

2015



**Canine
Partners**

Amazing dogs. Transforming lives.

2016

Annual
Review





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I am delighted that by December 2016 671 life-changing partnerships had been created since our foundation in 1990 and staff and volunteers have worked tirelessly to support new and old partners as we followed on from our 25th anniversary year in 2015.

Being partnered with an assistance dog is a life-changing and joyful yet challenging experience but facing new challenges is not unfamiliar to our partners and their courage and determination is so inspirational. This serves as a constant reminder of the importance of the charity's work, providing people with greater independence.

It was my aspiration in 2015 to complete the construction of the accommodation at the Midlands Centre before the end of 2016 and I am pleased that it is now fully operational, with partners and staff enjoying its facilities.

As my term of office comes to a close, I would like to introduce you to Jackie Staunton, who steps into the hot seat as chair. I know she will find the role just as rewarding as I have while the charity continues to move towards an exciting future.

”

Mark Richardson
Chairman, Canine Partners



Canine Partners was founded in 1990. In 2015, we celebrated 25 years of Canine Partners.



“

I am pleased to report that over the last two years we have created another 144 new partnerships between disabled people and our dogs which means that we closed 2016 with a record 375 disabled people living in the UK with a fully trained canine partner by their side. I would like to extend my thanks to all who were involved in making this possible – it really is a huge team effort!

The charity has over 600 volunteers and they, together with our dedicated staff, our corporate sponsors, charitable trusts, foundations and individual donors make it possible for us to fulfil our mission. With record numbers of disabled people applying for our dogs, however, we know that we still have a lot more work to do, and we are determined to change the lives of many more people in 2017 and beyond. Thank you for your help.

”

Andy Cook
Chief Executive, Canine Partners



Meet Paddy and his canine partner, Melvin

“

I look after Melvin and Melvin looks after me. We are a partnership, a canine partnership.

”



There are over 370 people across the UK partnered with our dogs, each with a different story to tell about how their lives have been transformed by our amazing canine partners. Paddy is just one of them.

Paddy flew Tornado fighters in the Royal Air Force until he suffered a severe traumatic brain injury while on operations. Left with epilepsy as well as poor balance and coordination, Paddy was discharged from service. He remembers:

“Suddenly, life had dramatically changed for the worse. I had only seconds of warning before a seizure, which didn't give enough time for emergency medication to take effect. I was constantly injuring myself in falls, resulting in a dislocated shoulder a number of times and my vision and hearing suffering permanent damage. I

struggled with my loss of independence and hated being reliant upon others, yet found day-to-day tasks very difficult to do on my own. Getting out became a nightmare for me and life really wasn't good.”

But all that changed when Paddy was introduced to his canine partner, Melvin.

“Melvin has given me a new sense of independence. We go out together by ourselves and have even flown to see family alone. Melvin's presence in his smart Canine Partners purple jacket has changed my outlook to busy public places. He seems to clear a path ahead of us and as I am concentrating on him, my brain is affected by the stimuli much less. Life is so much better now – it is easier, less stressful and a whole lot more fun. I look after Melvin and Melvin looks after me. We are a partnership, a canine partnership.”

Canine Partners aims to train dogs for people with even the most complex disabilities.



From puppy to partnership

The following pages illustrate the six stages that both puppies and our clients have to undertake before they can become a fully working canine partnership.

Training a puppy to become an assistance dog is a challenging process, taking between 20 and 24 months, and relies on volunteer support followed by advanced training at one of our training centres.

It costs £20,000 from purchase of a puppy right through to retirement at around 12 years of age. That's £4.56 a day, per dog.

Now consider that we create over 75 new partnerships each year – and that we receive no government funding. You can understand exactly why we rely on our supporters to change people's lives.

Michelle and her canine partner, Lester



£800 covers the cost of breeding a puppy ourselves or buying one from a breeder, plus training equipment.



The purchase of a puppy



As soon as we have purchased a puppy from a breeder, or bred one ourselves from our specially selected Canine Partners brood bitches, it's time to hand the young dog over to a volunteer puppy parent for training. Right now, we have 128 puppies in training across the UK, living with puppy parents. These vital volunteers take the canine partners of the future through their first steps, teaching them obedience and helping them to discover the world.

