



Commercial Dog Walkers in the Outdoors: Attitudes, Engagement and Opportunities

Project summary, evaluation and recommendations



April 2014

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author and Scottish Natural Heritage wish to thank all the commercial dog walkers, access authorities and local vets whose enthusiasm and cooperation ensured the project was a success. Our grateful thanks in particular to Carl Howman of East Lothian Council and Michelle MillerAllen from Falkirk Green Dog Walkers for their repeated contributions to all the events. Finally, we wish to thank the Kennel Club, Scottish Kennel Club and Your Dog magazine for their endorsement of the events, and for taking up the opportunities identified by this project.

Tribute: Michelle MillerAllen Falkirk Green Dog Walkers

This report is dedicated to Michelle MillerAllen who died aged 64 on 18th April 2014. Her passion for the Scottish countryside and love of dogs was the inspiration for the Green Dog Walkers concept that she gave her time to promote at all of this project's workshops.

Such was Michelle's commitment that she made arrangements for the scheme to readily continue on her passing. At the time of publication, Falkirk Council and the Community Green Initiative are making such arrangements. For the latest information and contacts go to: www.greendogwalkers.org.uk



*Michelle MillerAllen presenting a
Green Dog Walkers award in 2013*

Disclosure of interests statement

As a specialist in managing access for walkers with dogs, the author has been, or remains, professionally involved with a wide range of projects and partners including: the Crown Estate, Forestry Commission (Scotland and England); the Kennel Club; National Farmers' Union Scotland; Pet Fostering Service Scotland; Scottish Countryside Rangers Association; Scottish Government; Scottish Kennel Club; Scottish Natural Heritage; Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; Scottish Land and Estates; Society for Companion Animal Studies; Crown Estate and Your Dog magazine. Full details available on request.

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Six evening workshops were funded by Scottish Natural Heritage to positively engage with commercial dog walkers in 2013.
2. The aim of the events was to promote greater awareness of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and improve understanding and compliance with its messages, benefit land management and other interests and add value to commercial dog walking businesses.
3. Assessment of workshop participants' interests, awareness and behaviours was derived from online questionnaires completed before and after the events.
4. The assessments showed the events had a positive impact on attendees in terms of improving awareness and understanding of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, inspiring them to take a more active role in promoting responsible behaviour and generating awareness of, and interest in, responsible dog walking initiatives.
5. The workshops also elicited previously unavailable data on the nature, type and preferred locations of commercial dog walking activity.
6. The success of the events in identifying the environmental, economic and social benefits from helping commercial dog walkers to become advocates for responsible access taking has contributed to the development of a national accreditation scheme and professional qualifications by the Kennel Club and Lantra.
7. While these events were successful in themselves, to optimise their benefits the management of commercial dog walking needs to be just one of several elements in a strategic, locally-relevant approach to managing access for commercial and private walkers with dogs.
8. Areas where the wording, promotion and delivery of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code could be improved were also identified.
9. The project also highlighted the potential benefits from similar engagement with other professionals providing services to dog owners.



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Introduction

1.1 Aims and objectives

Scottish Natural Heritage publicises and promotes understanding of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code via a wide programme of communications and education work. Dog owners, including commercial dog walkers, have been identified as a key audience for this work.

This report summarises and evaluates the delivery of six Scottish Natural Heritage funded workshops for commercial dog walkers, undertaken to raise awareness of the Code and its best practice dog walking messages. The first pilot event was held at the Falkirk Wheel in February 2013, with 5 subsequent events across Scotland in November 2013. The workshops aimed to:

1. Assess the overall relevance and effectiveness of engaging with commercial dog walkers in this way;
2. Identify any desired changes in knowledge or behaviour arising from the workshops;
3. Better understand how commercial dog walkers run their businesses, and the implications for the management of responsible access taking;
4. Assess the value and potential of delivering similar events in other parts of Scotland;
5. Make recommendations on how engaging with commercial dog walkers can complement Scottish Natural Heritage's wider aims for responsible access taking by walkers with dogs.

These aims are reflected in Scottish Natural Heritage's objectives for this project, which were to:

1. Improve the understanding of access rights and responsibilities under the Scottish Outdoor Access Code by commercial dog walkers attending the workshop;
2. Influence and improve their practice;
3. Encourage them to spread the word;
4. Empower them to promote good practice within the sector, for example through local accreditation schemes and applying peer pressure.

1.2 Data sources

Data sources used in the preparation of this report are:

1. Anonymous pre-event online questionnaires (with paper version options) distributed to participants approximately 3 weeks before each of the 6 workshops;
2. Notes made on post-its, worksheets and flipchart paper during the workshops;
3. Anonymous post-event online questionnaires (with paper version options) distributed to attending participants after the workshops, with a separate area for personal details to be provided for follow-up contact and Crufts tickets draw.

In-line with Scottish Natural Heritage policy and statutory data protection legislation, clarification on how, when and by whom any personal data provided would be used was explicitly made in the online questionnaires, with participants given the option to opt out of future contact or use of images featuring them taken during the event.

2 WORKSHOP DELIVERY

2.1 Logistics and planning

2.1.1 Venue and timing

Falkirk was chosen as the host town for the first pilot workshop to provide accessibility to large centres of population and thus dog ownership and commercial dog walkers. The Falkirk Wheel was then selected as the venue given Scottish Canals' interest in hosting the event on 19 February 2013, given the availability of a training room and interest in promoting responsible access-taking by commercial dog walkers in the area. Falkirk was also very convenient for the guest speakers.

The venues for the 5 subsequent workshops in November 2013 were identified by soliciting expressions of interest in hosting an event amongst members of the Scottish Outdoor Access Network. In order to deliver as many workshops as possible within the project's budget, and to encourage commitment and engagement, access authorities were asked to provide a venue and help with local publicity for the events at their own expense. Scottish Natural Heritage met all other administration, preparation and workshop delivery costs.

The 5 subsequent events were held at:

- Rouken Glen, East Renfrewshire – 12 November 2013
- Mugdock Country Park, near Milngavie – 13 November 2013
- Lochore Meadows Country Park, Fife – 26 November 2013
- Baxter Park, Dundee – 27 November 2013
- Kincorth Community Centre, Aberdeen – 28 November 2013

Based on the assumption that participants were less likely to be walking dogs after dusk in winter, the events were held on midweek evenings to make them as accessible as possible. A light meal of soup and sandwiches was provided to make participants welcome and allow them to attend straight from work if required, especially if they had some distance to travel.

2.1.2 Invitations: Falkirk event

An up-to-date list of commercial dog walking companies was purchased and invitations sent to 230 commercial dog walkers within an approximately one hour driving time of Falkirk, the week commencing 21 January 2013. The invitations could only be sent out by post due to contact data usage restrictions, but this also allowed a flat dog treat to be included with the invitation as a novel way of attracting the attention of the recipients, and their dog(s).

A copy of the colour printed invitation appears below. While the underlying intention of the event was to promote awareness of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and reduce irresponsible access taking, the tone and content of the invitation was specifically designed to appeal to the positive personal interests of commercial dog walkers and thereby optimise interest and attendance.

Dog owners in general are often suspicious of unsolicited contact from public bodies, as historically this has most often been of a restrictive and unwelcoming nature.

Consequently, special efforts were made to promote the event as being in their interests, and formal endorsement obtained from dog-friendly organisations, namely the Kennel Club, Scottish Kennel Club and Your Dog magazine. The workshop host's positive national profile in the canine community was also intentionally highlighted for this reason. Goodie bags and a free prize draw for two season passes (value approximately £80) for Crufts Dog show in March (donated by the Kennel Club) were similarly used to capture the interest of the intended audience.

In total, 50 requests to attend were received, with the 40 places available allocated on a first come, first served, basis. Interest in attending was shown by some access officers and other public sector staff and while this interest was very welcome, places were not allocated to people other than commercial dog walkers, to promote the most open and mutually supportive environment for engagement at the event.

However, the convenor of the Scottish Outdoor Access Network (SOAN), Angus Duncan was invited to attend and help with facilitation, as this offered the opportunity for informal observation and feedback to SOAN members.

Commercial dog walkers workshop

The Falkirk Wheel Conference Centre*
Tuesday 19 February 2013
5.30pm for food, workshop 6 - 8.30pm

- Do you walk dogs for a living?
- Want to promote yourself as a caring and reputable business?
- Interested in getting ahead of the competition?

