

APPENDIX 4.

Transects walked to monitor the effectiveness of DCO Report December 2016

Aims

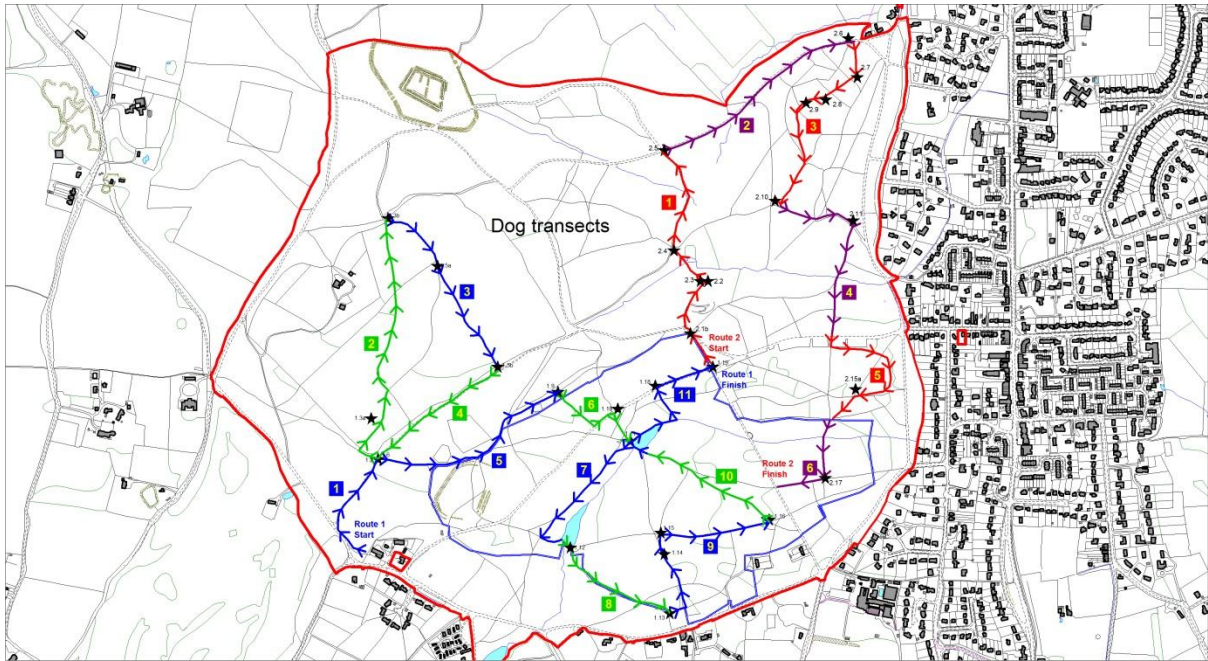
Dog control orders (DCO) were introduced into Burnham Beeches and took effect from 1st December 2014. A report to look at the effectiveness and review the situation was required by the Epping Forest & Commons Committee in July 2016. A variety of data sets have been collected since DCOs were implemented, that reported on here was obtained through the walking of transects across parts of Burnham Beeches and observing the number of people and dogs seen and noting if dogs are on a lead or not.

Methods

Transect routes were set up by the Eco vols in Autumn/Winter 2015/2016. Two routes were designed that could be walked either as two separate transects or a single long one. One route was entirely within the Schedule 2 area (dogs on leads at all times) and the other was entirely within the Schedule 3 area (dogs free to run off leads although must be put on leads if requested). Routes were designed to cover as much of each area as possible but in a way that was easy for others to follow i.e. using major paths. Neither route involved Halse Drive or Sir Henry Peeks Drive which are the roads dividing Schedule 2 area from Schedule 3 to avoid any confusion over whether dogs should be on a lead or not when people are walking along the road.

Several variations of the route were trialled (especially through Egypt where the paths are more difficult to follow) thus some of the early transects have been discounted for the analysis here as the routes were not consistent.

Although volunteers set up the routes and walked a few, the majority of the transects have been walked by the rangers team. It was intended that two transects per month would be walked in a variety of weather conditions and times of the day/week.



