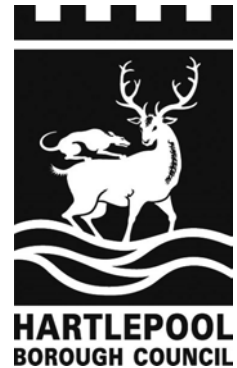


# **TRANSPORT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE**



**Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

**at 3.30pm**

**in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

Councillor P Hargreaves, Cabinet Member responsible for Transport and Neighbourhoods, will consider the following items.

1. **KEY DECISIONS**
  - 1.1 Review of Dog Control Orders – *Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)*
2. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

No items
3. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

No items

## **TRANSPORT AND NEIGHBOURHOODS PORTFOLIO**

Report to Portfolio Holder  
**4 November 2011**



**Report of:** Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

**Subject:** REVIEW OF DOG CONTROL ORDERS

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### **SUMMARY**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval to amend the existing Dog Control Orders currently in force across Hartlepool.

#### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

A review of the Dog Control Orders currently in force across the Borough has recently been carried out and the report contains details of the changes required following an extensive consultation exercise.

#### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Environmental issues which includes Dog Control Orders.

#### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Key decision (test ii applies). Forward Plan reference number RN57/11

#### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

#### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

Approval to make changes to the existing Dog Control Orders currently in place across the Borough of Hartlepool.

**Report of:** Assistant Director (Neighbourhood Services)

**Subject:** REVIEW OF DOG CONTROL ORDERS

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek approval to amend the existing Dog Control Orders currently in force across Hartlepool.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Five Dog Control Orders were introduced to Hartlepool in 2008 under Part 6 of the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act. Specifically, these are listed below and apply to various parts of the town:

- The Fouling of Land by Dogs (Borough of Hartlepool) Order;
- The Dogs on Leads (Borough of Hartlepool) Order;
- The Dogs on Leads by Direction (Borough of Hartlepool) Order;
- The Dogs Exclusion (Borough of Hartlepool) Order;
- The Dogs (Specified Maximum) (Borough of Hartlepool) Order.

- 2.2 A copy booklet of the Dog Control Orders currently in force across Hartlepool is available on Hartlepool Borough Council's website.

- 2.3 At a meeting of the Finance and Procurement Portfolio Holder in May 2011, the Portfolio Holder gave approval for the necessary steps to be taken to review the Dog Control Orders currently in place across Hartlepool.

- 2.4 The review was prompted by requests from members of the public for changes to be made to some of the existing orders and for new orders to be introduced in certain parts of the town. Specifically, the proposed new orders include the following:

- a) North Sands, 'On Leads' Order (seasonal, September to March inc.);
- b) Fens Field, 'Dog Exclusion' Order;
- c) Redheugh Gardens, 'On Leads' Order.

- 2.5 The level of fixed penalty for an offence committed under a Dog Control Order is currently set at £80, reduced to £50 if paid within a period of 7 days. There is no proposal to change this set amount.

### 3 FORMAL CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY

- 3.1 Subsequent to the Portfolio Holder meeting in May, a formal consultation exercise was carried out for a three month period between 1<sup>st</sup> May and the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2011. The consultation exercise was promoted in a number of ways including the Council's website, Hartlepool Mail, Hartbeat and the three Neighbourhood Consultative Forums.
- 3.2 Less formal, but nonetheless informative presentations/talks on the proposals have been given to a number of local community/resident groups.
- 3.3 In accordance with the Regulations, the Parish Councils of Dalton, Greatham, Elwick and Hart, and the Headland Town Council, have been formally consulted.
- 3.4 Key stakeholders including the RSPCA and the Dogs Trust have been formally consulted.
- 3.5 The Crown Estates has been informed about those dog control orders, which apply to parts of the beaches and foreshores.
- 3.6 Full details of the consultation exercise and survey is attached at **Appendix A**.

