New enforcement powers will target irresponsible dog owners

Dog owners are being urged to take heed of new enforcement powers introduced across Daventry District to tackle the issue of fouling in our parks and open spaces.

The new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) introduced by Daventry District Council is designed to target the small number of irresponsible dog owners who persistently fail to pick up after their pet, creating a mess as well as a health hazard.

The PSPO, which comes into force on December 1, means dog walkers risk a £100 fine and potentially prosecution if they fail to:

- Pick up their dog’s poo
- Carry the means for picking up their dog’s poo while on a walk
- Stop their dog from entering a fenced-off playground
- Place their dog on a lead when directed by a Council officer
- Put their dog on a lead in the area around the visitor centre/café at Daventry Country Park

The decision to implement the PSPO was made after a public consultation revealed strong support for it.

Enforcement of the PSPO will focus on education at first, with people who fall foul of the new rules reminded of their responsibilities as dog owners by Council enforcement officers.

However the new powers will be fully exercised from January 1, so dog owners are being urged to make sure they have plenty of poo bags with them.

Cllr Mike Warren, Health and Housing Portfolio Holder on Daventry District Council, said: “Every year our Council receives more than 100 complaints about dog fouling, which poses a real health hazard, especially to young children.

“We’ve introduced a number of innovative ideas and campaigns to tackle the problem, and those have proved effective in the main. But we still have a small minority of persistent offenders that we are keen to stop.

“This new order gives us greater powers to take effective action those irresponsible dog owners who do not pick up after their pets.

“Our initial priorities will focus on raising awareness of the new powers among local communities and to educate dog walkers about the issues. We will be advising them to make sure they have extra poo bags with them at all times to ensure they have the means to pick up, regardless of how long they’ve been out and about with their pet.
“These new powers are not intended to penalise the many responsible dog owners in our District, who should be assured that our officers will be taking a common-sense approach on their patrols. It’s not unreasonable though, for example, to expect someone who has just arrived at a venue to walk their dog to be carrying poop bags.”

People can find out more about the PSPO at www.daventrydc.gov.uk/dogfouling