



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

Bedfont Lakes Country Park

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Cranford Country Park

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Hounslow Heath

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Nature Leaflet

Dogs



Dogs

Did you know?

- There are around 6.8 million dogs in the UK.
- The UK dog population produces an estimated 900 tonnes of faeces every day...
- 900 tonnes is the same weight as the Glazed Control Room at Heathrow Airport which is 27 metres tall.



Dog fouling

Dog owners who fail to clear up their dog/s faeces can be fined under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996. Fines range from £40 - £1000. This covers land that is open to the air, and to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access (with or without payment).

Most importantly, if not cleared up, dog faeces can pose a significant health risk to humans, particularly young children as their immune systems are not fully developed. Children are also more likely to come into contact with soil or sand that contains dog faeces whilst playing in parks, gardens and playgrounds. All faeces contain bacteria that can cause stomach upsets, but the greatest risk is from toxocarasis.

Toxocarasis is an infection of the roundworm *Toxocara canis*. It can affect humans in three ways;

- Covert toxocarasis - This form of the condition is by far the most common. It has mild symptoms or may have no symptoms at all.
- Visceral larva migrans - It can cause swelling of the body's organs or central nervous system (the brain, spinal cord and the nerves connected to it).
- Ocular larva migrans - This form of the condition occurs when a *Toxocara* worm enters an eye. It can cause reduced vision, and in some cases blindness, in the affected eye.

The severity of a toxocarasis infection depends on the number of worm eggs swallowed and the severity of the reaction to them.

Dog owners can reduce the risk of faeces-related diseases and keep the park an enjoyable, safe place by following these simple rules:

- Keep dogs on a lead in signed areas and under close control at all other times.
- Always pick up your dog's mess and dispose of it in a dog waste bin.
- Do not allow your dog to damage any park furniture or disturb wildlife.

