

## Dover Dog Park

When I was young, Dover park was a great place to spot at on our way to walk along the Fraser river. There were large fields, a playground and basket ball courts all close together. Sure it was fun for awhile, until other nearby parks began changing and adding new features to make the time spent there even more enjoyable. As the years went by Dover park seemed to be going in the opposite direction. It stayed pretty much the same, other than the tell tale signs of deterioration and neglect. One year it seemed the park had been completely abandoned because of how high the grass had grown. Dover park had nothing new or interesting to offer. From then on we rarely ever set foot there, choosing instead to visit other parks. However, this all changed the day I adopted a little dog named Tofu. I had never owned a dog before, despite my love of animals and working in the veterinary field. Yet, I still knew how important it was for Tofu to socialize freely with dogs and people. Starting his off leash training as soon as possible was also very important, because it only takes mere seconds for a dog to be caught in a dangerous situation. What better place to learn these crucial skill then in a large secure area like the Dover dog park?

I've always heard from dog owners how having a dog lets you meet all sorts of people you wouldn't normally meet. I never thought much of it till I began visiting the dog park. The seating provided a great environment for dog owners to sit and relax and not before long began meeting all sorts of people and their dogs. Some were expert dog owners, and some like me were new to the whole thing. I enjoyed it so much that I began bringing some of my friends and their dogs to the park too. Some of which had never been to a dog park before because there where none within walking distance. Even my mom who was studying for a large test found the park a peaceful place to sit and study.

Working in the veterinary field, I have seen and heard of many dogs who are in desperate need of a dog park. Many of these dogs are stricken with a terrible illness that affects over 53% of pets world wide, and will shorten their life by at least 5 years. That illness is Obesity. These beloved family members are forced to endure many of the side effects that come with being over weight such as diabetes, arthritis, and decreased immune function. I have also seen dogs with severe behavioral problems who no doubt needed a place to become properly accustomed to people and other dogs. Even senior dogs who aren't able to walk very much benefit greatly from being in a safe area where they can roam free at their leisure.

According to the Oxford dictionary, the definition of a trial is “A formal examination of evidence by a judge, typically before a jury, in order to decide guilt in a case of criminal or civil proceedings.” Even though the Dover dog park isn't being considered by a typical judge and jury situation, the same facts still apply. A trial is meant to put something or someone to the test, then have the facts from both sides be properly and fairly considered. Despite the dog park being moved closer to where I am, I still advocate for the Dover dog park to be properly considered again so that I know with confidence that other dog parks do have a fair chance at becoming permanent.