

Press Release

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Public consultation results in extension of dog control measures

Measures to enforce responsible dog ownership in public spaces will be set in place for another three years, following overwhelming support during a public consultation.

Durham County Council introduced the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) on dog control in June 2017, which was valid for three years.

The following were deemed an offence under the order:

- Failing to pick up dog mess
- Allowing a dog to stray
- Failing to put a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer
- Allowing a dog into any fenced-off play area named in the PSPO

From June 2017 to May 2020, there was a 32 per cent reduction in stray dog reports, a 45 per cent reduction in dog fouling, and an 18 per cent reduction in dog fouling warden investigations.

Earlier this year, the local authority opened a consultation on the extension of the PSPO to address issues of dog fouling, public safety and strays. This came back with 98 per cent of respondents thinking an extension was a good idea.

Town and parish councils were also consulted on the extension, with a small number asking for a variation for their locality to include fenced off play areas which were not included in the PSPO.

The PSPO measures have been extended until May 2023.

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Ian Hoult, neighbourhood protection manager at Durham County Council said: “More of us are walking in our neighbourhoods as we stay local during the coronavirus outbreak. Whilst discovering new walks is a great joy, discovering someone’s dog mess is not. Now, more than ever, we all recognise the value of our local communities and the ways in which we need to look out for and respect one another. The great support for the extension of the PSPO really reflects that.

“Taking responsibility for our four-legged companions protects our shared environment, such as play areas, to create clean, safe places to live and enjoy.”

Anyone caught flouting the rules can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice by council neighbourhood wardens and police community support officers.

Find out more, including advice for dog owners, penalty information, and more about the council’s #FollowOurLead campaign, at: www.durham.gov.uk/dogcontrol

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Image: Monty the collie demonstrating responsible dog ownership including keeping dogs on leads where necessary, and collecting dog mess to put in bins.