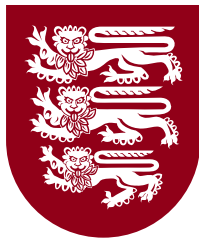


STATES OF JERSEY



Jersey

DRAFT DOGS LAW (JERSEY) AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 202-

**Lodged au Greffe on 12th February 2026
by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel
Earliest date for debate: 14th July 2026**

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

This Proposition has been lodged as part of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel's Animal Welfare & Control Review.

Background

In July 2025, the Panel received correspondence from a local farmer raising concerns about the prevalence of livestock worrying¹. This was submitted in the context of the Government's consultation on the Draft Animal Welfare (Jersey) Law and expressed the view that livestock worrying was not adequately addressed within that draft. They also asked that livestock worrying form part of the forthcoming amendments to the [Dogs \(Jersey\) Law 1961](#) being developed by the Comité des Connétables.

On 19th August 2025 the Comité lodged the Draft Dogs Law (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 202- ([P.63/2025](#)). During its review of P.63/2025, the Panel wrote to the Minister for the Environment to seek clarification regarding his awareness of livestock-worrying concerns and to ascertain whether he considered this issue to fall between the existing legislative provisions of the [Animal Welfare \(Jersey\) Law 2004](#) and the Dogs (Jersey) Law 1961.²

In the Minister's absence, the Assistant Minister for the Environment advised that the Environment Department was aware of the concerns raised, and that P.63/2025 included an amendment to Article 9 which was intended to address the identified gaps by "strengthening the definition of agricultural land".³

However, in its first set of Comments to P.63/2025 ([P.63/2025.Com.](#)) the Panel found that the proposed amendment did not address the concerns raised by stakeholders. Instead, the amendment widened the offence of livestock worrying to include damage to agricultural land that posed a hazard to the health of livestock.

Following this, the Comité des Connétables lodged an amendment to P.63/2025 ([P.63/2025.Amd.](#)) which removed the proposed change to Article 9. In its accompanying Report, the Comité explained that the amendment had been withdrawn so that the concerns relating to livestock worrying could "be considered more fully and addressed separately" and that discussions were "already being held with relevant stakeholders."

While the Panel recognised the importance of addressing the concerns raised, the urgency of introducing provisions relating to dangerous dogs meant that it felt unable to propose amendments to P.63/2025 at that time. The Panel therefore agreed that work on issues of livestock worrying should form as part of its review of the forthcoming Draft Animal Welfare (Jersey) Law.

Evidence

The Draft Animal Welfare (Jersey) Law 202- ([P.97/2025](#)) was lodged on 29th October 2025 and the Panel launched its Animal Welfare & Control Review on 4th December 2025.

The Panel wrote to a number of key stakeholders to request written submissions to its Review. Notably, submissions received from the Jersey Farmers' Union,⁴ the Conservation Grazing

¹ The Dogs (Jersey) Law 1961 defines "worrying livestock" to mean: "attacking livestock, or chasing livestock in such a way as may reasonably be expected to cause injury or suffering to the livestock or in the case of females, abortion, or loss of or diminution in their produce."

² [States Assembly | Letter - Draft Dogs Law \(Jersey\) Amendment Regulations 202- 22 September 2025](#)

³ [2025-09-26-Response-Draft-Dogs-Law-\(Jersey\)-Amendment-Regulations-202-and-Amendments-to-Animal-Welfare-\(Jersey\)-Law-2004.pdf](#)

⁴ [2026.01.12 Written Submission, Jersey Farmers' Union](#)

Group⁵ and the Reserve Farm⁶ consistently argued that the Dogs Law and Animal Welfare Law do not adequately protect livestock from being chased or attacked by dogs.

The submissions highlighted a long-term and increasing trend in incidents, particularly affecting sheep involved in conservation grazing. They advised that dogs are frequently off lead in areas where livestock are grazing and that dog-owners are either unaware of or in some cases indifferent to, the impact that worrying has on livestock.

Crucially, they emphasised that existing legislation is difficult to enforce and described livestock worrying as “the largest single welfare concern.” Across submissions, the clarity and enforceability of the Dogs Law and the limited tools it provides to prevent incidents occurring was identified as the most urgent issue requiring reform.

