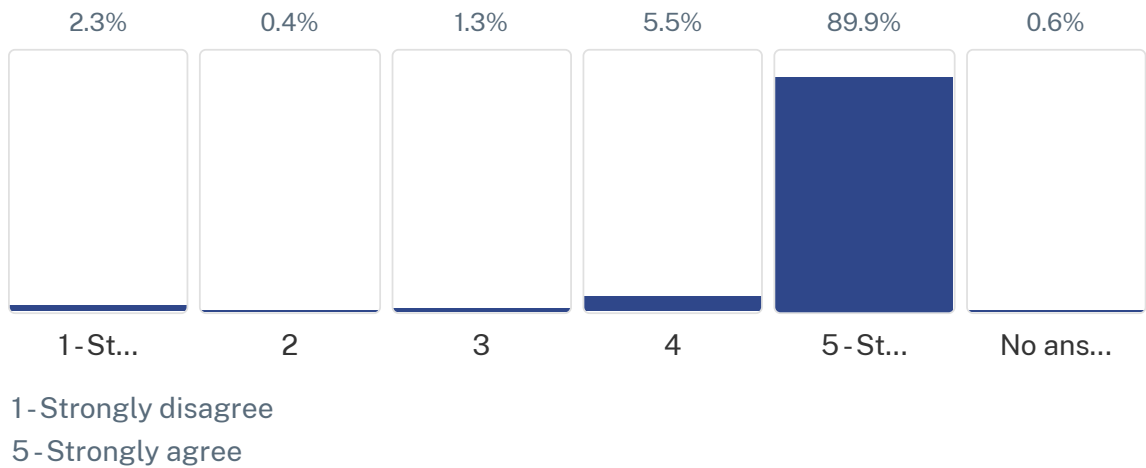


Dog Control - Public Spaces Protection Order 2026

Dog fouling

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the requirement that a person in charge of a dog must clear up their after dog immediately?

813/818 - Linear scale - optional



Do you have any other comments on the requirement for people in charge of a dog to clear up after their dog immediately?

354/818 - Long answer - optional



Most respondents supported the requirement strongly and described clearing up after a dog as a basic responsibility of ownership. A frequent theme was that “clearing up” must explicitly include disposing of the bag properly, not hanging it on trees, leaving it in bushes, verges or on the ground, or dumping it in other people’s bins. This was one of the most repeated complaints across responses.

Another major theme was enforcement. Many said the rule is already poorly enforced or effectively unenforced, so new wording or legislation will make little difference without visible patrols, wardens, fixed penalty notices and higher fines. Several called for tougher sanctions, including on-the-spot fines, repeat-offender penalties, or even restrictions on dog ownership/use of parks.

Many respondents also asked for more practical support: more dog waste bins, better placement at entrances/exits and along walking routes, more frequent emptying, clearer signage, and in some cases free poo-bag dispensers. Some argued that reduced bin provision makes compliance harder.

A common concern was public health and hygiene, especially risks to children, people using pavements, parks and play areas, and the unpleasantness of dog mess on shoes, pushchairs and mobility aids. Several said fouling is getting worse in some streets, parks and commons.

There were also repeated comments that dogs off lead, out of sight, or owners distracted by phones are more likely to result in mess being missed. Some linked this to calls for dogs to be kept on leads more often or for owners to keep dogs in sight.

A smaller but noticeable group said the rule should allow discretion in genuine cases: if the owner runs out of bags, cannot find the poo in long grass, leaves or undergrowth, or if the dog has diarrhoea. These respondents still supported the principle but wanted a “best efforts” approach rather than automatic penalties.

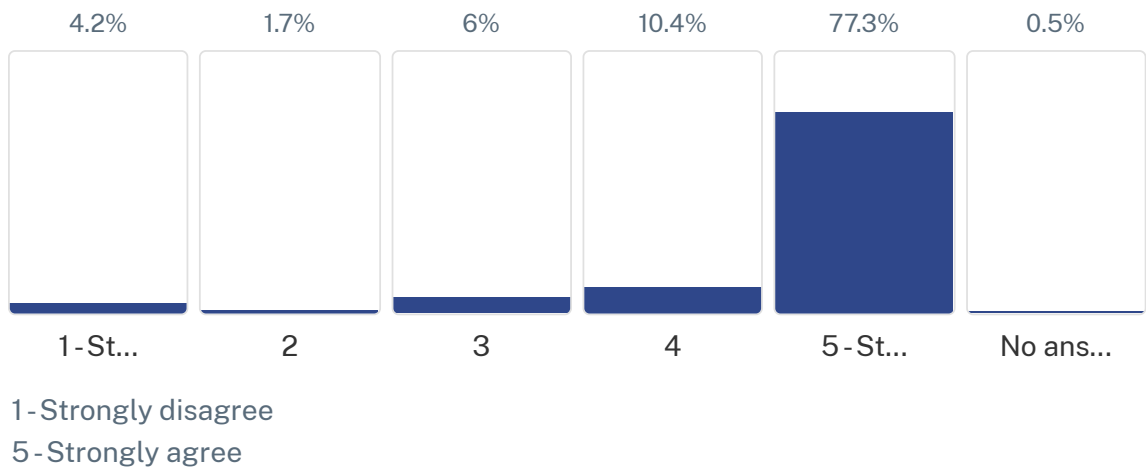
Some respondents said most dog owners already do the right thing and that the problem is a smaller irresponsible minority. A few objected that dogs are being unfairly singled out compared with cats, horses, livestock or human waste, or felt the proposal was overreach without realistic enforcement.

Keeping dogs on leads if asked by an authorised officer



To what extent do you agree or disagree that authorised officers can request that the person in charge of dogs put them on a lead if the dogs are out of control, or a threat to other people or animals?

814/818 - Linear scale - optional



Do you have any other comments on the requirement for people in charge of dogs put their dog on a lead if requested to do so by an authorised officer?

340/818 - Long answer - optional

Many respondents supported the requirement in principle, often strongly, but the biggest recurring issue was enforcement: people repeatedly said they rarely or never see authorised officers, doubt officers can be present when incidents happen, and want more patrols, dog wardens, fixed penalty notices, or easier reporting and evidence submission.

A very common view was that dogs should be on leads by default in public spaces, especially in parks, streets, city areas, shared paths, around children, and near wildlife, with off-lead use limited to clearly designated enclosed or marked areas. Many described off-lead dogs running up to adults, children, nervous dogs, cyclists and wheelchair users, with owners saying “don’t worry, he’s friendly”, which respondents said is not acceptable.

