

# Dog Strategy



**APRIL 2009**

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## **ISLINGTON DOG STRATEGY**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Islington Council is committed to maintaining a clean and safe environment for the benefit of everyone in the borough. This commitment recognises our responsibility to keep the streets and local environment clear of litter, obstructions and deal with other local environmental quality issues.
- 1.2 The presence of dumped waste, litter, dog fouling, graffiti and other environmental crime may also contribute to people's fear of crime and their perception of how well they think their council is performing.
- 1.3 The One Islington Corporate Plan 2006-2009<sup>1</sup> highlights the link between quality of life and the quality of the external environment and it includes our commitment to minimise harmful impacts and our intentions to create a cleaner, greener and safer place to live, work in and visit and provide services that are considered excellent in the eyes of our residents.

### **2 Executive Summary**

- 2.1 Islington Council recognises the importance of creating a usable and enjoyable environment for all who work in, visit or live in the borough. Dog related issues such as fouling and intimidating dogs could adversely affect the environment and people's enjoyment of it.
- 2.2 During the 2005 Measuring Customer Perceptions survey of Islington residents, 45% of respondents sited dog fouling as the number one environmental issue that needs addressing.
- 2.3 Islington Council has produced this Dog Strategy in order to clarify how we intend to tackle irresponsible dog ownership and antisocial dog behaviour. The strategy outlines how the Council will address dog control issues such as:
- ◆ Irresponsible dog ownership
  - ◆ Dog fouling
  - ◆ Dangerous dogs
  - ◆ Stray dogs
- 2.4 The strategy also outlines how we will encourage and promote responsible dog ownership and enforce legislation on dog control, in line with the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 - Dog Control Orders.
- 2.5 This document covers 2 key areas:
- ◆ The strategy
  - ◆ The action/communications plan

### **3 Background and Aims**

- 3.1 We have listened to people's concerns about local issues that can impact on their quality of life. Dog fouling and the anti social behaviour of some dog owners who fail to control their dogs in public places are amongst issues that concern residents the most. People feel we could do more to tackle the roots of these issues by providing more education, advice and awareness raising, backed up by officers issuing some form of penalty.
- 3.2 The strategy part of this document outlines how we will encourage and promote responsible dog ownership and enforce the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (CNEA 2005) on dog control as well as how other legislation affects what we do.
- 3.3 The action plan then details how the various services and agencies will liaise with each other to ensure that this strategy is delivered successfully.

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<sup>1</sup> Available on Islington Council website - [www.islington.gov.uk](http://www.islington.gov.uk)

## **4 Current Services and Resources**

### **4.1.0 Homes for Islington**

- 4.1.1 In line with the 'One Islington' vision - Homes for Islington is committed to working with other Council partners to ensure that they provide information on responsible dog ownership to their residents who have pets. They have also put resources in place to deal with enforcement on their land.
- 4.1.2 Currently Homes for Islington (HFI) residents can contact their Area Housing Office to report any of the issues listed in 2.3. The Estate Services and Tenancy Management Officers would then identify offenders and offer education and advice first before taking enforcement action under the conditions of the tenancy or lease.
- 4.1.3 There is no exercising of dogs throughout HFI estates and offenders may also be reported to the Area Housing Office. As a very last resort they may seek repossession of the residence for anti-social behaviour.
- 4.14 HFI Out of Hours Anti-social Behaviour Officers have authority from the Director of Environment and Regeneration to enforce the dog control orders and have combined this with promoting responsible dog ownership on estates by distributing information leaflets to residents.
- 4.1.5 HFI caretakers are responsible for cleansing communal areas of estates and they will respond to specific reports of dog fouling and remove dog fouling in these areas (except for shrub beds) as soon as reasonably possible.

### **4.2.0 Street Environment Services**

- 4.2.1 Currently anyone in the community can report dog fouling issues if they occur on the public highway via Contact Islington on **0207 527 2000**. Contact Islington will pass the information on to Street Environment Services.
- 4.2.2 Street Environment Officers will ensure that the street is swept by Enterprise PLC ( the Council's street cleansing contractor) on the scheduled day and remove all dog fouling along with the litter etc.
- 4.2.3 Street Environment Services administration team logs all reports of dog fouling received via Contact Islington and these hotspots are used as a basis for enforcement patrols.
- 4.2.4 The area based Street Environment Officers will investigate problems of dog fouling within 24 hours of receipt and may put up warning signs at the location or deliver leaflets to local residents advising them of the legislation and requesting that they clean up after their dogs. If they observe anyone not doing so officers will give them fixed penalty notices.