Come along to this free event to:

See how voluntary accreditation schemes can help businesses like yours

Hear the success of the community-led Falkirk Green Dog Walkers scheme

Get top tips from vet Stephen Champion of www.championvet.com Grangemouth

Be sure where you can go & what you can do

Tell us how best to share good practice and help reputable commercial dog walkers

BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL AS SPACES ARE LIMITED

Please email: recreationandaccess@snh.gov.uk with "dog walker" as the subject, stating your name, company and phone number
PLEASE BOOK BY 31 JANUARY 2013

Can't come this time? Then email us to find out about future events and advice. Alternatively call Anne on 01463 725223



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Free!

- Drinks, soup and sandwiches
- Raffle for two Crufts tickets
- Falkirk Wheel visit voucher
- Goodie bag for you & your dog
- On-site parking

Hosted by **Stephen Jenkinson**
for **Scottish Natural Heritage**
Kennel Club Access Advisor and
Your Dog magazine columnist

KNOW THE CODE BEFORE YOU GO
outdooraccess-scotland.com




DOGS: the enclosed Pedigree Schmacko is our gift for you to enjoy, but ask your owner first

* The postcode for Falkirk Wheel Conference Centre is FK1 4RS

Image 1: Approximately A5 sized invitation posted to commercial dog walkers for the Falkirk pilot workshop.

2.1.3 Invitations: other events

A different approach to inviting commercial dog walkers to the events was taken after the Falkirk event, given the local knowledge, contact and engagement of the host access authorities and to reduce administrative costs to Scottish Natural Heritage. Advertising posters were distributed by both email and hard copy through a variety of networks, asking for publicity to further networks and placement at key venues and outdoor locations. Some direct mail was also undertaken from lists gained from searching Yellow Pages directories.

In addition, local newspaper stories, local access forums, posters at car parks popular with commercial dog walkers, social media (Facebook and Twitter) and direct contact emails to known commercial dog walkers were also used to promote the events.

Commercial dog walkers workshops

5.30pm for food, workshop 6 - 9pm

- Do you walk dogs for a living?
- Want to promote yourself as a caring and reputable business?
- Interested in getting ahead of the competition?

Come along to a free event:

1. Thornliebank (Jct 3 M77)	12 Nov 2013
2. Milngavie	13 Nov 2013
3. Cowdenbeath, Fife	26 Nov 2013
4. Dundee	27 Nov 2013
5. Aberdeen	28 Nov 2013

See how voluntary accreditation schemes can help businesses like yours

Hear the success of the community-led Falkirk Green Dog Walkers scheme

Get top tips from veterinary professionals about safe and healthy dog walking

Be sure where you can go & what you can do

Tell us how best to share good practice and help reputable commercial dog walkers

PLEASE BOOK BY THESE DATES:
Events 1 and 2: Mon 1st November
Events 3, 4, 5: Mon 18 November

Email: recreationandaccess@snh.gov.uk with "dog walker" & your chosen venue in the subject line. Please state your name, company & phone number in the email itself.



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Free!

- Drinks, soup and sandwiches
- Raffle for two Crufts tickets
- Goodie bag for you & your dog

Hosted by Stephen Jenkinson
for Scottish Natural Heritage
Kennel Club Access Advisor and
Your Dog magazine columnist

BOOKING ESSENTIAL
SPACES ARE LIMITED

KNOW THE CODE
BEFORE YOU GO

outdooraccess-scotland.com




Image 2: Invitation posted to commercial dog walkers for the November events.

2.2 Attendance, content and delivery

In total, 116 invited participants attended the six workshops as follows:

- Falkirk Wheel, Falkirk: 32 participants
- Rouken Glen, East Renfrewshire: 18 participants
- Mugdock Country Park, near Milngavie: 20 participants
- Lochore Meadows Country Park: 10 participants
- Baxter Park, Dundee: 25 participants
- Kincorth Community Centre, Aberdeen: 11 participants

2.2.1 Falkirk event timings and structure

The programme for the Falkirk event appears below:



Commercial dog walkers workshop

Tuesday 19 February 2013

From 5.30 pm	Soup, sandwiches and refreshments	
6.00 pm	Welcome and introductions	
6.15 pm	Dog walking – opportunities and threats	<i>Stephen Jenkinson Kennel Club Access Advisor</i>
6.25 pm	Falkirk Green Dog Walkers	<i>Michelle MillerAllen Green Dog Walkers Project Falkirk Council</i>
6.45 pm	Approved professional dog walker accreditation scheme	<i>Carl Howman Amenity Protection Officer East Lothian Council</i>
7.05 pm	Discussion groups: what could these schemes mean for you?	<i>All</i>
7.25 pm	Where you can go and what you can do: Scottish Outdoor Access Code	<i>Stephen Jenkinson</i>
7.55 pm	Vet's top tips for dog walking	<i>Stephen Champion www.championvet.com Grangemouth</i>
8.15 pm	Summary, questions and the future	
8.30 pm	Depart	

Facilitators

Rob Garner, Recreation and Access Officer, Scottish Natural Heritage
 Anne Murray, Communications Officer - Campaigns, Scottish Natural Heritage
 Angus Duncan, Outdoor Access Team Leader - Falkirk Council



Image 3: Programme for the Falkirk Wheel event.

2.2.2 Other events: timings and structure

The 5 events in November generally followed the structure of the Falkirk event, as this was found to be successful in the post-event evaluation questionnaire, with the following changes:

- The events ended at 9 pm, 30 minutes later than the Falkirk event to give more time for discussion and presentations;
- The Scottish Outdoor Access Code session was delivered by different members of Scottish Natural Heritage staff, using the same series of Powerpoint slides;
- The Approved professional dog walker scheme session was delivered by Stephen Jenkinson at Dundee and Aberdeen, as Carl Howman from East Lothian Council was unable to attend those sessions;
- Indicative information on the planned Kennel Club / Scottish Kennel Club commercial dog walkers accreditation schemes was included in the Dundee and Aberdeen events.



Image 4: Workshop in progress at the Falkirk Wheel event.

3 COMMERCIAL DOG WALKER DEMOGRAPHICS AND PROFILE

The following sections summarise the key findings of the data from the pre- and post-event questionnaires and activities during the workshops.

Appendix 1 (Section 10) gives a question by question breakdown of the quantitative data from the pre-questionnaires where questions on commercial dog walking operations were asked, including basic statistical data as appropriate.

A copy of the anonymised raw data has been supplied to Scottish Natural Heritage.

Response rates varied between questions, with around 70 of the 84 workshop participants answering each question.

A summary of the survey key findings from all 6 workshop surveys is provided below. Where absolute figures are quoted, the mean average figure is given with minimum and maximum figures in parenthesis where appropriate.

Anonymised summary results from each of the 6 events are available on request

Percentages may not amount to 100% due to data rounding.

