



Dogged by problems

The problem

The new dog warden, employed by the local authority, is responsible for encouraging poop scooping and controlling stray dogs.

He has a particular problem in one housing estate where there are a lot of dogs. The owners are allowing their dogs to foul and not cleaning up after them. Most grass verges and the parks have evidence of dog faeces and the pavements are also a problem around the schools and shops. Dogs should also be wormed every three months to reduce public health concerns.

Some dogs regularly stray – some because they escape from gardens and others because their owners let them out to exercise themselves. Unneutered dogs are also more likely to stray because they are looking for a mate. There have been four road accidents involving loose dogs in the last month – one resulted in the driver being taken to hospital.

The law

The local Byelaw, states that it is an offence to allow your dog to foul a pavement, park, roadside verge (where the speed limit is 40mph or less) or other public place without clearing it up. It is punishable by a fine of up to £1000.

It is also illegal for a dog not to have a tag on its collar with the name and address of its owner clearly shown whilst out in public. Stray dogs should be reported to the council dog warden. If the dog is not wearing a tag or microchip it will be kept for seven days to allow the owner to claim it, after this they are either available for rehoming or may be destroyed. Owners who want their dog back will have to pay any costs of kennelling plus a fine.

The challenge

The dog warden wants to address these issues and has a £500 budget for a month long campaign. What would you suggest is done to improve the area and to encourage responsible dog ownership?

Brainstorm your ideas first and then pick out the most effective ideas to fit your budget and timescale.



Teacher's notes

The students should work in small discussion groups. Encourage the groups to consider positive educational ideas for owners as well as punishment for misdemeanours.

There are a lot of issues to cover and here are some ideas:

- Posters and notices to inform dog owners
- Patrolling the area more frequently
- Fining people who allow dogs to foul or stray, more often
- Giving out free poo bags to dogs owners
- More dog poo bins
- Educating the owners by giving talks to groups
- Educating children – the owners of tomorrow
- CCTV to catch the owners
- Cheap neutering scheme – un-neutered dogs often stray to find bitches in season
- Cheap worming tablets at local vet
- Free dog training classes to include information on these issues
- Cheap offer on dog tags at local pet shop or veterinary surgery or community centre
- A discounted micro-chipping scheme for dogs and cats
- Community help-a-neighbour scheme to repair fences and gates to prevent dogs escaping
- Having a fenced dog exercise area in the park

