

Assistance Dogs Policy

Policy Statement

- Roman Vindolanda and the Roman Army Museum & Magna Fort are classed as scheduled ancient monuments and as such require careful protection to ensure visitors can continue to enjoy them for many years to come. The Museums at both sites hold internationally significant artefacts housed in controlled environments and so the protection of the collection and health and safety of all our visitors is a primary concern.
- The purpose of this policy is to minimise the restriction of access to visitors with assistance dogs across both Roman Vindolanda and Roman Army Museum & Magna Fort.
- It is also to ensure a safe environment is provided to all visitors, volunteers and staff under the Equality Act 2010, whilst additionally, the Act requires that all reasonable efforts have been made to accommodate people's needs.

Access Rights

- Assistance Dog users have the right to access all public areas of the Vindolanda Trust including bathrooms and dining areas.

Definitions

- Assistance Dogs are defined as dogs that have been highly trained to carry out a range of tasks and alerts that support a disabled person or person with a long-term medical condition.
- Assistance dogs are trained to support a wide range of needs and can provide a variety of services. Assistance dogs are not defined breeds and can come in all shapes and sizes.
- In the UK there is no register of assistance dogs, and not all assistance dog users will have ID. Whilst people may offer these, there is no legal requirement for ID to be provided and access must not be refused if ID cannot be shown.
- There is a difference between an assistance dog and an emotional support dog. An emotional support dog at present requires no specialist training and are not referenced in the law. Therefore, it is important to remember that assistance dogs are highly trained and support a disabled person to mitigate a mental or physical health condition and this policy applies to assistance dogs. Emotional Support dogs, therefore, are not permitted on our sites.

Expectations

- Assistance dogs are highly trained. It should be noted that no assistance dog, no matter how highly trained and experienced, is going to be perfect 100% of the

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time. Whilst they are trained to focus on their partner, from time to time they may be distracted. However, there are some behaviours that we would not expect to see:

- Dogs that have not been trained to behave well in public e.g. lunging, constant barking, jumping up or pulling strongly on a lead (however, it must be noted that some assistance dogs may jump to alert their handler).
- Dogs with aggressive or very fearful temperaments e.g. cowering or growling.
- Poorly cared for dogs that constitute a hygiene risk.
- Dogs that are not toilet trained.
- At the Vindolanda Trust, our expectations are:
 - The assistance dog should be always kept on lead and under close control whilst accessing your service.
 - The user should, where possible, clean up after their dog. There are designated assistance dog toileting areas identified at both sites.
- Our staff will:
 - Be aware of the guidance and ensure disabled people are made welcome.
 - Provide assistance dogs with water if required.

Putting the policy into practice

- The Vindolanda Trust welcomes all visitors and supports any reasonable adjustments, including assistance dogs, to ensure visitors can access both Roman Vindolanda Fort & Museum and the Roman Army Museum & Magna Fort without making assumptions about their impairment or health condition.
- We expect all assistance dogs to be able to meet our expectations. We have a duty of care to our staff, volunteers, and other visitors whilst on site as well as protecting a scheduled ancient monument and designated museum collection. Where the behaviour of a dog does not meet these expectations, we will request the dog be removed from the site.
- All assistance dogs must be kept on a short lead at all times and the visitor, if possible, must clean up after themselves.
- If staff do not believe the dog can meet these expectations, then we will be unable to allow entry onto the site.
- This policy applies to assistance dogs only and does not apply to family dogs or emotional support dogs which are not permitted access onto either of our sites.