



**West  
Northamptonshire  
Council**

# **Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Control and Prohibition of Smoking in Public Places) 2022 Variation. Consultation Results and Comments.**

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## Methodology

In accordance with statutory guidelines and detailed in Section 72 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) has conducted a consultation. The consultation ran for 4 weeks from 16 March 2023 to 17 April 2023.

The consultation was carried out online through the West Northamptonshire Council Consultation Hub. It was supported by a West Northamptonshire Council communications campaign to raise awareness and encourage participation.

More than 100 businesses were notified in the proposal area including vets, dog trainers, professional dog walkers, behaviour experts, groomers, WNC animal licensees – dog boarders, kennels, breeders and pet shops.

Posters were produced to circulate or display in their business and share with their customers to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage participation.

All Parish Councils and Town Councils across West Northamptonshire were notified and asked to share with clubs, organisations and groups in their area.

Over 20 different animal welfare and animal assistance charities and organisations were notified. These included The Kennel Club, The Dogs Trust, Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Assistance Dogs UK, Autism Dogs, Canine Partners, Dog Aid – Assistance in Disability, Dogs for Good, Medical Detection Dogs, Support Dogs, The Seeing Dogs Alliance, RSPCA, Association of Professional Dog Walkers and Sitters (APDWS), National Association of Pet Sitters and Dog Walkers (NARPS UK), Professional Dog Walkers Association (PDWA), Canine and Feline Sector Group (CFSG), Dog Walkers and Sitters Association (DWSA), British College of Canine Studies.

All primary and secondary schools in West Northamptonshire were notified and asked to share details of the consultation with parents and carers.

Libraries across West Northamptonshire also supported and promoted the consultation and assisted with accessing it for residents.

Those on the WNC Consultation Register and the WNC Resident's Panel were notified - approximately 450 contacts.

Statutory partners were notified including Northamptonshire Police Chief Constable and Police and Crime Commissioner along with other groups and organisations who may be potentially affected by the introduction of the varied Order. These include a number of Residents Associations, Northamptonshire Football Association, Ramblers Association, Keep Britain Tidy, The National Trust, Community Safety Partners. WNC staff including the Chief Executive, Senior Leadership Team, Assistant Directors, Environmental Health and Environmental Crime Officers, Neighbourhood Wardens, Dog Warden, Rangers, Regulatory Services Lead Officers and the Portfolio Holder for Community safety and Engagement and Regulatory Services and neighbouring local authorities. All were given the opportunity to comment on the consultation.

Results from the consultation have shown strong support for each of the proposals which would be contained within the varied Order.

## **Results**

A total of 436 responses were received online. Of these, 373 were completed and 63 incomplete responses.

Not all consultees filled in every answer.

336 (90.8%) of responses were received from individuals.

34 responses (9.2%) were received on behalf of a business, organisation, voluntary or community group. This option also applied if the respondent looked after or walked dogs as part of their own business and wished to respond in that capacity. In total, 370 respondents chose to answer this question, with 66 respondents not completing this question.

Of the 436 responses received, 211 (48%) of respondents chose to make comments, 225 (52%) respondents chose not to make any.

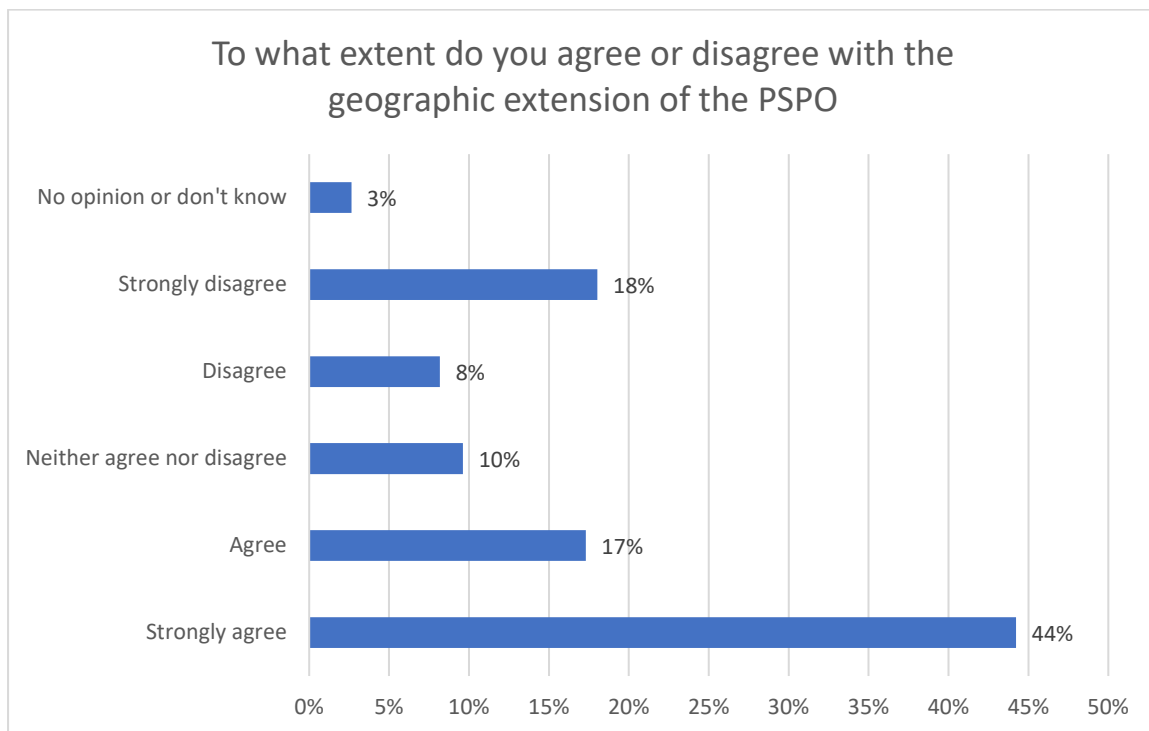
## **1 The geographic extent of the PSPO**

The PSPO (Dog Control and the Prohibition of Smoking in Public Places) 2022, that is in place in the Daventry and South Northants Areas would be extended to cover the Northampton Area.

**Table 1a: To what extent do you agree or disagree with this?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	184	44%
Agree	72	17%
Neither agree nor disagree	40	10%
Disagree	34	8%
Strongly disagree	75	18%
No opinion or don't know	11	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Chart 1a.**



## 2 Failure to clean up after your dog

This places a requirement on dog owners and walkers to immediately pick up after the dog they are responsible for.

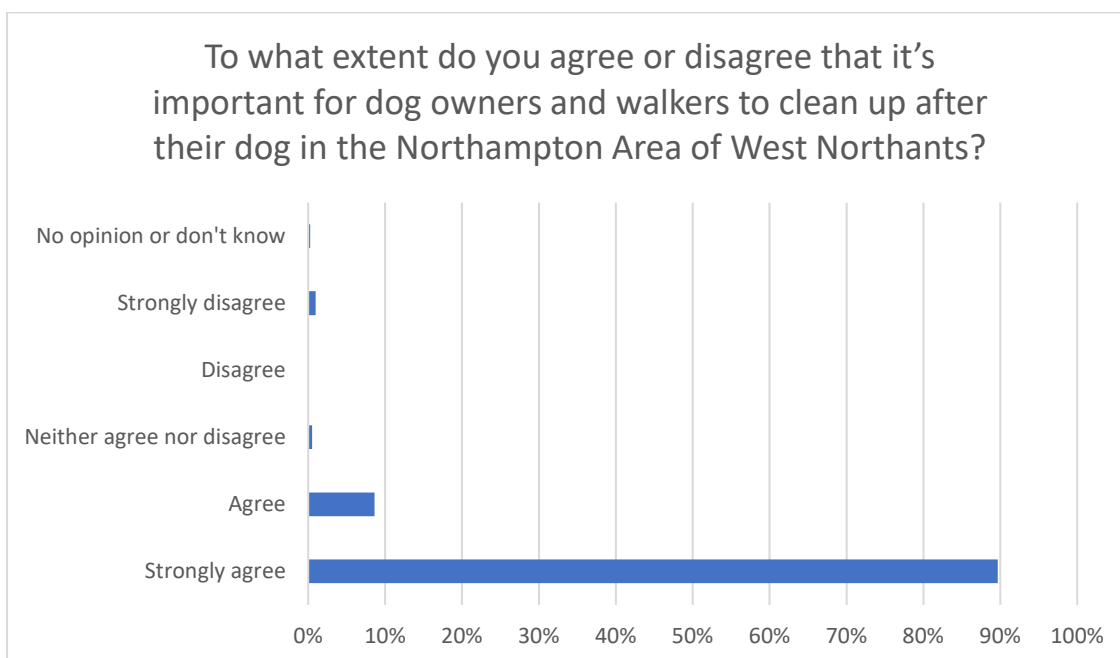
Further information: This measure will apply to any place within the Northampton Area to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as of right or by virtue of express or implied permission, including privately owned land with permitted public access, as is currently the case in the former Daventry and South Northants Areas. This also applies to all public footpaths and bridlepaths. There are many bins specifically for dog waste located in West Northamptonshire and should there not be one nearby, it is permitted to put dog waste in a public bin, alternatively owners can take it home for disposal with their household waste.

### **Table 2a: To what extent do you agree or disagree that it's important for dog owners and walkers to clean up after their dog in the Northampton Area of West Northants?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	364	90%

Agree	35	9%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	4	1%
No opinion or don't know	1	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>100%</b>

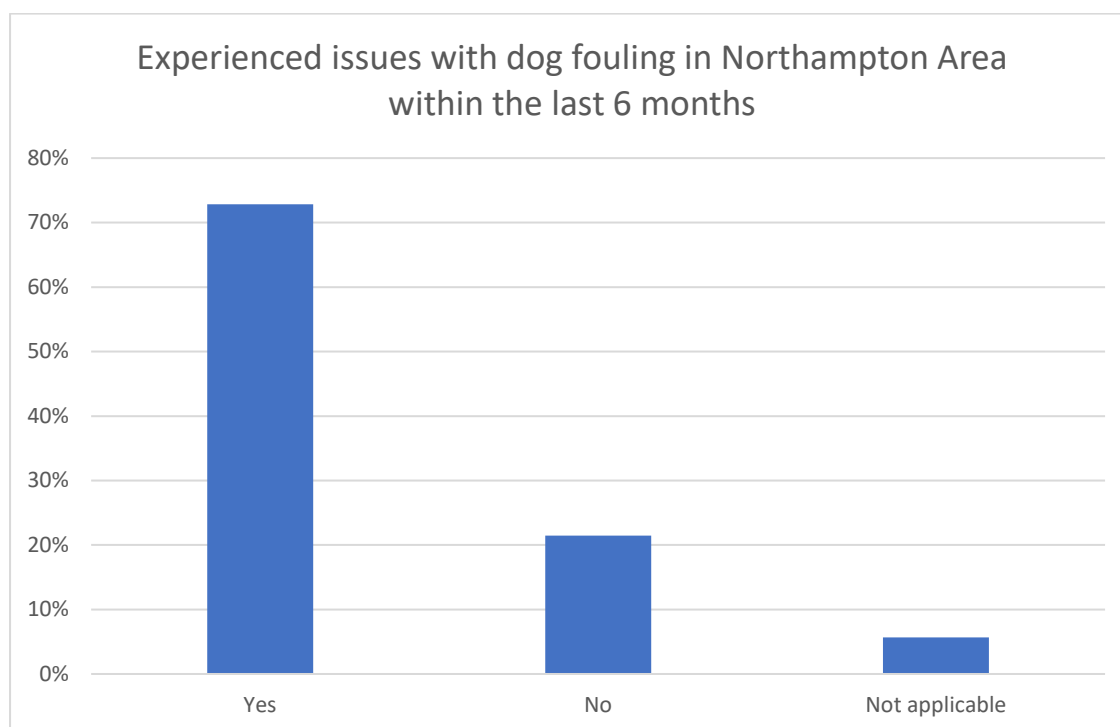
**Chart 2a.**



**Table 2b: Have you experienced issues with dog fouling in the Northampton Area within the last 6 months?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	295	73%
No	87	21%
Not applicable	23	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Chart 2b.**

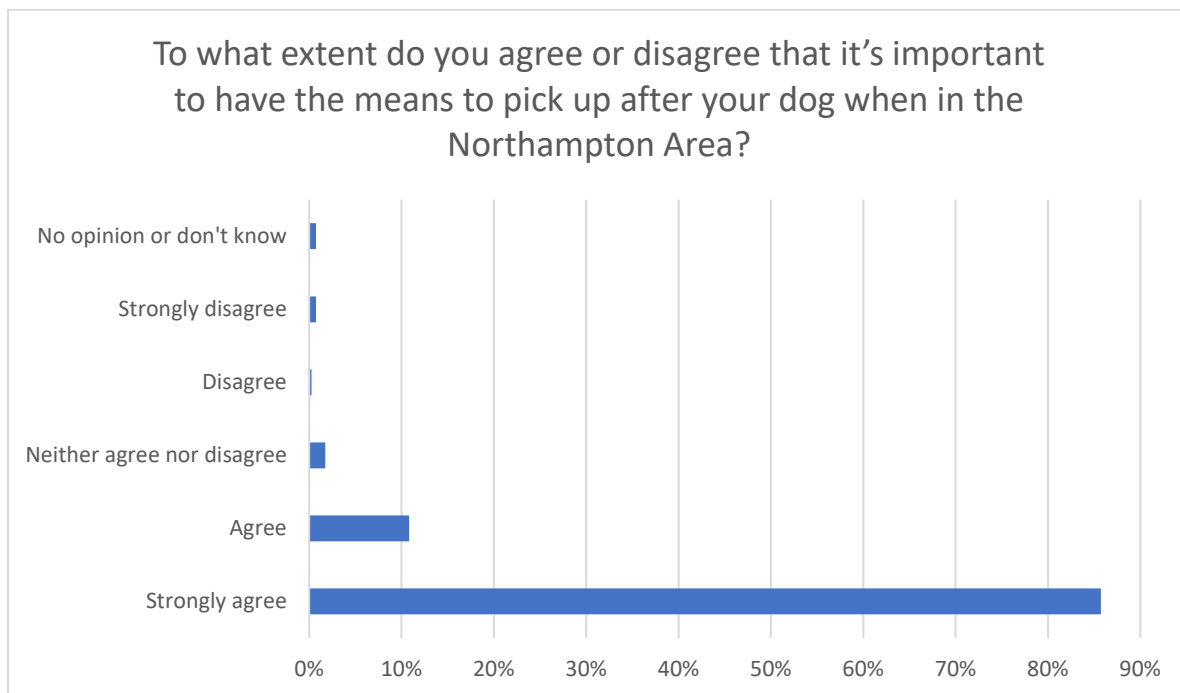


**Table 2c: To what extent do you agree or disagree that it's important to have the means to pick up after your dog when in the Northampton Area?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	348	86%
Agree	44	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	7	2%
Disagree	1	0%
Strongly disagree	3	1%
No opinion or don't know	3	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>100%</b>



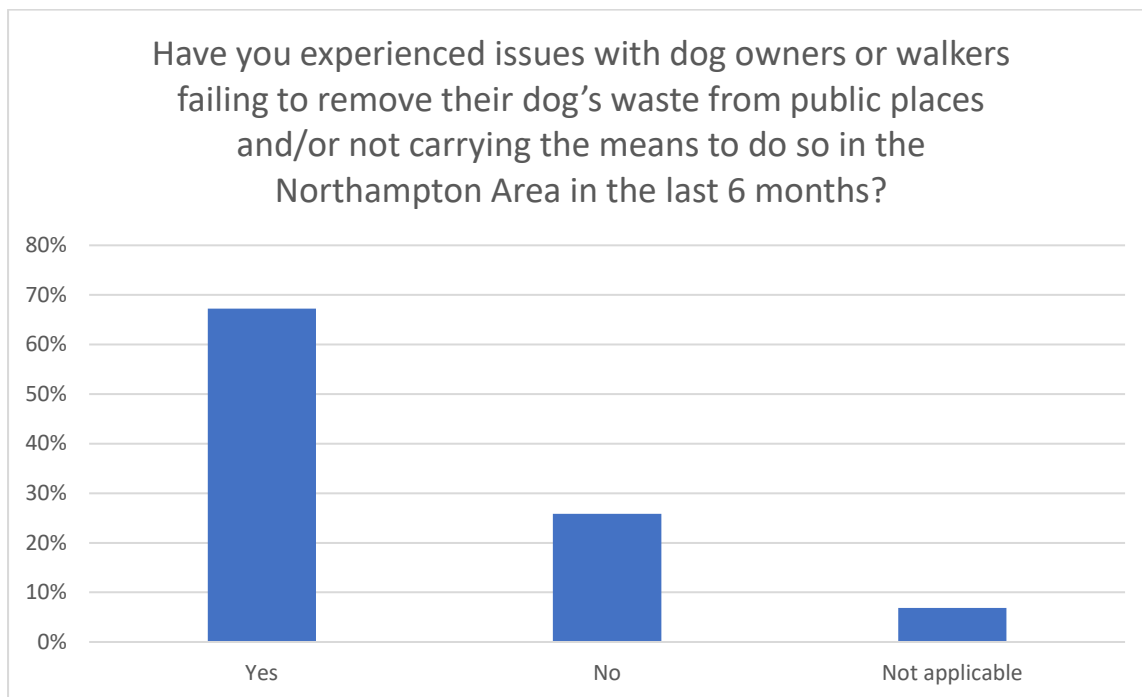
## Chart 2c:



**Table 2d: Have you experienced issues with dog owners or walkers failing to remove their dog's waste from public places and/or not carrying the means to do so in the Northampton Area in the last 6 months?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	273	67%
No	105	26%
Not applicable	28	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Chart 2d.



### 3 Dog exclusion zones

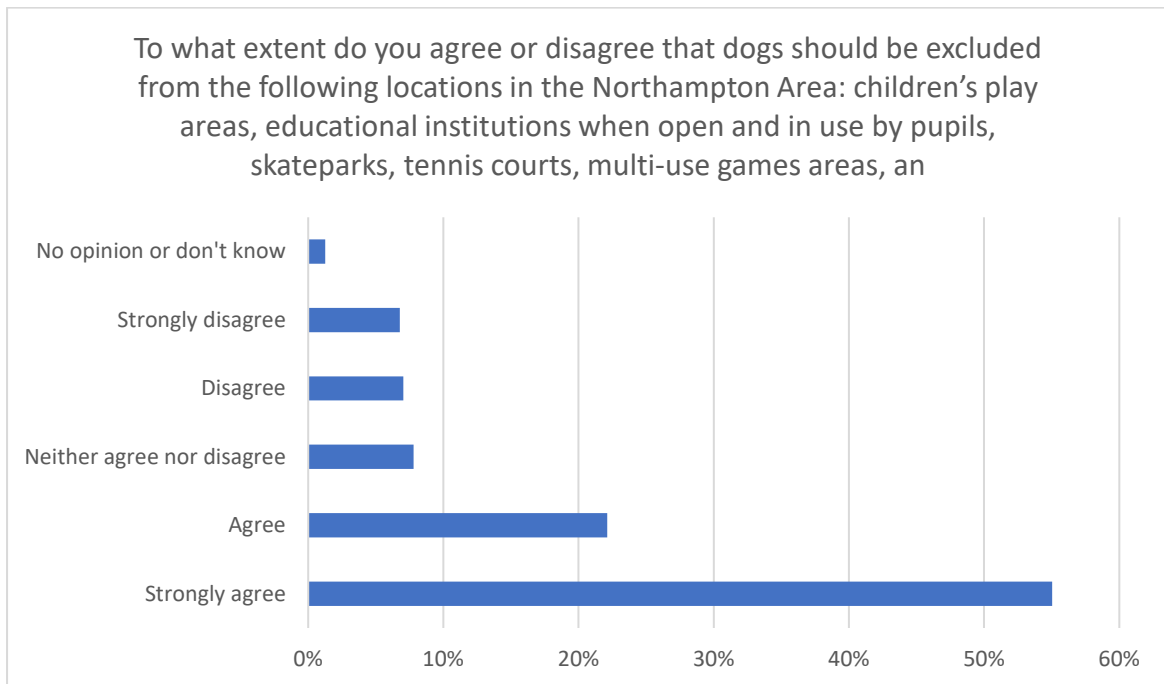
This measure provides that dogs are excluded from the following areas: Children's play areas, educational institutions, skateparks, tennis courts, multi-use games areas, and bowling greens.

Further information: Dogs are currently excluded from all children's play areas containing children's play equipment such as slides, swings, climbing frames, and which are either enclosed on all sides by fences, or by other structures or markings that define the boundary of the play area such as wood chip or safety surface, within the former Daventry and South Northants Areas. These described boundaries make it easy for people to identify the extent of the dog exclusion area. By describing the types of areas where dogs are not allowed, rather than by specifying named and mapped areas, we ensure that newly created or developing play areas, educational institutions, skateparks, tennis courts, multi-use games areas and bowling greens, fenced or otherwise, are included, ensuring a common approach across the area covered by the current WNC PSPO and giving residents certainty should future planned development take place.

**Table 3a: To what extent do you agree or disagree that dogs should be excluded from the following locations in the Northampton Area: children’s play areas, educational institutions when open and in use by pupils, skateparks, tennis courts, multi-use games areas, and bowling greens?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	219	55%
Agree	88	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	31	8%
Disagree	28	7%
Strongly disagree	27	7%
No opinion or don't know	5	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100%</b>

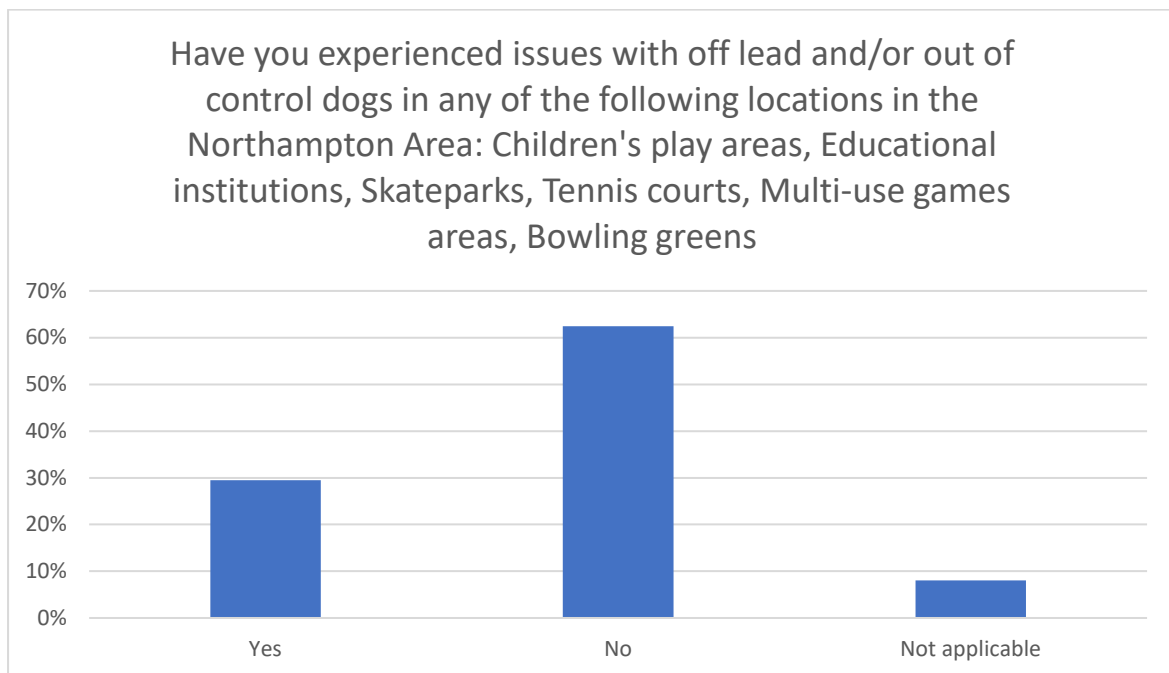
### Chart 3a.