### **4.3.0 Greenspace Services**

- 4.3.1 Dog control issues can be reported to Greenspace Services via Contact Islington on 020 7527 2000. The report will then be passed on to the appropriate Greenspace Ranger who is responsible for managing the borough's parks.
- 4.3.2 The Greenspace Ranger will investigate the problem and ensure that adequate signage is on display. If the problem is persistent the Ranger can organize park user education and offer advice around dog control in collaboration with the Greenspace Park Patrol Service.
- 4.3.3 The Parks Patrol Service has an enforcement role unlike the Rangers and have the powers to enforce the new legislation. Currently there are 9 Park Patrol Officers who are trained and able to handle dog behavioural issues, with at least 3 officers on patrol at any one time.

#### **4.4.0 Animal Welfare Officer (Dog Warden)**

4.4.1 The role of Islington's single Animal Welfare Officer is also to deal with dangerous or stray dogs in conjunction with the Police. The role also includes community liaison and education on dog-related issues. Our Animal Welfare Officer can be contacted on **020 7527 3222**.

### **5 Strategy**

5.1.0 One of the strategy's main aims is to provide a framework within which we will address dog fouling, as Islington residents have identified this as a priority local environmental issue. The strategy also sets out how the Council will address other dog control issues. It includes how we will communicate internally and externally on dog related issues to raise awareness, who will educate and advise on these issues and how services will work together to ensure effective and consistent dog control services borough wide.

5.1.1 The core of this strategy's success is the implementation of proportionate, well-publicised and enforceable dog control orders under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (CNEA 2005).

5.1.2 Dog control orders will allow officers to identify dog owners who need advice and assistance to comply with the law and improve their dog ownership skills.

5.1.3 Appropriate dog control orders also allow enforcement officers to identify and deal with those irresponsible dog owners who persist in allowing their dogs to spoil the local environment and amenities for others.

### **6 Promoting Education and Awareness**

#### **6.1.0 Responsible Dog Ownership**

6.1.1 In the past 20 years or so there has been a large increase in the amount of research supporting the general notion that "pets are good for you". A study of the relationship between pet ownership and cardiovascular health (Friedman et al 1980)<sup>2</sup> showed that pet owners were more likely to be alive one year after being discharged from a coronary care unit than non-owners. Pet owners also tended to have reduced blood pressure.

6.1.2 In addition, pets can decrease loneliness and depression by providing companionship, an interesting and varied lifestyle and an impetus for nurturing. They can also reduce anxiety by providing an external focus for attention, promoting feelings of safety and providing a source of contact comfort.

6.1.4 This strategy supports this notion and supports the promotion of responsible dog ownership, - Useful links to guidelines that inform dog owners of the current legislation affecting dogs in Islington, how to look after dogs correctly and useful dog related organisations such as the Dog's Trust and the Kennel Club can be found on Islington's website.

6.1.5 Topics accessible from our website will cover basic good dog care principles:

- |                                 |                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| ◆ Adequate and regular exercise | ◆ Sensible feeding                  |
| ◆ Access to veterinary care     | ◆ Identification                    |
| ◆ Neutering                     | ◆ Being responsible to other people |

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<sup>2</sup> Friedmann, E., Katcher A.H. and Thomas, S.A. 1983. Social interaction and blood pressure influence of animal companions. *Journal of Nervous Mental Disease* 171: 461-465.

- ◆ Cleaning up after your dog

## **6.2.0 Young People and Dogs**

- 6.2.1 While the majority of dog owners are responsible and enjoy the benefits of dog ownership, there is a small minority who are perceived to cause concern regarding their dog's behaviour. This situation may sometimes be caused by a lack of experience or understanding of dogs by their owners. Young dog owners can be particularly vulnerable in this regard. While our efforts to promote responsible dog ownership will be accessible to all, emphasis will be placed on ensuring that younger age groups have access to advice, information and encouragement. We intend to build upon previous work in this area:
- 6.2.2. Since 2005 the environmental charity - Groundwork, in partnership with Islington Council has carried out workshops in primary schools and youth clubs. Groundwork worked with the children to educate them about responsible dog ownership and to design anti-dog fouling 'flags' and poems.
- 6.2.3 The children then visited nearby open spaces identified as having dog fouling problems and put the flags in the ground in affected areas. The flags were left for a day or two for dog owners to see, to encourage them to pick up after their pets and remind them of the impact their behaviour has on children.
- 6.2.4 Groundwork then continued work at the open space locations with Islington's Animal Welfare Officer to promote and deliver 'good dog' training sessions. This involved dogs and their owners attending a training session where they had to perform a series of obedience test to achieve a Kennel Club Bronze award.
- 6.2.5 In 2006 the Parks Patrol Service created dog awareness events called Top Dog London and Parks Dogs projects in response to reports of anti social behaviour amongst youths with dogs.
- 6.2.6 The projects took on a holistic approach to solving the problem by providing free dog-related training and equipment to young people at accessible locations and times for them. They also provided the participants with diversionary activities by uniting them in a common interest and building a rapport between the officers and the youths during which wider social issues could be addressed. Youths who participated were rewarded with prizes and a better understanding of how to change the negative public perception towards them by using their improved dog handling and welfare skills.
- 6.2.7 Officers will continue to use these and similar projects when setting up local awareness events. The strategy action plan details how they will be incorporated into a co-ordinated regime of further promoting education and awareness.

