



PRESS RELEASE

Second dog owner convicted for failing to keep her dog under control on Ashdown Forest

On the 3rd of August 2018 before Hastings Magistrates, dog owner Aurora Morganite of Old Lodge pleaded guilty to breaching Bye-law 6 of the Ashdown Forest Bye-laws by virtue of the Ashdown Forest Act 1974 which states:

“A person shall not cause any dog belonging to him or in his charge to be upon the Forest or remain upon the Forest unless such dog be and continue to be under proper control and be effectively restrained from causing annoyance to any person and from worrying or disturbing any animal”.

Ms Morganite was fined £100 with a £30 victim surcharge and made to pay legal costs of £325 for allowing her dog to be out of control in the Three Wards area of Ashdown Forest on 21 May 2018.

Despite repeated warnings about the dog’s behaviour from both Ashdown Forest staff and the police, Ms Morganite allowed her Wolf-dog (a Wolf crossed with a domestic dog) off the lead in the middle of the grazing area, permitting the Wolf-dog to be at large with livestock and wild animals. The dog was loose for a period of around two hours on the Forest. In subsequent days, three sheep were found, one of whom had died and two who were severely injured and had to be put down. The most likely explanation for the state the sheep were in is that they were maimed by Ms Morganite’s dog. She and her husband and pet dog were evicted from their home as a result of this incident.

This prosecution follows a similar conviction in January 2018 whereby an out-of-control Husky killed a sheep on Ashdown Forest.

Dog walkers on Ashdown Forest are reminded that they must ensure their dogs are effectively restrained and kept under control at all times and that they take all reasonable steps to ensure that their dogs do not injure, endanger, intimidate or otherwise cause distress to any persons or animals.

Ashdown Forest is common land and sheep and cattle roam freely in the grazing area between April and November each year.

August 2018