

POLICE NOTEBOOK

THE PLEASURES and benefits of owning a dog are far reaching and well known. A dog offers companionship, amusement, the incentive to take some exercise, as well as being a focus for a family's affections. However, like many things we do in life, owning a dog can affect our relationship with our neighbours and our environment. For that reason, it is very important for any dog owner or family, to understand the responsibilities involved, both to other people and to the pet itself.

The law requires you to do certain things if you are a dog owner, although it is no longer necessary to get a dog licence. Every dog, irrespective of its age, must wear a collar and tag which bears the name and address of the owner, whenever the dog is in a public place (this includes parks). It is an offence for a dog to be at large in a field or enclosure where there is livestock, unless the dog is on a lead or otherwise under close control.

As a dog owner, you are liable to certain local by-laws, concerning matters such as the fouling of footpaths, and the areas where dogs may run free. Dog excrement on footpaths seems to have increased dramatically over the last six months; not only is it obnoxious in smell and looks, it can be harmful to our children. If your pet has to go while walking along a road, then at least pull it into the gutter, or clear up the mess yourselves.

Dogs straying around the villages on a regular basis are a nuisance in the neighbourhood, and often a hazard to road traffic. West Oxfordshire are contemplating starting a dog warden scheme similar to other areas. If this does come into operation, then regular stray dogs will be taken to a central

kennel, owners would then have to pay a fee for their return. The owners of a dog which causes an accident or does serious damage may be liable to pay damages to the person injured, or the owner of damaged property. It is very wise to have your dog insured against third party risks; the cost is minimal.

If your dog is aggressive to strangers, please ensure that members of the public cannot be frightened on passing your property. If need be, a second fence should be erected.

On a final note, hopefully the better weather will soon be here; please be aware of the dangers of leaving your dog in an unoccupied car for any length of time. If you would like to know more about The Dangerous Dog Act, 1991, please contact me, I do have some leaflets.

CRIME BUSTERS REVIEW

Between 18.00 hrs on Wednesday, 26th and 09.00 hrs on Thursday 27th February 1992, four complete Staddestones were stolen from a garden in Frog Lane, Milton. The offenders would have used some type of vehicle because of the weight. Several weeks earlier a Cotswold Stone plant holder was stolen from Upper Milton. Have you seen any suspicious vehicles, or have you purchased any items similar to these?

Some crimes are detected straight away, some take a little longer, and some are never solved. Last spring a burglary occurred at Bradley's garage in Shipton, where a quantity of M.O.T. certificates were stolen. One man has been arrested and reported for several offences, and more arrests are imminent.

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