## **6.3.0 Behaviour Around Dogs**

- 6.3.1 Most dogs are great with people and children and when problems do occur this is often down to people not knowing how to act around dogs properly and how to treat them with respect. The Dog's Trust's useful guidelines for children and those who are unfamiliar with dogs include:
- ◆ Not to play with a dog, unless the owner says so. Always ask the owner before approaching the dog.
  - ◆ Never rush up to a dog. Hold out a hand and let him come to you. Leave the dog if he doesn't want to come.
  - ◆ Don't stare into a dog's eyes.
  - ◆ Try not to make sudden movements or loud noises that may frighten the dog.

- ◆ If a dog growls or is unfriendly, stay calm and slowly walk away. Don't run!
- ◆ Children should never take a dog for a walk on their own. An adult should always accompany a child in case they need help to control the dog.
- ◆ Don't disturb or approach a dog if he is eating, drinking or is tied up.

## **7 Strengthening Enforcement**

7.0.1 After education and awareness raising have been used legislative enforcement is one of the keys to reducing dog fouling and dealing with control issues. Unfortunately some dog owners will only change their habits if made to by enforcement; therefore the correct level of enforcement is crucial.

### **7.1.0 Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 (CNEA 2005)**

7.1.1 The CNEA 2005 is legislation that became available to local councils in May 2006 for tackling low level anti social behaviour.

7.1.2 Islington Council listened to local peoples concerns about local environment issues and agreed to use this legislation formally in February 2007. Authorized officers can use this Act along with providing advice and awareness raising, to deal with issues like littering, dumping waste, graffiti, fly posting and dog control.

7.1.3 In relation to dog control, the CNEA 2005 makes it an offence to do any of the following on any designated land open to the air on at least one side that the public are entitled or permitted to have access to with or without payment:

1. Failing to pick up your dog fouling
2. Failing to keep your dog on a lead
3. Allowing your dog to enter an area from which they are excluded
4. Failing to put your dog on a lead when asked to by an authorized officer
5. Walking more than a specified number of dogs

7.1.4 It is important to note that under the CNEA 2005 penalties for any of the offences listed above can only be issued after a local council has consulted with the community and created formal Dog Control Orders. Under Section 55 of the CNEA 2005 local authorities can create dog control orders on all or parts of their land.

7.1.5 In order to consult with the community, local councils are required to publicize their proposals in at least one local newspaper and invite the community to public accessible venues in the borough to fill in questionnaires and make comments:

- ◆ Indicate the start and end dates of the consultation (At least 28 days from the publication date)
- ◆ Summarise which dog control orders may apply
- ◆ Identify the land to which each order may apply
- ◆ Give access to maps to view the proposed dog control areas
- ◆ Give details of where any comments/representations can be sent
- ◆ Make all details available on the council's webpage

7.1.6 At the end of the consultation period, local councils should consider the responses and create Dog Control Orders that are reasonable and in line with public opinion.

7.1.7 Once an order has been agreed and made, a public notice should be published in a borough wide newspaper/publication and on the local council's web page, detailing the order(s) at least 7 days before they come into force.

7.1.8 The process described above is contained in the CNEA 2005 and is the same process if an order is to be revoked or changed significantly.

## **7.2.0 Islington Dog Control Orders**

7.2.1 In compliance with the CNEA 2005 Islington Council carried out an extensive public consultation from 3rd March to 21st April 2008. Our consultation was based on Responsible Dog Ownership and took into account whether the orders suited the needs of the community and were proportionate, fair and enforceable.

7.2.2 We had over 1700 replies from non-dog owners and dog owners alike. There was overwhelming support for the introduction of new dog control orders with many additional suggestions about where they should apply.

7.2.3 Over 99% respondents agreed that dog owners should clean up after their dogs in any public place. Over 97% agreed that authorised staff should be able to instruct dog owners to put their dogs on a lead in any public place. 95% of respondents agreed that children's play areas and other games and sports areas should be dog free. In addition you told us that you wanted existing dog-free areas especially ornamental squares - to stay dog free.

7.2.4 We listened to the responses we received and on the 14th July 2008 we implemented 3 dog control orders making each of the following an offence in Islington:

- ◆ Failing to pick up your dog fouling - in any public space
- ◆ Allowing your dog to enter an area from which they are excluded no dog area – in specific areas
- ◆ Failing to put your dog on a lead when asked to by an authorized officer - in any public space.

7.2.5 During the consultation many comments were received about our proposal. We listened to these responses and as a result some new sites were added in addition to the no dog (exclusion) areas proposed in the consultation.

The additional sites included as dog exclusion areas are:

Arlington Square, Batishill Street Gardens, Canonbury Square, Compton Terrace, Gibson Square, Lonsdale Square, Milner Square, Northampton Square, Penn Road Gardens, Percival Street (Homes for Islington area), Percy Circus, St. Silas Gardens, Thornhill Crescent Garden and Wilmington Square.

