



Staff raise cash to train puppy February 2007

Dedicated fund-raisers at a Darlington insurance group have welcomed a new addition to their family – a new guide dog puppy called Freddie.

The team at BiB insurance brokers and underwriters spent 20 months raising £5,000 through a host of different activities to pay for a new guide dog to be trained.

Managing director Martin Littleton made the final choice on the name, suggested by underwriter Libby Robinson for the golden Labrador pup. Freddie, who was one of a litter of nine, recently visited BiB's offices in Darlington.

Karen Everett of BiB, who put forward the idea of raising money for a guide dog, said everyone in the company had worked hard over the past 20 months.

Staff, friends, family and even pets took part in a charity walk at Roseberry Topping which raised £1,800. Five colleagues raised £500 driving blind-folded at Nissan's test circuit and more money was collected by selling used mobile phones, a treasure hunt, raffles and a quiz night.

Karen said: "We've always raised money for charities but raising £5,000 was our biggest challenge yet. It's been hard work but very rewarding and thanks to the dedication and generosity of BiB staff and donations given by our suppliers we've finally made it.

"Everyone was really pleased to meet Freddie, the puppy their hard work will sponsor. The money we raised pays for his breeding, vaccinations, vet's bills and food for his first year. After his training we hope he will become a wonderful companion and support to his blind owner."

BiB staff will be kept up to date with Freddie's progress with 'pupdates', training reports and photographs.

Debbie Wheeler, of Guide Dogs, said: "Sponsoring a guide dog puppy is a rewarding and enlightening scheme and the support of companies like BiB is invaluable as Guide Dogs receives no government funding. Over the next year we will be able to share in the very special upbringing which will transform Freddie from a pup into a streetwise youngster ready for specialist guide dog training."

In addition to the £5,000 for Guide Dogs, last month staff raised £480 for St Teresa's Hospice in Darlington at a charity auction to mark BiB's 25th anniversary.

Prior to that, they raised £1,500 to pay for a children's pulse oxymeter for Darlington Memorial Hospital.



Karen Everett and Libby Robinson of BiB Underwriters Limited with Freddie, the guide dog puppy whose care and training will be paid for with funds raised by BiB staff