



# GRASSHOPPERS

## POLICY FOR DOGS ON CLUB PREMISES

### ABOUT THIS POLICY

Grasshoppers acknowledges that for some members having a dog is an integral part of their enjoyment of an active outdoor lifestyle and would like to support this, whilst also respecting that not all members will be comfortable having dogs in the Club setting. One must also note that some dogs can be unpredictable, and some owners can be irresponsible, which makes the challenge harder.

This document proposes to outline the rules and guidance set out for dogs that are brought on site at Grasshoppers. The Grasshoppers facility is not an area for exercising your dog and the policy is guidance to allow dogs on site under strict conditions and only within designated areas.

The aim is to provide a more inclusive and welcoming environment for club members, while maintaining safety, cleanliness, and respect for sporting activities. This benefit is for members only and is not extended to third party hirers or outside users of the facilities.

### PERMITTED LOCATIONS:

- Members Lounge (small bar)
- External Terrace – restricted areas (refer to Appendix 'A' for full details)
- External Areas as indicated on **Appendix A** – Site Plan of permitted areas.

*Note: Dogs are not permitted on any of the club furniture (indoor and outdoor)*

Access will be strictly prohibited in all other areas of the club house and club grounds. The number of dogs allowed on site at any time will be limited and controlled in line with occupancy levels and management discretion to ensure safety and comfort for all visitors.

## **MANDATORY CONDITIONS**

- ✓ All dog owners **must report to the clubhouse staff** on arrival that they are on site in order that numbers can be controlled and in some cases others made aware. (we need to remember that not all people like dogs and we have a duty of care to all)
- ✓ Should you be asked by a club member or staff member to reposition because of allergies and/or dog fears please be thoughtful and considerate.
- ✓ All dogs must be always kept on a **short lead** while on site and must remain under the control of a responsible adult.
- ✓ Dog owners are **completely responsible** for the welfare of their dog whilst on the club premises, members of staff should not be asked to take responsibility of dogs.
- ✓ Owners **must not** leave the building/designated area while their dog remains on site, even if the dog is in a designated area.

Dogs are strictly **prohibited** from entering all playing areas. These restrictions always apply regardless of whether matches or training sessions are taking place.

- All grass pitches and playing areas. Please be aware that inline within RFU guidelines all pitches have a 5m runoff zone (a clear area/zone surrounding the pitch) and that this zone is part of the “playing area”
- Artificial / 3G / 4G pitches.
- Training areas and associated footpaths, sports access areas and marked playing surfaces

This restriction always applies, regardless of whether matches or training sessions are taking place.

- ✓ **Fouling** - Owners must clean up immediately after their dogs but also ensure that the “fouled” area is clean and safe. To ensure responsible dog ownership and to maintain public health, dog owners should follow these protocols to manage dog waste:
  - **Always Carry Bags:** Take multiple waste bags when on the premises - more than you need.
  - **Proper Disposal Methods:** Bag all dog waste and dispose of in the club’s general waste bins - NOT THE RECYCLING. Alternatively, take it home to dispose of in your general waste bin. Please double bag if using the clubs waste bins.

- **Be Prepared for Accidents:** Carry a small bottle of water to rinse residue from the grounds after picking up waste.
- **Behaviour** - Dogs must be well-behaved and must not cause nuisance, intimidation, or disturbance to players, spectators, officials, or other visitors.

### **HEALTH RISKS**

Dog mess is unsanitary and poses health risks, especially on grassy areas where people play or train. It can spread Parvo among dogs and cause toxocariasis in humans.

### **RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH DOGS (REQUIRING MANAGEMENT)**

- Bites. The main risk from dogs is bites and possible secondary infection that may result from bites.
- Various phobias may also be associated with seeing dogs or the possibility of interacting with dogs, more notably relating the dogs fighting, which is often frightening to many young children and even some adults.
- Allergic Reaction. The proteins from the hair, saliva or urine of dogs may trigger an allergic reaction that attacks the eyes and airways and may result in asthmatic symptoms. Other allergenic reactions may include Atopic Dermatitis; a more common allergy linked to dogs.
- The most widely known health risk is Toxocariasis which is passed from the parasite Toxocara; a round worm commonly found in dogs and puppies. Toxocara eggs are present in the faeces of infected animals and can remain in soil for several years after faeces have disappeared. Eggs can also cling to the coat of infected animals. Children who swallow these eggs may become ill and, although very rare, serious illness can occur. Ingestion may occur through contact with contaminated soil or from patting and stroking infected dogs

### **RATIONALE**

Permitting dogs in designated areas offers a balanced solution that:

- Accommodates members who wish to bring their dogs for social reasons, acknowledging the importance of pets as family.
- Maintains strict controls to preserve a professional and safe sporting environment.
- Consistently safeguards playing surfaces and ensures participant safety.

- Enables staff to effectively manage compliance.

## **ENFORCEMENT**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- A request to leave the facility.
- Temporary or permanent exclusion from the grounds.