### 4 OUTCOME AND PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Based on the outcome of the consultation exercise, this section details proposed amendments and additions to the existing Hartlepool dog control orders:

#### **Amendments**

##### *Children's Play Parks*

Current: Dog Exclusion  
 Proposed: No change  
 Exceptions: None  
 Comments: None

##### *Sports Pitches*

Current: Dogs Exclusion  
 Proposed: No change  
 Exceptions: None  
 Comments: None

*Recreation Grounds*

Current: Dogs on Leads.

Proposed: No change

Exceptions: None

Comments: Please refer to the consultation document at **Appendix A**.

*Parks*

Current: Dogs on Leads

Proposed: No change

Exceptions: The Catcote Road end of the Burn Valley Gardens –  
Dogs will be allowed to run freely.

Comments: None

*Cemeteries*

Current: Dogs on Leads

Proposed: No change

Exceptions: North Cemetery, which had no previous restrictions.

Comments: None

*Multi-Use Games Areas, Skate Parks and Paddling Pools*

Current: Dog Exclusion

Proposed: No change

Exceptions: None

Comments: None

*Nature Reserves*

Current: Free-run areas

Proposed: No change

Exceptions: None

Comments: Please refer to the consultation document at **Appendix A**

*Gated Back Alleys*

Current: On Leads

Proposed: No change

Exceptions: None

Comments: None

*Designated Bathing Beaches from 1<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> September (Seaton (part), Fish Sands, Block Sands)*

Current: Dog Exclusion

Proposed: No change

Exceptions: None

Comments: None

*Maximum Number of Dogs*

Current: 4

Proposed: No change

Exceptions: N/A

Comments: None

**Proposed New Orders****North Sands** – Seasonal ‘On leads’ Order (September – March inclusive)

- 4.2 The proposal for a seasonal ‘On Leads’ Order was put forward following an issue relating to the application to develop the former Steetley site on the Headland. Natural England has objected to the application because of concerns over the potential increase in disturbance to water birds on the adjacent North Sands, which it feels will result from the construction of a new housing estate. This area of North Sands is a designated SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).
- 4.3 The Headland Parish Council has expressed strong feelings against an order being placed on the sands and the majority of respondents to the survey also objected. Natural England was invited to attend a meeting of the Headland Town Council to discuss local concerns but chose to decline the invitation.
- 4.4 Despite local feeling against the introduction of a Dog Control Order, Natural England has reminded Hartlepool Borough Council of its statutory duty under section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which states that public bodies must ‘take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of their functions, to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSI’s’.
- 4.5 In light of this statutory requirement, it is recommended that a seasonal ‘On Leads’ Order (September – March inclusive) is placed on the North Sands.

**Fens Field – ‘Dog Exclusion’ Order**

- 4.6 Local residents are proposing a ban on dogs from Fens Field. This proposal is supported by 46% of respondents (compared to 28% who opposed it). Banning dogs from the Field would provide a safe green space for children to play without risk of encountering dog fouling.
- 4.7 It is recommended that a ‘Dog Exclusion’ Order is placed on Fens Field.

### **Redheugh Gardens – ‘Dogs on Leads’ Order**

- 4.8 A ‘Dogs on Leads’ Order has been proposed for Redheugh Gardens by Headland residents to address problems of dog fouling in the park. This proposal is supported by 68% of respondents and would bring the gardens into line with the other parks in the town.
- 4.9 It is recommend that a ‘Dogs on Leads’ Order is placed on Redheugh Gardens

### **Thornton Street Linear Park – ‘Dogs on Leads’ Order**

- 4.10 During the consultation exercise, Thornton Street Linear Park has been identified as an area where dog control is an issue. There has been a great deal of improvements carried out in the area including the construction of the park to enhance the environment for local people. However, dog fouling and dogs running loose and unsupervised in the park are a problem.
- 4.11 In line with the rest of the town’s parks, it is recommended that a ‘Dogs on Leads’ Order is placed on the Thornton Street Linear Park.