7.2.6 In addition, there were a small amount of sites where current practice is that dogs are walked on leads. On these sites we have asked authorized officers to ask all dog walkers to put their dogs on leads and issue fines if this is not complied with.

7.2.7 To view a map of the all the Dog Control Order areas, use the Interactive Maps link on Islington's website, then choose Recreation and Leisure from the list on the right of that page.

## **7.3.0 Education and Advice**

7.3.1 Since July 2008 we have undertaken a campaign of providing education and advice regarding responsible dog ownership - we've handed out hundreds of leaflets and "dog poo bags" and

warnings to people with dogs who are contravening Dog Control Orders in our parks, open spaces and on the street.

7.3.2 Officers come across dog walkers who persist in contravening the dog fouling - dog control order despite receiving previous warnings. It became apparent that some irresponsible dog owners will only clean up when told to do so and that this approach does not always achieve the required behavioural change.

7.3.3 In December 2008 a report was presented to Full Council around Greener, Cleaner Safer – Promoting Civic Pride. Amongst other issues, it highlighted a change of strategy towards firmer enforcement for persistent offenders.

7.3.4 The report noted that the focus has been to encourage people to do the right thing and this has had some success in changing people's attitudes and behaviour. However in order to build on this success and tackle those engaged with low level anti social behaviour, it was considered the right time to change the focus from encouragement to enforcement.

7.3.5 It was agreed that the Council should join up enforcement coverage and adopt a harder line approach in tackling anti social behaviour through the use of fixed penalty notices. This will show that the Council is prepared to make a stand against the small minority engaged in anti-social behaviour. This new approach would help to improve the cleanliness and orderliness of the street environment and improve local environmental quality.

#### **7.4.0 Fixed Penalty Notices**

7.4.1 Fixed penalty notices (FPNs) are an opportunity for offenders to avoid prosecution for any of the dog control offences shown in 7.2.4 by payment of the penalty. These are issued by authorized officer when they directly witness or have evidence that an offence has been committed within a dog control area. Officers should only issue FPNs where there is adequate evidence to support a prosecution in court if a penalty is not paid.

7.4.2 Dog control fixed penalty notices are set at £80.00. This amount is reduced to £50.00 if the penalty is paid within 10 days from the date the notice was given.

7.4.3 The general process and timescale for fixed penalty notice administration is as follows:

- Fixed penalty notice issued
- Offender has 10 working days within which to pay (early payment discount applies)
- If no payment received/representation – after 28 working days the offender receives a Notice of Intended Prosecution
- A further 21 working days is allowed after the Notice of Intended Prosecution
- If no payment is received after this 21 day period the case file is prepared for Litigation
- Offenders can be prosecuted up to 6 months from the date of the offence

7.4.4 Trained officers carry out high-visibility patrols, observe situations and approach any dog owner they see breaking the law. They will issue fixed penalty notices to anyone they 'catch' committing an offence and the offender will be asked to take control of their dog and or clear up after it. Officers patrol in areas where they have intelligence or information that this anti social behaviour is occurring. We do not use video surveillance and rely on officers to take immediate direct action should they observe offences during routine patrols.

7.4.5 In law, an FPN can be issued to anyone over the age of 10. Islington Council's duty under the Children Act 2004 requires that we discharge our functions with regard to the need to safeguard and uphold the welfare of children.

- 7.4.6 Once an offence has been committed and the age of the offender has been ascertained officers are advised to use care and sensitivity when dealing with young people. Where the person is young (10 years and under), the officer will give them a verbal warning and remind them of their responsibility to control their dog or to pick up it's fouling and ask them to do so and give them a Responsible Dog Ownership leaflet and dog fouling bag (where supplies permit).
- 7.4.7 The issuing of FPNs to 10–15 year olds will be undertaken through a more consultative approach with parents or legal guardians if they are in the vicinity. In such cases young person will be encouraged to contact/notify their parents, legal guardian as soon as possible before the FPN is issued. Where this is not possible the officer may decide to give them a verbal warning etc as above. FPNs may be issued to 16 and 17 year olds in the same way as for adults.
- 7.4.8 The CNEA 2005 makes it an offence to fail to give a proper name and address to the authorised officer when requested to do so for the purposes of issuing an FPN. This issue will be tackled by effective joined up working with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Officers or Police.
- 7.4.9 Islington Council may retain any funds accrued from the serving of FPNs. The use of FPNs is not intended to increase the Councils income. Any payments collected will be used to help offset the costs of the enforcement function by helping fund for example, relevant educational, operational and publicity initiatives.
- 7.4.10 While the vast majority of dog owners have a responsible attitude and obey the new Dog Control Orders, there's still a hardcore few dog owners of all ages whose anti social behaviour and irresponsible action cause concern to the many law abiding residents. They give all dog owners a bad name, which is clearly not fair.
- 7.4.11 Our emphasis will continue to be on education, prevention and responsible dog ownership. However, we are getting tough and we will issue fines and even prosecute offenders as a last resort, as sometimes this is the only way we will change some people's unacceptable behaviour.
- 7.5.0 Disposal/Cleansing and Removal**
- 7.5.1 The strategy recommends that dog owners should always clean up after their pet/s and therefore resources will be targeted on making disposal easier, with an emphasis on education and enforcement rather than cleansing. Cleansing is expensive, requires ongoing resource allocation and encourages people not to act as responsible dog owners.
- 7.5.2 The Council has phased out the use of specific dog waste bins on all land and encourage the use of litterbins, which is now accompanied by appropriate signage to remind people to use this as an appropriate means to dispose of properly bagged dog fouling.
- 7.6.0 Signage**
- 7.6.1 In order to ensure that dog owners are aware of the existence of dog control orders we have replaced existing signage in Greenspace and HFI land with robust signs encouraging responsible dog owner behaviour and specifying which dog control order applies.
- 7.6.2 There are now prominent signs around the borough in parks and Islington estates highlighting the law and penalties. We have put signs on the network of over 2000 litterbins in the borough to indicate the existence of the relevant dog control order and to encourage/praise the use of the bins for disposing of litter including bagged dog fouling.

