

St Andrews Aquarium Assistance Dog Policy

Assistance dogs are trained to support people with additional needs and people with medical conditions in a variety of ways. Assistance dogs are welcome in St Andrews Aquarium. St Andrews Aquarium recognizes the following as Assistance Dogs:

- a dog which has been trained to guide a blind person.
- a dog which has been trained to assist a deaf person.
- a dog which has been trained by a prescribed charity to assist a person with additional needs who has a disability that consists of epilepsy or otherwise affects the person's mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination, or ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects.
- a dog of a prescribed category which has been trained to assist a person with additional needs who has a disability (other than one falling within point c) of a prescribed kind.

St Andrews Aquarium does not permit emotional support animals on site under any circumstances.

In line with the Equality and Human Rights Commission, St Andrews Aquarium expects that assistance dogs:

- are highly trained
- will not wander freely around the premises
- will sit or lie quietly on the floor next to its owner
- are trained to go to the toilet on command and so are unlikely to foul in a public place.
- If possible be recognizable by the harness or identifying dog jacket they wear.

We further ask that the handler of the assistance dog:

- Keep all assistance dogs under the close control of a responsible handler.
- Remove dogs which start barking or growling to an area where no aquarium animals are present until the animal stops vocalizing. Note – We are aware some assistance dogs may do a "Woof" (not bark uncontrollably) to alert their of medical conditions.
- Remove any dog that is obviously causing distress to any aquarium animals. Aquarium staff have the right to ask assistance dogs to leave if they are causing disruption or distress.
- Immediately clean up and dispose of all faeces appropriately. Please be aware St Andrews Aquarium does not have facilities for cleaning or disposing of any faeces.

Our outdoor areas are shared by our visitors and are therefore not deemed an appropriate place for an assistance dog to relieve itself. It is the responsibility of the assistance dog owner to plan for any accidents/spills discussed in advance of the visit.

Key areas of concern for St Andrews Aquarium are:

Biosecurity:

- the potential risk of infectious diseases carried by assistance dogs.
- the potential risk of exposing the assistance dog to zoonotic diseases. This is most likely in areas with open water tanks; however, dogs are at risk throughout the aquarium exhibits.

Animal behaviour and welfare:

- The potential for dogs to cause stress or distress to aquarium animals, or stress caused to the dog by being in the presence of aquarium animals.
- Frequently our small mammals within St Andrews Aquarium (meerkats and marmosets) can display distress and stress behaviours in the presence of assistance dogs. Due to this we ask handlers not to approach the glass of these enclosures and move away from the area if these behaviours are seen (vocalizing, hiding, alert).

By entering the aquarium, handlers are agreeing to the following points

- I have read and understood St Andrews Aquarium Admittance of Assistance Dogs Policy
- I am the responsible dog handler for the visiting assistance dog
- I will be in control of the assistance dog at all times during my visit
- The visiting assistance dog is currently enrolled on a standard canine vaccination program as advised by their vet and are up to date with all doses, including flea and worm treatment/parasite treatment.
- The visiting Assistance dog has not shown any signs of disease including vomiting or diarrhoea in the last 24 hours.
- I understand the potential risk of exposing the assistance dog to zoonotic diseases.