

ANGUS COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

3 MARCH 2015

DOG FOULING REPORT

BACKGROUND

One of the key actions of the Pride in Place member/officer group is to address the issue of dog fouling in the communities of Angus.

This report will highlight the actions taken and outcome achieved regarding this issue.

CURRENT POSITION

Key actions have been undertaken by services and agencies.

Waste Management

- Cleans ups of pitches carried out on Friday afternoon/Saturday morning.
- Dual purpose stickers (litter and dog fouling) on all litter bins.
- Leaflet regarding responsible dog ownership has been completed and circulated.
- Mapping and review of all public bins in Angus has been undertaken and adjustments made where gaps were identified.

Community Safety

- Community Waste Operative being targeted to worst areas.
- Proactive patrols are undertaken and Fixed Penalty Notices continue to be issued by Community Wardens.
- Promotion of dog fouling action being undertaken via the Clean Up Angus campaign
- Signs being placed in line with hotspot areas identified through analysis of complaints.

Community Housing Teams

- Review of caretaker duties will be completed shortly. Looking to realign duties to include clean ups around housing estates.
- Litter and dog fouling clean ups to be included in the managed services pilot being carried out in Forfar which commences 1 April 2015.
- Review of Housing policy regarding dog ownership in council tenancies is completed and now links into all dog issue being reported to Environmental Health.

Countryside Rangers Service

- Ongoing promotional information and leaflets being given to visitors to Country Parks
- Enforcement duties being carried out by the Rangers Service within Angus Country Parks

Communities Teams

- Work ongoing with local groups to promote schemes such as Green Dog Walkers.
- Dedicated Pride in Place officer linked to dog fouling through the Clean Up Angus campaign

IMPACT

The following highlights the impact that the group has made to date.

Community Warden Service

Community Wardens have continued to undertake high visibility patrols and issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

During 2014 Community Wardens detected 98 persons for dog fouling and Fixed Penalty Notices issued. (Montrose – 24, Brechin - 6, Arbroath – 29, Carnoustie – 9, Monifieth – 12, Forfar – 10, Kirriemuir – 8).

Over and above this, 4 persons were reported to the Procurator Fiscal (Montrose – 1, Arbroath – 2, Monifieth – 1), and 3 Young Person Warning Notices were issued in place of FPNs (Carnoustie – 1, Forfar – 1, Kirriemuir – 1). It should be noted that Lord Advocates Guideline's states that a Fixed Penalty Notice should not be issued to a person under the age of 16 years. In addition to this, the Rangers Service issued a Fixed Penalty notice to an offender within Monikie Country Park.

Overall, there has been an increase of 7.6% in detections against previous year.

Community Wardens dealt with 519 complaints of dog fouling at 292 different locations. Of these locations, 82.5% are now consistently free of foul. This shows a decrease in complaints of 2.3% and increase of 6.5% in areas consistently free of foul.

Dog fouling complaints have reduced from 82 in January 2013, to 74 in January 2014 falling to 40 in January 2015. The 40 complaints in January 2015 show a 45.2% reduction against 2014 and a 51.2% against 2013.

Encouragingly, Community Wardens daily reports show they have witnessed in excess of 3,400 persons complying with legislation whilst out on patrol. This is an increase 17.6% against previous year.

Community Waste Operative

During 2014, Community Waste Operative, who is tasked as the Community Wardens, has collected over 22,500 dog faeces across Angus. They have also picked up over 460 bags of faeces and over of 940 pieces of litter.

The Community Waste Operative post was established through monies received from the Police and Fire Reserve Funding, made available to Angus Council in 2012/13. Annual costs for the post are £25,000.

CHALLENGES

There are still issues which will impact the effectiveness of any plan put in place to combat irresponsible dog owners and the resultant fouling throughout Angus.

The Dog Wardens time continues to be occupied with the management of stray dogs in Angus, leaving little time for preventative work.

Complaints of dog fouling do not always reflect a proliferation of foul in an area and in some instances have proven to be about one or two faeces. For example, although nearly half of complaints received are regarding public streets, 70% of these are related to 3 or less faeces.

Key areas to be tackled are network paths and green spaces where issues are still being reported. This reflects a change in complaint profile from within more urban areas. A strategy to tackle this will require to be developed in the coming year.

Social media provides a platform for the community to put forward their concerns about dog fouling. Cognisance is taken of these discussions and relevant information is fed into the analysis process.

CONCLUSION

Progress has again been made in this year by working jointly to tackle an issue that is not the making of Angus Council. The action plan has been taken forward collaboratively and collectively, dealing with the noted themed areas which encompass the management of dog fouling. Much of the prevention work has been undertaken by the Clean-Up Angus group with an information film for the public re dog fouling having been completed. Staff are working more closely and impact is being seen across Angus in terms of cleaner communities, linking to the longer term outcomes of the Pride in Place MOG in Angus.

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