

Dear [insert person's name if known]

As a responsible dog owner living in [the Local Authorities name], I would like for you to consider the following points before making a decision on proposed Dog Control Orders (DCO), which may affect me and my dog.

1. Re; Dog Exclusion Order:

- I understand that there are some areas, such as children's play areas, where it is desirable for dogs to be excluded. However, I would prefer to see exclusion areas kept to a minimum and restricted to enclosed spaces.
- If an area does exclude dogs, I would hope to see plenty of signs to direct me to local alternative areas where my dog and I are welcome.

2. Re; Dogs on Leads Order:

- I would like the Local Authority to consider my duty of care requirements under the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland)2011, Section 9 (Ensuring welfare of animals) which requires my dog to exhibit normal behaviour patterns – this includes the need for my dog to exercise and run off lead.
- The Local Authority should ensure that there are a number of well sign-posted areas locally for my dog to exercise off-lead.

3. Re; Dogs on Lead by Direction Order:

- I believe a Leads by Direction Order to be preferable to Dogs on Leads as it targets individuals who have dogs which are causing a nuisance without restricting responsible dog owners and their dogs.

I hope you take into consideration my points and recognise the benefits that dog owners, and their dogs have on the local community. You may like to know that the animal welfare organisation [Dogs Trust](#) is happy to work with Local Authorities and offers help and support for those looking to tackle irresponsible dog ownership in the community.

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.

Yours faithfully,

[insert your name]