



## Volunteer Role

### Brood Bitch Holder



To provide a home for a brood bitch on behalf of Guide Dogs, to take responsibility for her and provide support when she is giving birth.

The time devoted to the role changes and it requires more time when the bitch is giving birth.

#### What does the role involve?

- To provide a safe, secure and welcoming environment within a reasonable distance from the National Breeding Centre
- To feed and care for the bitch as directed and with advice from Guide Dogs
- To provide support to the bitch when giving birth in your home
- To ensure if and when appropriate that the dog receives emergency veterinary care as soon as possible, and that Guide Dogs are informed at the earliest opportunity.
- All non emergency health issues should be reported to the Dog Care & Welfare Team at the National Breeding Centre

**Location:** At home and at the National Breeding Centre, Bishops Tachbrook, Warwickshire, CV33 9WF

#### What skills or experience are required?

- Good communication skills
- Dog handling experience preferred but not essential
- Clean driving licence is desirable and access to a car you are insured to drive

#### What will I get out of it?

- Enabling Guide Dogs to continue its work with blind and partially-sighted people.
- A dog to look after in your own home
- An opportunity to meet other volunteer stock holders

#### What support or training will I get?

- Regular and ongoing support from Guide Dogs
- Basic induction to Guide Dogs and to the role
- An opportunity to take part in any general Guide Dogs volunteer training that is available locally
- Opportunity to attend dog training classes
- Equipment from the Guide Dogs list needed to rear a litter
- Fixed contribution to heating costs of the heat lamp for the litter
- Payment of out of pocket expenses agreed in advance

**Will I need to do a CRB check? No**

**This role is managed by:** Brood Bitch Supervisor

## **Find out more – meet one of our existing Brood Bitch Holders**

Susie got her brood bitch Truffle in 2009



At the birth you're there if your dog needs you, but if she's getting on with it you let her. I was mainly there to reassure Truffle, clean up, and weigh and mark the puppies. Part way through her whelping she got very tired so I took her into the garden as moving can help get things going, which it did because she had one pup in the garden!

You are given a couple of training days, DVD's and weekly visits from your supervisor when your bitch is pregnant and advice on every aspect of her care. You know what to look out for, such as a drop in temperature and other signs, which lets you know the puppies are probably due in the next 24hrs. Truffles' first four puppies have been with puppy walkers for 7 months and it's wonderful to hear how they're getting on through Facebook.

We wanted to give the puppies as many experiences as possible – we dressed up in fluorescent jackets, different hats, and tried to introduce them to as many different sounds, scents, textures as we could! Because my son has special needs, his world can be quite small, he has got so much joy out of spending time with the dogs and because he isn't verbal it was great to see both him and pups getting so much out of it. He loves to be able to handle and stroke them and enjoys them following him around the kitchen and garden and they get invaluable experiences of people who act differently to normal.

I really enjoyed doing the Kennel Club Good Citizen award that Guide Dogs run for breeding stock holders. It was a great way of meeting new people it was a proud moment when Truffle and I received the gold award.

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