

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013

## Guide Dog puppy recruits descend on Cosford

**A group of puppies will be heading to the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford on Wednesday 24th April as part of their essential trainee Guide Dog preparations. Puppy walkers from Guide Dogs, along with five puppies all under the ages of eight months, will visit the popular Museum to familiarise their new recruits with different types of aeronautical sights, sounds and smells as part of their initial training.**

Puppy walking is a crucial stage in the development of guide dogs. Volunteers dedicate their time, patience and love to develop the dog, getting them used to everyday life, such as cars, buses, trains and crowds during their first 12 months.

Howard Jones, Puppy Training Supervisor for Guide Dogs, said:

*"Being able to take the puppies to RAF Museum Cosford for a day out is fantastic because they need to experience as many different scenarios as possible."*

It takes around 20 months of specialised training to transform a new-born puppy into a confident guide dog and Guide Dogs is the largest breeder of working dogs in the world, breeding more than 1,300 puppies each year.

In addition to time, it costs around £50,000 to support a guide dog from birth to retirement, which will give a blind or partially sighted person their independence, as well as company. Volunteers and puppy walkers are always needed and anyone interested should call Guide Dogs on 0845 371 7771 or email [volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@guidedogs.org.uk).

Nina Mitchell, RAF Museum Cosford Events Executive, said:

*"We are delighted to welcome Guide Dogs to the RAF Museum and to extend our facilities to them for the day, in order to prepare the puppies for the vital roles they will play in the future. The Museum will be fully open during their training, with lots of novel sights, sounds and plenty of people around, which I'm sure, will be an ideal environment to develop their socialising skills."*

The Museum is open daily from 10am and admission is FREE. Assistance dogs are welcome at the Museum and are permitted inside the hangars. For further information on our access policy, please visit the Museum website [www.rafmuseum.org](http://www.rafmuseum.org) or call 01902 376200.

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### Notes to Editors:

- For Further information on Guide Dog puppy training contact Howard Jones, Puppy Training Supervisor for Guide Dogs - 07796 611967 or email [Howard.Jones@guidedogs.org.uk](mailto:Howard.Jones@guidedogs.org.uk)
- For more information on Guide Dogs visit: [www.guidedogs.org.uk](http://www.guidedogs.org.uk)
- Royal Air Force Museum Cosford, Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 8UP
- Open daily from 10am
- Admission to the Royal Air Force Museum is free of charge.

- RAF Museum Cosford images & logo available at:  
<http://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/research/media-vault.aspx>
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Michelle Morgans on 01902 376212 or email [michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org](mailto:michelle.morgans@rafmuseum.org)
- Photos of the puppies should be credited to: 'Guide Dogs'