

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

14 May 2026

Decision Report –

Recommendation that the Council:

- **Consider whether to pursue the feasibility of creating an enclosed dog park.**

Should this be agreed, delegate to Officers to:

- **Open a public consultation to measure demand, need, and possible suitable locations,**
- **Liaise with landowners regarding locations,**
- **Cost a scheme and identify any external funding, and bring a report back to a future Environment Committee meeting for consideration**

Ward(s)

All

Risk Management

There is no budget provision for this, any contribution would need to come from balances if it was to be delivered in this financial year; the effect on balances would therefore need to be assessed. Alternatively, it could be added to the budget proposals for 2027/28.

Indicative costs for enclosed dog park are in the region of £25,000 capital, including the need to provide fencing, seating, bins, signage, and dog bag dispenser. Revenue costs, such as grass cutting and requirement of frequency of staff inspections are not yet known.

Objective

Promoting the environmental, social, and economic wellbeing of the town and its community.

Crime & Disorder Prevention

None.

Public Sector Equality Duty

An equality impact assessment would be conducted should this proposal be agreed to ensure the inclusion of accessible design for those with mobility issues.

Report

A proposal had been received in relation to the consideration of creating an enclosed dog park facility in Blyth. The Council has the power to provide such recreational facilities as the authority considers appropriate¹. The NCC (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order² restricts dog from:

¹ Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976: Section 19

- All enclosed play areas
- Multi use games areas and tennis courts
- Section of beach from the access at Beachway to Links car park from 1 May to 30 September.

Further to this, there is a requirement for dogs to be kept on short lead within memorial grounds, burial grounds, cemeteries and gardens of remembrance, and any verges or footpaths adjoining A & B roads.

Dogs may also be requested to be put on lead (by authorised persons) in any public open space including a dedicated enclosed dog park.

Dog ownership has increased in recent years, leading to greater demand for safe, designated spaces where dogs can exercise off lead. Enclosed dog parks can provide controlled environments that benefit both dog owners and the wider community by reducing conflicts in shared public spaces.

At present, provision of dedicated enclosed dog exercise areas is limited to the facility provided by Briardale House which is bookable with an hourly charge of £5. The Council may wish to explore whether providing such a facility would meet local demand and align with broader environmental and community objectives, this may detract from vital income required by an existing community facility.

Open access unsupervised dog parks can carry an element of risk, e.g. too many dogs within the facility, introducing unknown dogs into a shared space, use by professional dog walkers that may have a bonded pack of up to six at any one time.

Cramlington Town Council is currently looking to open a third enclosed dog park, their model for their parks operates with strict rules which places liability on the dog owner and they confirmed that they have had no issues of concern regarding behaviour to date and have found their open access unsupervised models that are freely accessible during daylight hours to be self-regulatory.

An alternative that could be considered is the publication of dog friendly walks guide/interactive map to promote awareness of dog exclusions areas within Blyth and where off lead is permitted, this is a model that is demonstrated by Minehead Town Council in Somerset³.

Elaine Brown
Deputy Town Clerk
29 April 2026

² Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

³ <https://mineheadtowncouncil.gov.uk/your-council/minehead-s-dog-friendly-guide>

Appendix 1

Proposal Councillor Erskine, seconded Councillor Carr

I would like the Town Council to consider:

carrying out a renewed review of potential locations for a dog park,

opening a short public consultation to measure demand and identify suitable areas,

exploring partnership or grant funding options where available,

and opening dialogue with Northumberland County Council about land options and permissions.

I believe this would be a practical and positive solution that recognises the new enforcement framework while still supporting responsible dog ownership and community wellbeing.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to support this proposal further or provide resident feedback gathered.

kind regards

Councillor Brian Erskine
Cowpen Ward Councillor.