

Don't fence me in: Understanding local government decisions to allocate and fence public open space for dogs in Melbourne, Australia

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Abstract: This study examines the rationales of key actors in local government in making decisions about fencing public open spaces for dogs and builds an overarching understanding of how different councils allocate public open space for dogs. To create sustainable cities, urban planning as a profession must critically engage with management of other species, not just humans. Around 40% of households in Australia own a dog, yet dogs are a neglected subject in planning scholarship. Dogs have a private and public life, and a key aspect of their public life involves urban parkland. Twenty-eight key actors from eight councils in Melbourne and the Victorian government were interviewed during August-December, 2014. This study adopts a qualitative content analysis of these interview texts to identify the drivers of the decision-making process undertaken by these key actors in local government and examine the outcomes of that process.

Urban parkland is typically scarce in supply and deeply contested. Dogs are a controversial user of urban parkland and with their owners are often relegated to marginal urban spaces. The decision-making process and outcomes of local government, to fence or not to fence, illuminates the treatment of dogs and dog owners in planning and highlights some dilemmas and debates that urban planners face when planning for other species. Importantly, the practice of allocating and fencing open space for dogs is found to primarily focus on the interests of dog owners rather than dogs.

Keywords: Planning, dogs, open space, fencing, local government

Introduction: The urban dog in Australia

In planning the sustainable cities of tomorrow, planners increasingly need to accommodate the needs of other species (Tarsitano 2006). Australia has around 4.2 million dogs, making dogs the most popular pet by household with around 39% of households owning at least one dog (Richmond 2013). There is an emerging field of scholarship on dogs in public open space (Instone & Sweeney 2014). Faced with the challenges of an urbanising world, public open space in our cities becomes ever more valuable and deeply contested (Graham & Glover 2014). In Australia, local governments (councils) make decisions to shape how urban parkland is used by dogs and their owners through installing physical infrastructure such as fencing and through the formal allocation of particular uses to spaces in order to make as much use of public open space as possible whilst recognising the inherent conflicts between particular user groups (Instone & Mee 2011). Dogs are a particularly controversial user group, their inclusion and exclusion in urban decision-making raising questions of philosophy of whether we have an obligation to provide such amenity and whether that in turn reduces the freedoms of humans (Instone & Sweeney 2014).

Domestication is an action wholly initiated by humans for our own needs and ends (Coeckelbergh 2009; Howell 2012, pp.223-6; Messent & Serpell 1981; Morey 2010, p.67). This act makes us arguably responsible for addressing any animal needs resulting from our actions; however we have no rational basis to determine exactly what those needs are (Dawkins 1985, p.38). Nussbaum (2011, pp.157-8) introduces a "scale of concern" which connects humanism, animism and ecocentrism (a 'human-animal spectrum'), feasibly allowing us to consider capabilities of other species as being of importance to humans. There are widely varying philosophies of the animal and of justice for animals (Calarco 2008; Nussbaum 2006; Rawls 1999; Sen 2009). One popular philosophy links the access to justice to the ability to suffer (Bentham 2004, pp.310-1) with the nature of such justice contingent on fairness of process and the substantive opportunity for capabilities to flourish through human agency (the 'capabilities approach' of Sen (2009, p.296)). In this way, we draw correspondence between the obligations on humans arising from the act of domestication and the obligations on humans to provide substantive freedoms to dogs living in the city.

Allocating public open space in favour of dogs benefits both dogs and humans. Dogs have a "social lubricant" effect where the length of conversations between strangers in public increases significantly when a dog is present (Messant 1983), with dogs both expanding and defining social networks

(Bueker 2013; Laurier, Maze & Lundin 2006). The benefits of this kind of interaction make a community more close-knit as acquaintances transition from the public to private realm (Jacobs 1989, pp.63-4). Dog parks, being parks which are primarily intended for use by dogs and their owners, provide an incubator for these kinds of social interaction (Tissot 2011) and have attracted contemporary attention primarily in their role as a human social construction (Graham & Glover 2014; Jackson 2012; Matisoff & Noonan 2012) with a number of supporting case studies from the U.S. (Lee, Shepley & Huang 2009; Tissot 2011; Urbanik & Morgan 2013).

