

ATLAS (Animal Threat Level Assessment System) Merseyside L & CH postcodes 12 month Trial Report (July 2017 to July 2018 On dangerous dog mapping for enforcing authorities.)



The impetus to develop ATLAS (Animal Threat Level Assessment System)

In April 2017 whilst attending MDSP (Merseyside Dog Safety Partnership) meeting where we (CWU) were challenged by a dog warden from St Helens regarding Royal Mail **not** giving her information or involving her in a way that could lead to either community improvement notices or prosecutions.

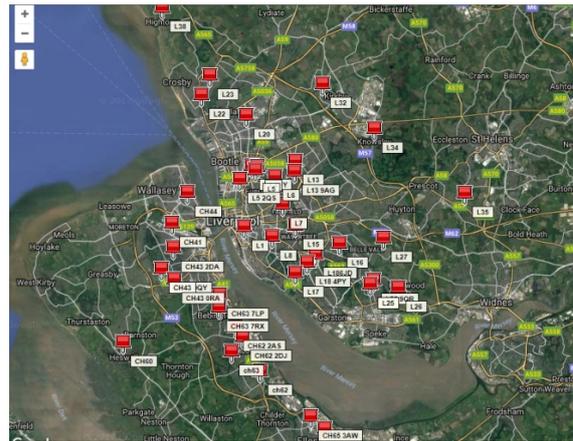
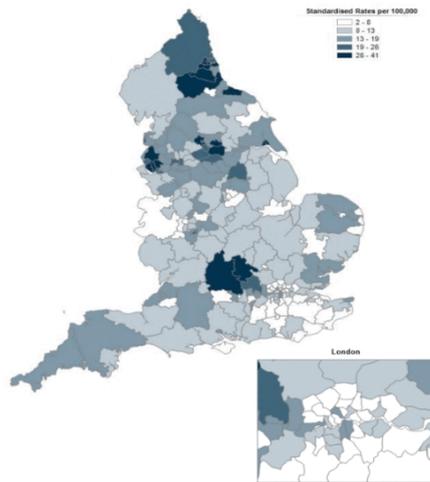
Throughout our previous partnership work with Merseyside Police it was decided a collaborative 'innovative' approach should be encouraged and consultation with other like-minded organisations was warranted.

This was based on the level and likelihood of risk in the Merseyside area and also a chain of very sad local dog attack events. See dog attack Heat map (below) of dog bites in the UK.

The map shows hospital admission rates per 100,000 populations for dog bites and strikes. In May 2015 Merseyside was named the 'dog attack capital of Britain', which further highlighted the need for a collaborative 'innovative' **partnership approach**.

In Merseyside we (CWU) have used the comprehensive level of local survey research to try and evaluate the level of commitment required to combat this serious issue that blights our community.

Our own RMG dog attack map is also detailed overpage.



Before launching the ATLAS trial, we also looked at feedback from frontline RMG staff (over 900) who took part in the 2016 DAW evaluation survey, this showed **many staff wanting earlier interventions**.

A typical snapshot example of DAW 2016 feedback is detailed below

<p>The AVOID message is credible because it has been put together in consultation with dog behaviour specialists?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree</p>
<p>The AVOID message should be used for other hazards and not just dogs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partly Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Partly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree</p>
<p><u>How could the DAW AVOID campaign be improved?</u></p> <p>Common Sense really – although same material in different format. The message is very good the delivery of the message is what really matters though.</p> <p>We could Really do with more intervention support from dog wardens or local police, Our managers never contact them, even after we are advising them of a dog that's becoming a real threat.</p>	<p><u>What did you not like about the campaign?</u></p> <p>Managers not delivering the message with any empathy.</p> <p>Total amount of Survey's returned between August</p>

ACTIONS TO BE COMPLETED BY	MONITOR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACTIONS COMPLETED	02/09/2014
<input type="checkbox"/> SEND LETTER		<input type="checkbox"/> CUSTOMER VISIT	
<input type="checkbox"/> SUSPEND MAIL		<input type="checkbox"/> CONTACT POLICE / DOG WARDEN	

It was our suggestion (after speaking with members of the MDSP and RMG/CWU dog safety joint working group) that we needed an intervention tool that can be shared **earlier** (before attack) with enforcing authorities. The authorities then have the evidence and of course the statutory power to intervene on our behalf when acting in the best interests of the community.

What ATLAS allows for is an earlier intervention when we have pre bite &

near bite events. These are in fact still potential 'section 3' offences and should be reported to police teams and local enforcing agencies.

It can also be saved and revisited should an attack occur and necessary external intervention was not forthcoming. Postal workers are part of the community and therefore community and public health risks should be raised to allow for any of the many protection systems that exist. These benefit not just the community but also postal workers once implemented. ATLAS has been fully shared via MDSP meetings and feedback was positive.

We were not expecting a miracle cure and ATLAS is not presented as such. In fact a recent report via a Freedom of Information request by the BBC generally suggests the recent Powers introduced to curb dog attacks are not being used by many authorities in the UK.
(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-40683116>)

Some 77% of the 311 councils in England, Scotland and Wales that responded had not issued any Community Protection Notices (CPN), which demand owners take steps to prevent attacks.

