

Appendix 3

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
Public Protection and Environmental Health
Davyfield Depot
Roman Road Industrial Estate
Blackburn
BB1 2LX



2 February 2024

Dear The Service Lead,

Dogs Trust has been made aware that Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council is currently consulting on the extension of its Public Space Protection Order.

As the UK's largest dog welfare charity, we would like to make some comments for consideration.

Dogs Trust's Comments

1. Re; Fouling of Land by Dogs Order:

- Dogs Trust consider 'scooping the poop' to be an integral element of responsible dog ownership and would fully support a well-implemented order on fouling. We urge the Council to enforce any such order rigorously. In order to maximise compliance, we urge the Council to consider whether an adequate number of disposal points have been provided for responsible owners to use, to consider providing free disposal bags and to ensure that there is sufficient signage in place.
- We question the effectiveness of issuing on-the-spot fines for not being in possession of a poo bag and whether this is practical to enforce.

2. Re; Dog Exclusion Order:

- Dogs Trust accepts that there are some areas where it is desirable that dogs should be excluded, such as children's play areas, however we would recommend that exclusion areas are kept to a minimum and that, for enforcement reasons, they are restricted to enclosed areas. We would consider it more difficult to enforce an exclusion order in areas that lack clear boundaries.
- Dogs Trust would highlight the need to provide plenty of signage to direct owners to alternative areas nearby in which to exercise dogs.

4. Re; Dog Exclusion and sport pitches

- Excluding dogs from areas that are not enclosed could pose enforcement problems - we would consider it more difficult to enforce an exclusion order in areas that lack clear boundaries.
- We feel that exclusion zones should be kept to a minimum, and that excluding dogs from all sports pitches for long stretches of the year is unnecessary. In some cases sports pitches may account for a large part of the open space available in a public park, and therefore excluding dogs could significantly reduce available dog walking space for owners.

Dogs Trust

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Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Registered Charity Numbers: 227523 & SC037843

- We would urge the Council to consider focusing its efforts on reducing dog fouling in these areas, rather than excluding dogs entirely, with adequate provision of bins and provision of free disposal bags

5. Re; Dogs on Leads Order:

- Dogs Trust accept that there are some areas where it is desirable that dogs should be kept on a lead.
- Dogs Trust would urge the Council to consider the Animal Welfare Act 2006 section 9 requirements (the 'duty of care') that include the dog's need to exhibit normal behaviour patterns – this includes the need for sufficient exercise including the need to run off lead in appropriate areas. Dog Control Orders should not restrict the ability of dog keepers to comply with the requirements of this Act.
- The Council should ensure that there is an adequate number, and a variety of, well sign-posted areas locally for owners to exercise their dog off-lead.

The PDSA's 'Paw Report 2018' found that 89% of veterinary professionals believe that the welfare of dogs will suffer if owners are banned from walking their dogs in public spaces such as parks and beaches, or if dogs are required to be kept on leads in these spaces. Their report also states that 78% of owners rely on these types of spaces to walk their dog.

We believe that the vast majority of dog owners are responsible, and that the majority of dogs are well behaved. In recognition of this, we would encourage local authorities to exercise its power to issue Community Protection Notices, targeting irresponsible owners and proactively addressing anti-social behaviours.

Dogs Trust works with local authorities across the UK to help promote responsible dog ownership. Please do not hesitate to contact should you wish to discuss this matter.

We would be very grateful if you could inform us of the consultation outcome and subsequent decisions made in relation to the Public Space Protection Order.

Yours faithfully,



Clara Citro
Community Engagement

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Appendix 4



CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Blackburn and Darwen Borough Council: Dog Control Public Space Protection Order 2024

February 2023

The RSPCA appreciates the opportunity to respond to the proposed Dog Control Public Space Protection Order 2024 by Blackburn and Darwen Borough Council. While recognising the value of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) in designated areas, we emphasise the importance of balancing this with the natural behaviours and needs of dogs.

Dogs derive joy and social interaction from playing with people and other animals. Thus, it is crucial to allow them opportunities to express these behaviours off the lead. The RSPCA advocates for the judicious use of PSPOs by local authorities, ensuring they are proportionate to the issue at hand, as outlined in guidance from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Under Section 9 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, owners bear the responsibility of meeting their pets' welfare needs, including the freedom to express normal behaviours and receive regular exercise. Therefore, when implementing restrictions on open spaces, it's imperative for local authorities to provide alternative areas nearby where dogs can exercise both on and off the lead, enabling owners to fulfil their obligations.

The RSPCA suggests that local authorities prioritise initiatives promoting responsible dog ownership. This includes encouraging training, proper care, microchipping, neutering, and ensuring owners diligently clean up after their pets. Such measures promise more sustainable long-term solutions to dog control issues compared to widespread PSPOs, which could strain enforcement resources across the authority area.

Dog fouling in public areas

The RSPCA acknowledges the significant impact of dog fouling on the cleanliness and health of our towns, cities, and communities. To promote responsible dog ownership and maintain a clean environment for people, pets, and wildlife, we advocate for measures that hold dog owners accountable for cleaning up after their pets. It is essential that local authorities mandate owners to promptly remove their dog's waste from public spaces, as outlined in this proposal.

Furthermore, the RSPCA supports initiatives that ensure all dog owners carry appropriate means, such as bags, to collect their dog's faeces while on designated land. This requirement not only reinforces responsible behaviour but also contributes to the overall cleanliness of public areas.