**Table 3b: Have you experienced issues with off lead and/or out of control dogs in any of the following locations in the Northampton Area: Children's play areas, Educational institutions, Skateparks, Tennis courts, Multi-use games areas, Bowling greens?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	117	29%
No	248	62%
Not applicable	32	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Chart 3b.



### 4 Dogs on leads in specific open spaces

This proposal requires persons in control of a dog to ensure that it is kept on a lead at all times whilst in the following: Cemeteries, burial sites, graveyards, memorial gardens, allotments, car parks to which the public have access to, sports grounds, fields, and pitches when in use for an authorised activity, land near schools when open and in use by pupils, Northampton Town Centre and Upton Country Park Phase 2.

Further information: Allowing dogs to enter cemeteries, burial sites, graveyards and/or memorial gardens and allotments whilst on a lead, means owners could keep their dogs with them to ensure their dog may not be stressed by separation and it may also reduce risk of theft of the dog if it would otherwise be left unattended.

Authorised sporting activity means an organised sporting event such as an amateur football or rugby games, taking place on land which is owned, operated, managed, or maintained by the Council, Parish, Town or Community Council or any amateur sporting club. This proposal seeks to prevent dogs from running onto pitches during play and spoiling enjoyment for other users of the public open space.

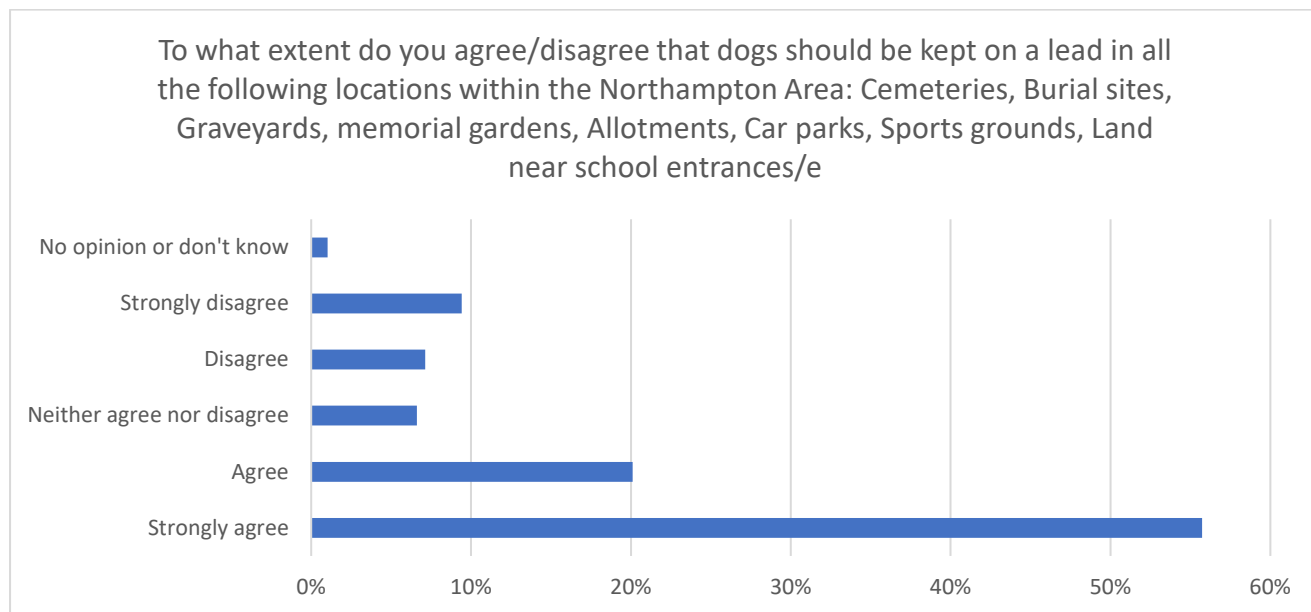
Where there are is a high prevalence of children, such as in schools, it is sensible to place dogs on a lead to ensure proper control and to minimise the chance of a dog fouling in the immediate area and it being trodden into buildings.

Requiring dogs to be walked on leads in Northampton town centre and at Upton Country Park has reduced the number of dog related incidents in these areas.

**Table 4a: To what extent do you agree or disagree that dogs should be kept on a lead in all the following locations within the Northampton Area: Cemeteries, Burial sites, Graveyards, memorial gardens, Allotments, Car parks, Sports grounds, sports fields and pitches when in use for authorised sporting activity, Land near school entrances/exits when open and in use by pupils, Northampton Town Centre and Upton Country Park, Phase 2?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	219	56%
Agree	79	20%
Neither agree nor disagree	26	7%
Disagree	28	7%
Strongly disagree	37	9%
No opinion or don't know	4	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>100%</b>

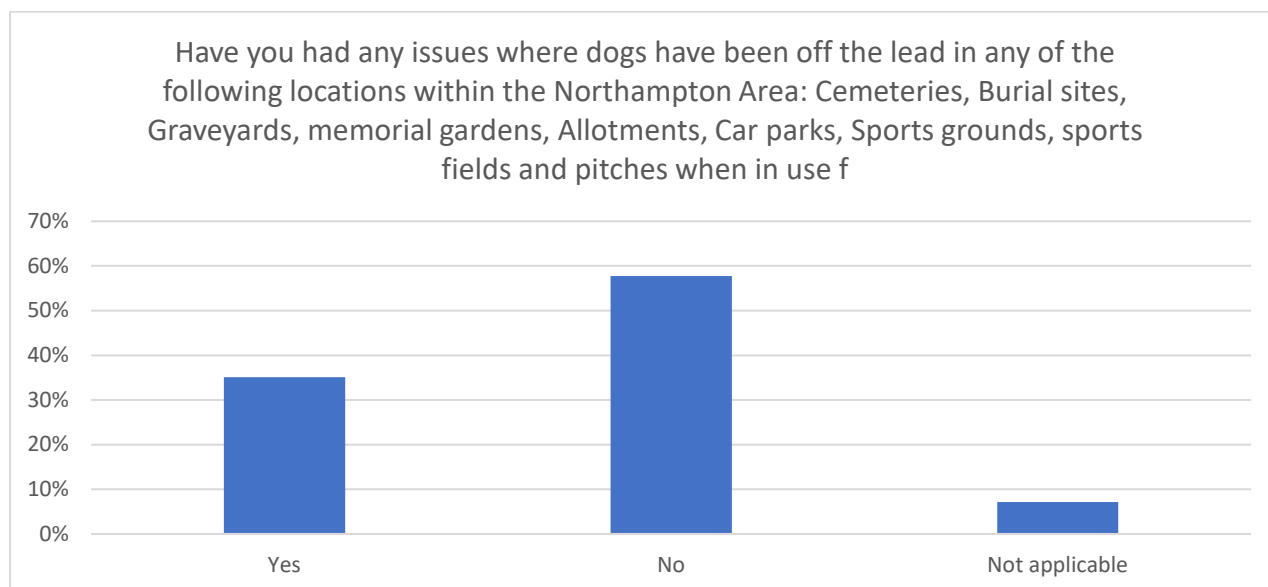
## Chart 4a.



**Table 4b: Have you had any issues where dogs have been off the lead in any of the following locations within the Northampton Area: Cemeteries, Burial sites, Graveyards, memorial gardens, Allotments, Car parks, Sports grounds, sports fields and pitches when in use for authorised sporting activity, Land near school entrances/exits when open and in use by pupils, Northampton Town Centre and Upton Country Park?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	138	35%
No	227	58%
Not applicable	28	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Chart 4b.



## 5 Dogs on leads by direction

This measure requires those responsible for the dog or dogs to place them on a lead when asked to do so by an authorised person.

Further information: For animal welfare reasons, it is advantageous for dog owners to be able to exercise their dogs off lead in open spaces. WNC recognises that most dog owners act responsibly and keep their dogs under the appropriate level of control when they are out. However, if they are not properly supervised and controlled, dogs that are allowed off a lead in public areas can cause nuisance or even injury to members of the public or other animals and could cause road traffic accidents. In such circumstances, we believe the option should exist for authorised person to require a dog to be put on a lead. Authorised persons will carry appropriate identification.

This proposal will help WNC to deal with any behaviour by a dog that is likely to cause annoyance or disturbance without introducing overly restrictive measures on all dogs and dog owners at all times. This flexible approach will also allow officers to address issues that arise in any area at any time during the lifetime of the Order.

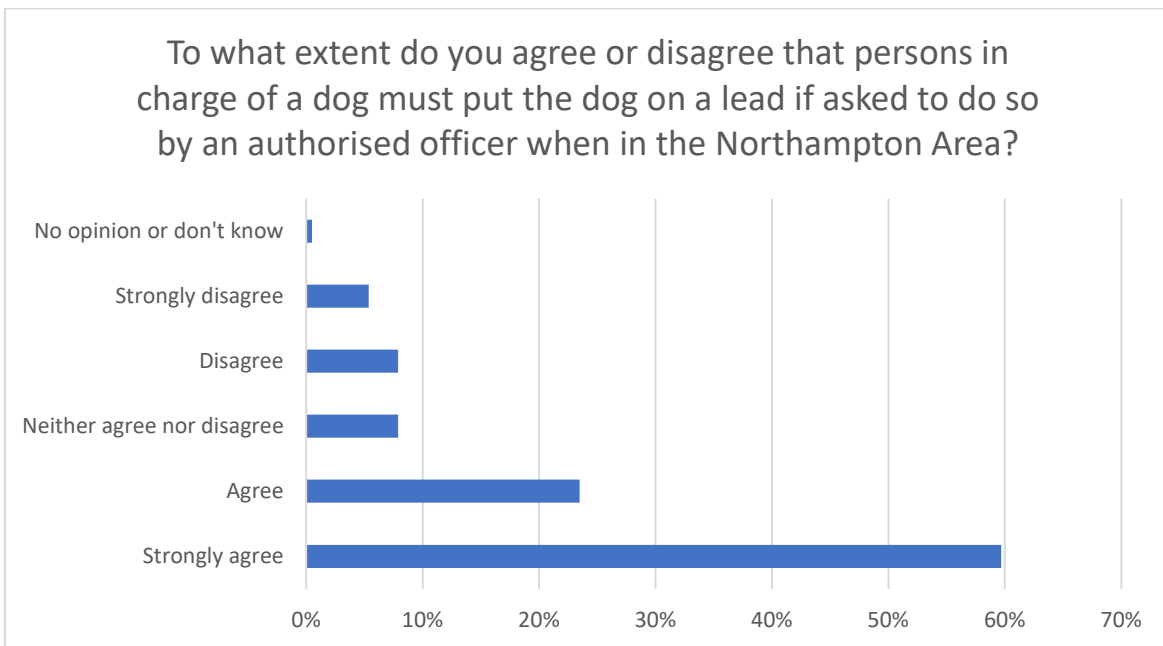
## Table 5a: To what extent do you agree or disagree that persons in charge of a dog must put the dog on a lead if asked to do so by an authorised officer when in the Northampton Area?

Response	Count	Percentage
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Strongly agree	234	60%
Agree	92	23%
Neither agree nor disagree	31	8%
Disagree	12	8%
Strongly disagree	21	5%
No opinion or don't know	2	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Chart 5a.**

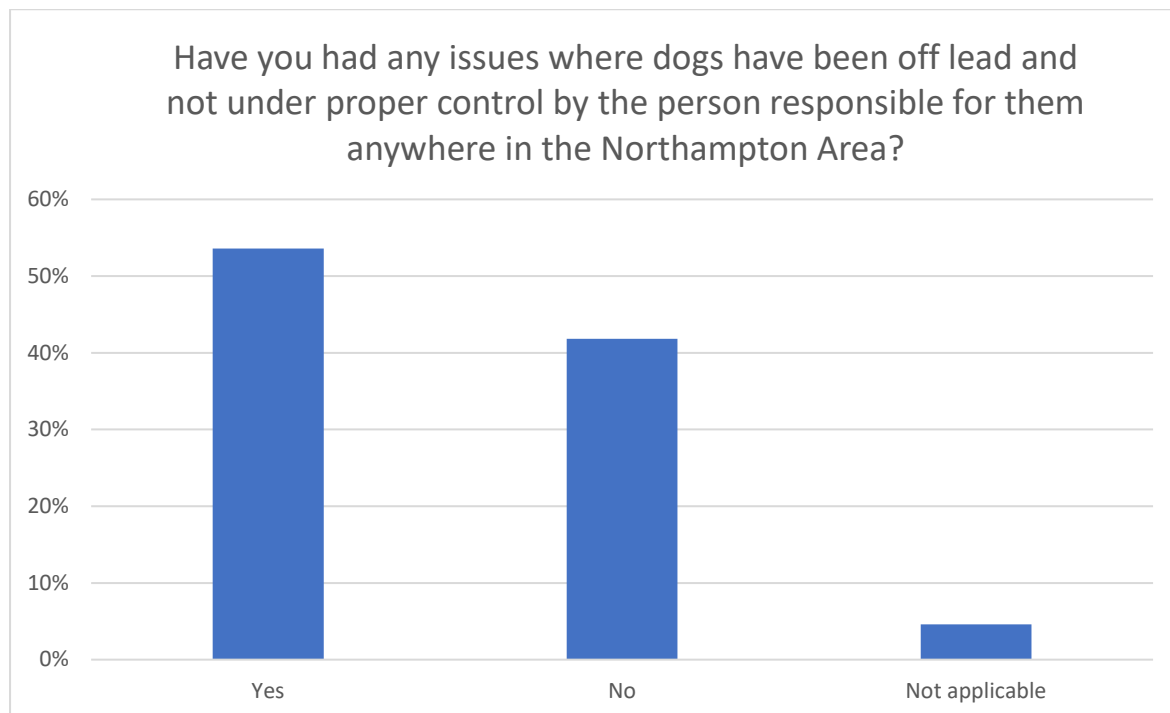


**Table 5b: Have you had any issues where dogs have been off lead and not under proper control by the person responsible for them anywhere in the Northampton Area?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	210	54%
No	164	42%

Not applicable	18	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Chart 5b.**



## **6 Maximum number of dogs permitted to be walked at any one time**

This measure will limit the maximum number of dogs walked by any one person at any one time to 4. This applies to those who professionally walk dogs including charities, and dog owners, unless they are permitted by the council to walk more.

Conversations are currently taking place with representatives of professional dog walkers and consideration is being given to the development of a licensing scheme and associated code of conduct for professional dog walkers.

Further information: This could potentially apply to all dog walkers; those who walk dogs professionally and dog owners, unless expressly permitted or authorised by WNC.

A maximum number of 4 dogs has been recommended in Professional Dog Walker Guidelines produced by The Pet Industry Federation, RSPCA, and The Dogs Trust.

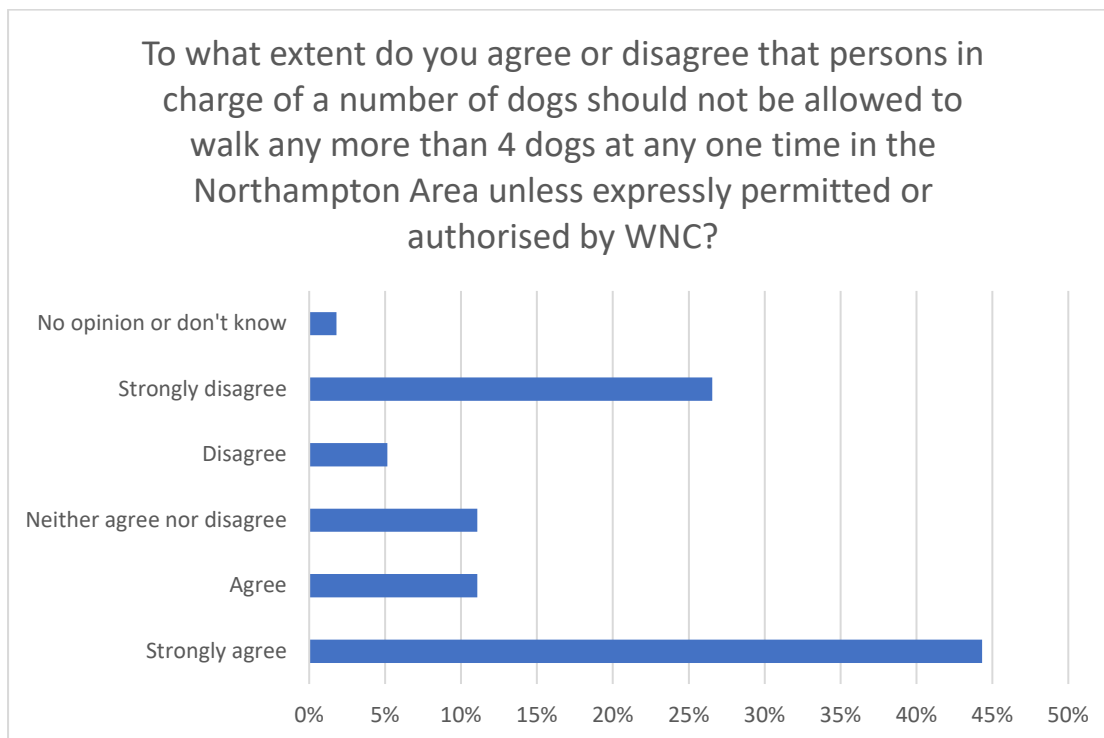
Dogs Trust research from 2010 shows that 95% of dog owners have up to 3 dogs. Therefore, the number of dogs taken out on to land by one individual would not normally be expected to exceed four dogs.

The intended effect of limiting the number of dogs to be taken onto a public place to 4 will help minimise risks associated with 'pack mentality', and to reduce the impact on pedestrians and other dog walkers, whilst still affording those with multiple dogs and/or those who walk dogs on behalf of others the opportunity to exercise their dogs.

**Table 6a: To what extent do you agree or disagree that persons in charge of a number of dogs should not be allowed to walk any more than 4 dogs at any one time in the Northampton Area unless expressly permitted or authorised by WNC?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	172	44%
Agree	43	11%
Neither agree nor disagree	43	11%
Disagree	20	5%
Strongly disagree	103	27%
No opinion or don't know	7	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100%</b>

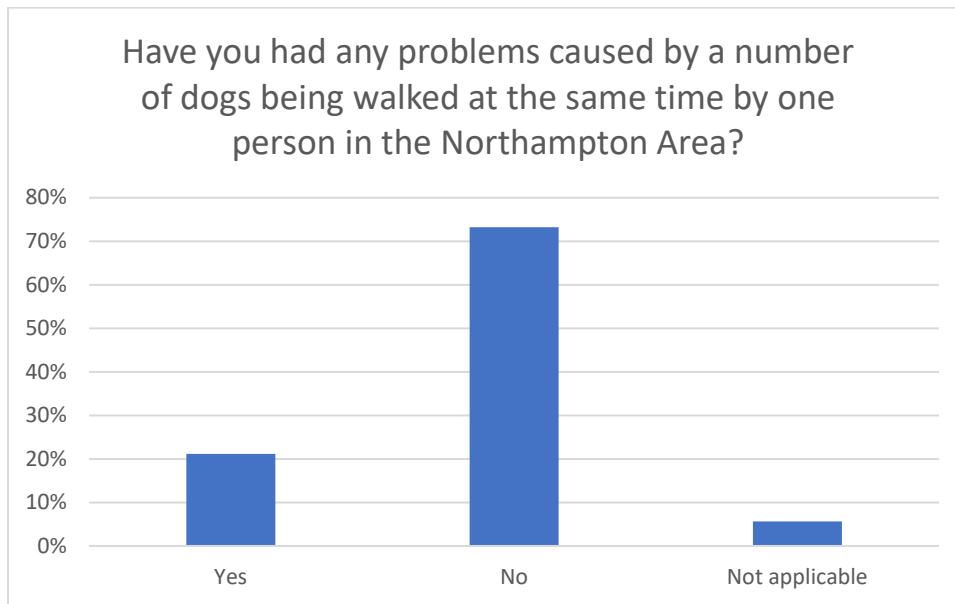
## Chart 6a.



## Table 6b: Have you had any problems caused by a number of dogs being walked at the same time by one person in the Northampton Area?

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	82	21%
No	284	73%
Not applicable	22	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Chart 6b.



## 7 Prohibition of smoking in certain public open spaces

This requirement disallows smoking (of any kind including electronic and herbal) in the following areas: Children’s play areas, land near schools when open and in use by pupils, skate parks, tennis courts, multi-use games areas, and bowling greens.

Further information: In Northamptonshire there are approximately 96,000 smokers, with the County seeing more than 7,000 hospital admissions, 300,000 GP appointments and more than 1,000 smoking related deaths each year. As part of The Council's commitment to public health in Northamptonshire, we need to do all we can to reduce exposure to second-hand smoke and make smoking less visible to children.

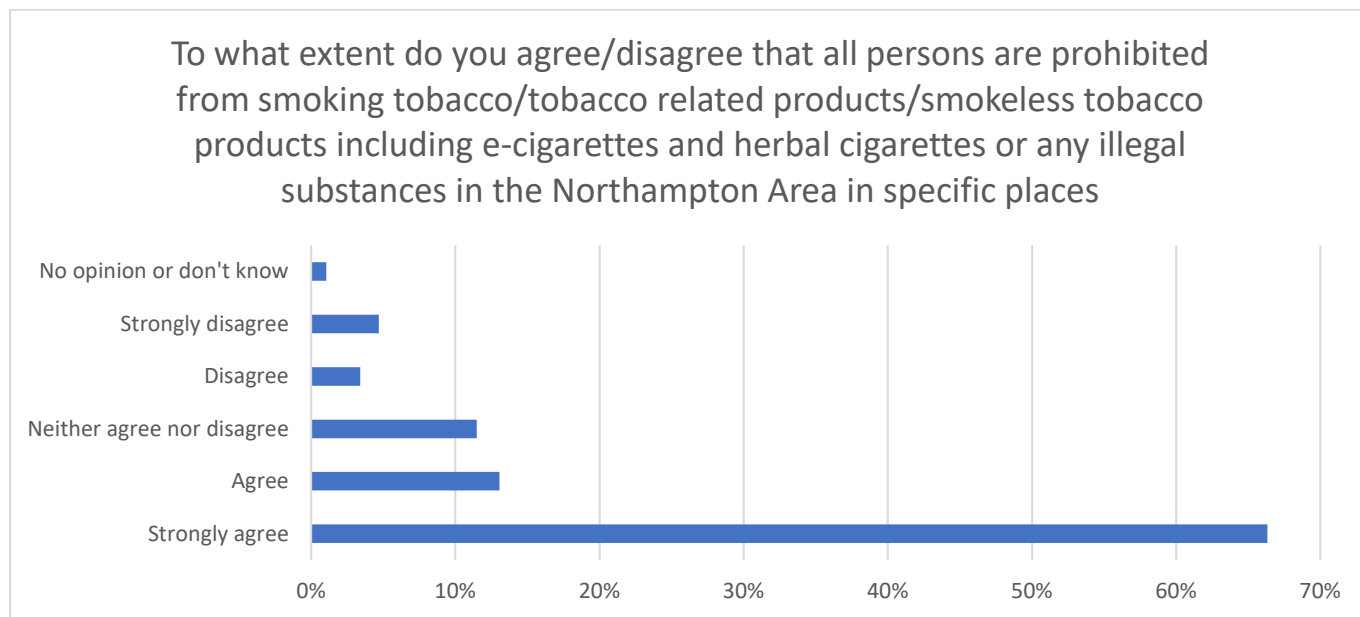
Children’s play areas, playgrounds, educational institutions, skateparks, tennis courts, multi-use games areas, bowling greens, (fenced or otherwise) are all public places for residents to visit and use to maintain and enjoy a healthy lifestyle, this can be supported with the banning of smoking in these areas.

