

Dog Control Orders - FAQs

1. When will the Dog Control Orders (DCOs) come into force?

There are statutory time periods which the council has to comply with, and we need to consider representations made during the public consultation. We therefore expect the DCOs to commence in August 2012.

2. I thought there was already fouling legislation in place throughout the district. why is the council changing it?

Yes, the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 already applies to all areas where the public has access (with a few exceptions). However, the council cannot legally make the other types of DCO e.g. dogs on leads, without also making the dog fouling DCO.

3. Why is Forestry Commission land excluded from the DCOs?

The Secretary of State has designated that Forestry Commission land should not be subject to any DCOs

4. Will the council be able to enforce the fouling DCO over the whole of such a large district?

The dog warden service has limited resources, and we need the public's help. We can act on information supplied by witnesses. If you have any information at all about an offender, please contact us on 01524 582935 or dogwardens@lancaster.gov.uk and this will enable us to take speedy action.

5. Why are there not more dog waste bins in the district?

At one time dog fouling waste was only permitted in dedicated dog bins. Now it can be placed in any waste bins, including litter bins, as long as it is in sealed bags.

6. If my dog fouls and I've forgotten a dog bag, can I return later and clean it up?

An offence is committed if the faeces is not cleaned up immediately. Not having a bag or other suitable means of removing the faeces is not a reasonable excuse for failing to comply with the DCO, nor is being unaware of a dog's fouling, for example if you were looking the other way. Responsible dog walkers will take care to carry sufficient dog bags with them.

7. I think dogs should be banned from cemeteries and graveyards. Why is the council only proposing that they be kept on leads?

A public consultation exercise has already been carried out on this specific issue, and the majority of respondents wanted 'Dogs on Leads' as opposed to 'Dog Exclusion'. A common reason given was that bereaved people often wish to visit a grave with their pet dog (kept on a lead).

8. Why is the council proposing a 'Dogs on Leads' DCO in some parks and not others? Dogs can sometimes be a nuisance running around in the middle of a football game.

Playing fields, large parks and other amenity areas are often the only facilities available for exercising dogs locally, and family recreational activity often includes the family dog. However, any fully enclosed playgrounds or sports facilities within these parks are proposed as 'Dog Exclusion' areas, and 'Dogs on Leads' DCOs are proposed for the smaller public parks and gardens.

9. How will I know which areas the DCOs apply to – will there be signs?

It is not possible for the council to provide signs on every street throughout the district, but signs will be affixed at regular intervals and specifically at playgrounds, parks etc.

10. Does the 'Put Dogs on Leads when Directed' DCO mean that I can be ordered to put my dog on a lead at any time?

No, this is likely to happen only under specific circumstances where a dog is causing nuisance, for example running around out of control during a sporting event or in an area where children are playing.

11. How will I know whether the person is an 'Authorised Officer'?

All authorised officers will carry identification cards with details of how to verify the card.

12. Why have the busy beaches not been designated under 'Dog Exclusion' DCOs?

Following extensive public consultation the two main stretches of beach (North Beach and South Beach) were designated under a separate 'Dog Exclusion' DCO several

years ago. This excludes dogs from these beach areas during the main tourist season from May to September, whilst they are still permitted on other, quieter beaches.

13. Will the DCOs apply to everybody?

No the Fouling DCO and the Dog Exclusion DCO will not apply to people who are registered blind, or are disabled and use trained assistance dogs.

14. I am a farmer and use dogs for herding my sheep along public roads. Will I be penalised for not keeping my dogs on leads?

No, working dogs are excluded from the Dogs on Leads DCO as long as they are demonstrably working at the time. At all other times the DCOs will apply.

15. If I don't agree with any of the proposals will my comments influence the making of the DCOs?

All representations will be taken into consideration. If a lot of people oppose a particular proposal, or wish to put forward an alternative means of ensuring dog-related problems are adequately controlled in the public interest, this could lead to amendments being made.