1

There are so many ways a canine partner can help a person with physical disabilities. Our dogs are trained to meet the individual needs of people affected by multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spinal and head injuries, stroke, osteoarthritis, arthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida and more besides.

A person with physical disabilities investigates how a canine partner would transform their life

Puppy training - 8 weeks to around 14 months

We work mainly with Labradors, golden retrievers or crosses of those breeds. We also train some poodle crosses for people who have allergies. Above all, our puppies need to have essential qualities such as a gentle nature, curiosity and friendliness, which is why puppy breeding and selection is so important.

£4,200 funds the puppy training which includes volunteer support, vets bills, insurance, transport and toys.



2



The interested person applies for a canine partner

Once someone has decided they are interested in applying for a canine partner, they make an enquiry and request a Canine Partners application pack from the Applications Team and apply.

Advanced training



3

£5,000 pays for advanced training at one of our centres with our experienced team of trainers and the dog welfare team.



An applicant is assessed

When our puppies are around 14 to 15 months old, they move into advanced training at one of our centres in Heyshott, West Sussex or Osgathorpe, Leicestershire for a 17 week training programme. The core skills they learnt with their puppy parents are developed to carry out more demanding tasks such as opening doors, retrieving the phone, pressing lift buttons and unloading the washing machine.

When we receive their application, we undertake an in-depth assessment of the person's home, their lifestyle and needs, and their ability to look after a dog. Following this assessment, they can then move on to the waiting list to have a partnership created especially for them.

£10,000 pays for the support and aftercare throughout the partnership.



Once all initial training and assessments are successfully completed, a dog is matched to the person. The dog's training is then tailored to suit the person's specific individual needs. At the same time, final checks are made on the person's home, as well as any other support that may be required.

When the partnership is finally created at the two-week residential course, it marks the beginning of a whole new adventure that will change this person's life.

What's so important is that all the rigorous training and assessments that have brought them this far are only made possible thanks to your support.

4

A trained dog and applicant are matched



The average age of people who come to us for a canine partner is 44.



5

On site residential training course

This amazing partnership of dog and disabled person begins when both attend the two-week residential course at one of our centres.

24-hour care is provided to ensure that our partners are safe and secure while they are taught how to manage, care for and continue training their dog. They learn the commands they will need, as well as how to introduce their new canine friend into their lives in order to support them.

It is during these busy two weeks that the special bond between them begins to form and an amazing partnership is established for many years to come.

Clare and her canine partner, Griffin

“ Life with Griffin is happier and so great. I can't thank Canine Partners enough for transforming my life and my family's lives too. ”



Partnership ceremony and aftercare



6

By the end of the residential course, the partner's life has begun to be transformed. The partnership has been cemented and they return one more time to their training centre, around a year later, for their graduation.

From then on, we provide ongoing care and guidance through regular visits and telephone support. In this way, we can ensure the long-term success of the partnership and oversee the well-being of our dogs throughout their entire working lives, right up to their well-deserved retirement, which is usually when the dog reaches around ten to twelve years of age.

Becky has cerebral palsy. She was born 10 weeks early and suffered brain damage due to lack of oxygen. It means she is unable to walk and uses an electric wheelchair to get around both indoors and outdoors. She told us:

“Being in a wheelchair means that many things such as opening and closing doors and picking things up off the floor are very difficult and take a lot of time and energy. Before Gino came, life had become very hard. I lost my job and was struggling to find employment. It was difficult to find any real purpose in each day. Days were often very long and lonely.

“Since I have been partnered with Gino every day seems so much brighter. He helps in so many ways by getting items from shelves in supermarkets, handing my purse to the cashier, picking up dropped items when we are out, meaning that I no longer need to go shopping with a carer. Together Gino and I can do it on our own.

“Gino also helps a great deal at home assisting me to undress by taking off socks, shoes, trousers, jacket and jumper. He also gets the phone, fetches the post, picks up his bowl after feeding, opens and closes doors, puts his toys away, helps me sit up in bed, brings the towel after my shower and takes my clothes out of the washing machine.