Safety concerns were a major theme. Respondents often mentioned fear, previous bites or injuries, dogs knocking people over, and risks to children, older people and disabled people. Shared-use and cycle paths were mentioned frequently, including hazards from dogs crossing paths or long/extendable leads.

Wildlife protection also came up often, particularly around ponds, rivers, nature reserves, nesting birds and cattle on commons. Cherry Hinton Hall, Mill Road Cemetery, Stourbridge Common and Midsummer Common were named repeatedly as places where dogs disturb ducks, swans, birds or cows and signage is ignored. Some, however, felt wildlife wording was too broad or inconsistently applied, especially where cats or foxes also affect wildlife.

A sizeable minority supported the rule only if applied narrowly and proportionately. They worried terms like “out of control”, “threat” and “feel threatened” are too subjective, could be abused, and might penalise responsible owners and well-trained dogs. These respondents often asked for clear definitions, officer training in dog behaviour, documentation of reasons, and restrictions on officer discretion.

There were repeated questions about who authorised officers are, how they identify themselves, and how the public would contact them. Many said officers should carry ID, wear uniform, and be clearly empowered and accountable.

Some respondents wanted stronger consequences for non-compliance: on-the-spot fines, warnings, recording owner details, repeat-offender tracking, and in a few cases confiscation, muzzling or bans on ownership. Others preferred education, clearer rules, training or licensing over criminalisation.

A smaller but notable group argued that dogs need off-lead exercise and socialisation, and that well-controlled dogs should still be allowed freedom in suitable areas. Several said the problem is irresponsible owners, not dogs in general, and that blanket restrictions would unfairly punish responsible owners.

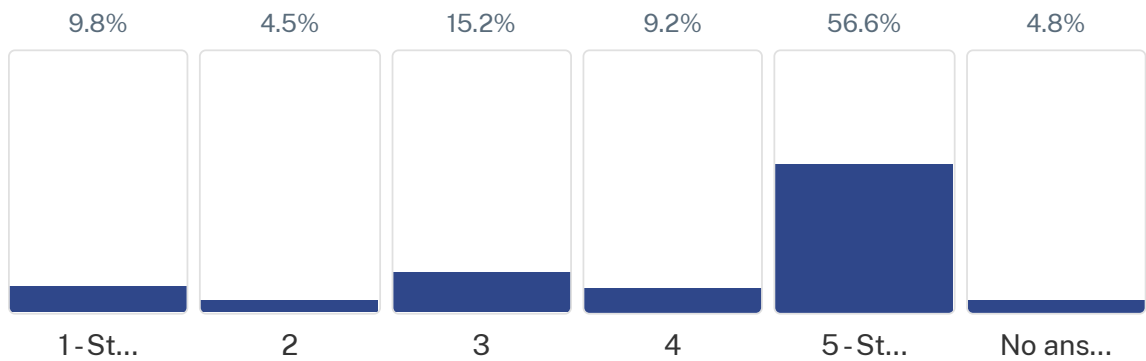
Overall, the dominant trends were support for stronger dog control, widespread concern about uncontrolled dogs affecting public safety and enjoyment of spaces, and scepticism that the rule will work without visible enforcement, clear definitions, and better communication.

Dog on lead areas (Existing restrictions)



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the requirement that dogs must be on leads at all times in the above areas?

779/818 - Linear scale - optional



1-Strongly disagree
5-Strongly agree

Do you have any other comments on the requirement for dogs to be on leads at all times in the above areas?

286/818 - Long answer - optional

Many respondents supported keeping or strengthening on-lead requirements, often saying they should apply in more places, sometimes all public spaces, parks, cemeteries, city-centre areas, playgrounds and near roads or waterways. Cemeteries were one of the most commonly backed examples, with people describing them as places of respect and saying dogs off lead can upset mourners, children and other visitors. Others wanted more dog exclusion areas as well as more lead-only areas.

A very common theme was poor enforcement. Respondents repeatedly said existing rules are often ignored, especially at Cherry Hinton Hall and Histon Road Cemetery, and that stronger policing, fines or visible consequences are needed. Linked to this, many said signage and public awareness are inadequate, particularly at Cherry Hinton Hall, where signs were described as too small, unclear or not visible enough, and the boundary of the restricted area as poorly defined.

Protection of wildlife was another major reason given for support, especially around ponds, streams, swales and nature areas. People mentioned ducks, swans, squirrels, aquatic habitats and nesting birds being disturbed or harmed by off-lead dogs. Safety and comfort for children and other park users also came up frequently, with some saying they or their children had been frightened by dogs running up to them, and that public spaces should be usable without fear.

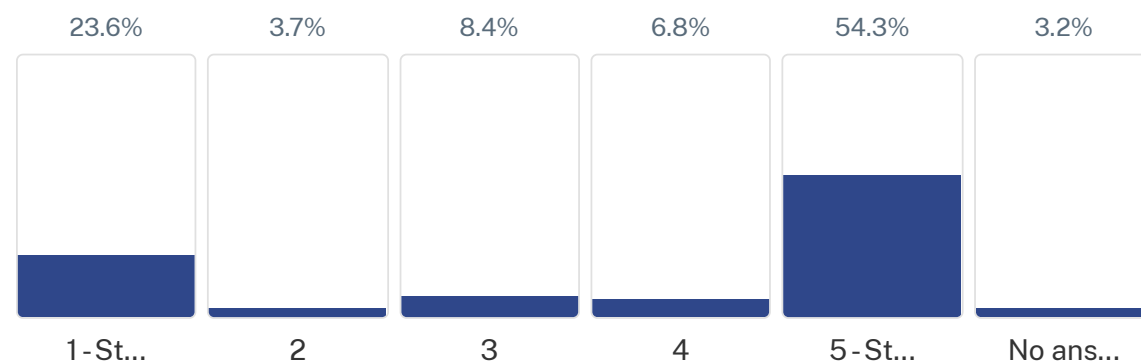
A substantial minority disagreed with blanket lead rules. Their main view was that well-trained, calm dogs with good recall should be allowed off lead, and that the focus should be on whether dogs are under control rather than on universal restrictions. Some said constant lead use can frustrate dogs, reduce exercise and socialisation, and unfairly penalise responsible owners. Several called for a better balance: some lead-only areas, but also enough off-lead spaces or enclosed dog areas.

Another recurring concern was lack of justification. Quite a few respondents said the choice of areas seemed random or inconsistent, and asked for clearer evidence or area-specific reasons, such as wildlife, children, or road safety. Some suggested seasonal or time-limited restrictions instead of all-year, all-day rules, especially where the main concern is nesting birds or busy periods. Many also said they were not familiar enough with the listed locations to comment confidently.