A no smoking requirement has already been adopted across all Country Park play areas in West and North Northamptonshire and across Daventry and South Northants. A common approach across the whole of West Northamptonshire to include the Northampton Area should give residents certainty and clarity of the requirement. The prohibiting of smoking in these areas will help reduce littering of cigarettes and associated items and will help keep open spaces safer, cleaner, and greener for all.

**Table 7a: To what extent do you agree or disagree that all persons are prohibited from smoking tobacco, tobacco related products, smokeless tobacco products including electronic cigarettes and herbal cigarettes or any illegal substances in the Northampton Area in all the following locations, whether fenced or otherwise: Children's play areas, Land near an entrance or exit of a school when open and in use by pupils, Skateparks, Tennis courts, Multi-use games areas, Bowling greens?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	254	66%
Agree	50	13%
Neither agree nor disagree	44	11%
Disagree	13	3%
Strongly disagree	18	5%
No opinion or don't know	4	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>100%</b>

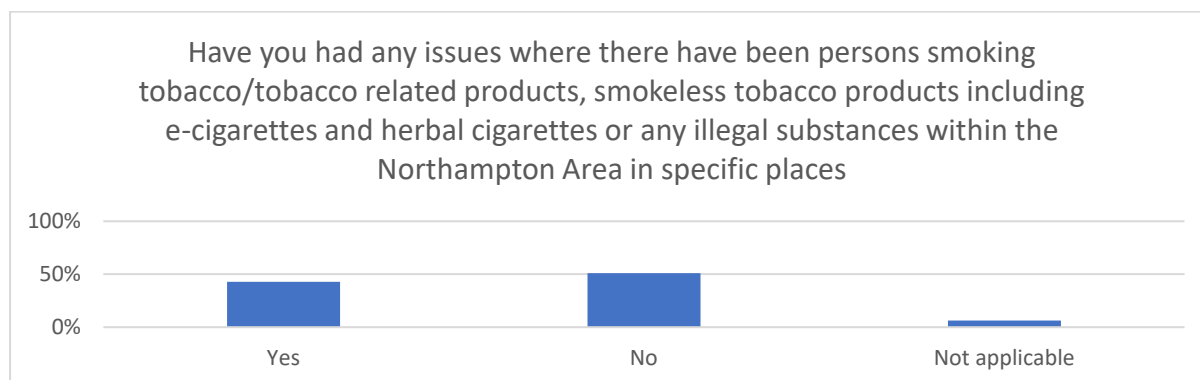
## Chart 7a.



**Table 7b: Have you had any issues where there have been persons smoking tobacco, tobacco related products, smokeless tobacco products including electronic cigarettes and herbal cigarettes or any illegal substances within the following locations in the Northampton Area, whether fenced or otherwise: Children's play areas, Land near an entrance or exit of a school when open and in use by pupils, Skateparks, Tennis courts, Multi-use games areas, Bowling greens?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	164	43%
No	195	51%
Not applicable	24	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Chart 7b.



## 8 Breach of the PSPO

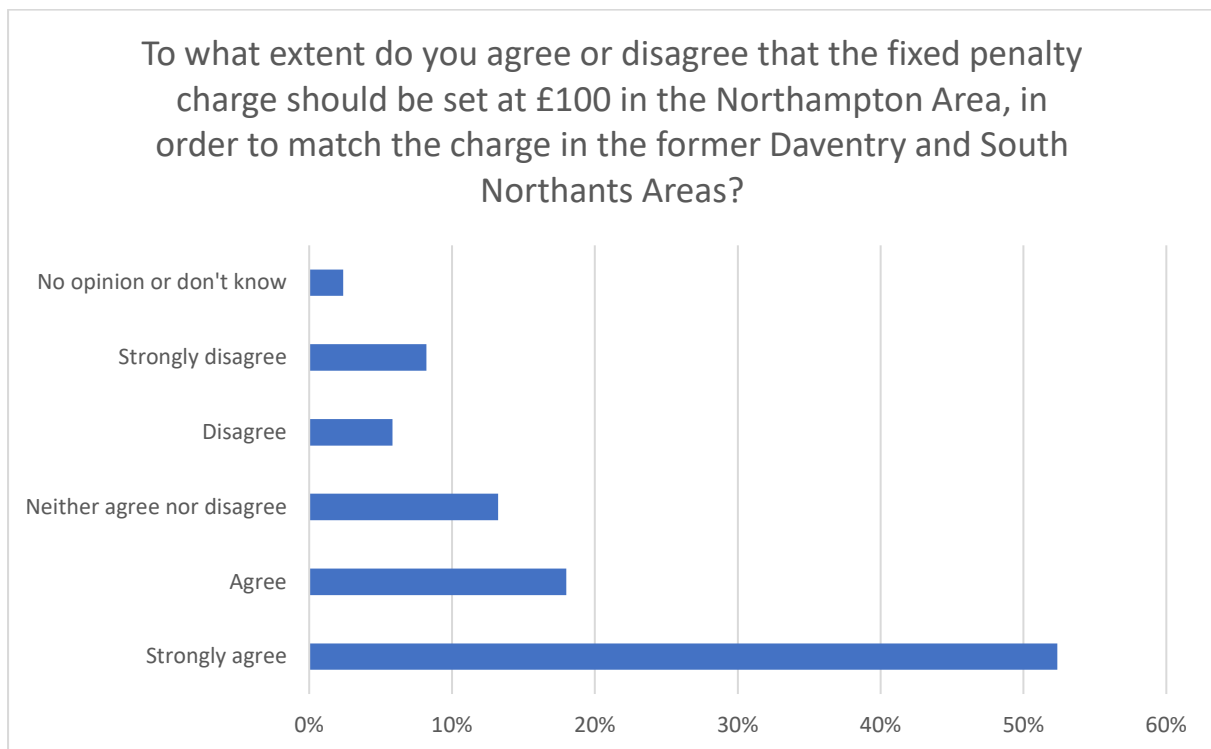
The maximum fixed penalty charge for breaches of the PSPO permitted by the Act is £100 which can help act as an effective deterrent against non-compliance of the PSPO. Any enforcement including the issuing of fixed penalty notices will be undertaken in line with the Council's Enforcement Policy. The penalty charge for breach of the current WNC PSPO is £100, and this will now apply to all of West Northamptonshire.

### **Table 8a: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the fixed penalty charge should be set at £100 in the Northampton Area, in order to match the charge in the former Daventry and South Northants Areas?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly agree	198	52%
Agree	68	18%
Neither agree nor disagree	50	13%
Disagree	22	6%
Strongly disagree	31	8%
No opinion or don't know	9	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100%</b>



## Chart 8a.



## 9 Variation of the existing PSPO

The following questions relate to dogs on lead and applies to Northampton Town Centre and Upton Country Park.

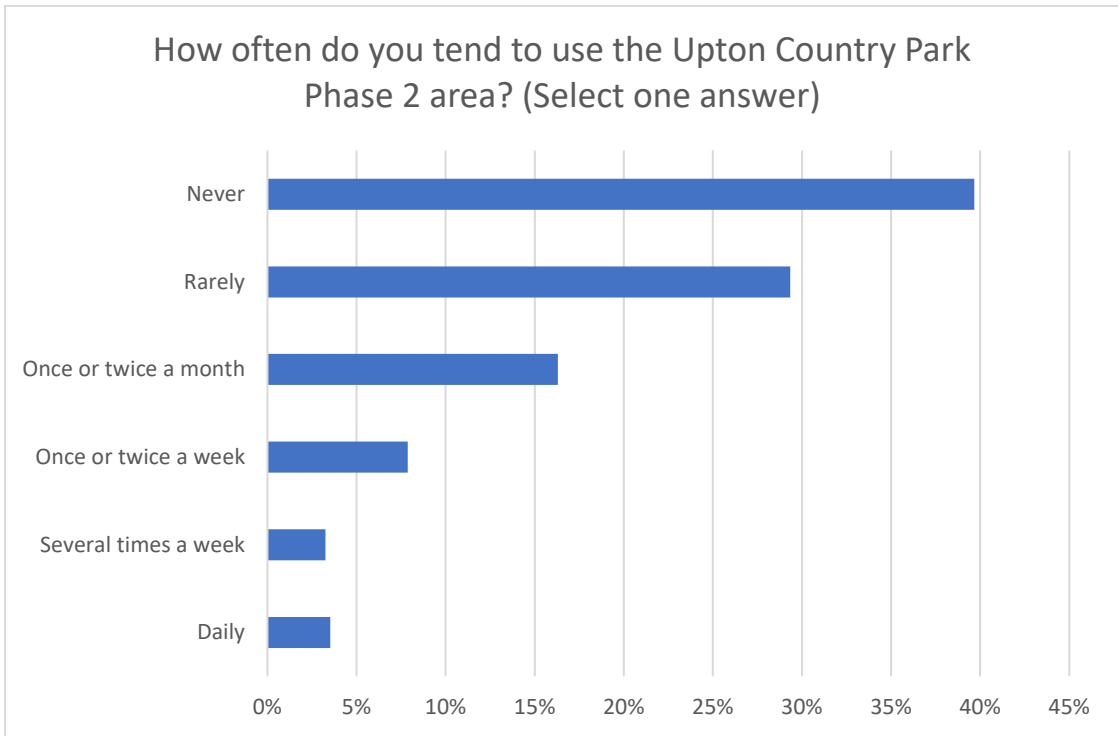
Further information: Requiring dogs to be walked on leads in Northampton Town Centre and also at Upton Country Park has reduced the number of dog related incidents in these areas. This requirement already applies to these areas because of an existing PSPO but this expires in September 2023 unless included within a varied WNC Order.

### Table 9a: How often do you tend to use the Upton Country Park Phase 2 area? (Select one answer)

Response	Count	Percentage
Daily	13	4%
Several times a week	12	3%
Once or twice a week	29	8%

Once or twice a month	60	16%
Rarely	108	29%
Never	146	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>100%</b>

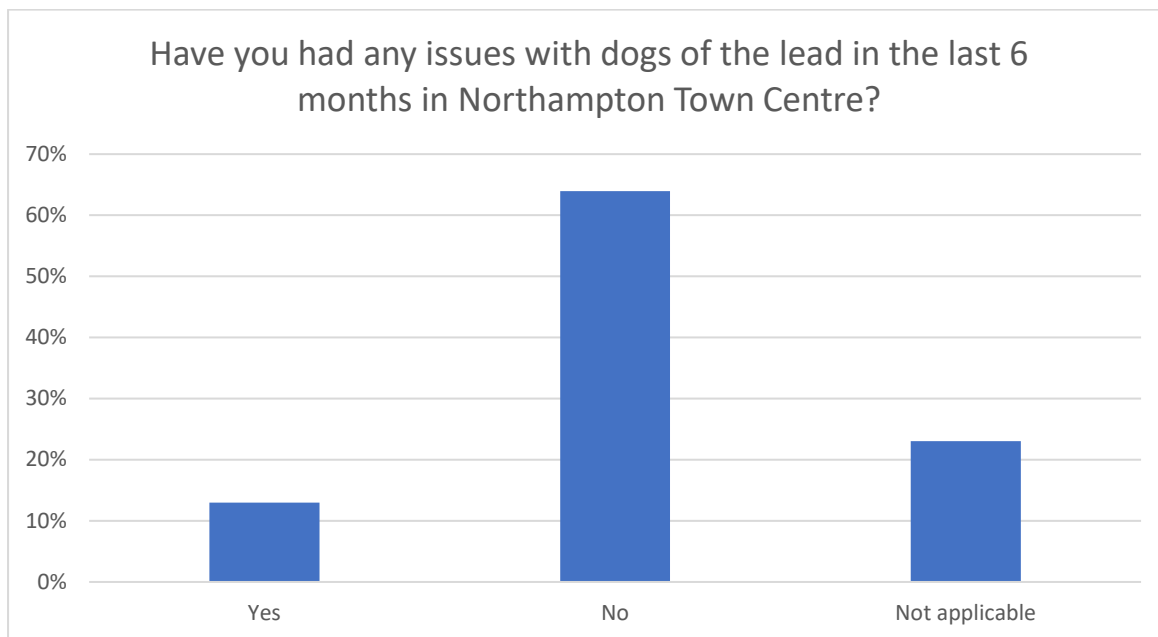
**Chart 9a.**



**Table 9b: Have you had any issues with dogs off the lead in the following areas in the last 6 months in Northampton town Centre?:**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	48	13%
No	236	64%
Not applicable	85	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>100%</b>

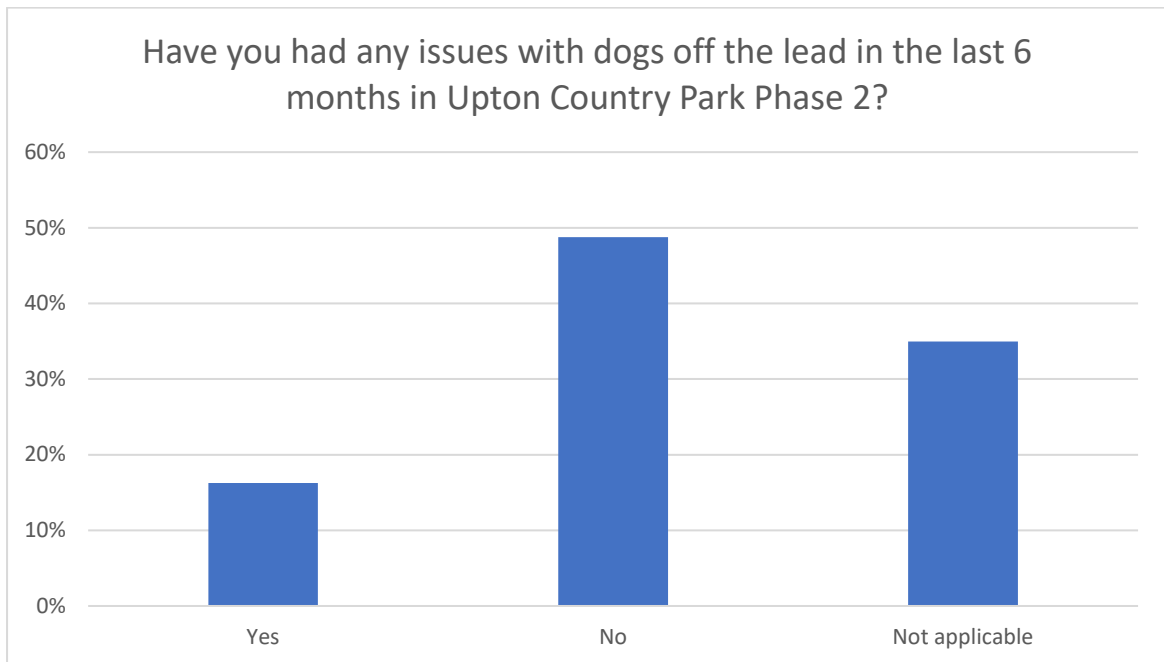
## Chart 9b.



**Table 9c: Have you had any issues with dogs off the lead in the following areas in the last 6 months at Upton Country Park Phase 2?:**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	60	16%
No	180	49%
Not applicable	129	35%
<b>Total</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>100%</b>

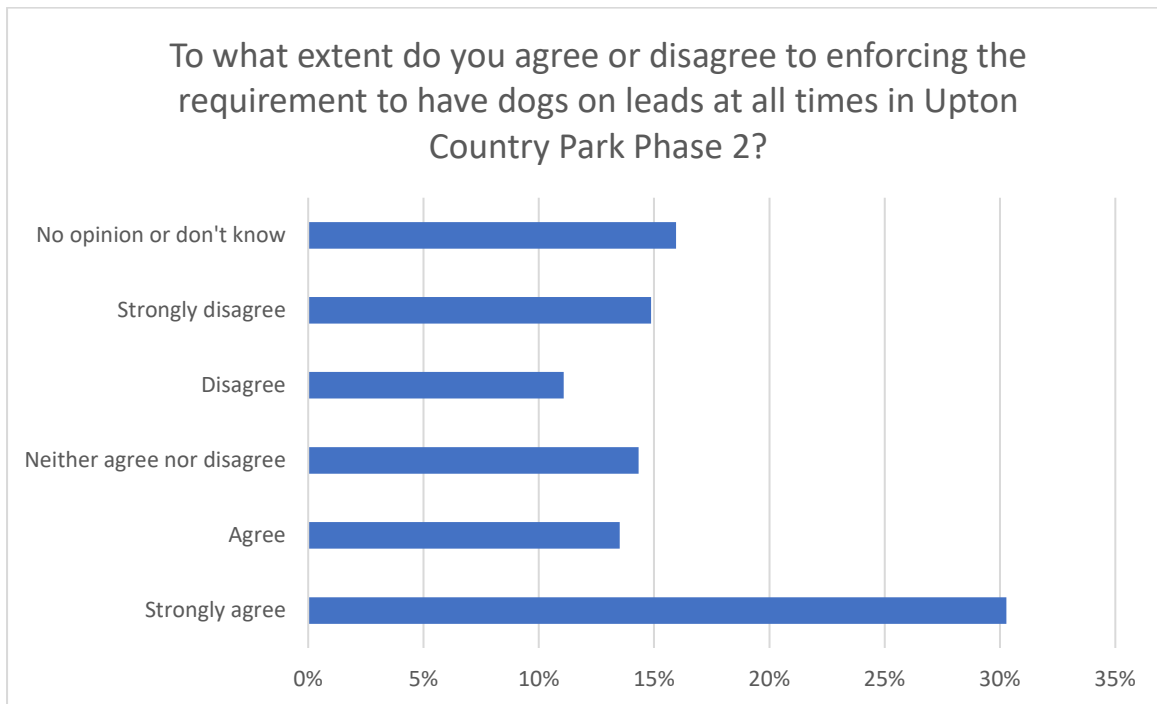
### Chart 9c.



**Table 9d: To what extent do you agree or disagree to enforcing the requirement to have dogs on leads at all times in Upton Country Park Phase 2?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	112	30%
Agree	50	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	53	14%
Disagree	41	11%
Strongly disagree	55	15%
No opinion or don't know	59	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100%</b>

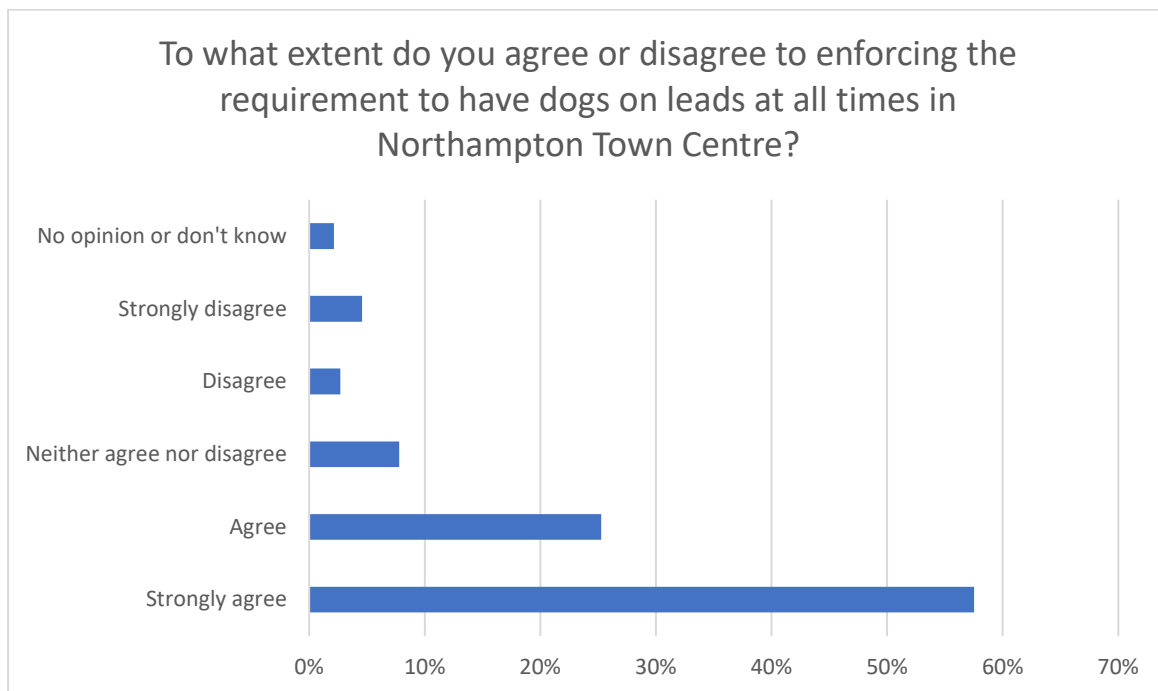
## Chart 9d.



**Table 9e: To what extent do you agree or disagree to enforcing the requirement to have dogs on leads at all times in Northampton Town Centre?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	214	58%
Agree	94	25%
Neither agree nor disagree	29	8%
Disagree	10	3%
Strongly disagree	17	5%
No opinion or don't know	8	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>100%</b>

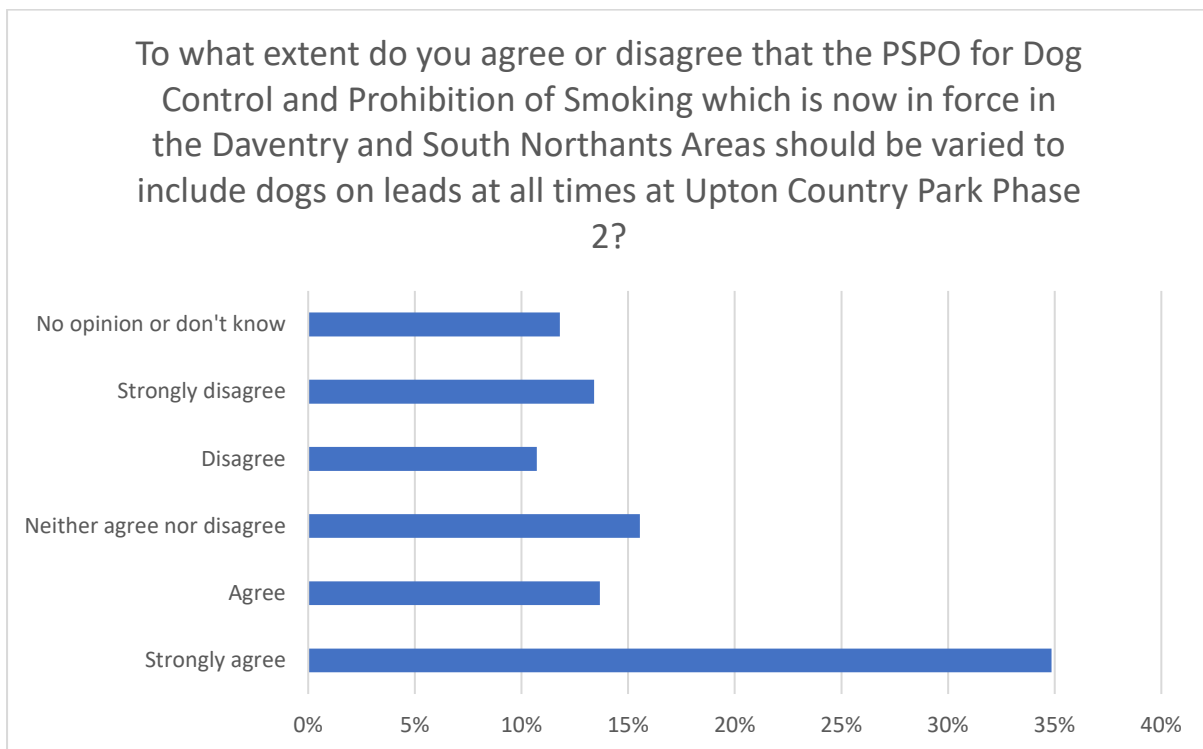
## Chart 9e.



**Table 9f: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the PSPO for Dog Control and Prohibition of Smoking which is now in force in the Daventry and South Northants Areas should be varied to include dogs on leads at all times at Upton Country Park Phase 2?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	130	35%
Agree	51	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	58	16%
Disagree	40	11%
Strongly disagree	50	13%
No opinion or don't know	44	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Chart 9f.

