

# DOG CONTROL ORDERS

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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

The DCO came into force on 6<sup>TH</sup> January 2014.

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

Clear signage is in place throughout the borough.

### 3. What do the signs mean?

	<p>Dogs are not allowed in areas wherever you see this sign.</p> <p>Guide dogs or trained assistance dogs will be allowed in these areas</p>
	<p>You must clean up after your dog.</p> <p>Guide dog or trained assistance dog owners are exempt from cleaning up after their dog.</p>
	<p>Dogs must be kept on leads wherever you see this sign</p>
	<p>When you are in a public area with your dog, you could be asked by an authorised officer to put your dog on a lead if they are not under the appropriate control of their owner or where they are causing a nuisance, damage or acting aggressively towards other dogs or park users.</p> <p>Putting a dog on a lead when asked by an authorised officer applies across all of Waltham Forest including parts of Epping Forest that are in the borough.</p>

### 4. What happens if I fail to comply with a DCO?

People who fail to comply with a DCO are liable for prosecution in the magistrates' court with fines currently up to £1000. However, the Council is able to issue fixed penalty notices (FPN) to anybody who breaches a DCO as an alternative to prosecution. The FPN amount is £80, if it is paid within 10 days of being issued the fine is reduced to £50.

## **5. Can I walk my dog in any public space?**

There are certain places, for example children's play areas, outdoor gyms and multi-use games areas (MUGA) where dogs are not allowed. These areas are known as dog exclusion areas and are clearly marked.

## **6. What is a MUGA (multi use games area)**

A MUGA is an area using synthetic grass or a hard surface for playing sports. They are marked for a number of ball games, and can be fitted with multi-function goal ends for a variety of games including football, netball and basket-ball.

## **7. What DCO's apply to Corporation of London land (Epping Forest) that is in Waltham Forest?**

The following DCO's apply to land owned by the Corporation of London that is in the borough;

- Dog Fouling – you must clean up after your dog on all land that the public has access to, including parts of Epping Forest that are in the borough.
- Dogs on leads by direction – Dogs must be put on a lead when asked to do so including parts of Epping Forest that are in the borough.
- Dogs on leads - Dogs must be kept on leads in car parks owned by the Corporation of London

## **8. How will I know whether the person is an 'Authorised Officer'?**

All authorised officers carry identification.

## **9. Do the Dog Control Orders apply to children and young people with dogs?**

DCOs do not apply to children under ten, although they will apply to anyone aged ten or above. However, our officers will use discretion when enforcing the orders, and will always seek resolution with the child's parents or guardians rather than enforce in the first instance.

## **10. What about people with a disability who rely on guide dogs?**

People who are registered blind or have a disability that affects everyday movements and rely on guide dogs or trained assistance dogs are exempt from picking up after their dog and from the Dog Exclusion Order.

## **11. Why are there not more dog waste bins in the borough?**

Dog waste can be placed in any waste bins, including litter bins, as long as it is in bags. Dog faeces in bags can also be taken home and disposed of in your domestic residual non-recycled waste collection.

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

An offence is committed if the faeces is not cleaned up immediately. Not having a bag or other suitable means of removing the faeces is not a reasonable excuse for failing to comply with the DCO, nor is being unaware of a dog's fouling, for example if you were looking the other way. Responsible dog walkers will take care to carry sufficient dog bags with them and check to ensure their dog is not depositing faeces without being cleaned up. Whether or not an offence has been committed, officers will always encourage dog owners to clear up after their dog, as soon as they become aware of the deposit.

## **13. If I am walking my friend's dog, will the law apply to me?**

Yes – the person in charge of the dog at that time is held responsible in the absence of the person who is normally in charge of the dog.

## **14. How do I report a dog problem?**

You can call Waltham Forest Direct on **020 8496 3000** to report a dog related problem and it will be passed to the Dog Enforcement Team.