

# Edinburgh volunteers wanted – to look after a puppy

If you are a dog lover and have some time to help train a puppy then Hearing Dogs for Deaf People want you to get in touch.



They have lots of hearing dog puppies which need homes for anywhere between 14 and 16 months from this autumn. The puppies need to be socialised and get experience of all the sights and sounds they might regularly encounter when they become a working dog.

There is a shortage of volunteers in Edinburgh and so the charity is looking for new puppy homes. If that is you then do volunteer now.



The role of a puppy socialiser volunteer is to ensure that the puppy they are matched with gets a good level of training and experience before it enters the next stage of its life. They take the puppy into as many different environments as possible, such as shops, on public transport, cafés and in and around busy towns. This gives the young dogs the confidence to accompany a deaf person everywhere they go when they become a hearing dog. Puppy socialisers also provide the puppies with housetraining and obedience skills and take them to weekly puppy classes along with other cute hearing dog puppies and their volunteers.



The whole process is funded and supported by Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and each puppy socialiser is assigned a local instructor, who will provide full support along the way.

Victoria Leedham, Volunteering Manager at Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, said: "It's definitely been a summer of love at

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and as a result we have experienced a summer puppy boom. This means we now have lots of cute little life-changers that are looking for homes in Edinburgh from the age of eight weeks, so we're urging anyone who might have the time and commitment needed to give a pup a home for anywhere between fourteen and sixteen months to get in touch to find out more."

Local resident, Diana Harkiss, who currently volunteers as a puppy socialiser for the charity, said: "Volunteering to socialise a puppy is an incredibly rewarding experience – it's like a dream come true for most people as they get to spend lots of time with an adorable puppy and know that at the end of their time together the little fur ball will be changing the life of a deaf person by acting as their ears.

"It is a commitment – I liken it to having a full-time job – but it is incredibly fun and worthwhile and the support you get along the way is fantastic."

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, which received no government funding, relies on its extensive network of more than 2,500 volunteers across the country in order to continue its life-changing work in training dogs that will change the lives of deaf people.

The role would suit anyone who is able to drive or has access to a car driven by someone else, has a secure private garden, enough time to train a puppy daily, and who is not away from home for more than two to three hours at a time.

For further information visit [www.hearingdogs.org.uk/puppies](http://www.hearingdogs.org.uk/puppies) or contact Hearing Dogs for Deaf People's volunteering team at [volunteer@hearingdogs.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@hearingdogs.org.uk) or on 01844 348122.

