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ACT dog off leash map feedback

Canberra Dog Walks (CDW) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the new ACT dog off leash and on leash map. CDW identifies many areas where recent changes should be reconsidered.

In some cases it appears there has been a misapplication of mapping data leading to an omission, or a dirt track being misidentified as a paved path.

In other cases the changes have not taken into account the actual terrain and condition of the ground which makes an off leash area essentially 'unwalkable' for most people.

There are also some areas which have very low traffic in terms of general pedestrians or cyclists but which provide an important facility for dog walkers who are safer walking on paved paths, e.g. the elderly, parents with prams and people with mobility issues.

The vast majority of Canberra is 'dog on leash' or 'dog prohibited'. There is a vast network of footpaths available for people to access who do not want to encounter dogs off leash. Including *some* defined areas where dog walkers may still use paved paths would allow a wider range of dog owners to continue to actually *walk* with their dog off leash.

CDW notes that the current shading of 'conditional off leash' playing fields do not extend to the full borders of these open areas because of the limitations of mapping software which only allows the actual playing field/oval to be shaded.

It would be extremely helpful to the public to clarify that the borders of most playing fields are also 'conditional off leash' or 'off leash' rather than 'on leash' as currently indicated by the new map, even if it means these spaces must be manually amended to extend the shaded area.

The following identified sites are listed in alphabetical order by suburb location for ease of reference and do not reflect their priority.

ARANDA

- Create a new off leash area in the space parallel to Belconnen Way between the Aranda playing fields to the corner of Caswell Drive, to connect with the new off leash area parallel to Caswell Drive.

Reason: The area is similar to the new off leash area parallel to Caswell Drive between the corner of Belconnen Way to the Aranda Bushland border. There are no paved paths, only a dirt track, and the area is bordered by the back fences of houses on one side and a thick strip of trees and shrubs along Belconnen Way.

BARTON

- Reinstate the dog on leash status of Telopea Park School; the new map shows it as 'conditional' off leash.

Reason: There is no access to this area for casual visitors: it is full enclosed with a 2 metre high steel fence with locked gates and is therefore inaccessible. Similar school grounds with primary aged children are 'dogs prohibited'.

CAMPBELL

- Reinstate as off leash the area containing a gully from Fairburn Avenue to White Crescent.

Reason: A dirt track follows the east side of the gully, running between the back fences of Campbell houses, and crosses over only one, low traffic, paved path.

COOK

- Reinstate the off leash status on the eastern side of the cycle path in the park extending between Lyttleton Crescent and Redfern Street.

Reason: Although there is a cycle path running through this park, it is easy to maintain a good distance from the cycle path by following a dirt track on the eastern edge of the park.

CURTIN

- Reinstate the off leash status of the park between the Curtin ridge reserve and Caruthers Street (between Munro and Jennings Streets).

Reason: there is no paved path, only a dirt track, and it is bordered by the back fences of houses.

- Reinstate the off leash status of the park between Holman Street and the Yarralumla Creek stormwater drain running parallel to Yarra Glen.

Reason: there are no paved paths, it is not an irrigated or maintained park, there are no playgrounds, it is used only occasionally by nearby residents.

- Reinstate the off leash status (on the eastern side of the cycle path) of the entire strip along the Yarralumla Creek stormwater drain and Yarra Glen, from the underpass at McCulloch to just before the underpass at Carruthers Street.

Reason: Most of the area is well away from the cycle path and even at the closest point the dirt walking track is well away from the cycle path.

- Reinstate the off leash status of the Curtin reserve on both sides of the footpath running from Jennings Street to the Cotter Road.

Reason: It is possible to keep away from the footpath along the vast majority of its route by following dirt tracks on the eastern edge as well as the western edge. Restricting access to the western side of the footpath only will result in dog walkers needing to follow the dirt track directly next to the Illoura Horse Holding paddock fence line.

This is an area where there would be high support for dog walkers to maintain access to the footpath. The lack of footpath access will impact on the elderly population - relatively high in Curtin; the area is frequented in the vast majority by local dog walkers.