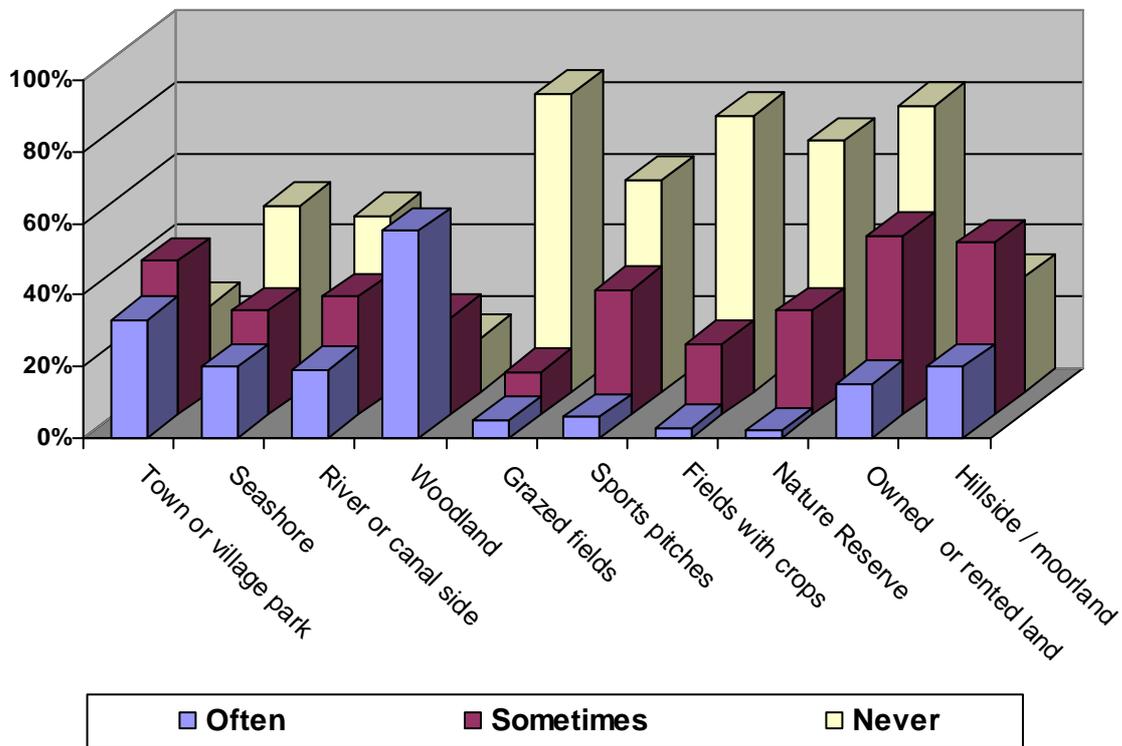
3.1 Survey results

3.1.1 *Frequency and number of dogs walked commercially*

- 71% of commercial dog walkers walk dogs for clients at least once each day; 58% of commercial dog walkers do so more than once per day;
- Most respondents had been walking other people's dogs commercially for 3 years;
- Commercial dog walkers walk an average of 4 clients' dogs at a time (ranging from 1 to 6 dogs);
- The average dog walk is 58 minutes long (ranging from 30 to 90 minutes);
- The maximum number of dogs they would walk at one time ranged from 2 to 10 dogs, with the average being 5 dogs;
- Respondents spend 16 hours (ranging from 4 to 50 hours) per week walking dogs for other people;
- On average 11 different dogs are walked for clients each week, with the range of responses being from 0 to 25 dogs;
- 96% of commercial dog walkers transport dogs to where they are walked in a car or van;
- The average journey time to a dog walking area is 19 minutes (ranging from 5 to 90 minutes);
- 88% of commercial dog walkers do not employ other people to walk dogs for their businesses.

3.1.2 Commercial dog walking locations

- Woodland was by far the most popular place for walking clients' dogs (58% "often" walked there), with town parks and hillsides / moorland being the next most popular areas;
- Fields grazed by farm animals, fields where crops are grown and nature reserves are the areas commercial dog walkers most frequently avoided for dog walking;
- 20% of respondents "often" or "sometimes" used land that they owned or rented for dog walking;
- 29% said it was not easy to find places to walk clients' dogs, and 38% felt there were fewer places to do so than 10 years ago.



Graph 1: Frequency of commercial dog walking by landscape type.

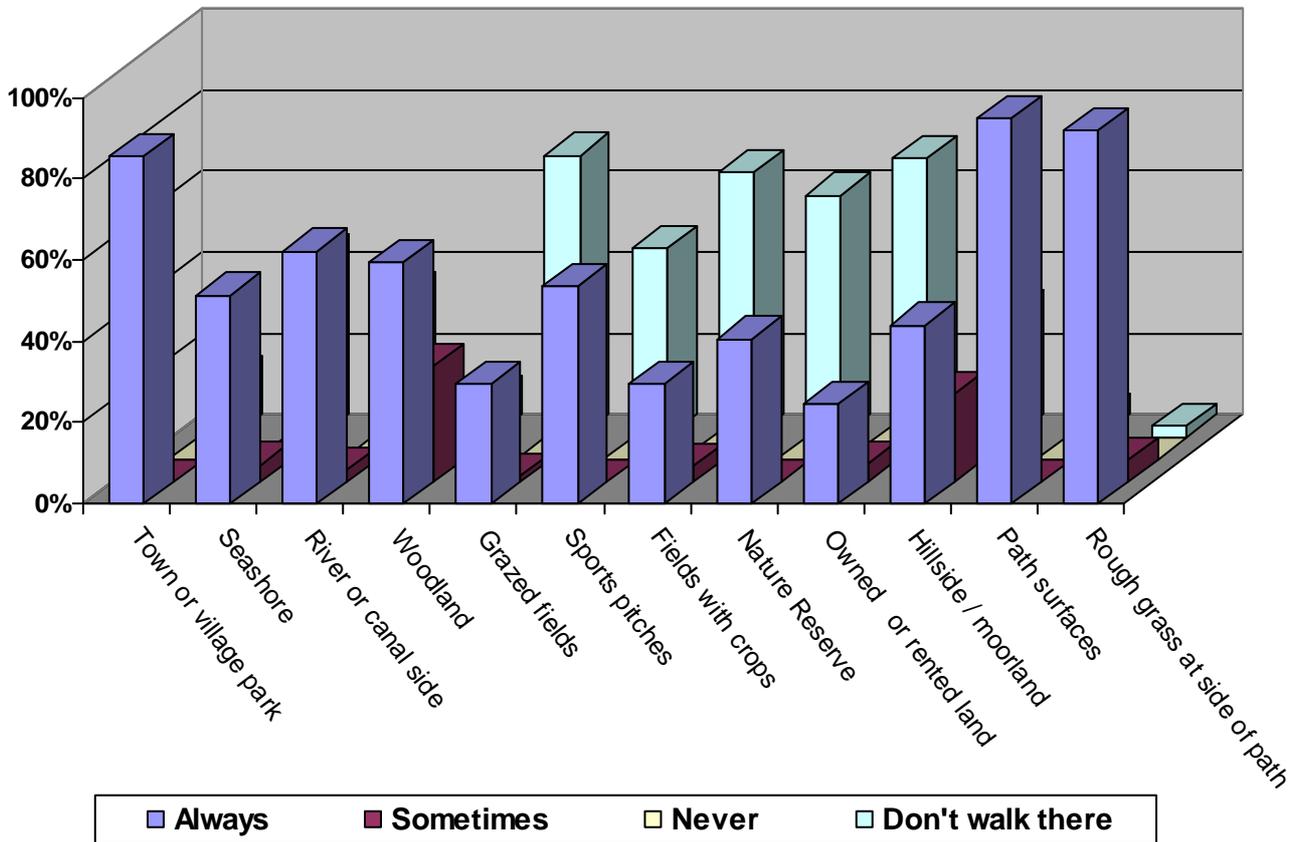
3.1.3 Off-lead dog walking

"Most" (49%) or "all" (26%) of respondents' clients would prefer their dogs to be exercised off-lead at some time when walked. 92% of dog walkers would do this if a client's dog had a good recall.

3.1.4 Removal of fouling

Respondents reported a very high level of picking up after clients' dogs, especially where fouling occurred in a more formal landscape or on a path surface.

The landscapes generally perceived as less formal (woodland and open hillsides / moorland) were those where around a quarter of commercial dog walkers did not always pick up.



Graph 2: Frequency of picking up dog waste by landscape type.

3.1.5 Paying for improved facilities

The fact 58% of respondents stated they would pay for easy access to safe areas where other dog walkers don't go, presents some significant opportunities for good management, including:

- Moving commercial dog walking activity to areas where it both adds value to the dog walkers' services and reduces conflict for the land manager;
- Land managers can reduce conflict and potential costs on their land, in a way that is cost neutral or provides a surplus;

- Commercial dog walkers clearly feel the added value of such provision can be commercially viable. This could be due to clients being prepared to pay more for this and/or being able to exercise additional dogs with safety in a given time;
- Some form of payment inherently requires dialogue between the dog walker and landowner, which is in itself valuable, and is more likely to happen in this scenario as it can provide benefits to both parties.

While the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 may appear to preclude such payments in Scotland, given the right of responsible non-motorised access to most land and inland water, in practice such provision could take place where:

- The land itself is inconvenient or not attractive to get to without using a motor vehicle, and public car parking is some distance away;
- In a small number of cases, access rights do not exist because access to the land was by payment on at least 90 days in the year to 31 January 2001;
- Payment is for amenities or facilities that are not provided under the 2003 Act. For example: private parking closer to, or within, the dog walking area; additional dog-friendly management, such as waste bins or canine activity courses; shorter mowing of grass or additional dog-proof fencing;
- The commercial activities undertaken with clients' dogs are such that they would not be classed as responsible access taking, and thus exempt from access rights provided under the 2003 Act and/or other access rights or traditions. For example, if the dog(s) were not always under "proper control" under Section 9 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, or if the exercising of the dogs was repeatedly taking place on the same land to such a degree that it was not classed as "responsible" access-taking under Section 2 of the 2003 Act.

One example of commercial dog walkers paying for these facilities occurs near Falkirk, which is understood to be valued by all parties. However, to ensure the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 is not breached, commercial dog walkers need to be aware that paying for the above additional amenities will not, in itself, guarantee exclusive use in legal terms, as access rights would continue to apply to other dog walkers.

Irrespective of any contractual obligations, as above, the Scottish Outdoor Access Code encourages commercial users to 'consider assisting with care of the resource used by your business', and this might provide a basis for some sort of courtesy payment to land managers in some circumstances.

