

1. Forget politics and religion. There is nothing like dogs to cause divisions in communities. And the biggest problem with dogs is dog poo.
2. There is nothing appealing about the sight or smell of dog poo, especially if you step in it or get it on your clothes. There are some illnesses associated with it but it is much more a social nuisance than a health problem. Even dog owners have no love of dog poo and see it much in the same light as a parent might view dirty nappies.
3. Individuals are often prejudiced in their views about dogs. They just don't appeal to some people, maybe they were born that way. Others may have had a bad experience. This group sometimes have an exaggerated impression about the negative aspects of dog behaviour and they are not usually dog owners.
4. Many people like dogs even if they are not dog owners. They will engage with dog walkers, take an interest in their dog and will often ask if its okay to pet or stroke your dog. In this respect dogs are great ice-breakers
5. But policies cannot be based on preconceived feelings, negative or positive. It is necessary to stand back and have a cold, hard look at the evidence relating to dogs as pets.
6. There are several laws relating to dog ownership. Dog fouling laws are widely known but not always observed. They are difficult to enforce as evidence to implicate a particular dog is difficult to produce.
7. Dangerous dogs are more visible and laws relating to them are enforced. The occurrence is small but the consequences can be catastrophic so there is often wide publicity.
8. Public Spaces Protection Orders were created to control behaviour in public places but have become a tool to control dog walking activity. There are several controls ranging from a requirement to pick up to banning of dogs. The PSPO has replaced Dog Control Orders.
9. Dog owners make up a sizeable minority with almost a quarter of households owning a dog, making a total of 9 million dogs in the UK. Dog walking is a vital aspect of dog ownership. Dog walkers will therefore have a prominent place in our neighbourhoods.
10. A word about health risks. The main organism associated with dogs is *Toxocara Canis*. It is a notifiable disease so there are accurate records of its incidence. It is incredibly uncommon and, when it does occur, it is most likely to cause a mild illness with no lasting effects. You are 10 times more likely to be struck by lightning and 40 times more likely to become a lottery millionaire than contract Toxocariasis.

11. Dogs are good for you. They keep you fit and active and make you less prone to stress and depression. They reduce your chances of developing serious illnesses. Their companionship can be comforting for single people, especially in retirement.
12. Dog walkers are more likely to be out and about on foot in your neighbourhood. They are likely to be acquainted with many people in the neighbourhood, especially other dog owners and others pedestrians. Strangers can become familiar faces, nodding acquaintances and even friends. These links are useful in promoting strong communities. Their presence also acts as a deterrent to criminals and vandals. Some areas have formalised this function with dog walkers adopting the role of community monitors with formal training in how to recognise and report suspicious activity. This is something that could tack onto our emerging Neighbourhood Watch.
13. Not all dog owners are responsible. There is occasional evidence of dog mess. Worse still, we sometimes see bagged poo jettisoned into hedges. We need a parish-wide program to promote responsible dog ownership. This could be through a poster or leaflet campaign, naming and shaming offenders or offering rewards to anyone who photographs an offender. The Green Dog Walkers scheme was piloted in Scotland. It involves recruiting responsible owners to act as monitors and advisors to other owners. Dog owners have very limited choice of routes. The lanes are narrow and traffic is often heavy and fast. We have 2 public footpaths only. The recreation field is accessible to Hatt residents, is conveniently divided into sports area and car park and has a 4 acre section that is unused. Opening the car park and unused field for dog walkers would create a much needed amenity for the dog walking public and their presence on the site will deter antisocial behaviour and vandalism.
14. A radical change in policy should not be imposed without consulting all stakeholders. This would ensure that everyone knows about the proposed change in policy and can have their say.
15. Managing change is rarely straightforward. A trial period would allow time for any unforeseen issues to emerge and be overcome. Say 3 months.
16. Formalising our decision would require the imposition of a PSPO to ensure that dogs were banned from the recreation and sports area, that they are kept on leads in the car-park area and that they have unrestricted access to the unused field. The legal requirement to remove mess will apply.



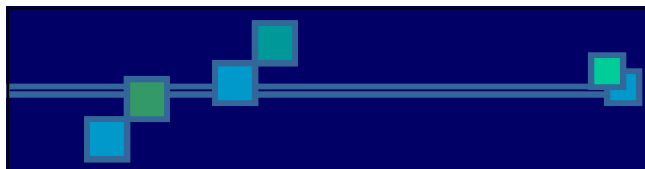
DOGS

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04/10/2017



Nobody likes dog poo.

- It looks terrible
- It smells awful
- It can cause health problems
- It is a social nuisance

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Some people don't like dogs

- Previous bad experience
- Genetically predetermined
- Often biased view about extent of dog nuisance
- They don't have dogs

3

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Lots of people like dogs

- Dog owners
- Non dog owners
- They stop in the street to admire dogs
- They ask if it's okay to stroke your dog

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Strip away the emotion

- Any policy must be based on evidence and not prejudice
- Benefits must be weighed against disadvantages
- Policy should aim to promote the benefits and limit the disadvantages

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The Law

- You can be given an on-the-spot fine if you don't clean up after your dog. The amount varies from council to council. It's often £50 and can be as much as £80
- If you refuse to pay the fine, you can be taken to court and fined up to £1,000.

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The Law

- It's against the law to let a dog be dangerously out of control
- In the UK, it's against the law to own certain types of dog

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Public Spaces Protection Orders

- keep your dog on a lead
- put your dog on a lead if told to by a police officer, police community support officer or someone from the council
- stop your dog going to certain places - like farmland or parts of a park
- limit the number of dogs you have with you (this applies to professional dog walkers too)
- clear up after your dog

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Dog ownership

- 24% of households own a dog
- There are approx 9 million pet dogs in the UK

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Relative health risks

- Toxocariasis cases/year in UK 4.5
- People struck by lightning/year 50
- Lottery millionaires/ year 200

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Benefits of dog ownership

- Improved general fitness
- Lower BP
- Lower cholesterol
- Improved mental health
- More rapid recovery from illness
- companionship

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Benefits to community

- Improves social cohesion
- Reduces antisocial behaviour and crime
- "Paws on Patrol"

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The Plan?

- Promote responsible ownership – “Green Dog Walkers”
- Prohibit dogs from using play areas or sports pitches
- Allow dogs on leads on car park by recreation field
- Allow dogs to run free on adjacent field which is currently unused

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Consultation

- Any plan must have popular appeal
- A period of consultation to inform and obtain views

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Trial Period

- If the policy is adopted then there should be a trial period to test adherence to the policy details – bagging and removing etc.

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Making it real

- If the trial period is successful then we will approach Cornwall CC to request a PSPO to limit access to the car park and unused field.
- The policy and details of fines will be posted on a noticeboard at the entrance.

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