

Dog Walking

Code of Practice

This Code of Practice has been produced to help maintain the highest levels of dog welfare and wellbeing. It is formulated to guide and assist professional dog walkers to develop and demonstrate excellent operating standards and better inform owners about the quality of the businesses they employ to care for their dogs.

Setting the scene....

Professional dog walking businesses are rapidly expanding and demands for these services are high.

Currently, professional dog walkers are unregulated, and do not require licenses by law, to operate. Ensuring you have relevant training, adequate insurance and acceptance of a code of practice will elevate your services and demonstrate excellent operating standards

Links to relevant guidelines and legislation are included in this document to inform and signpost all existing operators and anyone considering or choosing to establish a professional dog walking business.

Consultation with professional bodies such as the Professional Dog Walking Association will widen knowledge of what is expected nationally, and agreement with this code of practice will ensure local level guidance is known and accepted.

Our approach....

Professional dog walking businesses are expected to set their standards at the highest degree.

Where professional dog walking services are operated from pet sitting or kennel premises, a suitable licence will be required to undertake these activities.

Professional dog walking businesses are invited to agree to adhere to this code of practice, thus resulting in an accreditation and recognition of trusted walking services.

By agreeing to the code of practice, professional dog walkers will be expected to demonstrate the behaviours delivered in the guidance section

The fundamentals....

Knowing the local Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO's)

Currently, in North Devon, it is an offence to:

- Not pick up after their dog has fouled.
- Not place an out of control dog on a lead if requested by an authorised officer.
- Not have dogs on a lead in a public cemetery or NDC car park.
- Have dogs present on any formal sports pitch or enclosed children's play area
- Exercise dogs between October and 31 March, on or near land used as a High Tide Roosting Sites for overwintering birds

The fundamentals....

- Exercise dogs on Croyde or Combe Martin beaches between 1st May and 30th September.
- For an individual person to exercise more than 6 dogs at any one time.
- For an individual person to exercise more than 3 dogs off the lead or on extendable leads at any one time. Unless they are a professional dog walking service, that is registered with the Council and currently validated.
- North Devon Council will coordinate a voluntary registration scheme, and issue successful candidates with identification, which will help establish their current validation and exemption as defined within the PSPO.

The full details of current PSPO's can be found [here](#)

The fundamentals....

Look for relevant PSPO signage to familiarise yourself with restrictions in the area you wish to exercise the dogs in your care.



Responsible behaviours....

- Undertake a recorded pre-assessment of any dog you have been employed to exercise, to understand the dog, its needs and its personality
- Ensure all dogs are microchipped and that the details are up to date on a DEFRA approved database.
- Dogs should be transported in a safe, secure vehicle with ventilation.
- Dogs should not be left unattended in the vehicle other than short periods when collecting and delivering dogs
- Carry fresh clean water and clean bowls at all times.

Responsible behaviours....

- Always keep all dogs under control; if the dog in your care does not respond to recall, keep it on a lead.
- Avoid walking in busy areas.
- Keep dogs from jumping up at or approaching other people, especially children, cyclists and horse riders.
- Keep dogs away from picnics. Whenever possible move aside to let other walkers, cyclists and horse riders pass. Show respect for other dogs, if an approaching dog is on a lead, put yours on a lead too
- You can read further behaviour guidance from the RSPCA [here](#).

Relevant legislation....

Current regulations and legislation which should be understood and adhered to.

Animal Welfare Act 2006

The Control of Dogs Order 1992

Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000

Dangerous Dogs Act 1991

The Dangerous Dogs (Amendment) Act 1997

Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

Dogs Protection of Livestock Act 1953

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006