## **5 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Despite vigorous enforcement campaigns, irresponsible dog ownership in Hartlepool is still at an unacceptable level, which contributes significantly towards the decline of the local environment. Failure to maintain an effective means of combating this town-wide nuisance will undoubtedly result in a further decline.
- 5.2 Natural England has objected to the proposed development of the former Steetley site because of the threat of disturbance to water birds by people walking dogs along North Sands and has advised that a Dog Control Order would be necessary before it could withdraw its objection. It considers the housing development will have the potential to increase recreational usage of the beach.
- 5.3 The former Steetley site is a blight on the landscape and the subject of considerable vandalism and anti-social behaviour, which has a significant negative impact on the local community. Without mitigation for the objection raised by Natural England, it is likely the future development of this site may be jeopardised.
- 5.4 Hartlepool Borough Council has a duty under section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as incorporated by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to take reasonable steps, consistent with the proper exercise of our functions, to further the conservation of the SSSI.

- 5.5 Not taking reasonable steps to further the conservation of the SSSI will be a failure by Hartlepool Borough Council to meet its statutory duties, leaving it open to judicial review.

## **6 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 Natural England considers the introduction of a Dog Control Order to be essential to the mitigation of disturbance to ecological features along this coastline and accordingly its effectiveness will be closely monitored. A suitable policing regime will therefore be fundamental to the effectiveness of any Dog Control Order and it is envisaged this would place an additional burden on existing Council resources.
- 6.2 Notwithstanding the Council's duty under section 28G of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, there is potential for additional disturbance of water birds that would be solely attributable to the development of the former Steetley site. The cost of any additional policing of the Dog Control Order arising on account of the development will therefore be borne entirely by the developer under a Town and Country Planning Act, Section 106 agreement. In this case a developer is required to provide contributions to offset negative impacts caused by construction and development.
- 6.3 With the exception of maintaining appropriate signage on land to which the Dog Control Orders apply, there are no financial considerations directly associated with the introduction of new orders or amendments to existing ones.

## **7 ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 With the exception of maintaining suitable signage on land to which the Dog Control Orders apply, there are no asset management considerations directly associated with the introduction of any new orders or amendments to existing ones.

## **8 SECTION 17 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1 Dog-related matters continue to feature highly amongst peoples' concerns, with 'dog foul' and 'stray dogs' being amongst the more complained-about issues dealt with by the Council. Despite vigorous enforcement campaigns, irresponsible dog ownership in Hartlepool is still at an unacceptable level, which contributes significantly towards the decline of the local environment.

- 8.2 With regard to the former Steetley site, this area is the subject of considerable vandalism and anti-social behaviour. This not only has a significant negative impact on the local community, it is also a continuing burden for Council services involved in dealing with the consequences of these activities.
- 8.3 Although Hartlepool Borough Council cannot assume responsibility for any issues on the former Steetley site itself, as a consequence of its current degraded state, anti-social activities such as vandalism, fly tipping and the abandonment of vehicles are prevalent on neighbouring Council-owned land. All require intervention by various Council departments; the Police and Fire Brigade are also frequently called to attend incidents in the area

## **9 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That the Portfolio Holder formally approves the making of, as referenced, the orders detailed in Section 4 of the report and instructs the Chief Solicitor to bring the orders into force.

## **10 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 Dog-related matters continue to feature highly amongst peoples' concerns, with 'dog foul' and 'stray dogs' being amongst the more complained-about issues dealt with by the Council. Despite vigorous enforcement campaigns, irresponsible dog ownership in Hartlepool is still at an unacceptable level.
- 10.2 With regard to North Sands, the introduction of a Dog Control Order is considered important to the mitigation of disturbance to ecological features along the coastline and Natural England will not remove their objection to the proposed development of the site until an order is in place.
- 10.3 It is in the Council's interest to seek a suitable resolve to the continuing problems of anti-social behaviour at this location and to improve the visual amenity of the area. Failure by the Council to provide mitigation to the objection raised by Natural England may result in the development not being granted planning permission and the furtherance of issues contributing to the social decline of the area.