Results & discussion

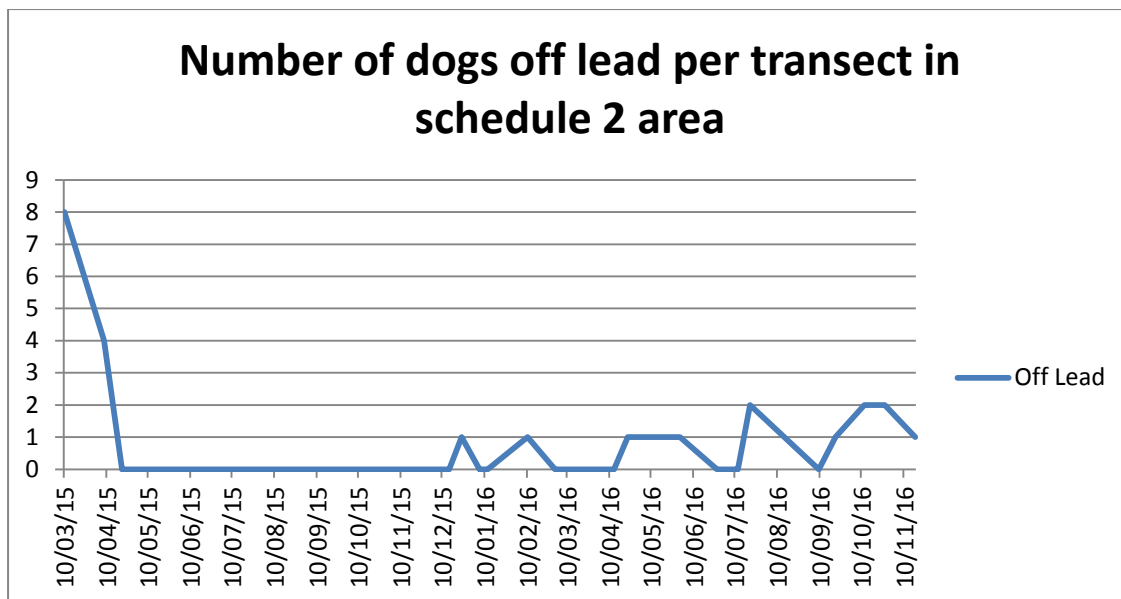
The majority of the transects were walked on weekdays and during a normal working day. None have been walked in the evening but a couple have been started at around 8.30am. One was on a Saturday, one on a Sunday and one on Christmas Eve. Weather conditions were mostly reasonably good but a couple have been carried out in the rain (including one day of heavy rain) and one day described as 'bleak'. Some in the summer were done in sunny weather. A total of 30 transects have been walked but as some of these included the sections in both Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 areas and others just one they have been separated out for analysis so that 36 transects are listed, each passing through a single schedule area.

The table below summarises the transects walked and the number of people and dogs recorded on each.

Date	Start Time	Day of week	Weather	Schedule	Total number of people seen	Total no of dogs seen	No. dogs on lead	No. dogs off lead
Schedule 2 area - Dogs on leads at all time								
10/03/2015	10:10	Tuesday	Sunny Calm	2	20	18	10	8
08/04/2015	10:00	Friday	Chilly Sunny Warm	2	38	11	7	4
21/04/2015	11:50	Tuesday	Sunny	2	20	1	1	0
12/10/2015	13:20	Monday	Sunny	2	26	5	5	0
30/10/2015	12:03	Friday	Grey wet	2	52	7	7	0
20/11/2015	11:25	Friday	Cold overcast	2	9	6	6	0
15/12/2015	08:50	Tuesday	Overcast with mist	2	6	1	1	0
24/12/2015	09:30	Thursday	Grey sky	2	5	5	4	1
12/01/2016	11:00	Tuesday	Bleak	2	5	2	2	0
06/01/2016	09:20	Wednesday	Overcast	2	14	6	6	0