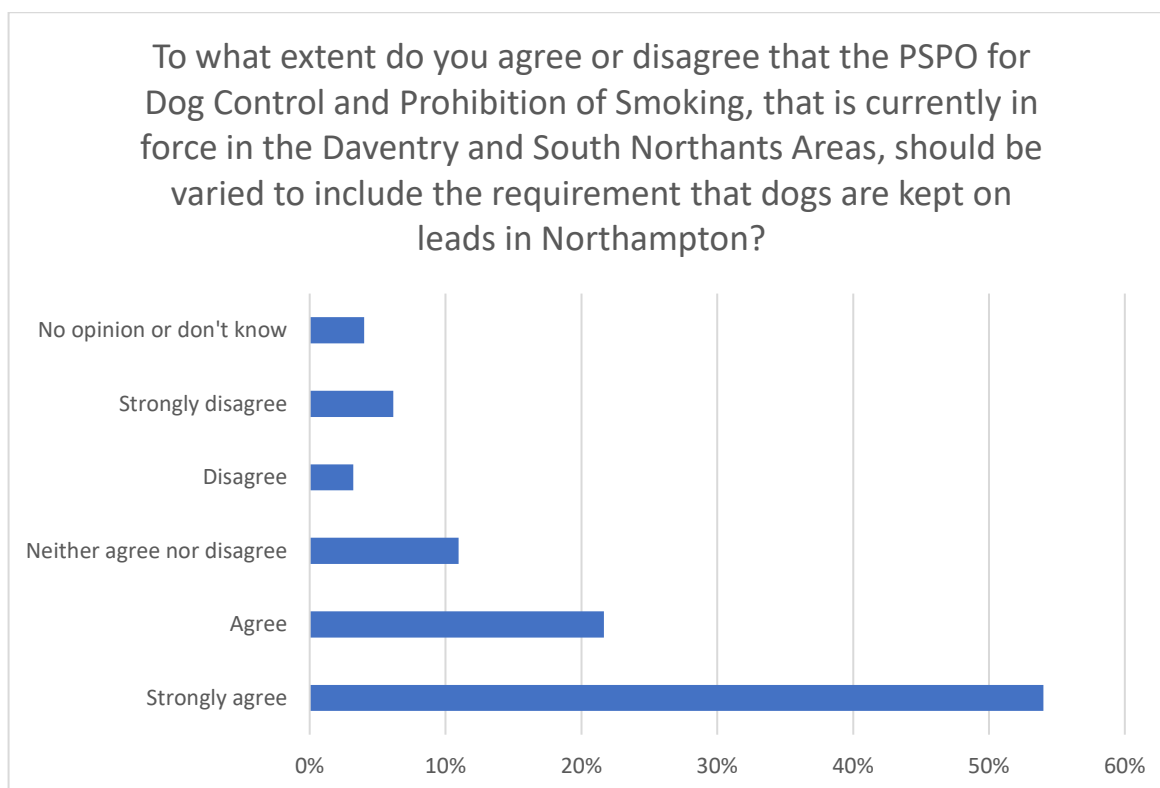


**Table 9g: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the PSPO for Dog Control and Prohibition of Smoking, that is currently in force in the Daventry and South Northants Areas, should be varied to include the requirement that dogs are kept on leads in Northampton Town Centre?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Strongly agree	202	54%
Agree	81	22%
Neither agree nor disagree	41	11%
Disagree	12	3%
Strongly disagree	23	6%
No opinion or don't know	15	4%

<b>Total</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>100%</b>
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### Chart 9g.



## 10 About you

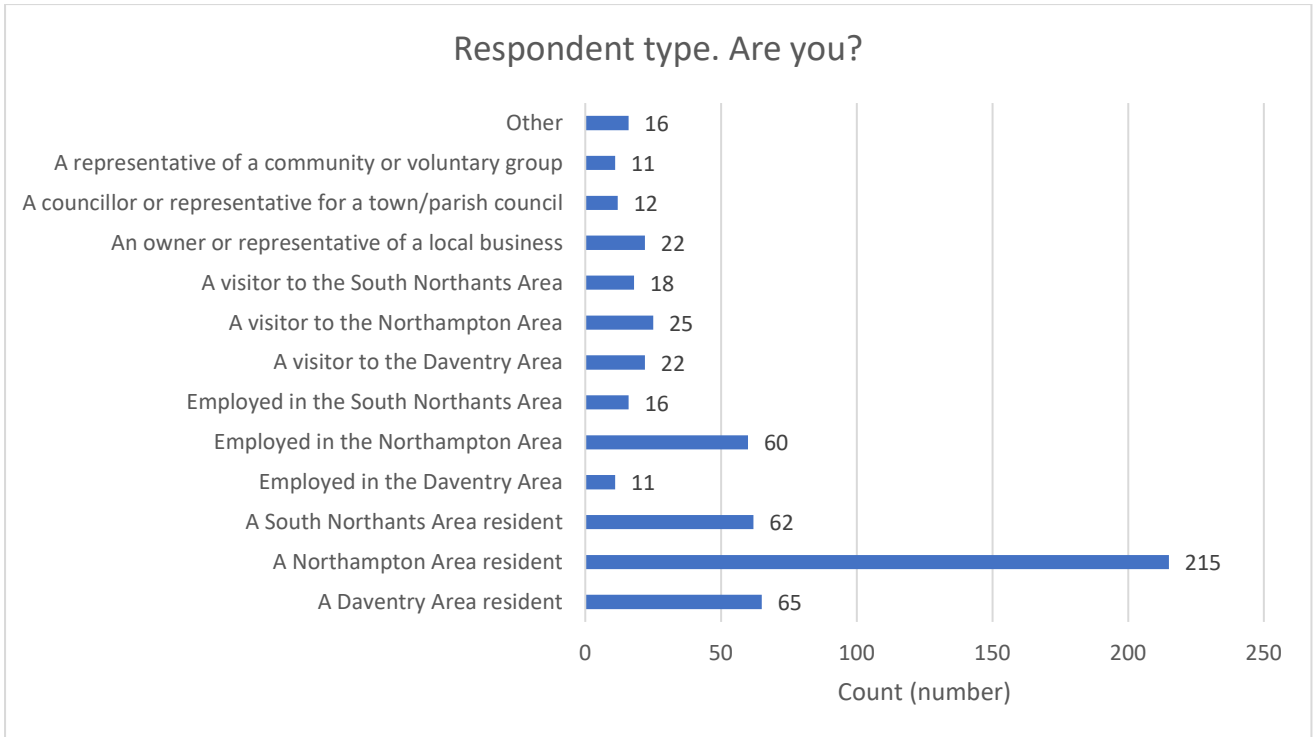
**Table 10a: Respondent type (multi-select option)**

<b>Respondent type</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A Daventry Area resident	65	11.7
A Northampton Area resident	215	38.7
A South Northants Area resident	62	11.2
Employed in the Daventry Area	11	2.0
Employed in the Northampton Area	60	10.8
Employed in the South Northants Area	16	2.9
A visitor to the Daventry Area	22	4.0



A visitor to the Northampton Area	25	4.5
A visitor to the South Northants Area	18	3.2
An owner or representative of a local business	22	4.0
A councillor or representative for a town/parish council	12	2.2
A representative of a community or voluntary group	11	2.0
Other	16	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Chart 10a.**

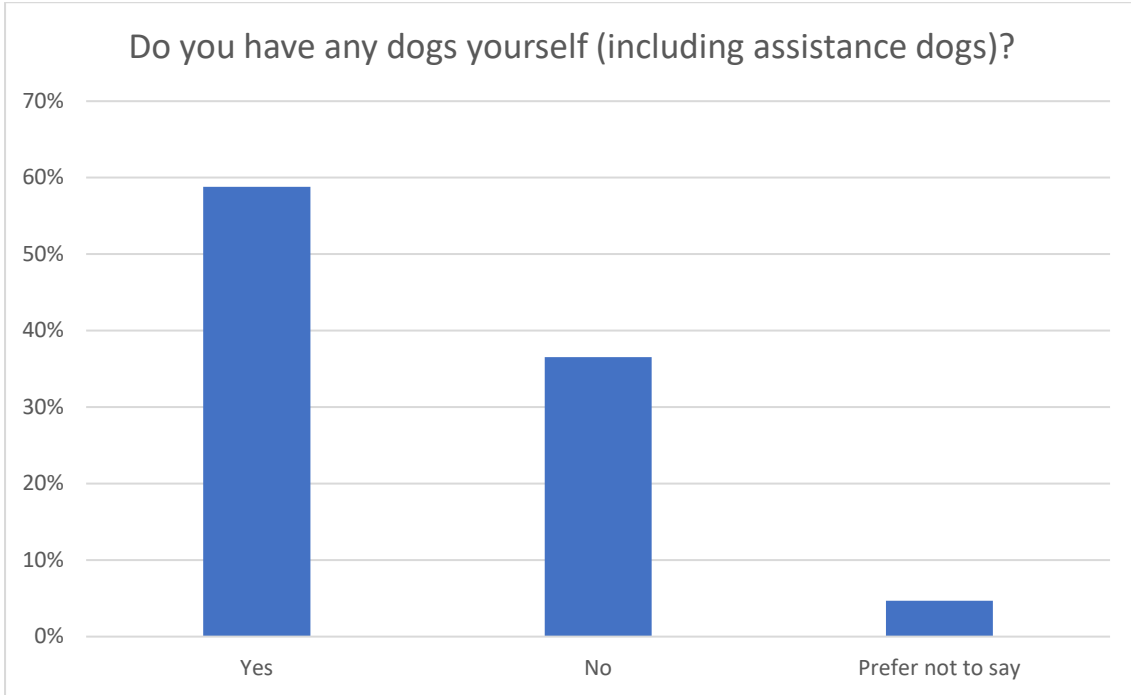


**Table 11: Do you have any dogs yourself (including assistance dog/s)?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	214	59%

No	133	37%
Prefer not to say	17	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>100%</b>

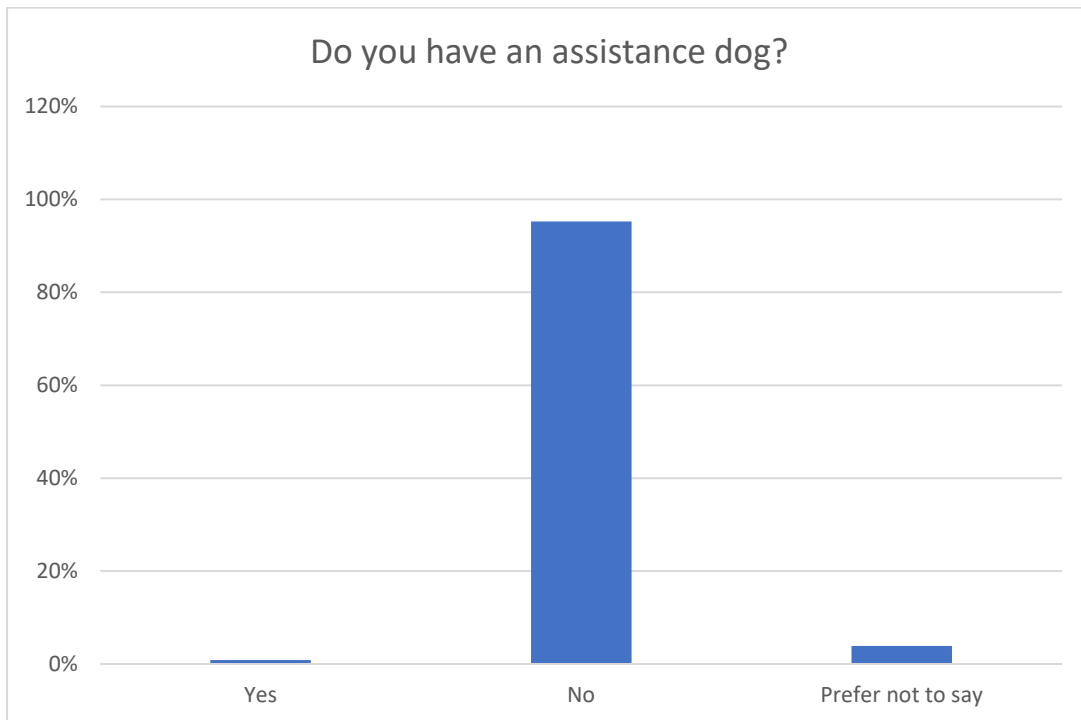
**Chart 11.**



**Table 12: Do you have an assistance dog?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	2	1%
No	221	95%
Prefer not to say	9	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>100%</b>

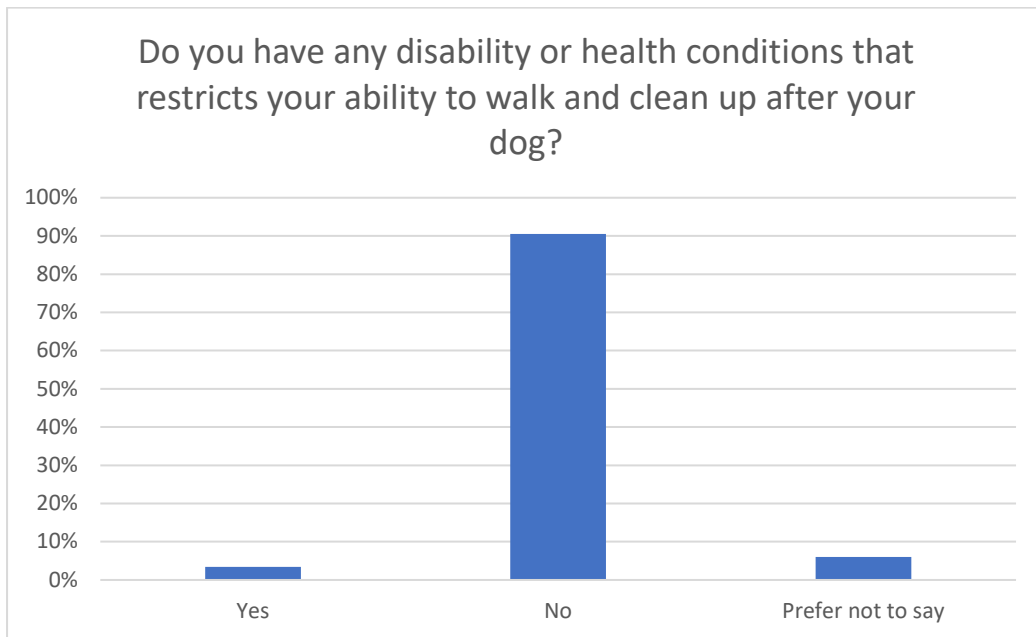
## Chart 12.



**Table 13: Do you have any disability or health conditions that restricts your ability to walk and clean up after your dog?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	8	3%
No	211	91%
Prefer not to say	14	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>100%</b>

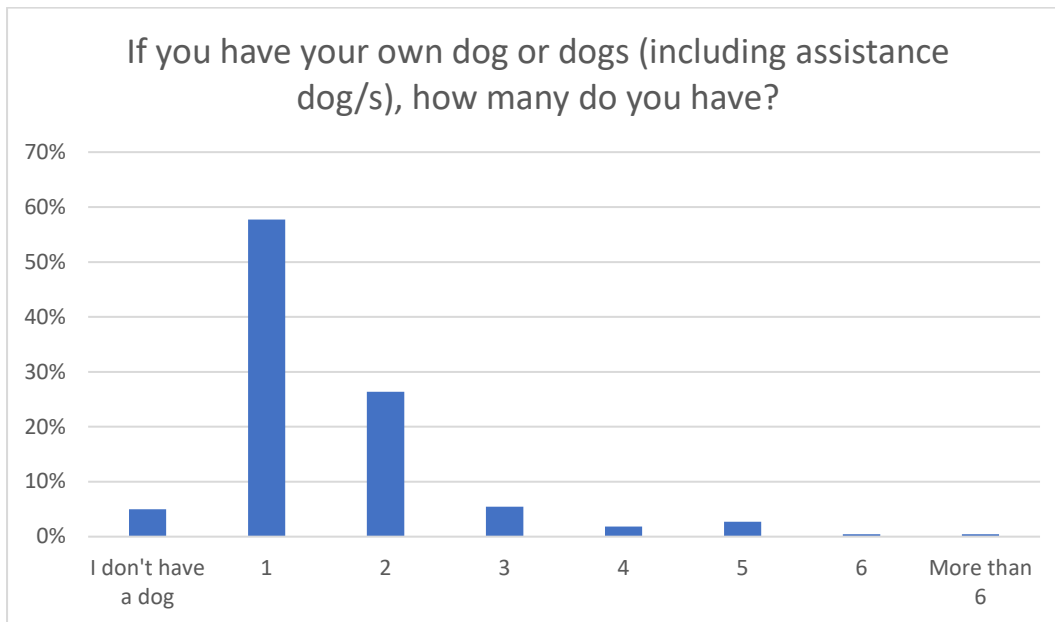
### Chart 13.



**Table 14: If you have your own dog or dogs (including assistance dog/s), how many do you have?**

Response	Count	Percentage
I don't have a dog	11	5%
1	127	58%
2	58	26%
3	12	5%
4	4	2%
5	6	3%
6	1	0%
More than 6	1	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100%</b>

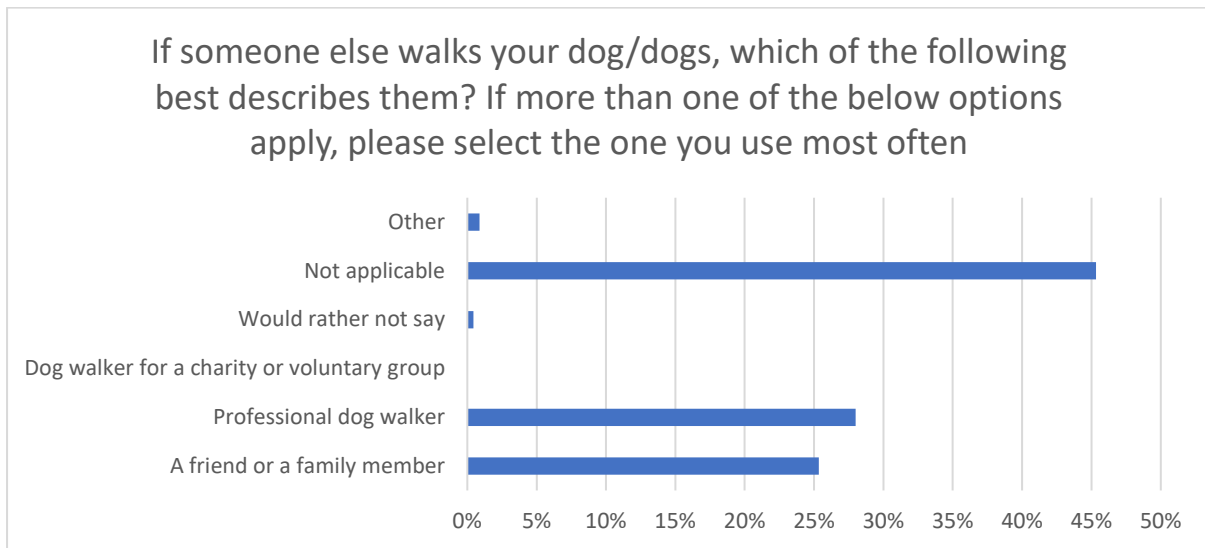
## Chart 14.



**Table 15: If someone else walks your dog/dogs, which of the following best describes them? If more than one of the below options apply, please select the one you use most often**

Response	Count	Percentage
A friend or a family member	57	25%
Professional dog walker	63	28%
Dog walker for a charity or voluntary group	0	0%
Would rather not say	1	0%
Not applicable	102	45%
Other	2	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>100%</b>

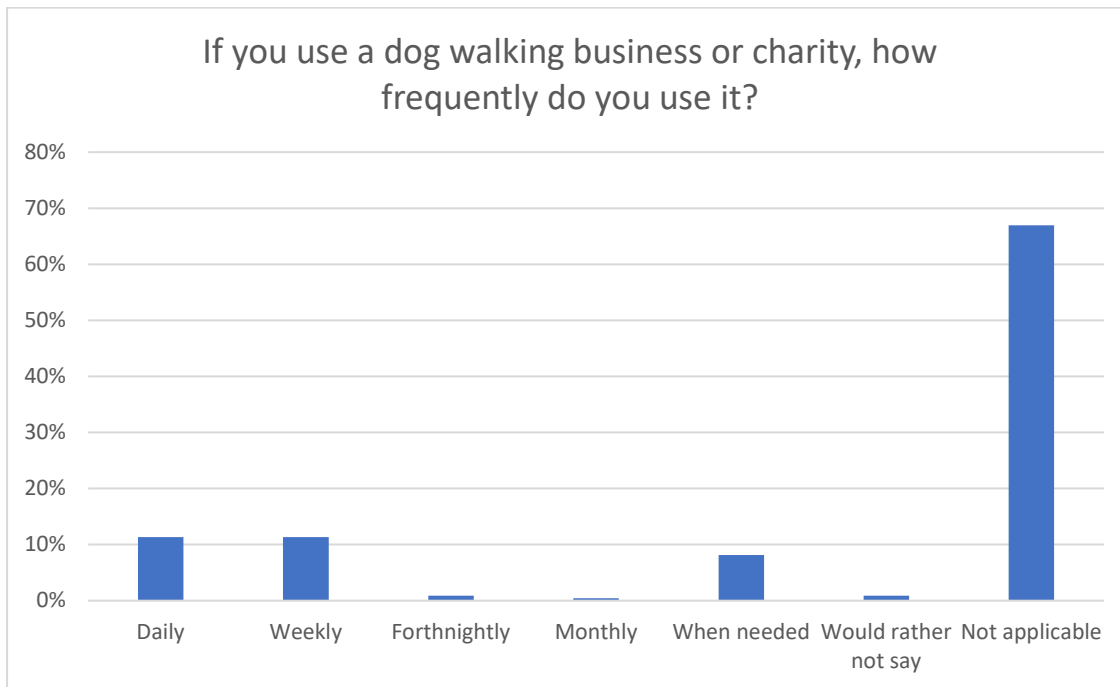
## Chart 15.



**Table 16: If you use a dog walking business or charity, how frequently do you use it?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Daily	25	11%
Weekly	25	11%
Fortnightly	2	1%
Monthly	1	0%
When needed	18	8%
Would rather not say	2	1%
Not applicable	148	67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>100%</b>

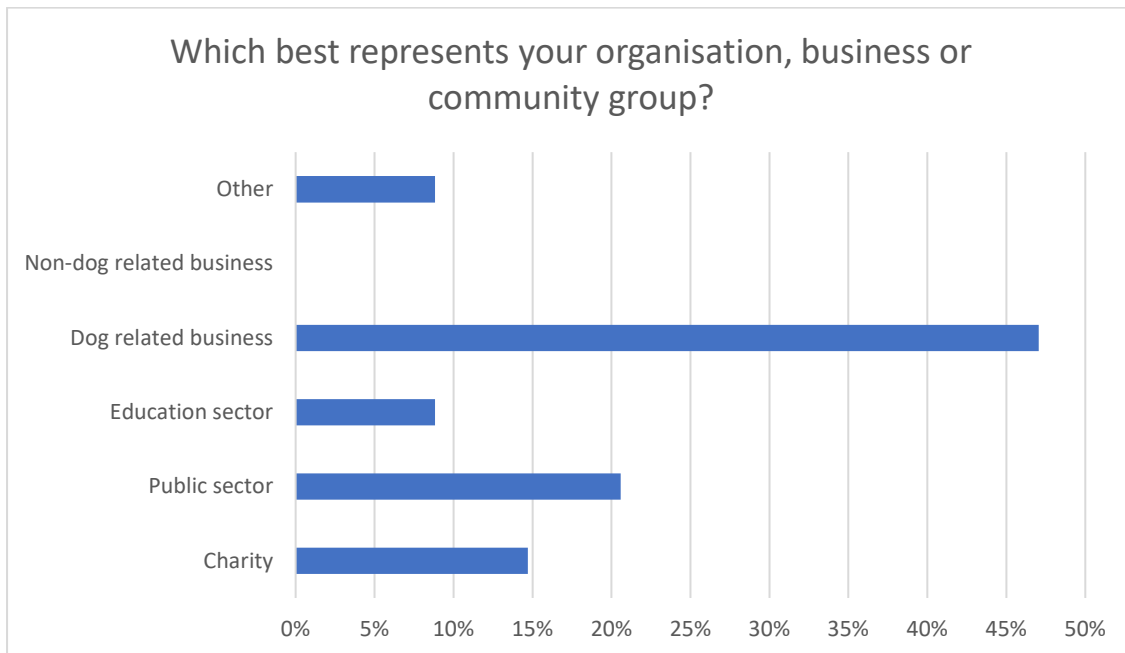
## Chart 16.