## 7.7.0 Equalities and Exemptions

7.7.1 With reference to section 7.1.3 the offences under Orders 1 (Failing to pick up your dog fouling) does not apply to the following groups:

- ◆ A person who is registered as a blind person in a register compiled under section 29 of the National Assistance Act 1948
- ◆ A person who has a disability which affects their mobility, manual dexterity, physical co-ordination or ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects and relies on the assistance of a dog trained by Dogs for the Disabled (registered charity number 700454), Support Dogs (registered charity number 1088281) or Canine Partners for Independence (registered charity number 803680).

7.7.2 In addition to those listed in 7.1.3 under Order 3 (Allowing your dog to enter a no dog area)

- ◆ A deaf person in respect of a dog trained by Hearing Dogs for Deaf People (registered charity number 293358) is also exempt.

7.7.3 No offence is committed where a person has a reasonable excuse for taking their dog onto, or allowing it to enter or remain on the land where the owner, occupier or other person or authority who has control of the land has consented (generally or specifically) to their doing so.

7.7.4 CNEA 2005 regulations specifically state that being unaware that your dog has fouled or not having the means to remove the fouling is not a reasonable excuse for failing to comply with the order and may still result in an FPN being issued.

## 7.8.0 Other Dog Related Legislation

### 7.8.1 The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991

7.8.2 This Act bans the ownership, breeding, sale, exchange and advertising for sale of Pit Bull Terriers, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino and Fila Brasileiro.

7.8.3 Some dogs of these breeds may be exempt from the ban, but owners must carry a Certificate of Exemption with them and ensure that the dog is neutered, micro-chipped, insured, muzzled and on a lead at all times when in a public place. Failure to do this may result in the dog being seized by either the Police or the Animal Welfare Officer. The provisions under CNEA 2005 do not alter the existing powers the Police have to deal with dangerous dogs under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

7.8.4 Dangerous dogs can also be any breed of dogs that can be classed by their behaviour as being dangerously out of control in a public place or where they are not permitted to be and have caused injury or given grounds for reasonable apprehension that it would do so.

7.8.5 If a dog is one of the banned breeds or if a dog has bitten or attacked anyone and is still presenting a danger to the public in a public place then the Police should be informed immediately via **999**. Under Section 5 of this Act the Police can seize the dog and take it to a secure kennel. If an incident has already taken place then these should be reported to the **Met Call Centre on 0207 704 1212** and they may use then a warrant to seize the dog. The Police may then prosecute the owner.

7.8.6 If authorised council officers feel dogs behaviour is unacceptable and anti social or this has been reported to them (e.g. Ripping off tree bark, mauling on park furniture/ equipment, etc) then their first option will be to locate the owner and make them aware of their dogs intimidating behaviour. Officers will offer the owner advice and within the dog control order applicable ask the owner to take to control their dog appropriately.

### **7.9.0 Dogs Act 1871**

7.9.1 Members of the public can use this Act to bring about civil proceedings if they feel that a dog is dangerous and not kept under proper control.

7.9.2 Although the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 is used more frequently, successful proceedings under the Dogs Act means that the court can impose a control order requiring a dog to be kept under proper control at all times with along with other conditions if necessary. It also means that the in rare cases that an owner can be banned from keeping a dog.

### **7.10.0 Deed Not Breed**

7.10.1 Islington Council is in support of the deed not breed lobby which calls for an amendment to the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 to adequately deal with aggressive or dangerous dogs (deeds) based on the actions of a dog rather than its breed. This could be implemented by introducing a more effective anti social behaviour order or acceptable behavior contracts type of control systems to allow for suitably stringent controls on owners of dogs that display unwarranted aggression, whatever the breed of dog.

