

Dogs in Carmarthenshire



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Dog fouling and controlling dogs in public places

Carmarthenshire is a dog-friendly county with a selection of walks and miles of golden, sandy beaches to enjoy with your four-legged friends.

The majority of dog owners act responsibly by cleaning up after their pets and keeping them under control in public places.

However, we do get complaints of dog fouling and of nuisance behaviour from dogs that are not under proper control.

We have introduced a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to give us greater flexibility in tackling irresponsible dog owners and incidents involving dogs.

Some replace existing powers while others are new.



The order includes:

1. Cleaning up after your dog

You must clean up after your dog in all public places in Carmarthenshire.

Please dispose of your dog mess carefully. If out walking, please use any number of the public litter bins throughout the county.

If possible, encourage your dog to use your garden (toilet training at puppy stage can help). You can buy specially designed 'doggy loos'. This works just like a bin, half buried in your garden - except that you never need to empty it, as natural processes then break the contents down and disperse them harmlessly into the soil. Dog loos are available from a number of local pet stores and can also be ordered by phone or online from pet product suppliers.

If you do have to dispose of dog mess in your black bag make sure it is double-wrapped and mixed in with other types of waste.

Grab It, Bag It, Bin It!

- ✚ Always keep a good supply of plastic bags near your dog's lead (supermarket carrier bags make great poop scoops) so you don't forget when you go out for a walk. Simply insert your hand in the plastic bag and pick up your dog's waste.
- ✚ Carefully turn the plastic bag inside out and your dog's mess will then be 'bagged'.
- ✚ Dispose of your bag in a public litter bin.



2. Dogs on lead by direction

You must put your dog on a lead of no more than two metres in length when directed to do so by an authorised officer. You will only be asked to put your dog on a lead if your dog is considered to be causing a nuisance to other people or another animal.



3. Dog exclusion

Dogs are excluded from all outdoor, enclosed children's play areas within Carmarthenshire. Signs will be in place to inform the public that dogs are not allowed. It does not apply to sites such as tennis courts, skate parks, multi ball parks, sports facilities etc.



If you fail to comply with the PSPO you are committing a criminal offence and can be issued with a fixed penalty notice of £100, reduced to £50 if paid within 10 days.



The maximum fine if prosecuted in the magistrates court is £1,000.

Existing byelaws

Existing byelaws introducing seasonal dog exclusions (from May 1 to September 30) at **Cefn Sidan and Llansteffan beaches** and the byelaw requiring dogs to be kept on leads at all times on **Llansteffan Green** remain in force.



Report

To report dog fouling and other dog related nuisance please visit ilocal.carmarthenshire.gov.wales and click on report or call 01267 234567.

Include the time, date and location, a description of the dog and person in charge of the dog. If it occurs at regular times targeted patrols can be carried out and offenders can be fined. Information can be given in confidence.

Lost and stray dogs can also be reported online or by phone.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why clean up after your dog?

In addition to the unpleasant smell and the mess created when it gets on pram wheels, wheelchairs, shoes and clothing, there is a potential health risk associated with dog mess. *Toxocara canis* is a roundworm that lives in the dog's gut. Eggs are passed out with the faeces and can survive in the soil for up to three years. The eggs hatch into larvae which, if ingested, will enter the bloodstream. The human blood is an alien environment and the larvae will remain dormant. However, if a larva lodges in the small blood capillaries behind the eye, it can cause partial loss of vision. Although this is very rare and the body's defences will normally destroy the larvae, cleaning up after your dog will remove the risk.



But I didn't see my dog foul?

When you are out walking your dog it is your responsibility to watch your dog at all times and to ensure you clean up after it. Being unaware of the defecation (whether by reason of not being in the vicinity or otherwise), or not having a suitable means of removing the faeces, is not a reasonable excuse for failing to comply with the order.

There was no bin nearby?

That is no excuse, if there is no bin nearby, carry it with you until you find one or take it home with you to dispose of. You must not leave bags of dog mess lying around, even if you intend to pick it up later. If you do you will be committing a criminal offence under section 87 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (for littering). Containers and deodorised bags can make them easier to carry.



Are there any exemptions for cleaning up after your dog for people with disabilities?

