

Appendix 5.

DCO Review Interviews with National Trust and South Bucks District Council Managers 2016/17.

These fact finding discussions were originally conducted in May 2016 for use in the DCO update report to EFCC of July 2016. The same questions were reported in 13th December 2016 to inform the full DCO Review report

Since May 2016 – have they seen??

- 1) Any increase in number/ displacement from BB of dog walker to BCC country parks /NT– if so what
- 2) Impact on BCC/NT since May – increase in any costs /action taken

Determine any impacts on neighbouring open spaces – dog numbers

Contact Black Park and query and also councillor related issues. NT(?)

Black Park contacted May 2016 – Contact: Park Manager

Black Park do not believe there has been any significant displacement of dog walkers to Black Park from BB since December 2014.

They have not seen any increase in incidents/issues as a result of DCOs at BB i.e. they have not seen a displacement of problem dog walkers/dogs to Black Park as a result of DCOs at BB.

They have seen an increase in professional dog walkers in that period – people bringing over 4 + dogs and they are having such an impact on dog bins that their dog bins are having to be emptied 2 x a week - they have 6-7bins at Black Park (as opposed to 16 at Burnham Beeches) - they also have 2 bins at each of Langley & Denham CP.

BP are looking at ways to manage their professional dog walkers though it is unclear where this increase is coming from as BB does not record a similar marked reduction. BB has lost one or two known professional dog walkers and gained a couple of new ones as well – though the ones we have lost Tim did not recognise the names of sign written vans. BP is currently recording details/description of professional dog walkers visiting the parks. Other possible issue we discussed is the licensing of professional dog walkers introduced by Royal parks over the last 3 years and recent restrictions on parking at Windsor Great Park may also be an influence.

BP - Visitor numbers are increasing annually at a fairly consistent rate (10%)

NT – Cliveden and other relates estates (Maidenhead thicket, meadows at Cookham)
Contact: Lead Ranger May 2016

Visitor numbers over last 3 years – 420000, 395000, 400000

Professional Dog walking not allowed

They feel they have seen an increase in dog numbers but not suddenly over the last year – just gradual year on year. Couldn't quantify this

NT have recently carried out a basic survey of visitors and asked some question about dogs - the survey was aimed at all visitors dog and non-dog walkers – basic summary below

Formal garden will remain dog free as will orangery

Dog walkers wanted dog bins

Dog walkers not keen on having to keep dogs on leads

Non Dog walkers wanted on lead areas.

In addition they have received comments from Dog walkers that information says Cliveden welcomes dog walkers but provides no dogs bins.

They have occasions when visitors have complained about being approached by dogs owned by others but no increase in the last 18 months

They plan to re-launch their current A3 dog leaflet in a more portable user friendly form

Basically saying

Dogs welcome

Owners must clean up after them

Keep dogs on leads or close control (close control = in sight, on paths and coming back when called).

They intend to install 3 dog poo bins – 2 at woodland car park and one at the main entrance area.

Other areas managed – they do have issues with professional dog walkers as access not restricted on PROWs – at Cookham they have a general rule of 4 dogs/walker but that can still result in groups of 16 dogs and 4 walkers which can be intimidation to other users.

Determine any impacts on neighbouring open spaces – financial impacts as of June 2016

Contact Black Park and query and also councillor related issues. NT(?)

No financial impact related to DCO

BP increases in dog waste costs due to increase in professional walkers – but no clear link to BB here and BP are looking to manage this in future to redress cost issues – only have same equivalent number of Dog bins as BB.

12/12/2016 – general notes from meeting with NT

Manager feels that there was an increase in professional walkers when DCOs were implemented, however, no change since May 2016.

Dog bins – 3 have been installed around the Woodland car park area, one receives capacity in under a week at busy times. NT considering options for twice weekly waste collection or the cost of an extra bin to be installed. Costs have increased since May due to providing dog facilities. This will be reviewed early 2017. There are areas where people leave piles of bagged waste or hang it in trees.

Re-launch of NT dog policy – The leaflet content will be as above but will include information regarding NT stance on professional walkers. Professional walkers do use the site but insist they are walking their own dogs in their own time even when challenged getting out of sign written vehicles. The policy will include information on where dogs can be walked as an increasing number of people are trying to bring dogs into formal gardens and food outlet areas.

Numbers – The visitor numbers have gradually increased, this has included a percentage of dog walkers. No significant change since May 2016.

13/12/16 – General notes from meeting with SBDC

Manager feels that since May there has been no change in visitor numbers due to DCOs since May 2016 but noted that the summer holiday period was extremely busy for the country parks.

Dog bins – There have been no changes to numbers or frequency of collection (twice per week) however a waste audit showed large amounts of dog waste goes into general waste stream and some dog bins are overflowing. For 2017 3 times a week emptying is being considered at peak times. There will be full waste audit in 2017 to include dog waste, general waste and recycling.

Professional walkers – There have been some enquiries by general visitors as to rules/licencing due to feeling intimidated by groups of dogs (i.e. 2 professional walkers with 4+ dogs each). The licencing of professional walkers will aim to be active during 2017.

Incidents – there has been a drop in reported lost dogs and dog on dog incidents since May 2016 at BP.