Outside Scotland, such as in England and Wales, there are significantly more opportunities for such approaches to work, given far fewer access rights to land compared to Scotland.

Landowners are also recommended to check their insurance cover before voluntarily providing any such additional access or amenities.

3.2 Analysis and comment

Commercial dog walkers reflect many of the same characteristics of people walking their own dogs* in that:

- Off-lead access is highly valued and sought, as is avoiding conflict with other dog walkers;
- Around a third feel places where dogs can be exercised are becoming more scarce;
- They will readily drive an average of 20 minutes on a daily basis to get to good dog walking areas;
- An average dog walk is around one hour;
- They are less likely to pick up faeces in more informal landscapes such as woods, hillsides and moorland.

However, they differ from people walking their own dogs in terms of:

- Having more dogs with them;
- Using a narrower range of landscapes more frequently for dog walking, primarily centred on woodland;
- Being less likely to walk a dog to where it is exercised from the dog's home;
- Having the potential to be ambassadors for responsible access taking with their clients, and seeing a commercial advantage for doing so.

* data taken from:

Edwards, V. and Knight, S. (2006) *Understanding the psychology of walkers with dogs: new approaches to better management*. University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth

Jenkinson, S (2013) *Planning for dog ownership in new developments*. Whitehill Bordon Eco-town, Hampshire

Sport Industry Research Centre (2008) *Assessment of perceptions, behaviours and understanding of walkers with dogs in the countryside*. SIRC, Sheffield

All available for download from: www.hants.gov.uk/dogs

4 SCOTTISH OUTDOOR ACCESS CODE AWARENESS

The pre- and post-event questionnaires tested participant awareness of dog-related elements of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

The findings summarised across all 6 workshops are presented below, with responses to individual questions being given in Appendices 1 and 2 (Sections 10 and 11).

Anonymised summary results from each of the 6 events are available on request.

4.1 Pre-event Scottish Outdoor Access Code awareness

The commercial dog walkers invited to the events who completed the questionnaire, had a high level of awareness (over 90%) of most of the core principles of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code, such as putting their dogs on leads around farm animals, and not letting their dogs disturb calves, lambs or ground nesting birds*. See Section 10.1 for the principles tested.

However, it is of concern that only 69% agreed that the Scottish Outdoor Access Code advises dog walkers to release their dogs if chased by cattle, as such situations do lead to injuries and occasional deaths of dog walkers each year across the UK.

Where their knowledge of access rights was less clear, commercial dog walkers appeared to err on the side of caution and assumed rights did not exist; for example, only 54% agreed that there was a right of access to sports pitches when not in use.

The responses did highlight that while almost all commercial dog walkers understood the underlying principles of responsible access taking, they were less clear on what this means in practice, particularly in terms of where specifically to go at a local level. For example, 27% said it was not easy to know where you can go, and what you can do when dog walking, and only 14% said it was easy to know where to use a lead to avoid disturbing ground nesting birds.

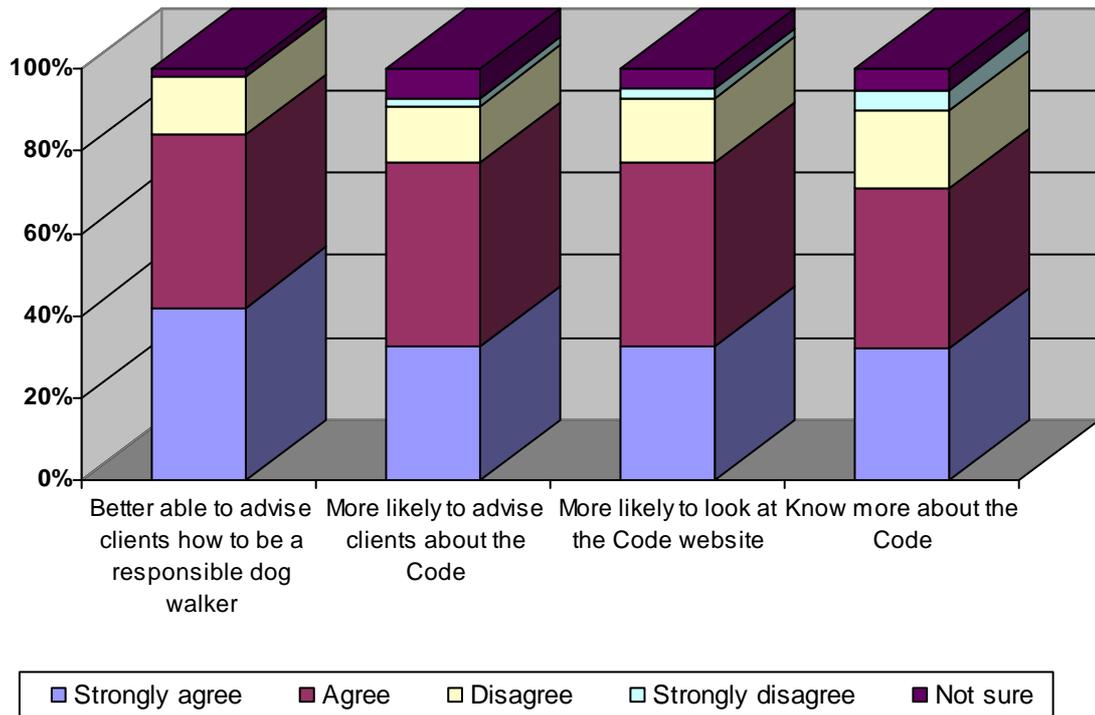
4.2 Post-event Scottish Outdoor Access Code awareness

After all the events, and for each of the six assessment factors tested, positive change was reported by respondents in terms of Scottish Outdoor Access Code awareness, including:

- 71% knew more about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code;
- 78% were more likely to look at: www.outdooraccess-scotland.com;
- 78% were more likely to tell their clients about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code;
- 84% felt better able to tell their clients how to be responsible dog walkers.

In relation to fouling, of the approximately 30% of respondents who previously did not always pick up when dog walking in more informal landscapes, over half said that after the event they were more likely to pick up in woodland (57%), fields grazed by farm animals (61%) and hillsides / moorland (74%).

** At the Falkirk event (the only event where this was tested before the workshop), there was a 74% Scottish Outdoor Access Code awareness rate reported by respondents. This was significantly higher than for the general public in Scotland, which was 39% in 2012. It is also higher than the peak rate of Scottish Outdoor Access Code awareness of 67% in March 2008 during a Scottish Natural Heritage television campaign.*



Graph 3: Changes in commercial dog walker knowledge and behaviour in relation to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code as a result of the workshops.



Image 5: After the events, 78% of commercial dog walkers felt better able to advise clients about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

4.3 Analysis and comment

Given the comparatively high level of general Scottish Outdoor Access Code awareness before the event, the significant increases in awareness and advice to clients about responsible access taking is very encouraging and endorses the merit of holding such events.

The value of raising awareness about problems associated with fouling of less formal landscapes is also endorsed, given that most non-compliers are now more likely to pick up. While this does not necessarily make for actual changes in behaviour when out dog walking, it is clear that the need to do so has been communicated in a compelling manner.

Equally, this makes the areas where awareness is still lacking all the more notable, given that this is an engaged audience with a sound underlying awareness of Scottish Outdoor Access Code principles.

In particular, the lack of locally-relevant knowledge about where precisely dog walkers can go, the location of ground nesting birds, and safest action if chased by cattle, is worthy of greater emphasis in Scottish Outdoor Access Code communication. However, this needs to be backed up by clearer information (including engagement by access authorities and others), about what responsible access taking means at a local level, as this cannot be effectively communicated at a national level by Scottish Natural Heritage.

5 RESPONSIBLE DOG WALKING INITIATIVES

The workshops included two key initiatives from the Central Belt of Scotland, both of which inherently promote Scottish Outdoor Access Code-compliant, responsible access taking.

5.1 Falkirk Green Dog Walkers

This is a community-based scheme that builds capacity amongst local dog owners to positively promote responsible dog walking, especially in relation to fouling. It uses a non-confrontational and friendly way to change attitudes about dog fouling using a variety of tactics, education methods and events, such as providing green dog walker branding (including armbands and bandanas), dog waste bags, running workshops at local schools and the annual Canine Capers event. The scheme has had several significant positive outcomes, including increasing the use of dog waste bags by 34% and reducing incidences of greenspace fouling in Falkirk, where the scheme originated.

