



*To: Vets in Wealden*

Dear Sir/Madam  
Environmental Protection Act 1990  
Stray, Lost and Found Dogs

I am writing about the local procedure for stray, lost and found dogs in Wealden. When a dog is found in a public place in the district of Wealden and the finder believes it to be stray, they must contact our contractor Animal Wardens Ltd on 01424 490034. If the finder knows who owns the dog, they should return the dog to them. Before collecting a stray dog, Animal Wardens check the lost dog register and if a match is identified will arrange a reconciliation.

A finder of a stray dog may elect to keep the dog, but must inform Animal Wardens of the full details, so if the owner comes forward, they can be reunited. The finder of a stray dog, who does inform Animal Wardens and holds the dog for a month, may then become the legal owner of the dog. If they have not informed Animal Wardens, they can never be the legal owner under this legislation and may be guilty of an offence.

A local authority, or their appointed contractor, can seize a stray dog and detain for seven clear days, to allow for any reconciliation. Should the dog remain unclaimed at the end of the seven clear days, the dog is the property of the local authority and we will seek to rehome the dog, or in rare cases euthanise.

The finder of a lost dog should not pass on that dog to another party, including veterinary practices. Be aware that Animal Wardens will not collect a dog held by a veterinary practice, in accordance with their contract. Should a veterinary practice accept a dog presented to them by a finder, they are not and can never be the legal holder of that dog. All finders should therefore be advised to contact Animal Wardens on 01424 490034.

I am aware that Eastbourne and Lewes District Councils operate differently and may on occasions accept dogs accepted by veterinary practices. To be clear, this applies only to the districts of Eastbourne and Lewes. To identify the local authority boundaries, you could use the postcode and local authority electronic finders or the layers on GIS maps. (~~Local Authority – Area (findthatpostcode.uk)~~)

Animal Wardens operates between 09:00 and 21:00 daily and will respond to all answerphone messages within one hour. A stray dog will then be collected from the finder within six hours between 09:00 and 21:00. There is no collection centre as an acceptance point will be agreed between Animal Wardens and the finder of a stray dog.

I hope this letter clarifies these local arrangements.

Yours faithfully

Environmental Health Manager