

Why was LEAD started?

LEAD was started after a woman was attacked and killed by a dog in Wallington in December 2010. Police in Sutton set about working with key partner organisations to launch the LEAD initiative as a structured and co-ordinated approach to encourage responsible dog ownership.

LEAD accomplishments

LEAD has been recognised as being best practice, both locally and nationally, for promoting responsible ownership of all breeds of dog whilst tackling anti-social and inconsiderate behaviour by individuals with dogs in a way that protects and reassures the public. LEAD has been adopted by other London boroughs including Merton, Kingston, Newham, Bexleyheath, Enfield and Barnet. It has also been taken up by other police forces, such as in Surrey and Merseyside. Other local authorities and police forces have expressed an interest including Essex, Thames Valley, South Wales, Luton and Dover district councils. In June 2015, Hertfordshire Police in partnership with Stevenage Borough Council adopted and launched LEAD. Also in November 2015, North Wales Police launched LEAD in partnership with their six county councils across the whole of North Wales. LEAD has been a finalist in the Sutton Community Safety Awards and was nominated as a finalist in the UK Kennel Club 'National Good Citizen Dog Scheme Awards' in 2013. In addition, LEAD has been endorsed by the Kennel Club and supported by major charities including the RSPCA and Battersea Dogs Home. LEAD was used as a case study by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for their new 'Dealing with Irresponsible Dog Ownership Practitioner's Manual' which accompanies the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Police Act (October 2014).

Useful helplines

- Noisy dogs, dog fouling, stray dogs: Call Sutton Council on 020 8770 5070 (day: between 8am-8pm) or 020 8770 5000 (between 8pm-8am)
- Illegal breeds, organised dog fights, dangerous dogs, anti-social behaviour with dogs: Call Met Police on 101
- Nuisance dogs or anti-social behaviour with dogs in your tenanted or leasehold accommodation (such as council housing). Call your landlord (i.e. Sutton Housing Partnership or Roundshaw Homes)
- Health and welfare of dogs: Call the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999.

Help us make Sutton safer

By working together and sharing knowledge and experiences we want to make our communities safer for everyone to enjoy. Sutton is a low crime borough and one of the safest in London. Help us make Sutton even safer.

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Let's work together to be Responsible dog owners

Taking a LEAD on dogs

Local Environmental Awareness on Dogs - LEAD© - is a police-led, initiative founded in the London Borough of Sutton in South West London to encourage responsible dog ownership of all breeds of dog. It seeks to provide advice to the public on dog issues, improve dog safety and dog welfare. It also deals with anti-social and inconsiderate behaviour by individuals with dogs in a way that protects and reassures the public. It is aimed at all dog owners in Sutton whether in private or rented accommodation.

This work is being promoted through regular dog roadshows, engagement with dog owners during regular patrols and through day-to-day contact with owners of dogs that come to police attention. To achieve this we are working closely with our partner agencies, which include Sutton Council, all Registered Social Landlords like Sutton Housing Partnership and Roundshaw Homes, the RSPCA and the Riverside Animal Centre, which is based in Beddington Park, Sutton. Our annual surveys of local residents highlight that issues concerning dogs, such as nuisance dogs and dog fouling, are high on the list of concerns amongst residents in the borough – and LEAD is aimed at tackling these concerns.

Working with dog owners

In our day-to-day police work, we are:

- recording all incidents involving negative dog behaviour including dog attacks on people and animals; dog welfare and dog fouling. This is important to create a documented history should enforcement be necessary
- encouraging owners (if a social housing resident) to register their dog with their landlord
- arranging dog roadshows that offer dog advice and free or discounted dog micro-chipping, which will become a legal requirement by April 2016.

When it's time for police intervention

As well as encouraging responsible dog ownership and giving advice, there are times when it is necessary for police to intervene, initiate

control measures and ultimately prosecute offenders.

We will intervene when:

- dogs are used by owners to commit crime
- dogs are linked with anti-social behaviour
- prohibited types/breeds come to notice.

Control measures, sanctions and legislation

We will act to enforce the law and protect the public whenever necessary and where legislation permits. Measures include:

1st 'Come to Notice' letter

This will include key details of the incident – details that **will be shared** with relevant partners. Letters will be sent with supporting literature from The Kennel Club, RSPCA and Battersea Dogs Home and other literature.

2nd 'Come to Notice' letter

Should the dog's behaviour come to notice again, a second letter will be hand-delivered by the local Safer Neighbourhoods police team. If the dog owner is a social housing resident, the landlord will contact the dog owner within seven working days to remind them of, or enforce, their tenancy agreement. Continued anti-social behaviour, could result in permission to have a dog being withdrawn or even the property being repossessed.

Acceptable Behaviour Contract

As the second letter is sent, an Acceptable Behaviour Contract – a voluntary agreement between the police and the individual – will be sought. If this is declined, the police Anti-Social Behaviour Unit will monitor the dog's behaviour for at least six months.

Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO), Community Protection Notice (CPN), Contingent Destruction Order on conviction under the Dangerous Dogs Act

Continued anti-social behaviour could result in a CBO, CPN, Contingent Destruction Order on conviction under the Dangerous Dogs Act or an appropriate Dog Control Order section 2 of the 1871 Dogs Act.

Please note a CBO, CPN, Contingent Destruction Order or a Dog Control order can be sought at anytime during the process