Dogs on leads (Proposed new area)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the new proposal that dogs must be on leads at all times at Mill Road Cemetery?

792/818 - Linear scale - optional



Do you have any other comments on the new proposal that dogs must be on leads at all times at Mill Road Cemetery?

280/818 - Long answer - optional

Responses were strongly split, but opposition was more common and more detailed than support.

The most frequent theme was that year-round leads would reduce dog-walker footfall and make the cemetery feel less safe. Many respondents said the current seasonal restrictions have already coincided with more drug dealing, drug use, litter, needles, rough sleeping, human waste and other antisocial behaviour, and that regular dog walkers provide informal surveillance, report issues and pick up litter. Related to this, many said dogs are not the main problem in the cemetery and enforcement should focus on crime, drugs and maintenance instead.

Another very common point from opponents was that Mill Road Cemetery is one of very few nearby, enclosed or relatively safe spaces for off-lead exercise in this part of Cambridge. They stressed the importance of off-lead time for dog welfare, exercise and socialisation, especially for people without cars, older residents, and those using the space as part of a local dog-walking community.

Many opponents also challenged the stated ecological justification. Repeated comments said there is no evidence of ground- or low-nesting birds in the cemetery, and several argued that keeping dogs on leads would not prevent urination anyway. Some asked the Council to publish clearer evidence about affected birds, plants and grassland.

Supporters most often argued that a cemetery should be a respectful, contemplative place rather than a dog exercise area, and that dogs should be on leads there as in other cemeteries. A common supporting theme was consistency and simplicity: several felt “all cemeteries, all dogs on leads” would be clearer and easier to understand and enforce. Others cited wildlife protection, fear of loose dogs, dogs approaching children, fouling, and dogs running over graves.

Across both sides, a recurring practical issue was enforcement. Some said the current seasonal rule is confusing, patchily followed and hard to police, so a blanket rule would be simpler; others doubted any new rule would be enforceable without more patrols and signage.

A smaller middle group suggested compromise options: keep the current seasonal approach, improve signs and communication, target only irresponsible owners or problem dogs, or create/identify alternative off-lead space nearby.

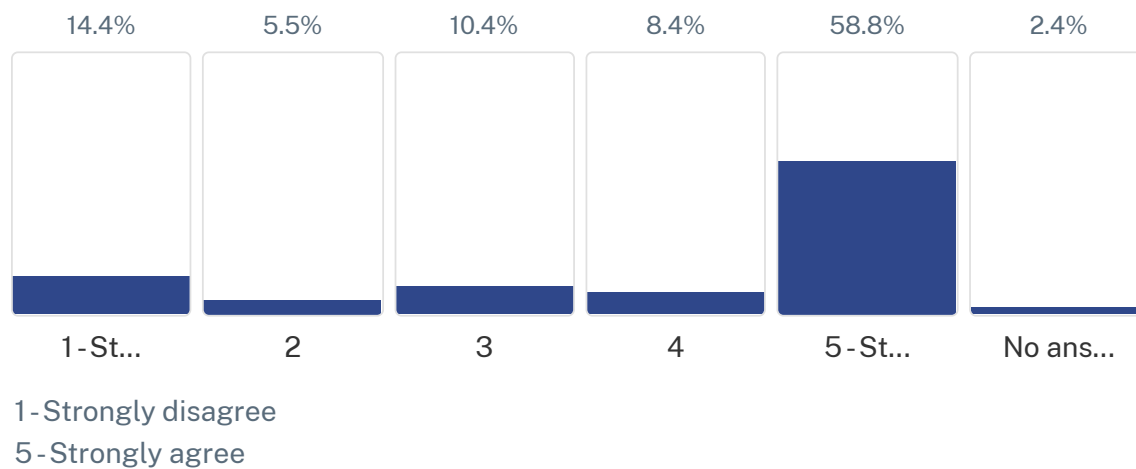
Dogs on leads (Existing seasonal restrictions)



English

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the existing seasonal restrictions that dogs must be on leads at all times in the above areas?

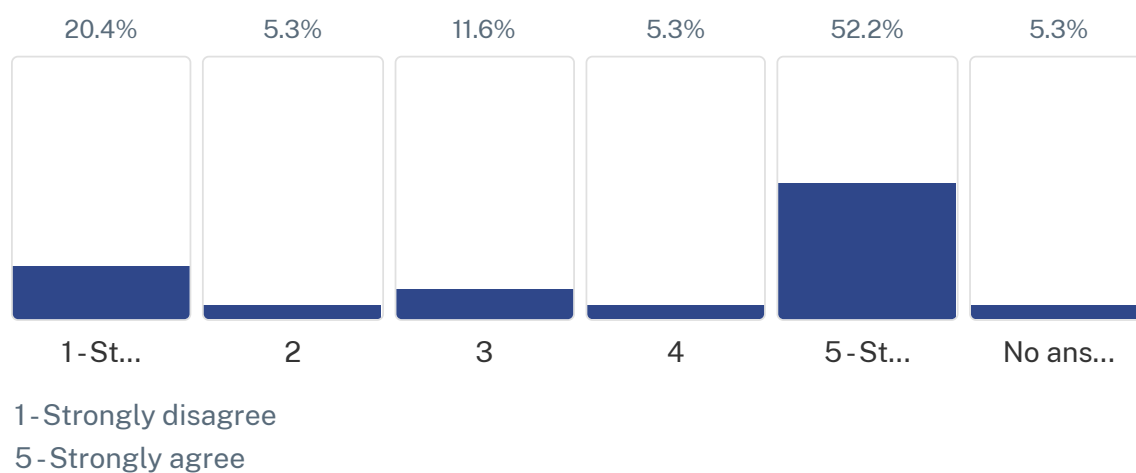
798/818 - Linear scale - optional



Dogs on leads (seasonal restrictions) - Proposed new areas

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the new proposed seasonal dogs on leads at Byron's Pool LNR?