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Neighbourhood Services Proposed Dog Control Orders -  
[http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/200089/street\\_care\\_and\\_cleaning/604/dog\\_warden\\_service/7](http://www.hartlepool.gov.uk/info/200089/street_care_and_cleaning/604/dog_warden_service/7)

**12 CONTACT OFFICER**

Craig Thelwell  
Waste & Environmental Services Manager  
Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department  
1 Church Street  
Hartlepool  
TS25 7DS

Telephone: (01429) 523370  
E mail: [craig.thelwell@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:craig.thelwell@hartlepool.gov.uk)

## APPENDIX A

**DOG CONTROL ORDERS CONSULTATION SURVEY AND RESPONSES RECEIVED**

The following section details the questions asked and responses received from the Dog Control Orders Survey. In total 128 responses were received.

**A bit about you...**

**Q1. Are you a Hartlepool resident?**

**Q2. Do you own a dog(s)?**

**Q3. Do you regularly walk a dog(s) in Hartlepool?**

The profile of the respondents shows that 97% of respondents were Hartlepool residents, 70% own a dog and 70% regularly walk a dog in the town.

**About dog control orders**

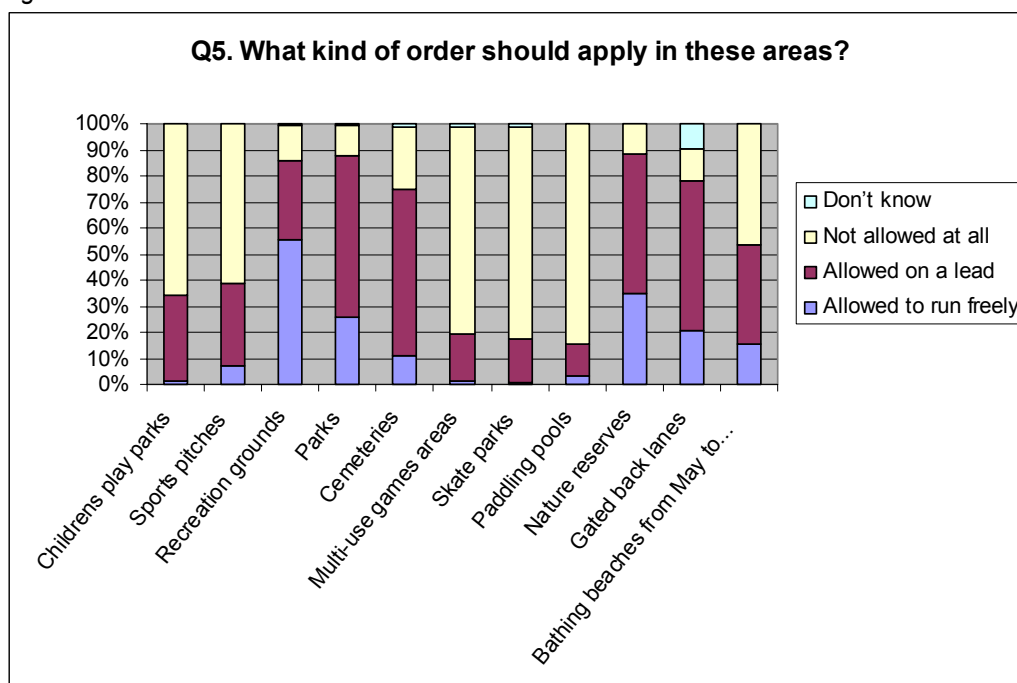
**Q4. Do you agree that there should be some places in the town where access for dogs should be restricted or that dogs should be excluded from?**

It appears from the responses that most people broadly agree that there is a need for dog control orders in the town with 88% agreeing that there should be some places in the town where dogs should be excluded or restricted.

**Q5. The following are a list of areas in Hartlepool which are currently covered by a dog control order. Please let us know for each one which kind of order you think should apply:**

The survey provided a list of areas which have dog control orders in place and respondents were asked, for each area, if dogs should be "allowed to run freely", "allowed on a lead", or "not allowed at all." Figure 1 shows the results

Figure 1



### Dog exclusion areas

The areas that most respondents think that dogs should be excluded from are children's play parks (66%), sports pitches (60%), multi-use games areas (79%), skate parks (80%) and paddling pools (84%). The seasonal beach ban on the bathing beaches is also popular with respondents with 45% thinking dogs should be excluded compared to 37.5% who think they should be allowed if kept on a lead.

