



Media Release

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photo opportunity – see below

NEW KIT TO PROTECT FOOTBALLERS FROM PUTTING THEIR FOOT IN IT

For most footballers the only protection they need to wear for a match would be a pair of shin pads, but team members of the Killinghall Nomads under 10s and under 11s are considering donning a full contamination suit to play their matches on the Hydro Playing fields.

The Hydro playing fields are a well-known dog fouling hot spot. Recent patrols by Dog Control Officers and the Environmental Protection Team have resulted in on the spot fines being issued to irresponsible dog owners who failed to pick up after their dogs.

The council is using National Poop Scoop Week to focus once again on the fact that ‘not picking up’ is a criminal offence. Their goal is for a dog poo free environment.

Nicky Garside, Assistant Director of Health and Housing, said: “We get a lot of complaints about dog fouling on playing fields. Officers are patrolling target areas early mornings, late evenings and weekends, which is when most dog walking takes place, in an effort to catch offenders. That’s the dog walkers, of course, because dogs are just doing what comes naturally.

“Some of our on the spot fines have been issued as early as 7.00 am when most dog walkers would think we weren’t about. They have the choice of paying a £50 fine or facing prosecution in the Magistrates’ Court where the fine could be up to a maximum of £1000.”

But not every dog owner is irresponsible and many do pick up, or use the dog bins and dog toilets provided.

“We are asking residents to help us identify irresponsible dog owners. Not just at the Hydro playing fields, added Nicky Garside. “We don’t want these young footballers to have to pick up dog poo before they can play a match or, indeed, anyone’s leisure time being spoilt by this fouling of our streets and parks.”

Chris Dixon, Chairman of Killinghall Nomads, said: “We always do a sweep before we play any match and parents of our footballers have to regularly clear dog mess before we can start playing. We have seen an increase in responsible dog ownership and generally we have a good relationship with dog walkers. But it is sad that the minority are spoiling it for all of us.”

Residents can report irresponsible dog owners by contacting the Dog Control Officers on 01423 556633 giving them a description of the person and their dog and details of where they walk so the Dog Control Officers can be there to catch them in the act. ENDS

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY: 5.30 pm, Tuesday 15 June at the Hydro playing fields, Jennyfield Drive, Harrogate. Members of the Killinghall Nomads will be kitted out in their normal football gear but one of them will be donning one of Environmental Health’s full contamination kits – white suit, helmet and goggles.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Dog owners are advised that if there is no dog waste bin near to where they walk their dogs, they can put dog waste, properly bagged, into the nearest litterbin or take the bag home and place in their normal dustbin.

Harrogate Borough Council provides over 200 dog waste bins. They also carry out numerous awareness campaigns, school talks etc. But there are still some troublesome spots in the district, particularly playing fields. Fines have been issued on Butler Road playing Killinghall Moor, Belmont playing fields, Harrogate, Haywra Park in Knaresborough and Hell Wath in Ripon.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Nicky Garside, Assistant Director of Health, is available on 01423 556847.