It has been adopted under licence in several other local authority areas across the UK for a one-off cost of £500. The initiative was led by Michelle MillerAllen who presented an overview of the scheme at all the workshops (see tribute page 4). Information about the scheme, partner authorities and its impact can be found at: www.greendogwalkers.org.uk

5.1.1 Participant perception of scheme

Workshop participants responding to the post-event questionnaire were supportive of the Green Dog Walkers approach with:

- 95% agreeing it was a good way to tackle dog fouling that also helps show dog walkers can be responsible;
- 93% agreeing that commercial dog walkers should get involved in such schemes;
- Only 1 respondent (2%) felt that such a scheme would not work in his/her area ;
- 53% of respondents would themselves try to get such a scheme operating in their area, if there was not such a scheme already.



Image 6: After the workshops, 93% of commercial dog walkers felt they should become involved with Green Dog Walker schemes – dog walker with Falkirk armband pictured.

5.2 East Lothian Commercial Dog Walker accreditation scheme

As part of East Lothian Council's ongoing Dog Watch project, a voluntary commercial dog walker accreditation scheme has been introduced that has, for example, reduced complaints about commercial dog walkers from approximately one a day to one a month.

Commercial dog walkers are keen to join and remain on the scheme, as their approval by the council was good for business, and having online links to their websites from the council's website improved their rankings on the Google internet search engine.

Lead officer Carl Howman presented details of the scheme at 4 out of the 6 workshops.

To be granted approved (accredited) status, the dog walking company has to agree to a number of conditions including:

- no more than six dogs to be exercised at any one time;
- relevant pet business insurance and a canine first aid kit;
- dogs to be transported in a vehicle fit for purpose with dogs adequately secured;
- dogs to be tagged with the commercial dog walker's own company tag whilst under their care;
- controlling dogs during exercise and cleaning up any dog fouling;
- being aware and responsible about when and where dogs are walked, for example keeping away from livestock and not disturbing ground nesting birds.

More information and contacts for the scheme are at: www.eastlothian.gov.uk/dogwatch

5.2.1 Participant perception of scheme

Pre- and post-event questionnaires asked respondents the same questions about these schemes to test for any change in attitude following the event. Most participants felt positive about the principle of schemes before the event, and in most cases this view was not significantly changed or decreased after the event.

However, the number of people who felt such schemes were a waste of time was significantly reduced by 24%, with the same percentage fall in the number of people who felt such schemes would be too expensive.

Key perceptions of the schemes before (first percentage) and after the workshops (second percentage) were that:

- 83% / 84% felt such schemes would be a good selling point for their businesses;
- 88% / 82% agreed they helped dog owners identify responsible commercial dog walkers;
- 28% / 4% felt such schemes were a waste of time and of no value to them;
- 59% / 35% felt such schemes would cost their businesses too much to join;
- 49% / 52% believed such schemes should be voluntary.

As with the Green Dog Walkers, most respondents were positive about accreditation schemes, with 39% stating they would like to be involved in setting one up in their area.

The East Lothian scheme's requirements were also felt to be "about right" by 77% of respondents.

Only 4 (5%) of the 73 commercial dog walkers completing the post-event questionnaire were already involved in accreditation schemes. 3 were members of the National Association of Pet Sitters, and 1 was a member of the Association of Professional Dog Walkers.

5.3 Analysis and comment

There was an inherently high level of interest and support for both these schemes amongst the commercial dog walkers attending the workshops, which if captured has the potential to improve responsible access taking by commercial dog walkers themselves, their clients, and dog owners in general.

The significant improvements in attitudes toward accreditation achieved during the events, shows that uncertainty about the benefits and costs of accreditation can put people off, even though they are supportive of such schemes in principle.

While there were no specific measures put in place to capture the interest in developing schemes immediately before the event, 94% of respondents to the post-event survey indicated that they were happy to be contacted by their local authority about these issues after the event. These contact details will be made available to the local authorities concerned.

Overall, facilitating greater consideration and understanding of these schemes appears to have significant untapped potential to support Scottish Natural Heritage's aims for the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and access taking more generally.

It is also noted that both these schemes are located in departments outwith the outdoor access teams (Environmental Health at East Lothian and Corporate and Neighbourhood Services at Falkirk), and thus it may also be appropriate to encourage greater liaison between Scottish Natural Heritage, access staff and wider teams such as environmental health to develop the most complementary approach to such issues.

6 EVALUATION OF WORKSHOP DELIVERY

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure
<i>I was made to feel welcome</i>	<u>84%</u>	16%	0%	0%	0%
<i>It was a good use of my time</i>	<u>62%</u>	30%	3%	2%	3%
<i>It was useful to meet other commercial dog walkers</i>	<u>55%</u>	37%	7%	0%	2%
<i>The presentations were relevant and interesting</i>	<u>70%</u>	25%	5%	0%	0%
<i>I had the opportunity to express my views</i>	<u>49%</u>	42%	7%	2%	0%
<i>Evenings are a good time for events for professional dog walkers</i>	<u>80%</u>	17%	0%	0%	3%
<i>Issues were explained in a way I could understand</i>	<u>72%</u>	28%	0%	0%	0%
<i>I felt the event was designed to help responsible dog walkers</i>	<u>72%</u>	22%	5%	2%	0%
<i>I would recommend this type of event to other commercial dog walkers</i>	<u>77%</u>	13%	5%	2%	3%

The post-event evaluation showed that all but 5 of all the participants felt very positive about all aspects of the event. For example, of the 60 participants responding to these questions:

- All (100%) agreed they were made to feel welcome, issues were explained clearly and evenings were a good time for such events;
- 92% of participants agreed that the event was a good use of their time;
- All but 4 participants (7%) felt the events were designed to help responsible dog walkers and would recommend such events to colleagues.

Specific elements of the event are evaluated in the following sections:

6.1 Most and least useful parts of the event

Respondents were asked to identify the most and least useful parts of the event using free text answers.

Summary analysis of the responses showed the following:

Workshop element	“Most useful” mentions	“Least useful” mentions
All of it	11	0
None of it	0	26*
Opportunities, threats and event host	7	0
Falkirk Green Dog walkers	16	5
East Lothian Accreditation scheme	14	3
Group discussions	15	5
Scottish Outdoor Access Code	4	4
Vet’s top tips	14	7
Information on local council policy and plans on these issues	3	2
Kennel Club National Accreditation Scheme (included at Dundee and Aberdeen events only)	2	0

* i.e. none of the workshop elements were not useful

Several respondents were keen to point out that while they personally classed some elements as “least” useful (e.g. when they already knew of the issue, or it was not relevant to their personal needs), this did not mean they felt the content was irrelevant to the other participants as a whole.

6.2 Most important thing to do after the event

Participants were asked to state the most important thing they were going to do as a result of the workshop using free text. From the 55 responses, the following generic themes were identified:

Generic action to be taken after workshop	Number of participants
Pursue green dog walker activities	17
Pursue accreditation for their businesses	17
Engage / liaise with local council on relevant issues raised at event / encourage them to take more action	15
Improve dog health related practices, including vaccination checks and first aid kits	5
Promote responsible access taking by dog owners through marketing / spreading the word / speaking with clients	5
Comply more with the Scottish Outdoor Access Code	5
Start / improve dog walking business	4
Pick up more frequently / in more places	4
Share information gained at event with other dog walkers who could not attend / didn't know about the event	4
Keep in contact with other commercial dog walkers	3

6.3 Analysis and comment

The aim to produce and deliver a programme that was accessible, relevant and worthwhile for the participants was overwhelmingly met, as well as delivering the desired messages about responsible access taking.

While content on the Scottish Outdoor Access Code was rarely stated to be the “most useful” element, it was equally only “least useful” to one person. Other post-event questions also showed that the Scottish Outdoor Access Code-related content did positively influence knowledge and perception in the desired way.

Moreover, the most and least useful comments validate the assumption made at the planning stage, that content of direct relevance to their businesses, and the credibility of vets, is critical in attracting commercial dog walkers to such events.

It is common for group work to split opinion in such assessments, as it is greatly influenced by an individual's preferred learning style, especially with a diverse range of participants as in this case. While most participants will be used to, and comfortable with, listening to talks and lectures, some people very much like the opportunity to interact with others, but participatory activities can be more uncomfortable for some individuals.

Overall, the workshop appears to have delivered a balanced, engaging and relevant programme that met with widespread approval and support from the target audience.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Value of workshops

The inclusion of pre- and post-event evaluations has clearly shown, as far as is possible in this context, that the events were very effective in meeting Scottish Natural Heritage's desired aims.

Further evaluation would be helpful to see what changes have occurred over a longer time period, but for now there is enough evidence to show the events were effective.

7.2 Opportunities for working with commercial dog walkers

There is clearly a significant proportion of commercial dog walkers who are very motivated to engage with these issues, both for their own interests and due to them perceiving commercial value in promoting responsible behaviour, both to attract clients and reduce calls for further restrictions on dog walking.

