



# Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon Lord Benyon  
Minister for Biosecurity, Marine and Rural Affairs

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Lesley Griffiths AS/MS  
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Welsh Government  
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Dear Lesley,

Thank you for your letter of 25 May to the Secretary of State about dog control. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

Our approach towards dangerous dogs involves focussing on the controls and measures applying to all types of dog. The existing legal framework equips the police and local authorities with appropriate powers to tackle dangerous dogs and irresponsible dog ownership across all breeds. Through the Responsible Dog Ownership working group, which includes the police, local authorities and animal welfare groups, we are seeking to identify ways to improve the application of these powers. I would like to extend my thanks to Welsh Government officials for their continued and constructive engagement in the Responsible Dog Ownership working group.

Alongside the working group my officials have also been progressing additional workstreams to encourage responsible dog ownership and reduce the risk of dog attacks. We have been delivering a series of joint webinar sessions on dog control with the police and local authorities across England and Wales. These sessions highlight how enforcement agencies can make best use of their current powers and encourage multi-agency working to ensure dog control issues are addressed before they escalate. We have been particularly heartened to hear that police forces and local authorities in Gwent, Caerphilly and South Wales intend to implement the Local Environmental Awareness on Dogs (LEAD) initiative for early intervention following attendance at these webinars.

Further, over the past year we have been working closely with other government Departments, with the devolved governments and with stakeholders to disseminate educational messages about safe interactions between children and dogs. As part of this, Defra has been coordinating a cross-sector communications push during Child Safety Week and the school summer holidays so that families are equipped with practical tips to enjoy spending time safely with dogs. Dog safety fact sheets have also been widely disseminated to parents, health visitors, safeguarding professionals, police forces and local authorities. These resources are available in both English and Welsh: [Dog safety Archives | Child Accident Prevention Trust \(capt.org.uk\)](#).

We expect the Responsible Dog Ownership working group to make its recommendations later this year. We wish to focus on this initiative working as well as possible, and in light of that, we are not currently planning to add other types of dog to the list of types that are prohibited under Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

Yours sincerely,

*Richard Benyon.*

**THE RT HON LORD BENYON**