



CASE STUDY 3: Designated dog walker access points

Summary

Providing specific facilities where walkers with dogs enter a country park, path network or other greenspace helps reduce problems from path fouling, conflict with other access users, and provides a venue for positive communication.

Good practice

- Recognises that a key area of potential conflict is in the first few minutes when dogs arrive on site.
- Dog-friendly entry points also help non-dog owners by providing an informed choice.
- Dog owners will actively choose to use designated entry points / car parks if well designed.
- Designated entry points can be excellent places to communicate with dog owners.
- A dedicated adjacent area of grassland can help contain and minimise fouling problems.



Description

Dinton Pastures Country Park near Wokingham, designated a “dog walker” entry point from the main car park with an adjacent field, where dogs can be exercised before entering the wider path network, minimising any initial conflict with other site users.

As dogs tend to foul soon after arriving, this contains problems if people do not pick up, “bag it and fling it” and facilitates efficient dog bin placement.

A notice board provided at the entry point has been adopted by the canine community (lost dogs, charity events etc), providing an effective place for rangers to communicate with owners.

Dog walkers are one of the main user groups of this site, where conservation grazing also takes place. Good management means that dog-free zones (for wildlife) and on-lead areas (around the café), are well respected. Dog owners are self-policing; bylaws and on the spot fines are very rarely used.

Some designated car parks have been unsuccessful elsewhere in the UK due to poor design, eg, by being poorly connected to where owners want to go, or because they are secluded / overgrown and so do not feel safe to use.



For more information contact:

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