775/818 - Linear scale - optional



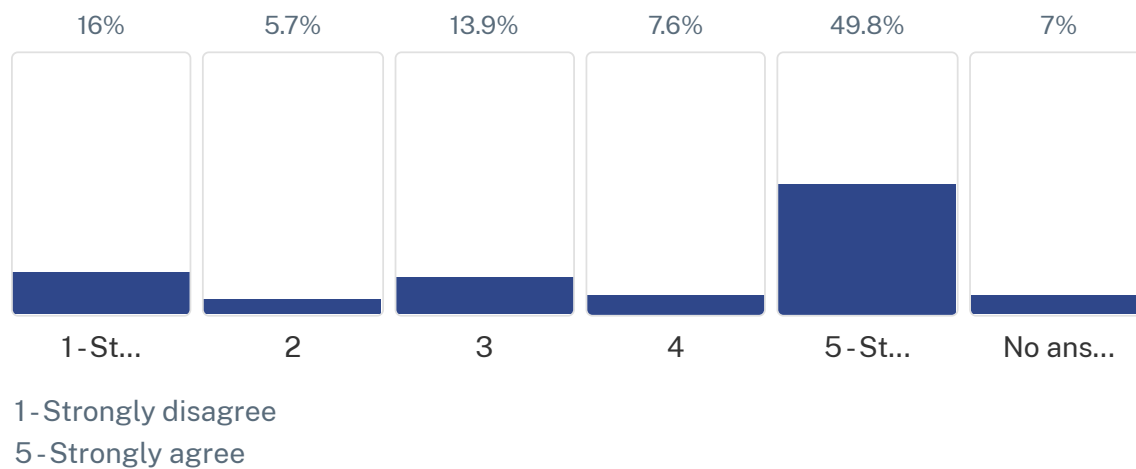
Church End, Cherry Hinton LNR



English

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the new proposed seasonal dogs on leads at Church End, Cherry Hinton LNR?

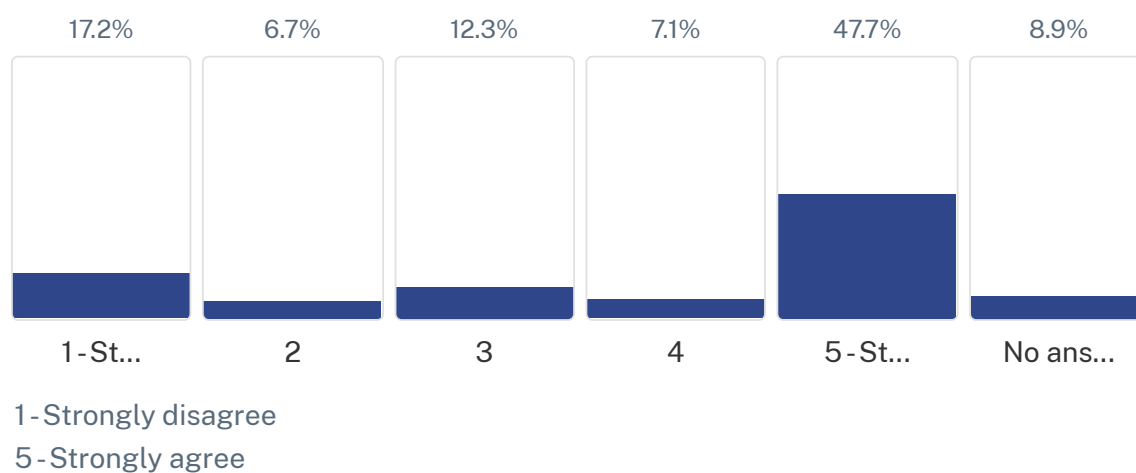
761/818 - Linear scale - optional



Fulbourn Road Open Space, Cherry Hinton

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the new proposed seasonal dogs on leads at Fulbourn Road, Cherry Hinton?

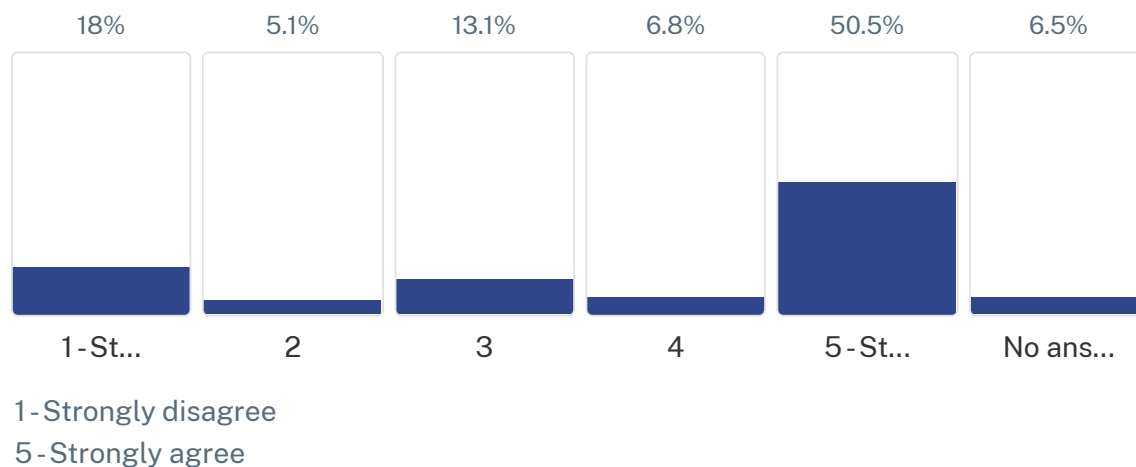
745/818 - Linear scale - optional



Hobson's Park

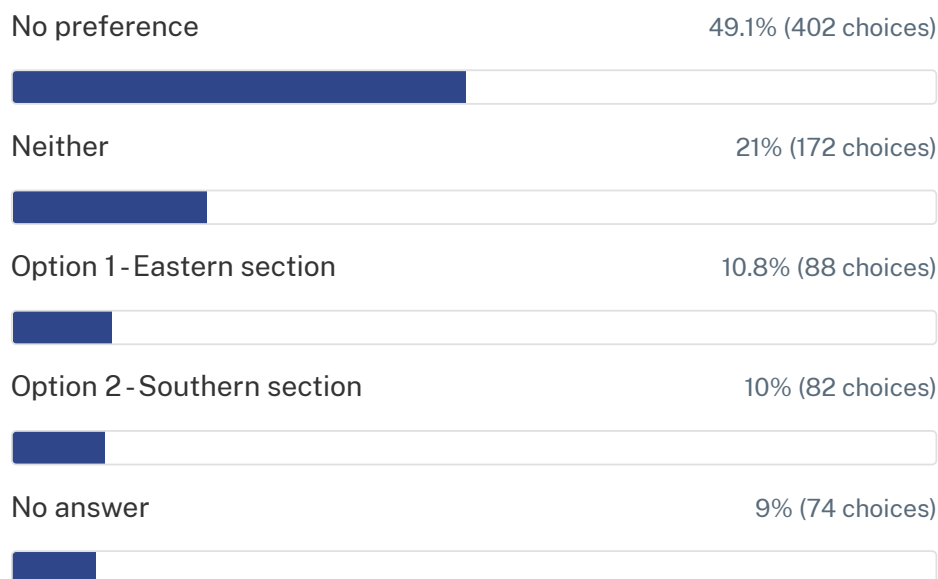
To what extent do you agree or disagree with introducing seasonal dogs on leads restrictions at Hobson's Park?