10/02/2016	14:30	Wednesday	Slight cloud cover, cool	2	13	4	3	1
01/03/2016	08:45	Tuesday	Light rain	2	1	2	2	0
30/03/2016	09:20	Wednesday	Clear & sunny	2	31	5	5	0
13/04/2016	14:45	Wednesday	Sunny until 4 then rain	2	10	0	0	0
23/04/2016	10:26	Saturday	Sunny	2	30	7	6	1
31/05/2016	11:06	Tuesday	Heavy rain	2	6	2	1	1
27/6/2016	16.00	Monday	Sunny	2	7	2	2	0
12/7/2016	08.23	Tuesday	Clear/sunny	2	10	4	4	0
21/7/2016	14.30	Thursday	Sunny	2	21	5	3	2
9/9/2016	01.15	Friday	?	2	21	3	3	0
21/9/2016	14.50	Wednesday	Cloudy	2	11	4	3	1
12/10/2016	08.30	Wednesday	Cloudy	2	7	7	5	2
27/10/2016	11.00	Thursday	?	2	56	6	4	2
18/11/2016	11.25	Friday	?	2	18	3	2	1
Total					437	116	92	24
Mean per transect					18.2	4.8	3.8	1
Schedule 3 area - Dogs can be off leads but must be under effective control								
08/04/2015	11:50	Friday	Chilly Sunny Warm	3	22	24	6	18
21/04/2015	14:24	Tuesday	Sunny	3	14	7	0	7
13/10/2015	14:00	Tuesday	Overcast	3	8	7	3	4
15/12/2015	10:05	Tuesday	Cloudy & misty	3	18	16	7	9
10/01/2016	12:17	Sunday	Bright & cold	3	20	8	3	5
01/03/2016	08:45	Tuesday	Light rain	3	1	0	0	0
08/03/2016	15:00	Tuesday	Cloudy	3	17	12	3	9
23/04/2016	10:26	Saturday	Sunny	3	51	27	9	18
05/05/2016	15:52	Thursday	Sunny & warm	3	18	12	2	10
31/05/2016	11:06	Tuesday	Heavy rain	3	1	1	0	1
12/7/2016	09.30	Tuesday	Cloudy/ rain	3	18	25	1	24
28/6/2016	09.00	Tuesday	Dry, sunny	3	15	4	4	0
Total				3	203	143	38	105
Mean per transect					16.9	11.9	3.2	8.75

Within the Schedule 2 area where all dogs should be on a lead since the introduction of the DCOs a total of 437 people were observed with 116 dogs. The majority of dogs (92 or 74%) were on leads. Many of these (8 and 4) were seen on two early transects which might appear from the table above to be just two groups of people, however by looking back at the data it can be seen that this is not the case and the maximum number of dogs per person in these situations was two. The graph below shows how the numbers of dogs off leads in the schedule 2 area has varied over the period in which the transects have been conducted. Compliance in the last four months has been 67% or higher.



It might be suggested that awareness of schedule 2 was perhaps low initially, it was then complied with but in more recent months has been ignored by some people but in reality the data are so few that detailed interpretation is not possible.

In the schedule 3 area there appear to be more dogs seen per transect than the schedule 2 area, however comparisons between the areas may not be valid as the areas covered/length of walk have not been compared and far fewer transects walked in the schedule 3 area. It is interesting to note that within the schedule 3 area some dogs (38 or 36%) were on leads.

There were three observations of people picking up dog poo, one in a schedule 3 area and two in the schedule 2 area. There were at least 4 occasions when staff were walking the transects and were close enough to approach members of the public with dogs off leads in the schedule 2 area. Three of these complied with requests to put dogs on a lead but one owner objected. One dog was seen off a lead in the schedule 2 area with a dead (cold) pigeon in its mouth and the owner spoken to.

Conclusions

The transects have proved to be an effective way of recording of how people are responding to the DCOs in different parts of the Beeches and have shown up that although the majority of people are complying with the schedule 2 requirements there are a number who are not.

It would be useful to get more data from other times of the day such as early morning and evening and also from weekends. The use of transects to note compliance of visitors to schedule 1 (picking up dog poo) has not been very successful and other methods would be better used for this.

