

## Considering getting a dog?

Owning a dog is a long term commitment which involves a lot of time and money. Carefully consider whether you have enough time to train, groom and exercise a dog, whether you can afford to keep it and if it will fit into your lifestyle for the next ten years or more.

- Do your research – Think carefully about the type of dog which will suit your family and lifestyle, as different breeds have different temperaments; some are happy to lie by the fire most of the day; others are highly energetic and will require a lot more exercise. Bigger dogs generally cost more to feed and their medication is more expensive.



## Being a responsible dog owner

- All dogs should be fully vaccinated and given worm and flea treatments regularly. Vet bills can be very expensive, so you should consider insuring your dog. This should also cover the damages which could be incurred if your dog caused an accident or injured somebody.

- You should not leave your dog alone for long periods of time as this may cause problems such as boredom, destructiveness and barking. Incessant dog barking is classed as noise nuisance and indeed it can be incredibly annoying, particularly if it is going on all through the night. If you have a problem with dog barking, there are a number of special dog barking collars available to rent from the Council Offices on payment of a £20.00 refundable deposit.

- You should also think seriously about neutering/spaying your dog. This has health benefits and can also reduce behavioural problems. It also prevents unwanted puppies.

- Your dog needs regular exercise to keep it happy and healthy. You should also spend time playing with your dog and grooming it in order to maintain a healthy bond.

- **Microchipping** – Since 1st April 2012 it has been a legal requirement that your dog is microchipped. Microchipping is a good way of reuniting pets and their owners. Contact your local vet to ensure your dog is microchipped and keep the details up to date with you microchip provider.

## Dogs and the Law

- You should ensure you have enough space in which to keep your dog comfortably and above all securely, so that it cannot escape and roam around. Any dog which is free to wander unsupervised is straying and may be impounded by the Council Dog

Warden. Council Officers may also issue £50 / £80 Fixed Penalty Notices to owners who let their dogs stray.

- It is an offence to keep a dog without a licence. A standard dog licence costs £12.50. Over 65's can get one free dog licence each year and any additional licences will cost £5.00 each. A concessionary fee of £5.00 applies where a) the dog is neutered/spayed or b) the applicant is in receipt of, or is a member of a couple in receipt of, one of the following income-related benefits: Universal Credit; State Pension Credit; Income Support; Housing Benefit; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance; Income-related Employment and Support Allowance; Working Tax Credit.

Keeping a dog without a licence may result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution with a possible fine of up to £1,000.



- The law requires dogs to be clearly identified, wearing a collar and tag displaying their owner's contact details. If your dog is licensed and wearing its collar and tag, you have a much better chance of being reunited with your pet should it escape or stray.

- Dogs must be kept under control at all times in public places and in most cases this will mean keeping your dog on a leash. **If a dog attacks a person or other pet animal or worries livestock, the dog owner may be prosecuted and fined and the Court may make an order for the destruction of the dog.**

### Dog Fouling



- **Pick up after your dog.** Anyone caught failing to clean up after their dog faces a Fixed Penalty Notice of £50.00. Dog foul is not only smelly and messy, it can carry eggs from a roundworm called *Toxocara canis*, which in rare cases can cause blindness in humans who come into contact with it. Dog owners should ensure they have poop-scoops or plastic bags with them each time they take their dog for a walk.



### RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERS...

#### ALWAYS:

- ✓ LICENCE THEIR DOG & MAKE SURE IT WEARS A COLLAR WITH IDENTIFICATION DETAILS
- ✓ HAVE THEIR DOG MICRO – CHIPPED
- ✓ HAVE THEIR DOG REGULARLY VACCINATED AND TREATED FOR WORMS AND FLEAS
- ✓ SCOOP THE POOP AND DISPOSE OF IT IN A BIN
- ✓ HAVE THEIR DOG NEUTERED TO PREVENT UNWANTED PUPS
- ✓ GIVE THEIR DOG PLENTY OF EXERCISE



#### NEVER:

- × LET THEIR DOG ROAM FREE
- × ALLOW THEIR DOG TO FOUL PUBLIC PLACES
- × ALLOW THEIR DOG TO BARK EXCESSIVELY
- × LEAVE THEIR DOG ON ITS OWN FOR LONG PERIODS OF TIME
- × ALLOW THEIR DOG TO BEHAVE AGGRESSIVELY TO OTHER ANIMALS AND PEOPLE



Comhairle Ceantair  
**Lár Uladh**  
**Mid Ulster**  
District Council

## RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP

### BASIC GUIDE TO BEING A GOOD DOG OWNER



Dog Warden, Environmental Health Department

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