



Warwickshire
POLICE



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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR DOG OWNERS

There have been a number of concerns raised by local farmers and landowners recently regarding dog walkers not keeping their dogs under control when crossing their land and not picking up after their dog.

When using a public footpath you and your dog(s) need to keep to the line of the footpath and the dog should either be on a lead or under close control. When crossing a field with livestock in it is strongly advised that the dog is kept on a lead.

Warwickshire Police sometimes receives calls from farmers, landowners and members of the public reporting farm animals being chased by dogs. Dogs can savage and kill sheep, and larger animals such as cattle and horses can also be seriously injured.

As well as the animal welfare aspect, the impact this can have on a rural business can be devastating. Not only does the farmer incur expensive veterinary costs, but for pregnant animals there is the risk of aborting.

It is important that dog owners are aware of current legislation which states under the Protection of Livestock Act 1953: "If a dog worries livestock on any agricultural land, the owner of the dog, and, if it is the charge of a person other than the owner, that person also shall be guilty of an offence under this Act." The maximum fine is £1,000. Section 9 of the Animals Act 1971 states that the owner of livestock, the landowner or anyone acting on their behalf, is entitled to shoot any dog if they believe it is the only reasonable way of stopping it worrying livestock.

Please remember the following advice:

- Do not allow your dog to enter a field on its own and keep it under control at all times.
- Keep your dog on a lead when crossing through fields that contain livestock.
- Always stick to public right of ways and do not go onto private farmland without permission. Make sure all gates are shut behind you.
- If you know your dog has previously chased or attacked sheep then take responsible measures to prevent it happening again.
- Ensure that your property is secure and that your dog cannot escape during the day or night.
- Please always pick up after your dog and take it home or put it in the nearest bin - don't leave bags in hedges or at the side of a field. Dog mess and the bags can contaminate the land and be potentially fatal or cause serious health problems to other animals and wildlife.

We want everyone to work together, be responsible and considerate so that everyone - including our dogs - can enjoy the lovely countryside we live in.