765/818 - Linear scale - optional



Which option do you prefer for seasonal dogs on leads restrictions at Hobson's Park?

744/818 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



Do you have any other comments on the new proposed seasonal dogs on leads areas?

211/818 - Long answer - optional



English

Many respondents focused on the choice between the two proposed sections and a common view was that restricting only one section does not make sense. A large number explicitly asked for both areas to be included, often saying this would be simpler, clearer and easier to enforce. Some went further and wanted restrictions across the whole park or year-round, especially in wildlife or nature reserve areas.

Another major theme was criticism of the survey itself. Many said the map, labels and options were confusing or mismatched, especially the ordering of option 1/2 and southern/eastern sections, and some felt this undermined the validity of responses.

There was a strong split in views on the principle of restrictions. Supporters emphasised protecting nesting birds and wildlife, saying dogs should be on leads in sensitive areas, sometimes at all times, and that signs and enforcement should be clear and robust. Some also said short leads rather than extendable leads were needed.

Opponents most often argued that there is not enough evidence that dogs are the real problem. Many asked for proper ecological evidence, bird surveys and clearer justification before imposing restrictions, and questioned whether there are actually ground-nesting birds in some locations, especially Mill Road Cemetery and parts of Byron's Pool/Hobson's Park. Several suggested cats, foxes, people, cyclists, antisocial behaviour, or development are bigger threats to wildlife than dogs.

A frequent concern was loss of off-lead space for dogs, especially in dense urban areas and near new housing. Respondents said dogs need room to run, socialise and stay healthy, and that too many restrictions would harm dog welfare, reduce safe local exercise options, and unfairly penalise responsible owners. Some asked where dogs would be able to go off lead during the restricted season, and suggested designated dog parks or enclosed exercise areas as an alternative.

Practicality and enforcement also came up often. Respondents said partial restrictions would confuse users, be hard to police, and may only affect responsible owners while others ignore them. Clear signage, fencing and public information were repeatedly requested.

Mill Road Cemetery drew particularly polarised comments. Some supported restrictions there, but others strongly opposed them, saying there are no ground-nesting birds, that dog walkers help keep the area safe and discourage antisocial behaviour, and that restrictions have already caused mistrust and division.

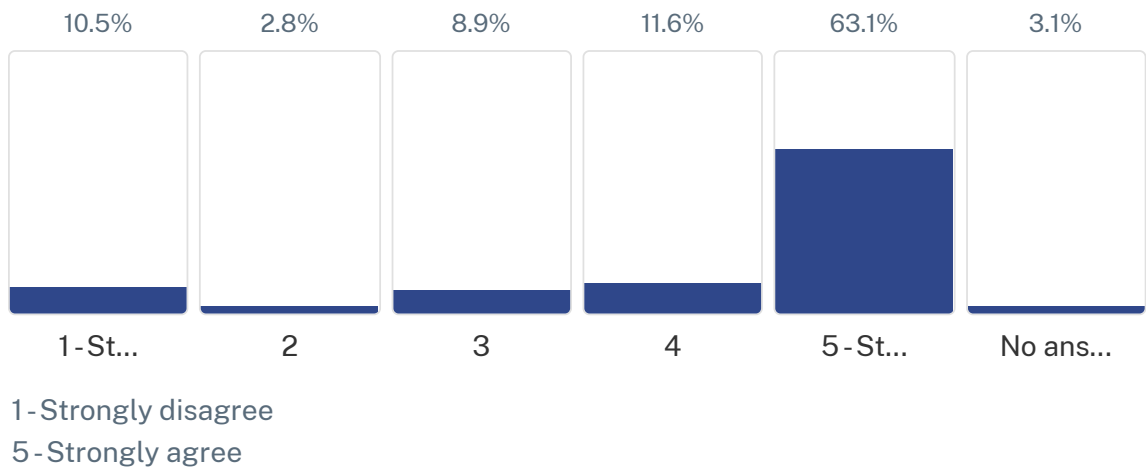
Overall, the strongest recurring points were: include both areas if restrictions are introduced; fix the confusing survey materials; provide clear evidence and justification; and address the balance between wildlife protection and the shortage of safe off-lead space for dogs.

Dog Exclusion Areas



Do you support the proposed amendment to Schedule 2 that would prohibit dogs and their owners from entering specified fenced or enclosed recreational areas within Cambridge City Council public open spaces?

793/818 - Linear scale - optional



Do you have any other comments on the requirement for dogs to be excluded from the above areas?

159/818 - Long answer - optional

Many respondents supported excluding dogs from clearly defined children's play areas, paddling pools and some sports facilities, often describing this as common sense, necessary for safety, cleanliness and reducing fear among children. Concerns about dog fouling, hygiene, dogs knocking over or frightening children, and disruption to sport came up repeatedly.

A very common concern, including from people who agreed with some exclusions, was that the policy is too broad or too vague, especially around "green open spaces". Many said play areas and enclosed specialist spaces are fine, but wider parks and open grass areas should not be automatically included, as this could unnecessarily reduce places for dogs to exercise and displace use elsewhere.

Enforcement was one of the strongest recurring themes. Many respondents said restrictions are pointless without visible enforcement, dog wardens, monitoring, penalties and clear signage. Related to this, several raised the need for secure, well-maintained fencing, saying broken fences and gates undermine compliance and create conflict.

Another frequent theme was the impact on families, especially parents or carers with both children and dogs. Some felt a total ban in children's areas would make everyday outings difficult, and suggested on-lead rules rather than full exclusion in some places.

Many respondents also asked for more dedicated dog space, such as fenced dog exercise areas or reassurance that there will still be enough off-lead space in the city. Some felt responsible owners and well-behaved dogs were being unfairly penalised by blanket rules.

