

To Parish and Town Clerks,

You will recall earlier in the year we contacted you to advise of a Public Consultation on Dog Controls across the Borough asking the general public, and Town and Parish Councils to let us know if there were any local concerns regarding dog controls. The Consultation ran from 1<sup>st</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020.

We had a good response from Okehampton Town Council with regard to dogs on Kempley Meadow which indicated that the majority wished the Meadow to remain accessible for exercising dogs off leads. We also had a comprehensive response from Bere Ferrers Parish Council with regard to dog access on The Down and on the Bere Ferrers Playing Field. The information provided from both Okehampton and Bere Ferrers indicated that dogs should be able to be exercised off leads on accessible areas of The Down and the Playing Field except when organised sport is in play on the open field(s) when dogs should be on leads.

Across the remainder of the Borough there was a very limited response. This led us to believe that the majority of residents were happy with the status quo which has been in place, in general since 2014, and is as follows:

On all land which is in the administrative area of the Borough Council and which is: open to the air; and, to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access with or without payment (except Forestry Commission lands). This land is referred to as 'the restricted land' in the rules.

- Dog walkers must pick up the faeces (and dispose of in a responsible manner) if their dog defecates on land in the restricted area
- Dogs must be kept on leads on all areas covered by Rule 56 of the Highway Code which includes the road, the pavement or on a path shared with cyclists or horse riders (this rule supports the Traffic Act(s) enforced by the Police)
- Dogs must be kept on leads on: Areas with retail premises designated as zone 1 under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, i.e., where there are 2 or more commercial / shop premises; in Car Parks; Cemeteries and Churchyards; Any fenced, hedged or walled pond, area of water or nature reserve; Marked sports fields whilst organised sport is in progress; and, Areas delineated as formal gardens.
- Dogs must be put on leads by direction, i.e., when so asked by an authorised officer
- Dogs are excluded from any fenced, hedged or walled site delineated as a children's play area; bowling green; tennis court; putting green; and any sporting or recreational facility pitch when sport is in play.

There are exemptions for those registered blind and with a disability which affects mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination or ability to lift and who relies for assistance on a dog trained by a prescribed charity such as Dogs for the Good; Support Dogs; or, Canine partners for Independence.

The only difference is that the proposed new Order will include a control that dog walkers must carry the means to pick up faeces if their dog defecates on land in the restricted area.

We have extended the review period to ensure that we have considered all concerns or suggestions regarding the proposed new Dog Control Article. Please will you let us know by replying to the above email address by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021 if you are aware of any local concerns relating to any Restricted Area within the Borough of West Devon and if we do not hear from you by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021, we will assume confirmation that the majority of your residents are in favour of maintaining the controls outlined above. Thank you.

Kind regards,