

Brixham Town Council

Report No:	02-2019		
Report Type:	Public		
Title:	Dog issues		
To:	Community Services	Date:	14.01.19
Contact Officer:	Deputy Town Clerk	Linda McGuirk	
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Purpose of Report

To provide members of the Community Services Committee with a progress report on matters relating to dog issues in the town raised a member of the community.

Background

During October 2018 correspondence was received from a resident regarding irresponsible dog owners in the town. Members of the committee debated the contents of the letter, in particular, with regard to the lack of adequate signage around the breakwater Beach area containing seasonal information about when dogs are permitted on the beach.

Action taken

The committee resolved to take the following action:

- Reply to the resident and advise them that the Town Council takes the issue of dog fouling seriously and has discussed the matter on numerous occasions, however it is the responsibility of Torbay Council as the local authority to enforce dog fouling.
- Ask Torbay Council how often the dog warden is in Brixham and request feedback on the number of fines issued or direct action that is taken. It was further resolved to ask the Harbour Authority to put up signs 'Dog Watch Area'.

Communication with Torbay Council Dog Warden

Q1. How often does the Dog Warden attend Brixham?

Brixham is usually checked twice a week.

Q2. The number of fines issued, or any direct action taken in Brixham?

No fines in Brixham have been issued. A Brixham resident was recently fined whilst visiting Paignton.

Q3. To request more adequate signage at Breakwater Beach.

Signage is a problem with all beaches especially when the signs get taken down and vandalised. Torbay Council are exploring the idea of using stencils on the ground as well as the usual signage. Breakwater and the walkway to the harbour have had many signs put up only for them to be stolen / taken down.

The Dog warden went on to state that *"they rarely get dog fouling complaints from Brixham. The Breakwater area and Berry Head are the main areas of complaint."*

A further request was submitted to the Beaches Team for a review of the current signage, the installation of 'Dog Watch Area' signs and also to clarify who is responsible for enforcement during the periods when dogs are not permitted on beaches.

The Beaches Team responded:

'At the beginning of the summer period the beaches and coastline team will assess the appropriateness of this signage and insure it is up to the same standard of that as is in situ across the other resort beaches, and appropriate to the site. Any improvement does of course rely on available funds.

We Believe the 'Dog Watch Area' signs. On Broadsands beach to which you refer were actually installed by our community safety team and in particular the dog wardens, I have copied them in to this correspondence for their views on whether or not this signage would be appropriate for breakwater beach?

With regards to enforcement. Although there is no longer a council presence during the main summer season as part of the mini resort concept the Breakwater Bistro, as our preferred supplier to this, is responsible for trying to enforce this restriction; however the ultimate enforcement of persistent offenders would come down to the Dog Wardens within Torbay Council who are able to take action if they are alerted, with detail! any persistent offenders.'

Recommendations

1. The Town Council continues to actively pursue the relevant departments at Torbay Council for improved dog related signage in Brixham, in particular around the beaches.
2. Request more frequent and visible patrols in the town from the Dog Warden.
3. Request the Dog Warden Keeps the Town Council better informed on the service provided to Brixham.
4. Advertises in the Signal newsletter to increase awareness in the community and improve education.