



## Assistance Dogs Policy

### Foreword

Although we love dogs, we regret that visitor's dogs or pets are not permitted in the zoo, with the exception of assistance dogs. This is to ensure the welfare of our animals and the comfort of our other guests, following the expectation that assistance dogs are trained to the highest standard in order to provide support, and are provided with high standards of preventative health care.

Entry cannot be permitted for therapy, emotional support or comfort dogs as they are not considered to be assistance dogs. Assistance dogs are usually trained to perform specific tasks to aid a person with a disability, and are usually qualified by one of the charitable organisations registered as members of Assistance Dogs UK.

Here at the Zoo, we welcome assistance dogs and want to make your visit to us as enjoyable as possible. To enable this to happen, we have compiled the following guidance to enable assistance dogs to safely enter the Zoo grounds.

The Zoo does not allow pet dogs around site, and strongly advises against leaving dogs in cars or bringing your dog with you when you visit the Zoo.

### Visiting with an Assistance Dog

The following verification will be required to be presented to Zoo staff at our entrance gates to facilitate entry of an Assistance Dog to the Zoo grounds;

**Verification of your need for assistance** - Dogs qualified by one of the charitable organisations registered as members of Assistance Dogs UK may only need to present their yellow ADUK branded Identification Booklet, or piece of their dog's identification equipment. Alternatively, this could be a Blue Badge, PIP letter, or a letter from a recognised health professional on their organisations headed paper.

**Evidence of assistance dogs vaccination** - Dogs qualified by one of the charitable organisations registered as members of Assistance Dogs UK may only need to present their yellow ADUK branded Identification Booklet, or piece of their dog's identification equipment. Alternatively, a veterinary record demonstrating up-to-date vaccinations (Including canine distemper and parvovirus), along with evidence the dog has received preventative flea and worm treatment in the last six months.

**Evidence the assistance dog has been resident in the UK for more than six months or rabies vaccination** - Dogs qualified by one of the charitable organisations registered as members of Assistance Dogs UK may only need to present their yellow ADUK branded Identification Booklet, or piece of their dog's identification equipment. Alternatively, evidence of residency or vaccination against rabies.

### Assistance dog declaration form

You will be asked to complete an assistance dog declaration form which sets out the requirements for admission, states the dog has not displayed any signs of disease, vomiting or diarrhoea in the past 24 hours, and that terms of entry have been provided.



## **Around the Zoo site**

Assistance dogs must be announced during admission, otherwise access for your dog around the Zoo site will not be permitted. The Zoo kindly request assistance dogs wear an identifying harness, jacket, collar or lead at all times whilst on the premises. Although the Zoo recognises this is not a legal requirement for entry, it will allow other visitors to understand the context under which a dog is on site and minimise interruptions during your visit.

Assistance dogs must be on a short lead at all times and under strict control. Barking or growling out with the specific training role of the dog must not be allowed. The Zoo reserves the right to politely ask you to move away from any areas or situation where we feel a welfare issue is being created for our animals or your dog, or distress caused to any of our visitors due to the behaviour of the dog. Faeces should be cleared away by their owners and taken away by them.

There are several areas assistance dogs are not permitted, in the interest of our animals and your dog and in the interest of biosecurity. These include our Reptile and Alligator houses, the Children's farm barn, the chimpanzee auditorium, the flamingo, penguin and lemur walkthrough areas.

## **References**

Assistance Dogs UK

BIAZA Advice Regarding Admittance of Assistance Dogs to Zoos and Aquariums (2022)

Equality and Human Rights Commission - Assistance dogs: a guide for all businesses