7.10.2 We are aware that the 1991 Act was amended by the Dangerous Dogs (Amendment) Act of 1997. This amendment has been widely welcomed, as it acknowledges the fact that not all dogs who are deemed to be of a 'type' mentioned in the Act pose a threat to the public, and as such need not always be put to sleep. The importance of this amendment is that it states that no dog need be destroyed if a court is satisfied that it constitutes no danger to public safety. Instead, once the court is satisfied of their suitable temperament and their owner's commitment to responsible care, dogs may be registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs, micro chipped, neutered and returned to their owner's care.

7.10.3 The implementation of this strategy and dog control orders will go some way to deal with irresponsible owners. Such controls would include keeping the dog under control when asked to by an authorised officer (including use of lead), training, rehabilitation of the dog, and keeping dogs in a way that discourages any inappropriate aggression. We will continue to support relevant legislative changes that underpin the Council's commitment to responsible dog ownership.

### **7.11.0 Control of Dogs Order 1992 (Stray Dogs)**

7.11.1 Under this legislation dog owners are required to ensure that their dogs always have a collar on with the owners name and address on it or on a tag attached to it when they are out on the public highway or in a public place.

7.11.2 If authorised officers find dogs with none of the above requirements they can report them as stray dogs to the Animal Welfare Officer. Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 Sects. 149-150, the Animal Welfare Officer can seize any dog that is not in the presence of its owner even if it is wearing the identification details above.

7.11.3 Stray dogs are then kept and cared for in secure kennels for a minimum of 7 days and if they are not claimed or the owner does not respond to a notice to come and collect it then it may be either sold, given to another owner, sent for re-housing at local dog rescue homes or as a very last resort destroyed. For security reasons for both the animals and the staff caring for them the location of the Council's Animal Pound is not disclosed to the public).

7.11.4 The Council's Animal Welfare Officer keeps a record of all stray dogs found in the Animal Welfare Service Office at the address detailed in Section 12. The public via appointment during, office hours can access the register.

### 7.12.0 The Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 & Byelaws

7.12.1 Section 65 of the CNEA 2005 repeals the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 and the new dog control orders replace all existing Islington bylaws created in 1976 on any land in the borough where the CNEA 2005 order deals with the same offence.

7.12.2 New byelaws can now only be created for dog control offences that are not contained in the CNEA 2005. Until dog control orders are created the current byelaws applicable to specific Greenspace land are still enforceable.

### 7.13.0 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended)

7.13.1 Section 68 of the CNEA 2005 amends the Environmental Protection Act 1990 by taking the responsibility to deal with stray dogs from the Police and giving it to local authorities. This became formal in April 2008.

### 7.14.0 Animal Welfare Act 2006

7.14.1 The Animal Welfare Act 2006 introduced in England on April 6th 2007 places a legal responsibility on those who care for or own animals including dogs to allow them to exhibit normal behaviour patterns i.e. walk/run freely and to provide a suitable diet i.e. food and exercise. A person commits an offence if they inflict deliberate cruelty or their act or failure to act causes an animal to suffer unnecessarily. It is hoped the Act as well as the new codes of practice - which will be introduced in 2008 - will not only improve general animal welfare but also help vastly reduce the number of stray dog.

7.14.2 The Animal Welfare Officer is authorized to act under this piece of legislation and implements it during the course of exercising his duties. We will also take the requirements of this Act into consideration when creating our dog control orders.

### 7.15.0 Enforcement Officers

7.15.1 Below is a summary of authorised officers able to enforce dog control orders in Islington:

*Table 1*

<b>Service Area/Agency</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Legislation</b>
Homes for Islington	Anti Social Behaviour Out of Hours Officers	10	Dog Control Orders - CNEA 2005; HFI Tenants terms & conditions.
Greenspace and Leisure Services	Park Patrol Officers	9	Dog Control Orders - CNEA 2005; Byelaws
Street Environment Services	Street Environment Officers	16	Dog Control Orders - CNEA 2005
Street Environment Services	Street Environment Wardens	9	Dog Control Orders - CNEA 2005
Metropolitan Police	Metropolitan Police Community Support Officers	46	Dog Control Orders - CNEA 2005; Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
Public Protection	Animal Welfare Officer	1	Dog Control Orders - CNEA 2005; Dangerous Dogs Act 1991; Byelaws; Animal Welfare Act 2006; Environmental Protection Act 1990 Sections 149-150 (Stray Dogs)

7.15.2 The Out of Hours Anti Social Behaviour Officers have been identified as both an education and advice and enforcement resource for the purpose of delivering this strategy for Homes for Islington

and will be in operation between 14:00 – 22:00. They will be able to do this under delegated authority from Islington Council.

