

DANGEROUS DOGS



FIRST PRINCIPLE

norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple
suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple

Top Tips

- Know the Law

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/65/contents>

- Know your responsibilities
- Know what to do if your dog is attacked
- A farmer has the right to shoot your dog if it's worrying their livestock.

PREVENT CRIME

PROTECT COMMUNITIES



NORFOLK
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Our Priority is You



SUFFOLK
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The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 is an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom that was introduced in response to various incidents of serious injury or death resulting from attacks by aggressive and uncontrolled dogs, particularly on children.

The Law

It's against the law to let a dog be dangerously out of control anywhere, such as:

- In a public place
- In a private place, e.g. a neighbour's house or garden
- In the owner's home and garden

The law applies to all dogs.

A dog is considered dangerously out of control if it injures someone (aggravated offence) or puts someone in fear or apprehension of injury

- A court could also decide that a dog is dangerously out of control if it attacks someone's animal or the owner of an animal thinks they could be injured if they tried to stop your dog attacking their animal (this is not necessarily a criminal offence)

Penalties

The penalty for having a dangerously out of control dog is an unlimited fine or a prison sentence of up to 6 months (or both). In addition, offenders may be banned from owning a dog in the future and the dog may be destroyed.

If a dog injures someone, the owner can be sent to prison for up to 5 years or fined (or both). If an owner deliberately uses the dog to injure someone they could be charged with 'malicious wounding'.

If an owner allows their dog to kill someone they can be sent to prison for up to 14 years or get an unlimited fine (or both).

If a dog attacks an assistance dog (e.g. a guide dog) or puts them in fear, the owner/offender can

be sent to prison for up to 3 years or fined (or both).

How to report a dog incident

Anyone can report a dog and their owner to the police. You can also report a dangerous dog to your local council.

Banned dogs

In the UK, it's against the law to own certain types of dog. These are the:

- Pit Bull Terrier
- Japanese Tosa
- Dogo Argentino
- Fila Brasileiro

It's also against the law to:

- Sell a banned dog
- Abandon a banned dog
- Give away a banned dog
- Breed from a banned dog

Whether a dog is a banned type depends on what it looks like, rather than its breed or name.

Example If a dog matches many of the physical characteristics of a Pit Bull Terrier, it may be a banned type. The police can take away a banned dog and keep it even if it isn't acting dangerously and there hasn't been a complaint

The police may need permission from a court to do this if the dog is in a private place.

A police expert will judge the type of dog it is and whether it is (or could be) a danger to the public, and that the owner is a responsible one and should keep a dog like this. The dog will then either be released or kept in kennels while the police apply to a court

Owners are not allowed to visit their dog while awaiting the court decision.

Owners can give up ownership of their dog but can't be forced to. If they do, the dog could be destroyed without the owner going to court.

Going to Court

It's the owner's responsibility to prove their dog is not a banned type, there are independent experts who can identify the dog for the court case.

If the dog is not found to be of a banned type, the court will order the dog to be returned to the owner. If they can't prove it (or they plead guilty), they will be convicted of a crime.

Owners can get an unlimited fine or be sent to prison for up to 6 months (or both) for having a banned dog against the law. The dog will also be destroyed.

Police can also take the owner to court through civil proceedings and not through a criminal court.

Index of Exempted Dogs

If a dog is banned but the court thinks it's not a danger to the public and the owner has proved they can be responsible for this type of dog, the court may allow the dog to be put on the Index for exempted dogs (which is held by DEFRA).

Owners will be given a Certificate of Exemption by Defra, once certain criteria have been met. This is valid for the life of the dog.

The dog must be:

- Neutered
- Microchipped
- Kept on a lead and muzzled at all times when in public (including in a vehicle)

- Kept in a secure place (garden) so it can't escape

Owners must:

- Take out 3rd party insurance against their dog injuring other people
- Pay Defra a set fee for going onto the register
- Be aged over 16
- Show the Certificate of Exemption when asked by a police officer or council dog warden, either at the time or within 5 days
- Let the Index (Defra) know of any changes (e.g. address), or if your dog dies.

Public Spaces Protection Orders

Some public areas in England and Wales are covered by Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) previously called Dog Control Orders (DCOs). In public areas with PSPOs, dog owners may have to:

- Keep their dog on a lead
- Put their dog on a lead if told to by a police officer, Suffolk police community support officer or someone from the council
- Stop their dog going to certain places like farmland or parts of a park
- Limit the number of dogs they have with them (this applies to professional dog walkers too)
- Clear up after the dog

PSPOs only apply to public land

If owners ignore a PSPO, they can be fined:

- £100 on the spot (a 'Fixed Penalty Notice')
- Up to £1,000 if it goes to court
- Owners can't be fined if they are a registered blind dog owner.
- Local councils must let the public know where PSPOs are in place.

First Principle: Related links

Check out all of our Crime Prevention information using the following links or by using the QR code to take you to the First Principle Pages Alternatively go to our website at <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/> and look in the 1st Principle A-Z of Crime Prevention.

Allotment Security
Anti-Social Behaviour
ATM Security
Beach Hut Security
Boat Security
Building Site Security
Business Security
Caravan Security
Caravan Storage
Card Security
Catalytic Converters
Church Security
Cold Callers
Commercial CCTV
Counterfeit Banknotes
County Lines Advice
for Landlords
Cyber Crime
Cycle Security
Dangerous Dogs
Dog Fouling
Dog Theft
Domestic CCTV
Domestic Violence
Farm Security
Fraud Prevention
Grooming
Hate Crime

Heating Oil
Home Improvements
Home Security
Home Security for
Tenants
Horses and Stables
Keyless Vehicles
Key Safe Security
Lock Snapping
Mopeds and Scooters
Motorcycle Security
Neighbour Disputes
Occupiers Liability
Personal Security
Power Tool Security
Products Brochure
Rural Crime
Security Alarms
Sheds and Garages
Social Media
Social Media for
Parents
Suspicious Behaviour
Shoplifting
Taxi Driver Safety
Vehicle Security
Windows and Doors



Other Links you might find helpful

Ask the Police
Secured by Design
Sold Secure

Crimestoppers
0800 555 111

Victim Care
0300 303 3705