To set aside public space for dogs is to potentially exclude others, so the challenge for councils is both delicate and complex in how to include dogs and their owners in public open space whilst not unreasonably reducing the freedoms of others (Instone & Sweeney 2014). Fencing is one such approach taken by councils to manage this conflict between dogs and humans (Matisoff & Noonan 2012). Fencing promotes both inclusion and exclusion, where it can be interpreted as privatising public space (Madanipour 1999) and symbolic of underlying social problems (Trouille 2014). Fencing for dogs is seen as important by dog owners to improve the safety and amenity of the public open space (McCormack *et al.* 2010). Furthermore, the scheduling of conflicting activities at different times is a potentially viable alternative to fencing (Krohe Jr 2005). The dog park paradoxically improves the physical and social freedoms of dog owners despite apparently excluding others in the community (Graham & Glover 2014). Importantly, avoidance is distinct from exclusion however this distinction is shown to blur in practice. Fencing for dogs proves no exception to the controversies and debates with other motivations for fencing urban public open spaces.

The formal constructs of allocation and fencing are two of the primary tools available to help councils mitigate the conflict between dogs and humans. Through the voices of their planners and animal management officers, this paper examines how eight metropolitan councils in Melbourne make decisions to include or exclude dogs from public open space through allocation and fencing, providing insight into how councils treat dogs when planning the human habitat of cities. This study contributes to the critical and present need for more research on the subject of dogs and cities (Gaunet, Pari-Perrin & Bernardin 2014). Moreover, through its critical anthropocentric lens, this study contributes to an understanding of how humans might 'animal' their urban habitat (Instone & Sweeney 2014), in doing so allowing us pause to think how our actions affect other species.

Methods

Dogs as an interest of study are not remarkable to any particular city. Melbourne, the capital of Victoria, Australia is a city under similar pressures of increasing urbanisation and contested land use experienced by other Australian cities and is therefore an instrumental case to observe how humans treat dogs in planning public open space ('instrumental' in the sense of Stake (2000, p.437)). Limiting the study to this single context allows a comparative case study of individual councils as units of analysis using a similar systems approach (Denk 2009; Denters & Mossberger 2006; Yin 2009, pp.46-60). The study examines the discourse of 28 interviewees – animal management officers, open space planners and urban planners – drawn from eight representative councils in Melbourne (shown in Figure 1) and from the Victorian state government.