It is clear that feelings around areas where dogs should be excluded or restricted from are quite strong as illustrated by the following selection of comments:

*My 10 year old grand daughter and I were recently surrounded by 4 very large, boisterous dogs i.e. Alsatian/retriever type while we were walking my daschund on a lead. My grand daughter was very afraid and distressed. I explained to the "owners" who proceeded to verbally abuse me, pointing out that my grand daughter shouldn't be there where dogs were exercised. They had brought the dogs to Hartfield car park in a van. We were left very upset by the episode.*

*As a dog owner myself, I feel it is very important that dogs are kept on a lead at all times when in a public place. I am a Fens resident and have seen many owners allow their dogs to roam freely. This is not only a nuisance to other walkers but in some cases results in dog excrement not being cleared.*

*I am a resident of Thornton Street and I feel that Dogs should be excluded from the park in the street. They foul the park, with hardly any owners cleaning up after them. They foul up the sides of the benches so that is all that you can smell whenever you sit on a bench and they are also damaging the trees in the park as the grass around the base of the trees is dead. They also have destroyed the planted area, digging it up. They have also had a large impact on the quality of the grass as they take out large chunks after fouling. We also have 3-4 dogs who just roam around the local area without even being on a lead and their owners not being there with them.*

### Free-run areas

Equally, dog owners feel very strongly that there is a need for more safe, free-run areas for dogs to be exercised off the lead. The areas which scored most highly for dogs to be allowed to run freely were recreation grounds (55%), nature reserves (35%) and parks (26%). From the comments received, it seems that there is a need for designated, enclosed free run areas for dogs in the town:

*Dog control orders are getting out of hand, before long you wont be able to take your dog anywhere. If there was a specific enclosed field where dogs could run without being fined for something I think this would solve a lot of problems. Until then we have no choice but to use beaches, parks and fields.*

*I have walked dogs in Hartlepool for 47 years. The last 20 years on Rift House Rec. We had a group of up to 7 walkers, we always picked our dogs' dirt up. Since the ban on dogs running free being enforced the groups have vanished. For most of us this was our only contact with others. We were told that the old unused allotments adjoining the [Rift House] Rec would be passed over and fenced off to allow our dogs to be loose. Obviously this isn't going to happen. Once again the law abiding people made to suffer.*

*All you are interested in is placing dog orders banning dogs, before long you will not be able to take your dogs anywhere. I never see anything positive being done to ensure dogs also have a place to go. I believe if we had an enclosed area that was dedicated to dogs it would stop people taking their dogs in places where children are, etc. and would stop a lot of mess on streets as people would take their dogs there to run in a safe environment. Every other town has a place for dogs to go so why can't we? Instead of asking about other areas we feel would benefit from a dog control order how about concentrating on better facilities for dogs and having a safe enclosed area for them to run in. I for one am sick of having no where to go and having to take my dogs out of town. I'm constantly being told dogs aren't allowed in this area.*

*I think there should be designated, fenced and secure areas within parks and recreation grounds where dogs with limited recall abilities such as hounds etc. can run freely and safely.*

*All that I would ask of this review is to take these matters in to consideration and consider fencing off an area either in the Seaton park or Dodd's Field where dog owners can legally let their dogs off the lead in order to give them the exercise they need.*

*Why don't the council introduce dog parks? Dogs are away from children, ball activities etc. Dog bags and bins available inside the fenced dog park. These dog parks have to be large enough to let a dog run free and dog park rules must be set i.e. no dogs with behaviour problem... A dog shut in the back yard or garden and never allowed out causes a lot more problems than a dog running free chasing a ball.*

### Dogs on leads areas

The areas where most people think dogs should be allowed but only if kept on a lead are cemeteries (64%), parks (62%), gated back lanes (57%) and nature reserves (54%). For all four of these areas, the option for dogs to be allowed on leads is more popular than the free-run option.

