

## **New laws for dog owners**

South Northamptonshire Council has announced it will adopt new dog control orders from Wednesday, 1 April 2009.

From August 2008 to February 2009 there was a statutory consultation period where residents were given the opportunity to comment on whether the Council should adopt these new powers. The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 is a new legislation that will replace the current Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 and dog bylaws. A summary of these new orders are as follows:

### Failing to remove dog faeces

This offence applies when someone responsible for a dog fails to pick up and dispose of faeces in an area where a Fouling of Land by Dogs Order applies. This applies to any land which is open to the air (on at least one side) that the public are entitled to have access to within the district.

### Not keeping a dog on a lead

This offence applies when someone responsible for a dog fails to ensure that it is on a lead in an area where a Dogs on Lead Order applies. This applies to the following within the district:

- Allotments
- Car parks to which the public have access
- Sports grounds, fields and pitches, when in use for authorised sporting activities
- Cemeteries/churchyards and burial grounds

### Areas from which dogs are excluded

This offence applies when someone responsible for a dog takes it onto land where dogs have been banned under a Dogs Exclusion Order. This applies to the following within the district:

- Fenced/enclosed children play areas
- Fenced/enclosed games areas
- Bowling greens
- Fenced/enclosed educational facilities

### Not putting, and keeping, a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer

This offence applies when someone responsible for a dog fails to put and keep a dog on a lead when instructed to do so by a person authorised by the Council in an area where a Dogs on

Leads by Direction Order applies. This applies to any land which is open to the air (on at least one side) that the public are entitled to have access to within the district.

In a Magistrates' Court, the penalty for committing an offence under a Dog Control Order is a maximum fine of £1,000. Alternatively, the alleged offender may be offered the opportunity to pay a fixed penalty as an alternative to prosecution. In South Northamptonshire the fixed penalty notice is £75.

There are other dog laws that will remain unchanged in South Northamptonshire. These include the requirement that all dogs in public places have a collar and tag with the owner's name and address on it.

There is further information available at [www.southnorthants.gov.uk](http://www.southnorthants.gov.uk) which includes a copy of the public notices. Please contact the Council on 01327 322322 for this information to be posted to you.

Note for Dog Owners:

Biodegradable Poop Scoop Bags may be purchased from the Council offices at Springfields at a cost of £10.00 for 300. They are also available through a number of local pet shops. We recommend that dog owners use the designated dog litter bins for the disposal of dog faeces.