



# HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

## DOG WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



Owning a dog brings many pleasures and benefits, including companionship and comfort; the sense of wellbeing provided by a pet helps to decrease loneliness, isolation and depression, but also promotes physical activity. The Parish Council recognises that the majority of dog owners behave responsibly while out walking their dogs, but there is a small minority of owners whose behaviour is irresponsible and, in some instances, criminal.

From the number of complaints received by the Parish Council about dog fouling, there is obviously a community desire to tackle the problem and to improve our streets, public spaces and local environment.

This Strategy sets out what the Parish Council will do to encourage and promote responsible dog ownership; the Parish Council is also committed to tackling the antisocial behaviour of irresponsible dog owners.

### **Blindness in children from dog fouling caused by *Toxocara canis***

Dog owners are legally required to clear up after their dog has fouled in an area of land to which the public have access. Dog faeces can be harmful to people and children are particularly susceptible; an infection called *Toxocara canis*, which is a parasite that lives inside dogs' bodies, can spread from infected animals to humans through contact with animal faeces. Once ingested, the parasites can travel around the body and settle in the soft tissue of the retina of the eye, where damage or even blindness can be caused.

Preventative measures include:

- Worming dogs properly, both as a puppy and as an adult.
- Cleaning up after a dog that has fouled.
- Preventing dogs from licking your hands and face.
- Ensuring hands are washed after playing on grassed areas where dogs are allowed and where dogs or puppies have been handled.
- Keeping control of dogs and preventing fouling on children's play areas and sports pitches.

There is also growing evidence of links between two specific diseases in livestock and the presence of dog faeces on grazing land. *Neosporosis* can cause abortions in cattle and *sarcocystosis* causes neurological disease and death in sheep. For public and animal health reasons, dog walkers should always clean up after their dogs.

### **Code of Conduct for Dog Ownership**

- Pick it up, bag it, bin it. Any bin will do!
- Respect the land and other public space users; do not disturb wildlife and keep your dog close to you so it does not sniff out or flush out nesting birds.
- Ensure your dog keeps to areas where you have right of access and away from livestock; never let it out of your sight because out of control dogs can kill livestock.

## **Aims & Objectives of this Strategy**

The Parish Council has listened to the concerns expressed by local people about dog fouling and the impact it has on the quality of our lives. The primary objective of this Strategy is to protect public health by reducing dog fouling; the Parish Council believes the best way to do this is by encouraging responsible dog ownership as follows:

- To educate dog owners in the principles of responsible dog ownership; there is no excuse for not picking up – most Kirklees Council litter bins (except those in children's play areas) can be used for disposing of bagged up dog waste.
- To raise awareness of the legal responsibilities associated with dog ownership and the dog control orders and dog exclusion areas within Kirklees.
- To reduce the incidence of dog fouling left in public places, by providing information and advice to dog owners to enable and support compliance with the law, e.g. if anyone leaves bags of dog waste on trees, bushes, the base of a lamp post etc. they are committing a littering offence that may also be punished by way of a fixed penalty being issued.
- To discourage straying of dogs and antisocial behaviour of irresponsible dog owners.

## **Parish Council support for Community Empowerment**

Individuals and our communities play an important role in influencing behaviour and the provision of support, advice and assistance to other dog owners, and potentially to those affected by the actions of irresponsible dog owners.

To have a positive impact on our communities, our quality of life and the environment, the Parish Council will support those communities by:

- Providing an annual budget to provide dog waste bags, maintaining a list of where dog waste bag dispensers (normally provided by Kirklees Council) are located, and co-ordinating regular filling of the dispensers by volunteers who are provided with a dispenser key.
- Providing funding for additional dog waste bag dispensers in the community.
- Providing signs, stickers and posters re responsible dog ownership, to attach to lamp posts and dog waste bag dispensers.
- Encouraging vigilance and empowering people to approach others who do not clean up after their dogs in a non-threatening way.
- Providing education and promotion of responsible dog ownership in schools and other activity groups for young people, e.g. Brownies, Cubs, Guides and Scouts.
- Helping to identify businesses and individuals within the community who can provide or assist others in providing products and/or services to reduce dog fouling, e.g. dog waste bags, dog waste dispensers, signage etc.
- Working in partnership with other organisations, e.g. Kirklees Council Dog Wardens and Environmental Protection, local veterinary practices and pet shops, to help raise awareness of the legal responsibilities associated with dog ownership.

## **Useful Contacts:**

- To report a dog waste related offence, please contact Kirklees Dog Wardens on 01484 221000.
- To report a littering offence or to report a full litter bin, contact Kirklees Streetscene on 01484 221000 or by email on [Highways.ROSS@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:Highways.ROSS@kirklees.gov.uk)

Approved by Service Provision Committee – 7 SEPTEMBER 2020