**Table 17: Of the Organisations who responded, which best represents your organisation, business or community group?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Charity	5	15%
Public sector	7	21%
Education sector	3	9%
Dog related business	16	47%
Non-dog related business	0	0%
Other	3	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Chart 17.

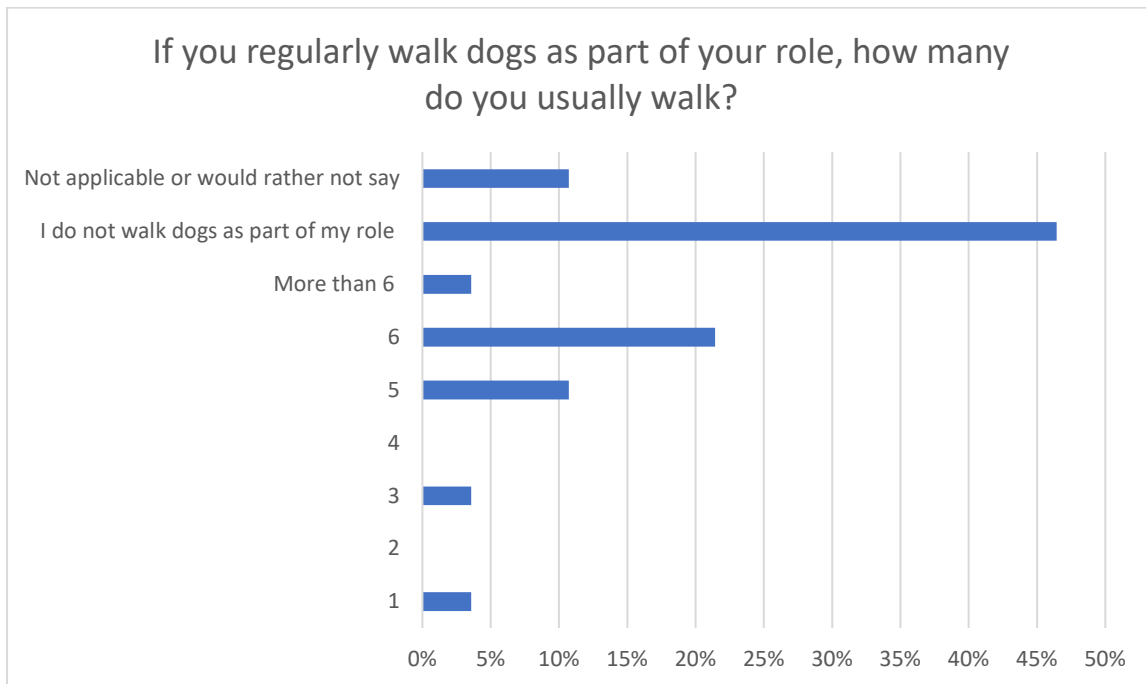


**Table 18: If you regularly walk dogs as part of your role, how many do you usually walk?**

Response	Count	Percentage
1	1	4%
2	0	0%
3	1	4%
4	0	0%
5	3	11%
6	6	21%
More than 6	1	4%
I do not walk dogs as part of my role	13	46%
Not applicable or would rather not say	3	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100%</b>



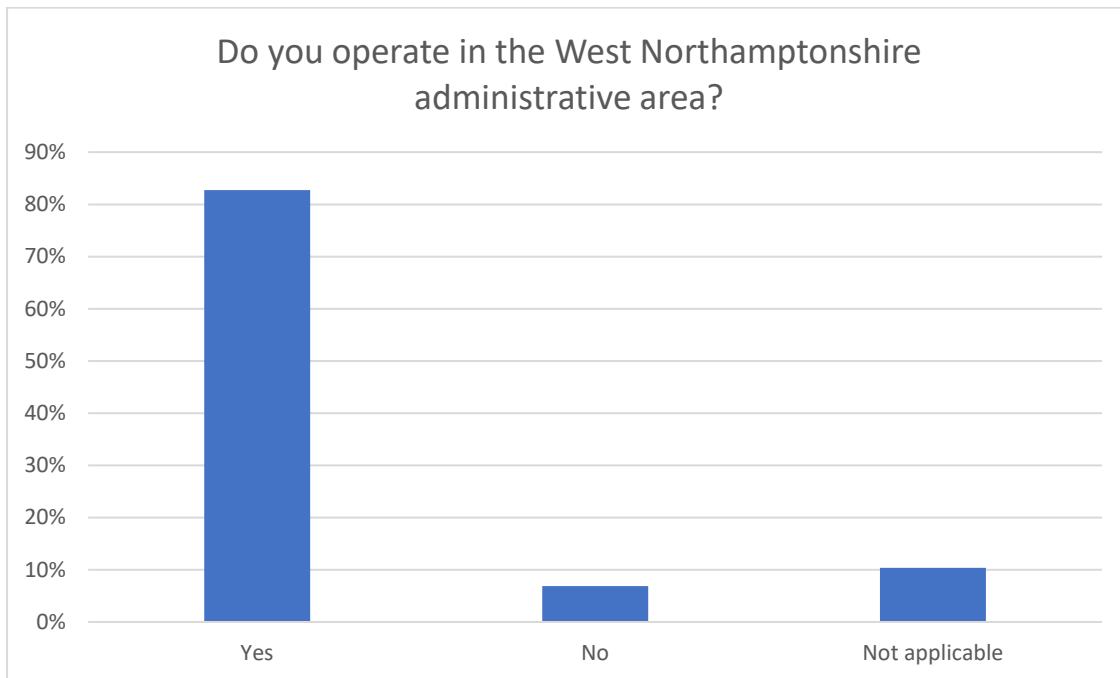
## Chart 18.



**Table 19: Do you operate in the West Northamptonshire administrative area?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	24	83%
No	2	7%
Not applicable	3	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Chart 19.



## Table 20: More about you: How would you describe yourself?

Response	Count	Percentage
Male	90	27%
Female	212	64%
Other	1	0%
Prefer not to say	27	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Table 21: How old are you?

Response	Count	Percentage
18 and under	1	0%
19 to 25	5	2%
26 to 35	31	9%

36 to 45	64	19%
46 to 55	88	27%
56 to 65	59	18%
66 to 75	43	13%
76 and over	10	3%
Prefer not to say	31	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 22: Are you currently pregnant or have you had a baby in the last 6 months?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	9	3%
No	264	82%
Prefer not to say	49	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 23: Do you consider yourself to be disabled or as having a long-term physical or mental health condition?**

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	56	17%
No	222	69%
Prefer not to say	44	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Communications

### Press release:

[Residents invited to have their say on new measures for public open spaces in Northampton | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Articles:**

Town and Parish Briefing article (sent to all parishes in West Northants)

Members' Briefing newsletter (sent to all WNC councillors)

## **Social media:**

6 posts

Reach: 16,725

Engagement (reactions, comments, shares): 194

## **PSPO variation comments:**

Comments from respondents have been redacted to remove personal information but are otherwise untouched to preserve transparency and openness.

Respondents were able to make comments about the PSPO, dog related issues or smoking and were prompted with a list of suggestions, these included:

### **Common themes**

The comments could refer to anything related to the Order. A list of common themes that were listed include:

Proposals or themes relating to dogs:

- Dog fouling
- Dog owners having the appropriate means to pick up after their dog
- Areas that dogs are excluded from such as play areas, schools, skate parks, tennis courts, multi-use games areas, bowling greens
- Requiring dogs to be kept on leads in cemeteries, memorial gardens, allotments, car parks, sports pitches, land near school entrances and exits.
- Dogs to be placed on lead when directed by a Council Authorised person
- Number of dogs being walked by a person at any one time
- Exemption from the existing WNC PSPO requirements i.e., if disabled, using assistance dog
- Proposal to vary the PSPO for dogs on lead in Northampton town centre
- Proposal to vary the PSPO for dogs on lead in Upton Country Park Phase 2
- Out of control dogs

- Irresponsible dog ownership (generally)
- Professional dog walkers
- Licensing schemes relating to the number of dogs permitted to be walked by one individual. i.e., possible professional dog walker licensing or animal boarding/day care licensing
- Dog waste bins/bags
- Length of dog leads
- Dog welfare concerns

Proposals or themes relating to smoking:

- Prohibiting of smoking or vaping in areas i.e., play area, land near school entrances and exits, skateparks, tennis courts, multi-use games areas, bowling greens

General themes:

- Geographic area covered by the PSPO
- Proposal to extend the existing PSPO to the Northampton Area
- Enforcement of the PSPO
- Fine/penalty charge related to the PSPO
- Education or signage of the PSPO requirements and prohibition
- Current PSPO in Daventry and South Northants

Of the 436 responses received, 211 (48%) made comments, 225 (52%) respondents chose not to make any. The comments received are as follows:

### **Dog fouling:**

- Dog fouling is a growing issue. Each time I go out I see more on footpaths, immediately next to footpaths, in bags hanging in hedges or cast aside next to footpaths. It's a disgrace and I really hope to see some positive action to stop this. Dog owners need to be spoken to and reminded of their responsibilities as dog owners.
- In Kingsley, where I live, there is repeated dog fouling. Today, I walked 100yards and saw 10 lots of dog poo, including outside my house. Around Kingsley, dog fouling has become an increasingly bad issue.
- Thank you for this survey and allowing me to comment as I now pay over £2k in Council Tax and I really do feel that I deserve a nicer and cleaner place to live.

- Where I live there is an enormous increase of dogs. Their owners are allowing them to foul the pavements, private drives / gardens and public walkways and grassed areas - it really is quite disgusting and stressful. Thankfully when I called Northampton Council a lovely lady took my call and got the mess cleared away the same day and on other occasions too. Fouling of our public spaces is happening now on a very regular basis.
- Dog fouling is prevalent in my area of Little Billing/Great Billing/Bellinge. My enjoyment of walking my dog is ruined while I'm constantly having to dodge dog faeces. So many people don't pick up and some use a bag but don't use a bin, leaving it on the ground.  
Loose dogs foul and their owners just let them, they aren't bothering or often not noticing as they're using their phones. Also people with several dogs are not able to deal with the fouling. I definitely agree with the 4 dog limit.
- This is a big problem, not only on the country park at Upton, but on the pathways on the Upton estate - some dog owners have let their dogs foul outside people's front doors without picking up (caught on ring cam)! A FPN would likely act as a deterrent.
- It would be great if dog owners would be encouraged to dispose of their own dog's poo in dog bins. There are not enough dog bins in the estate. Being on Ashby Wood Drive means that people walk past our house to go to the park and they dispose of their dog's poo in our bins, sometimes right at the bottom so it gets squashed by our rubbish and stinks our bins for days. I have had a dog poo right on our doorstep too.
- On dog-fouling, this is a common problem and some owners would be blatantly refusing to pick-up even when asked by another person. They don't even budge even if they are caught on camera! There should be a hefty fine for this! This happens at Upton Country Park so often!
- We have a dog and always pick up after her. We are shocked by the number of people who don't do this, however, it is less likely that people will comply if there aren't any bins in the area. At Towcester Water Meadows, virtually everyone picks up, but the bins are only near the entrance and are often overflowing- this doesn't encourage the good behaviour exhibited thus far
- Owners letting dogs foul front lawn - on a corner plot and part out of sight.
- I am a long term daily dog walker, I find it totally annoying and vexatious to find there are other dog walkers, casual and/or professional, who let their charges deposit their excrement on walkways, footpaths or an area nearby and leave it! It is totally inconsiderate and antisocial as well as disgusting and unhygienic.

I also live near a very large School (circa 2000 students) and I am not impressed that they all face the threat of dog faeces becoming attached to their shoes and being walked into the school rooms as well as into their homes.

There is no excuse and we are long overdue some kind of enforcement action on dog owners. I accept that registered blind people cannot pick up after their guide dogs if they have an accident, I have picked up after them in the past and continue to be willing so to do, but please, not in the centre of the path.

Finally, we should not overlook the dangers of Toxocara or Toxocariasis.

There is a health risk.

- Dog fouling increasing in streets in and around Bouverie Estate, Northampton and surrounds.
- Dog fouling has blighted our lives. We can hardly walk a few yards in Northampton streets without coming across dog faeces in the public footpath. Likewise, it is very difficult to enjoy our lovely Northampton parks and green spaces with children without having to worry about the countless dogs that are running wild without leads.
- People picking up their dogs poo and then dumping the poo bags in hedges or trees. More poo bins are needed
- Persistent issues with dog fouling in the Queen's Park area and around Malcolm Arnold Academy including Bunting Road
- This should also apply to private property and streets around Upton. Dog walkers leave poop near houses and on paths
- Upton estate has a persistent and constant problem with dog owners not picking up after their dogs, leaving mess on the pavements. It is disgusting and looks awful. People who fail to pick up after their dogs should be fined and notices should be prominently displayed in order to secure prosecutions
- Bellinge/Billing. Dog fouling very prevalent in these areas, particularly the green spaces.

Used bags frequently left on the ground.

- Rules regarding pick up of dog waste already exist with possibility of fines. This apparently does not prevent or deter the act. How will it be improved if the area is extended? What additional measures will be taken to enforce and implement the prevention of dog fouling?
- Please can we have a campaign to make it clear why it is unacceptable for dog owners to leave their dog poo, bagged or unbagged anywhere at any time
- I live in Lorraine Crescent and we get lots of people walking round the Crescent who don't actually live here letting their dogs foul ..Just today I had to pick up after a dog had been let to foul right on the entrance to my property. Twice this week I have been behind people walking their dog..don't pick up poop and see me coming and ask me for a poop bag as I have my dog. They let their dogs poop on the grass and pee with no thought for the person who tends the grass .Also there are people who take their dogs at night into Billing Road Cemetery ..off lead and they run up to you barking .People should not be taking their dogs to consecrated ground full stop there

is no need .Also we never see Park Rangers on Parklands where the Community Centre and that would be helpful indeed Can we have signs at all in Lorraine Crescent about dog fouling please.Its constant and disgusting.I hope Northampton actually bring something in to make these people who let their dogs foul everywhere a hefty fine 100 pounds is not enough...One thousand pounds is better .if there are no consequences then it won't stop people also if it's brought in your rule then it needs to be enforced or there is no point at all ..

### **Means to pick up:**

- I think having means to pick up dog waste is extremely important and will hopefully encourage responsible ownership.

### **Dog poo bins:**

- More poo bins needed now more people own dogs. Posters needed to remind people to pick up poo.

### **General and unrelated to the PSPO:**

- I never knew dogs were such a big problem that you had to have a survey about them. Surely teh council have better things to bother themselves with, like what about the HUGH impact new homes are having on the area when there aren't the resources to cope with them..... nah we'll twitter on about dogs and fags.
- The time and money spent on this could have been better spent on mending the enormous pot holes that Northants road are plagued with.

### **Other anti-social behaviour:**

- There is no effective policing to stop drugs or bikes/scooters in public places and now you intend to add more unenforced regulation?  
Have you considered asking why people no longer have any inclination to report illegal activity because, when you dial 999 and wait in a queue... Your always told there are no officers available!

For 4 years I have reported drug dealers selling and using in Dallington park changing rooms but nothing has or will be done.

- We need to have more police presence in Upton, especially near the primary school because recently there are some groups of young teenagers doing drugs around the area. Some are locals, but some are not, they just choose this location especially because police don't bother them.



- General smell of cannabis when walking through most parts of the town particularly in the Summer months is very unpleasant
- Discarded canisters are strewn everywhere in parks, footpaths, car parks

### **Irresponsible dog owners:**

- "There is so much dog mess on the pavements around Abington and also on the paths in Abington Park that I really welcome these measures. I also have a child that is scared of dogs and making sure that people are not allowed to bring their dogs into the play area is a good thing. I welcome making owners put their dogs on the lead, as I have had dogs come up to me and jump up me. I like dogs, but I don't want them coming up to me when they aren't familiar to me. These measures need to be well advertised to ensure people follow them."
- Its a shame that a few spoilbit for the rest a little respect for peoples personal space and training of thete dogs would make a big difference.

### **Dog control/aggression:**

- It's usually the dog owners with the one dog they cannot control who has a problem with a group of dogs who are in control. Surely, this should be about whether you can control a dog or group of dogs? I mean it's just like saying, just because your dog is on a certain length lead, it means the owner will pick up their dog's poo. It's also like saying that because there are some rotten politicians that they should all be thought of in the same way. Most people walking groups of dogs are doing nothing wrong.
- Please kindly make this a priority, people and dogs need the protection. To walk their dogs in peace, recovering from surgery or whatever the vulnerabilities, without feeling constantly under threat is a basic foundation for looking after our mental health. Please make this so and thank you for your efforts.
- I have had issues with dogs off leads on multiple occasions, their owners clearly have no control over them. They are a menace. I ask owners to put dogs on a lead, they often ignore this request. Dog mess is everywhere owners do not care.
- When Dogs appear out of control with running and Barking, this can be a very terrifying experience for children, making them afraid of dogs for the rest of their life.

## Dogs off leads:

- I have a long-standing fear of dogs after being attacked as a baby. I have real difficulties with dogs off leads, as they sense my fear and frequently approach me. As a result I am unable to use various public spaces, and struggle to take my grandchildren to playgrounds because of owners ignoring rules relating to leads. This is a perpetual problem.
- I live in a row of terraced town houses in Wootton Fields with open plan gardens and an open green space to the front of these houses used by the residents children to play on constantly. There are several dog owners who use the open space on a daily basis as a toilet for their off lead dogs, while they do pick the fouling up it will leave residue to come in contact with children's hands.

My other issue is that they seem to think our open plan gardens are an extension of the area that their dogs can use as a toilet. I have doorbell footage of their dogs and several random dog walkers standing watching their dogs urinating over plants in my garden some of which are up close to my door. [location information]. I've tackled some of the local dog owners as my topiary shrubs are dying due to being urinated on by upto 4 plus dogs 2/3 times daily.

So basically while you are putting something into place to tackle dog owners you might want to consider situations like mine

- Seen several attacks by dogs off leads in the Wootton parks in the last 12 months and owners struggling to retrieve their off led dogs in Upton Park
- My child is fearful of dogs and I've stopped going to certain parks, in particular Abington park and Upton country park because they're always off the lead. He's so frightened
- I was going for a run through Upton country park when a dog tried to bite my ankle as it was off lead and wouldn't respond to the owner. Also my son is afraid of dogs so we can't use that area just in case as there are a lot of dog walkers that use that area that let their dogs run loose. It would be nice if we could use that space without fear
- Dogs off leads in Billing Road Cemetery, Northampton can be intimidating; we know people who will no longer visit as a result. When asked to control their dogs (eg please stop them jumping up) a minority of owners become abusive and threatening. The same occurs when owners asked to clear up after their dogs in local streets.
- I would much rather it be an offence to have your dog off lead. I live in Upton and regularly use the Upton country park when walking my sisters dog. He is not violent or antisocial but does not like being approached by other dogs. I always keep him on a lead but he gets incredibly distressed by other dogs approaching off lead. I also have children and do not trust dogs in general

around my children and would never want an unleashed dog around my children in a park due to them being so unpredictable.

- My son has been chased and jumped at many times in Upton country park, leading him to have a severe fear of all dogs.
- Lots of owners let the dogs off leads so they do not need to clean up after them

In car parks the dogs run in and around the cars so cars being driven have to break suddenly

- I let my dog out of the car in a car park then leave it off lead to as I get to the park does this would make me against these guidelines ? I am careful of my dog and do not put others at risk ? I think these rules are a little vague and open to criminalising people who are not breaking any rules. Not sure the rules on regulating how many dogs one person can walk, penalising those with well behaved dogs but have a few

## **Dogs on leads:**

- I feel that dogs should be on leads at all times as not everyone is a dog lover - some people are scared to be near them, despite an owner saying 'don't worry, it's very friendly'. Having them constrained on a lead would still allow them to be out whilst making everyone feel happier in their presence. In addition a dog may be 'friendly' one minute but not the next as, sadly, so many cases in the press have reported.
- Why did you not include the Northampton Washlands as an area in which dogs must be on leads? The Environmental Agency has a rule that dogs must be on leads there because it is an area of international environmental significance for the protection of birds species but most dog owners ignore it. As a result, dogs off the lead chase and scare birds at the Washlands, kill them, and they have killed sheep as well. Dogs have attacked humans as well at the Washlands, leading to police investigations. Upton Park is important but so too is the Washlands. You must make it illegal for a dog to be off the lead in the Washlands, impose a £100 penalty for non-compliance, patrol the area, put CCTV and put up clear signage.
- A ban on off lead dogs MUST be extended to Hunsbury Hill Country Park as well. Why are the Hunsburys consistently left out of decision making? My dog has been persistently attacked and harassed on Hunsbury Hill Country Park. Which is far more widely used than Upton.
- Want the Council to introduce FINES for people who do not have Dogs on leashes at the Northampton Washlands.
- There are many who will say its ok my dog is friendly, they don't seem to understand that all dogs are not necessarily friendly, I know of many people who walk their dogs off lead and yes they are friendly, however when I walk my dog is not dog or people friendly he is always on a lead he wears basically

a hi-vis coat as I see it as a warning to other dog walkers, I always avoid other dogs, the law should be were ever dogs should be on lead regardless, you are not in control of your dog unless its on a lead.

- I think that dog owners should have their dogs on a lead in residential areas at all times.
- Dogs should always be on the lead no matter where that is, have experienced plenty times dogs attacking individuals and children. Also dog owners not cleaning dog fouls is absolutely disgusting.
- Requiring dogs to be kept on leads in cemeteries, memorial gardens, allotments, car parks, sports pitches, land near school entrances and exits. I disagree with the PSPO covering cemeteries and memorial gardens across the whole of West Northamptonshire. In many smaller towns and villages, the churchyard is one of the few places where there is little risk to children from dogs, the land is easily accessible on foot by elderly/infirm people, the landscaping is well maintained, the area is somewhat enclosed and there are places to sit. For these reasons, they are popular places for elderly people who keep dogs as companions to take their dogs for exercise, and this order bans them from doing so.
- Knee jerk reaction to a very few problems
- Requirement for dogs to be on lead should be extended to any area that is used by the general public and is not specifically designated for dog walkers. Tho it is right to seek to ensure and prioritise the safety of children it is the case that out of control dogs are also dangerous to other vulnerable people and adults. So while the numbers of responsible dog owners appear so low, we need to protect the bulk of the population the best we can over the whole area.
- We have a play area in Hunsbury Hill Country Park. It is impossible to fence the area off, and although there are notices asking dog owners to put their dogs on the lead this rarely happens. How can this possibly be managed!!!

