

Carlton Cricket Club 2021

Non-Playing Membership – Dog-Walking Frequently-Asked Questions



Please read in conjunction with the Non-Playing Membership FAQ which provides general information about the club. In this document, we answer many of the questions asked about dog-walking membership of Carlton Cricket Club. If something isn't covered, please contact the Membership Secretary.

Club members may exercise their dogs (responsibly!) on payment of the appropriate fee. But why do we allow dogs on the cricket ground? And what exactly do we mean by "responsible"?

Membership can be withdrawn if the advice included here is not followed.

Why is there a higher charge for dog-walking ?

Dog-walking members are our most frequent users of the ground and, apart from cricketers (who pay significantly more) gain most from their membership, thus justifying a higher annual fee.

Do I pay more if I have two dogs ?

A few members have more than one dog but we don't charge a higher amount. If a member was to turn-up with Grange Loan's version of "101 Dalmatians", we might have to reconsider.....

Dogs must be kept under reasonable control whilst on the ground, so please :

- don't allow your dog to harass other members (human or canine) – keep your dog on a lead if it is going to cause problems for other users of the ground or for our groundstaff
 - keep your dog away from cricketers, cricket equipment or cricket balls
 - keep your dog off the square (see the "Where Can I Walk My Dog" section)
 - don't allow your dog to dig holes in the ground or otherwise cause damage
 - if you cannot keep up with your dog and keep it under control - Keep it on a Lead
 - if required, use a long or extendable lead to allow your dog more freedom, but still remain under your control
 - walking around with your mobile phone glued to your ear whilst not paying attention to what your dog is doing does not constitute responsible dog-walking
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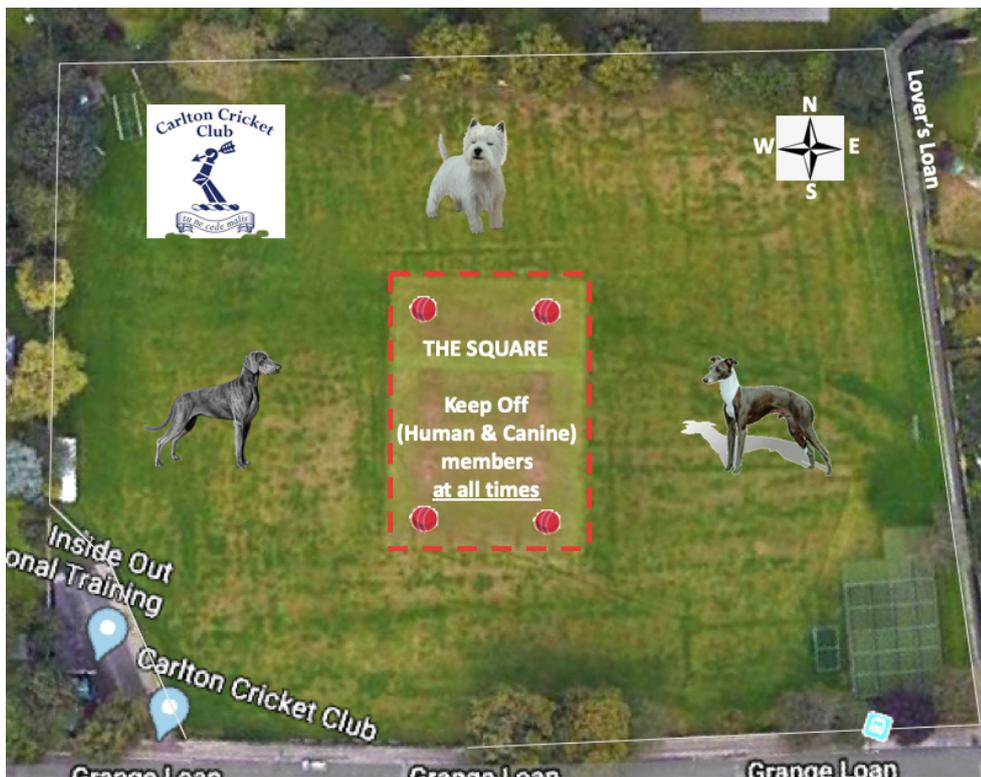
Clearing-up after your dog :

We rely on the diligence of our dog-walking members clearing-up after their dogs :

- it is your responsibility to clean-up after your dog anywhere on the ground (the playing field or its surroundings) at all times. Be particularly vigilant when it's dark and you might not spot where your dog has been – keep your dog on a lead if you can't see where it is
 - a bin is provided for disposal of dog-waste (to your left as you enter the ground). Do not dispose anywhere else such as other bins or buckets or throw into the hedges or into our neighbours' gardens - Disgusting!
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Where can I walk my dog ?

Dogs should be kept clear of areas being used for cricket training and outside the boundary when matches are in progress. It is important that dogs are kept off the “square” in the middle of the ground at all times (see image below – “square” is a specific, technical cricket term: actually, it’s a rectangle, but that’s being pedantic). This carefully-tended area is the most important part of the ground for the club’s cricketing activities – so we appreciate our members and their dogs keeping off this area - even during the off-season when this area is particularly susceptible to damage. The edges of the square will be marked after remedial work is concluded in the Autumn and until pre-season preparatory work begins in Spring. An explanation of why this area should be avoided is included as an appendix.



Don't let your dog dig holes :



Dogs digging holes in the outfield is a danger to our cricketers. It is exasperating for our volunteer groundstaff to repair holes only for them to be re-excavated.