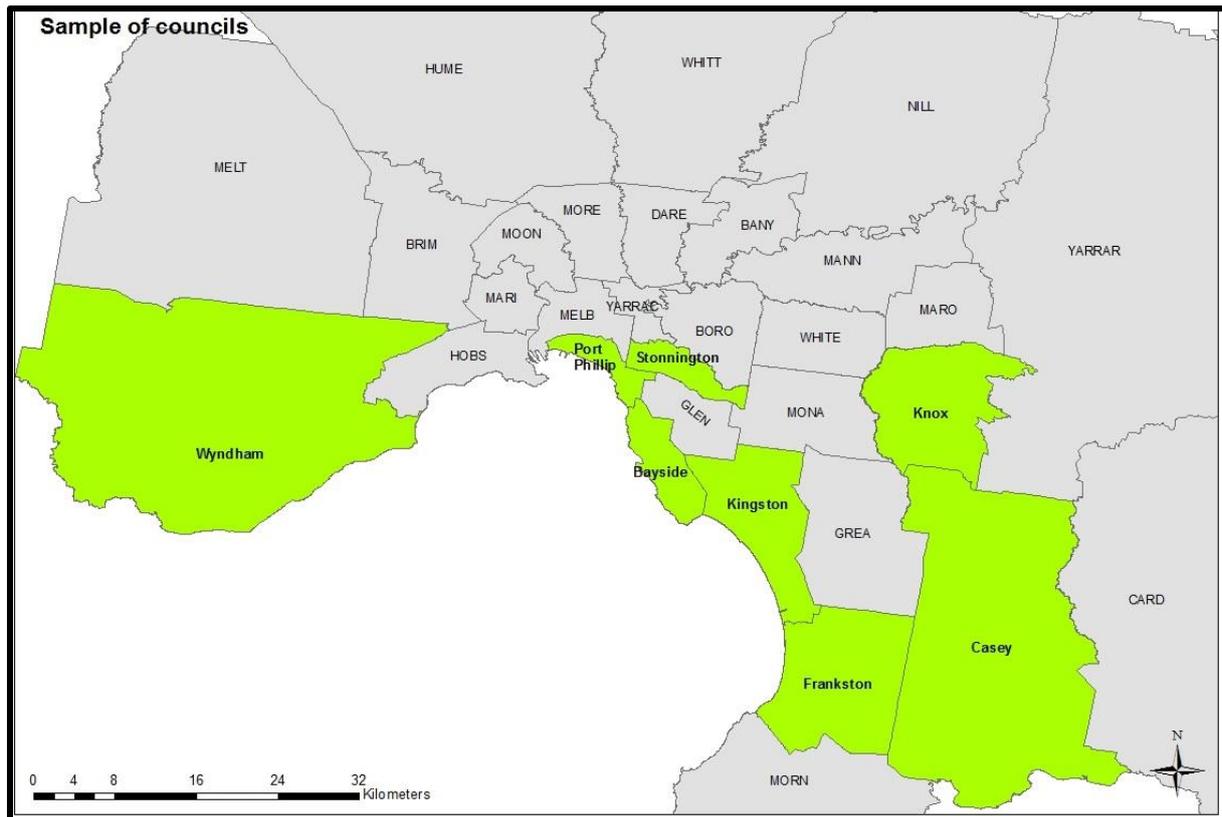


Figure 1: Eight representative councils (shown in green)
(map uses the cartographic data of ABS (2011))

An interpretative qualitative content analysis explores the core inquiry through the words of the interviewees and key council documents (including each council's *Domestic Animal Management Plan*) (Elo & Kyngäs 2008; Krippendorff 2004, p.89), adopting a completely open approach to grounding theory from data (Corbin & Strauss 2008, p.58). Individual accounts which speak of dogs individually or collectively are heavily impacted by anthropomorphism and lack consensus in the sense of Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2011, p.119). Karlsson (2012) argues that perhaps the best we can do is critically acknowledge the problem exists and act accordingly. We consider that the institutional traces of council through the voices of planners and animal management officers reflect the attentions of society toward planning for dogs in a credible, consistent and comparable way.

Findings and Discussion

Demand for public open space for dogs

We begin examining how public open space is planned for dogs by evaluating the demand for dog amenity in the public realm. All forms of walking, including dog walking, are typically the most popular uses of public open space throughout Melbourne (Bayside City Council 2010, pp.87-8; City of Port Phillip 2009, p.23; Knox City Council 2012, p.326). The shared use activity of dogs which walk with their owners in public open space demonstrates a legitimate need for basic consideration of dog owners when considering investment in public open space amenity. Accordingly, there was a broad consensus among interviewee accounts that provision of dog walking amenity is a basic need in the community. These accounts demonstrate that awareness of this need is growing in councils, particularly within dog parks, with dogs acting as “social lubricants” (Messent 1983):

“But they [dogs] are not the highest, but they’re sort of not forgotten. I think as I said before, we’ve changed our perspective on them [dog parks] because they are community meeting places and dog areas and dogs.” (Interviewee 20).

“This isn’t just about exercising our dogs, this is about social networking” (Interviewee 9).

“One of the other things from a couple of other councils that I’ve spoken to that have probably in the last five years introduced dog parks, they said that one of the other main benefits of introducing them is the social side for people. So you come back to your urban park providing for the human side, they have found that it’s been a huge factor on becoming quite a social gathering point for people with dogs, so they’ve seen a huge benefit in actually drawing people back into parks by providing dog areas for them. So they’ve seen that as a secondary benefit, but it’s almost outweighed the original reason for why they put them in” (Interviewee 16).

A dog park is an off-leash space with dogs and their owners as intended primary users. We assert that the appetite for dog parks and off-leash parks more generally has grown for the benefits they bring to humans, not any apparent benefits they might provide dogs. In other words, the actions of human agency are not always driven by the interests of dogs. This motivation begs the question of whether dog off-leash spaces and dog parks are required by dogs in the first place.

