



Canine behavioural problems as we emerge from the pandemic

Hopefully we are seeing the light at the end of what has felt like a very long tunnel. However for many puppies obtained during the pandemic, the relaxation of the rules can highlight some negative effects of lockdown on behaviour; the most obvious and serious one is separation anxiety. Being at home more can improve anxious pets that crave more human contact but hinder those that find change of routine challenging.

A positive effect of more available time is developing that powerful human animal bond but also improved learning & training compared to an equivalent age prior to the pandemic.

However the delay in socialisation (past the critical age of 16 weeks), accentuation of hyper excitability caused by restrictions in movement, along with the sudden spike in dog's numbers in the area can have negative effects particularly in the parks.

It is always prudent to not assume every dog is friendly or confident and to check before you let your dog approach. There has been a colour code system to help other owners know from a distance the temperament of the dog. These can be in the form of a collar, harness or ribbon.

- Red: Do not approach the dog, and beware.
- Orange: The animal does not get along well with other dogs.
- Yellow: The dog is nervous and unpredictable.
- Green: Feel free to approach alone or with animals. The dog is friendly.
- Blue: On duty or going through training, and therefore don't disturb.
- White: The dog is deaf, blind or disabled.
- Purple: Don't feed the dog (for any reason)

Obviously not every one is aware or uses the system so be careful making assumptions! If you are worried about any negative behaviour in your pets then it is strongly recommended to seek professional advice before the problem escalates further and becomes more of a challenge to manage.

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