Public Hearing

In light of concerns around enforceability, the Panel held a Public Hearing with the States of Jersey Police and the Comité des Chefs de Police on 29th January 2026 to understand how the provisions on livestock worrying are enforced in practice.

The Comité des Chef de Police commented that “if it is just worrying... We may just come to the point of giving a word of advice, whereas “if a sheep has or an abortion or damage to the sheep” this “takes it over the prosecution threshold... and we would look to then send it to the court to deal with it”.⁷

The States of Jersey Police confirmed that livestock worrying “is quite a hard investigation” and that prosecution rates are “very low”.⁸ Both agencies highlighted the difficulty of securing the level of evidence required under the current law, particularly in cases where incidents are unwitnessed.

During the hearing the Panel also learnt that the reporting statistics held by the States of Jersey Police may not include incidents that have been responded to by the Honorary Police Force unless they result in a Parish Hall Inquiry.⁹ The Panel are concerned that there has been a vast level of under-reporting precisely due to the difficulties of livestock-worrying prosecution expressed by stakeholders.

Proposed Amendment

To follow up on the Comité’s previous commitment to reviewing the livestock worrying provisions within the Dogs Law, the Panel sought an update and received a response on 27th January 2026. The Comité advised only that the work was “ongoing” and that the Panel would be updated “in due course”, with no further detail provided.¹⁰

Given the consistent concerns raised by stakeholders, the high threshold for prosecution, and the lack of progress made by the Comité des Connetables on its own review, the Panel believes that strengthening the provisions on livestock worrying is necessary to protect animal welfare.

While worrying livestock is already an offence, stakeholders and enforcement agencies have advised the Panel that this statutory threshold is high and very difficult to meet in practice.

The Dogs Law also contains no explicit duty on a dog owner to keep a dog on a lead or under control in areas where livestock are present. As a consequence, enforcement action is limited to

⁵ [2026.01.2026 Written Submission, Conservation Grazing Group](#)

⁶ [2026.01.16 Written Submission, Aaron Le Couteur](#)

⁷ [Transcript, Animal Welfare & Control Review, SoJP and Comite des Chef de Police](#), pg. 18

⁸ [Transcript, Animal Welfare & Control Review, SoJP and Comite des Chef de Police](#), pg. 18

⁹ [Transcript, Animal Welfare & Control Review, SoJP and Comite des Chef de Police](#), pg. 18

¹⁰ [2026.01.27 Letter, Comite des Connetable](#)

circumstances in which harm is already likely or has already occurred. The Panel considers that the absence of a preventative offence represents a material gap in the legislative framework.

The amendment therefore widens the existing offence of livestock worrying by providing that a dog is also “worrying livestock” if it is off-lead or otherwise not within 5 metres of the person in charge, on agricultural land where livestock are present. This introduces a clear, statutory requirement for dog owners to maintain close control of their dogs in the presence of livestock.

The amendment also provides exemptions for police dogs, and dogs that are owned by or in the charge of the occupier of the agricultural land, the owner of the livestock or a person authorised by the occupier of the agricultural land or owner of the livestock.

The creation of this preventative element is intended to reduce the risk of harm to livestock, improve the responsible control of dogs and provide enforcement agencies with a more practical and effective mechanism for intervention. The proposed approach also aligns with comparable provisions in the United Kingdom.¹¹

The amendment also moves the definitions of “livestock worrying” and “agricultural land” from Article 1 – Interpretation to Article 9 – Livestock worrying to improve the clarity of the legislation, as those terms apply only to Article 9.

Interaction with the Policing of Parks Regulations 2005

The Panel notes that public parks listed under Parts 3 and 4 of the [Policing of Parks \(Jersey\) Regulations 2005](#) permit dogs to be off-lead. This amendment does not alter those permissions. However, where any public park is being used for livestock, under the proposed amendments, dog owners must keep their dogs on a lead or within 5 metres of them. This ensures that off-lead access in public parks continues as normal unless livestock are present, in which case the preventative livestock-worrying provisions apply.