FARRER

- Reinstate off leash status of the park on the ridge behind Dreverman Street further down towards Beasley Street.

Reason: There are no paved paths and it makes sense to extend the off leash area from the top of this ridge further downhill up to the footpath. The area is bordered by the back fences of houses.

GORDON

- Continue on leash access for dogs to the Point Hut Pond District Park while ensuring 10m restriction zone around play equipment and BBQs is maintained.

Reason: There is plenty of space around play equipment and BBQs to comply with the restriction zone. It allows responsible dog walkers to retain access to a beautiful walking area by following the dirt track around the perimeter of the Pond, rather than walk along the edge of the nearby road.

GOWRIE

- Reinstate the off leash status of the strip of grassy park parallel to the stormwater drain and Isabella Drive, from the Goldstein Crescent overpass to the pedestrian overpass near the corner of the Fadden Pines off leash area.

Reason: The walking area next to the stormwater drain is very well segregated from the cycle path by a steep bank and a thick stand of pine trees. The stormwater drain and a steep bank on the other side gives good separation from Isabella Drive.

GRIFFITH

- Reinstate the conditional off leash status of the Flinders Ovals 1, 2 and 3 and adjoining non-irrigated, unmaintained parkland (on google maps appearing as Willem Janzsoon and Romy Parks) bordered by Flinders Way, La Perouse Street and Monaro Crescent.

Reason: All other unfenced playing fields are 'conditional' off leash. These are no different from any other unfenced playing field. There are no paved paths on these grounds. The paved path adjacent to Flinders Way is separated from the grounds by a wire fence. This area is highly frequented by local dog walkers including a regular late afternoon social group running for well over 15 years.

HUGHES

- Reinstate off leash status of park adjacent to Brand Street on the north side of the footpath between Kent and Birdwood Streets.

Reason: It is easy to avoid the footpath by following a dirt track on the north side of the footpath through the park and avoid the children's playground.

KALEEN-GIRALANG

- Reinstate the off leash status of the area at the southern end of the parkland separating Kaleen and Giralang.

Reason: There are no paved paths, only dirt tracks and it forms a natural extension to the off leash parkland along the rest of the Kaleen-Giralang border.

KAMBAH

- Reinstate off leash status of the area on the western side of Drakeford Drive and bordered by O'Hallaran and Chirmside Circuits.

Reason: It is easy to avoid the cycle path by walking along (underground) course of Village Creek. The land rises steeply to Drakeford Drive providing good separation from the road.

- Reinstate off leash status of the small park parallel to, and on the south/west side of Bissenberger Crescent.

Reason: This is a little used bush park with little pedestrian traffic but popular with dog walkers. It is generally bordered by the back fences of houses and the small playground is mainly fenced. This is another area where access to footpaths by dog walkers should be maintained.

- Reinstate off leash status of parkland between Kambah District Playing Field 2 and Marconi Crescent.

Reason: Although there is a paved path through the park, the park is wide and it is easy to avoid the footpath. The adjacent school is fully fenced off from the park.

KINGSTON

- Reinstate conditional off leash status to Kingston Oval.

Reason: All other unfenced playing fields are 'conditional' off leash. It is no different from any other unfenced playing field. It is the only off leash area available in the entire Kingston and Barton area which has a high density dog population with most housed in apartments or townhouses.

LAKE GINNINDERRA

- Reconsider the off leash status of the fenced area in the centre of the Diddams Close peninsula.

Reason: The fenced area sometimes contains cattle. It is not possible to see the entire 'paddock' from all areas of the fence line to check for the presence of cattle before entering with an off leash dog.

LYNEHAM

- Reinstate the off leash status of the area on the east side of the stormwater drain extending from the Lyneham High School grounds to Goodwin Street.

Reason: This strip has no paved path, only a dirt track. It is bordered on one side by the back fences of houses and the stormwater drain on the other side provides a good barrier from the cycle path situated on the far side of the drain.

MAWSON

- Reinstate the off leash status between the Mawson Neighbourhood Oval and the Mawson Primary School which is fully fenced.