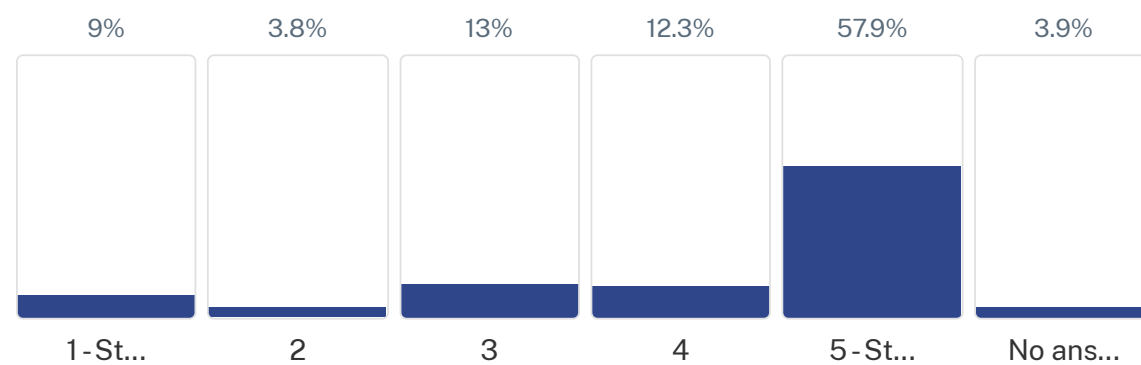
A smaller but notable group wanted stricter rules still, including more dog-free zones, wider lead requirements, buffer zones around children's areas, and stronger action against non-compliant owners.

There were also a few site-specific comments, including objections to particular listed areas or requests for wording corrections, such as the Nightingale Avenue bowling green no longer existing. Some respondents asked for clearer exemptions for assistance dogs.

Maximum number of dogs (Existing restrictions)

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the limit on the number of dogs that can be walked by a person at Byrons Pool LNR?

786/818 - Linear scale - optional



1 - Strongly disagree

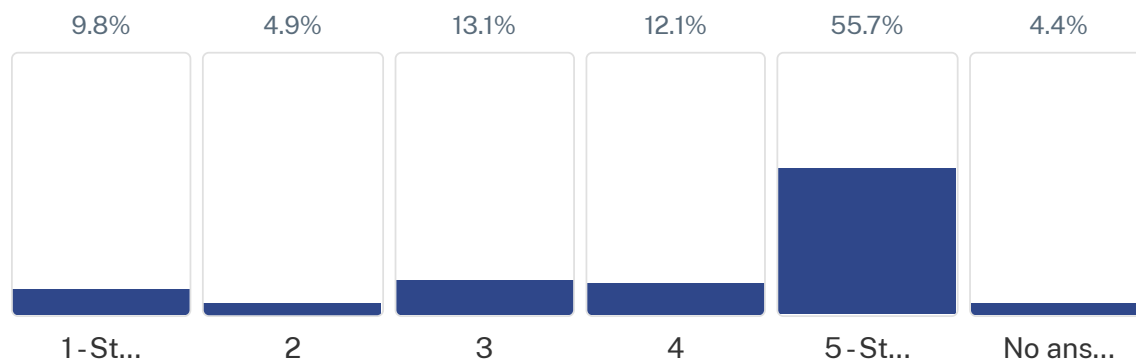


English

agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the limit on the number of dogs that can be walked by a person at Coldhams Common sports pitches?

782/818 - Linear scale - optional

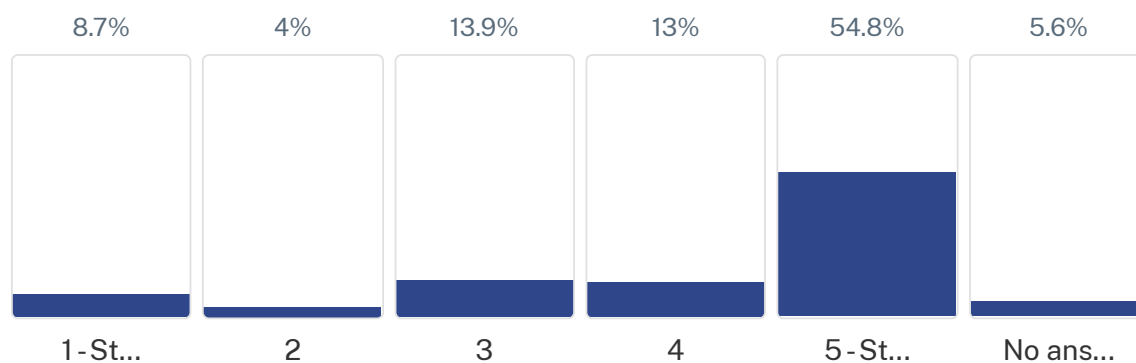


1-Strongly disagree

5-Strongly agree

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the limit on the number of dogs that can be walked by a person at Hobson's Park?

772/818 - Linear scale - optional



1-Strongly disagree

5-Strongly agree

Do you have any other comments on the limit on the number of dogs that can be walked by a person at the above locations?

199/818 - Long answer - optional



English

Many respondents supported having a limit, but the strongest trend was that four dogs was seen as too high. A large number said the maximum should be two, with others suggesting three or saying four was the absolute upper limit. Concerns focused on safety, control, dogs behaving as a pack, difficulty managing large or strong dogs, narrow paths, and being unable to pick up after multiple dogs properly.

A similarly common theme was that the fixed number felt arbitrary, and that control matters more than the number. These respondents argued that one badly controlled dog is more of a problem than several well-controlled ones, and said any rule should take account of dog size, breed, temperament, whether dogs are on or off lead, and the competence of the walker. Some suggested licensing or accrediting professional dog walkers instead of using a blanket limit.

Enforcement came up repeatedly. Several questioned how a numerical limit would be monitored, and whether it would be ignored without visible enforcement, fines or warnings. Some felt the proposal was overcomplicated or a poor use of council resources, preferring simpler rules such as dogs allowed, banned, or seasonally restricted.

There were mixed views on professional dog walkers. Some saw them as generally responsible and providing an essential service, and worried the rule unfairly targeted their livelihoods or dog owners who rely on them. Others felt commercial walkers often handle too many dogs, use public spaces to run a business, and contribute to mess and loss of control.

Another recurring point was scope. Quite a few wanted any limit extended city-wide or to more parks and wildlife areas, while others wanted outright dog bans in some locations, especially sports pitches, children's areas, and sensitive nature sites. Specific places people asked to include included Mill Road Cemetery, Romsey Rec, Logan's Meadow, Trumpington Meadows, Paradise, Coe Fen, Jesus Green and Midsummer Common. A few, however, questioned applying the same rule to very different spaces such as Coldham's Common.

