**Elham Valley Referrals**

**Dealing with Blindness in Dogs**

Living with a blind dog can be challenging, especially if the vision loss was sudden and the adjustment period was cruelly skipped or rushed.  Here at EVR we deal with a lot of such cases and although it’s never easy, we can definitely say it **IS** possible for our furry friends to not only cope with blindness, but also to live an adventurous, fulfilling life that lacks nothing compared to that of a visual dog!

Our advice...

* + **Take time to process your shock.** Accept that things are going to be different from now on, but that definitely doesn’t have to mean worse.  Dogs are incredibly good at acclimatising and compensating for their blindness by use of their other senses.  If your blind dog can cope, so can you.

* + **Protect your dog.**   This can involve anything from not moving furniture in your home or changing your pet’s familiar surroundings to perhaps teaching them new commands like ‘’Step-up’’, ‘’Step-down’’, ‘’Close’’, ‘’Stop’’ etc.
  + **Stimulate their other senses.**  Playtime with your dog can still be great fun.  Try treat-dispensing toys, scented toys and, of course, toys that make funny/ squeaky sounds.  Socialisation is key; exposing your dog to noises, smells, people and other dogs within a safe environment can massively enhance their confidence and even assist overcoming phobias.
  + **Ask for help.**   You are not the first pet owner to be in this situation, so draw upon the experiences of others. Whether it’s your vet or a pet training instructor or even another dog owner with a similar experience, advice can be really helpful.

If you have any queries about dealing with blindness in your dog, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our staff and we will do our best to help.