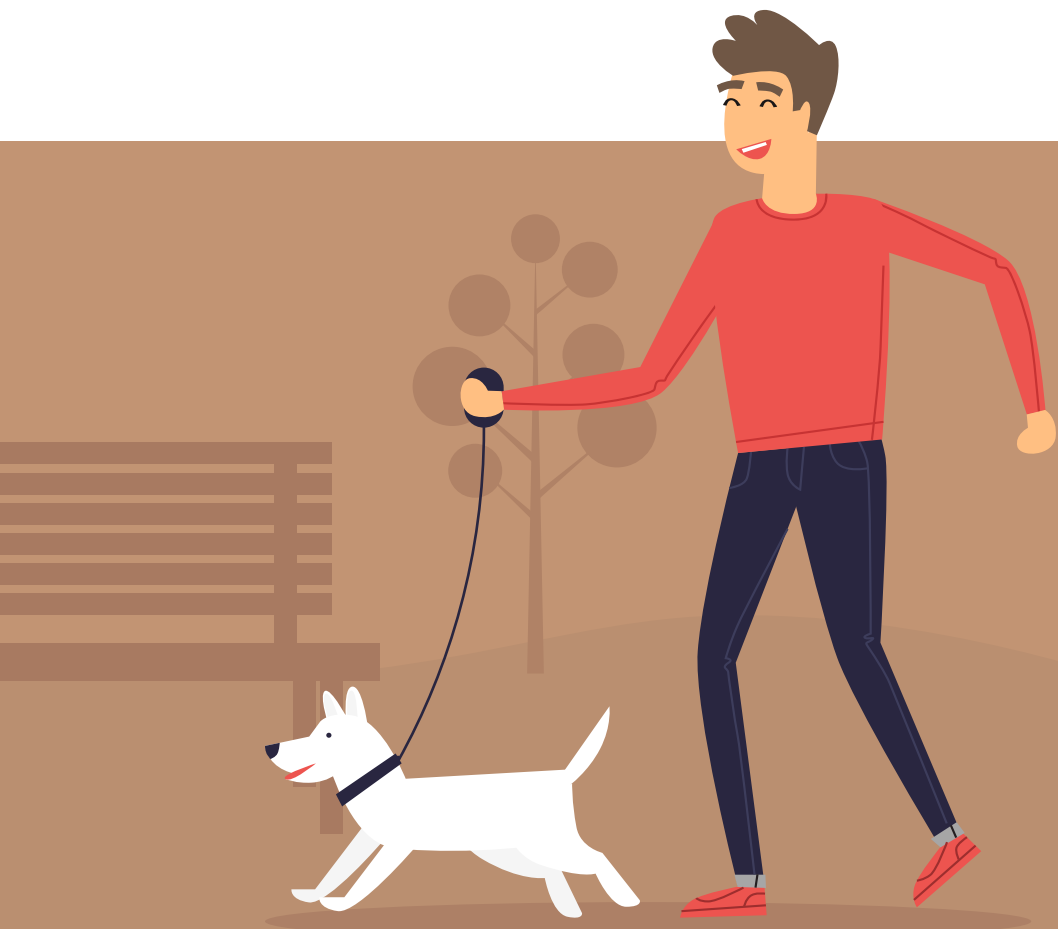


Dog Control in Public Places

Essential information
for all dog owners



States of
Guernsey

Take the lead

It's estimated that there are over 10,000 dogs living on Guernsey and the majority of Island dog owners are caring, responsible people. They obey the seasonally-restricted areas, do not allow their dog to run and jump at other people, respect wildlife and remove and dispose of their dog's mess, to ensure that our parks, pavements, beautiful coastlines and cliff walks remain clean and safe for everyone to enjoy.

From time to time, it is necessary to remind some owners of their legal obligations when walking their pets in public.

This leaflet explains the do's and don'ts of dog control in the islands. Dog ownership should be fun and enjoyable – familiarising yourself with your legal responsibilities could save you a fixed penalty notice or a hefty fine.

The Law

The Control of Dogs Ordinance (1992) affects all public places island-wide and at all times. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may lead to prosecution and a fine.

Dogs must be kept under control at all times in public. This means that they should have reliable recall and should not be allowed to run up to and/or jump up at other members of the public. Remember that whilst many people do enjoy the company of dogs, there are also many people, adults and children, who are uncomfortable or scared around dogs.

