# Shepton Mallet tackles rising dog fouling issue with community campaign



Shepton Mallet, a town in Somerset known for its associations with iconic brands such as Babysham, Showerings Cider, and Mulberry handbags, is facing a growing challenge with dog fouling in public spaces. Despite its reputation as a dog-friendly locale, with pets welcomed in pubs, cafes, and other establishments, the issue of unattended dog waste has escalated, prompting concern among residents and local authorities.

Local parks, footpaths, and public areas have seen an increase in dog mess, leading to the formation of a coalition including the police, council, Neighbourhood Watch, and community groups to address the situation. "Dog fouling is a significant public nuisance that negatively impacts the aesthetic and hygienic quality of communal spaces," stated a spokesperson for Avon & Somerset police. They emphasised the importance of responsible pet ownership, insisting that pet owners must ensure the prompt removal and proper disposal of their dogs’ waste.

In response to the growing complaints, the local police are taking proactive measures. Distribution of leaflets to households has commenced, encouraging community members to report instances of dog owners failing to pick up after their pets. Offenders face substantial penalties, with fines reaching £1,000 if the matter escalates to court. Under current legislation in Somerset, dog owners are legally obligated to clean up after their animals, with fixed penalty notices and on-the-spot fines of £100 being commonly issued.

The residents of Shepton Mallet are keen to enhance the image of their picturesque town, particularly with the influx of visitors attending events at the nearby Bath & West Showground and those passing through en route to the famous Glastonbury festival. The town's reputation as a clean and friendly destination is seen as vital for attracting tourism. There is a collective hope that by addressing the dog fouling issue, Shepton Mallet can maintain its charm and continue to be a welcoming space for both locals and visitors.

As the campaign to improve public sanitation continues, the message to dog owners remains clear: while dogs are cherished members of the community, it is imperative they also ensure their pets' waste is managed responsibly to keep Shepton Mallet a clean, safe environment for all.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/environment-and-food-safety/dog-warden-service/> - This URL corroborates the legal obligations of dog owners in Somerset to clean up after their pets, as well as the presence of dog controls and regulations in the region.
* <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/environment-and-food-safety/report-dog-fouling/> - This URL provides information on how to report dog fouling in Somerset and emphasizes the community's involvement in addressing the issue.
* <https://www.litterfreecoastandsea.co.uk/somerset/current-projects-and-campaigns/dogfouling/> - This URL supports the efforts in Somerset to reduce dog fouling through campaigns and community engagement, highlighting the success of similar initiatives in nearby areas.
* <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-microchipping-of-dogs-england-regulations-2015> - This URL provides details about the legal requirements for dog ownership in England, including microchipping, which complements the discussion on responsible pet ownership in Somerset.
* <https://www.britishlegislation.co.uk/regulation/1990/43/environmental-protection-act-1990-part-iv> - This URL references the Environmental Protection Act 1990, which outlines the responsibilities related to keeping public spaces clean, including the removal of dog waste.