

Dog owners facing tough line on fouling



Northampton Dog owners who, unlike this member of the public, fail to clean up after their pets on any public land now face £80 fines. (CE library picture)

Irresponsible dog owners who fail to clean up after their pets could face an £80 fine from today if they are caught breaking the law.

From today a new Dog Control Order will come into effect, which will apply to all open land with public access.

The Northampton Borough Council by-laws will replace existing ones and give environmental wardens the power to issue fixed penalty notices to dog owners who let their pets foul but do not dispose of the waste responsibly.

Borough councillor Trini Crake (Lib Dem, Boughton Green), cabinet member for environment, said: "We are using this order to promote responsible dog ownership. "Most dog owners will clean up after their pets, but there are still some people who allow their dog to foul.

"To avoid a fine when you take your dog for a walk, be prepared and take a couple of plastic bags to collect any mess your dog makes. Then place the bag in a dog bin, an ordinary bin or take it home with you to put in your own bin, but please don't leave it for others to find."

The borough council is considering three other dog control areas, which will be finalised this year, which will see areas created from which dogs will be excluded, as well as areas where dogs can be kept on leads and ordered onto a lead by an authorised person.

Tony Ansell, who runs the cafe at Abington Park, said: "The cleaner the parks the better for us, especially near play areas. But why have laws like this if you have no park rangers to make sure it's policed properly? It's no good having laws if there's no one to enforce it. It's stupid to put these laws down but have no one to police them."