

# Assistance Dog Policy

October 2025

At Marwell, we are committed to making the wonders of nature accessible to everyone. We welcome visitors with assistance dogs and will do everything possible to make your visit safe and enjoyable for everyone – people, dogs, and animals alike.

## What is an Assistance Dog?

An assistance dog is specially trained to support a person with accessibility requirements or someone with a medical condition. These dogs are:

- Highly trained and under control at all times
- Identifiable by a harness or jacket (though not legally required but preferred)
- Toilet trained and unlikely to foul in public areas

**Please note: Emotional Support Animals are not legally recognised as assistance dogs in the UK so we cannot allow them into the zoo. This is because zoos have unique animal welfare and biosecurity requirements due to the sensitive nature of the animals in our care. We follow guidance from BIAZA regarding assistance dogs and Emotional Support Animals.**

## Where Dogs Can Go

- Assistance dogs are welcome in most areas of the zoo.
- For animal welfare and biosecurity reasons, dogs may not be allowed in certain enclosures, walkthrough exhibits, or experiences. These restrictions will be clearly explained on the map provided on our website or at our admissions gates. Please ask a member of our team.
- Assistance dogs are welcome on our road train, and our drivers can assist if needed.

## Health and Safety for Animals and Guests

To protect the health and welfare of our all animals and guests:

- Owners may be asked to confirm their dog is healthy, fully vaccinated, and free from parasites.
- Dogs must remain under close control at all times and must not touch zoo animals, fences or barriers.
- Any dog fouling must be cleaned up immediately by the owner.

Barking or growling dogs will need to move immediately away from animal areas until calm. If this behaviour persists you may be asked to leave.

## Visitor Responsibilities

- Dogs must stay on a lead and with their handler at all times.
- If a dog causes distress to zoo animals, we will ask the handler to move to another area or leave the Zoo.

## Refusal of Entry

- Exclusion of an assistance dog will only happen in exceptional cases, where animal health, welfare, or biosecurity risks cannot be safely managed.

## Important Notes

- We do not require ID for assistance dogs, as this is not a legal requirement.
- Assistance dogs come in many breeds, sizes, and appearances and all are welcome.
- We do not allow any assistance dogs in training into the zoo.
- We cannot allow any other types of animals into the zoo, even if they are pets or companions.

If you are unsure of any of the information provided in this policy we recommend contacting us at least a week before your visit so we can support you.

***This policy follows BIAZA guidance and has been informed by leading UK assistance dog charities.***