

Frequently Asked Questions – Dog control orders at Burnham Beeches




<p>What is a Dog Control Order (DCO)?</p>	<p>The Dog Control Orders come under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Under this act, primary and secondary authorities (the City of London has secondary authority status) have powers to make dog control orders. The DCO regulations provide for five offences which may be prescribed in a dog control order (see schedules listed below).</p>
<p>Why does the City of London plan to Introduce them</p>	<p>The Beeches has 585 000 visits per year with the estimated total number of dog visits being around 220 000 or 1000 dog visits /ha/year. Buckinghamshire provides an average of 1.23ha of green space for each dog in the County – in other words BB welcomes approx. 1500 more dogs per ha than is the average for Bucks. We welcome dog walkers but we have to consider their impact on the reserve and to balance their needs with those of all visitors (whether, cyclist, horse rider, nature watcher, picnicker or runner) and with the needs of the wildlife; research and surveys show there is currently an imbalance and that this is causing harm to the site and its wildlife. Voluntary codes brought in over the past 10 to 20 years have failed to redress the balance making the introduction of DCOs essential to minimise the detrimental impacts.</p>
<p>What will the rules be under the DCO?</p>	<p>Under schedule 1: dog walkers must remove all faeces deposited by their dog, at all times. Under schedule 2: dogs must be on a lead, no more than 5m long, in the designated area, at all times. Under schedule 3: dogs must be put on a lead when directed to do so by a Ranger. Under schedule 4: dogs must not be allowed to enter land from which they are excluded (this only applies to the existing small exclusion zone by the café). Under schedule 5: no more than 4 dogs will be allowed per dog walker.</p>
<p>What are the fines under the DCO?</p>	<p>The fine is likely to be around £80 for failing to stick to the DCO if dealt with by a Fixed Penalty notice (FPN). There could be an additional fine of £80 for refusing to give your name and address to a Ranger. If the offence goes to magistrates court the fine could be up to £1000.</p>
<p>Will dogs be banned from the Beeches?</p>	<p>No, dogs that are under effective control have always been and always will be welcome at the Beeches. This will simply allow us to ensure that all dog walkers visiting the site will do so in a responsible manner.</p>
<p>Where will I be able to walk my dog?</p>	<p>You can walk in all the areas that you could before but when you are in the area covered by schedule 2 you will have to keep it on a lead. This will be helpful to wildlife and site users</p>

	who do not wish to interact closely with dogs. It will also be easier to note when your dog has defecated. The only place where dogs are not allowed is in the existing small exclusion area directly around the café.
Will my dog have to be on a lead all the time?	No, in the area covered by schedule 3 dogs can be walked off a lead across 220 acres of the Beeches unless you are directed otherwise by a Ranger. Our research shows that this is 3 times larger than the area required by an average dog walk in the Beeches and provides plenty of space to ensure the health and mental wellbeing of your dogs. When off a lead, dogs must still be kept under effective control as defined by the current voluntary code. In the area covered by schedule 2 dogs will have to be on a lead at all times.
Where will I have to pick up after my dog?	You must pick up after your dog has fouled in ALL areas of the Beeches – this has not changed. The existing voluntary dog code, designed by visitors, already expects all dog walkers to pick up after their pet over the whole reserve.
Why isn't this being done as a voluntary scheme?	Over many years we adopted a 'voluntary approach' to encourage responsible dog ownership but despite this, the number of dog related incidents has remained high.
How was the size of area for schedule 2 decided?	The area had to be of sufficient size to achieve a benefit for the wildlife whilst balancing these needs with those of dog walkers and non-dog walkers. There also had to be an obvious boundary between areas where dogs could be walked on or off leads so the internal roads were chosen to mark this.
My dog is full of energy and needs to run around, what should I do?	The same rules will apply after DCOs are introduced as existed beforehand; dogs must be under effective control at all times. This means in sight at all times and returning immediately when called or on a lead. If you can follow this rule you can walk your dog off a lead in area 3 which is 220 acres and includes the areas most people arrive at on site.
My dog is always well behaved – will it apply to me?	Yes the DCO applies to all dog walkers across the entire site. This is the only way that it can be easily and fairly enforced.
I am a lady dog walker and walking with my dog makes me feel safe. There will be fewer dog walkers therefore I will be less safe.	The changes will not affect your situation as there is no correlation between safety and presence of dog walkers. The site has a high ranger presence and an exceptionally low level of criminal activity of any kind.
Dog walkers make a major financial contribution to the site	Currently the number of visitors is increasing each year. We do not expect the number of visitors to change significantly and finances are expected to remain stable.
I am an elderly dog walker with a disability so cannot use a lead	We will continue to provide 220 acres so that your dog can be off lead. The average dog walk on the Beeches covers 75 acres. Registered guide dogs are excluded from many of the DCO requirements.
Schedule 2 should only apply where the cattle graze	The cattle will graze 95% of the site. To expect dogs to be kept on a lead in an area that size would be too extreme.
The proposals are unfair, only a few	Schedule 2 brings clarity to 'the rules' and helps us to make

people break the rules. Why should all dog walkers suffer?	the site a better place for all visitors and wildlife to share. Dog walkers will be greatly appreciated by other user groups if their dogs are on leads at all times in the Schedule 2 area.
I have walked here for decades and never seen a dog out of control.	Our annual figures record hundreds of incidents each year, many of them extremely serious such as death of wildlife, attacks on livestock, people and other dogs.
Dog walkers will stop coming to Burnham Beeches	We will continue to provide an excellent level of service to dog walkers including the provision of over 500 acres of beautiful landscape. Dog bags (currently over 100 000 p/a), dog waste removal, dog friendly events and lost dog retrieval will remain free services.
What impact does dog walking have on the resources available to manage the site	Each year we spend between £6000 and £7000 on dog waste removal at BB. This is more than we spend on the conservation of the beautiful and rare veteran pollards.
What proof is there that dog walking harms the conservation value of Burnham Beeches?	Recent research has linked visitor pressure to the decline in the health of the Beech trees and other rare habitats and wildlife. Deposition each year of tons of dog faeces and urine is part of the problem. Every year Rangers deal with dogs that have chased and/or killed wildlife on the site – rarely is this intentional but the impact exists.
How can I give my feedback to the consultation?	<p>You can send us your comments, giving your full name, address and post code, to: The Burnham Beeches Office, Hawthorn Lane, Farnham Common, Buckinghamshire, SL2 3TE OR email: burnham.beeches@cityoflondon.gov.uk</p> <p>We hope to start the consultation in June, please check onsite and online for more information.</p>

Map showing proposed areas for Dog Control Order schedules

Key:

-  Boundary of site within which the Dog Control Orders apply. Schedules 1 & 5 apply in all areas, schedules 2, 3 & 4 in the areas shown below.
-  Boundary between areas for schedules 2 & 3
-  Shaded section shows area covered by schedule 2

Schedule 1: You must remove from the site, any faeces deposited by dog(s) for which you are responsible

Schedule 2: Dogs on leads at all times in this area. Max lead length 5m

Schedule 3: Dogs may be walked off lead but must be put on a lead when requested by a Ranger. Max lead length 5m

Schedule 4: Dogs excluded from this area (see diagram inset)

Schedule 5: Maximum of 4 dogs per walker

