

1. Dangerous and out of control Dogs

<http://www.bexley.gov.uk/article/3687/Dangerous-dogs>

Using the link above goes to advice published on the Council's web site, which in turn provides a link that members of the public can use to report problems with dangerous or out of control dogs. It should be noted that section 3 of the Dangerous Dogs Act (1991) makes it an offence, irrespective of the breed, for a dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place. It is also an offence under the Act if a dog behaves in any way that would give cause for anyone to think they are in danger of harm from it. Park users should report any potential concerns of improperly controlled dogs to the Police as only they have the powers to deal with incidents that infringe the Act. Any person responsible for a dog whose behaviour contravenes the Act could be fined up to £5,000 or face six months in prison. In appropriate circumstances Magistrates may also order that the dog is destroyed.

2. Professional Dog Walking

The possibility of introducing Dog Control Orders was previously considered. Guidance issued by Defra advises that Councils should consider how easy it would be to enforce a Dog Control Order, since failure to enforce would undermine its effect and vulnerable to challenge in the Courts. As a general point, the guidance indicates the number of dogs being walked by an individual would have to exceed at least six dogs before it could be deemed reasonable to consider enforcement of a Dog Control Order by way of issuing a fixed penalty notice.

Moreover the Council would also need to be able to show that this is a necessary and proportionate response to problems caused by the activities of the walked dogs and those in charge of them. With respect to the Meadows and given its size (97ha), the complainant and the Council would need demonstrable evidence that dogs being walked and properly under control, were nevertheless adversely affecting other users within this large park.

Following investigation, it was concluded the problems across all sites weren't large enough to warrant the making of a Dog Control Order and more significantly, the Council simply didn't have the resources to subsequently support the enforcement of such Orders. Since that time resources within the Council have reduced further and the introduction of Dog Control Orders is not under active consideration.

However, should the walked dogs be dangerous or out of control then the advice provided in section 1 above would apply.

3. Dog Fouling

<http://www.bexley.gov.uk/dogfouling>

The link above goes to information published on the Council's web site that advises enforcement action can be taken against a person in control of a dog who fails to clear its fouling. There is also guidance on how a problem should be reported. To assist the Council in targeting its limited resources, as much of the following information should be provided.

- Name and/or address of the dog owner?

- Do they usually walk the dog at a certain time during the day?
- What times are the offences being committed?
- Where are the offences being committed?
- What does the dog look like?
- What does the owner look like?
- If the dog owner is using a vehicle, what is the number on the registration plate?

4. Parks and Open Space Byelaws

<http://www.bexley.gov.uk/article/4924/Byelaws-for-Bexleys-parks-open-spaces-and-recreation-grounds>

Using the link above connects to the Council's web site and provides information on the Byelaws applying to all the Council's parks together with the relevant contact details.