

Submission on Botanic Gardens Draft Management Plan ("the Plan")

From : Sarah and James Soligo (residents in Mariri Rd Kelburn)

Date : 4 August 2014

Our submission relates to the Dog Control rules in the Plan and, by reference within the Plan, to the Council Dog Policy.

Current position in Plan : Dog walking on lead is permitted throughout the Botanic Gardens. Para 8.3.2 in particular states " dog walking (on leash unless in a specified off-leash area, refer also to the Council's Dog Policy")

Para 8.3.2 alludes to the possibility of there being specified off leash areas within the Gardens but no areas are so specified at present.

Our submission : Amend the Plan / Dog Control Policy to classify the area known as Magpie Lawn as a Specified Time Exercise Area. Namely allow the area to be used as an Exercise Area (off leash) before 9am (year round) and after 7pm in summer during national Daylight Saving hours.

Points in support of our submission:

- Magpie Lawn is not utilised regularly by other Gardens visitors in the times specified.
- Many responsible dog owners live in Kelburn and there are no exercise areas (off leash) in Kelburn where dogs can socialise. This has the unintended result of some less responsible dog owners allowing their dogs to run off lead in the gardens particularly early in the mornings when they think they can get away with this. I have personally encountered this as have other friends of mine who run through the gardens in the mornings. Providing a suitable contained space such as Magpie Lawn would help alleviate this.
- I appreciate that Magpie Lawn is used for functions / picnics / events in summer on a few evenings. I understand these need to be booked with the Council in advance. These events which are after 7pm in summer should take preference to the dog exercising and notice could be posted at Magpie Lawn advising dog owners of the unavailability of the area on those dates.
- I strongly suggest a dog poo bag station be set up in the lawn so owners have no excuses.
- I also suggest, due to the fact this would be a change to the status quo, that a change as I have suggested be done on a trial basis to see if it is compatible with the Gardens Management and other users.

Amendments necessary to give effect to our submission:

Minor amendments to the text of the Plan would be needed to reflect this submission as well as a specific change to Table 3 Appendix A of the Dog Policy, namely the addition as follows to the Exercise Areas (Specified Times)

- 4. Magpie Lawn, Wellington Botanic Gardens, Dogs are allowed off-leash before 9am year round and after 7pm in summer during national daylight saving hours. Any booked events on the lawn in summer after 7pm will take preference to the space and notice will be posted at the Lawn to advise dog users of times in summer when the space has been prebooked.