

dogs in our shire



Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS COUNCIL DOING?

This year, Kempsey Shire Council will be reviewing many of the rules and processes that apply to keeping pets and animals. Council will be working together with key stakeholders including animal groups, other government bodies such as the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the community to update the locations of council's off and on-leash dog exercise areas and supporting signage and infrastructure.

WHY IS COUNCIL MAKING THESE CHANGES?

Recently, there have been a number of resident complaints related to dogs on our beaches due to fear of dogs or the danger they may present to children. Members of the community have also voiced concerns around a failure of owners to clean up after their pets on our beaches.

Additionally, council has also identified a lack of clarity on signage and in the communication of rules. This has been leading to uncertainty of the rules around dogs, specifically in off and on-leash areas.

It is our aim to share the proposed options for new and existing dog exercise areas with the community for feedback and make the rules easier to understand and follow.

WHICH AREAS ARE WE ABLE TO PROVIDE INPUT ON?

The council managed areas open for feedback from the community are:

- South West Rocks – Trial Bay / Back Creek Beach / Mattys Flat
- Hat Head
- Crescent Head – Killick Beach
- Kempsey
- Stuarts Point & Grassy Head

WHY DOESN'T THE SIGNAGE HAVE THE RIGHT INFORMATION?

Council has identified a lack of clarity on our signage and in our communication of the rules around dog exercise areas. To fix this, Kempsey Shire Council is reviewing many of the rules and processes that apply to keeping pets and animals. This review will include working with key stakeholders including animal groups and other government bodies as well as the community to review the location of council's off-leash and on-leash areas, signage and more.

WHY DON'T COUNCIL ASK DOG OWNERS ABOUT ALL OF THIS?

Council is currently seeking community input regarding on-leash and off-leash dog areas in the shire, via Your Say Macleay. The reason that Council was not able to ask dog owners about the change to Back Beach at Crescent Head, is that the change was not regulated by the Council due to the area being re-gazetted as a National Park, down to the low water mark, several years ago.

To have your say on council managed areas, please visit: ksc.pub/your-say-dogs

CAN I HAVE MY DOG IN THE VEHICLE WHILE ACCESSING KILLICK BEACH THROUGH RICHARDSONS CROSSING IN HAT HEAD NATIONAL PARK?

The Hat Head National Park Plan of Management prohibits domestic animals in the park, including being driven through the park in vehicles. NPWS will continue to inform and educate park users on dog regulations, and where required apply penalties.

To have your say, please visit: ksc.pub/your-say-dogs



HAVE COUNCIL AND NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE BEEN COMMUNICATING?

Following a conversation where land management boundaries were clarified, Council's Rangers team held negotiations with the National Parks and Wildlife Service with the results that:

- The rules for dogs on the beaches have been agreed between the two agencies
- New maps have been created to clearly identify which rules apply where for dog walking
- A change to the rules for the area at the north end of Back Beach in Crescent Head, that had recently been made on-leash will now be an off-leash zone, as an interim arrangement
- Council is seeking additional feedback from the community around off-leash areas in the shire

WHERE CAN I WALK MY DOG OFF-LEASH IN THE SHIRE?

We know the rules are unduly complex at present and Council is currently seeking community input regarding on-leash and off-leash dog areas in the shire.

At present, you may release your dog from the lead for exercise purposes in the following places:

- Specific beaches under Council's control
- Inside an area of the south western corner of South Kempsey Park between the museum and the tennis courts
- Kempsey Riverside Park, adjacent to boat ramp area

Dogs must be under effective control of a competent person at all times.

WHY IS BACK BEACH SOUTH OF THE ENTRANCE IN CRESCENT HEAD NOW DOG-FREE?

The beach south of the Goolawah Beach vehicle access was gazetted national park in 2015 (including the intertidal zone). Dogs are not permitted in any national park in NSW as they are a refuge for native wildlife. Goolawah Beach is now protected as habitat for a range of species including shorebirds, migratory species and sea turtles.

NPWS have been informing and educating the community since the beach was included as national park in 2015 through onsite signage and personal interactions.

WHEN WILL COUNCIL BUILD A FENCED DOG PARK IN THE SHIRE?

Council have approved plans for a fenced off-leash dog park as part of the master plan for Kemp Street Sporting Complex which was adopted in 2020.

CAN YOU CLARIFY BEACH MANAGEMENT AS IT RELATES TO THE TIDAL ZONES ON NATIONAL PARK BEACHES?

Goolawah National Park was reserved in 2010 and the intertidal zone included as an addition in 2015. This means Goolawah Beach south of the beach entrance at Back Beach in Crescent Head is now managed by NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service from the mean *low* tide mark.

Hat Head National Park was reserved in 1972 to the mean *high* tide mark.



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KEMPSEY
Shire Council