Financial and staffing implications

There are no direct financial implications that arise from this proposition. The Panel anticipate the amended Dogs Law may increase the number of incidents of livestock worrying and thus require a small increase to the work of the Honorary Police and States of Jersey Police.

Children’s Rights Impact Assessment

It is considered that this proposition (amendment) has no direct or indirect impact on children and that the duty to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not arise. Accordingly, a Children's Rights Impact Assessment is not required under the [Children \(Convention Rights\) \(Jersey\) Law 2022](#).

Re-issue Note

This proposition has been re-issued to revise the text in the second paragraph on page 3, and the second and third paragraphs on page 4 in the report. On page 7, in the substituted Article 9(5)(c), the word “agricultural” has been added before the word “land”.

¹¹ [Dogs \(Protection of Livestock\) Act 1953](#), Article 1(2)(c)

EXPLANATORY NOTE

These Regulations, if passed, will amend the provisions relating to worrying livestock in Article 9 of the Dogs (Jersey) Law 1961. The definitions of agricultural land and worrying livestock are moved from Article 1 to Article 9. The meaning of worrying is expanded to include a dog that is not on a lead or within 5 metres and under the control of the person in charge of it and is on agricultural land on which there is livestock. But this does not include a dog that is owned by or in the charge of the occupier of the land, the owner of the livestock or a person authorised by one of those people, or a dog being used by a police officer.

The Regulations come into force 7 days after they are made.



Jersey

DRAFT DOGS LAW (JERSEY) AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 202-

Made [date to be inserted]

Coming into force [date to be inserted]

THE STATES make these Regulations under Article 13C of the [Dogs \(Jersey\) Law 1961](#) –

1 [Dogs \(Jersey\) Law 1961](#) amended

These Regulations amend the [Dogs \(Jersey\) Law 1961](#).

2 **Article 1 (interpretation) amended**

In Article 1, the definitions “agricultural land” and “worrying livestock” are deleted.

3 **Article 9 substituted**

For Article 9 there is substituted –

9 **Worrying of livestock**

- (1) If a dog worries livestock on agricultural land, the owner of the dog commits an offence and if the dog is in the charge of a person other than the owner, that person also commits an offence.
- (2) A person does not commit an offence if at the material time the livestock are trespassing on the agricultural land in question and the dog is owned by, or in the charge of, the occupier of that agricultural land or a person authorised by the occupier, except in a case where that person caused the dog to worry the livestock.
- (3) The owner of a dog does not commit an offence under this Article if they show to the satisfaction of the court that at the time when the dog worried the livestock it was in the charge of another person whom the owner reasonably believed to be a fit and proper person to be in charge of the dog.
- (4) If a dog is found on any land, a police officer may seize the dog and detain it until the owner has claimed it and has paid all expenses incurred by reason of its seizure and detention if –

- (a) the police officer has reasonable cause to believe that the dog has been worrying livestock on the land;
- (b) the land appears to the police officer to be agricultural land; and
- (c) no person is present who admits to being the owner of the dog or in charge of it.

(5) For the purposes of this Article a dog is worrying livestock if –

- (a) it is attacking livestock;
- (b) it is chasing livestock in a way that may reasonably be expected to cause –
 - (i) injury or suffering to the livestock; or
 - (ii) in the case of female livestock, abortion, or loss of or diminution in their produce; or
- (c) it is on agricultural land on which there is livestock and the dog is not –
 - (i) on a lead; or
 - (ii) within 5 metres and under the control of the person in charge of it.

(6) Paragraph (5)(c) does not apply to the following –

- (a) a dog that is owned by or in the charge of –
 - (i) the occupier of the land;
 - (ii) the owner of the livestock; or
 - (iii) a person authorised by the occupier of the land or the owner of the livestock;
- (b) a dog that is being used by a police officer.

(7) In this Article, “agricultural land” means land used –

- (a) as arable or meadow land or for the grazing of livestock;
- (b) for the purposes of keeping poultry or pigs; or
- (c) for market gardening, or as allotments, nursery grounds or orchards.

4 Citation and commencement

These Regulations may be cited as the Dogs Law (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 202- and come into force 7 days after they are made.