

Lesley Griffiths AC/AM
Gweinidog yr Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-477
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05413/19

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions committee.

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March 2019

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 19 February regarding support for the Control of Dogs (Wales) Bill.

I met with Cllr Dilwar Ali, Julie Morgan AM and David Joyce, Communications Workers Union, on 20 March and 6 November 2018 to discuss this subject as well as other responsible ownership concerns.

There has been some significant developments since the Autumn of last year regarding dog welfare. The updated Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs was published on the 12 November and our consultation on the Third Party Sales of Puppies and Kittens launched on 19 February and will close on 17 May. It is absolutely essential we address the root cause of any welfare concerns in changes to legislation regarding third party sales. Information on the supply chain of puppies is of particular significance in this process.

Following the introduction of the UK Governments Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 a report from the House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee on the enforcement of the Act has advised that the patchwork of legislation should be consolidated into a single Dog Control Act and dedicated Dog Control Notices should be introduced to facilitate early intervention in dog incidents.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Officials are continuing to analyse the findings of this report to determine what aspects are relevant to Wales and this is currently ongoing.

Officials have discussed the issues associated with dog control measures with their counterparts in Defra. Defra hold the research budget on behalf of England, Scotland and Wales and have commissioned research to obtain a better evidence base. The research which will look at:

- The effectiveness of current dog control measures including the use of the powers provided to police and local authorities in 2014.
- Identify and examine the factors and situations that may cause dog attacks, including whether any particular types of situation or domestic setting influence dog aggression and dog attacks; how behavioural problems among dogs might best be addressed; and how policy might need to develop to deal with dog behavioural problems.
- How to promote responsible dog ownership and, in particular, identify the help and information needed for dog owners who have experienced dog control issues or who are vulnerable to these (this includes evaluation of risk factors).

The research is currently in the literature research phase and the results are due later in the year (autumn).

We have received initial legal advice and dangerous dogs and dogs dangerously out of control is a reserved matter for the UK Parliament to legislate on, as is the subject-matter of Part 4 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, which is the part making provision for Community Protection Notices.

I am planning on attending the next Caring4K9s event on 6 March. Caring4K9s is a campaign started by Cllr Dilwar Alli and Julie Morgan AM to help promote responsible dog ownership.

I will update you on further developments in due course.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Regards" on the top line and "Lesley" on the bottom line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

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