



## Behavioural Problems In Dogs

At Lanes Vets we want to keep your dog as healthy as possible, part of this involves avoidance of behavioural problems. Our advice is to socialise early in life as this greatly reduces problems later on.

### Socialisation

Puppies exposed to a lot of new experiences early in life are less likely to have behaviour problems later in life.

We recommend carrying puppies outside until they are old enough to be fully vaccinated so that they get use to the sights, sounds and smells of the world out side. This includes people, traffic and other animals. You can take your puppy to a friend's house with a friendly, vaccinated dog for social interaction.

When at home get your puppy used to noises such as the vacuum cleaner, washing machine and children. This process begins when a puppies eyes and ears are open, from around 3 weeks of age so take care to source a puppy from a knowledgeable breeder where the puppies have lived as part of the household.

### Training

Once puppies are fully vaccinated try to take them to Basic Training classes. As well as being good for socialisation, these classes help teach the young dog basic obedience and they also teach the owner how to control their dog. Before starting at a class, always go along and watch a training session. A good session would ideally have less than 10 puppies per class and only use positive reinforcement – avoid classes that use water pistols, choke chains or any other aversive techniques. Frightened puppies are unable to learn and aversive techniques will only damage the trust bond between you and your puppy.

Train your young dog at home with short training sessions often being the best. Always reward your dog for good behaviour. Training is excellent mental stimulation, a bored puppy will find it's own entertainment which may include activities you don't want such as shredding books. Make sure you direct your puppies activity with items such as frozen Kong toys, food toys and training exercises.

### Later Training

More advanced training classes are available later on to keep your dog on track. Activities such as agility, fly ball and other fun classes are great ways to enjoy time with your dog and keep them socialised.

## Behaviour Problems

If your dog does develop any problem behaviours, these are best treated early on. This is an unlicensed field which means that anyone can call themselves a behaviourist. The Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors (APBC) is an organisation aiming to help provide the public with access to behaviourists that have both the academic background and experience required to provide a good service. Please contact us for advice if you are having problems and we are able to refer you to an APBC registered behaviourist.

<http://www.apbc.org.uk>

Finally, remember that training should be fun for your dog as well as for you!

## Lanes Vets Locations & Contact Information.

<b>Lanes Vets Garstang</b> Leachfield Industrial Estate, Green Lane West, Garstang, Lancashire PR3 1PR.	Telephone. 01995 603 349 Email: <a href="mailto:garstang@lanesvets.com">garstang@lanesvets.com</a>
<b>Lanes Vets Lancaster</b> Units 4 - 5 Lake Enterprise Court , Ladies Walk, Caton Road, Lancaster LA1 3NX.	Telephone. 01524 67777 Email: <a href="mailto:lancaster@lanesvets.com">lancaster@lanesvets.com</a>
<b>Lanes Vets Poulton</b> 235 Garstang Road East, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire FY6 8JH.	Telephone. 01253 891 088 Email: <a href="mailto:poulton@lanesvets.com">poulton@lanesvets.com</a>

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