Almost half of all respondents wanted to take an active part in establishing and promoting responsible dog walking schemes. To the author's knowledge, such latent interest has not been widely exploited across Scotland or elsewhere in the UK.

While commercial dog walkers are often mentioned by access authorities and land managers in a negative context, there is clear potential for a significant proportion of them to be engaged as part of the solution to irresponsible access taking. This is in terms of their own behaviours and promoting responsible access taking to their clients.

However, as the commercial dog walkers at this event had, on average, only been working as such for three years, it is likely that ongoing engagement and / or repeated events will be needed to ensure key Scottish Outdoor Access Code messages are communicated following staff turnover.

7.3 Workshop promotion

One reason for the success of the events was the positive and engaging nature of its promotion. While it is understood why some land managers and nature conservation interests have sought to engage with dog walkers, primarily with messages about the problems they can cause for others, the latter is far less likely to engage this audience than messages about how responsible access-taking can add value to their businesses.

The initial invitations to such events give a vital first impression, and so must actively address the audience's needs and aspirations, with the access management outcomes built around that. Endorsement of the events by dog-friendly organisations was also held to have been helpful. These bodies can also be well-placed to promote the value and awareness of such workshops.

7.4 Workshop content

The content was very relevant to participants and the use of guest speakers with credibility in their field was seen as an essential element in achieving this. While other commitments and travelling distances meant that not all the speakers could attend all the workshops, the inclusion of similar speakers is essential.

In particular, the presence of vets was highly valued and is known to aid engagement; prior research has shown that dog owners give the highest priority to advice from other dog owners and their vets. Extending the November events by 30 minutes was felt to be valuable and did not appear to result in participants leaving before the end of the events.

7.5 Involvement of access authorities

Now that the concept of these events has been shown to be a success, it is vital that any future events are planned in partnership with both access and environmental health staff. This will guide relevance of content and ensure participant enthusiasm for initiatives (e.g. commercial accreditation and community dog walking) is identified and subsequently made use of.

7.6 Integration with wider access management

As with dog owners in general, commercial dog walkers are predisposed to not cause conflict for themselves nor other interests. Equally, the value placed on off-lead access, and commercial dog walkers' ability to drive to different locations, means that any management of off-lead access or other behaviour by walkers with dogs, must always consider the potential for displacement.

The established momentum for imposing dog bans and on-lead areas in England and Wales, appears to be gaining ground in Scotland. Any such restrictions (for example from management rules or bylaws) have a high potential to displace and concentrate perceived problem behaviours in other areas. Without a strategic approach about how best to accommodate the demand for access, particularly off-lead, by commercial and private dog owners, any such restrictions could heighten such problems, and work against the many benefits of dog ownership and the provision of commercial dog walking services.

Thus, work with commercial dog walkers needs to be complemented by wider access management awareness and planning about where dog walkers can go and what they can do at a local level.

Greater liaison between access authority staff, environmental health teams and local access forums may well be helpful to ensure positive work done with commercial dog walkers is not undermined by other conflicting management initiatives.

7.7 Wider applicability

The event appears to be readily transferable to other areas in Scotland, where there is a prevalence of commercial dog walking, be it to reduce current problems, or to prevent conflict occurring. While workshop content and speakers need to be accessible and locally-relevant, there seems to be ample potential for similar events to be delivered.

While this project was aimed at commercial dog walkers, the interest shown suggests that a pilot event or other engagement with wider sectors of the canine care industry (e.g. dog trainers, groomers, vet nurses etc.) could well be helpful to explore. These people could also be inspired and supported to become advocates for responsible access taking by their clients.

7.8 Kennel Club Commercial Dog Walkers Accreditation Scheme

The success of these events, the demographic data obtained, and the enthusiasm of commercial dog walkers for accreditation, was a significant factor in prompting the Kennel Club to establish a UK-wide accreditation scheme for commercial dog walkers, formally announced at Crufts dog show in March 2014. At the time of writing, this is to be developed and piloted in 2014, with full implementation in the second half of 2015.

The commercial dog walker events also provided support for the Kennel Club in its successful efforts to ensure access to land was included in the UK National Occupational Standard for providing dog walking services published by Lantra in January 2014 – Appendix 3 (Section 12).

The aims of the Kennel Club Commercial Dog Walkers accreditation scheme include:

- Delivering accreditation for commercial dog walkers within its existing suite of City and Guilds certified continuing personal development scheme for other dog related services;
- Compliance with a code of practice for access taking, to be drawn up with UK land management partners and local councils (including at the time of writing: Scottish Land and Estates; Forestry Commission Scotland);
- Complementing existing accreditation schemes that at least meet its entry-level standards, by allowing their affiliation to the Kennel Club scheme;
- Incrementally adding value and raising standards for commercial dog walkers within the scheme;
- Providing an independent complaints and investigation process that is separate to individuals and organisations delivering dog walking services;
- Embedding the canine welfare in all aspects of the accreditation scheme;
- Providing an off-the-shelf means for private and public sector land managers to accredit and influence commercial dog walkers, without having to set up and manage their own schemes;
- Recognising and accommodating the fact that many commercial dog walkers also provide other canine-related services that are already accredited by the Kennel Club, meaning that membership of one nationally-recognised umbrella scheme can cover a wide range of their services;
- Preventing any intentional or inadvertent restriction of trade that could otherwise occur through schemes administered by those with a potential financial interest in limiting the number of accredited businesses;
- Supporting and developing commercial dog walkers as ambassadors for responsible dog ownership and access taking.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Engagement of Commercial Dog Walkers:** It is recommended that similar events are used by access authorities and any other land manager to engage with commercial dog walkers, in a way that inherently optimises the potential for commercial dog walkers to become advocates for increasing responsible access taking with their peers and clients.
2. **Event content and promotion:** Such events need to be expressly promoted and delivered to primarily engage with the personal interests and motivations of commercial dog walkers, while inherently promoting responsible access taking. This may be challenging to some access staff and land managers, but it is essential to ensure positive engagement from the start.
3. **Integrated working and liaison:** The need for liaison between access and environmental health teams must be emphasised, along with the need for such initiatives to be integrated into strategic planning and management of where dog walkers go and what they do. The issues of displacement due to localised dog bans or on-lead restrictions, requires access adjacent authorities and local access forums to proactively seek consultation and engagement in any such proposals.
4. **Scottish Outdoor Access Code messages:** The difficulties many commercial dog walkers expressed in knowing what the Code meant locally, regarding where they could go and what they could do needs to be considered in any future reviews of Scottish Outdoor Access Code content and promotion. In particular, behaviour if chased by cattle needs specific consideration (given safety implications for dog owners and liability issues for farmers), as does how best to communicate what the national principles about ground-nesting birds in the Code means about access-taking and lead use at a local level in specific areas.
5. **Guidance to access authorities:** Irrespective of whether further events are delivered, it would be helpful for Scottish Natural Heritage to publish guidance for access authorities to help them better engage with commercial dog walkers, based on the new data obtained in this and any subsequent events. This would foster a more constructive approach that makes commercial dog walkers part of the solution as much as part of the problem of irresponsible access taking.
6. **Payments to landowners:** While the Scottish Outdoor Access Code gives a right of responsible access to most land and inland water, section 4.1.5 of this report highlights how payments to landowners by commercial dog walkers can be both lawful and mutually beneficial. However, there is the potential for this to be misunderstood or abused, so clear Scottish Natural Heritage-endorsed guidance should be produced for land managers, access authorities and commercial dog walkers, to clarify how this can be done to reduce conflict and avoid contravening access legislation.
7. **Other canine care professionals:** Given the latent enthusiasm from commercial dog walkers, consideration should be given to better engagement with other professionals in the dog care sector, to assess their potential to similarly become advocates for responsible dog walking and the best way to achieve this.
8. **National accreditation schemes:** Scottish Natural Heritage should seek to support and influence national accreditation schemes for commercial dog walkers, such as the one proposed by the Kennel Club, as a partnership approach to delivering its powers and duties in relation to the Scottish Outdoor Access Code and the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

9 APPENDIX 1: PRE-EVENT SURVEY RESULTS

9.1 Understanding of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code

<i>First of all, please tell us how much you agree with each of the following statements:</i>						
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	Sample size
<i>I have a clear understanding of where I can go and what I can do when out dog walking</i>	24%	<u>63%</u>	8%	0%	5%	59
<i>I have a clear understanding of where and when I should use a short lead to avoid disturbing wildlife</i>	33%	<u>52%</u>	12%	2%	2%	60

