

# Dog owners bite back at council

THURSDAY, 28 AUGUST 2008



NORTHSIDE dog owners living in Dublin City Council homes will take to the streets in the coming weeks to voice their opposition to the clampdown on dog ownership.

The protest will take place on September 4 outside the council's head office. Under new council rules, which will be implemented on September 30, council tenants who own certain dogs must have them neutered or spayed and micro chipped before September 30.

The new restrictions have sparked outrage among dog-lovers across the city. Finglas man Paul Doyle is just one of hundreds of tenants who will be affected

the move.

"I got my pit-bull, Zena, the week after my mother died back in January," he told Northside People.

"I was in a very bad way after my mam passed away. I didn't know what to do with myself so a friend gave me Zena to keep me distracted.

"She means everything to me now; she's my best friend, she goes everywhere with me and wouldn't hurt a fly."

Paul's pit-bull is one of 10 breeds the council will clamp down on in the coming weeks.

German Shepherds, Bull Mastiffs and Japanese Tosas are among the other dog breeds on the list. The breeds on the list are dogs were originally bred as fighting or hunting animals and a number of attacks on small children and adults have been reported in urban areas.

Some owners believe the new rules are the start of an effort to phase the dogs out.

"I know that there are people out there who don't practice responsible dog ownership," Paul said.

"I know some people use their dogs for fighting but I'm not one of them so why should we all be tarred with the same brush?"

He added: "Why should one rule apply to me in relation to my dog and another apply to somebody who owns their house?"

"The council is discriminating against me just because of the breed of my dog. I'm being treated like second class citizen."

Paul insists that his pit-bull does not pose a danger to anyone.

"If you wanted to rob my house she'd help you rather than attack you," he said.

"The council can't introduce measures for everyone to abide by just because of problems with certain individuals."

Next week's protest has been organised by the Deed NOT Breed Dublin group, which is made up of volunteers and dog lovers alike who are calling on the council to reverse the restrictions.

According to Lillian Colgan, founder of the group, council tenants are being treated unfairly.

"We are being labelled as irresponsible owners just because we own a certain breed of dog," she told Northside People.

"We are being discriminated against just because we don't own our own houses."

She added: "The council is trying to intimidate and bully us."

A senior executive officer with the council's housing and residential services department explained the consequences for those who fail to comply with the new plans.

"We acknowledge that a number of our tenants are responsible dog owners and have built up a relationship with one of these breeds, and would understandably be upset if they had to give their dog away or have it put down," he explained.

"We are happy to allow them to keep their dogs provided they agree to have them micro-chipped and neutered or spayed.

"Where tenants persist in illegally keeping one of the 10 restricted breeds of dog in their home, the council will consider such action to be in breach of tenancy, will issue a notice to quit, and this could ultimately lead to eviction."

[Close Window](#)