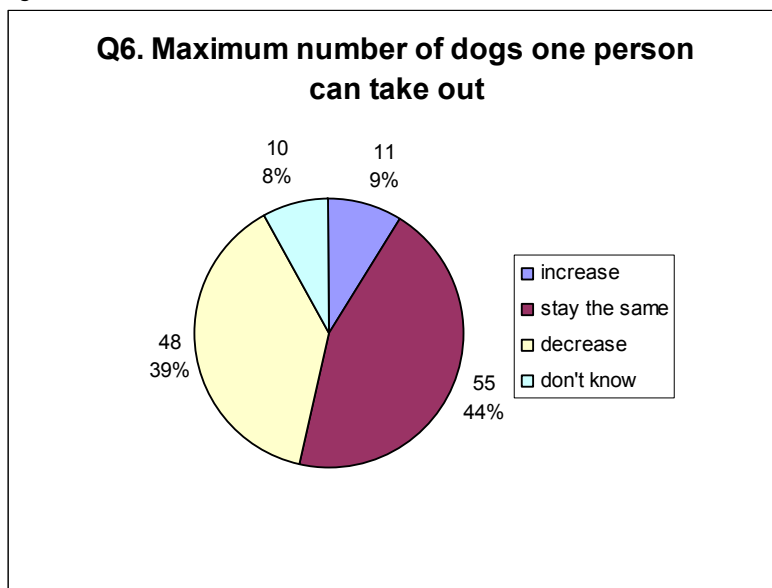
Currently, recreation grounds are classed as dogs on leads areas however, the majority of respondents think that this should be changed to a free run area (55% free run compared to 30% on leads).

*I believe dogs should be on a lead at all times! Should be more dog waste bins available to comply with legislation. More dog wardens needed to enforce regulations.*

**Q6. Currently the maximum number of dogs that one person cant take out in Hartlepool at one time is 4. Do you think this should increase, stay the same, or decrease?**

Respondents were asked whether they thought that the number of dogs that one person could take out at a time (currently 4 dogs) should change. The majority of people thought that the number should either stay the same or decrease with only 11 people wanting to see an increase (figure 2).

Figure 2



A number of the comments received on this question remarked that the number of dogs one person should be allowed to take out should be based on the size of the dogs rather than being a set number; however this would be more complicated to enforce. Other comments questioned the ability of one person to safely control and clean up after 4 or more dogs at one time.

*Restriction on number of dogs should depend on size of dogs and an adult in charge of the four dogs.*

*No one person can control 4 dogs 2 dogs at the most*

*I think people who walk numerous dogs for financial gain should be limited to how many dogs they can be responsible for. They also have a huge impact on the area with car parking. Increase traffic, dog fouling and many dogs are not on leads.*

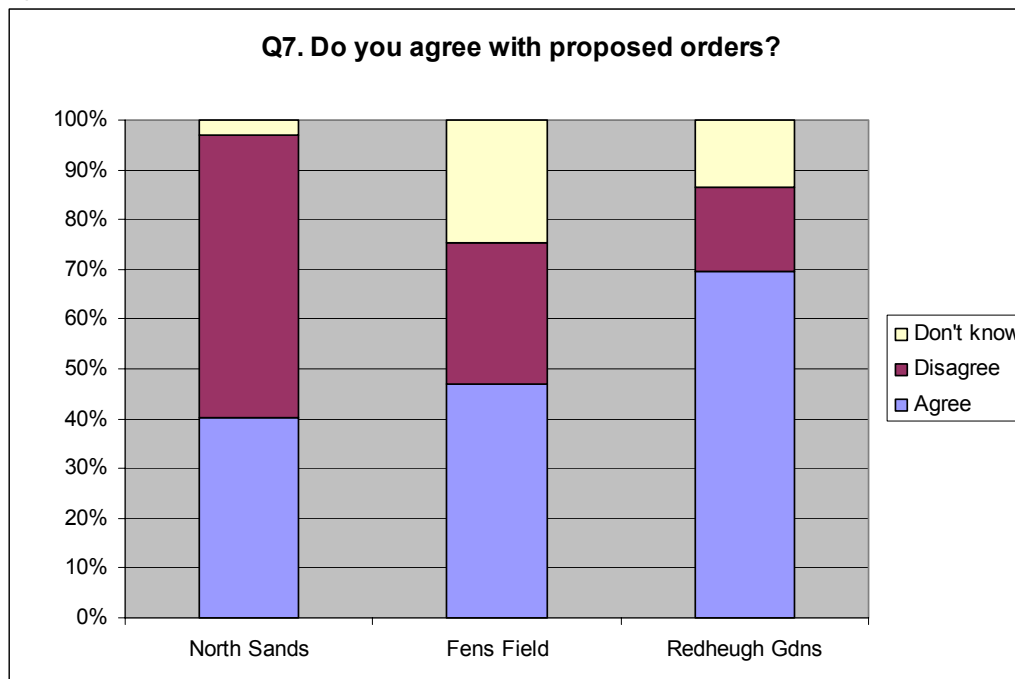
**Q7. In addition to existing dog control orders an order has been proposed for the following sites. Please let us know whether you agree or disagree with the plans**