## **Dog leads:**

- There should be a restriction on the size of dog that is on a retractable lead. I don't actually agree with retractable leads at all but my dog was recently attacked by a Belgian Malinois type of dog on one of these leads, the dog ran away from the owner who could not control it because the handle does not allow for a secure grip and then attacked my dog.
- The requirement to have a dog/dogs on leads should specifically say an individual fixed lead no more than 4 feet in length must be used - many people use extendable leads that allow dogs to be up to 20 feet away from the owner. These leads are used by people who have not trained their dogs and they often cause hazards to other walkers and cyclists and allow dogs to run up to other dogs and children. Dogs cannot be controlled on this type of

lead, Similarly people use dog leads where several dogs are attached to a single lead - again they obviously cannot be controlled on this type of lead.

## **Variation:**

- My answers are with respect to the proposal becoming effective for the wider Northamptonshire area, which I would like to see. Currently I live [location information] in Grange Park. Since living [location information] the country park the fence on the boundary between is a 3 bar fence i.e. somewhat open, in this time I have had multiple dogs cross the side and front area of my property where owners clearly don't have them on a lead and/or in control of them. I would estimate this is a least once per month that I see and I am sure there are many more that I don't see. On one particular occasion one dog was aggressive towards my son who was approximately 3 years old at the time and fortunate I was there to protect him. So the takeaway I would hope councils and parish councils take from this is that the impacts aren't just limited to the park areas they can cause potential safety issues for near by residents and others where out of control dogs shouldn't have to be accounted for. I would also go further and say perhaps more consideration needs to be given to the type of fencing to boundaries to ensure neighbors to the country parks are protected should an aggressive dog be loose.

I would also say that whilst picnicking I have had dogs steal food, which is amusing sometimes, but more infuriatingly many of the owners may apologize but often you don't see them putting their dog back on lead, it seems the onus is on you to protect what you have rather than being able to enjoy it freely.

Regarding leads I would also say that extendable leads are a constant trip hazard when walking, so on the lead isn't necessarily constrained.

I have grown up with dogs and like animals, I don't want the world to be policed to micro detail so that no one can enjoy it, however, unfortunately by a considerable number of people there is a distinct lack of thought for others, common sense and awareness of their own dogs, which as outlined leads to significant safety concerns.

As a suggestion perhaps designated areas that are fenced off can be provided to allow dogs to be off lead.

On a separate issue, smoking is becoming a major concern, particular cannabis the later is particularly more pungent and regularly I can walk out my front door and smell someone before you can see them, often way in the distance in the country park and I am not even in the country park yet. I feel as smoking has been removed in history from so many public places it should

be removed from public open areas also. There is some irony to go for a walk and get some fresh air only to meet someone head on smoking freely. it is quite obvious you can't avoid inhaling some of the smoke. Overall this really deters me accessing open spaces and I am sure many others would view the same.

Again similar to the above proposal, as a suggestion could an smoke permitted area be constructed/designated.

- Upton Country Park. I don't know why Phase 2 is. I think there could be some dog on lead zones at the country park but definitely not totally on lead.

Unfair on responsible dog owners living locally to Upton as a dog needs some off lead exercise so long as safe to be off lead.

Town centre dogs best on lead as potentially unsafe environment with traffic and more visitors

- Upton Country Park Phase 2 variation. Dog owners need somewhere to exercise their dogs off lead. Whilst I appreciate that there are always some irresponsible dog owners not everyone is. I know that there is sometimes livestock grazing in this area, in which case, make it compulsory for dogs to be on leads, but if there is no livestock I see no reason to keep dogs on leads and allow them to run around and get the exercise that they need.
- Upton Country Park- If there isn't a football match being played there then I don't understand why dogs should be kept on a lead in a wide open space. Dogs need their exercise too which they don't get if on a lead.
- I despise cigarettes/vapes and smoking and don't have a dog, but I despair at the growing interference in everyday life by authorities. It is bordering on [profanity]. We have to draw the line somewhere or we'll have "15 minute" areas forced on us next. The [profanity] you employ to enforce these petty, pathetic, rules, would be unemployable in any other job. Stop this nauseating, petty, bureaucracy.

## **Northampton area variation:**

- How is this to be consistently enforced? Surely not reliant on people lodging complaints. Are play areas to be fenced? If not what are the boundaries? Too subjective without definition.

What constitutes Northampton Town centre? What streets mark the boundaries? Again without definition it is too subjective.

- Many people walk dogs and let them off lead on the racecourse. There are only limited places dog owners can do this. As far as I recall the basketball pitches are not fenced off so it would be impossible to keep dogs off them. Similarly it would be impossible to keep dogs off the football and rugby pitches, bike park etc.

If wnc proceeds to make this order they should make it possible for dog owners to comply by fencing these areas. This of course would change the aesthetic of the park completely and should be subject to further consultation.

I personally do not have a dog although I occasionally walk a dog for a friend. Responsible dog ownership has been shown to have very positive health benefits such as exercise and we should not effectively remove that from dog owners or force them to drive out to the country in order to exercise their dogs every day.

### **Upton Country Park variation:**

- I live in Upton. I enjoy the country park but the number of dogs not on leads scares me. I am constantly aware of dogs running free or walking off lead and feel anxious..... it spoils my enjoyment and causes me to be fearful
- Dog's should be allowed to run in open spaces, but should be on a lead when entering or exiting the area, and when in the vicinity of other users. Public spaces are as the title suggests - for public use and users should be firmly aware of the expectation of use. Clean up after any dogs, and take all rubbish home or place in bins and treat other users with courtesy and respect.
- Dogs on leads at all time in Upton Country Park - I would disagree with this point - I would feel the park is an appropriate place for dogs to be off lead, but have the provision for enforcement to be carried out by officers to instruct owners to put dogs on lead if deemed necessary. I disagree with the blanket rule that all dogs should be on the lead in the park.

### **The PSPO:**

- "Dog waste not being picked up in Kingsthorpe has significantly increased in the last 2-3 years & needs a public campaign / enforcement particularly on school routes.

With reference to dogs/smoking being banned from children's play areas, you need to be explicit about what this means for open play areas (non-fenced) such as the play areas on Kingsthorpe Rec, Thornton's Park & the Pastures where there isn't a defined boundary line between where a person can walk with a dog/smoke & where they cannot. The play area at Bradlaugh Fields has a clearly defined boundary fence with a sign that states no dogs

allowed to enter & I feel that the PSPO will be unenforceable / open to challenge if boundaries are not clearly defined around non-fenced play areas for both dogs & smoking. I don't personally have an issue with dogs close to a play area so long as they're on a lead/under owner control."

- "Often play areas have to be passed to reach areas suitable for dog exercise. Surely if under control and on a suitable lead (not a wander lead) you can pass a play area.

Dog excrement In public parks needs ONE law not piecemeal patches. Take note of Forestry Commission rules where it is advised to move excrement into undergrowth To support other animal life. They do not appear to have a problem to my knowledge and probably are popular with dog owners and family exercise. Seems very sensible.

There is a considerable risk here of covert watching and vigilante action by some sectors of the public who like being barrack room lawyers."

- I still see no alteration to the order that allows dog walkers in the wide open countryside to remove dog mess from the footpath but allow it to be in the hedgerow or long grass where it can cause no offence. In fact it is a food source for slugs snails etc. and is soon cleared and becomes part of the eco system. We often see fox poo an badger poo rabbits etc. and that is a fact of life of living in the countryside. I always carry a pick up bag just in case but I should not be under threat of a £100 fine for walking in the countryside and not carrying a bag of faeces for the whole walk. You are just encouraging the awful scourge of poo bags being left hanging in trees which is much more offensive. This is an urban problem not applicable to the open countryside. Please can you address this grey area in your review.
- In my experience of using the parks around Northampton and surrounding areas, that dogs are not usually a problem..Most if not all owners or dog walkers are responsible people and both walk or exercise their dogs with sense. Any area around schools etc it should be more important to prevent people smoking than worrying about the odd dog on or off a lead.. But 99% of responsible dog owners always keep their dogs on leads in built up areas. If the councils wish to do something useful they should be looking at fly tipping as this is a massive problem. Start sorting out the aggressive nature of fly tippers and fine or jail those who do this and you show some way towards cleaning up the countryside for everyone to use..
- There needs to be more done to educate owners, dog walkers etc. it seems really unfair to have to keep well behaved dogs on a lead, this restricts their exercise, they are breed to run around and confined to a lead is not the answer. Have more dog wardens to educate others before fines, create free enclosed dog spaces



Surely you should focus your attentions on irresponsible dog owners instead of tarring everyone with the same brush!

If a dog is well behaved and kept in good/safe control with a responsible owner why does it have to have a lead?

If someone has six dogs that are all well socialised why can't they be walked together?

It seems more like you insist the public pay more council tax each year yet you aren't prepared to direct those extra funds to police/educate the few who need it. Instead you are insisting on a blanket approach where the majority can be punished because of the minorities downfall and your lazy attitude. How much has this process cost, couldn't you have employed a dog warden instead?

As for smoking, I think it's horrid. But why is it being discussed with a dog walking issue?

If people want to smoke outside the boundaries of a premises who are you to say no that? Why not try educating?

- I feel you are using a very large brush to tar everyone with. Owning a dog is meant to be a pleasure and good for us but you seem to be trying to make it a hardship. Yes I agree dog owners need to know where and when it's appropriate to let their dogs off the lead and I'm totally on your side with regards to cleaning up immediately after fouling but really 'limiting' the amount of dogs one person can walk! What about people who have a dog walking business! Are you really in a position to say 'I'm going to cut your earnings by half everyday because I consider you not responsible'. There are only so many daylight hours they can walk so will you or the government be giving them a subsidy as an allowance to live? I don't know of one professional walker or boarder who would allow the dogs, that they are responsible and insured for, off the lead, to run wild and foul in any park, cemetery, Upton 2 or any of the other places on your list. Drunken yobs I can't speak for! Maybe instead of paying someone to drive around trying to catch a dog owner or walker out your monies would be better spent on more bins and someone checking areas carry a bag and a scoop, clearing up if they come across any dog poop. Joking aside maybe there is a place for owners and professional walkers, of more than four dogs, to be registered or carry a permit. Maybe everyone would be happy with that but definitely dogs on leads in town centers etc. How you'll keep the foxes and other wild animals off football pitches and such places is beyond me!
- British law requires owners/carers/walkers of dogs to have dogs under effective control. PSPOs were introduced to stop anti social behaviour in designated areas where evidence could be provided that a PSPO was needed. There is absolutely no evidence to support a blanket ban on responsible dog owners or those walking more than 1 dog. The Kennel Club and DogsTrust should have been consulted on the provisions of the PSPO as provided for in

the Local Government Act relating to PSPOs. It is not a Council's job to victimise, marginalise and criminalise law abiding members of the public. You do not ban all drivers of cars because one driver causes an accident. Use the law that is available to you and stop adding unnecessary layers of law at a local level. You are [Profanity] implementing laws against groups of people just because.....Gary Linekar stood up to be counted and I am standing up to be counted in this matter also.

- There are already UK laws in place to deal with dog related antisocial behaviour. It doesn't need councils micro managing this with unevidenced and disproportionate PSPO'S  
Dog fouling needs to be addressed by Enforcement Officers patrolling areas effectively and efficiently so that the actual perpetrators can be dealt with appropriately  
Education about placing dogs on leads around other dogs/children is important but is a PSPO regarding this evidenced and proportionate?  
Responsible dog owners will not go into areas that you describe. If the evidence is that there are a majority of people violating these areas then a PSPO could be appropriate. However if it is a minority then deal with them specifically.  
Multiple dog owners are an extreme minority in this country which therefore, concludes your area will only have a handful if that. As per the guidelines of implementing a PSPO please consider what evidence the council has to victimise these owners. If this is aimed at dog walkers, then deal with them appropriately. Dog walkers insurance will allow 6 dogs to be walked at any one time. The Kennel Club concur with this amount. Please research this part of the PSPO and ensure you have based your decision on factual evidence and not one or two anecdotal stories.
- How is WNCgoingto implement this. I never see anybody about that would be able to tell somebody to stop smoking. It's a farce.  
There is also no statistical evidence to show a need for a draconian and restrictive PSPO to be implemented to limit the number of dogs one person can safely walk at any one time. British Law covers out of control dogs and local PSPOs were never designed to cover anything other than anti social behaviour in a defined place that detrimentally impacts on residents. Until West Northants can apply those guidelines to dog walkers/owners they should not even think of a PSPO.
- Northants is extremely dog unfriendly as it is.
- Bring back dog licences and the fee increases with the increase of problems, poo bins needed etc. People could then be vetted for dog ownership as they are the problem, not the dogs. There is little to no knowledge of the pspos and one never sees any enforcement of it especially in the villages, you can't walk anywhere without your head down to try and spot it especially with children.

- This will affect dog walking businesses within the area and thus affect income and then spend back into society. Also not sure why Upton country park was on the same list as burials and cemetery. A open space park is a completely different environment to burial grounds.
- such draconian ideologies are been proposed here. Majority of dog owners are responsible people and this I once again sounds like it's a group of people who hate dogs. Those who don't control dogs or pick up after them will continue regardless
- I think if you intend to make upton phase 2 a dogs on lead space only there will be no where to walk a dog off lead locally. I am from a farming family and understand the need for dogs to be on leads around livestock however if a dog has good recall and is not a danger to others then why should they not be permitted to be off lead where it is away from a public highway and safe to do so.

Totally agree that is caught not picking up after your dog you should be fined, however to allow someone to fine you for not having your dog on a lead where they are not a danger to road users or other park users and the park is not in use for sporting events is subjective and unfair.

where a green space is not in use by others for sporting purposes why should responsible dog owners lose the opportunity to allow happy dogs to make use of the space.

- Most dog owners are responsible people and are happy to clean up after their dogs, and part of responsible dog ownership is the necessity to exercise dogs. Trying to restrict dogs to being on leads only - especially in parks - is ludicrous and totally unfair to the welfare of the animals; as is the carte blanche ban on smoking products. People should still have the right to choose what they put in their bodies - yes smoking is unhealthy, but alcohol is the number 1 killer drug, and no one's banning that! These proposals seem totalitarian - and how would they be enforced? It's a bit much.
- Out of control dogs and smoking/vaping are both anti social behaviours. They should never be seen near schools or play areas. I have lost count of the amount of times dogs have jumped up me when out running. (why do dog owners think its ok for their dirty muddy smelly dog to do that, 'he was just being friendly' is the constant refrain) My horse was attacked by a dog in Salcey Forest and threw me and ran across 2 roads to get away. Imagine if that was a child. Dog poo is disgusting and the fine should be £500. Not only do we have to put up with the smell and disease, the plastic bags destroy the environment. Nothing worse than a full bag left in a tree, what sort of [expletive] does that?

The constant plume of smoke from vapes and cigarettes is very unpleasant to breathe in especially if you are outdoors to get fresh air.

- As a manager involved in the oversight of issues relating to environmental crime and antisocial behaviour in West Northants I am aware of a number of

complaints about dog fouling, control of dogs and smoking in public locations within the Northampton area.

I have personal experience of ongoing problems with dog fouling in various locations around the town, particularly in areas around schools and on footpaths. I also have personal experience of dogs being poorly controlled in the town centre and in some parks in the town. I have also seen people smoking around schools and in children's play areas and the health impacts of this concern me.

- Smoking and dogs - you are eroding freedoms, you don't even enforce the laws we do have, why add to that problem, we don't need further laws we just need to enforce what we have first then there won't be a problem, to normal people this is just extra hassle, to those already ignoring the current restrictions won't take any notice of new restrictions, use a bit of simple logic please, I fully comply so why do I have to be restricted more and more when I'm not the problem, no wonder you go bust.
- The current trial - I live in South Northamptonshire and totally unaware this was happening.  
Who is policing this? Who is issuing fines? How many fines have been issued. I'll raise a FOI request for this and look forward to the response.
- Dogs - With the increase in dog ownership I think this is especially important as sadly not all dogs are friendly and not all owners are responsible.
- I'm unhappy that areas where responsible owners can exercise their dogs off lead are being restricted, and that dog ownership is being linked in such a way to antisocial behaviours such as smoking. These are two separate issues and should not be linked together. Why are you not tackling the issue of littering, especially from smoking/vaping related products, where dropping fag ends, empty wrappers or packets and vape items is commonplace. Most dog owners pick up after their pets, only the irresponsible ones who will ignore your PSPO anyway, leave behind a mess; can the same be said of most smokers (do most smokers clear away spent fag butts).
- There are no prohibitions in South Northamptonshire and neither should there be, we are a rural area and we enjoy the freedom ourselves and our dogs are allowed.  
Why is this all about Northampton AGAIN, what is the point in there being a unitary council when all they care about is Northampton.  
It's about time councillors from WNC actually started looking at rural areas being different from Northampton, we aren't Northampton and we never will be.  
Absolute disgrace.
- How is the council enforcing the new rules? Previous PSPO in Daventry has been in place for years and fouling is still a major issue as no enforcement at all! Also, rule of maximum of 4 dogs is totally stupid, as it's never the large groups of dogs causing issues. They often seem to be well socialised and

mostly friendly. It's usually individuals with 1 or 2 dogs that are unfriendly, antisocial and aggressive. Again, why is that not being tackled by the council?

- This consultation has been written with a negative bias - pushing people to answer in the way you demand.

Linking dog walking with smoking is another proof of negative bias.

It is perfectly reasonable for an officer to ask for a dog to be put lead if the dogs behaviour merits it but that must be stated in the PSPO.

You are demonising dog owners, dog walkers here - yes tackle irresponsible dog owners and dog walker with the LAWS you currently have - there is no need for further restrictions.

Why are you targeting people who have more multiple dogs ? - These people are more likely those who work with dogs, training them to a high standard of obedience and have them under proper control. If you have a few that are not in that category then tackle them using what is already in place rather than forcing the responsible to pay for the irresponsible few. Control of behaviour orders, the Dogs Act , the Dangerous Dogs act are only a few that come to mind - you have so many other options.

Sadly councillors only seem to act on negative and not on the positive and they bring in sweeping control orders when no were needed and any dog issue could easily have been tackled on a case by case basis.

Re bringing in an order to insist someone has means to pick - sounds great - but totally unnecessary - if a responsible dog owners misplaces a bag they will FIND a way to clear up after their dogs. This rule will not stop the irresponsible ones so TACKLE them by enforcing the laws you have already in place.

- Dog related issues and smoking. All the above should be enforced to all public spaces in Northampton eg Dogs should be on a lead in all public spaces and smoker shouldn't be able to smoke outside entrances to shopping centres etc
- Dogs should always be kept on leads unless in a designated dog exercise area/paddock.

Smoking is NOT a crime – [profanity] you are NOT.

Do NOT make yourself them.

- Smoking outside my kids school prolific and totally uncalled for dog fouling on street a regular problem on school route Wellingborough Road as is smoking and bad driving and parking on a major town road that is home to 3 primary schools the path outside my home is a through way from kettering road to wellingborough road but why does that mean i have to put up with bad habits of smokers and dog owners on my doorstep street cleaning is non existent in this area
- I feel you are discriminating against responsible dog owners. By all means take action against irresponsible behaviour but do not spoil it for everyone just because of the actions of a minority. For example... There is a difference between a responsible dog owner walking their six rescue greyhounds on a

lead and an unlicensed dog walker letting six dogs from different households run riot with no control. Too many people see dog walking as easy money, do not have the necessary experience and skills and make poor choices. Also in terms of the playing fields... where I walk there are kids football matches at certain times and responsible dog owners who have control of their dogs can walk around the perimeter or in neighbouring space with no problems. Again you are proposing to penalise the majority for the actions of the minority which is outrageous.

- My house fronts onto the Eastfield Park and I regularly on a daily basis see dogs fouling and owners that ignore their dogs toileting and walk on past, making no attempt to clean it up. I also see owners that pick up and bag their dogs faeces then proceed to dump the bag of dog mess under and on trees, hedges and by peoples houses. My husband and I have confronted dog walkers on more than one occasion, but quite frankly they don't care! Even denying what they have done, despite being caught on CCTV.

I am a responsible dog owner. I always carry bags to clean up after my dogs, but my dogs rarely toilet outside our garden.

Dogs that don't come to recall and run at other dogs and people should be kept on a lead in public parks. My dogs have been attacked more than once. You can not walk along the path on the park in front of the houses without smelling the pungent smell of marijuana. The awful smell wafts into my home from the park and surrounding properties.

Who is going police this? Mr Nobody as usual!

We pay our taxes and are just as entitled to have our parks and estates policed as any other park or estate in Northamptonshire. We See nobody but drug dealers taking over our park. It's disgusting! What are we paying our council tax for? We see very few services.

I for one won't be voting for more of the same, that's for sure! I want to see real change and the services we pay for first.

## **Dog exclusion in schools:**

- I have experienced significant issues with dogs on school grounds. Ignoring the fact that we have a pupil who has been mauled by a dog and sustained life changing facial injuries (not on the school grounds) it is extremely difficult to deal with dog owners who refuse to manage their dog safely. It would be much easier to have a blanket ban of dogs on school premises (except for guide dogs and other assistant dogs). Even when dogs are on leads, the leads are often let out to long lengths which trip up children, get entangled and otherwise are a safety concern. Children will go up to dogs and you are never quite sure how they are going to react. Dogs on school grounds should be prohibited for the safety of all.

- Dogs are often used in school to support children in a variety of ways including therapy, wellbeing, reading ect. It must be made clear that school dogs are not included in any new rules as they do extremely important work.

## **Fines:**

- What actually is ever done about these violations? Fines for dog fouling have been in place for years. How many dog owners are ever actually caught and fined? The same goes for smoking.
- Proposed £100 charge is too much.  
Taxpayers see these as just another cash cow.  
Since converting to a Unitary system many Northampton taxpayers now have to fund:
  - . Council tax
  - . Adult Social Care Precept
  - . Police Fire Crime Commissionery
  - . Northampton town councily
  - . Parish council precept
 We are being held dry by you people.
- This is just another excuse to get money out of Northampton residents again, the council should be ashamed of themselves
- Another money making exercise by a unelected council. How about fining people who don't control their children in public places
- Should be higher than £100
- As usual, these penalty fines are only for people who can't afford them. You don't care about fines when you have money.
- I feel the fine should be higher, say £120-£150 as a bigger deterrent but also will there be signage to show this?
- £100 fine isn't much of a deterrent. I think it should be at least £500 and persistent offenders have their dog taken away.

## **Enforcement:**

- Broadly the ideals behind the PSPO seem reasonable, but are not required as there are robust provisions already in place for control of dogs. I have no interest in the smoking provisions but do not understand why the council should be involved. There is a fine-for-profit company milking the system in the town centre and your PSPO will only potentially improve their revenue whilst having zero impact on behavior and simultaneously damaging the Northampton economy. Private companies should not be able to compel residents to prove that they will not commit an offense in the future. The fines are disproportionate to the potential offense.
- As the parent of a dog phobic autistic person, I think that anything which helps to control dog behaviour is potentially useful and cleaning up of dog

mess and cigarette butts is essential, but I worry that the current measures and the new proposals are pointless unless they are properly resourced with enough officers to ensure they can be enforced.

- What is the point of these proposals when there will be no-one around to enforce them? Fines are great but offenders will escape them with no enforcement officers to follow through.
- This legislation is not enforceable without investment or police support
- There are no means to enforce these penalties, and it appears pointless with no means of enforcement, how this will be effective. Dog fouling blights many parts of West Northamptonshire and it is appalling that the council are simply unable or unwilling to enforce this.
- I am a dog owner myself and it really annoys me that other so called owners refuse to pick up after their dog, wardens should be out and about in ALL public areas, not just the "posher" areas of town, I live in Briar Hill and the pocket park by The Causeway is littered with irresponsible dog owners mess, wardens need to come here too
- The rules that exist now are seldom enforced so I'm not sure why this is a proposal unless it is an attempt at distraction from the other serious issues that the council are not dealing with. People drink frequently during the summer in my local park but I have never seen an enforcement person there. These new proposals are an attempt to control my actions and an infringement of my personal freedom to exercise my dog where and how I want to. My dog is often off lead, returns when called, never fouls without me picking up after him and is put on a lead if I am concerned that he will not return when called, i.e. when I consider it appropriate not some one who has no knowledge of myself or my dog. Restricting responsible dog owners is not how you deal with problem dog owners because they will carry on regardless.

