

Visiting with an Assistance Dog

We love dogs at Colchester Zoo, but, unfortunately, we can **only allow assistance dogs into the zoo**. This is because of the need to ensure the welfare of our animals, the general safety and hygiene for our other guests and the expectation that assistance dogs are trained to the highest levels to support others.

Therapy / emotional support dogs are not allowed to enter the zoo.

Assistance dogs, either accredited or owner trained, are allowed into the zoo with some restrictions for the reasons above.

Therapy, emotional support or comfort dogs

These are rather general terms and often used to describe a dog that is used to benefit people in a therapeutic way. This incorporates quite a wide range of potential activities with a wide range of potential people and clients.

Some pets take part in visiting programmes, whilst others take part in structured activities as part of a therapeutic programme or practice. Only certain assistance dogs are permitted with an accompanying owner.

Therapy dogs in the UK are not considered to be assistance dogs – this is because an assistance dog is trained to perform specific tasks to help a disabled person and are usually qualified by one of the charitable organisations registered as members of Assistance Dogs UK.
– The Society for Companion Animal Studies.

Dogs in cars

Colchester Zoo does not allow dogs to be left in cars, even with ventilation and water, anyone found leaving dogs in their car will not be granted admission. We take this very seriously and take our lead from the RSPCA – please see the RSPCA website below:

<http://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/dogs/health/dogsinhotcars>





On the day of your visit

ON ARRIVAL

When you arrive for your visit, you should report to Guest Services located in the Main Entrance building to show the relevant verification for your assistance dog's entry to the zoo, this will be: -

- **Verification of your need for assistance** - this could be a Blue Badge or a PIP letter. You may also provide verification in the form of a letter from a recognised health professional on their organisations headed paper.
- **Evidence of the assistance dog's vaccination** record that shows all vaccinations are currently up to date with all inoculations for standard canine diseases (including canine distemper and parvovirus) and that the dog has received anthelmintic (worming) treatment in the last six months and has not shown any signs of disease, including vomiting or diarrhoea, in the last 24hrs.
- **Evidence of residency for more than 6 months OR rabies vaccination.** All assistance dogs must have been resident in the UK for more than 6 months or have received an annual vaccination against rabies.



WITHIN THE ZOO

We want you, your dog and other guests to have the best experience when visiting Colchester Zoo. We believe this can be achieved if you understand and comply with our Code of Conduct for Assistance Dogs in the zoo -

- Dogs must be kept on a **short lead at all times** whilst under strict control. Should your dog start **growling/barking or cause distress** to any zoo animals, you must remove them from the area immediately and wait in an area without animals until the dog stops barking/growling.
- Dogs **must not be allowed to foul anywhere** in the zoo grounds and any faeces should be cleared away by their owners and taken away with them.
- We reserve the right to politely ask you to move away from areas in the zoo if we feel a welfare issue is being created for our animals or your dog.
- Dogs are **not permitted in enclosed areas or walkthrough exhibits** as this will impact the welfare of our animals, as well as your dog, as we cannot guarantee our animals' health status at the time of your visit.
These areas are: -
 - All walkthrough exhibits with free-roaming animals including: Worlds Apart, Rainforest Walkthrough, Colenso Village (goats and sheep), Sensation Station, Australian Rainbows (lorikeets), Feathers of the Forest, Wallaby Walkabout and Lost Madagascar Lemur Walkthrough.
 - Areas where animals are close to visitors, including, but not limited to, Elephant or Giraffe feeds and zoo animal handling sessions.
 - Enclosures where the animals dislike the presence of dogs, including: Chimpanzee Lookout, Rajang's Forest (orangutans), Lion Rock, Leopards at Ussuri Falls, Bush Dogs (next to the Lost Madagascar train station) and Call of the Wild (wolves).

ASSISTANCE DOG ACCESS MAP

Please see the map (BELOW) for all the zoo locations that you are permitted to access when visiting with an assistance dog.

The areas in RED are not permitted for assistance dogs.