**Proposed new dog control orders**

Prior to the consultation being carried out Hartlepool Council had received requests for three new orders to be brought in. These are: a seasonal dogs on leads order on North Sands from the golf course to Marine Drive proposed by Natural England. This order was proposed in order to protect the winter feeding areas of a number of migratory birds including redshanks, oystercatchers and knots. Also, a dogs exclusion order for Fens Field and a dogs on leads order for Redheugh Gardens, which were proposed by residents to address problems of dog fouling in those areas.

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or not with the proposed areas (figure 3). Whilst most people agreed with the proposals for Fens Field and Redheugh Gardens, the results for the North Sands proposals were split, however a small majority were against the proposal (72 against compared to 51 in favour).

Figure 3



**Q8. If you disagreed with any of the Dog Control Orders detailed in Q7 please tell us why.**

Feelings were strong on the proposed new orders as reflected in the following comments:

*There is no need for dogs to be on a lead on the north sands beach as no birds nest on the area. Birds are also frightened by humans when feeding but always just move along the beach if so do you propose to ban humans off the North Sands the beach. The beach belongs to the people of Hartlepool not the bird watchers.*

*As a dog owner and mother of two boys I need somewhere to bathe and paddle where my boys and dog can go together. North Sands is this. Please don't take it away from me, my boys, my dog and countless other doggy families.*

*I understand the only reason for this proposal is to safeguard some birds. These birds have survived many industrial sites adjacent to this beach, together with the dogs and many other people on the beach since Hartlepool came into existence and I do not believe banning dogs from the beach would have any significant effect on these birds while significantly reducing the local areas where dogs can still be properly exercised.*

*The North Sands are a long stretch of beach that, as long as dog walkers have control of their dogs, I can see no reason why dogs should be kept on a lead. The nesting birds are at the Crimdon section so to stop dogs from running and exercising from Marine Drive seems way over the top. Dogs have been unrestricted for as long as I can remember without any problems whatsoever.*

*This [North Sands] is quite an isolated beach, well washed with tides and I think that it is a good area for dogs to run. I think to ban dogs from Fens Field is not good as it prevents adults who wish to check on children are to be unable to bring a dog on lead.*

*As someone who is a responsible dog owner I regularly take my dogs on fens field and I think this proposed dog order is ridiculous. I grew up in the Fens area and Fens Field is a safe, enclosed area where I can run my dogs. I believe it is safer for me and my dogs to run them there as opposed to a park where they could run off or children are playing. The dogs aren't doing any harm and are not endangering children as if there are children on there I don't take my dogs on. I always tidy my mess up, I just don't see what the problem is. There is no where else to safely run my dogs.*

**Q9. Are there any other areas of Hartlepool which you feel may benefit from having a dog control order?**

Respondents were also asked to suggest any other areas that might benefit from a dog control order and what kind of order it should be (figure 4).