<i>In Scotland you have a right to walk across most land provided you do so responsibly. In your opinion, what does this mean for dog walkers?</i>						
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	Sample size
<i>Don't go into fields containing young animals like calves and lambs</i>	<u>86%</u>	12%	1%	0%	1%	78
<i>Only walk through a field of fruit or vegetables if there's a clear path to follow</i>	<u>45%</u>	36%	12%	4%	4%	78
<i>It's easy to know where you can go, and what you can do, when out dog walking</i>	20%	<u>42%</u>	20%	7%	12%	76
<i>If you are chased by cows, release your dog(s) and get to safety separately</i>	<u>40%</u>	29%	14%	5%	12%	77
<i>Keep dogs on a short lead or close at heel in fields containing farm animals</i>	<u>75%</u>	20%	3%	3%	0%	79
<i>Between April and July, prevent dogs from disturbing birds that nest on the ground</i>	<u>71%</u>	23%	1%	0%	4%	77
<i>You can exercise dogs off-lead on sports pitches when they are not in use</i>	20%	<u>34%</u>	26%	7%	13%	76

Note:

Sample size = number of responses to this question

'_' = most frequent response

9.2 When started dog walking business

	Mean	Min	Max	Sample size
<i>In what year did you start walking other people's dogs as a business?</i>	2010	1999	2014	74

9.3 Numbers of dogs walked

<i>On average, how often do you walk one or more dogs for clients? (Sample size = 77)</i>						
More than once a day	Once a day	4 to 6 times per week	1 to 3 times per week	A few times per month	Less than a few times per month	I'm not walking clients' dogs at present
58%	13%	<u>11%</u>	9%	0%	0%	9%

	Mean	Min	Max	Sample size
<i>On those walks, on average how many clients' dogs do you have with you? (dogs)</i>	4.0	1	6	69
<i>On average, how long do your walks for clients' dogs last? (minutes)</i>	57.5	30	90	69
<i>What is the maximum number of clients' dogs you would walk at any one time?</i>	5.2	2	10	71
<i>On average, how many hours per week do you spend walking clients' dogs?</i>	16	4	50	68
<i>How many different dogs do you walk for clients in an average week?</i>	10.6	0	25	65

9.4 Travel to dog walk times

	Always	Mostly	Occasionally	Never	Sample size
<i>Do you walk clients' dog from their homes, rather than transporting them in a van or car?</i>	4%	13%	<u>66%</u>	17%	70

	Mean	Min	Max	Sample size
<i>What's the average time you spend driving clients' dogs to where you walk them? (minutes)</i>	19.2	5	90	65
<i>What's the longest journey time you would spend driving clients' dogs to where you walk them?</i>	26.0	5	90	65

9.5 Use of other employees

	Mean	Min	Max	Sample size
<i>How many other people does your dog walking business use other than yourself to walk clients' dogs?</i>	1.7	1	3	7

9.6 Areas where dogs walked

<i>How often do you currently walk clients' dogs in the following places?</i>				
	Often	Sometimes	Never	Sample size
<i>A park in a village, town or city</i>	33%	<u>43%</u>	24%	70
<i>Seashore</i>	20%	29%	<u>52%</u>	66
<i>River bank or canal towpath</i>	19%	33%	<u>49%</u>	70
<i>Woodland</i>	<u>58%</u>	27%	15%	73
<i>Fields grazed by farm animals or horses</i>	5%	12%	<u>83%</u>	66
<i>Sports or playing fields, when not in use</i>	6%	35%	<u>59%</u>	49
<i>Fields where crops are grown</i>	3%	20%	<u>77%</u>	66
<i>Nature reserve</i>	2%	29%	<u>70%</u>	66
<i>Land that I own or rent</i>	15%	5%	<u>80%</u>	65
<i>Open hillside or moorland</i>	20%	<u>48%</u>	32%	69

9.7 Availability of access and off-lead exercise

How much do you agree with the following statements?						
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	Sample size
<i>It's easy to find safe places to exercise clients' dogs</i>	<u>24%</u>	6%	<u>24%</u>	5%	0%	74
<i>I would pay for easy access to safe areas where other dog walkers don't go</i>	28%	<u>30%</u>	27%	3%	12%	74
<i>There are fewer places to walk dogs than 10 years ago</i>	23%	15%	<u>43%</u>	1%	19%	75
<i>I avoid places where there are cows or sheep</i>	<u>73%</u>	25%	0%	1%	0%	75
<i>I will exercise clients' dogs off-lead if they have a good recall</i>	<u>57%</u>	35%	5%	1%	1%	75

	All of them	Most of them	Half of them	A few of them	None of them	Don't know	Sample size
<i>How many of your clients would prefer their dogs to be exercised off-lead for some of the time when you walk them?</i>	26%	<u>49%</u>	10%	5%	7%	3%	73

9.8 Fouling of land

<i>In what areas do you pick up the poo of clients' dogs?</i>					
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Don't walk there	Sample size
<i>Path surfaces</i>	95%	<u>0%</u>	0%	5%	73
<i>Rough grass at the side of a path</i>	<u>92%</u>	5%	0%	3%	75
<i>A park in a village, town or city</i>	<u>85%</u>	0%	0%	15%	75
<i>Seashore</i>	<u>51%</u>	4%	0%	45%	74
<i>River bank or canal towpath</i>	<u>62%</u>	3%	0%	35%	74
<i>Woodland</i>	<u>59%</u>	28%	3%	9%	74
<i>Fields grazed by farm animals or horses</i>	29%	1%	0%	<u>69%</u>	75
<i>Sports or playing fields, when not in use</i>	<u>54%</u>	0%	0%	46%	54
<i>Fields where crops are grown</i>	29%	4%	1%	<u>65%</u>	75
<i>Nature reserve</i>	41%	0%	0%	<u>59%</u>	74
<i>Land that I own or rent</i>	25%	4%	3%	<u>68%</u>	73
<i>Open hillside or moorland</i>	<u>44%</u>	21%	4%	31%	75

9.9 Accreditation schemes

As you may know, there are accreditation schemes for commercial dog walkers in some parts of Scotland. These schemes aim to support responsible businesses and reduce problems for other people, such as fouling and out of control dogs.

How much do you agree with each of the following statements about accreditation schemes?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	Sample size
<i>They should only be voluntary</i>	23%	<u>26%</u>	23%	7%	16%	73
<i>I'm concerned they would cost my business too much to join</i>	23%	<u>36%</u>	23%	4%	14%	73
<i>A waste of time and no benefit to me</i>	3%	25%	<u>44%</u>	18%	10%	72
<i>They help dog owners know who the reputable companies are</i>	<u>50%</u>	38%	4%	3%	5%	76
<i>I think accreditation would be a good selling point for my business</i>	<u>49%</u>	34%	5%	3%	8%	73

	Yes	No	Sample size
Are you involved in an accreditation scheme for commercial dog walkers?	12%	<u>88%</u>	73
Accreditation schemes cited:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Association of Pet Sitters: 3 respondents (4%) • Association of Professional Dog Walkers: 1 respondent (1%) 			

10 APPENDIX 2: POST-EVENT SURVEY RESULTS

10.1 Changes in awareness of Scottish Outdoor Access Code

<i>First of all, please tell us how much you agree with each of the following statements:</i>						
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	Sample size
<i>I know more about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code than I did before this event</i>	32%	<u>39%</u>	19%	5%	5%	59
<i>The Scottish Outdoor Access Code helps me know where I can go and what I can do</i>	<u>49%</u>	46%	5%	0%	0%	59
<i>As a result of the event, I am more likely to look at the Scottish Outdoor Access Code website at www.outdooraccess-scotland.com</i>	33%	<u>45%</u>	16%	2%	5%	58
<i>I am now more likely to advise my clients about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code</i>	33%	<u>45%</u>	14%	2%	7%	58
<i>I am now better able to advise my clients how to be a responsible dog walker</i>	<u>42%</u>	<u>42%</u>	14%	0%	2%	59
<i>The advice in the Code helps me to be a responsible dog walker.</i>	<u>50%</u>	41%	5%	2%	2%	58
<i>I didn't know about the Scottish Outdoor Access Code until this event</i>	5%	7%	<u>60%</u>	24%	3%	58

Note:

