

Consultation
Three Rivers District Council

Three Rivers District Council Public Spaces Protection Order Dog Control – Order Extension Consultation

SUMMARY REPORT

January 2019

Background

There is currently a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO)* in place throughout Three Rivers District, with restrictions relating to dogs. This PSPO expires in April 2019 and Three Rivers District Council consulted on extending this order.

*A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) is a new power introduced by the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. This power allows Local Authorities to prohibit specified things being done in the restricted area and/or require specified things to be done by persons carrying out specified activities in that area. Penalties: a person who fails to comply with the terms of the Order may be liable to a £75 Fixed Penalty Notice, or upon summary conviction to a fine not exceeding Level 3 on the standard scale (currently £1000).

Objectives

The key objective of the consultation was as follows:

- To understand whether residents and users of Three Rivers' open spaces and parks agree or disagree that the restrictions currently in place for a person in charge of a dog should continue to be an offence under the PSPO

Methodology

A 'Survey Monkey' on-line survey was launched on 10th December 2018 and closed on 7th January 2019. In total, 1235 survey entries were recorded. Profile information is recorded at the end of the report, but in summary:

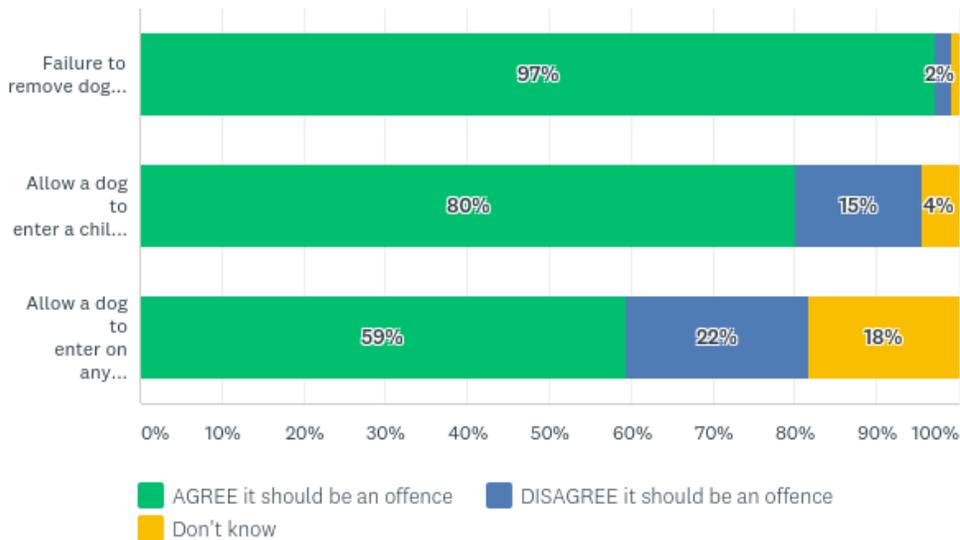
- 45% had at least one dog
 - 30% had children under 16 living in the house
 - Respondents were predominantly from three main towns: Croxley Green (19%), Rickmansworth (16%) and Chorleywood (15%)
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Results

Levels of agreement with the restrictions continuing to be an offence under the PSPO

The vast majority of respondents agreed that **'failure to remove dog faeces from a public space' and 'allowing a dog to enter a child play area, sport court, outdoor gym, skate area or fenced off picnic area'** should continue to be an offence under the PSPO (97%, 80% respectively) .

Over half (59%) of respondents agreed that **'allowing a dog to enter on any land used for the grazing of animals on Chorleywood House Grounds between 1st June and 30th September'** should continue to be an offence under the PSPO. It should be noted that almost a fifth (18%) of respondents simply 'did not know', suggesting that this might not have felt so relevant to some (e.g. those who did not use Chorleywood House Estate).



	AGREE IT SHOULD BE AN OFFENCE	DISAGREE IT SHOULD BE AN OFFENCE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Failure to remove dog faeces from a public place (district wide)	97% 1,191	2% 26	1% 9	1,226	1.04
Allow a dog to enter a child play area, sport court, outdoor gym, skate area or fenced off picnic area	80% 980	15% 189	4% 53	1,222	1.24
Allow a dog to enter on any land used for the grazing of animals on Chorleywood House Grounds between 1st June and 30th September inclusive	59% 727	22% 275	18% 223	1,225	1.59

KEY COMMENTS

Dog faeces removal

More enforcement presence for failure to remove dog faeces (10 mentions)

"I wish you'd enforce the rules – dog poos is a big issue"

"To enforce this there must be presence of officers"

