# Rising dog control incidents spark concern among Welsh MPs and charities



In recent years, incidents involving dog control have reportedly increased across Wales, prompting serious concerns from local MPs and animal welfare organisations. Ruth Jones, the Member of Parliament for Newport West and Islwyn, has highlighted this troubling trend after reviewing data obtained via Freedom of Information (FOI) requests submitted to police forces throughout the country. The findings reveal discrepancies in the data collection process and indicate a rising number of incidents, although the statistics vary significantly from one police force to another.

The Dogs Trust, an animal welfare charity, emphasised the challenges posed by the inconsistency in data, noting that some figures begin from different starting years, making long-term analysis difficult. This lack of uniformity in reporting impediments thorough investigations into the rise in dog-related incidents. The charity is advocating for a comprehensive review of the Dangerous Dogs Act, legislation introduced in 1991 that bans the ownership of specified breeds. The XL Bully breed was recently added to this list in 2023, following a spate of distressing incidents, including the tragic death of ten-year-old Jack Lis in Caerphilly.

One impactful incident brought to light by Jones involved a local resident, Giles Lewis, who reported a severe attack on his dog, Yuki, a Pomeranian Japanese Spitz, while on Risca Road in Newport. Yuki sustained a significant injury that resulted in a veterinary bill nearing £20,000 for her owners. Commenting on the incident, Lewis reached out to Ruth Jones, underlining the personal toll of these attacks.

In her correspondence with the UK Government, Jones asserted that the existing system for managing dog control is inadequate, stating that it "too often fails innocent people and pets." She sought historical data from Welsh police forces regarding incidents of dangerously out-of-control dogs in an effort to gain clearer insights into the scale and nature of the issue. Gwent Police provided data only from 2018, indicating that incidents have been on the rise throughout the last six years. Meanwhile, Dyfed Powys Police did not release comparable statistics, citing difficulties in retrieving information and suggesting it would require extensive resources to delve into their records.

Ruth Jones remarked, "These numbers confirm what sadly many people in Wales have already experienced. Every figure relates to an avoidable incident where a person or pet has suffered trauma, injury, or even lost their life." She called for more comprehensive data to facilitate actionable change in addressing dog control issues, insisting that current records hinder the ability to understand when, where, and how incidents occur.

A spokesperson from Dogs Trust echoed the concerns presented by Jones, affirming the necessity for decisive actions to prevent future incidents and enhance public safety. Gwent Police's Chief Inspector Shaun Conway acknowledged the growing number of reports regarding dogs acting out of control resulting in injury, suggesting that heightened awareness might lead to increased reports being filed.

Although South Wales Police and Dyfed Powys Police opted not to provide further commentary on the matter, the rising trend of dog attacks combined with inconsistent reporting practices underlines a pressing need for a review and potential overhaul of existing regulations pertaining to dog ownership and control in Wales.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.oakwoodsolicitors.co.uk/news/dog-attacks-up-21-in-england-and-wales-figures-show/> - This article supports the claim of a rise in dog attacks across England and Wales, highlighting a 21% increase and the addition of the XL Bully breed to the banned list under the Dangerous Dogs Act.
* <https://www.statista.com/statistics/297447/dog-bite-victims-occurances-in-england/> - Statista's statistics show an increase in dog attacks over the years, corroborating the general trend of rising incidents involving out-of-control dogs in England and Wales.
* <https://www.vettimes.com/news/vets/opinion/call-to-action-following-increase-in-dog-attacks> - Vet Times reports on a significant increase in dog-related hospital admissions, particularly in Wales, underscoring the need for improved legislation and enforcement to address these incidents effectively.
* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/dangerous-dogs> - Although not explicitly mentioned, government guidelines on dangerous dogs support the addition of the XL Bully breed to the list of banned breeds and emphasize the importance of responsible dog ownership.
* <https://www.dogstrust.org.uk/> - The Dogs Trust website provides information on their advocacy for responsible dog ownership and better legislation, aligning with concerns raised by Ruth Jones over the inadequacy of current measures for managing dog control.