Forestry Commission England

Case Study

CASE STUDY 6:
Alternative facilities – dog dip

Summary
The positive provision of alternative facilities is an effective and non-confrontational way of accommodating dog walker activity on a site, which may otherwise bring them into conflict with other interests at certain times or places.

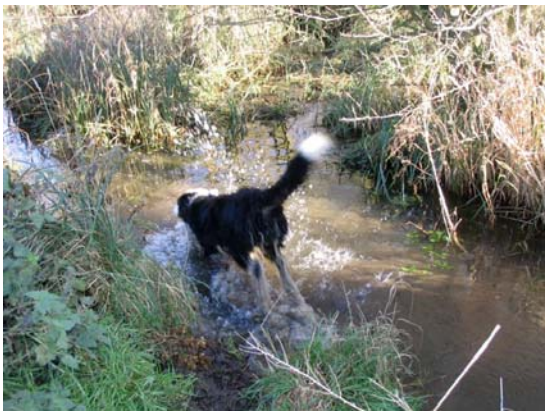
Good practice

- Designating alternative, accessible sites for certain activities is a positive way to manage sites without appearing to be "anti-dog"
- Recognises the fact that for regular site users like dog walkers, prohibiting an activity is more likely to displace it, rather than prevent it occurring at all.
- Good management stems from understanding, accepting and accommodating needs and aspirations.
- Solutions need not be complex or expensive; creativity and good communication is more important.

Description
Nightingale Wood is a recently planted Forestry Commission community woodland on the edge of Swindon, Wiltshire.

An open area with a stream on the edge of the wood became popular with dog owners. Many dogs enjoy splashing in water; it can also help keep them cool and clean.

The open area subsequently became popular with birdwatchers as different species became established, creating a conflict with the previously established dog use of the area.



A hide was built for the bird watchers and a designated 'dog dip' was created and signed in a less sensitive and more screened area nearby.

The wood remains popular with both birdwatchers and dog walkers, thanks to site staff recognising and accommodating the legitimacy of both interests. Like many other FC sites, the wood also hosts cani-cross events (www.cani-cross.co.uk).

For more information contact:

Recreation Manager
E dean@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
T 01594 833057
www.forestry.gov.uk