Dogs have innate needs which involve enrichment such as socialisation, play, exercise and mental stimulation. Defining these needs is subjective and suffers heavily from anthropomorphic generalisation. There is a pervading cultural entitlement in Australia that owning a dog is a right, even if the living conditions in urban areas are becoming increasingly more challenging for dog-keeping. Problems then surface as some dog owners feel entitled to make inappropriate demands of their community according to these accounts:

“With high rise and high density living, we’re not seeing a reduction in the ratio of dog ownership. So our culture hasn’t changed in what we want to own, but how we’re living is changing, the density is changing” (Interviewee 8).

“But part of the issue is we’ll have off-leash areas designated but people will still let their dogs run off-leash wherever they feel like it and then be quite upset when they’re told that that’s not... that’s not appropriate” (Interviewee 13).

Upon reflection, a number of accounts reflect a complex and manifold genesis of owner entitlement. On the one hand, dog owners feel they have a right to demand greater amenity for their dogs due to their compulsory annual dog registration fees. In contrast philosophically, there emerges a community belief that dogs have an innate need for dogs for off-leash spaces and dog parks. These arguments drive demand in the community for more dog amenity, with owners acting in apparent agency for their dogs. Importantly however, this human agency does not necessarily reflect any requirement for dogs to have access to such spaces to attain the dogs’ innate requirements for enrichment as in the following accounts:

“The good thing about it is that pedestrians and dogs are very similar. All they need is a footpath and dogs probably need less than that: as long as you have a leash, you can just walk around” (Interviewee 20).

“You don’t have to walk your dog off-lead in order for it to be exercised. There’s that perception out there that you can’t exercise your dog unless it’s off-leash. Well, that’s not true... It’s also about changing people’s mindset... it’s very difficult sometimes” (Interviewee 7).

“We have a lot of dogs that are of that type of breed that actually do need and require exercise and it’s an enrichment-type process where even just by simply walking it down the street on a lead is taking the dog out of its own environment and therefore is socialising it. Just by walking it down the street. It doesn’t need to meet anyone, it is being socialised. New smells, new movements, new colours, you name it. Whatever the case may be. Taking a dog off a lead in a specific area and throwing a Frisbee or a ball or whatever and once again getting that dog to interact with the environment, with other people, with other dogs, can only be of benefit” (Interviewee 2).

On the basis of these and other accounts, we argue that off-leash parks and dog parks are desirable mainly for the amenity which they bring to humans rather than servicing any innate need of domesticated dogs. Many dogs do enjoy the opportunities which off-leash parks and dog parks afford

them, but those environments do not necessarily service an innate need of dogs for that kind of activity. On the basis that humans are incapable of knowing the precise capabilities and needs of another species, we can infer that any planning for such parks is largely for the benefit of the human community, with the dogs benefiting indirectly by accompanying their owners to the parks. Any planning we do for dogs is ostensibly in agency for dogs.

Dog parks form part of the broader open space network of each council, alongside other kinds of park where dogs are often found as well. How these dog activities take place in harmony and in conflict with other legitimate uses and users of public open space are examined through the allocation and fencing of public open space for dogs.

Allocating public open space for dogs

Public open space is a deeply contested and scarce commodity in Melbourne. As one interviewee declared – “The park is there for people first” (Interviewee 15) – their call being echoed by others when allocating public open space for dogs. As another interviewee put it profoundly – “To what extent do you prioritise the needs of dogs over the needs of people?” (Interviewee 19) – then continuing by questioning whether it is acceptable for the council to be seen prioritising dogs over humans with the myriad of diverse issues urban planners must already consider. Open space planning appears openly anthropocentric; nevertheless councils acknowledge the legitimacy of dog walking as an activity they need to plan for. As dog activity becomes more exclusive and demanding of the public open space, it becomes less certain whether or not the legitimate need of earlier continues to exist. Interviewees used words like ‘luxury’ and ‘negative’ to describe allocating open space for dog owners and dogs to use in the following accounts:

“Sport’s a primary [use]; anything, whether its dogs or anything else, that affects sports in a negative way would be secondary” (Interviewee 13).

“Therein lies the theme, for 16% of the time, and we have that conversation with our leisure guys about how do we ensure those facilities are multi-use. And our leisure guys are very strong that they agree they should be multi-use; but when it’s being used for sport, it’s being used for sport” (Interviewee 15).

