

Pets & other animals

Make people feel at ease by considering their different attitudes towards animals.

Tips

Attitudes towards pets differ across cultures and among individuals. Some people have cultural or religious reasons for wanting to avoid close contact with animals.



Inform, ask, respond

Before your visitor encounters any animals, make sure they're aware of the possibility and ask if they'll be comfortable. If they show signs of discomfort, take steps to limit the encounter.

Consider pet-free zones

Reception areas and tea rooms may be best kept pet-free. Ensure animals can't access designated pet-free zones.

Provide washing facilities

Visitors may avoid touching animals unless they can wash their hands immediately afterwards, sometimes for religious reasons. Provide washroom facilities if you can.

Animal behavior

If your pet exhibits highly excited or aggressive behavior when people approach, it may be best to keep it away from visitors.

Insurance

Make sure you're insured against any damage caused by your animals.

Incidents

If a problem develops, stay calm and remove the animal from the situation. Make the person feel comfortable, for instance by offering them a cup of tea and access to a washroom.

Ensure all your staff know how to respond.

If you have animals

1. List any negative experiences your visitors may have had with your pets or other animals.

2. Describe the worst thing that could plausibly happen to your visitors with regard to your animals.

3. What measures would you need to take to recover from the description above?

4. Outline how you could prevent visitors from coming into contact with your animals if needed.

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