Grasshoppers reserves the right to refuse entry to any dog at its sole discretion, particularly in cases where the dog exhibits aggressive behaviour, causes repeated disruptions, poses a hygiene or safety concern, or if the presence of the dog is deemed, by the staff, as unsuitable for the club environment. This is to ensure the wellbeing, comfort, and safety of all members, staff, and animals on site.

## **CONCLUSION**

This controlled policy offers a practical compromise between maintaining standards and enhancing member experience. By limiting access, setting clear rules, and enforcing compliance, the club can safely allow dogs without negatively impacting operations or sporting use of the facilities.

## **The Executive Committee**

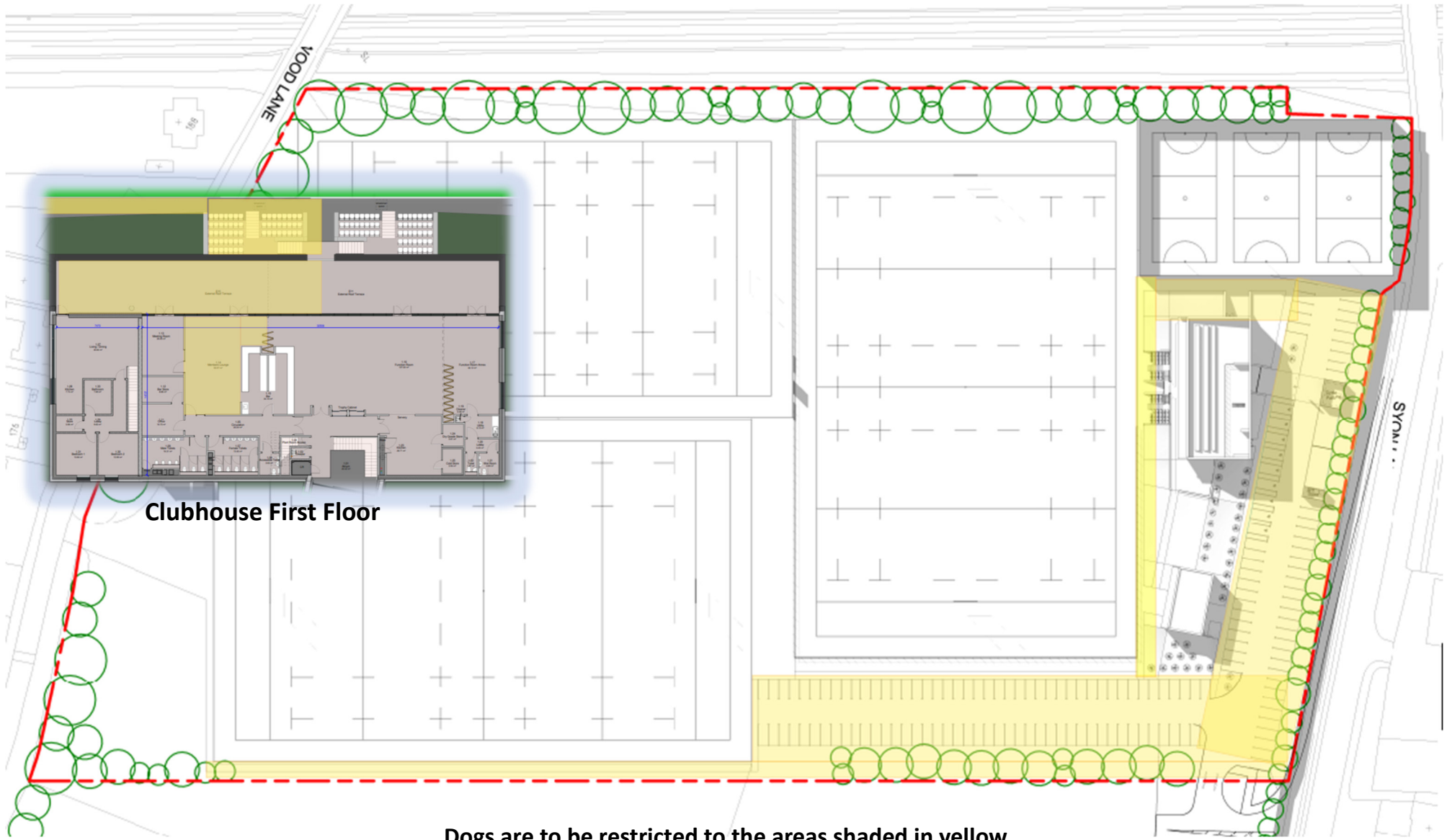
Date: March 2026

## **APPENDIXES**

**Appendix 'A'** - Site Plan of permitted areas.

## APPENDIX 'A' - POLICY FOR DOGS ON CLUB PREMISES

Site Plan of permitted areas. (This Site plan is to be read in conjunction with the POLICY FOR DOGS ON CLUB PREMISES)



**Dogs are to be restricted to the areas shaded in yellow.**

Note: Grasshoppers Sports ground is not a place for exercising your dog.