General information about dog characteristics and profiles

The Health and Safety team together with Richard and Harrie the dog walking coordinators have developed a standarised system for placing dogs in colour coded behavioural categories.

We wanted the system to be simple and instantly understandable at a glance. To achieve this we have designed a traffic light based system.

As shown below:

Red — Only volunteers experienced with the characteristics of a particular red designated dog should walk or handle that particular dog.

Amber / Orange — These dogs have specific handling needs. They present less challenge than red designated dogs. These Amber designated dogs can be walked by those with experience of their characteristics. For those without this previous experience you must speak to housekeeping staff or a volunteer who knows this dog's characteristics before entering their kennel or walking them.

Green — These dogs do not need any special knowledge or handling experience and can be walked or handled by everyone.

The colour coding is consistent across all areas. Firstly you will see the Red, Amber / Orange or Green identifiers next to the dog's name and number on the dog walking tick sheet. When you collect the dogs harness this is also colour coded and numbered identically. When you approach the dogs kennel the dogs name number and colour code is displayed on a white background warning diamond.

Please be aware when we use the word experience we are not referring to a volunteer's overall experience with dogs. **We are specifically referring to experience with a particular APROP dog**. We are very respectful that many new volunteers arriving to help at APROP have owned or worked with dogs for many years and as such actually bring skills and experience to our community. Our only concern is to keep volunteers as safe as we can. Therefore this distinction has to be understood and accepted. Some APROP dogs have characteristics that no amount of previous experience with other dogs can prepare you for. This is not an insurmountable problem because if you want to work with or walk a particular dog that requires experience of that dog we have various ways to make that introduction in a safety first controlled way.

We are a "Can do" community of volunteers and we do make things happen. Please read the dog profiles in the colour coded folders on the table outside the Casita as a first step to getting to know our wonderful dogs and their characteristics.

At the back of those folders are walkers induction sheets and dog walkers guidelines. Please take a copy of each. If you have not had a formal induction please request one.

Thank you

The Health and Safety Team