Reason: This area is not irrigated or maintained and separated from the school by a 2 metre high iron fence.

NARRABUNDAH

- Reinstate the off leash status of the parkland strip between Goyder and Matina Streets and Mill Creek and Jerrabomberra Creek, running from Kyeema Street to Mill Creek Oval (opposite Kootara Crescent). The oval (no longer irrigated or maintained) is currently off leash.

Reason: There are no paved paths through this parkland. It is well separated from the Errol Kavanagh Playing Fields by Mill Creek and then Jerrabomberra Creek.

- Reinstate the off leash status of the wooded parkland strip between Matina Street and Canberra Avenue running from Mill Creek Oval (opposite Kootara Crescent) to McMillan Crescent.

Reason: This area has no paved paths and is well buffered from streets by back fences of houses, the stormwater drain/Jerrabomberra Creek, and a long stand of mature oaks trees with dense scrubby undergrowth. The paved path adjacent to Canberra Avenue is

full separated from the dirt walking track by the stand of oaks and impenetrable undergrowth.

NGUNNAWAL

- Reinstate off leash status throughout the parkland running from Gurrang Avenue to Ginninderra Drive.

Reason: it is possible to largely avoid the paved path by following alternative dirt tracks in the park section between Gurrang Avenue and Marungul Avenue. The limited off leash area to the east of the paved path in the park section between Marungul Avenue and Ginninderra Drive includes large sections of steep scrubby land which is in practice un-walkable.

This is another area where there would be high support for dog walkers to still have access to the footpath. The lack of footpath access will impact on current users: the area is frequented by local dog walkers, including a large proportion of young mothers walking dogs together with children in prams. There is relatively little off leash space in Gungahlin and this parkland is one of the only areas one can actually *walk* with a dog off leash.

NICHOLLS

- Create a new off leash area on the slope of Harcourt Hill following the line of back fences from Clarrie Hermes to Curran Drive.

Reason: The dirt track through this long strip is bordered on one side by the back fences of houses and separated from the paddock on Harcourt Hill, on the other side of the track, by a bank and a wire fence. There is already an off leash area further along and adjacent to this wire fence, past the houses and extending down to Curran Drive. This would allow people to walk from Clarrie Hermes Drive to Curran Drive into the current off leash area.

- Allow access to footpath areas in the two small parks with off leash status at the end of Stedman Place and Cecins Place.

Reason: Much of the park space currently marked off leash is steep, scrubby and difficult to access. It would benefit residents to have access to safe walking with their dogs.

UMBAGONG PARK

- Reinstate off leash status to all of Umbagong Park.

Reason: Much of the park space currently marked off leash is steep, scrubby and difficult to access. This is another area where it would benefit elderly dog walkers and parents with prams walking with their dogs to continue to have full access to the paved paths. The park is little used by general walkers, families or cyclists.

YARRALUMLA

- Reinstate the dog off leash swimming beach opposite Brown Street and near Yarralum-la Dog Park.

Reason: It is a highly popular area in summer and a good distance from the cycle path. It is similar to the distance between the Lake Ginninderra dog swimming beach and the cycle path, opposite to the Belconnen Dog Park. In both areas the ground slopes upward to the cycle path so that the distance may appear less on a satellite map. It will impact on a large number of dog owners who will have to drive to the other side of the lake to Yarramundi Reach, which has no beach and therefore no easy access to the water.

- Create a new off leash area immediately south of Forestry Oval in the rectangle bordered by Wilf Crane Crescent, Bentham Street, Banks Street and CSIRO buildings.

Reason: This area planted with cedars has no paved paths and is not amenable to any other use but walking.

- Reinstate the off leash status of the strip of park running along the border of the Yarralumla Golf Club between the Golf Club entrance at the end of Bentham Street to Dunrossil Drive.

Reason: This park is bordered by a high wire fence on one side (the Golf Club border) and either the back fences of houses or impenetrable dense woods. There are no paved paths, but a dirt track following the line of the Golf Club fence which provides a very enjoyable route from CSIRO to Dunrossil Drive. It is not amenable to any other use but walking.

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