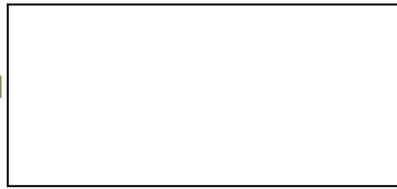
ATLAS would be best described as a **dangerous** dog hazard mapping system and we have actually proved it is **very easy to introduce**.

It was decided that during our trial, that only the dangerous dogs with risk levels causing us **serious concern** would be included on this system.

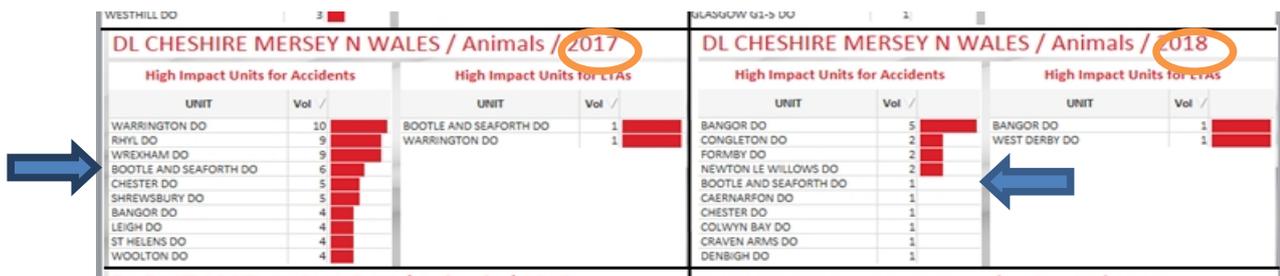
We believed (before the trial) that we would be able to confidently estimate numbers would be around 15-30 reports per year in Merseyside, this was further analysed during the first 3 months of the ATLAS trial. This forecast proved **very accurate**.

COUNCILS INVOLVED

- KNOWSLEY
- SEFTON
- WIRRAL
- CHESHIRE WEST
- LIVERPOOL



It is fair to say we have seen different types of Intervention and responses from the different councils in our area. Yet the pertinent point is that we have seen responses and ultimately different types of interventions by enforcing authorities. Dialogue with councils & Merseyside Police materialised simply because of ATLAS. We have had several conversations with Wirral CC, Knowsley CC and Sefton CC who have all been particularly keen to engage with us.



The single aim and focus has always been to utilise every tool available to tackle irresponsible dog ownership, so we are committed to collaborative working techniques. ATLAS is an example of that.

We are therefore keen to share the results of our trial as widely as possible and also wish to continue using ATLAS within the Greater Merseyside area.

Details of ATLAS reports submitted during this trial:

Breed	Risk Level	Intervention	Council
Sharpie	15-16	yes	KNOWSLEY
Large black mongrel	15-16	yes	CHESHIRE
Grey cross breed	6 - 12	yes	SEFTON
Large bull type		yes	SEFTON
Mastiff type	15-16	yes	SEFTON
Terrier type breed	6 - 12	yes	SEFTON
Husky type breed		yes	SEFTON
Greyhound	15-16	no	Liverpool
Mongrel	6 -12	yes	KNOWSLEY
Pit-bull type breed	15-16	yes	SEFTON
Mongrel	6 -12	yes	WIRRAL
Staff terrier	6 -12	yes	WIRRAL
Husky/Malamute type	15-16	no	Liverpool
Bull type breed	15-16	yes	SEFTON
Staff terrier	15-16	yes	WIRRAL
Rottweiler	15-16	yes	WIRRAL
Various breeds	6 -12	no	Liverpool
Husky	6 -12	no	Liverpool
Boxer	6 -12	yes	SEFTON
German Shepherd	15-16	yes	WIRRAL
Mongrel	6 -12	yes	SEFTON
Dachshund	15-16	yes	WIRRAL
Pit bull type breed	6 -12	yes	WIRRAL
Large Collie	6-12	yes	POLICE
2 cross breeds	6 -12	yes	SEFTON

Feedback from partnership

Wirral Council ATLAS Report feedback

*Hazel Millington,
Technical Officer,
Environmental Health
18th July 2018*

On Wirral a multi-agency approach between the CWU and Environmental Health has been introduced in an attempt to reduce dog incidents. Atlas reports, since mid-April 2018, are now forwarded to Environmental Health by the Royal Mail. They are in an easy to understand format and provide the initial information required to instigate an early intervention procedure. The process is still being reviewed and developed our feedback has led to forms being adapted to include further information to assist officers prior to them visiting an address.

To date 7 reports have been received and actioned. Dog owners who have been visited by an officer have been advised with regards to current legislation and how this affects them and their dogs, and also what their responsibilities are. All dog owners have been open to suggestions and advice to ensure the safety of people visiting their property to deliver items and also the safety of their pet dog.

This joint working and sharing of information is permitting Wirral Council to respond to complaints, highlighting issues which were previously unknown, and with this early intervention has prevented incidents reoccurring and escalating.

We have now proved that ATLAS encourages a multi-agency partnership approach. ATLAS also benefits local communities by providing information which then allows enforcing agents to give advice and support to dog owners about the likes of dog welfare, dog micro chipping, dog behaviour and the current law

ATLAS also provides vital information for police in working with other organisations – providing documentary evidence that's sufficiently robust to be presented as evidence in Court if need be.

Jamie Mc Govern - Area Safety Rep
Mark Evans - Branch Union Safety Rep.