

Dear Andy,

Dogs Trust has been made aware that Burnham Beeches Council is planning to introduce a series of Dog Control Orders. As the UK's largest dog welfare charity, we would like to make some comments for consideration.

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 and to provide ample signage and disposal points for responsible owners to use.

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 and sports grounds, 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.

3. 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 running 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.

4. Re; Dogs on Lead by Direction Order:

- Dogs Trust enthusiastically support Dogs on Leads by Direction orders (for dogs to be put on and kept on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised official).
- We consider that this order is by far the most useful, other than the fouling order, because it allows enforcement officers to target the owners of dogs that are allowing them to cause a nuisance without restricting the responsible owner and their dog. As none of the other orders, less fouling, are likely to be effective without proper enforcement we would be content if the others were dropped in favour of this order.

5. Re; Taking more than a specified number of dogs onto a land:

- Dogs Trust does not agree that there should be a limit on the number of dogs walked as so much depends on the ability of the person to control the dogs. A good owner may be able to control large numbers of dogs while a less responsible person may be incapable of controlling one. While we accept the motivation for introducing this order, we consider that proper use of a "Dogs on Leads by Direction" order, by authorised officers, would be a better solution that is less restrictive on responsible owners.

Whilst we believe that the vast majority of dog owners are responsible, Dogs Trust would be happy to talk to the Council about ways we could work together to encourage responsible behaviour amongst the small minority of owners who may cause problems.

We work with Councils across the UK in a variety of ways to help them to promote Responsible Dog Ownership. I enclose further information on our Dogs in the Community Campaign. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this matter.

We would also be very grateful if you could inform us of the outcome of the consultation process and of subsequent decisions made in relation to the Dog Control Orders.

Yours faithfully,

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Visit our website at <http://www.dogtrust.org.uk>
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