

# Dog walking

The National Trust recognises the benefits that dog walking brings to many people, in particular the importance of walking the dog for exercise, companionship and enjoying the outdoors, as well as the practical needs for those for whom a dog is an essential aid to mobility or experiencing places.

Dog walkers regularly visit a large number of Trust parkland, countryside and coastal properties. Some sites, particularly those within towns and cities and on the urban fringe, are particularly valued and relied on by local dog walkers for daily exercise. However, heavy and frequent use by dog walkers can bring many management challenges, and the increasing numbers of dogs exercised on National Trust properties continues to be of concern to many property managers.

The most common management challenges are the need to a) encourage greater awareness of the adverse impacts dogs can have on the environment, wildlife and other visitors, b) control indiscriminate dog fouling, c) introduce restrictions for dog walkers at some sites that reflect the interests of all visitors, and d) reconcile conflicts between dogs and stock farmers so that dog walkers can make greater use of tenanted farmland.

## Guiding Principles

1. We welcome responsible dog owners who observe local notices and restrictions and clear up after their dog; particularly in car parks, play areas or on paths, placing dog poo in a dedicated bin or taking it home.
2. We expect dog owners to keep their dogs under control, which on some sites will mean on a lead.
3. We will continue to raise awareness and promote responsible dog walking in a variety of ways for the benefit of all other users and the sites themselves. We will if necessary impose restrictions or exclusions using legislation and our Byelaws.
4. People with assistance dogs are welcome at all our properties and we will actively promote associated information.

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### Conservation Directorate Guidance Note Information

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