



Let your dog take you somewhere interesting...

Walking dogs in the woods

A concordat between the Forestry Commission and the Kennel Club

PICTURED: Two walkers and a labrador enjoying the forest walks
and views of Llyn Elsi in Gwydyr Forest Park.



The Forestry Commission is the manager of one million hectares of National Forest Estate in England, Scotland and Wales on behalf of the Governments of each country.

Established in 1873, the Kennel Club is the governing body of the world of dogs, and its primary objective is to protect and promote the dog's varied roles in society.

Working together to improve people's health and well-being through dog ownership, whilst respecting the forest environment and the needs of other users, we will:

- Promote the year-round opportunities within national woods and forests for the regular, healthy activity of dog walking.
- Use our networks and influence to encourage better mutual understanding of the needs of dog owners and all forest users.
- Work to develop links between local dog-walking communities and the woods on their doorsteps.
- Ensure dog owners feel welcome in the forest and play a part in conserving its value for everybody.
- Help people understand and experience how dogs enhance people's lives, through improved health, confidence and mobility.
- Respond positively to conflicting interests, ensuring any restrictions on dogs are fair, balanced, and regularly reviewed.
- Work with others to develop new ways to improve how dogs and their owners use the forest.
- Maintain an ongoing dialogue to make the best of the opportunities dog ownership brings and minimise any negative impacts.

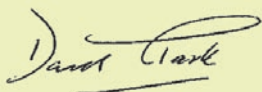
The Forestry Commission will:

- Promote guidance to our staff to ensure a consistent approach to managing access for dog owners, reflecting existing legislation
- Make dog owners aware of opportunities and places that are particularly well-suited to their needs.
- Only seek restrictions on dogs (such as them being kept on leads or prohibited) in specific circumstances, such as around children's play areas and at particularly sensitive times or places for wildlife.
- Accommodate dog-related sports in the forest environment, whilst balancing the needs of all other interests.
- Introduce positive measures to make dog owners feel welcome, such as water bowls and information points at visitor centres.
- Ensure we meet the specific needs of assistance dogs and their human partners in the forest, and at visitor facilities and events.

The Kennel Club will:

- Promote the opportunities the forest has for responsible owners who keep their dogs under control and respect existing legislation.
- Use our network of over one thousand Good Citizen dog training scheme clubs to promote responsible dog ownership, healthcare and training.
- Endorse and encourage proportionate and balanced measures to reduce conflict between dog owners and other forest interests.
- Encourage dog owners to be sensitive to other forest users, who may not be familiar with dogs and the benefits they can bring.
- Use its networks to encourage dog owners to support the Forestry Commission's work towards the multiple use of woodland.
- Work with partners as a mediator and link to dog owners, to explore and resolve any localised issues.

Signed in agreement at Crufts dog show on 12th March 2005



The Rt Hon Lord Clark of Windermere
Forestry Commission Chairman



Caroline Kisko
The Kennel Club Secretary