

News Release

November 17, 2009



Volunteers required!



Dogs for the Disabled is currently searching for volunteer puppy socialisers in the Oxfordshire area to help continue the charity's vital work helping people with disabilities live independently.

Puppy socialisers take a young pup (usually a Labrador or Golden Retriever) into their

homes for approximately one year giving them plenty of experience of the outside world before they commence their formal training at the charity's centre in Banbury, Oxfordshire.

Dog Training Manager for Dogs for the Disabled, Chris Allen explains what the role of a puppy socialiser entails: "A young puppy needs to learn all the basics such as walking on a lead, sitting on command and the all important toilet training, but in addition our dogs need to get lots of experience of different sights, sounds and environments to ensure they are confident, relaxed young dogs when they start their formal training."

Once fully trained an assistance dog is able to assist with everyday tasks that help a person with disabilities live more independently. A dog can be trained to open doors, pick up dropped items such as keys, a wallet or mobile phone or help a person to undress. But a dog offers much more than practical assistance, offering companionship, improving confidence and improving social interaction for the disabled adults and children they are partnered with.

The charity does not ask its puppy socialisers to have previous dog handling know-how although it can be an advantage. What is required is that your circumstances are

stable and if you do work it is for no more than four hours per day (including travel time). You will also need to be prepared to have a fully fenced garden and live within one hours' drive of Banbury.

In return, the charity provides on-going support for all our volunteers, with regular home visits from a Puppy Co-ordinator and advice on every aspect of care. All costs for the puppy are paid by the charity and include food and vets bills. There are also opportunities to meet other volunteers and share experiences. While the charity acknowledge that saying 'good-bye' to a puppy at the end of the year is difficult many socialisers enjoy their role so much that they can't wait to start again with a new pup.

For a Puppy Socialising Information Pack please contact Dogs for the Disabled on 01295 252600 or send an email to info@dogsforthedisabled.org.

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Please call the communications team to arrange an interview with local puppy socialisers.

For more information:

Sarah Watson
Communications Manager
Sarah.watson@dogsforthedisabled.org
01295 759808