

Summary of suggestions from the Troopers Hill Dog Questionnaire

This is a list of the ideas given in reply to the Friends of Troopers (FoTH) Hill Dog Questionnaire aimed at finding ways to control dog fouling and out of control dogs.

1. Ideas to control dog fouling

1. Anti-fouling posters

Many people supported the idea of posters including

- Ask dog owners not to hang poo bags in the bushes
- More graphic posters showing the effect of the parasitic worm has on people especially children.
- Stern posters at each entrance, with punishments (FINES) clearly displayed.
- Dogs kept on a lead until they have had a poo. Please encourage.
- Name and shame. Most of these people are repeat offenders. Shame them please.
- Please include on the posters (anti-fouling notices) some of the statistics. E.g. Friday 7th February 108 piles removed, by Saturday 8th February a further 42 piles left.

FoTH comment - *posters have been displayed on every entrance but are ripped down. To replace posters on a daily basis would cost £16 per month, which FoTH, a volunteer group, dependent on donations and grants do not have. They also need volunteers to put up the replacements. Currently they are replaced every month when there is a work party. Please contact Susan on 0117 947 5037, if you would like to volunteer for putting up posters or fund them.*

To name and shame we would have to know who the people are. So far no-one has reported to us any names of people who do this. We do talk regularly to dog walkers and other people on the Hill. If any names were supplied we would want details of when the offending happens and we would pass this on to the police and the Dog Warden team.

2. Occasional well publicised enforcement visits from Dog Warden with prosecutions.

FoTH comment - *there were at least 4 enforcement visits in 2013 and 2014. No prosecutions were made. 20 acres of hillside is a very big space to monitor.*

3. Extra bin

FoTH comment - *There are now bins at all entrances to Troopers Hill, the last one was installed 6/10/2015*

Bristol City Council will not install bins anywhere that cannot be accessed by a vehicle. It is not sensible in terms of cost and time for there to be a long walk between a bin and a vehicle and bin contents are often VERY heavy.

4. Provide sticks at entrances to "stick and flick"

FoTH comment on "stick and flick" - this would mean dog faeces would be found (or worse) by
a) children playing in the open grassy areas meeting, or
b) volunteers working or
c) Bristol Parks workers being sprayed with dog poo (as they are NOW) whenever they use a strimmer to cut the edges of the paths to keep path clear for visitors. They also carry out winter works cutting back areas to manage the Local Nature Reserve and have unpleasant encounters with dog faeces then. FoTH would ask everyone to pass on the message that the only place for dog waste is in a bin, it is NEVER OK for it to be left in publicly accessible places concealed in undergrowth - undergrowth will be cut by someone or accessed by people or wildlife with all the threats to health and associated soiling.

5) CCTV cameras on Hill

FoTH comment - who pays for people to monitor the cameras and do we want structures put up on a Local Nature Reserve?

6) No dogs running free after lighting up time

FoTH comment - this is not possible to enforce at the moment. We believe dog fouling is worse when the days draw in, we hope to prove this with our dog fouling audits and could then discuss with Bristol City Council whether this is at all feasible for the future

7) Dogs to have lit dog tags attached to their collars (There were free recently in "the Evening Post"

FoTH comment - we could look at finding funding to buy some and give away.

8) Perhaps offering help as some older/disabled people may not physically be able to pick up their dog pooh.

FoTH comment- we can spread this as a message to users of Troopers Hill.

9) Ban dogs

FoTH comment - we took this to mean ban dogs from Troopers Hill. We would not want to do this because of the brilliant work done by many dog walkers picking up litter, some picking up other people's dog poo and all providing a natural deterrent to anti-social behaviour just by being there. The majority of regular users of Troopers Hill are dog walkers.

2. Ideas on how to deal with out of control dogs

1. Posters

Many people supported the idea of posters including:

- Information about requirements under law for dog owners at entrance.
- Posters informing people of a contact number if they are having difficulty with an out of control dog, or dog owner!!
- Make the public more aware that they can report things like dogs jumping up at them, that it is unacceptable. So many times I have had to wash jackets, trousers because of people's blummin dogs! I wish I could change the owners for the Nikwax, energy, water and time and inconvenience!!!
- The information above (on the questionnaire) is informative and if put on a poster might make dog owner (responsible ones) more cautious.

FoTH comment - *there is someone who rips down our posters at entrances when the subject is dog control or fouling but we will work with Bristol City Council on the wording of a poster to put in the noticeboard at the Malvern Rd entrance. In the meantime Bristol Parks number is on EVERY noticeboard and can be called about park issues. If the public are in danger ring 999.*

To replace posters on a daily basis would cost £16 per month, which FoTH, a volunteer group, dependent on donations and grants do not have. They also need volunteers to put up the replacements. Currently they are replaced every month when there is a work party. Please contact Susan on 0117 947 5037, if you would like to volunteer for putting up posters or fund them.

2. Regular unpublicised visits from Dog Warden or similar to have informal chats with owners whose dogs are not on a lead and are not under control.

FoTH comment - *We have 4 visits from police and council officers in 2013 and 2014, we will ask for more.*

3. Change the law

The law needs to be changed to mimic the ones in Scotland, whereby dogs which have been out of control are given ASBOS to be lead walked or muzzled and if caught not being controlled like that then the dogs should be taken away, or owners forced to attend dog training classes.

FoTH comment - *the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 as amended 1997 provides great protection - it includes this definition:*

Out of control (taken from www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/overview)

Your dog is considered dangerously out of control if it:

- injures someone

- makes someone worried that it might injure them

A court could also decide that your dog is dangerously out of control if either of the following apply:

- it attacks someone's animal
- the owner of an animal thinks they could be injured if they tried to stop your dog attacking their animal

Penalties include prison and fines.

4. Leaflets

Leaflets about how to train dogs maybe more useful!!!

FoTH comment - *we will investigate - if you would like to fund this or like to distribute them please contact us.*

5. Arranging contact with the dog owner

If possible get name of owner and have a dog trainer call on them

FoTH comment - *no one has every given us a dog owner name and contact details*

6. Dog muzzles

- Large bull breeds and guarding breeds e.g. QSD Rot should be muzzled when off lead to reduce damage by attack to other dogs and public
- All dogs should wear a muzzle when in a public place/park

FoTH comment - *we would need a change in law for this (all dogs to be muzzled) to happen*

7. Free training

Free trainer taster sessions on the Hill.

FoTH comment - *we will talk with local trainers to see how practical this is and find out the cost. If you can help with this, whether co-ordinating, giving information or funding, please contact us.*

8. Fencing off area for children to play

FoTH comment - *on Thursday 8th October a £50,000 grant application was made by Friends of Troopers Hill to provide a fenced under 5s play area on Troopers Hill Field.*

9. Keeping dogs on leads

- Dogs kept on leads at set times e.g. 11am-2pm so if you are concerned and have no dog and want to enjoy the hill you now that between certain hours you can enjoy without dogs roaming free. Pleases everyone! Maybe :-)
- All dogs on a leash. No dog to run free.

FoTH comment - *Troopers Hill, the Field and the Woodland is one of the few places where dogs are allowed to be off the lead, although they MUST be under control. We would only campaign for dogs to be on a lead as an absolute last resort. The vast majority of dog owners are responsible. Brilliant work is done by many dog walkers picking up litter, some picking up other people's dog poo and all providing a natural deterrent to anti-social behaviour just by being there. The majority of regular users of Troopers Hill are dog walkers.*