## **Misdirection of the council's limited efforts and resources:**

- I read with interest on the local BBC website that WNC are "consulting" on the above measure which was brought in under the radar last year, then temporarily suspended as a result of the quite justifiable backlash from residents.

As a responsible dog owner and resident of South Northamptonshire, I can say with resigned certainty that the ONLY noticeable change brought about by WNC since it took over from the previously failed regimes of NCC and SNC, has been the imposition of extra charges for collecting green bins, bad enough in itself, but unforgivable when passed off as "levelling up" with Daventry and Northampton Borough.

You asked for feedback (although the feedback form was well hidden on your website), so here it is: Stop insulting and patronising your charge payers,



stop harassing dog owners, the vast majority of whom are responsible, and devote your energies to something useful! After all, it's not as if we are receiving the services that we are paying so dearly for. The roads are like something from the 3rd world and roadside hedges throughout the area are festooned with litter. Get a grip on the real problems or risk becoming NCC mk2.

## **Breach of PSPO:**

- I Strongly disagree with being asked to provide evidence of the means to pick up after my dog. I am a responsible female dog owner and often walk my dog alone. I would be very uncomfortable about being approached by someone demanding to know what I had in my pockets/bag. Will officers be approaching people in other exclusion areas demanding to know if they have cigarettes/vapes/illegal substances on them?

With regards to dogs being off lead. Billing Road cemetery has not been used for burials for decades. It is more frequently used by dog walkers and unfortunately drug dealers and vandals. It is the responsible dog walkers who are keeping the more anti social behaviour at bay. They call the police/fire brigade when necessary, generally pick up broken glass and rubbish and stop the area from becoming a drug dealing den. I would like to propose that as an inactive cemetery Billing Road is excluded from the cemeteries list. I have been walking my dog there for many years and can not remember any problems with dogs being off lead. Most responsible dog walkers put their dogs on lead if they are approaching another dog on lead or a family with children.

## **Authorised person:**

- Who exactly is an authorised council person

## **Assistance dogs:**

- The use of the wording 'prescribed charity' overlooks those assistance dogs that are trained by non charitable status organisations and owner trained dogs. My understanding is that there is still legal protection for these dogs under the Disability discrimination act. Having said this I believe currently that only guide dogs for the blind are exempt from clearing up their dogs excrement ( I could be mistaken)

## **Specific location issues and comments:**

- Hunsbury Hill Children's Play area - I have a long-standing fear of dogs after being attacked as a baby. I have real difficulties with dogs off leads, as they

sense my fear and frequently approach me. As a result I am unable to use various public spaces, and struggle to take my grandchildren to playgrounds because of owners ignoring rules relating to leads. This is a perpetual problem.

- Upton - I have personally experienced dogs poo in front of my house I live near the Upton Square, Dog owners when confronted, very abusive and ignorant. Also way too many parents doing school runs with their dogs who are then just tied up to trees and barking at children. In my opinion school, park, children play areas, Upton Square are currently abused by dog owners, who are very rude and aggressive. I live in Upton and look after my area, do not understand such anti social behaviour. Lots of parents let their dogs off the lead and let dogs play with children. I was personally attacked by dogs while walking my children from school across Upton Square. Dog owners said dog was friendly. I was scared to death. Also I contribute towards maintenance of green areas of Upton but dog owners just let their dogs to poo where they like and leave the mess behind. I have to clean regularly [location information] and have someone's dogs poo on my doormat. I have toddler and school children at home and I am really concerned for them to step into someone's dogs mess. I fully support councils proposal to tackle this massive problem in Upton estate. Especially, when Upton Park has become a spot for dog owners from whole Northampton. Over the 15 years, since I moved to Upton, it turned into dog's wasteland. I stopped taking my children to Upton Park solely due to too many aggressive dogs without leads and too much dogs waste left behind.
- Daventry Country Park - [personal details removed] virtually every day the dogs on leads is breached and regularly more than 4 dogs beyond waked, see same people in a morning walking dogs in the play area and regularly smoking around the cafe, these laws need to be enforced regularly or people just laugh about them and continue to abuse the system. Get them enforced around the café
- Abington Park - There are clear breaches of dogs being let off leads in the smaller part of the park and this causes distress and anxiety to many park users - most dog walkers are very responsible. However a small number could not care less and have little or no control over their animal(s) which can upset both young children and many others.  
There are also many, many instances of illegal substances being smoked in particular around the whole park and surrounding area - the stench from these products cannot be disguised and is becoming more and more noticeable at all times of the day.
- Spring Park, Kingsthorpe - there is a lack of enforcement in this area , never seen an officer in Kingsthorpe parks in the 12 years I've had a dog. Those with misbehaving dogs should be kept on a lead, yet I have trained working dogs that are obedient

if dogs are to be kept on a lead during football matches on this park, then the PSPO needs to be enforced for the teams & spectators that leave rubbish after the matches ,drinks bottles , orange skins electrical tape for holding their socks up is routinely discarded , i have even seen people & footballers urinating in the hedges . treat everyone equal litter is litter whether its dog mess or rubbish , even urinating

it has been going on to long & I agree to a crackdown, but for everyone.

- Brackley -I have been rounded on by dogs on the field walks at the back of the rug by club where there is a narrow path but dogs off leads, owners have no control and often let their dogs pop in the crops and run within them. Brackley is almost too dog friendly, it's difficult to go into a shop or cafe now without negotiating space around a dog, this must be very difficult for partially sighted people or disabled people to cope with, again owners of dogs now see this as their right. Walking round the lake is a nightmare as some dog owners insist their dog has right of way on foot paths and many let their dog off the lead to explore,chase geese etc.

I have a huge problem with smoking having just recovered from cancer, years of treatment and therapy only to open my patio doors at home and have my neighbours cigarette smoke coming in every half hour,this terrifies me to the extent I can't open my windows or doors at the back of the house when shes home even in 39° heat, weve had to buy an aircon. The smoke travels 35 ft. In public places this should definitely be band, particularly in pubs surrounding play areas like the Chequered flag! They e just installed extra seating which will be for smokers and non smokers alike. It's becoming almost impossible to avoid smoke either from newly installed log burners or cigarette smoke in this area as well as increased pollution from the leisure centre and new build traffic. We've lived on [address] for 20 years and since 2020 my breathing has been so badly effected that we're now considering moving from our forever home.

Why not have just dog friendly walks or parks, places?

Why not warn people dogs might be in the premise?

Insist that pubs move their smoking areas well away from children's play areas and that neighbours who smoke in their garden build a shelter to house their habit!

- Bowling Greens. So I'm guessing once again the local council were at hard at work again when they noticed a dog walker with a cigarette whilst they were either playing tennis or lawn green bowling. Why punish the majority for a minority,  
Just another way of taking money from generally people with [expletive] and sending it to another company which you probably have interests in out of this town  
Draconian to be honest.

- Eastfield Park (Northampton). I have personal experience of both smoking and dogs not being on leads in the Junior Play Area in Eastfield Park. I have plenty of experience of dogs' mess not being picked up in Eastfield Park and some experience of uncontrolled dogs in the park. I do not believe that controlled dogs should always be on a lead in the park but I do believe that dogs should always be under the control of the owner or another responsible person. (Dogs are sometimes allowed to run wild in the park.)
- Eastfield Park. I am a responsible dog owner who uses Eastfield Park regularly. I have had issues with out of control dogs with owners who stand at the edge of the park letting them defaecate where they like, and causing problems with other dog walkers. There is broken glass in the park and also dog faeces that has not been picked up. The friends of Eastfield Park work so hard to give us a lovely place to walk, but there is no one around to enforce any of the measures that are either in place or being proposed. The park also needs more dog waste bins especially at the entrance to Baldwin close. I often see dogs in the fenced off play area.
- Nature reserves. I was somewhat concerned that the changes may push the prohibited behaviour to other sites instead (such as our ecologically sensitive reserves like Everdon Stubbs) but as the areas proposed are limited to specific locations and there are other options available, this shouldn't be an issue. If, in the future, there is the opportunity for these measures to cover nature reserves (even if just for specific sites, rather than blanket prohibition), I feel that that would be additionally beneficial.

## **Dog areas:**

- Some playbacks also have a dog bin. I walk my dog in a play park but early at 4 am I always pick up my dogs faces and use the bin provided. I do not want to be stopped using this park because my dog is not good with other dogs, is a rescue and only will go to this small park because of his anxiety he is always kept on a lead also I walk him at 4am so that the park wold not have children in it at that time. If it is banned I will have no where to walk my dog responsibly as I do now. However there is an issue with dog fouling all over the town and people not clearing up after their dogs it ruins it for the rest of us responsible owners maybe people like us could buy a licence to use these parks for our dogs if they are going to look at a full ban. People that pay will be more likely to be decent people like us that pick up after our dogs and keep them on a leash at all times in the town.
- I would like to see some enclosed areas where dogs can be let off their leads safely otherwise you are penalising all dogs for the bad behaviour of the few. Please remember that iys usually the owners who are to blame for most incidents involving dogs

## Equality Impact:

- Currently this part of the PSPO refers to people with mobility issues who have a trained assistance dog. Some people who have mobility issues do not have an assistance dog but have problems picking up dog waste, especially those with mobility scooters. For some people getting off the scooter and bending over to pick up the dog mess is not possible, for example they may suffer issues re bending over and pain. One other thing to take into account is that some people will suffer dizzy spells when bending over and may fall over. I regard this part of the PCPO as restrictive and discriminates against those type of people.

## Smoking:

- First I want to say that I am a non smoker and I agree with banning smoking in certain public spaces. However, to ban smoking near schools or unfenced sports areas can be very subjective. i.e. At what point are you near a school or sports ground? For example is a person walking down the street smoking passing a school deemed to be near enough to be given a fixed penalty? In the same way someone walking in a park where there is a football game being played, would they be penalised if they were smoking? How close or far do they have to be to be deemed near?

Personally as a non smoker these issues won't affect me, but recently I have been following a link on line where a member of the public claims to have been wrongly accused of committing a similar type of offence and is having difficulty proving his innocence.

- Smoking : I live very close to a Junior school, [school name]. The STAFF are the main culprit of smoking. They are not allowed to smoke on the actual site of the school, so what do they do, the staff come outside the school gate and stand on the corners outside our homes on the pavements Smoking. They drop their cigarette ends on the pavements - there is always a group of them from the school. I have E mailed the Headmaster of this school to complain about his staff smoking and leaving their cigarette ends on our residential street which is our home. Most of us in my immediate area of my home actually go out and sweep the pavements and the road in an effort to keep our estate clean and tidy.

Should you wish to increase revenue, then please do come to my area and you will catch many people dropping cigarette ends.

Whilst I write this, I feel compelled to enquire -" just when is the Council going to addresses parking on pavements !!? It's chaos around here at school pick up and drop off times .. there are so many cars parked three quarters on the pavements that there is nowhere for parents and their children who "do " walk their kids to this school.

Please West Northampton, we must have some discipline and respect installed for our environment and your residents. Thank you for reading.

- I mainly wanted to answer this consultation as I can't stand people smoking around places where there are children. I really don't care about where the people have their dog on or off the lead and they certainly shouldn't have to have them on the lead in a country Park. What is the council thinking trying to restrict people from exercising their dogs in an open green space. Anyway I don't think there is enough questions about the smoking issue in this consultation which is what I came here to answer it's all about dogs
- I think it is common sense that people who smoke shouldn't do it in front of children AND by the school gates. Certain schools already have no smoking signs on their gates so I would have thought that the school itself can already impose this. So I definitely strongly agree (I'm a smoker and don't do this!). However, i think for this rule to be imbided, at the start, there should be an enforcement officer that will appear at certain periods during school hours to check. Mostly, I've seen parents do this at drop off and pick-up. Perhaps especially at the date of launch.
- Smoking in open areas. I believe we live in free country, not George Orwellian state give people the choice !! I don't smoke it dose not bother me if you are in open spaces smoke vanishes straight away
- All public areas and streets should be smoke free
- Smoking, vaping and the reckless discard/negligent disposal of related waste products in public spaces should be more closely policed, and the penalties associated with being caught breaching the rules should be both significant and enforced.
- Please can you consider extending the smoking prohibition to the area outside of the hospital. I hate having to walk through thick smoke with my children when approaching the main entrance to the hospital. It's awful, unfair and a health risk too. There needs to be a designated area for them to congregate that is not directly on the road outside the hospital. Please!!
- Smokers and people who smoke the things that go in balloons just simply discard their litter.  
It's awful.  
It's unsightly.  
It's antisocial.
- Parents outside school gates smoking but irresponsible parking outside schools more of a issue than dogs
- Seem a bit ridiculous to fine people for smoking in an area during school hours on a week day when the children you're trying to protect should be in school, rather than fining the people using those facilities perhaps you should fine children's parents for not having them in school and use that money to purchase more bins for all public spaces.

- Those that vape produce clouds of vape and I think they should be included in this scheme.
- I would extend this to outside schools, hospitals, outside workplaces, shops and shopping centres. In fact, the only place should be inside a person's own home except where children or vulnerable persons live. An exception would be a room inside/outside a place mentioned above where polluted air inside the place/room is carried away via forced extraction away from public areas.

## **Consultation questionnaire/process:**

- A cemetery is different to a play area for example, but they are all grouped together so it wasn't possible to answer appropriately.
- For example multi use sports area? This could be a very large open space that would be suitable for dogs to be off lead when not be used for sport or to smoke without effecting others.  
The question relating to fines categorised both dog walking and smoking which should be treated separately.
- I have noticed that the council put keeps putting out these questionnaires in regards to dogs. It's coming across very unhelpful especially as this is not the first time this type conversation is going to held for Northamptonshire
- So many of these questions are jumbled and I find them leading to the point where I cannot give my opinion on money. Why is the issue of smoking for example being put in with Dog Walking. I would like to answer questions on smoking and drug use in public places but I can't give the answer I would like as this would also implicate that I have a problem with Dog Walker is which I do not.
- Fair enough on the smoking but leave the dog walkers alone please. Yes there's some badies but most a good. Why not crack down on those people Why doesn't the council provide an easier consultation process for different subjects so that people can give their answers freely about each subject.
- You can't answer the questions in this pspo fairly as too many things are linked in together. The questions are not specific and should not include issues about smoking, country parks and dog fouling altogether! Who on earth wrote this!

## **Dog on dog attacks:**

- "My dog, [dog's name] was attacked by a fierce mastiff off lead. While that dog now has an enforcement notice requiring it to be muzzled and on lead at all times when outside their home, I've had no recompense for the £735 the vets charged for [dog's name] treatment  
There is a petition to government to make dog on dog attacks illegal"

## **Business impact:**

- I have a small business [name of business] and paid a small fortune for licence to have daycare dog up to 6 and now it would mean 2 dogs would have to stay in my house alone while I walk the others and that's not the service I offer nor would it work leaving 2 dogs behind

## **Professional/dog walkers:**

- I use profession dog walkers to help me while I work. Without their services I would have to rehome my dogs. This would have a significant impact on me and my mental health bit to mention it's incredible cruel to out people in this situation because if a few bad dog owners. Profesional dog walkers are often in more control of their charges than many owners. It is their livelihood and our life line and should not be reduced.
- If you control 4 dogs walked and do not offer a licence to professional dogs walks you are impacting the local community, business and peopled mental health, freedom to roam. Risking the quality of dogs excite and the mental health of the owners. People often own 4 or more dogs. Also this blanket ban will risk isolating huge parts of rhe community. My question is how would this be policed?? Ig your officers are only going to protol upton park and central Northampton? Im a local dog walker and rarely see anyone while out walking and believe it will be one of them rules out there that are just ignored by the general public.

Most of your questions are related to dogs poo and on lead walking. And offering no veration in dogs behaviours. Remembering dogs poo on or off lead.

- Most responsible dog owners should not be punished as a result of the small number that can't control their dogs they should be independently prosecuted which should not effect others who abide by safety
- I think that registered dog walkers I use are sensible and ensure their dogs are kept under control at all times. To restrict them to 4 (given their professionalism) may mean some go out of business with impact on the owners who might rely on them so they can go to work.

## **Professional Dog Walker Licensing:**

- Dog businesses with a licence should be treated separately, we have had to demonstrate ability via training and so forth, I think it would be a real shame to wreck this for the minority. I mean what pervsions are being put in place? Are the council going to have enclosed off lead spaces for dogs? There are 13 million dogs in the Uk all to have behavioural issues if can't run off lead. Punish those who fail to train



## Number of dogs walked:

- The survey does not give the option for people to choose a number higher than 4 so any professional dog walkers or licensed boarders cannot choose an option most suited to their needs.

I would fully concede that a limit of 4 dogs is sensible in parks and towns regardless of whether a professional person is present but to have those limits set for open countryside including some public footpaths and bridleways is excessive and unnecessary in relation to professional dog walkers.

I would fully support the idea of licensing professional dog walkers and boarders to enable them to walk 6 dogs under standards mutually agreed with the council, including strict penalties for anyone breaching these limits, as the blanket limit of 4 dogs is severely restrictive to current business practises and will cause many conscientious professionals to go out of business or lose a third of their income.

Do the council have any evidence of problems regarding numbers or behaviour of dogs in relation to professional dog walkers and if so what action has been taken?

- I don't agree to restrictions on 4 dogs only, as many people own more than 4 dogs and dog walkers sometimes walk more than 4 dogs. I think the limit should stay at 6.
- Professional dog walkers with insurance that covers up to 6 dogs should be able to walk up to 6 dogs. It's not the number of the dogs that are an issue rather specific owners or a specific dog, none of these proposals will address this issue
- Dog walkers/boarders should not be restricted to only four dogs at once. This restriction would make their business unviable. This could then force owners to use less reputable boarders or kennels which are not suitable for many dogs. I have no issue with any of the other proposals.
- The No of dogs walked should along tk the licence of 6.
- Please do not limit this to 4. As a professional Walker of 6+ years this will massively effect my business and the businesses of others. A better solution would be a license. A competent Walker will have control over all their dogs and will take them to the appropriate places to walk them.
- Professional dog walkers usually have insurance for 6 dogs. Below that number means that their business is no longer viable.
- This proposal only gives a maximum option of 4 dogs to be walked at any one time whilst my insurance as a professional dog walker supports 6 dogs and, in a lot of circumstances, 6 is the number many professional walkers and boarders need to be able to walk to have a viable business. I have been walking dogs professionally for 5 years and have never had any issues or complaints, lowering the number allowed at once would reduce my income by

a 3rd, which would not be viable to continue with. I have worked really hard to build my business as have a lot of other walkers, lowering the number to 4 max would be detrimental to many of us.

- I strongly disagree that the number of dogs allowed to be walked by one person being capped to four. Some people have more than four dogs and some people walk dogs as a way to make a living this would not be fair to them.
- More than 4 dogs being walked by a responsible dog walker are not a problem. The problem is with a single dog being walked by an irresponsible dog owner/walker who does not know how to control a single dog
- "As an owner of a dog care business I find the worrying trend of councils playing god with people's livelihood without a thought for the sometimes devastating consequences, appalling. Animal welfare is not paramount in this decision making."
- There is absolute no need to restrict the amount of dogs 1 person can walk, especially for professional dog walkers. It is often 1 private individual with just 1 or 2 dogs whose dogs are aggressive, unsocialised or out of control. It is also much more likely to be a private individual not picking up after their dog(s), rather than a professional dog walker
- I believe that limiting the number of dogs to be walked by one person will not decrease the issues caused by out of control dogs as usually these issues are caused by irresponsible owners with 1-2 personal dogs
- I rely heavily on a dog walker who takes my dog and others out whilst I'm working. She is absolutely fantastic and takes the dogs to quiet areas when they can be exercised. I trust her whole heartedly and I think a blanket ban on having more than 4 dogs under your control is unfair.
- Professional and qualified dog walkers who can control a pack of 6 should be allowed. Sometimes there is no room to shuffle the dogs so more than 4 have to be walked. Restrict the smokers but not the qualified and professional dog walkers who do a great job, and must have so much patience. So NO do not restrict the dog walkers.
- I am a small breeding and show kennel who walks multiple dogs at one time both on the lead in public places and off lead in bridle ways. To implement a max number of dogs walked would impact my daily life dramatically
- There is no evidence at all that people walking more than 4 dogs are causing more issues than people walking less than 4 dogs. In fact, all I hear about is incidents with 1 or 2 dogs that the owner can't control! Professional walkers tend to have well socialised and friendly dogs, so they are able to walk 4, 5, 6 or even more dogs without any problems.
- Surely you should focus your attentions on irresponsible dog owners instead of tarring everyone with the same brush!  
If a dog is well behaved and kept in good/safe control with a responsible owner why does it have to have a lead?

If someone has six dogs that are all well socialised why can't they be walked together?

It seems more like you insist the public pay more council tax each year yet you aren't prepared to direct those extra funds to police/educate the few who need it. Instead you are insisting on a blanket approach where the majority can be punished because of the minorities downfall and your lazy attitude. How much has this process cost, couldn't you have employed a dog warden instead?

As for smoking, I think it's horrid. But why is it being discussed with a dog walking issue?

If people want to smoke outside the boundaries of a premises who are you to say no that? Why not try educating?

- Why would the council want to restrict the amount of dogs walked by 1 person? It's always the irresponsible owners with just one dog who they can't control. I've seen so many incidents with inexperienced owners, who don't seem to socialise their dogs at all and who don't seem to read their dog's body language! My dog walker gives my Poodle a great time with his friends and often meets up with other dog walkers. I get photos of 10-15 happy, playful dogs and this is what I want for my dog and what all dogs should be able to experience! Scrap the limit of dogs please!
- There should be NO limit on the number of dogs you are allowed to walk because that number is dictated by your competence as a dog handler and the training of the dogs. Specifying a number criminalises those who have trained their dogs well but have more than the specified number to walk. It also encourages people who aren't competent and have untrained dogs to walk more than they are competent to walk because the council have specified how many it is safe to walk irrespective of any other factor
- My dog walker operates with 6 dogs, we rely on this to be able to work full time. Without this service I don't know what we will do. She won't be able to operate with only 4 dogs.
- "Dog walking numbers should be limited to 4 in public parks and the areas mentioned in the survey but should be allowed to increase to 6 in less populated areas in line with most dog walking insurance policies  
How is the PSPO going to be enforced if all open countryside is covered by the limit of 4?"
- What a ridiculous suggestion that no more than 4 dogs can be walked by any person and that pack mentality could be an issue. We're talking about dogs, not wolves! Also, practically all incidents with dogs are in either a home situation or with owners who only have 1 or maybe 2 dogs that they haven't trained and are either aggressive or out of control. My dog walker regularly takes 6 dogs in one go and they are all friendly and well behaved. Being in these groups has really helped my own dogs with how they behave around other dogs!