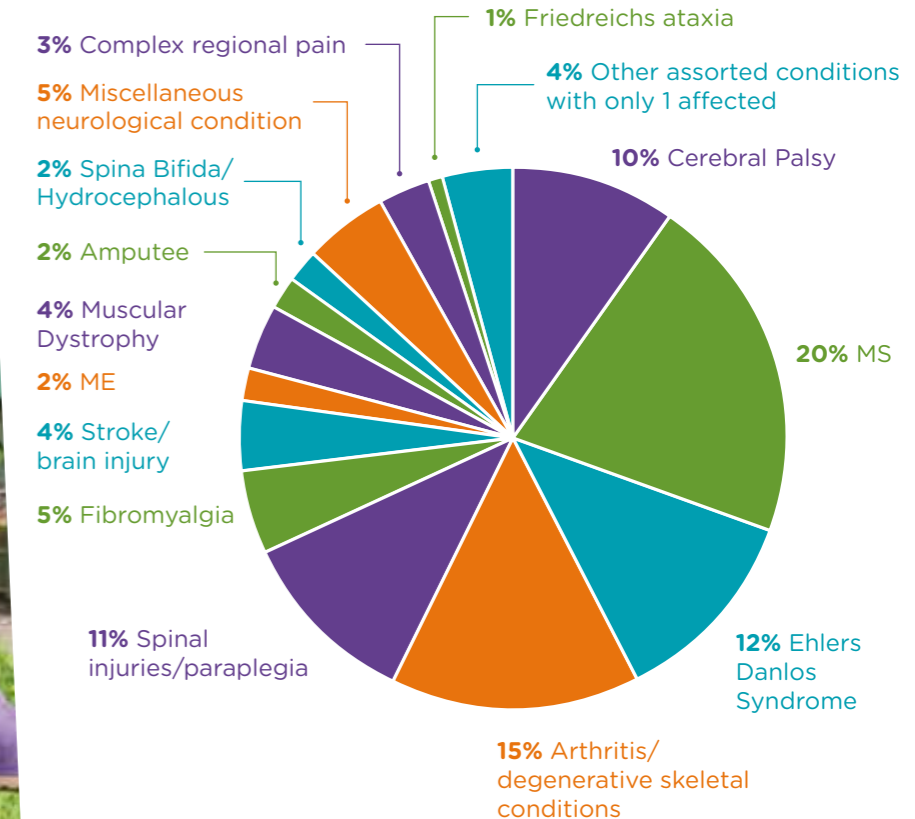
“Gino has changed my life. His love, companionship, loyalty and devotion to me is amazing, I feel so lucky and blessed to have him.”

Meet Becky and her canine partner, Gino



“Gino has changed my life. His love, companionship, loyalty and devotion to me is amazing, I feel so lucky and blessed to have him.”

The conditions of those on the waiting list December 2016





Our Midlands Centre

More than 1.2 million people in the UK use a wheelchair. Our aim is to help everyone whose lives could be transformed by our dogs.

Phase one of our Midlands Centre was successfully completed in 2014, which incorporated the training centre with areas for both advanced and puppy training, client meeting rooms and staff offices.

Phase two, the fully accessible residential accommodation was completed in December 2016, enabling people with extreme levels of disability to stay safely and comfortably on site while being partnered with their dogs during the two-week residential training course.

The completion of the final phase, the kennels and dog welfare centre, is to be achieved in 2017/18, once funding has been secured.