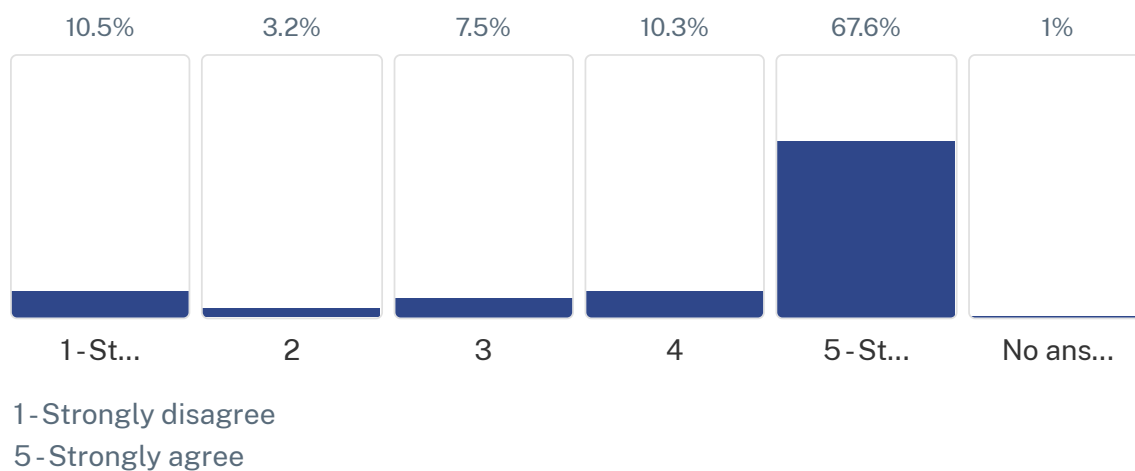
Overall, the main messages were: support for some action, strong pressure to reduce the proposed limit below four, and frequent calls for a more nuanced approach based on control, dog type and enforceability rather than a single blanket number.

Means to collect and dispose of dog faeces



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the new proposal that authorised officers could request that the person in charge of dogs produce to them a suitable means to collect and dispose of dog faeces?

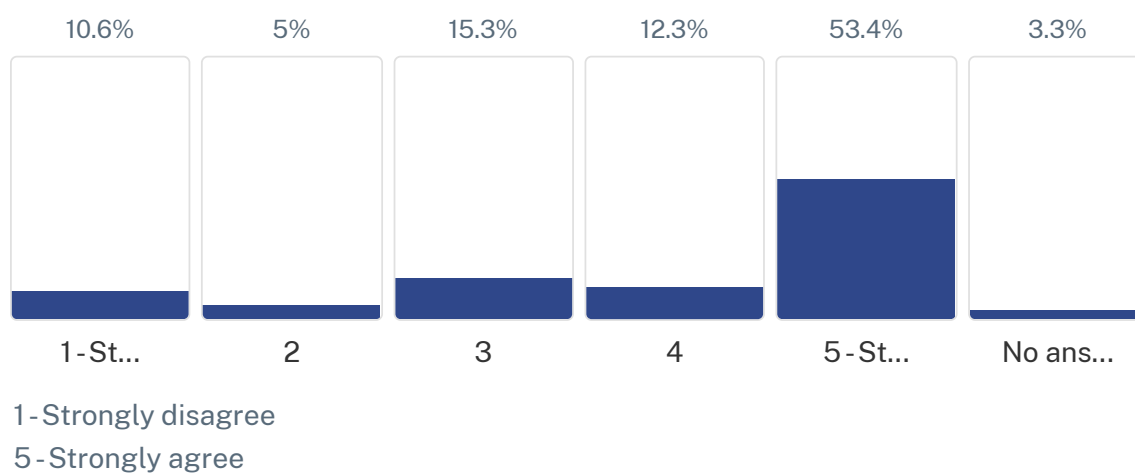
810/818 - Linear scale - optional



Exceptions to the order

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above exception?

791/818 - Linear scale - optional



Do you have any other comments around the above exception? Or any other exceptions that should be included in the order?

184/818 - Long answer - optional

Most comments argued that any exception for assistance dogs should be very limited. The strongest and most repeated view was that dog fouling rules should still apply to everyone: respondents repeatedly said dog mess is a public health and hygiene issue regardless of who owns the dog, and owners or handlers should still carry bags and clear it up.

A very common concern was abuse of the term “assistance dog”. Many respondents said the definition is too vague, especially around emotional support, therapy or comfort dogs, and wanted tighter wording, proof, registration, certification, visible identification, or a nationally recognised standard for genuine working assistance dogs. Several said exemptions should apply only to clearly trained guide dogs, hearing dogs, or other officially recognised assistance dogs, not self-declared support animals.

Another frequent point was that assistance dogs are usually on lead anyway, so many respondents did not see the case for exempting them from lead requirements. A common compromise view was: allow access to restricted areas where needed for disabled people, but still require the dog to be under control, usually on a lead, and subject to fouling rules.

Many respondents said any exception should depend on the handler’s disability and whether it genuinely makes compliance impossible or unreasonable. Blind people were the group most often mentioned as a possible case for exemption; others said many disabled handlers are perfectly capable of complying, so exceptions should be case-specific rather than blanket.

There was also a smaller but noticeable group strongly supporting broad exemptions for assistance dogs, mainly on accessibility and anti-discrimination grounds, saying people who rely on them must be able to access public spaces fairly.

Other recurring comments were about practicality and enforcement: concerns about over-policing, inconsistent or discriminatory enforcement, and doubts about checking whether someone has bags. Several also asked for more bins, emptied more often, and in some cases biodegradable bags or better disposal arrangements.

Additional information

Do you have any other comments about the public spaces protection order for dog control?

302/818 - Long answer - optional



English

Enforcement was the strongest theme. Many respondents said any PSPO will only work if rules are actually enforced, with more patrols, dog wardens/officers, visible penalties and repeat-offender fines. Several said current rules are widely ignored and that they rarely see any enforcement at all.

A large number also focused on uncontrolled dogs: dogs off lead approaching or jumping at people, frightening children, attacking other dogs, chasing wildlife or livestock, and causing problems for runners and cyclists. Many wanted stricter lead requirements, often in all public spaces or at least in busy parks, commons, paths, play areas and near water/play facilities. Jesus Green, Midsummer Common, Lammas Land, Cherry Hinton Hall and Parker's Piece were mentioned repeatedly.

Dog fouling was another major topic. Respondents complained about poo on pavements, parks and sports grounds, and about tied poo bags being left behind or hung in trees. A common practical request was for more bins, replacement of removed bins, more frequent emptying, and in some cases free poo bags near bins.

There was a clear split over whether restrictions should be tightened. One group wanted much stronger controls, more dog-free spaces, more leads-only areas, tougher fines, licensing/registration, and greater priority for children, non-dog owners and wildlife. Some said all dogs should be on leads except in designated enclosed dog areas.

The other large group argued the proposals are disproportionate, anti-dog or overly bureaucratic, and punish responsible owners for the behaviour of a minority. They stressed dogs need accessible off-lead exercise for welfare, socialisation and owners' mental health, and asked for more designated off-lead or fenced dog areas instead of blanket restrictions.