- 7.15.3 The current Park Patrol Officers are the only enforcement officers intended to patrol for Greenspace and Leisure. Greenspace Rangers have no enforcement powers as their role is primarily about community development/ engagement. The rangers will report incidents and collect evidence, for the Park Patrol to action.
- 7.15.4 The Street Environment Officers' role under their delegated authority from Director of Environment will continue to include enforcement duties on the public highway along with monitoring Islington's waste contractor to ensure that litterbins are emptied regularly and street cleanliness standards are achieved.
- 7.15.5 The Street Environment Wardens set up in April 2007 will provide a more visible community support function. They will be more involved in working within hard to reach groups and ensuring that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities on local community and environmental issues. They are also able to carry out an enforcement function when it becomes necessary under their delegated authority from Director of Environment.
- 7.15.6 The Warden Team will be working gathering evidence for producing acceptable behaviour contracts where advice and support are not effective, to this end they will work closely with the Council's Anti Social Behaviour Team and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Animal Welfare Officer on a borough wide basis.
- 7.15.7 The Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) are allocated to Islington's 16 wards forming the 16 Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams. The PCSO's under the new Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 will also be enforcing dog control offences and issuing FPNs to offenders. The Police also work in partnership with Islington's Public Protection Services to deal with stray and dangerous dogs.
- 7.15.8 The strategy brings together operational services - Greenspace, HFI, Registered Social Landlords, Street Environment Services, Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams as well as the Anti – Social Behaviour Team, the Animal Welfare Officer and other advisory agencies such as the Dogs Trust and the Kennel Club who have an impact on dog control issues and ensures a joined up approach is delivered. This joint approach means the cause of dog control issues will be understood and tackled and not just relocated as an unsolved problem from site to site.

## **8 Developing a Joined Up Approach**

### **8.1.0 Lead Department**

- 8.1.1 Street Environment Services are responsible for leading on this strategy and co-ordinating it's implementation and involvement from the other services/agencies listed below:
- 8.1.2 The approach of this strategy relies on strong partnership working. Through partnership working the aim of the strategy can be met in a shared and efficient manner. In order to seek the most effective operation of this strategy we aim to work with, amongst others, the following:
- 8.1.3 The authorised officers described in 7.15.1 will be responsible for providing operational services. They along with representatives of the agencies listed above will meet to discuss related matters on a periodic basis from the date of publication of this document.

### **8.2.0 Training**

- 8.2.1 All authorised officers identified in Section 7.15.1 will receive training on the new legislation and how to enforce it. The courses undertaken before any enforcement is carried out will include:

- ◆ Equalities issues
- ◆ Conflict Management
- ◆ Gathering evidence
- ◆ Customer Care
- ◆ Dog Behavioural Awareness
- ◆ Court proceedings

8.2.2 Only competent officers who have appropriate qualifications or experience will be authorised to take enforcement action. Officers will also have sufficient training and understanding of our enforcement policies and their area of work to ensure a consistent approach to their duties.

8.2.3 All officers carry visible identification picture cards, at all times and an authorization card to show what legislation they are able to enforce. The Director of Environment and Regeneration endorses this.

8.2.4 Information will also be made available to community groups such as “Friends of” groups, Tenant & Resident Associations and the “Eyes of Islington” on request. This will include an update on the new legislation, the enforcement structure in place and how to report an incident, and collect evidence.

### 8.3.0 Targeting Hotspots/Information Sharing

8.3.1 All authorised officers from operational areas identified in Section 7.15.0 will react to reported dog control incidents across the borough:

**Table 2**

Source	Immediate Action	Future Action
Public complaint	Officers notified/cleansing provided /witness evidence gathered- 24 hours	Recorded on map/list – Hotspot target -set up periodic proactive enforcement
Officer observation	Education/Advice/Enforcement - immediate	Recorded on map/list – <b>Hotspot target</b>
CCTV footage	On request by Officers	Used to back up <b>Hotspot Target</b> investigations

Where possible officers will attend to public complaints within 24 hours from being notified and take action to identify the offender(s), take information from witnesses and arrange for areas to be cleansed (if relevant).

Locations of persistent complaints/incidents will be prioritised from:

- ◆ Contact Islington complaints
- ◆ HFI residents
- ◆ Operational officer observations
- ◆ Dog Tracker (Park Patrol service database)

Joint service enforcement and education/ awareness raising resources can then be focused on these hotspots during planned exercises.

8.3.2 The hotspot locations on all land in the borough will be reviewed and monitored every six months to check whether the locations are still affected by dog control issues. Resources can then be reallocated to new hotspots were necessary.

8.3.3 Islington Council has access to a network of fixed and mobile (close circuit television units) CCTV units across the borough. The enforcement of serious dog control issues may use CCTV to provide evidence, especially for persistent offenders. Any use of evidence from this source will be in compliance with the requirements under the Regulation of Investigative Powers Act 2000.

- 8.3.4 The use of CCTV will be in conjunction with officer intelligence and will be part of a joined up approach amongst all officers with enforcement powers and the CCTV control teams, to ensure a coordinated efficient and proportionate enforcement operation.