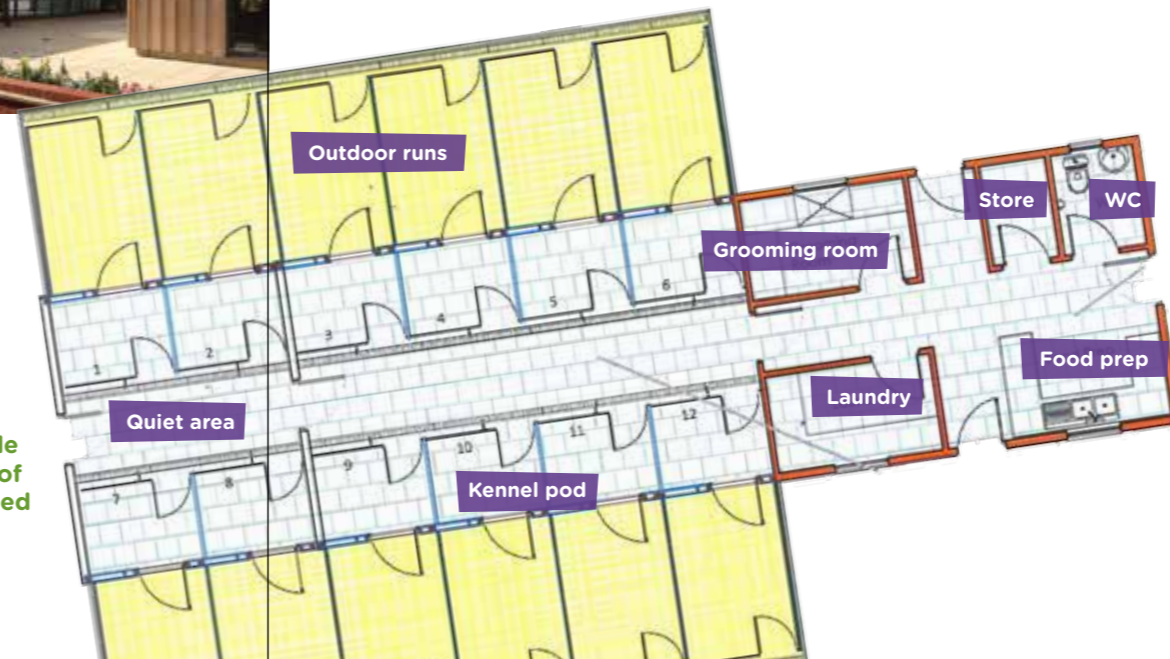
In 2016, 28 disabled people living in the midlands and north were able to access our services and benefit from our brand new, state of the art midlands facility.



Left: Accommodation rooms

Our new Centre means we can increase the number of partnerships we create each year to help meet the huge demand. It will make us more accessible and help us provide a better service to everyone, wherever they live.

It's your support that makes vital work like this possible. Thank you for everything you are doing to help.



Right: Example layout of proposed kennel facility

£25 pays for one special dog bed, providing a comfortable and homely place to sleep for a canine partner in training.

£2,200 pays for the two-week residential training course, when a disabled person can stay with us, while they meet and bond with their new canine partner.

How we raised and spent our funds in 2015 and 2016

In 2015 we received £3,772,762. Of this amount £3,370,874 came from the generosity of our community, companies, charitable trusts and the hard work of our support groups. This included £1,219,380 from legacies, a significant increase on 2014. Legacy income is an important source of funding and we continue to raise the importance of this with our supporters by running regular legacy events.

In 2016 we received £3,668,060. Of this amount £2,134,441 came from our

communities, companies, charitable trusts and support groups. £1,355,081 came from legacies.

In 2015, £2,342,246 was spent on charitable activities. A further £684,143 was spent on generating funds including fundraising events and sale of charitable merchandise.

In 2016, £2,481,298 was spent on charitable activities. A further £623,305 was spent on generating funds including fundraising events and sale of charitable merchandise.

