



Sopwell House – Welcoming Assistance Dogs

We're proud to be an inclusive and supportive space at Sopwell House. While we don't allow pets in general, we warmly welcome all trained assistance dogs in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, and we are committed to ensuring an inclusive and accessible environment throughout our hotel.

Here's everything you need to know to make your visit smooth and comfortable.

General Pet Policy

We're a no-pets hotel, so furry friends (other than trained assistance dogs) can't stay with us or enter public areas like lounges and restaurants. This helps us maintain a calm, luxurious environment for all our guests.

What Is an Assistance Dog?

An assistance dog is specially trained to help someone with a disability — for example, guiding someone who is visually impaired or alerting someone who is deaf.

These dogs might be trained by organisations like Guide Dogs UK, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, or Canine Partners. They may wear a jacket or harness, but don't worry if they're not wearing anything — visible ID isn't required by law.

Please note: **Emotional Support Dogs** are not recognised as assistance dogs under UK law as a disability aid, so unfortunately, we can't offer them the same access as officially trained, certified and registered assistance dogs. This still applies **even** if you have a letter from your therapist or doctor.

Where Are Assistance Dogs Allowed?

Your assistance dog is welcome in:

- Guest bedrooms
- Lounges and dining areas
- Meeting and event spaces
- Our beautiful outdoor gardens
- Spa reception and some other spa spaces

For **health and safety reasons**, for the comfort of your dog, and to comply with **public hygiene regulations**, assistance dogs are **not permitted in the swimming pool, spa, or thermal suite areas**.



These areas are subject to strict water treatment protocols, and the high heat, humidity, and moisture levels may not be suitable for dogs.

We thank you for your understanding, and our team will be happy to assist you in finding a suitable, comfortable space nearby for your assistance dog while you enjoy the facilities.

If you have any specific access needs or questions, please don't hesitate to speak with a member of our spa team.

A Few Things to Keep in Mind

To help us look after you and your assistance dog, we ask that:

- You let us know in advance (at booking stage) if you're bringing an assistance dog so that we can make the right preparations in time for your visit.
- You keep your dog with you at all times — they shouldn't be left alone in the room.
- Need a quieter spot? Just let us know and we'll do our best to accommodate.
- You bring anything your dog might need (like food, bedding, etc.).
- You clean up after your dog.
- We understand that this will be a new environment for your furry assistant, and sometimes unfortunate accidents and breakages do happen. Please do not be embarrassed, simply inform one of our team, who will help. We will then add any charges onto your bill at the end of the stay, discreetly and without fuss.

How Our Team Will Support You

All team members are trained to:

- Greet you and your dog with respect and warmth
- Never ask about your disability
- Always allow access for legitimate assistance dogs

During the reservation process or on check in, we might ask politely:

"Is the trained assistance dog required because of a disability?" and "May I ask which organisation trained your assistance dog?"



When Access Might Be Limited

Very rarely, we may have to restrict access if:

- The dog is aggressive or not under control, or showing signs of distress
- The guest confirms the dog isn't an officially trained assistance dog
- There's a serious health and safety concern

Any situation like this will be handled with care by our Duty Manager.

Concerns or Feedback?

If you have any questions or something doesn't feel right, please speak to a member of staff or ask for the Duty Manager.

We're here to help and will always take your feedback seriously.

Let us know how we can make your visit more comfortable — we're here for both you *and* your assistance dog.