- I don't see how this benefits anyone. Most professional dog walkers' insurance allows them to walk up to 6 at a time. A single dangerous dog is far more concerning than 6 docile dogs being walked at once. If the plan goes ahead I won't be able to afford my dog walker anymore as they'll have to increase their costs, meaning we'll have to carefully consider whether we can afford to provide a good life to our dog any more.
- The proposal says "Consideration is being given to the development of a licensing scheme and associated code of conduct for professional dog walkers", until this is concluded it is not appropriate to limit to everyone to 4 dogs. Licensed dog boarders have insurance to walk 6 dogs so should be able to do so.
- I don't think this is fair, our dogs are walked with other dogs and enjoy socialising and our dog walker is brilliant, making her walk less dogs will mean her business will suffer and so will the interaction our dogs have with others. I feel this needs to be the same as it is now as she is fully insured to take 6 dogs out at one time and restricting this is a huge shame!
- What is wrong with this council. Leave people alone with their dogs. Yes agree about smoking but why limit dog owners in with them?
- I believe that anyone that is professional dog Walker with appropriate insurance should be allowed to walk more than 4 dogs and should be allowed to walk 6 dogs. To stop professional dog walkers walking no more than 4 dogs will be very short sighted of the council. There are enough dogs abandoned at dogs shelters. If professional dog walkers are stopped to walk more than 4 dogs their businesses will be at risk, dogs being left at shelters will increase. As per everything with new laws/rules etc, the sensible are always penalised. You won't stop unsociable dog owners by introducing these rules/laws, they will just carry on BUT you will stop decent, law abiding, sensible, professional, trained dog walkers to continue their business and destroy many people's livelihoods. Not forgetting an increase in dog abandonment because no one can get help to walk their dogs.
- Dog owners should be responsible for their own dogs and not have restrictions put on them by the council. Dog walkers should be able to walk more than 4 dogs if required firstly so it's a financially viable business and secondly to support dog owners to be able to work. In these economic times it would be crazy to restrict this and potentially cause further financial misery for walkers and owners
- There are many more responsible dog owners/walkers that will take 5/6 dogs out without any issues than irresponsible owners. The dog attacks that I am aware of always relate to a lone dog rather than anyone walking multiple dogs. Maybe there can be a compromise that if anyone is walking more than four, up to six dogs they then have to be on a leash but one person can still walk them.

- Licensing schemes relating to the number of dogs permitted to be walked by one individual. i.e., possible professional dog walker licensing or animal boarding/day care licensing. As a professional dog walker for 6 years, I feel personally affected by the limiting of the number of dogs walked at one time. This section of the PSPO will be detrimental to our business and therefore, the dogs and owners, should this limit be enforced again. If dog walkers are limited to the number of dogs they are able to take care of, this leaves owners in the difficult position of safeguarding their dogs welfare when they are working. Dogs left for long hours, or without adequate exercise and socialisation can quickly become frustrated, leading to dogs developing undesirable behaviours (likely to add to issues this order is trying to control) and/or the owners having to relinquish their pets.

Responsible dog walkers use their knowledge, experience and care to make sure dogs are grouped appropriately so there is no 'pack mentality' and a level of calm and good manners can be upheld.

As a professional who has put a lot of time, money, and passion into gaining knowledge and experience, I fully agree with the need for a licensing scheme for professionals, that can provide the appropriate guidelines for dog walkers, and owners to look for when enquiring about a dog walker. This will also ensure that standards are upheld and monitored.

By limiting dog walkers to 4 dogs per walk, it will cap our incomes considerably, making the profession almost unrealistic in the current financial climate. I, myself, am a single income household and it would have a hugely detrimental affect on my ability to stay afloat.

I have a waiting list of clients that would have to go to other walkers if I was limited, however, if this order stays at a 4 dog limit, they would struggle to find a professional walker with availability, making the possibility of under-experienced and/or less responsible walkers worsening the issues the PSPO is seeking to resolve, rendering it counterproductive.

I ask you to please revisit the prospect of a licensing scheme for professional dog walkers, guided by those that know the profession, and the areas we cover, rather than a blanket restriction that will have a hugely negative effect on the dog walking, and pet ownership industry of our area.

Yours sincerely,

[name]

[business name]

- If the number of dogs is limited to only 4 then I will be unable to walk all of my dogs together as I own 5. They are all highly trained dogs who compete nationally in obedience, agility and canicross. It's unfair to limit those responsible dog owners when I have not experienced myself, nor heard from anyone else, of issues with someone walking more than 4 dogs. I can fully understand licenses for dog walkers/those running a business and feel that

this rule you wish to implement should be split between general dog owners and those receiving money from walking dogs.

- Allowing only 4 dogs per dog Walker would put a strain on a small dog business and I disagree strongly that this comes into force. It should be allowed that a dog Walker can walk more than 4 dogs
- I strongly believe that professional dog walkers should be allowed to walk more than 4 dogs at one time.
- 4 dogs is plenty. Any more would be dangerous for the public, the dog walker and other dogs in the area. How would pop be picked up? Thank you.
- I run my own dog boarding and walking service and some breeds of dog require off lead walks, I do agree that if your walking your dog or dogs you should at all times be responsible for them and you should always place your dog on lead if there's another on lead near by, I have over the last few years notice alot of dog mess not being picked up and do feel this should be addressed , regarding smoking outside I don't smoke myself but do feel that this is a person's right to do,so as long as they discard waste properly.
- People are walking far too many out of control dogs. Most handlers cannot handle the 5-6 they currently walk, and plenty of walkers flout the rules and time out 8-10. The rules for walking should be far more stringent to keep both the dogs and the public safe.
- This is an impractical rule for dog breeders, show persons and dog walkers who do this as a business
- I am in strong favour of dog walkers walking a maximum of 4 dogs at any one time, unless on private property with no public access.  
I am also in strong favour of professional dog walkers having a licence to trade and this industry being regulated. Thank you [name and business name]
- Should be 2
- Dog owners should be limited to 4 dogs. Professional walkers should be allowed to remain at 6 dogs per walk to ensure we continue the essential dog socialisation needs. And to not cause further socialisation and emotional issues in dogs by making it difficult and unaffordable for owners to engage the services if dog walkers.
- Dogs should be on lead at any time in a residential area
- I am a pet service provider and I do not walk multiple dogs together, as I strongly believe that dog walking should be focused at all times on the needs of the individual dog and can't see how one person can safely control more than 4 dogs at a time on the lead and certainly cannot watch and control more than 4 dogs off lead and see where they all are at once and if they have fouled. Walks with one person and more than 4 dogs are purely for money and not for the welfare of the dogs.

- Strongly suggest a regulation system for dog walkers. I have seen 8/9 dogs being walked by one individual which is highly risky and does not promote animal welfare or responsible dog ownership.
- Dog walking companies have too many dogs on walks. They don't keep eyes on them when they let them off lead which then means they are not observing dog's behaviour towards people and other animals Also they cannot control large groups on or off leash Also so many do not pick up dog mess. They seem to offload the dogs out of vans and it becomes a fee for all. Large groups of dogs being walked by dog walkers needs to be stopped
- I strongly believe that professional dog walkers should be allowed to walk more than 4 dogs at one time.
- Some of my friends and responsible small business owners who run dog walking businesses providing a vital service for working people with dogs. In seeking to reduce their working capacity you will not only be letting them down but also letting down the residents of this town who rely on them. I think it's awful what you are proposing to do to these peoples livelihoods.

## **Responses from professional bodies/charities/organisations:**

### **Dog Walkers and Sitters Association (DWSA):**

- The DWSA (Dog Walkers & Sitters Association) have a code of conduct for members, and all dog walkers listed on the DWSA site are qualified, insured and DBS checked. We are working hard to attempt to regulate and improve the safety and standards of this rapidly growing industry. We welcome being consulted on such issues and our own code of conduct includes dog walkers not walking more than 4 dogs at a time, always having the means to clean up after dogs, having a first aid kit, always having dogs under control, and other steps to ensure the safety of the dog walker, the dogs and the public. Unscrupulous sites such as rover.com are littered with hundreds if not thousands of people offering dog walking and sitting services. Most are dog lovers offering services in their spare time for extra cash with little or no dog related courses or qualifications, no insurance and no DBS check.

Ultimately, the dog owning public have a part to play in improving standards, by only employing/hiring suitably qualified, insured and security checked professional dog walkers. Supply will sadly meet demand. If demand improves its standards, then so will supply.

We welcome the proposal/idea of a dog walking licence for professional dog walkers, obtained by demonstrating membership to an organisation such as DWSA, where members have all completed a course written and delivered by the British College of Canine Studies. Any reputable and responsible dog

walker worth their salt is only too happy to join such a group and meet the standards, adhere to the code of conduct, have the insurance and the DBS check.

### **Sulby Parish Meeting:**

- I am a dog owner and have been around animals all my life. I understand the responsibilities of dog and other ownership, which unfortunately doesn't seem to be the case with some other owners.

The Covid epidemic and increase in the number of households in this area has with it, brought a dramatic increase in the number of people walking with their dogs. Also, the demographic distribution of town folk visiting the area with little or no idea of the countryside code.

This has resulted in seeing a lack of control of dogs as well as irresponsible professional dog walkers with up to 6 dogs without leads, The consequence of all this is potential confrontations with other walkers and an increase in the dog fouling that is well documented to be harmful, especially to children.

To help improve the dog ownership behaviour, more signage to remind dog owners of their responsibilities and more dog bins so that people don't have to carry the bags of poo for miles, as for example on the Jurassic way between Naseby Road and Sibertoft. In addition I believe it's time to put some rules in place to highlight the responsibility the both dog owners and professional dog walkers and the consequences of this unsociable behaviour.

### **Catesby Parish Meeting:**

Litter! That's my response. Clear it up and provide adequate bins, emptying of bins and enforcement.

As a rural parish the litter on our roads and verges, thrown from cars, is ridiculous and needs sorting.

### **East Hunsbury Parish Council:**

- East Hunsbury Parish Council have discussed the issue of dog control in public open spaces in relation to some recent complaints received from residents. However parish councillors were reluctant to have a formal order in place across public open spaces in East Hunsbury as the majority of dog owners are law abiding and able to to keep their dog under control.

We feel that a broader message and awareness campaign regarding responsible dog ownership and "park etiquette" should be adopted.



If the PSPO was to be adopted across the Northampton area this would include open spaces in East Hunsbury, regardless of the opinion of the parish council. While we accept that this would be the case, we would need to understand fully how the PSPO would be enforced in our parish. It is not sufficient to put the PSPO in place and rely on residents to report incidents.

Information on the resources that will be available for patrol of open spaces, education of users, and issuing fines, should be declared prior to the adoption of the PSPO so that communities can see that this will be enforced effectively.

### **Billing Parish Council:**

- Billing Parish Council currently have a big issue across the Parish of dog fouling. Whilst we feel that the people who are caught not picking up after their dogs and who do not carry the means to pick up should be fined we are at a loss on how this will be successfully monitored and implemented when their is already limited staff.

### **Brixworth Parish Council:**

- We believe that Nitrous Oxide canisters should be banned from all areas that involve minors.

### **Northampton Town Council:**

- The Environmental Services Committee of Northampton Town Council recently considered the consultation on varying public spaces and protection orders.

The Town Council is supportive of the proposals regarding dogs, and also those to be imposed regarding tobacco, tobacco related products and smokeless tobacco products.

Regarding dog control, the town council particularly support the introduction of a maximum limit that one person can walk at a time. The uptake in the dog walking industry needs some regulation and the intention to introduce a licence and/or code of conduct is welcomed.

Regarding the orders on smoking, again the council is supportive of these proposals. Children are influenced by their parents/carers and minimising their exposure to smoking will have beneficial effects in supporting healthy living and setting a good example. It was suggested that the dropping of cigarette butts should be included in the proposal as these have an environmental impact both from a visual standpoint and in terms of making their way into streams and rivers, etc.

When this order is agreed then we would encourage WNC to publicise it widely so that the various groups that will be impacted by this are fully aware of it and how their actions could contravene the order. In addition it is believed that enforcement is key and we would encourage WNC to enforce these new orders wherever possible.

## **Kennel Club:**

### **Dog fouling**

- The Kennel Club strongly promotes responsible dog ownership, and believes that dog owners should always pick up after their dogs wherever they are, including fields and woods in the wider countryside, and especially where farm animals graze to reduce the risk of passing Neospora and Sarcocystosis to cattle and sheep respectively.

We would like to take this opportunity to encourage the local authority to employ further proactive measures to help promote responsible dog ownership throughout the local area in addition to introducing Orders in this respect. These proactive measures can include: increasing the number of bins available for dog owners to use; communicating to local dog owners that bagged dog faeces can be disposed of in normal litter bins; running responsible ownership and training events; or using poster campaigns to encourage dog owners to pick up after their dog.

### **Means to pick up**

Whilst we support proactive efforts on behalf of local authorities to encourage responsible dog ownership, measures to require owners to pick up after their dogs must be fair and proportionate. We would not like to see responsible dog owners penalised unfairly. The Kennel Club has concerns regarding the proposal to introduce an offence of not having the means to pick up. Responsible owners will usually have dog waste bags or other means to clear up after their pets. However, if dog owners are approached at the end of a walk they may have already used the bags that they have taken out or given a spare bag to someone who has run out, for example. Such behaviour is encouraged by Green Dog Walker schemes.

It is also plausible that such proposals could, in certain circumstances, perversely incentivise dog walkers to not pick up after their dog. Dog walkers could be made to decide between using their final waste bag and risk being caught without means to pick up, or risk not picking up in order to have a means to pick up should they be stopped later on their walk. It is reasonable to assume a proportion of dog walkers would choose the second option if they believed this was the least likely route to being caught, especially if the penalty for not picking up was the same as not being in possession of a means to pick up.

Local authorities may wish to consider introducing a clause which provides an exemption for those who have run out of bags but are able to prove that they were in possession of and made use of these during their walk. It is essential that an effective communication campaign is launched in the local area to ensure that people are aware of the plans and have an excess supply of dog waste bags with them.

### **On lead**

We can support reasonable 'dogs on lead' Orders which can, when used in a proportionate and evidence-based way, include areas such as cemeteries, picnic areas, or on pavements in proximity to cars and other road traffic.

### **On lead by direction**

The Kennel Club strongly welcomes 'On lead by direction' Orders. These allow responsible dog owners to exercise their dogs off lead without restriction providing their dogs are under control, whilst simultaneously giving the local authority powers to restrict dogs not under control.

We recommend that the authorised officer enforcing the Order is familiar with dog behaviour in order to determine whether restraint is necessary. There exists the possibility that a dog, through no fault of its own, could be considered a 'nuisance' or 'annoyance' to someone who simply does not like dogs.

We encourage local authorities to make use of more flexible and targeted measures at their disposal, including Acceptable Behavioural Contracts and Community Protection Notices. Kennel Club Good Citizen Training Clubs and our accredited trainers can assist owners whose dogs run out of control due to them not having the ability to train a reliable recall.

### **Exclusions**

We do not normally oppose Orders to exclude dogs from playgrounds or enclosed recreational facilities such as tennis courts or skate parks. It is important that alternative provisions are made for dog walkers in the vicinity to avoid displacement or the intensification of problems in nearby areas. However, we will oppose PSPOs which introduce blanket restrictions on dog walkers accessing public open spaces without specific and reasonable justification. Dog owners are required to provide their dogs with appropriate daily exercise, including "regular opportunities to walk and run" – in most cases, this will be off the lead while still under control.

When seeking to restrict access to playing fields, local authorities should consider whether or not it is absolutely necessary. When they are not in use, they can be a vital resource for dog owners to ensure that their dogs get their required daily exercise. As such, time and/or seasonal restrictions may be more appropriate than a continuous exclusion order.

With regard to the proposed exclusion of dogs from schools while 'open and in use by pupils', we would encourage the Council to include an exemption where the dog owner has permission from the Head Teacher of the school. Various charities, such as Pets As Therapy (<https://petsastherapy.org/>) and The Bark and Read Foundation (<https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/about-us/charity-work/bark-and-read/>), take specially trained dogs into schools and other settings by request of the school, for the benefit of the pupils within the school. Without a clear legal exemption from the PSPO, charitable volunteers may be put off from offering this beneficial service.

### **Displacement**

A common unintended consequence of restrictions is displacement onto other pieces of land, resulting in new conflicts being created. It can be difficult to predict the effects of displacement, and so the council should consider whether alternative sites for dog walkers are suitable and can support an increase in the number of dog walkers using them.

The All-Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare (AGPAW) published a report which provides guidance to local authorities considering PSPOs, highlighting the increased risk to livestock if dog walkers are displaced to farmland.

"When reviewing Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs), local authorities should be careful to consider the availability of open space for use by dogs off lead. To restrict such areas or remove them via a PSPO may increase the risk to livestock in the countryside as more owners and walkers find that location as the only alternative. APGAW believes that local authorities should carefully consider alternative locations for dog owners and walkers to take their dogs when looking at issuing PSPOs and other measures such as introducing car parking charges and conservation grazing.

Given that there is a dog in around a quarter of all homes, as normal good practice, local authorities should seek to ensure adequate provision of green space for dog walkers during planning applications for new developments to avoid adjacent farmland becoming in effect local public amenity areas. Good practice already exists in the provision of such green space when planning to minimize any impacts on sensitive wildlife areas adjacent to new homes arising from dog walking." (Tackling livestock worrying and encouraging responsible dog ownership, 2017 Page 6 - <http://www.apgaw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/APGAW-Livestock-Worrying-Report-2017.pdf>)

### **Maximum number of dogs**

An arbitrary maximum number of dogs that a person can walk is an inappropriate approach to dog control that will often displace and intensify problems in other areas. The maximum number of dogs a person can walk in a controlled manner depends on a number of factors relating to the dog

walker, the dogs being walked, whether leads are used, time of day and the location where the walking is taking place.

As such we advise against the use of arbitrary numerical limits. Instead we suggest that the behaviour of individual commercial dog walkers is considered on a case by case basis, with Community Protection Notices used to tackle those behaving in anti-social manner.

If a maximum number of dogs measure is being considered due to issues arising from commercial dog walkers, we instead suggest that councils look at accreditation schemes – as seen in places such as the East Lothian Council area. These can be far more effective than numerical limits as they can promote good practice, rather than just curb the excesses of one aspect of dog walking. Accreditation can also ensure that dog walkers are properly insured – which will typically cap the number of dogs that they can walk at any one time – and act as advocates for good behaviour by other dog owners.

Government guidance has been relatively consistent that the maximum number of dogs being walked should not exceed six dogs. This is in line with typical limits imposed by insurance companies, for which annual dog walking insurance for walking up to six dogs on or off lead, is readily available for under £100 per annum. Councils should be clear as to what behaviour they're aiming to address when introducing PSPOs to regulate the behaviour of commercial dog walkers. As there is a high chance rogue operators will make a financial calculation that the risk of being caught and maximum fine under a PSPO, is outweighed by the income generated by exceeding the numerical limit set out in the PSPO. Or indeed, it may encourage multiple dog walkers to share a single vehicle and walk in groups, resulting in larger groups of dogs being walked together.

### **Appropriate signage**

It is important to note that in relation to PSPOs, The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 (Publication of Public Spaces Protection Orders) Regulations 2014 makes it a legal requirement for local authorities to –

“cause to be erected on or adjacent to the public place to which the order relates such notice (or notices) as it considers sufficient to draw the attention of any member of the public using that place to -

(i) the fact that the order has been made, extended or varied (as the case may be); and

(ii) the effect of that order being made, extended or varied (as the case may be).”

Regarding dog access restrictions, such as a 'Dogs on Lead' Order, on-site signage should clearly state where such restrictions begin and end. This can be achieved with signs that say on one side, for example, 'You are entering [type of area]' and 'You are leaving [type of area]' on the reverse.

While all dog walkers should be aware of their requirement to pick up after their dog, signage must be erected for the PSPO to be compliant with the legislation.

### **Assistance dogs**

We urge the Council to review the Equality and Human Rights Commission's guidance for businesses and service providers when providing any exemptions for those who rely on assistance dogs. The guidance can be viewed here:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/assistance-dogs-a-guide-for-all-businesses.pdf>

We would therefore encourage the Council to allow for some flexibility when considering whether a disabled person's dog is acting as an assistance dog. The Council could consider adopting the definitions of assistance dogs used by Mole Valley District Council, which can be found below from their 2020 PSPO which included the following exemption provisions on dog control:

Nothing in this Order shall apply to a person who –

a) is registered as a blind person on a register compiled under section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948; or

b) is deaf, in respect of a dog trained by Hearing Dogs for Deaf People (registered charity number 293358) and upon which he relies for assistance; or

c) has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, in respect of a dog trained by any current or future members of Assistance Dogs UK or any other charity registered in the UK with a purpose of training assistance dogs and upon which he relies for assistance

d) has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and in the reasonable opinion of the Council that person relies upon the assistance of the dog in connection with their disability. or that of Northumberland County Council:

“(4) The term “Assistance Dog” shall mean a dog which has been trained to assist a person with a disability.

(5) The expression "disability" shall have the meaning prescribed in section 6 of the Equality Act 2010 or as may be defined in any subsequent amendment or re-enactment of that legislation"

## **Dogs Trust's:**

### **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. In order to maximise compliance we urge the Council to consider whether an adequate number of disposal points have been provided for responsible owners to use, to consider providing free disposal bags and to ensure that there is sufficient signage in place.

We question the effectiveness of issuing on-the-spot fines for not being in possession of a poo bag and whether this is practical to enforce.

### **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, 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; Dog Exclusion and sport pitches**

Excluding dogs from areas that are not enclosed could pose enforcement problems - we would consider it more difficult to enforce an exclusion order in areas that lack clear boundaries.

We feel that exclusion zones should be kept to a minimum, and that excluding dogs from all sports pitches for long stretches of the year is unnecessary. In some cases sports pitches may account for a large part of the open space available in a public park, and therefore excluding dogs could significantly reduce available dog walking space for owners.

We would urge the Council to consider focusing its efforts on reducing dog fouling in these areas, rather than excluding dogs entirely, with adequate provision of bins and provision of free disposal bags

### **4. 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 the need for sufficient exercise including the need to run 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.

**5. Re; Dogs on Lead by Direction Order:**

Dogs Trust enthusiastically support Dogs on Leads by Direction orders (for dogs that are considered to be out of control or causing alarm or distress to members of the public 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.

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

The behaviour of the dogs and the competency of the handler need to be taken into consideration if considering this order. Research from 2010 shows that 95% of dog owners have up to 3 dogs. Therefore the number of dogs taken out on to land by one individual would not normally be expected to exceed four dogs.

**The Dogs Trust, Community Engagement:**

- Dear Environmental Improvement Team,  
Thank you for inviting us to respond to the consultation to vary the Order to cover the Northampton Area and include the requirement to keep dogs on leads in Northampton town centre and also at Upton Country Park Phase 2 and exclude dogs from certain public open spaces such as play areas and schools.

If you would like to discuss your proposed varying of the Order in more detail, then we would happily attend an online meeting with yourselves, to talk through the proposal from an animal welfare perspective. Please let me know if you would like that meeting with us.

As the UK's largest dog welfare charity, we would initially like to make the following comments for consideration:



## **1.Re; Dog Exclusion and sport pitches**

Excluding dogs from areas that are not enclosed could pose enforcement problems - we would consider it more difficult to enforce an exclusion order in areas that lack clear boundaries.

We feel that exclusion zones should be kept to a minimum, and that excluding dogs from all sports pitches for long stretches of the year is unnecessary. In some cases, sports pitches may account for a large part of the open space available in a public park, and therefore excluding dogs could significantly reduce available dog walking space for owners.

We would urge the Council to consider focusing its efforts on reducing dog fouling in these areas, rather than excluding dogs entirely, with adequate provision of bins and provision of free disposal bags.

## **2. 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 the need for sufficient exercise including the need to run 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.

The PDSA's 'Paw Report 2018' found that 89% of veterinary professionals believe that the welfare of dogs will suffer if owners are banned from walking their dogs in public spaces such as parks and beaches, or if dogs are required to be kept on leads in these spaces. Their report also states that 78% of owners rely on these types of spaces to walk their dog.

We believe that the vast majority of dog owners are responsible, and that the majority of dogs are well behaved. In recognition of this, we would encourage local authorities to exercise its power to issue Community Protection Notices, targeting irresponsible owners and proactively addressing anti-social behaviours.

Dogs Trust works with local authorities across the UK to help promote responsible dog ownership. Please do not hesitate to contact should you wish to discuss this matter.

We would be very grateful if you could inform us of the consultation outcome and subsequent decisions made in relation to the Public Space Protection Order.

Yours sincerely

[name] Community Engagement

**North Northamptonshire Council, Regulatory Services:**

- Following a review of the WNC consultation documentation with relevant colleagues I can confirm that there would not be any anticipated impact upon us as NNC and on this basis we would not propose to make any representation.