



Assistance Dog Policy

BHAFC, BHAWFC

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity as to the approach taken by Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club and Brighton & Hove Albion Women's Football Club to assistance dogs and their handlers. For the purposes of this policy, Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club and Brighton & Hove Albion Women's Football Club shall together be referred to as BHAFC.

2. Legal Framework and Definitions

In the UK, disabled people are granted rights of protection under the Equality Act 2010 (the "**Act**"). A "disability" is defined under the Act as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term negative effect on the ability of the individual to carry out normal daily activities. Service providers have legal duties to ensure that those with disabilities are not discriminated against owing to their disabilities. The service provider may therefore be required to make reasonable adjustments for those with disabilities. One area in which this duty must be considered is in the use of assistance dogs.

Under the Act, an "assistance dog" is defined as:

- a) *"a dog which has been trained to guide a blind person;*
- b) *a dog which has been trained to assist a deaf person;*
- c) *a dog which has been trained by a prescribed charity to assist a disabled person who has a disability that consists of epilepsy or otherwise affects the person's mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination or ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;*
- d) *a dog of a prescribed category which has been trained to assist a disabled person who has a disability (other than one falling within paragraph (c)) of a prescribed kind."*

Emotional support animals (as distinct from assistance dogs) are not defined in the Act.

3. BHAFC Policy Regarding Assistance Dogs and Emotional Support Animals

Most assistance dogs are likely to be highly trained animals. As the Act makes clear, they are likely to be animals that can assist those with disabilities to perform day-to-day tasks. That may include assistance for blind or deaf persons, or to assist with epilepsy, mobility, physical co-ordination and movement or to generally assist with other disabilities. This means that they are:

- Likely to sit or lie quietly on the floor next to their owner;
- Unlikely to wander freely around the premises; and
- Unlikely to foul in a public place.

The Act makes it clear that an assistance dog must have been trained. Where an assistance dog is in training, there is no legal obligation to permit access to that assistance dog.



BHAFC is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of all employees, as well as supporters, who visit the American Express Stadium and Broadfield Stadium (the “**Stadia**”). As such, BHAFC welcomes assistance dogs and will endeavour to provide assistance to any supporters that have specific requirements for their assistance dogs when they visit the Stadia (subject to the remaining provisions of this policy).

While BHAFC welcomes fully trained assistance dogs, BHAFC **does not** permit the following to its Stadia:

- (a) **Emotional support animals.** Emotional support animals offer comfort and companionship but are not trained in the same way that assistance dogs are. As noted above, assistance dogs are often highly trained and are equipped with the skills that can assist those with disabilities in their performance of daily tasks. Emotional support animals are not referenced in the Act and there is no obligation on BHAFC to admit such animals to its Stadia.
- (b) **Assistance dogs that have not been fully trained.** The Act specifies that assistance dogs must be “*trained*”. In the case of specific prescribed assistance (i.e. with epilepsy or certain mobility related disabilities), that training must be provided by a prescribed charity. In circumstances where an assistance dog is in the process of being trained (i.e. is not a full trained assistance dog), BHAFC is not obliged to permit it access to its Stadia and it does not do so. BHAFC is mindful of the obligations that it owes all supporters and users of its Stadia and as such it reserves the right to request that owners provide details and/ or evidence of training upon reasonable request. In such cases BHAFC will work collaboratively with owners and, for example, such evidence of training could include (but is not limited to):
 - evidence that the dog has been trained to assist with a disability or medical condition by way of specific tasks, for example by producing evidence of training by an accredited member of Assistance Dogs International (“**ADI**”), the Assistance Dog Assessment Association (“**ADAA**”), the International Guide Dog Federation (“**IGDF**”) or another similarly recognised body; or
 - such other evidence as BHAFC reasonably considers would confirm that the dog has both been trained to assist with a disability or medical condition by way of specific tasks and further that the dog is:
 - ☐ likely to sit or lie quietly on the floor next to their owner;
 - ☐ unlikely to wander freely around the premises; and
 - ☐ unlikely to foul in a public place,

In each of the above cases taking into account the environment of the Stadia on matchdays and otherwise.



4. Reporting Procedure

Where possible, we ask that supporters get in touch with us prior to the matchday to make us aware that they will be attending the Stadia with an assistance dog. This will allow us to ensure that the supporter is in a suitable area in the relevant stadium for the supporter and the assistance dog, and to advise of facilities nearby.

Supporters can contact Supporter Services by email at:

supporter.services@brightonandhovealbion.com

Or by phone on 01273 668855 (option 1).

If a supporter would like to ensure their assistance dog is familiar with the Stadia prior to a matchday, BHAFC would be happy to facilitate a visit to the relevant stadium on a non-matchday. Please also be ready to provide evidence that your assistance dog has been trained and – where appropriate – by which organisation. If you have a certificate of your dog's training, it would be helpful to provide that to BHAFC upon request.

5. Responsibilities

The assistance dog is the responsibility of their owner, and we outline below the conditions that BHAFC requires be met;

- We ask that the assistance dog is wearing a harness which identifies them as an assistance dog, to make this clear for staff members on matchdays. There is no legal obligation to do so, but this can help make the match-day for you and your assistance dog an easier and quicker process.
- The assistance dog should be always kept on lead and remain with their owner and under close control at all times.
- The assistance dog must be toilet trained.
- The assistance dog must be well cared for, and must not constitute a hygiene risk.
- The assistance dog should be vaccinated and free from fleas and ticks.
- The assistance dog's behaviour should be of acceptable standard, i.e. the assistance dog must not display aggressive traits such as growling and does not bark at fellow supporters in the Stadia.
- When the dog is taken for relief, this should be done outside of the Stadia, and waste disposed of in waste bins. There is a dog spending area opposite the East of the stadium. This can be accessed by speaking to a steward on the matchday, who will direct the supporter there.



BHAFC acknowledges that, while assistance dogs are often highly trained, they are nevertheless animals and their behaviour cannot be guaranteed. If, however, an assistance dog's behaviour falls short of the standards set out in this policy, BHAFC reserves the right to refuse to admit entry or to eject you or your assistance dog from the Stadia where it considers it appropriate to do so in its discretion (acting reasonably).

This policy may be updated or amended by BHAFC from time to time, in its absolute discretion.