Mill Road Cemetery drew especially strong and divided comment. Supporters of tighter controls cited children being scared and wildlife protection. Opponents repeatedly said the evidence for bird-related restrictions there is weak, that dogs should remain off lead, and that dog walkers help deter antisocial behaviour, drug use and human fouling in the cemetery.

Many objected specifically to officers being able to ask people to show they are carrying poo bags. This was often described as heavy-handed, pointless, overreach or a poor use of resources; several preferred fines for actual fouling rather than "stop and produce" style checks.

Signage and communication came up often too. Respondents wanted clearer, more visible signs, maps, and better explanation of why restrictions are needed, especially around wildlife and seasonal controls.

A recurring secondary theme was that other problems in public spaces deserve more attention and resources, especially drugs, antisocial behaviour, litter, human fouling and dangerous cycling/mopeds. Some argued these are more serious than dog issues, or that dog walkers actually help make spaces safer.

About you



English

Do you own a dog/s?

747/818 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional

No 51% (417 choices)



Yes 40.3% (330 choices)



No answer 8.7% (71 choices)



Are you a professional dog walker?

731/818 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional

No 88.4% (723 choices)



No answer 10.6% (87 choices)



Yes 1% (8 choices)



Demographic data

Respondents are invited to share some details about themselves as part of the registration process on our online engagement platform. This helps us better understand how representative the responses are of the people who live and work in Cambridge.

To ensure that the survey is accessible to as many people as possible, we do not make it compulsory to provide this data. The online engagement platform is continually working to improve how it presents this data.



English

Age

0-9



10-19



20-29

1%



30-39

9%



40-49

8%



50-59

12%



60-69

11%



70-79

7%



80-89

2%



90+



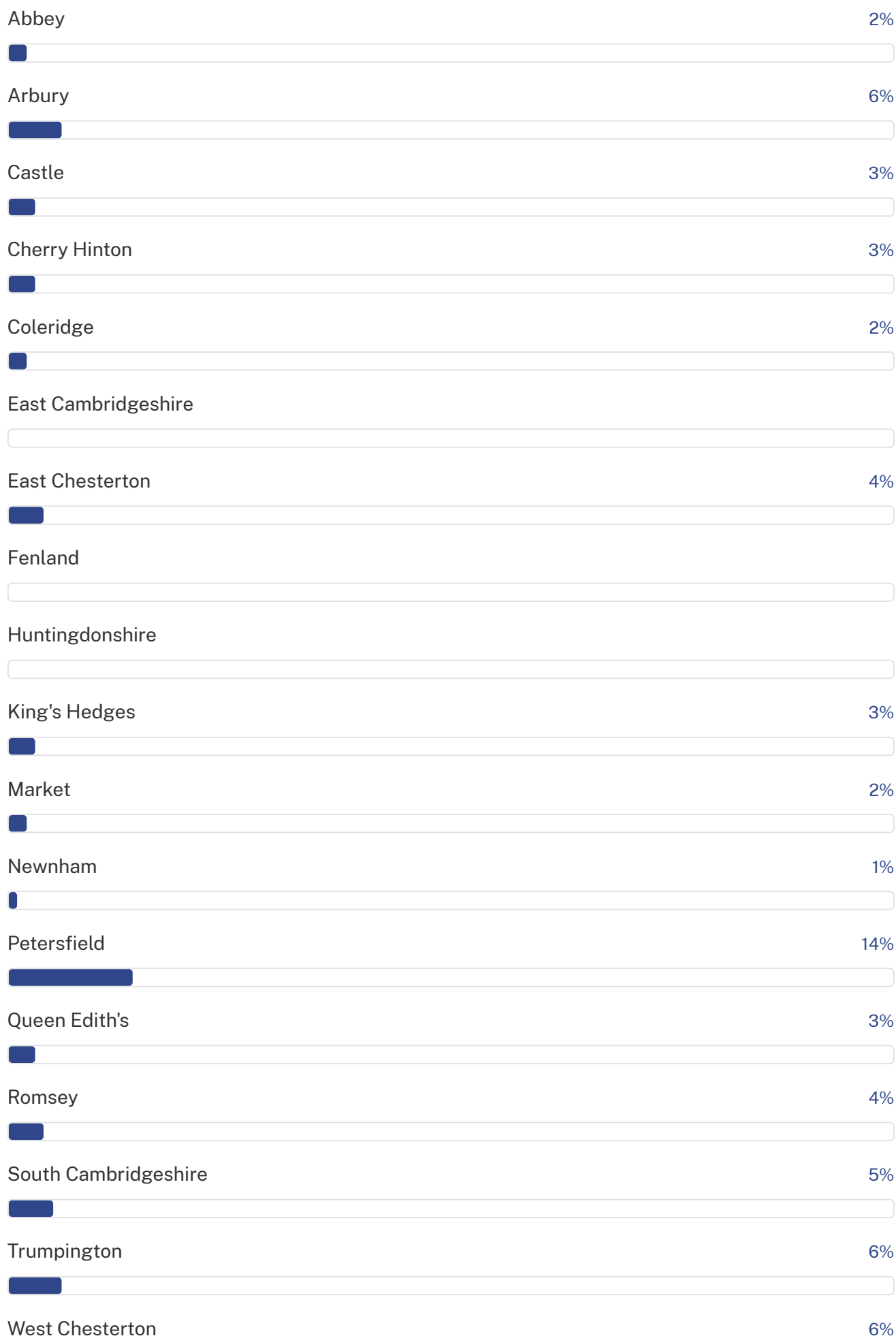
Unknown

50%



English

Place of residence



English

Somewhere else 1%



Unknown 35%



Which of the following describes how you think of yourself? (please select one response from the following)

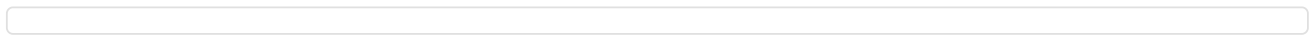
Male 28%



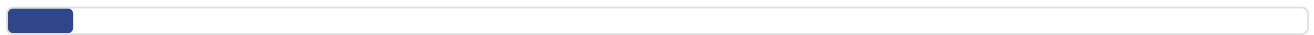
Female 36%



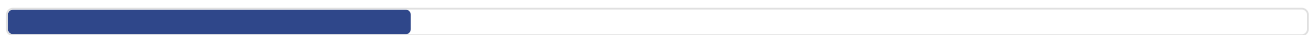
In another way



Prefer not to say 5%



Unknown 31%



English