Sample size = number of responses to this question

'_' = most frequent response

10.2 Accreditation schemes – post-event

	Agree	Disagree	Not sure	Sample size
<i>They should only be voluntary</i>	<u>52%</u>	36%	13%	57
<i>I'm concerned they would cost my business too much to join</i>	35%	<u>56%</u>	9%	57
<i>A waste of time and no benefit to me</i>	4%	<u>82%</u>	14%	57
<i>They help dog owners know who the reputable companies are</i>	<u>82%</u>	5%	12%	57
<i>I think accreditation would be a good selling point for my business</i>	<u>84%</u>	5%	11%	57
<i>They are best run by the local council</i>	<u>47%</u>	19%	33%	57
<i>I would like my local council to set one up</i>	<u>54%</u>	14%	32%	57
<i>They would work better if run by a body representing commercial dog walkers</i>	<u>39%</u>	19%	42%	57

	Yes – and I would like to be involved in making it happen	Yes – but I don't want to be involved in making it happen	Possibly	No	There is already a scheme in my area	Sample size
<i>Would you like to see an accreditation scheme in your area?</i>	<u>56%</u>	18%	18%	5%	4%	57

	Far too strict	A bit too strict	About right	Not quite strict enough	Far too easy to meet	Sample size
<i>Thinking about the requirements for joining the East Lothian scheme, would you say they are:</i>	0%	11%	<u>81%</u>	6%	2%	54

10.3 Perceptions of Green Dog Walker schemes

Now that you've been to the event, how do you feel about the Green Dog Walkers concept?						
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not sure	Sample size
<i>It's a good way to tackle the problem of dog fouling</i>	<u>53%</u>	42%	4%	0%	2%	57
<i>It is important for commercial dog walkers to get involved</i>	<u>55%</u>	38%	4%	0%	4%	56
<i>Such schemes would not work where I live</i>	2%	4%	<u>58%</u>	23%	14%	57
<i>Schemes like this help to show that most dog walkers are responsible</i>	44%	<u>46%</u>	4%	0%	7%	57

	Yes – and I would like to be involved in making it happen	Yes – but I don't want to be involved in making it happen	Possibly	No	There is already a scheme in my area	Sample size
Would you like to see a Green Dog Walker scheme in your area?	<u>44%</u>	19%	16%	4%	18%	57

10.4 Fouling of land

After the event, how more likely are you to pick up if your own or a client's dog poos in the following places?					
	More likely	Less likely	No difference	Always picked up there anyway	Sample size
<i>Rough grass at the side of a path</i>	11%	0%	5%	<u>84%</u>	57
<i>River bank or canal towpath</i>	9%	0%	5%	<u>86%</u>	57
<i>Woodland</i>	23%	2%	16%	<u>60%</u>	57
<i>Fields grazed by farm animals</i>	16%	0%	11%	<u>74%</u>	57
<i>Open hillside or moorland</i>	35%	0%	12%	<u>53%</u>	57

11 APPENDIX 3: LANTRA NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARD FOR DOG WALKING SERVICES

LANAnC72

Provide dog-walking services



Overview

This standard covers the provision of dog-walking services. It includes the agreement of services with the customer, selection and use of handling equipment, interaction with the dog, safe and responsible dog walking and the maintenance of records.

You will be expected to work in accordance with relevant National legislation and local policies relating to dogs and the exercising of dogs. You will be expected to develop and maintain a suitable level of skills, knowledge and experience to deliver a professional service.

This standard is for those providing dog-walking services, as well as those providing exercise as part of other pet care services including home-boarding, pet/home sitting, and day boarding.

Users of the standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up-to-date information and policies, and that they are working within the limits of their authority, expertise, training, competence and experience.

This standard is for anyone who provides dog-walking services.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 *maintain your own professional conduct and ethics and work within the limits of your own authority, expertise, training, competence and experience*
- P2 *comply with relevant animal health and welfare and other National legislation, local policies and codes of practice regarding the walking of dogs at all times*
- P3 *carry out all work in accordance with relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements, codes of practice and business policies*
- P4 *find out and record sufficient **information about the animal** prior to undertaking dog-walking services*
- P5 *agree the service to be provided and the exercise requirements of the dog with the customer*
- P6 *ensure informed consent to carry out dog-walking services is obtained from the customer and recorded*
- P7 *assess the dog's suitability against the customer's requirements in advance and on the day of the walk*
- P8 *assess the **suitability of dogs to be walked together**, if walking more than one dog*
- P9 *prepare the dog appropriately for the planned walk*
- P10 *select and prepare the resources necessary for the planned walk*

- P11 transport the dog safely and in an appropriate manner in accordance with relevant legislation*
- P12 if relevant, follow the handling and training programme provided and use the appropriate methods and resources*
- P13 approach all interactions with the dog in a manner that promotes safety, enjoyment and the interests of others and avoids behaviour giving rise to welfare concern*
- P14 handle the dog correctly throughout the walk in a way that does not compromise the dog's health and welfare*
- P15 monitor the mental and physical condition of the dog during the walk and take appropriate action*
- P16 report if the dog's behaviour indicates that the exercise may be unsuitable*
- P17 complete relevant paperwork and records*

Knowledge and understanding
You need to know and understand:

- K1 your professional and ethical responsibilities and the limits of your own authority, expertise, training, competence and experience
- K2 your responsibilities under relevant animal health and welfare and other National legislation, local policies and codes of practice regarding the walking of dogs
- K3 your responsibilities under relevant environmental and health and safety legislation, codes of practice and business policies
- K4 the importance of carrying out a risk assessment as a lone worker and recognising own limitations
- K5 your legal and professional liability when providing a dog-walking service and the importance of appropriate insurance cover
- K6 the need for and importance of disclosure checks
- K7 the information that should be obtained from the customer prior to agreeing to provide dog-walking services
- K8 the importance of agreeing and recording the details of the service you will be providing, and the cost, with the customer
- K9 how to assess the suitability of the dog for the planned walk
- K10 how to assess the suitability of dogs to be walked together if walking more than one dog
- K11 how to assess the suitability of the environment for the planned walk including **access to land**
- K12 the range of equipment available for the handling and exercise of dogs and how to fit and use it correctly
- K13 how to prepare dogs for exercise and how this will differ according to

the dog, the environment and the planned walk

- K14 correct ways of handling the dog concerned for the safety of the dog, self and others
- K15 how to ensure that the dog's welfare is maintained throughout and that your behaviour does not cause adverse reactions
- K16 how to transport dogs safely and securely to and from the place of exercise
- K17 how exercise will impact on animal welfare
- K18 the importance of clearing up and disposing of dog waste, legislation relating to this and methods of doing so
- K19 signs that indicate the mental condition and physical behaviour for the breed of dog
- K20 the importance of assessing animal behaviour and the condition of the animal before, during and after exercise, and suitable action to take
- K21 how to administer first aid to dogs
- K22 when it is appropriate to seek veterinary attention
- K23 the signs that indicate that the exercise may be unsuitable for the animal concerned
- K24 why it is important to regularly review and discuss progress with the customer
- K25 methods of maintaining hygiene and bio-security and the reasons why these are important
- K26 the importance of maintaining the safety and security of the property if collecting a dog from a customer's premises
- K27 appropriate records to be kept, the importance of confidentiality and the requirements of the Data Protection Act

Scope/range

Information about the animal could include:

- 1 breed
- 2 handling and exercise requirements
- 3 training requirements and the appropriate method to be used
- 4 health status
- 5 current vaccination status
- 6 who the current veterinary surgeon is and relevant veterinary history
- 7 existing treatment and medication, including prophylaxis

- 8 gender and sexual status
- 9 identification of animal, e.g. microchip
- 10 interaction with other dogs
- 11 interaction with people
- 12 transportation requirements
- 13 emergency arrangements
- 14 any special requirements or restrictions

Suitability of dogs to be walked together:

- 15 size
- 16 breed
- 17 temperament
- 18 behaviour
- 19 exercise requirements

Access to land:

- 20 National and local access rights and responsibilities
- 21 access by permission or payment
- 22 land management practices including: grazing, forestry, harvesting, spraying
- 23 amenity green space management
- 24 sensitive times for wildlife and livestock
- 25 impact on other users e.g. walkers, horse riders, cyclists
- 26 farming and other economic activity occurring on the land

Transport dogs safely and securely:

- 27 method
- 28 restraint
- 29 separation if transporting multiple dogs
- 30 hygiene and bio-security
- 31 ventilation and heat control

Glossary**Current animal welfare legislation:**

- England and Wales, Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Scotland, Animal Health and Welfare Act 2006
- Northern Ireland, Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

Current legislation regarding access to land:

- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (England and Wales)
- Highways Act 1980 (England and Wales)
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (England and Wales)
- Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003

Developed by	Lantra
Version number	1
Date Approved	January 2014
Indicative review date	January 2019
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating organisation	Lantra
Original URN	LANAnC72
Relevant occupations	Pet Care Services
Suite	Animal Care and Welfare
Keywords	dog; walking, access to land