In addition to enforcement measures, we encourage the council to explore educational and promotional campaigns targeting areas where dog fouling is prevalent. These initiatives can raise awareness about the importance of responsible dog ownership and proper waste disposal practices. Regular monitoring of these locations by authorised officers can serve as a deterrent to offenders and help mitigate the occurrence of dog fouling complaints.

Moreover, the provision of clear signage in affected areas can further emphasise the expectations regarding dog waste cleanup. By implementing a multifaceted approach that combines enforcement, education, and

awareness-raising efforts, local authorities can effectively address the issue of dog fouling and foster a cleaner, healthier environment for all members of the community.

Dogs on leads in cemeteries

The RSPCA supports the notion of permitting dogs on leads in graveyards, cemeteries, or memorial gardens, recognizing the invaluable comfort and companionship they provide to their owners. Allowing dogs in these areas alleviates the dilemma faced by owners who might otherwise have to leave their pets tied up outside, a situation that can be stressful for the animals and increase the risk of theft.

Additionally, prohibiting dogs from accompanying their owners may lead some individuals to leave their pets unattended in vehicles, exposing them to potential harm and infringing upon their welfare, which could result in legal repercussions under the Animal Welfare Act.

By permitting dogs on leads in these spaces, authorities not only accommodate the needs of owners but also ensure the well-being and safety of the animals themselves. This approach fosters a more inclusive and compassionate environment for both visitors and their canine companions.

Dogs in play areas and areas used for sport or other recreational activities

The RSPCA acknowledges the importance of creating designated dog-free zones in open spaces, particularly in areas such as children's play areas or dedicated sports facilities. However, we recognize that blanket exclusions of responsible dog owners from marked sports playing pitches can pose challenges, especially when alternative spaces are limited. Such restrictions may hinder dogs from expressing normal behaviours and can be contrary to guidance provided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs regarding the careful application of Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs).

It's crucial to consider the balance between accommodating the needs of different user groups and ensuring the well-being of both humans and animals. While certain areas may require dog-free policies for safety or hygiene reasons, authorities should also strive to provide adequate alternative spaces nearby where responsible dog owners can exercise their pets without disrupting recreational activities.

Moreover, enforcement of PSPOs should be targeted and proportionate, focusing on specific areas rather than penalising responsible individuals. By adopting a thoughtful and nuanced approach to managing open spaces, local authorities can uphold community needs while promoting inclusivity and responsible dog ownership.



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Appendix 5

Officer	CDR	Location	Pleasington	Date	16/02/24
Do people bring their dogs into the play area?					
Leads					
If yes, are the dogs on leads?					
No, many not					
Do you see a lot of dog fouling around the play area?					
No, a lot picking it up					
How do you feel about people bringing their dogs into the play area?					
No dogs in little 'young age ones' Older ages – as long as controlled					
Do you think they dogs should be kept out of play areas?					
↑					
Why?					
Owners in the older age Parks Should be responsible for looking after the dogs					
Other comments					

Officer	LOR	Location	Plasington	Date	10/2/24
Do people bring their dogs into the play area?					
Not sure					
If yes, are the dogs on leads?					
Do you see a lot of dog fouling around the play area?					
generally people do pick up after themselves					
How do you feel about people bringing their dogs into the play area?					
don't agree					
Do you think they dogs should be kept out of play areas?					
yes					
Why?					
fouling around the area					
Other comments					

Officer		Location	Pleasington	Date	
Do people bring their dogs into the play area? <p style="text-align: center;">No</p>					
If yes, are the dogs on leads? <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>					
Do you see a lot of dog fouling around the play area? <p style="text-align: center;">No</p>					
How do you feel about people bringing their dogs into the play area? <p style="text-align: center;">No, stick to side</p>					
Do you think they dogs should be kept out of play areas? <p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p>					
Why? <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> <p>dogs should have their own area</p> </div> <div> <p>people probably wouldn't clean up after them</p> </div> </div>					
Other comments 					

Officer	LOR	Location	Pleasington	Date	16/02/24
Do people bring their dogs into the play area?					
Yes					
If yes, are the dogs on leads?					
No					
Do you see a lot of dog fouling around the play area?					
Quite a bit					
How do you feel about people bringing their dogs into the play area? - Pleasington					
* attack Yes if they clean SPECIFIC = ones to clean up UP					
Do you think they dogs should be kept out of play areas?					
No					
Why?					
end of having loads of violent dogs not being able to free be free					
Other comments					
don't agree with bringing directly into the area * dogs scared violent if not allowed on leads					

Officer	LOR	Location	Wilton Park	Date	16/2/24
Do people bring their dogs into the play area?					
They do					
If yes, are the dogs on leads?					
no / not on leads					
Do you see a lot of dog fouling around the play area?					
can't identify					
How do you feel about people bringing their dogs into the play area?					
not allowed in areas					
Do you think they dogs should be kept out of play areas?					
yes					
Why?					
don't know what other dogs are like - don't want children hurt					
Other comments					

Officer	LOR	Location	Wilton Park	Date	16/2/24
Do people bring their dogs into the play area?					
Some do					
If yes, are the dogs on leads?					
Mostly					
Do you see a lot of dog fouling around the play area?					
No					
How do you feel about people bringing their dogs into the play area?					
on lead / its no problem					
Do you think they dogs should be kept out of play areas?					
No , as long as on lead					
Why?					
Other comments					