

Police Dog Training Unit



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Advice on Encountering a Possible Dangerous Dog



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All dogs can be dangerous and need treating with caution. They can all bite and cause life changing injuries, some can cause even death.

There are specific breeds that are banned under the Dangerous Dogs Acts 1991 and this Power Point is aimed at Health Care Professionals who visit addresses and may see these dogs.

It will give you advice on what to do whilst at the address and also what to do once you have left the address to report it to the Police.

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It is really difficult to identify a banned breed dog and not all Police officers can recognise them.

The Police have specially trained officers (Dog Legislation Officers) who can assess and identify banned dogs.

The dogs do have certain characteristics, but with Pit Bull Terriers, there are variations and they only have to be Pit Bull 'types' to be classed as a banned breed dog.

The other three banned breed dogs are more specific breeds but are not as common as the Pit Bull Terrier.

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These are the banned breed dogs;

Pitbull Terrier

Built for performance, the pit bull is a muscular, short-coated breed. The head is big and jaws are strong and wide, the ears may be cropped. The body is very strong and powerful. Staffordshire Bull Terriers are often mistaken for Pit Bulls, but they are smaller in height.



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Dogo Argentino

Muscular, graceful dog of mastiff stock. It has a short, sleek, glossy, thick and always white coat. The skull is massive and the jaws are very strong and tenacious.

The ears are customarily docked and the eyes are dark brown with an alert and intense expression. The nose is black and the chest is wide. The skin on the neck is loose and it has a long tail.



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Japanese Tosa

The Japanese Tosa is referred to as the Sumo Wrestler. It is an exotic breed and recognised as a natural guard dog.

It has a large head, and deep broad chest and also may develop black muzzles and ears. It ranges from 110 –170 pounds and may appear larger due to their muscular build. The Tosa is a massive and large boned athletic dog.



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Fila Brasileiro

Known for its working ability, loyalty and courage, the Fila is a large, heavy-boned dog with pendulous hips. Filas excel as guard dogs, cattle herding dogs, police dogs and hunting dogs, and are very loyal and eager to please their owners.

They have a short coat. These dogs are highly territorial and possess a natural aversion to strangers.

It is totally fearless in the face of danger.



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Some general advice when visiting an address with a dog;

- Ask the dog owner to move it to another room.
- Avoid making eye contact with the dog.
- Stand tall and be confident, they can sense fear.
- Avoid approaching the dog, they are territorial animals.
- Do not stroke the dog or put your face near the dog.
- Look for warning signs in the dog; growling or snarling, baring of teeth, pulled-back ears, tense body muscles and tail tucked away are just some of them.

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If you visit an address and whilst there, you are in fear that you may be bitten by a dog because the dog is very aggressive, or you are bitten by a dog at the address, this dog is potentially 'Dangerously Out of Control' and the owner/keeper commits a criminal offence.