

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **Why are you introducing a Professional dog walking license in Lambeth Parks?**

The scheme has been introduced to ensure that professional dog walkers are appropriately insured and follow a code of conduct when in operating in our parks. This will protect dog owners, other park users and the dog walkers themselves and ensure that parks remain safe places for all park users to enjoy.

In addition businesses who are using our parks to trade should contribute financially to the upkeep of parks to help with litter costs and general grounds maintenance. This scheme will bring professional dog walkers in line with other traders such as cafés and personal fitness trainers who are already licensed to operate in our parks.

- **How can you identify a professional dog walker?**

All licenced professional dog walkers will be issued with an identification armband and must wear this when walking their dogs in Lambeth Parks.

- **Who will enforce the licenses?**

Council officers will make adhoc checks to ensure operators are licenced correctly and will follow up reports of unlicensed operators who continue to use parks without a licence.

- **How do I apply for a licence?**

Licences can be applied for using the online form on our website using this link: <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/forms/parks-enquiries>

Please read through the relevant terms and conditions and code of conduct documents which apply to the licence before you apply.

- **How long will it take to get a licence?**

Applications will take approximately 2-4 weeks to process. If you are a new applicant, you cannot operate your business in the parks until approval has been given.

- **How much does the Professional dog walking licence cost?**

The 2017 cost is £300 per annum and covers a maximum of six dogs at any one time. Licences are issued from January to December each year and pro rata charges will apply if your licence covers periods of less than 12 months from your first initial application.

- **How many licences would I need if I have multiple people who work for me?**

If you employ multiple dog walkers, each dog walker will need to be licensed if they are working in the parks at the same time. However if they operate at different times, a licence can be transferred between employees but not outside of the business.

- **What happens if I my armband is lost or stolen and I need a replacement?**

If an armband is lost or stolen, the professional dog walker will need to report this to the police and the council. The stolen armband will be invalidated. You will need to request a replacement armband and there will be an admin fee of £50.

- **Why can I only walk a maximum of six dogs at a time?**

The number of dogs that can safely be controlled and cleaned up after for a single person does depend on the location and individual circumstances.

We assessed what existing good practice guidelines are and we consider it to be reasonably to set the maximum number of dogs at 6 per person.

Excessive numbers of dogs begin to be less manageable especially if multiple dogs are being walked in a large site off of the lead. It can be difficult to control them and ensure that dog mess is cleaned up.

- **Why have you exclude professional dog walking from certain areas or sites?**

We have taken into consideration site suitability when deciding where professional dog walking should be permitted. Therefore smaller sites or churchyards which are not suitable for large scale dog walking have been removed.

General dog walking is not permitted in areas such as children's play areas, picnic areas or sports facilities to ensure these activities can be carried out without disturbance and so that there remains a balance of areas for different usage for all park users.

Full details of where you can and cannot carry out professional dog walking can be found in the terms and conditions listed on our website.

- **Why might I have to put my dog on a lead if a council officer tells me to?**

Requiring dogs to be kept on leads in designated areas ensures dog walkers keep their animals under control in areas which are used primarily for other usage such as play areas, around cafes, sports pitches and nature areas.

The vast majority of parks and open spaces are free of restrictions and only if a council officer considers a dog or dogs to be out of control or causing alarm or stress will the owner be instructed to put and keep a dog on a lead.