



RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP

Taking on a dog as a pet is a big responsibility for all the family in terms of time and expense. Dogs need suitable exercise, diet, environment and medical care. It is also recommended your dog is insured to both protect against large veterinary bills or any civil claim.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 provides that a person commits an offence if they do not take such steps as are reasonable in all the circumstances, to ensure that the needs of the animal for which they are responsible are met to the extent required by good practice.

An animal's needs include:

- its need for a suitable environment;
- its need for a suitable diet;
- its need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns;
- any need it has to be housed with, or apart from other animals; and
- its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.



Your responsibility to your dog:

- provide your dog with adequate training;
- exercise your dog regularly;
- provide a well balanced diet;
- provide veterinary care, including vaccination;
- undertake regular grooming;
- provide safe accommodation both at home and when travelling; and
- never leave a dog alone in a hot car.

IDENTIFICATION OF YOUR DOG

Collar and ID Tag

Under the Control of Dogs Order 1992 every dog, while on a highway or place of public resort, must wear a collar with the name and address of its owner inscribed on it or on a plate or badge attached to it. This is a legal requirement and failure to comply could lead to prosecution.

It is also a good idea to have a collar and ID tag because if your dog does accidentally stray or becomes lost, the finder will be able to contact you and arrange for your dog to be safely returned. It is also good practice to have your mobile telephone number on the ID tag as owners are often away from their home looking for their dog should it become lost.

MICRO-CHIPPING

Micro-chipping is another way of ensuring your dog can be identified. Micro-chipping can be undertaken at any veterinary surgery and involves a simple insertion of a small implanted micro-chip beneath the skin. Each micro-chip has its own unique identification number registered on a national database, owners can be traced very quickly and the dog can be returned safely. The Council's Dog Warden and Animal Welfare Officer and stray dog kennel proprietor all have scanners. Where practical all dogs are scanned prior to being placed in kennels. Using this method owners are often traced and the dog can be returned without the need for the dog to be taken to kennels. Micro-chipping does not replace the requirement in the law to provide a collar and ID tag.

NEUTERING/SPAYING

In order to prevent unwanted puppies it is worth considering having your dog/bitch neutered or spayed. It could save you a lot of time and trouble and also bring recognised health and in some cases, behavioural benefits to your dog e.g. reduced aggression. Neutering/spaying is carried out by most veterinary surgeries and it may be helpful to discuss the benefits of such an operation with your vet.

Neutering is a simple operation carried out under a general anaesthetic. Bitches are 'spayed' – this involves removing the womb and the ovaries. In a male dog the testicles are removed – this is called castration.

LOSING YOUR DOG

If you lose your dog during normal working hours please contact:

- the Dog Warden Service on 01653 600666 ext. 208 or email dogwarden@ryedale.gov.uk; and
- any local vets to find out if anyone has handed it in or reported it as a stray dog.

Give a full description of the dog and where it was last seen. If the Dog Warden and Animal Welfare Officer has had any report of stray dogs matching the description you give they will assist you in finding it.

If you lose your dog outside normal working hours then contact the above telephone number and leave your and your dog's details on the voicemail and the Dog Warden and Animal Welfare Officer will contact you on the next working day to assist you. Alternatively, please telephone the Ryecare Service on 01653 697737 who will pass on the details to the Dog Warden and Animal Welfare Officer the next working day or, if you are fortunate to have your dog found and reported by a member of the public, put the finder of your dog in contact with you directly.

If your dog is found straying, if it can be determined from the ID tag or micro-chip attempts will be made to return the dog to you if this is the first time your dog has strayed. If you are unavailable or the dog is found straying a second time the dog will be seized and taken directly to the kennels. You will have to pay a charge of £25, plus kennelling fees and any associated costs e.g. veterinary costs before the dog will be released to you.

DANGEROUS DOGS

The Dogs Act 1871 makes it an offence to have a dog which is dangerous and not kept under proper control when in a public place and also in places where the dog is on the owner's private property to which other people have a right of access.

The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 also makes it an offence for a dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place or, by allowing it to enter a private property and while it is there, injuring any person or if there are grounds for reasonable apprehension that it will do so. A dog does not have to bite someone to be deemed dangerous.

The owner or person in charge of a dog which has been worrying livestock, may be shot by a farmer, you can be prosecuted and made liable for damages and a destruction order may be placed on the dog.

Always keep your dog on a lead in a public area or when approaching other dogs. If your dog is prone to be aggressive provide a muzzle when out in a public area. Provide adequate warning signs to visitors to your premises if your dog is left free to roam on your premises. You may wish to consider providing a post box at the entrance to your property.

INSURANCE

It is always a good idea to get insurance cover for your dog, both to guard against unexpected large veterinary bills and/or protect you against any civil claims with regard to your dog.

DOG FOULING

It is against the law for a person in charge of a dog not to clear up immediately on any land, which the Council has designated. The offender can face a maximum fine of £1,000 and may also be liable for costs.

The Council has designated all land in the open air to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access with or without payment.

In order to avoid committing an offence always ensure that when taking your dog in a public area to "Take the Lead and Take the Bag" to safely remove the faeces. Ryedale District Council, town councils and a number of parish councils now provide special dog waste bins for disposal of dog waste bags. If there are no such bins in the immediate area then wrap up the dog waste again in a sealed plastic bag and dispose of it in a litter bin or in your domestic residential waste bin at home. The Council also provide limited free dog waste bags available at all the Council Offices.

For more information on dog fouling see the Council's **Dog Fouling** leaflet.

BARKING DOGS

Barking dogs can cause nuisance to your neighbours so ensure your dog is not left unsupervised for long periods. The Council investigates such noise complaints under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Individuals may also take action in the Magistrates Court using this act.

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