- from “The Laws of Cricket” MCC :
2.7.2 Conditions shall be regarded as dangerous if there is actual and foreseeable risk to the safety of any player or umpire

Holes are also dangerous for other members users of the ground, particularly those using the ground in darkness. Do not allow your dog to wander off unsupervised to damage the turf when you're not looking.

To avoid damage to machinery :

- *please remove sticks, balls and toys from the ground – dogs love them but grass-cutting machinery doesn't*
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When cricketers are using the ground, please keep yourself and your dog out of their way :

The ground is open to dog-walking members, almost all of the time. During the cricket season - normally between April and early September – there are dog-walking restrictions when certain cricketing activities are underway. All cricket activities weather-permitting !

Restrictions are necessary to allow the club's dog-walking fraternity and our cricketers fair - and safe - use of the ground :

- *cricket balls are hard – they can be dangerous projectiles :*
 - *being distracted by dogs puts cricketers at risk*
 - *dogs are at risk of being injured by cricket balls*
- *we've had dogs ruining brand-new cricket balls (they're not cheap), dogs urinating on cricketers' bags / cricket equipment, dogs interrupting matches and training sessions.....*

1. During Matches - Restricted Access :

- *dogs can be walked on a lead outside the marked boundary when matches are in progress:*
 - *during the season, most Saturday and Sunday afternoons (normally 12 noon or 1 pm start, usually scheduled to finish by 7 pm / 8 pm)*
 - *a small number of senior matches on weekdays use the whole ground starting at 6 pm*
 - *midweek junior matches normally use a smaller outfield, leaving room for responsible dog-walking*

2. Junior Training Sessions – No Dogs Please

- a) *Under 12 Practice Nights : 5.30 pm until 8.45 pm, usually Wednesdays*
 - *occasionally switched to Mondays (which will be posted on the Notice Board)*
 - *only during the cricket season (mid-April to end August)*
 - *usually busy, noisy evenings where most of the ground is in-use and best avoided by dog-walkers or other members interested in preserving their hearing*
- b) *All-Stars Cricket Sessions*
 - *introducing cricket to 5 to 8 year old children*
 - *typically an hour in length, 10 am to 11 am Sunday mornings or as posted on the Notice Board*
 - *we are keen to ensure that our youngest cricketers are introduced to cricket in a safe environment without distractions, so please avoid dog-walking during these short sessions.*

3. Senior Training Sessions – Keep Clear Please !

Training sessions normally use specific sections of the ground. Please stick to the areas not being used and put your dog on a lead if he/she is likely to stray into the area being used by cricketers

Other situations to watch-out for :

Grass cutting :

Please avoid obstructing the cutting of the outfield. It is cut in a carefully planned manner in order to produce an attractive pattern, ensure all areas are cut, minimise time and save fuel.

Weed-Spraying :

On rare occasions, the ground is sprayed for weeds. A sign will be posted indicating the short period when the ground will be closed to dog-walkers for health reasons.

We also run occasional barbecue functions on a few evenings during the season when we would discourage dogs from visiting – too much temptation for some of our greedier canine members !

If you have any additional questions, please contact :

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Appendix: Keeping Off The Square :

Why is the “square” so important? Why should dogs (and people) stay clear ? Why isn’t it fenced-off if it is so important ?

Imagine a cricket match is taking place and you’re batting. A 6 foot 5 inch fast bowler is sprinting towards you, hurling a hard ball in your direction from 20 yards away at over 80 mph. The ball bounces a few yards in front of you.

If the surface is uneven, the ball might bounce in an unexpected way - scuttling along the ground into the stumps you’re supposed to be defending or, even worse, rearing-up towards your chest or head.

This is why our ground-staff take great care to prepare wickets that provide a predictable bounce. Their time and effort is considerable - seeding, fertilising, top-dressing, cutting, rolling, scarifying....hours of toil. Their aim is to produce a solid, predictable playing surface ensuring a fair contest between batsmen and bowlers and - crucially - safe. Indeed, umpires are required to judge the quality of wickets and can abandon matches if they consider conditions to be dangerous.

Damage to the grass on the square from a cricketer slipping or a dog’s claws has to be repaired by our groundstaff - reseeding, filling and rolling. Even when the grass has grown through, the repaired area might look ok, but won't be as firm as the surrounding area. The aforementioned 80+ mph delivery might still keep low or rear-up dangerously.

The request to stay off the square applies during the cricket season, but it’s also important over the close season when the square will be softer and more easily damaged. In September, post-season remedial work is undertaken on the square - spiking, reseeding then top-dressing with new soil. Following this process, the square is particularly vulnerable. It will be unusually soft and has to be left undisturbed for the grass to germinate before winter to produce the binding root-growth needed to produce good playing conditions in the following season.

If the square is so vulnerable, why don’t we take greater steps to protect it ? A fair question. Several years ago, the square was fenced-off at the end of the cricket season. A few autumnal gales later, the fence was torn to shreds. We haven’t come up with a workable solution. Fencing during the season, during pre-season preparation (from as early as February) or post-season maintenance would interfere with the groundstaff’s work - and still might not stop our more agile canine members.

If you think dog-walkers are singled-out, this is far from being the case. Woe betide any cricketer seen by the groundstaff treading on the square unless a match is in progress - no-one would dare drag a cricket bag across the square. Carefully walking onto the square to retrieve a stray practice-ball is tolerated (but only just !).

So “Please Keep Off The Square” -make it a habit for you and your dog to only use the rest of the ground - there’s plenty of room.