“I wouldn’t want to see a whole park fenced off for just dogs. We don’t have that luxury for having that space” (Interviewee 16).

Whereas councils may be reluctant to exclusively allocate certain open space for dogs and dog owners, they routinely give formal sports uses priority and exclusivity in the use of certain open space. This space is often well-located and is kept in good condition due to the investment council makes in maintenance and upkeep of the sports facilities. Good location clearly contributes to the amenity of public open space, leading to an examination of the location of ‘exclusive’ dog parks. Unlike sports facilities, these accounts show dog parks to be typically located on less desirable land with humans reserving more attractive spaces for anthropocentric uses:

“I think it was just a piece of land that was out near the road that was largely not really being used for anything else, they wanted to put a dog park somewhere, so that’s where they put it... you’d argue, an inappropriate piece of land” (Interviewee 21).

“I know of a couple of areas of very underutilised parks and very large underutilised parks that could be modified fairly easily to accommodate dog parks and quite a large dog park and I actually think that that would be a direction to head in” (Interviewee 16).

There are a number of justifications interviewees typically provided for locating dog uses in remote or undesirable locations, including beliefs that dogs cause excessive wear-and-tear and dog owners routinely leave dog litter in parks, and dog parks are reserved for use by dogs and their owners to the exclusion of others. Dogs and dog owners are heavily affected by generalisations and stereotypes of how they as a group behave, this affecting the limited amenity provided for their use.

The perception of exclusivity is particularly intriguing as it is the broader community’s choice to stay away rather than any regulation or rule that declares a space exclusively for the use by dog owners and their dogs as in this account:

“So then you come into discussions about ‘this isn’t just for dogs: people can go in there as well’. But it’s like, ‘Would you go into an area that was fenced off for dogs if you didn’t have a dog and you just wanted to hang around?’ Probably not” (Interviewee 9).

Further illustrating the urban anthropocentric norm, the interviewees revealed a surprising extent of community concern arising from the perceived exclusivity of dog parks relative to a lack of concern taken with the actual exclusivity of many formal sportsgrounds. Perplexingly, those exclusive sportsgrounds are often desirable spaces in both location and amenity in comparison to many dog parks. In other words, exclusivity is apparently acceptable to councils so long as it is humans who stand to benefit.

The community’s reactions in the case of the following small neighbourhood park reflect similar notions. The allocation of this particular underutilised space and the installation of a fence created unreasonable and sudden entitlement of the broader community to feel attached to a space they never had used before:

“Nobody used that park, nobody cared about it, nobody looked at it... the minute we put in [a fence so] that people could... dogs could go there... all these residents, who had never visited the park, became entitled about that park” (Interviewee 8).

The allocation and fencing of undesirable urban space appears a reluctant concession which acknowledges the legitimate demand by dog owners for spaces to recreate and bring their dogs.

Fencing public open space for dogs

Fencing is often used as a treatment to help manage potential conflicts of different activities in public open space. Fences formally demarcate activities in public open space; however there was controversy in these accounts over whether fences are an appropriate treatment for open space:

“It’s never the ideal. We try to keep everything fence-free” (Interviewee 4).

“As a broad picture I’d say that I’m not a fan of fencing and we shouldn’t install them for the confinement of dogs in off-leash area because then you’re limiting the usage of that space as well” (Interviewee 7).

“I don’t particularly mind it [fencing for dogs] if it means that... it needs to be enclosed anyway because of the playground. We normally enclose our playgrounds to stop little kids running off. So I don’t particularly have an issue with that” (Interviewee 20).

The attitudes interviewees expressed toward fencing of public open space for dogs provide insight into a council’s philosophy in providing amenity for dogs more broadly. We have classified these attitudes into three dualisms, being an inclusionary dualism, an accessibility dualism and a compliance dualism.

Inclusionary dualism

Fences simultaneously make open space more accessible and less accessible, allowing multiple activities to take place on a larger site but necessarily excluding other activities from taking place. In terms of exclusivity of space for dogs and dog owners, interviewees spoke of exclusivity in two ways as either removing amenity from humans (Interviewees 6 and 9) or adding amenity for dogs (Interviewees 8 and 20):

“There’s a definite need for dog parks, it serves a certain part of the community. And then there’s also that if an area of park is taken up for this particular use, what does that do to the rest of the park and how does that function?” (Interviewee 6).

