



## Dog Straying

Unsupervised dogs are a hazard. They can cause a danger to traffic, they may foul, they may attack people or other animals and they may also get injured or killed themselves.

Dog owners can be fined if their dogs are picked up by our wardens and they can be prosecuted by the Police if their dogs cause a road traffic accident. The Police can also get involved if a dog displays aggressive behaviour to a human or it attacks livestock. However, if a dog attacks someone else's pet (such as another dog or a cat) then this would be a civil matter between the animals' owners.

## Identification

Dog owners are legally required to ensure that their dog wears a collar with an identity tag with their name, address and telephone number. Whilst microchips are also an excellent idea in case a dog loses its collar or if the dog is stolen, they are only useful to someone with a scanner that detects them, whereas a tag on collar can be read by anyone and so a dog owner can get their pet back much more quickly. Also, the law makes no mention of microchips, only tags, and so a pet owner can be fined for not putting a collar and tag on their pet, even if it has been microchipped.

## What is a stray?

Our dog wardens can seize any dog that is out in a public place without an owner as such dogs are classed as 'strays'. We can also collect strays that have been contained on private premises by a member of the public.

## What happens to strays?

- If our dog warden detains a stray and it has no identification in the form of a tag on its collar or we cannot detect a microchip, we will seize the dog and take it to our designated kennels. If we pick up a dog and it does have a tag or we find a microchip then we check our database to see if the dog has been seized before. If it has not then we will make efforts to return the dog to its owner and give them a warning. If it has been seized before, or the owner is not at home, then it will be taken straight to the kennels and a Notice will be served on the owner.
- Once at the kennels the dog will remain there for 7 clear days. If the owner does not come forward and the dog is healthy then the kennels will endeavour to re-home it.
- If the owner comes forward they must first go to one of our offices in Pershore, Evesham or Droitwich. They can identify their dog from a photograph which has been taken at the kennels and stored on our computer system. To get their dog back they will then have to pay a £25 statutory fine, kennelling fees of £10 per day or part day and an administration fee of £15. If the dog is microchipped or they agree to have us microchip it then the fee will be reduced to £5). We will then give them a receipt which they can take to the kennels to collect their dog.

## **What do I do if I see a stray?**

9.00am to 4.30pm from Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays.

If you ring (01386) 565015 then a member of staff will try to get a Dog Warden out as soon as possible. Obviously it can take some time for a Dog Warden to reach the area in question, so if the public can catch or contain the dog (without risk to themselves) until we get there this is extremely helpful.

### **Outside office hours**

Dogs can be handed in at Evesham Community Contact Centre, Abbey Road, Evesham during their opening hours below

Mon-Fri - 8am-8pm

Sat - 9am-5pm

Sun -10am-4pm

If this is not practicable then please contact Worcestershire Telecare on 08450 568035 and advise them of the details. Telecare will liaise with the out-of-hours dog warden and arrange for the dog to be collected.

### **What about dogs which are allowed to stray on a regular basis?**

If a dog is let out or is able to escape on a regular basis then please telephone and tell us about it. We will ask you to keep written records to aid us in our investigation. If you tell us who owns the dog we can also write to them to remind them of their responsibilities. We can also patrol the areas in question if the dog continues to stray and will seize persistent strays wherever possible.

### **What if I own a dog which strays and I need help?**

Contact us on (01386) 565015. Our dog wardens can give practical advice with regard to the environment the dog is kept in and any training that is required. If you no longer want to keep your dog we can assist you with finding a new home for it.

### **What if I find a stray and I want to keep it?**

This is possible, but you must contact us so that we can make all efforts to find the owner. We will come and scan the dog for a microchip, photograph it and check its description against our database. There are also national databases which can be checked as well. We will complete some paperwork with you, check that you will provide a suitable home and give you any advice you may need with regard to caring for the dog. If we cannot find the owner and they do not come forward, after 31 days the dog becomes legally yours.

Contact: Environmental Protection Section, Environmental Services, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, WR10 1PT

**Telephone: 01386 565015 Fax: 01386 561826**

Email: [environmental.health@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:environmental.health@wychavon.gov.uk)

[www.wychavon.gov.uk/es](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/es)