"It would be nice for the rangers who have the power to enforce this order to use this power even to talk to public about dog poo. Have a day where they hand poo bags out to draw conversations about keeping clean"

More bins needed (9 mentions)

"Dog bins in Chorleywood House grounds especially by the unofficial entry from behind the Gate pub"

More signage needed (7 mentions)

"Pick up your dog poo notices came down"

"Lack in quantity of signage near the concerned areas"

"More notifications need to be put up particularly on entrances to parks etc. so that it's very clear to all owners"

'Stick and flick'/undergrowth exceptions (4 mentions)

"I would not expect anyone to remove faeces a dog has discreetly deposited under a bush or brambled fences. Further, it is environmentally better to flick the faeces into undergrowth than to put it in plastic and leave in a poo bin (if there is one nearby)!"

Dogs in play and picnic areas

Areas need gating to prevent accidental access by dogs (10 mentions)

“Allowing’ implies intent to let it happen. I agree that dogs should be kept away from these areas, but if they escape into them, then it shouldn’t be an offence”

“Not the dog’s fault if gates to play areas are open”

“There seems to be a new idea that pets and people should be separated. This is leading to many dogs and children becoming wary of each other”

“I walk my dog on Chorleywood Common which now has some climbing areas for children, which have not boundaries. It is not realistic to say the dog should not enter those tree log areas”

Dogs to be allowed in play and picnic areas, if on lead (10 mentions)

“A family with a quiet, controlled dog would not be a nuisance in a picnic area”

Dogs in grazing areas

Dogs to be allowed in grazing land, if on lead (45 mentions)

“The presence of the cows during the summer months greatly reduces the options for a long circular walk”

“Dogs on leads and fully under the owners’ control should be allowed on land with grazing animals”

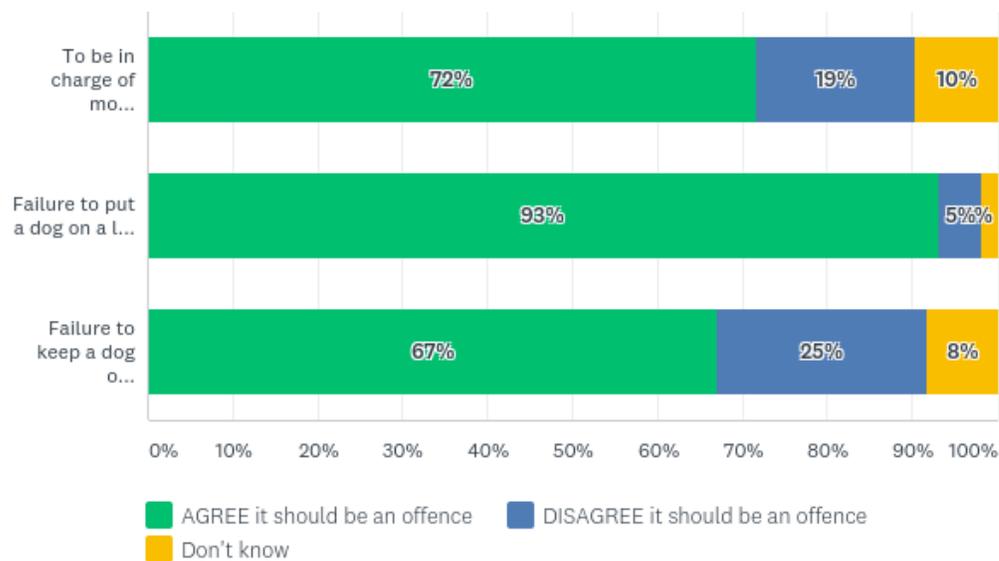
Dogs are allowed on other areas with grazing cattle (2 mentions)

“Dogs are allowed on Croxley Common Moor whilst the cows are grazing and this does not cause problems so feel it should be acceptable at Chorleywood House”

Levels of agreement with the restrictions continuing to be an offence under the PSPO

The vast majority (93%) of respondents agreed that **'failure to put a dog on a lead if directed to do so by an authorised officer of the Council, Police Officer or Police Community Support Officer'** should continue to be an offence under the PSPO.

Two thirds of respondents agreed that **'being in charge of more than 4 dogs in a public place'** and **'failing to keep a dog on a lead in the area directly surrounding the Café in the Park (the Aquadrome, Rickmansworth)'** should continue to be an offence under the PSPO (72% and 67% respectively).



