**BERE FERRERS PARISH COUNCIL - CONSULTATION ON DOG CONTROL M1**

For many years we have suffered from the problems of dog fouling in our villages and in particular on public amenity land owned by the Parish Council. In the past year this has become quite unacceptable within the Bere Alston, The Down Recreational Field and to a lesser extent in the Field at Bere Ferrers.

On the Down there is an unresolved conflict between various users, with some dog owners resenting the allocation of public space for the exclusive use of Bere Alston United Football Club,( BAUFC.) Meetings in September 2019 and subsequent informal dialogue produced no lasting resolution. This came to a head in February this year when large amounts of dog fouling and a quantity of stones were found within the fenced football pitch.

During May industrial chemicals were spread on a wide swathe of grass on the pitch killing the grass, and the pitch gates had their padlocks superglued.

On 20 February two officers from the Environmental Health Dept. of West Devon Borough Council visited the The Down Recreation Field, they expressed surprise that dogs were allowed on the field and in particular on the football pitch. They reminded us of our responsibilities under the Health & Safety Legislation and our ‘Duty of Care’ to all users of the Field, especially children. A retired Doctor warned the Council that Toxocariasis could be caught by contact with dog faeces, or the surrounding soil up to some weeks after any fouling, with the consequent danger to children.

Taking into account:

* the above advice
* that most of the sports pitches within West Devon have dog controls on them
* Cornwall Council has banned dogs from all such areas
* we provide a separate Dog Field (Field on corner, of The Down and Bere Ferrers Road.) for the sole use of dog owners (we are the only Council to do so)

The Parish Council made the decision to ban dogs from the football pitch area and so authorised the Football Club to prevent dogs entering the field with more fencing and locked gates.

The Parish Council have formed a group to investigate what measures could be taken to mitigate the situation. We have carried out a census of dogs using the Down and spoken to many owners in an attempt to obtain a balanced view. It is quite obvious that the vast majority of dog owners act responsibly and we were pleasantly surprised at the number of people who even picked up mess deposited by other peoples’ animals.

There is still the area west of the enclosed pitch to consider, where almost 60 children play football each Saturday. There are two age groups, which may increase to four, and they cannot play on the larger enclosed area because it is not suitable for juniors and there would be timing clashes. There have been some horrifying dog-related incidents involving children; including being children being fouled with dog faeces, after falling on to it.. In one incident last year the Police were involved. These are serious child safety issues which have to be addressed.

We now wish to seek the views of our Parishioners on what further steps should be taken to alleviate this dangerous situation. Would you please complete the consultation questions on the back of this sheet and add any of your own suggestions that would assist us.

**Views requested on: Only one response per household please**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | PLEASE CIRCLE: |
| Should exclusion of dogs from enclosed football pitch be supported by a Public Spaces Protection order? | Yes No |
| Should dogs be excluded from The Down Recreation Field? | Yes No |
| Should dogs be excluded from Bere Ferrers Recreation Field? | Yes No |
| Should dogs be kept on a lead at all times at The Down Recreation Field? | Yes No |
| Should dogs be kept on a lead at all times at Bere Ferrers Recreation Field? | Yes No |
| Should dogs be excluded from the Recreation Fields during organised sport? | Yes No |
| Should dogs be kept on a lead in the Recreation Field during organised sport? | Yes No |
| Should dog owners always carry ‘Poo’ bags | Yes No |
| What is the maximum No. of dogs to be controlled by one person | 2 3 4 no limit |

We would welcome any other suggestions, particularly how we can avoid further incidents during the Junior Training areas on Saturday Mornings:-

Please let us have these details in case we need to respond to you:

Name…………………………………………….Tel……………………………………………Email address…………………………….

**Please return this questionnaire** by placing it **in the box at Bere Alston Post Office** or at **Margaret’s Hairdressers in Bere Ferrers** or by posting or delivering it to **Parish Hall Mail Box, Station Road, Bere Alston PL20 7EJ** or by emailing to**:** [**asstclerkbfpc@btconnect.com**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5COwner%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5CR73YXSGK%5Casstclerkbfpc%40btconnect.com)  or by accessing the Parish Council website [**www.bereferrersparishcouncil.org.uk**](http://www.bereferrersparishcouncil.org.uk)

**BEFORE FRIDAY 10 JULY PLEASE!**  Thank you for your participation.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

You may be aware that **West Devon Borough Council** are at present consulting on further measures to be taken with regards to dog control under the Public Protection Orders legislation: 1 Dog walkers must carry doggy bags or other container to collect dog waste;  2 Restrict amount of dogs that can be walked at to four at a time;  3 Dogs to be kept on leads on roads within 30mph speed zones.

You can find further details **at *https://www.westdevon.gov.uk › article › Dog-Control-Orders****.* The Consultation finishes on **31 July, 2020** and you should send your views to **pspoconsultation@swdevon.gov.uk**