



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Seacole Building
4th Floor
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

T: 03459 33 55 77
helpline@defra.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

[Redacted]
By email: [Redacted]

Our ref: FOI2023/13530
31 July 2023

Dear [Redacted],

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Dangerous dog attacks Taskforce

Thank you for your request for information of 9 July 2023 about dangerous dog attacks taskforce. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Your information request and our response are set out below.

On 6 July 2023, during a parliamentary debate, Rt Hon Therese Coffey MP responded to the SNP's Amy Callaghan MP, on the topic of the Animal Welfare Bill: "My right hon. Friend the Minister for Food, Farming and Fisheries set out on 25 May how we intend to take through our manifesto commitments. We also have a taskforce working on this situation, and I expect a report with some recommendations later this year."

Who are the members of the taskforce mentioned by Therese Coffey, and what are their designations?

We can confirm that the taskforce Steering Group is chaired by Defra officials and the membership is made up of representatives from the following organisations:

- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Welsh Government
- Local authorities in England and Wales
- The National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) Dangerous Dog Working Group
- Battersea (representing the Dog Control Coalition which comprises Battersea, Blue Cross, Dogs Trust, The Kennel Club, RSPCA, Scottish SPCA and British Veterinary Association)
- RSPCA (representing the Dog Control Coalition which comprises Battersea, Blue Cross, Dogs Trust, The Kennel Club, RSPCA, Scottish SPCA and British Veterinary Association).

We confirm that Defra does hold the names of the individual members of the taskforce, however after careful consideration we have decided that the information should be withheld under sections 40(2) and 40(3A) of the FOIA as the information constitutes personal data relating to persons other than you. These sections exempt personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would breach any of the data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).



We consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle, which provides that personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner. Disclosure would not constitute 'fair' processing of the personal data because the individuals concerned would not reasonably have expected their names to be made public.

In our obligation to advise and assist under section 16 of FOIA we can inform you that in December 2021 Defra published research in collaboration with Middlesex University investigating measures to reduce dog attacks and promote responsible dog ownership across all breeds of dog.

In response to this research, we are working with police, local authorities and animal welfare organisations through the Responsible Dog Ownership taskforce to consider how the recommendations could be taken forward and to identify ways in which to improve the application of the full range of existing dog control powers.

Conclusions from this work are expected later this year.

Information disclosed in response to this FOIA (request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the government's Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

We attach Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

Information Rights Team
InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs or logos) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

Most documents produced by Defra will be protected by Crown Copyright. Most Crown copyright information can be re-used under the [Open Government Licence](#). For information about the OGL and about re-using Crown Copyright information please see [The National Archives website](#).

Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the [Intellectual Property Office's website](#).

Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to ^[Redacted], Head of Information Rights via email at InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure.

The ICO can be contacted using the following link:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>