



Hi

We want to tell you about our exciting charity, **Service Dogs UK**, which provides veterans from the **Armed Forces, Emergency Services, Coast Guard & RNLI**, who suffer from **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**, with specially trained assistance dogs from rescue centres!

We provide this at NO cost to the veteran!

We train dogs to the highest standard with the goal of achieving ADI (Assistance Dogs International) accreditation, meaning they will have public access and can be with the veterans at all times.

We will continue to support the partnerships as part of our ongoing commitment to 'those who serve', past or present.

We will raise awareness of PTSD as a significant danger to our veterans through our activities and education. We will also research and develop ways of improving the lives of our injured service people through the interaction with dogs and the therapeutic benefits that this provides.



Why rescue dogs

We feel that our veterans will have an empathy with rescue dogs. They know what it is like to be in a difficult and sometimes desperate situation. Now, they can change a dog's life for the better and change their own lives at the same time. Doing something positive is a very powerful feeling! Rescue dogs, like veterans with PTSD, have their 'battle' scars and being able to help each other empowers both.



You can make the difference!

We need your donations to do what we do!

-  **Donate**
Via **JustGiving** to set up a direct debit, one-off donation or a fundraising page visit: [justgiving.com/servicedogs-uk](https://www.justgiving.com/servicedogs-uk) this way we also automatically receive GiftAid, meaning your donation goes even further.
Or use our bank details; Bank: **Santander**, sort code: **09-01-28**, Account No.: **82363380**, Name: **Service Dogs UK**
-  **Fundraise!**
See our website for oodles of excellent fundraising ideas.
-  **Look good!**
Visit the site and get cool gear; we have hoodies, shirts, wristbands and more!

Visit:

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You can make the difference!

 It is easy to forget, that those who serve on the frontline, be it at home or abroad, often see and experience awful things so that you and I do not have to. **But this bravery does come at a cost for some and they need your support!**

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is the brain's response to an extremely traumatic experience or experiences, assistance dogs can help people cope with this disabling condition.

For those in the armed forces it is often triggered by being in combat. For those in the emergency services it is can be triggered by life-threatening experiences, having to deal with horrific road side accidents or domestic and child abuse cases. They can be situations where the person feels intense fear and/or helplessness.

*"Within some groups of society, the incidence of PTSD must be expected to be much higher than one per cent. Within the emergency services (fire, police and ambulance) and the armed forces (army, navy and air force) the **incidence of PTSD can be as high as 15%**. It is a disturbing probability that out of every hundred police officers currently engaged in uniformed patrol duties in our towns and cities, fifteen will be suffering from symptoms in accord with PTSD."*

David Kinchin, Author,
Post Traumatic Stress
Disorder

People who suffer with PTSD can have various symptoms that makes life very difficult and disabling - just because you cannot see the injury doesn't mean it's not there.



Typically, sufferers will experience or feel anger, grief, flashbacks, guilt, despair, fatigue, depression, emotional numbness, sleeplessness, loss of trust, feeling overwhelmed, fear, work/family problems, frustration, insecurity, self-doubt and suicidal thoughts.

Dogs can really help!

Research is currently being carried out in both the US and Canada looking into the benefits of dogs in terms of mitigating the symptoms of PTSD. The U.S. Congress is backing this research, however, in the UK, we are still some way behind.

Dogs are able to 'draw out' even the most isolated people. Through engaging with a dog, veterans are able to overcome emotional numbness and lower

social barriers; it is much easier to talk about dogs than it is about yourself!

Through training a dog, veterans develop new ways to communicate without anger or paranoia. In some research, it was shown that veterans, were also able to sleep again knowing a dog was 'looking out for them'. By bonding with a dog emotionally, veterans feel more able to be out in the world, to engage.



IMPROVEMENTS Noted for veterans and service members (with PTSD) who are involved with service dogs

*Increase in patience,
impulse control,
emotional regulation*

*Improved ability
to display affect,
decrease in emotional
numbness*

Improved sleep

*Decreased depression,
increase in positive
sense of purpose*

*Decrease in startle
responses*

*Reduce anxiety &
lower blood pressure*

*Decrease in pain
medications*

*Increased sense of
belonging/acceptance*

*Lowered stress levels,
increased sense of
calm*

*Service Dog Training
Program for Treatment of
Posttraumatic Stress in
Service Members - Yount,
Olmert, Lee published: US
Army Med Dep J. 2012*



Ajax - Service Dogs UK first assistance dog in training

Having a dog means working as a team! Our dog-human partnerships rely on each other and support each other on a daily basis. Going out provides an opportunity to socialise and interact with others. A trained assistance dog will also be able to perform specific tasks that will make life easier for the veteran.

What our dogs can do

Dogs help by just being dogs! But ... Our dogs are specially trained to help veterans with PTSD. They are carefully selected with the right qualities to pass the ADI Public Access Test meaning they can go everywhere with the veteran as part of a team. Specific tasks are also trained to address any individual requirements, here's how they help:

-  Dogs interrupt nightmares and bring comfort.
-  Dogs give non-judgemental friendship and comfort.
-  Dogs can distract you when you feel tense.
-  Dogs share with us the hormone oxytocin which is released with close interaction and reduces stress and anxiety.
-  Dogs can create a subtle barrier in public allowing the partner to feel safer or take the person to a quieter place.
-  Dogs can recognise stress and anxiety and can redirect the person to more positive activities such as petting.
-  Dogs provide a routine and provide a purpose to go out.