	AGREE IT SHOULD BE AN OFFENCE	DISAGREE IT SHOULD BE AN OFFENCE	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
To be in charge of more than 4 dogs in a public place (district wide)	72% 874	19% 226	10% 118	1,218	1.38
Failure to put a dog on a lead if directed to do so by an authorised officer of the Council, Police Officer or Police Community Support Officer	93% 1,135	5% 61	2% 23	1,219	1.09
Failure to keep a dog on a lead in the area directly surrounding the Cafe in the Park, The Aquadrome, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire	67% 816	25% 301	8% 101	1,218	1.41

KEY COMMENTS

Requests for dogs to be on lead at all times at the Aquadrome (25 mentions)

“Extend the dog lead area to the whole of the Aquadrome”

“Many people let their dogs run wild at the Aquadrome, going into the water and disturbing the birds”

“Dogs off leads can ruin a trip to the Aquadrome etc. as my daughter is scared of them”

“I use the Aquadrome on a weekly basis and have a toddler to look after. It is not acceptable for small children to face the risk of being bitten or scared by dogs”

“I fish around the Aquadrome and rarely see dogs on a lead, most of them are running free and quite a lot of owners are too busy chatting or using mobiles to notice when a dog has defaced”

4 dogs rule – depends on the size and obedience of the dogs (4 mentions)

“Numbers to relate to size and behaviour of dog. Six well behaved Chihuahuas versus four badly behaved big dogs – I know which I would prefer to encounter”

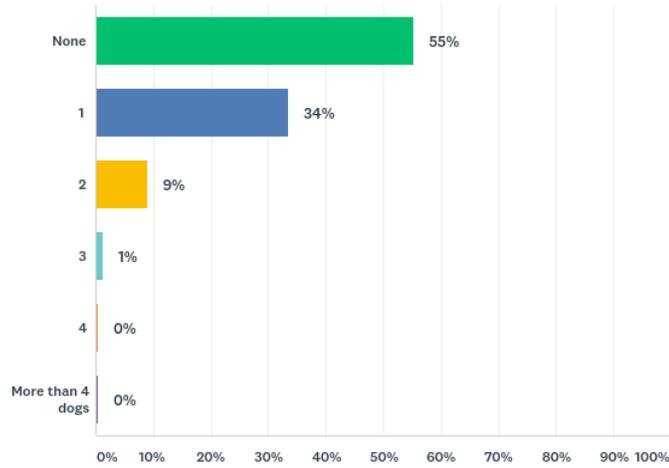
“Restricting to 4 is contrary to what the Kennel Club advise; it is deeply unfair to owners of more than 4, most of whom will be involved in some sort of dog sport and will therefore have a good level of control over their dogs”

Dogs should be excluded from other cafes e.g. new Woodlands café in Leavesden (3 mentions)

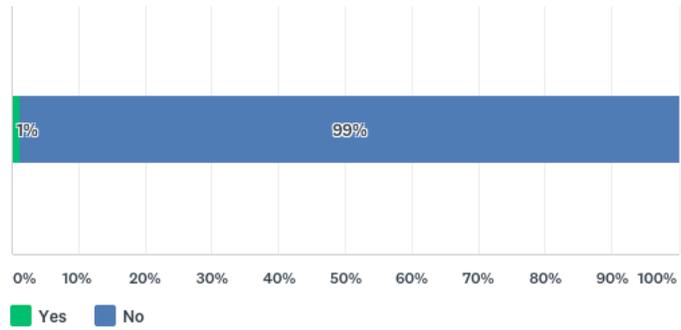
“I think that the area should be expanded in which it would be an offence for failure to keep a dog on a lead in all cafes in parks (new Woodlands café in Leavesden)”

THE PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

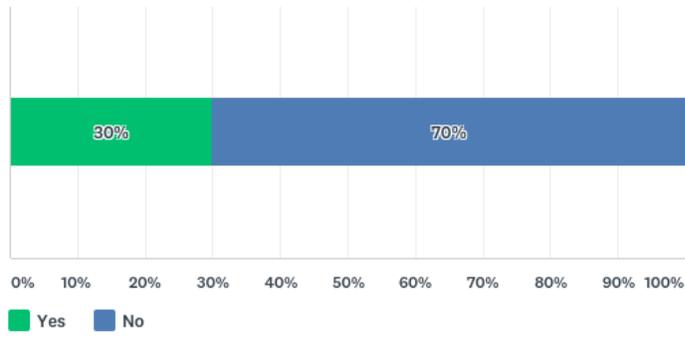
Q3 How many dogs do you own?



Q4 Are you a professional dog walker?



Q5 Do you have children under 16 living with you?



Q6 Where do you live?

