



NEWS

Miscommunication around Brent cemetery sparks community outrage

 23 September 2024  [Jessica Hopkins](#) [Follow @NW_Londoner_](#)

A miscommunication between [Brent Council](#) and a community organisation has caused outrage and confusion over whether dogs will be allowed off their leads in a cemetery in the borough.

[Friends of Paddington Old Cemetery](#) (FoPOC) published in one of their newsletters that Brent was preparing to introduce a new rule that could permanently put dogs on leads in the cemetery.

When approached, however, a council spokesperson said that the proposed rule was: "Dogs must be kept under control at all times, within eyesight, and respond when called."

"If not, you will be instructed to put the dog on a lead."

This clarification indicates that, for the most part, dogs can in fact be let off their leads.

The cemetery is widely used by the community for grieving and dog-walking purposes, meaning the newsletter caused widespread content.

One dog-walker, Bella, said: "It's unfair on the dogs. This is the only good park that we have that is safe for our dogs."

Another resident, Sean Duffy, when questioned about the issue of dogs being off lead said: "It's a lack of respect for the cemetery and for the mourners, there needs to be more sensitivity around that."



PADDINGTON OLD CEMETERY: A popular dog-walking site in the area. Credit: Jessica Hopkins

At the time of writing, nearly 200 comments have been made on a post on community social media platform Nextdoor, indicating the debate and confusion which the supposed rule has caused.

When initially approached about the issue, before the council rearticulated the rule, a FoPOC spokesperson, Andy Lowe, said: "What the council told us last week is that the rules are in place and they are going to start enforcing it.

"We are pretty furious with the lack of transparency and we are very annoyed there has been a lack of consultation."

Lowe made it clear that FoPOC were frustrated with the short notice with which the council announced the rule change to them and not the content of the rule itself.

Part of this frustration is born out of what the FoPOC spokesperson feels is a repeated struggle with Brent Council for clear communication.

He went on to describe how FoPOC were only told about plans to uproot select trees from the cemetery around a week before the planned start.

He said: "There have been times such as the trees earlier this year when they just didn't tell us what they were up to until about a week before."

Paddington Old Cemetery is an important site for the surrounding residents as it remains an active cemetery, hosting funerals, and a popular place for dog walking.

The cemetery opened in 1855 and has two Grade II listed Gothic style chapels.

It holds the graves of the creator of Paddington Bear, Michael Bond, and the first ever English football contact, [Cuthbert Ottaway](#).

Luckily for all concerned residents, it seems as both dog-walkers and mourners alike will be able to enjoy the cemetery, despite the recent miscommunication.



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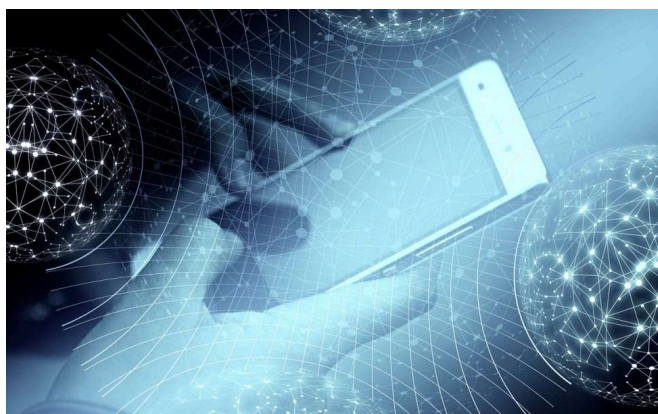
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