“There are people who do not think there should be a dog park at *** because it alienates public open space. So if you’ve got a park that this big and you put a fence here that’s for dogs, that means for the rest of the community has to walk around that and it limits the amount of space” (Interviewee 9).

“What I think we need to do is assess our needs, because we have limited open space and there are competing needs, there still should be places where we can take an animal where there aren’t those competitions or dual uses” (Interviewee 8).

“Some areas we do have just leftover bits of land which are all enclosed. What we need to do is minimal infrastructure upgrades, put a fence on the end of it, and it becomes a dog off-leash area. So that’s one type of space we’ve created” (Interviewee 20).

On the other hand, in terms of inclusivity and sharing of open space, the dialogue is much more positive overall. Curiously, even if the role of fencing is to separate different uses, such treatments avoid conflicts and therefore do promote an overall sharing of open space according to these accounts:

“So you’ve got to sort of consider: Do you want to put everything in a box? Do you want to put all sporting people together? Do you want to put all the dog people together? Or do you want the park to function as a space that everybody can use? And it may have some conflicts, you might have to deal with fencing along part of it” (Interviewee 26).

“We have draft plans that show potential dedicated dog off-leash area, fenced and controlled. It still means that there’s enough space there for that to occur in conjunction with other things on that site” (Interviewee 15).

“We need to have the fence because often parents will have the families with the pets as well and they’ll come together” (Interviewee 4).

Accessibility dualism

Fencing acts to make a reserve both more and less desirable. Some users of the reserve desire fencing as it reduces the conflict between their activity and other activities. Conversely, other users of the reserve dislike fencing as it makes public open space less accessible, more cluttered and perhaps artificial. Fencing changes the dynamic of the park and the dynamics of other parks, perhaps exacerbating any perceived exclusivity.

Fencing was seen by some interviewees as disrupting the flow of the park in how the space itself functions and how it connects to the surrounding urban environment, including neighbouring parks:

“I don’t agree with fences either and I think there are other issues against them. It’s a very simple, easy option putting a fence up to try and allocate space, but it means you lose the whole effect of the reserve and any sort of natural environment you have... fencing then creates an artificial barrier between the public and private realm. Open space is supposed to be a public resource, there’s a lot of value it delivers from an amenity and streetscape perspective and an environmental perspective. Open space should be open for anyone to access and putting a fence up diminishes that value and... it’s closing off and restricting access to a public asset” (Interviewee 13).

“Ideally, we’d like to get them to blend together. From a design perspective, the fences are not the best way to segregate those spaces. But they just come up as a real high-demand item especially families with young children. If you have dogs and a playground they always want them segregated... we try to limit the amount of fencing that we use because it just makes the space seem so much enclosed and we want to keep it open, keep it integrated with the rest of the surrounding areas” (Interviewee 4).

“You’re shifting the problem to somewhere else and maybe even focusing more because you’re bringing more dogs than just maybe the dogs that would have been there as part of the general neighbourhood population of dogs” (Interviewee 14).

Fencing is potentially both desirable and undesirable, depending on the individual perspective and environmental context. The detrimental effect which fencing has on the ‘openness’ of open space also featured in these accounts:

“Fencing everything off and then all of a sudden you don’t have open space anymore” (Interviewee 15).

“But you wouldn’t just fence around the playground, you’d fence a really big area, so you don’t get the sense that you’re caged in” (Interviewee 11).

“In some of these smaller parks, you don’t want to start fencing it off. It’s going to look like a jungle of fences and so forth” (Interviewee 16).

Where large tracts of open space exist, interviewees highlighted a reluctance of councils to fence unless fencing was required for safety reasons or to protect children from dogs:

“So some people don’t think dogs should particularly be on ovals because they wreck them and some people don’t think we should have a fully fenced dog park because it alienates everybody else. And then some people think we shouldn’t have dogs near playgrounds, but we don’t have such of an issue about that. I think somehow the issues have been resolved. Either there’s a fence around the playground which does happen, or it’s far enough away and it’s a big enough space that people are comfortable” (Interviewee 9).