Partnerships created during 2015 = 78

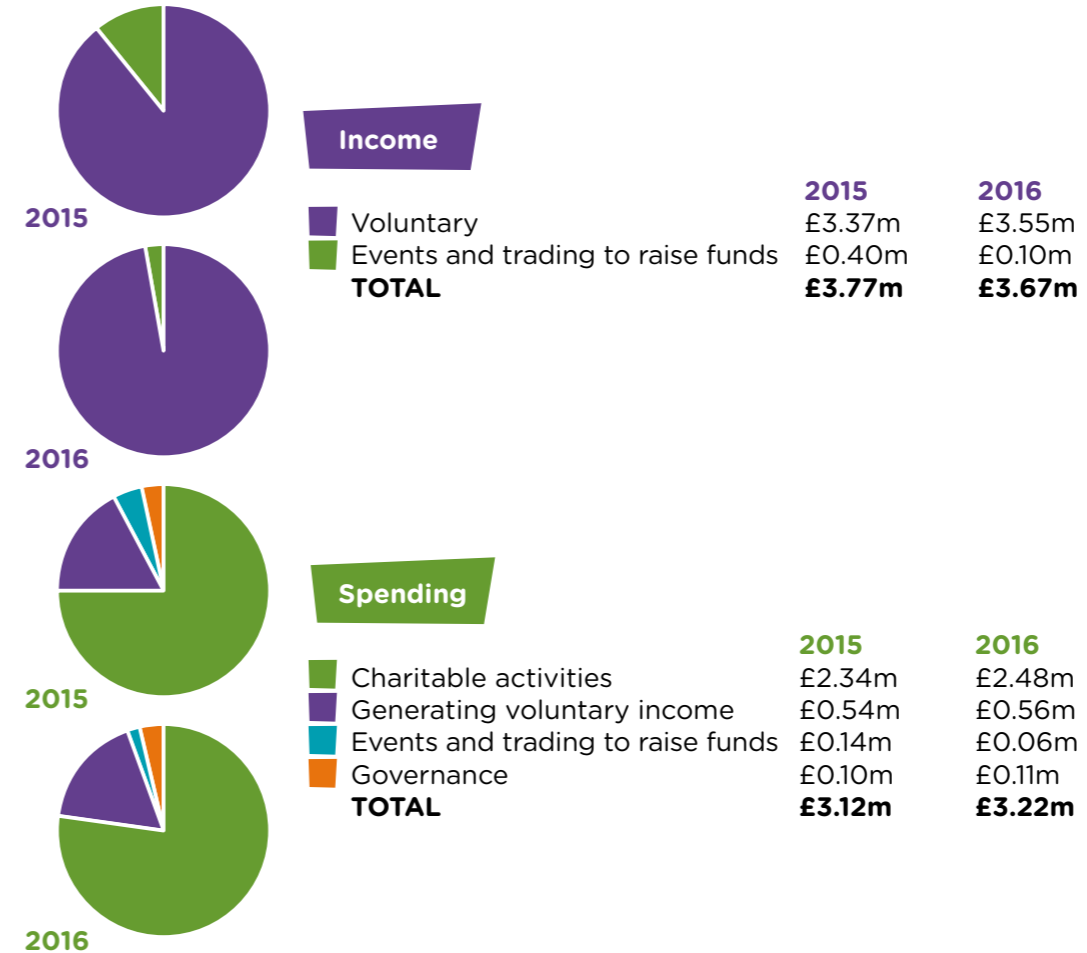
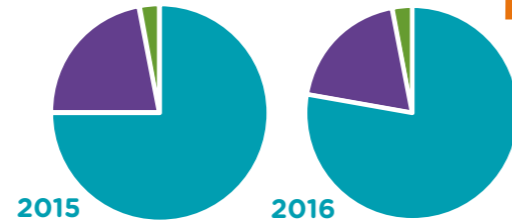
Number of working partnerships in the UK 2015 = 339

Partnerships created during 2016 = 66

Number of working partnerships in the UK 2016 = 375

Each pound given to fund the working of the Charity has been spent this year as follows:

	2015	2016
Charitable activities	75p	77p
Cost of generating funds	22p	19p
Governance costs	3p	4p



Financial review and summarised accounts 2015 and 2016

The annual report and financial statements for the year to 31 December 2015 and 31 December 2016 have been drawn up in conformity with FRS102, the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice. A full copy of the Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2015 and 2016 may be obtained from the Company Secretary on application to the Charity's registered office or from the Charity Commission at www.charitycommission.gov.uk

A big thank you!

From all of us at Canine Partners, we would like to say a big thank you to everyone who helps us continue to transform people's lives every single year.

That means our puppy parents, fosterers, support groups, speakers, demonstration dog team and all our wonderful volunteers up and down the UK – without whom our work simply wouldn't be possible.

And we want to say thanks to our supporters too. Your kind generosity helps provide the desperately needed funds that pay for all of our life-changing work.

We rely on your kindness. Please carry on helping us be there for everyone who needs us. Thank you so much.

We receive no government funding and rely on donations from the public, businesses, charitable trusts and legacies.



Thanks to our corporate sponsors

At Canine Partners we are lucky enough to work with corporate donors from across the UK, who help us to continue our amazing work. Thank you to all our corporate supporters. We could not do it without you.



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A company limited by guarantee. Company registration No. 02516146.

Registered as a charity in England and Wales (No 803680) and in Scotland (No SC039050)

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