#### **8.4.0 Awareness Raising & Education Campaigns**

- 8.4.1 As part of a unified approach publicity and communications regarding dog control will involve all relevant council departments and partners. Plans will be jointly developed to outline how the council and other agencies will publicise and promote responsible dog ownership and discourage dog fouling and anti social behaviour.

- 8.4.2 We will use a variety of cost effective ways to increase awareness:

- ◆ Use of network of well trained existing officers to provide up to date and accurate information.
- ◆ Clear and accessible poster and leaflet campaigns.
- ◆ Relevant press & media releases
- ◆ Clear reporting options for officers and residents
- ◆ Specific dog events
- ◆ Work with local schools and youth groups
- ◆ Work with relevant charities and interest groups
- ◆ Work with national organisations
- ◆ Promotion at council or community events
- ◆ Distribution of dog bags through retail outlets
  
- ◆ Articles in “in house” newsletters and website (e.g. Council newsletters, HFI newsletters, etc)
- ◆ Develop and maintain a dedicated webpage on dog control and responsible dog ownership

#### **8.5.0 Monitoring and Review**

- 8.5.1 This strategy's aim and effectiveness will be reported on using a number of evaluation tools. This evaluation will highlight the successes of the strategy and also illustrate any gaps in the performance of the awareness raising and or enforcement functions. These performance indicators are listed below:

- ◆ Evaluation of authorised officer training and understanding
- ◆ Number of leaflets distributed = number of messages
- ◆ Review number of participants at dog awareness events
- ◆ Review number of fixed penalty notices issued
- ◆ Review number of fixed penalty notices paid/cancelled
- ◆ Review number of prosecutions
- ◆ Increase in public satisfaction (residents survey)

- ◆ Review of dog control complaints statistics particularly dog fouling
- ◆ Reduction of dog fouling hotspots in the borough
- ◆ Monitoring of authorised officer performance/customer care

8.5.2 This strategy is a working document and will be updated as necessary. Representatives of the authorised officers will meet at least twice per year to evaluate the performance indicators above with a view to updating this document and our working practices accordingly. We will seek to invite other related agencies to these meetings.

8.5.3 Our reviews will also seek to introduce where necessary any new related powers granted to local authorities in managing local environmental quality. The outcomes for progress on this strategy will be linked to Islington's local environmental quality survey results which tell us periodically how clean our street environment is and will help us reset annual priority areas.

## 9 COMPLAINTS

9.0.1 The council wants to provide residents with high quality services and so complaints are treated very seriously. If anyone is unhappy about a particular service, any action taken or want to make a suggestion, they should first talk to the relevant local office or staff in that department. Contact Islington on **020 7527 2000** can provide assistance with the number of the relevant service area and re-direct the call.

9.0.2 The relevant service area will be advised of the complaint and follow Islington Council complaints procedures to deal with complaints and send a full written reply within 10 working days.

9.0.3 Details of our full complaints procedure, can be found on our website: - <http://www.islington.gov.uk/complaints>

### 9.1.0 OPENESS AND HELPFULNESS

9.1.1 We aim to be open about the work we do and will be available to provide general advice, deal with specific cases and investigate complaints. We view formal enforcement as a last resort and prefer to work with the community to achieve compliance. We will provide translation and interpretation services if English is not spoken or written by anyone we deal with.

9.1.2 For further information on these, and any other council services, please call Contact Islington who will have telephone translation support available and information on how to obtain or read this document in Braille or large print. Contact Islington can also be reached on **020 7527 2000** or email [contact@islington.gov.uk](mailto:contact@islington.gov.uk) or visit <http://www.islington.gov.uk/accessibility>

9.1.3 This is a public document. Further copies of this above can be obtained from:

Street Environment Services  
Environment and Regeneration Department  
1 Cottage Road N7 8TP  
Telephone 020 7527 2000  
Fax 020 7527 4755

This document can also be found on our website - <http://www.islington.gov.uk/dogs>.

9.1.4 This document is reviewed periodically and we would be pleased to receive any comments you have on it. Please send your comments in writing to the address shown above.

9.1.5 This policy was endorsed and agreed by the Executive Committee on **17<sup>th</sup> January 2008**

9.1.6 This policy was last updated on **24<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

## **10 Useful Contacts**

The Dogs Trust  
17 Wakley Street  
London EC1V 7RQ  
Phone: 0207 837 0006  
E-mail: [www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)

The Kennel Club  
1-5 Clarges Street  
London W17 8AB  
Phone: 0870 606 6750  
E-mail: [www.the-kennel-club.org.uk](http://www.the-kennel-club.org.uk)

Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT)  
Peacocks Farm  
Northchapel, Petworth  
West Sussex GU28 9JB  
Phone: 01428 707 620

Islington Animal Welfare Service  
Public Protection  
3rd Floor  
Municipal Offices  
222 Upper Street  
Islington  
London N1 1XR.  
Phone: 020 7527 3222