

Firstly may I reiterate Councillor Middleton, that this Item has been requested by residents of Modbury, brought to our attention as the dog warden councillors and is not a personal item requested by ourselves.

However, as a service dog user and non driver I do have particular insight as to what provision for safe, free running is available in Modbury.

May I take a moment to explain the complexities of owning a service dog; the dogs are valuable resources, for instance at the end of my guide dogs life, from birth to retirement she may well have racked up £55,000 of voluntary public contributions therefore her safety and health is paramount.

1: Service dogs are not to be free run off lead unless the area is recognised as a safe zone.

2: We are not encouraged to free run them n beaches or moorland and definitely not in areas where there is Livestock.

As you can see, this severely narrows our choices in Modbury.

The lanes are definitely not a safe zone, and we are recently all too well aware of the consequences of free running dogs in fields where there is livestock.

For most owners of service dogs in Modbury it requires a carer or friend to drive ourselves and our dogs out of Modbury to find a flat, safe place to exercise our dogs, thus taking away our right for independent living in our own home town. For most of us, retaining independence is the reason for having a service dog in the first place.

We are required in our contracts as service dog users to provide both daily exercise and social time for our dogs, as set down by the animal welfare act 2006 to enable these working dogs to receive and exhibit normal animal behaviour patterns. It is worth noting that service dogs are highly trained and highly unlikely to cause a nuisance to other public space users.

According to research done by the Kennel club, those in our society who rely on their canine friends for company and assistance in their lives, are severely impacted by the ever increasing impact of P.S.P.O.'s, and most of these PSPO's are simply passing the problems on to other areas eg. Into our lanes, and this is making our already difficult lives harder.

You've heard my for's and I appreciate your against's and with toxocariasis being one of your biggest reasons for the against motion I hesitate to add that even though we are all aware of it and its implications, and that, I, as a person with severe visual loss. totally understand the fear. But, we are surrounded by dogs, in our homes, cafes, pubs, the lawns of our friends gardens and other surrounding areas and will continue to do so for ever.

It has been brought to my attention that foxes and cats also carry this worm and they certainly do not pick up after themselves and Im sure visit our recreation field most nights.

This request highlights the need for a middle ground. With reference to which Councillor Middleton has previously stated, where Modbury, like Aveton Gifford, Ermington, Filham, Kingston, Lodiswell, Plymstock all live together and provide for all members of their community. Including more poo bins and more poo picking and perhaps the naming of fellow Modbury residence who do not do this.

At the end of this Month, my guide dog will retire and as is tradition, I will leave my house with her in harness and the trainer will ask me to walk with her to Modbury's free/safe area and I will have to reply, Modbury does not have one. We will then make our way to our Churches car park which is enclosed and the trainer will take back the harness and Unis will have a quick safe run and then she will walk home on her lead, retired.

At this time I will be hoping the church wardens will understand my need to use their private land and let us be. Thank you for listening to the request of some dog owners via Councillor's Middleton and Woodcock.