



## **Safer, Cleaner, Greener: Falmouth Town Council encourages responsible dog ownership to keep our streets sweet and our beaches beautiful**

As a nation of dog lovers, many of us enjoy the benefits of owning and caring for a canine companion, but it is important that we do so responsibly if we are to protect ourselves, our pets and the wider community.

This is Falmouth Town Council's message for April as part of its year-long **Safer, Cleaner, Greener** public information campaign.

The first major issue relates to the picking up of poo.

The average dog produces about  $\frac{3}{4}$  lb (300g) of excrement each day. That amounts to 5lb (2kg) per week; 20lb (8.5kg) per month, or a staggering 20 stone (110kg) per year! Statistics also suggest that 30% of dog-walkers will only pick up after their dogs if they think they are being watched. Whichever way you look at it, we have a big problem if we permit our dogs to foul Falmouth's streets, parks and beaches.

But this is NOT a dog problem – it is a human one! By not picking up poo in a public place, you are damaging the environment, inconveniencing other people and causing a serious health risk, particularly to children. Dog mess is not only very unpleasant to step in, it can also carry harmful infections. The most widely known of these is toxocariasis, which can lead to blindness and linger in the environment for up to two years. Whilst there is no immediate danger from fresh faeces as that takes between ten and 21 days to become infectious, the potential threat of harming our young should provide us with good enough reason to pick up and dispose of it correctly.

In terms of the law, it is a criminal offence if you do not clean up after a dog in your control as soon as it has fouled on any land that is open to the air and to which the public are permitted access. It is not a defence to say: "I'm coming back later/I didn't see my dog foul/it's not my dog/I haven't got anything to pick it up with." Failing to clean up after your dog will result in a fixed penalty notice of £100 being issued. If you are found guilty and prosecuted, you could face a fine of up to £1000.

The second issue relates to the dog ban on Falmouth's beaches between Easter Day and 30 September. This needs to be strictly observed to ensure that their quality and appeal are sustained for the enjoyment of visitors and residents alike.

With dog-friendly beaches elsewhere in the area that can be found by visiting [www.cornwall-beaches.co.uk/dog-friendly](http://www.cornwall-beaches.co.uk/dog-friendly), there is absolutely no need for you to breach the ban, but if you do, you are liable to receive a fixed penalty notice of £100.

### **So how can you help?**

- Pick up after your dog every time it fouls in a public place. Fragranced nappy sacks help or you can purchase poo bags from Falmouth's One Stop Shop on The Moor
- Look out for waste bins that are also marked as dog bins to place your poo bags in
- If you cannot find a waste bin that is marked as a dog bin, please double wrap the poo bag and place it in a normal litter bin
- If a dog bin is full, please report it to Cornwall Council as detailed below
- Do not hang your poo bag from a tree or throw it into a hedgerow. This is a double whammy in terms of irresponsible dog ownership
- Report problems to the relevant authority.

### **Who to contact:**

The Police are responsible for dealing with dangerous/aggressive dogs, road traffic accidents involving dogs, and dogs in cars on hot days. If you need to report any of these incidents, dial **101** or **999** if the situation is a genuine emergency.

Cornwall Council deals with all other dog welfare issues, including strays, noise/odour complaints, dogs on beaches, dog fouling and dog waste bins. They will investigate all complaints received but will be in a much better position to take action if you can provide:

- The date, time and location of the incident
- What you witnessed, with as much information about the incident as possible
- A description of the dog/owner as well as anything that identifies them such as a name, address or vehicle registration number.

Everything you need to know about Cornwall Council's dog welfare and enforcement service can be found at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/animal-welfare/dog-welfare-and-enforcement-service/](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/animal-welfare/dog-welfare-and-enforcement-service/)

If you have a problem to report to Cornwall Council, this can be done by using the online form at [www.cornwall.gov.uk/report-it](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/report-it); by emailing [publicprotection@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:publicprotection@cornwall.gov.uk) or by 'phoning 0300 1234 212.

If you are aware of a case of animal cruelty, you can either contact Cornwall Council via the above methods or the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999.

"Whether picking up our pooches' poo, abiding by beach bans, or reporting animal welfare issues, we can all play a part in making Falmouth safer, cleaner and greener for our community as well as our canines." comments **Town Clerk, Mark Williams**. "Following these simple rules will make Falmouth a more fragrant and family-friendly destination for work, rest and play, and we hope that local residents will do everything they can to promote the importance of responsible dog ownership for the benefit of all."