Under the law, dogs are prohibited at all times from children's play areas, La Vallette bathing pools and from specified public sports playing fields unless the dog is

on a lead and under close supervision at all times (i.e. not on an extendable lead). [*as per The Control of Dogs Ordinance 1.c*]. For the avoidance of doubt a playing field is an outdoor area that is marked out with white lines for team games. Similarly, dogs must be kept on a lead on the main streets of St Peter Port and St Sampson – for a list of streets, public sports and playing fields please visit www.guernseylegalresources.gg/ordinances/guernsey-bailiwick/a/animals-and-animal-health/control-of-dogs-ordinance-1992/. Additionally, there is a ban on dogs going on to seven of the island's beaches during the summer months 1st May to 30th September inclusive:

**Fermain, Petit Bot, L'Eree, Vazon, Cobo,
Port Soif, L'Ancrese/Pembroke**



Dogs are also excluded from Shell Beach, Belvoir Bay, Fisherman's Beach and the stretch of beach in front of the White House Hotel to the Herm Harbour Jetty.

All these beaches are clearly signed at key access points to advise people when dogs are banned from these areas.

Guide Dogs and Registered Assistance Dogs

Owners of guide dogs are exempt from the provisions of the Control of Dogs Ordinance, 1992. Please note that special arrangements can be made for dogs registered under the UK Registered Assistance Dogs scheme to go into restricted areas. Please contact Agriculture, Countryside and Land Management Services (aclds@gov.gg) for further details.

Dog Litter

Bagged dog waste can be placed in any public general litter bin around the island. Please make sure that dog waste is securely wrapped to avoid the risk of transmission of disease.



Health Risks to People and Animals

In addition to being unsightly and unpleasant, dog waste can be harmful to people and animals. Dog waste can carry parasites such as, roundworm, tapeworm and other harmful bacteria.

Toxocara is a parasitic roundworm of both dogs and cats but it can cause disease in humans. Humans can contract toxocariasis by inadvertently swallowing mature toxocara eggs. One potential outcome of toxocariasis in humans is visual impairment or even blindness. Whilst the risks associated with toxocariasis are small those who do not clear up after their 'best friend' will only increase the risk to public health, as well as break the law.

Keeping public land clean is important but so is making sure that you pick up after your dog if you're walking it where animals are grazed or where hay or silage is made.

Guernsey's farm animals are also at risk of disease from dog waste. The parasite *Neospora caninum* causes Neosporosis and is responsible for the highest percentage of all cattle abortions reported in the UK. Several local farmers have suffered the loss of aborted calves due to Neosporosis, at an alarmingly higher rate than in the UK.

Farm animals and horses

Always keep dogs on a lead and under close control unless you are sure there are no grazing animals or domestic birds on land nearby. Always take a cautious approach and carefully check what is around you before letting your dog off the lead. Farmers will often place signs on paths that approach their livestock forewarning dog owners to gain full control of their dog before it can see the livestock. For this reason owners must not allow their dogs to get too far ahead of them when walking. Dogs may be particularly excited by the sight or smell of grazing animals and it's important that you take care not to allow a dog of any age into a field where it may chase farm animals or horses. Sheep are particularly vulnerable to injury, abortion or death if they're chased by dogs. The Dogs (Liability for Injury and Protection of Livestock) Ordinance, 1982 provides some protection for a livestock keeper in the course of protecting their livestock from a dog.

Some breeds of dog have a strong instinct to chase prey or even herd animals. It is your responsibility to ensure that a dog in your care does not cause harm to domestic or farm animals. If in any doubt of your dog's recall please walk your dog away from areas with grazing animals or birds, whether domestic or wild.

Stray Dogs

Owners who let their dogs out to roam unsupervised are not only causing a potential risk to members of the public but are also endangering the safety of their pet on busy streets. Straying dogs may also chase and attack farm animals, or pet birds such as chickens or ducks. This is very upsetting for the owners of animals that are injured so please ensure your dog is secure in your property and that no unexpected callers are able to let your dog out if you are not home. Stray animals may be seized and detained by Authorised Persons under The Animal Welfare (Guernsey) Ordinance, 2012. Before the animal is released the owner must pay all expenses reasonably incurred in detaining and caring for the animal.

Anyone spotting a straying dog should contact the local animal welfare organisations; the GSPCA or Guernsey Animal Aid.

Enforcement

Unfortunately, despite the efforts of Agriculture, Countryside and Land Management Services (ACLMS) and other public authorities to prevent dog fouling of public places, a small minority of dog-owners are choosing to flout the law. Some owners have bagged their dog mess in a plastic bag but are leaving the refuse on the side of the path or in vegetation rather than using the public litter bins. This is still a littering offence.

ACLMS officers will take a 'zero-tolerance' approach and during routine inspections of parks, beaches and cliffs etc. they will check that dog owners are cleaning up after their pets. Many officers have been sworn in as Special Constables and have full police powers in respect of the Control of Dogs law in these public areas.

Scan



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