“That’s an area where we haven’t got any fences. We’re unlikely to put new fences because it’s a massive reserve and there’s less conflicts with other users because it’s so big you can put them in different areas so you’re not going to have the dogs playing around” (Interviewee 20).

“We’ve got an annual budget to increase planting so that’s a much easier resource to put in [than fencing], and very quickly as well... So we hit a lot of targets if we put in the greening, then we may be able to improve biodiversity because we have more permeable surfaces” (Interviewee 4).

Compliance dualism

Fencing can act as an effective barrier and reward for owners who ‘do the right thing’, but can also harbour an owner’s poor control of their dog. Fencing alternatives such as vegetation or rockeries may be cheaper and more visually attractive, however these may prove less effective as a barrier. The planner’s own perception of dog owners motivates their decision to fence and, if so, how to fence.

In describing fencing as being motivated as a reward for good behaviour, interviewees spoke positively of dogs and their opportunities they have because of the fencing:

“The minute we fenced it, it became a much more attractive area for dog owners. Now it doesn’t mean, and this is hard for the residents to understand, that the people are any less attentive to their animal and under control, it just reduces the opportunity for the dog to get away and maybe get hit by a car” (Interviewee 8).

“They want basically a safe area to let their dogs off lead because while the laws say if you’re letting your dog off-lead... and there’s plenty of off-lead activity areas... the reality is in training a dog to be that obedient, to recall, you have to practice somewhere and you need to let them off-lead in a safe space that you know they can’t get out of” (Interviewee 17).

“People are going that are living in that area, they’re walking down and they’re letting their dogs run in this open area because you can throw a ball there, the dogs run around together, they’re already using it for that purpose. And all I’m trying to do is to legitimise it and say, actually, if we put a fence around it, the dog won’t stray anywhere” (Interviewee 21).

These interviewees viewed fencing as enabling dogs to access a particular function which they otherwise would not be able to access in an urban environment. Not all interviewees viewed fencing as positively however, instead they saw fencing as encouraging dog owners to become less compliant with local laws, in particular less compliant with the requirement to keep all dogs under the effective control of the owner, and spoke of fencing with negative connotations:

"It's very controversial. I'm probably not a fan of it, in regards to fencing. From an animal point-of-view, if you need a fence to control your dog, then you shouldn't have it off-lead because you're selling the message that it's okay not to have effective control of your dog in an area where even if it's off-lead you still must have effective control of your dog" (Interviewee 7).

"That's what people do, people become lazy because it's enclosed, they'll just sit on the park and just let the dogs do whatever they do." (Interviewee 3).

Conclusion

In this paper we argued that off-leash parks and dog parks exist to primarily benefit dog owners or, expressed differently, dog owners demand such spaces from council for their own benefit rather than their dog's benefit. This argument is constructed from a critical anthropomorphic perspective where humans apply their wants and needs to other species simply because humans are experiential creatures and habitually generalise. Planners and animal management officers are human and therefore are just as liable to make the same generalisations as dog owners in the community, thus it is reasonable to observe a lack of consensus amongst the interviewees as to whether fencing of off-leash space is provided to benefit dogs or to benefit dog owners. Underlying this argument is anthropocentrism which pervades this planning of public open space for dogs.

Not all interviewees situated themselves on the human-animal spectrum however. Most interviewees nevertheless agreed that primary attention to humans is necessary as we plan our cities. In many cases but not all, these attentions ought to align with the interests of other species. With this in mind, we argued that the creation and location of dog parks and the decision to implement fencing are fundamentally based on considerations of human utility. Any benefit for dogs of those installations appears of ancillary concern to humans, this being perhaps the most fundamental conclusion of this paper. Accordingly, further study of community attitudes towards dogs and public open space appears a natural extension of this paper. The premise of this paper is to reinforce that simply thinking of the outcome of our actions for the dog, even if ultimately decisions may remain unchanged, recognises the needs of dogs and provide them with greater justice in the human world.

Acknowledgement

The authors wish to thank both anonymous reviewers for providing constructive feedback which improved the structure of the paper.

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