

Information for Visitors Bringing an Assistance Dog to the London Olympics 2012

If you are planning to bring your assistance dog to London Olympics, you might find this information helpful.

Cultural Issues

In general, the UK is a nation of dog lovers. Indeed, it is generally recognised that the British love their dogs far more than they love each other! Because of this, you will find that people are genuinely interested in your dog and this can be a nuisance sometimes. However, take it in the spirit it is intended, although be firm if you do not want someone to touch or distract your dog.

Many UK partnerships report that those members of the public who show interest in their dog, may well ask what the dog does for you and some even enquire what impairment you have to warrant having a dog. This is usually out of genuine interest and friendliness, and whilst you should never say more than you feel comfortable with, people may be offended if your answer is "none of your business"! Most people simply smile in admiration of well trained dogs helping people.

Access Laws

The Access laws in the UK are quite complicated, but overall, you should find that you are able to take your assistance dog into all public places. The 2010 Equality Act (EA) states that assistance dogs should be recognised by service providers as a 'reasonable adjustment' that enables a disabled person to be treated equally in terms of accessing public places and services. Although very few service providers will necessarily know the law, most people will intuitively recognise the public access rights for assistance dogs. However, you need to remember that it is the disabled person that has the rights not the dog, so you need to be with your dog if it is to access public places.

It is customary that assistance dogs are "dressed" in an appropriate manner so that they are easily recognised. i.e. a jacket, harness, bandana etc.

Pulling Wheelchairs

It is against the law in the UK for a dog to pull a wheelchair.

Collars

All forms of shock collars are illegal in parts of the UK and should not be used in any circumstances. The use of prong collars, whilst not illegal, is heavily frowned upon and you are advised not to use them.

Escalators

Generally speaking it is not customary for dogs to use escalators or moving walkways/travelators in the UK, this is due to concerns over safety. In central London for example, you may well see signs which say "Dogs Must be Carried" and certainly Transport for London (TfL) do not allow dogs on escalators unless they are carried, or are guide dogs that

have undertaken escalator training and have a certificate to that effect. There are generally lifts in close proximity, and at less busy times of day, staff may, upon request, stop an escalator for a partnership to walk up or down.

Food

It is against the law to bring pet food into the UK (this includes meat, kibble and biscuit containing any meat or dairy products) and so you will need to think about this well in advance.

Spending Areas

There will be spending areas at all venues – see special section for more details.

General

It is important to remember that there are close to six thousand assistance dog partnerships in the UK who by and large have good access and the respect of the general public. We welcome you to the UK with your dog and hope you will enjoy your time here.

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