Figure 4

Area	Type of Dog Control Order
Rec off Westbrook Ave	Dogs run freely
No, why would it benefit, what is the benefit	
Hart Church Yard	Total Ban
Hart Primary School Field	Dogs on leads
Village Greens	on a lead
Cenotaph & Seating	no dogs allowed
Nineacres Hart Village	Dogs fouling
Hart Village Field adjacent to the school	Dogs excluded
Hart village field (next to the school)	Dogs excluded
Burn Valley Gardens	Dogs on leads
	Dogs on leads provided adult in charge and they clean up after their dogs
Throston Grange (area at end of Pembroke Grove)	
St Mary Magdalene Churchyard Hart	dog on lead
Clavering Field at Belasis Grove and Sandwich Grove	Allowed on a lead
Green wedge adjacent to Hartfield Retirement Village	Dogs on leads
Burn Valley	Dogs on leads
More wardens on pathways of Headland - especially around Heugh in winter.	
Summerhill	No dog mess on pathways
The main beach area at Seaton does have an order but still allows access in the winter months for dogs. This appears to be a good compromise.	
Rear of Bruntoft avenue dogs are allowed to run free	banning

Area	Type of Dog Control Order
Seaton Carew Field	Allow dogs to run free early morning and early evening
Elwick road near the burn valley up towards Eldon Grove school	allowed on leads and people pick up the dog litter
Promenade from Seaton Carew to Hartlepool Marina	Dogs should be kept on lead
Thornton Street Park	Exclusion Order
Thornton Street Park	Exclusion Order
Shopping parades, some are left outside shops	With an owner at all times and on a lead.
Greenbelt next to Hartfields	Excluded
Ward Jackson Park	Banned all the time
Burn Valley	Kept on lead - full area
Burn Valley Gardens, Rift House Rec, Family Wood	Dogs on leads

Other requests for areas to have a dog control order put in place have been made outside the survey. These are for the new children's play area behind Brougham School, the new children's play areas in the Burn Valley and Hindpool Close, and Rift House recreation ground.

*I know the department is consulting with general public re dog control orders and inviting suggestions and I have one that a member of public gave to me during a door knocking exercise. The area concerned is Brougham play area in Middleton road. Nearby residents are concerned that some people let their dogs loose in this area which is quite well used by children and as such consider it a health hazard and would like some form of control for dogs within the area.*

At the drop-in sessions residents have also queried whether the new play areas installed in the town will be covered by a dog control order as they are unfenced? The two that have been particularly queried are Owton Manor Lane and Oxford Road. Currently these areas are not subject to an order as they are unfenced and some residents have expressed concern that dogs can run loose in there and the potential for dog fouling. However, at present, the Enforcement Team have received no formal complaints of dog fouling in these areas.

#### **Q10. Do you have any other comments or questions about dog control orders?**

Finally, respondents were asked if they had any further comments to make regarding dog control orders. These comments have highlighted a number of issues such as dog fouling and enforcement. A common complaint is that dog owners are flouting the dog control orders, particularly with regard to cleaning up after their pets.

*Use the traffic vehicle engaged by HBC to also pick up people who allow their dogs to mess on pavements and not pick up. Heavy fines should be imposed. Some of the more disadvantaged wards in town seem to have more dog mess on pavements, these also need addressing. Generally lack of dog litter bins and those there are overflowing so bags left on the floor!!*

*Until dog owners clear up the mess their pets make I would exclude them from all areas used by the public.*

*Thornton Street Park has become a toilet for all dogs in the surrounding area. There are residents in Thornton Street and Alderson Street who don't even put their dogs on a lead to take them to the Park, they just let them out. Personally I am afraid of dogs and so am unable to use the park as a Thornton Street Resident, and see it as unfair that the local dogs get preferential treatment over residents.*

*Although there has been an improvement and there is less dog mess evident, there is a long way to go as the less "responsible" dog owners leaving dog dirt on walk ways, in parks and on pavements which is highly unpleasant. Congratulations for the good work so far, but still a way to go.*