Yes. This part of the order does not apply to a person who -

- (a) is registered as partially sighted or blind in a register compiled under section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948; or
- (b) is registered as “sight-impaired”, “severely sight-impaired” or as “having sight and hearing impairments which, in combination, have a significant effect on their day to day lives”, in a register compiled under section 18 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014; or
- (c) has a disability which affects his mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination, or ability to lift, carry, or otherwise move everyday objects, such that he cannot reasonably be expected to remove the faeces; or
- (d) has some other disability, such that he cannot reasonably be expected to remove the faeces.



When can I be asked to put my dog on a lead?

A request to put a dog on a lead can **only** be made where an authorised officer of the council believes that such restraint is reasonably necessary to prevent a nuisance or behaviour by the dog that is likely to cause annoyance or disturbance to any other person, or the worrying or disturbance of any animal.

Who can issue a direction requiring a dog to be put on a lead?

The direction can be given by an authorised officer of the council. This has a wide meaning and means any person who is authorised in writing by the council for the purpose of giving directions under the order. This can include a person who is not an employee of the council, such as employees of a contractor or a partner agency.

Is there a lead length requirement for dogs on leads?

Yes, if you are directed to place your dog on a lead you must use a lead no more than two meters in length.

Can I use an extendable lead?

Yes, you can still use an extendable lead, but you must not extend it beyond two metres if directed to place your dog on a lead of no more than 2m in length.

What is a children's play area?

A children's play area is an area that is set aside for children to play in and contains children's play equipment such as slides, swings, climbing frames and other similar apparatus. This order will not apply to sites such as tennis courts, skate parks, multi ball parks, sports facilities etc.



Does it apply to all children's play areas?

The order only applies to outdoor children's play areas that are totally enclosed on all sides by fences, gates, walls or other structures that mark the boundary of the play area. If there is a children's play area within your local park that is separated from the rest of the park, dogs will not be allowed in to the fenced off play area. This will not stop you from taking dogs in to the rest of the park.

Where there is an **unenclosed** play area within a larger park site, the exclusion order will **not** apply to it.

How will I know if dogs are excluded?

Signs will be erected at all of the play areas where the order is being enforced. We will not enforce the order at play areas where there are no signs.



Are there any exemptions for people with disabilities?

Yes, the dog exclusion will not apply to assistance dogs provided by a registered charity.

Does the order apply to working dogs?

The order does not apply to the normal activities of working dogs, **whilst the dog is working**. Therefore, we will not prosecute if we are satisfied that a dog was working at the time that when the order was breached.

For example, we will not prosecute any breaches committed by:

- ✦ Any dog being used for emergency search and rescue work.
- ✦ Any dog being used for law enforcement work.
- ✦ Any dog being used by Her Majesty's Armed Forces.
- ✦ Any dog being used for the herding or driving of cattle or sheep.
- ✦ Any dog being lawfully used for the capture or destruction of vermin.
- ✦ Any hounds or dogs that are being lawfully used for the purposes of hunting.



What happens if I fail to comply with the order?

If the person in charge of a dog fails to comply with the requirements of the order, they will be committing a criminal offence unless:-

- they have the consent from the owner, occupier or person in charge of the land, not to comply with the order;
- they have a reasonable excuse for failing to comply; or
- they fall within one of the other exemptions within the order, such as the exemptions in the order for disabled people, assistance dogs and working dogs.

What is the penalty for breaching the order?

You can be issued with a fixed penalty notice of £100 which must be paid within 14 days, reduced to £50 if paid within 10 days. You can also be prosecuted in the magistrates court where the maximum fine that can be imposed is £1,000.

Does the council have other options/powers for dealing with dog control issues?

The council can also use Community Protection Notices (CPNs) to deal with dog control issues. A Community Protection Notice is a legal notice that imposes conditions on the behaviour of an individual who is causing anti-social behaviour. They are intended to deal with ongoing problems or nuisances which negatively affect the community's quality of life, by targeting the individual(s) responsible for it.

For further information on the Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) please visit www.carmarthenshire.gov.wales

For further information on dog-friendly walks, attractions and accommodation please visit www.discovercarmarthenshire.com