TfL has to investigate. You may wish to bring an independent legal action, and we respect your decision to do this. You can discuss this with TfL.

If you require any additional information, you are always welcome to call the London Engagement Team on 01 18 983 8888 or you can visit www.guidedogs.org.uk/media/8240022/access-guide-taxis.pdf.

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Volunteering



Award-winning London volunteers

Local Volunteer Awards 2016

Huge congratulations to our volunteer winners at our awards last month. Each award was based on a Guide Dogs value, with nominations invited from members of staff and guide dogs owners. Here are the winners:

- **Dedicated to Superior Quality:** Winner – Malcolm Moore. Runners up – Eric Griffiths, Charlie Pelham and Elise Avery.
- **Trustworthy:** Winner – Maggie Lydon. Runners up – June and Brian Breeze.
- **Inclusive and Embracing:** Winners – Ari Rosenblum and Arriel Eder. Runner up – Elisabeth Dormandy.
- **Customer-Focused:** Winner – Lynda Stuart. Runner up – Bo Win.
- **Maximising Impact:** Winner – Terry Burnham. Runners up – Ling and Tim Mack, and Hilary Leacock.
- **Passionate and Determined:** Winner – Emily Davison. Runners up – Helen Latchem and Heather Taylor.

Thanks very much to hosts Knight Frank and judges from business supporters Portico and Ecclesiastical.

Thanks to ALL of our London volunteers, we couldn't do our life-changing work without you. Contact desiree.polluk@guidedogs.org.uk with any volunteering questions.

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Fundraising

We visited the corporate law offices of Herbert Smith Freehills near Liverpool Street on 20 May during Mental Health Awareness Week, to trial the Meet Guide Dogs in the London area. Each staff member was given a 10-minute time slot to meet the dogs and learn more about Guide Dogs. With help from puppy walkers and Guide Dog Trainers from the Redbridge Training School, we were able to raise £1,471.35 in just two hours.



Staff from Herbert Smith Freehills

We are running two flag days (street collections) this year – Friday, 23 July for the metropolitan boroughs of London and Friday, 7 October (during Guide Dogs Week) for the City. We would greatly appreciate as many volunteers as possible on these two days to help us raise as much money as we can.

We have successfully recruited and trained some new fundraising speakers but are always on the lookout for more. If you'd like to find out more then please get in touch.

We have fundraising groups all over London and are looking at creating more, so if you fancy getting involved and can spare an hour or so to help us at collections and events, please get in touch and we can link you to your closest fundraising group.

If you'd like to help out or take part in any of these calls to action, please contact the fundraising team at londonfundraising@guidedogs.org.uk.

My Guide



My Guide volunteer Martyna with Sadhna



Some Friends and family training

The My Guide service in London is going from strength to strength. The team behind the service, Charlotte and Rebecca, is working hard to make sure our volunteer sighted guides can be matched up to the people with sight loss who need that all-important sighted assistance to help them get out and about in their community.

Don't forget that we also offer Friends and family training for those who would like to offer their nearest and dearest the opportunity to brush up on their guiding skills.

Get in touch with the London team if you're interested in receiving any part of the service, and ask to speak to Charlotte. If you'd like to be a part of our volunteering family and join the My Guide scheme, then please contact Rebecca on rebecca.harper@guidedogs.org.uk or ask for her via the main office number.

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Noticeboard

News in brief

Redbridge is 30 years old

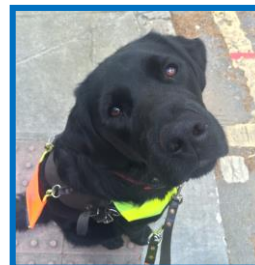
Come and celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Redbridge Training School on Saturday, 3 September, from 11am–4pm. All of the usual fun day activities will be there, and there will be some new surprises. Entry is £2 for adults and free for children, but pet dogs are not allowed on site. Offsite parking is available nearby at West Hatch School, postcode IG7 5BT. For more information, call 0118 983 8802 or email redbridge@guidedogs.org.uk.



Redbridge Training School

Out-of-hours contact for vet care

A quick note from Dog Care and Welfare. If you need to contact a vet out of working hours about your guide dog, call 0870 609 2219. Please note that not all vets will do visits or collect dogs, and out of hours it's unlikely to be your local vet who will be able to help.



A guide dog puppy in training

Flying with guide dogs

A number of guide dog owners have recently had problems travelling with their dog on internal UK flights, because they didn't have the relevant ID with them to confirm to the airline that their dog is trained by a "recognised training organisation". An agreement has been reached with the airline industry that this will be either a yellow Assistance Dogs UK-branded ID booklet, which is designed to support air travel in the UK, or a letter from the organisation that trained the person's dog to confirm its status as an assistance dog. If you are a guide dog owner planning to travel, please do remember to carry the yellow ID booklet, alongside your dog's pet passport, for international air travel. If you don't have a yellow ID book, please get in touch with our team to obtain one.

Registered charity in England and Wales (209617) and in Scotland (SCO38979)

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