



Welcome to
Boredom Busters Pet Care Services
Spring Newsletter
07726 265848 Brentwood
<http://www.brentwooddogwalker.co.uk/>

News from the Team

I have finally been told by Brentwood council that I am licensed for dog boarding! This is great news, as it means I am the only fully insured and licensed domestic dog boarder in the borough – and you get first dibs on my time! I am still waiting for my nice, shiny laminated licence to come through the post, but I have been assured it is backdated to the day I applied so I am now open for bookings.

My basic charges are set at £25 per DAY (nights are free, half days £10), with all my regular (ie at least once a week) customers getting 20% off bookings. This should not be compared to the price of a kennel stay, because your dog will be in my home, mixing with my dogs (who have met most of your dogs already), getting in the way of the telly as they probably do at home, snuggling up with me, and generally be getting all the love and attention I can give them. I have a 60' secure garden and three different parks/woodland areas within easy walking distance, plus my usual walking areas to enjoy. I have a soft spot for beaches at weekends too.

There will be no extra charges for weekends, but bank holidays and extra dogs please check with me. I am limited to one family's dogs at a time, and I will do my best to give my regular customers priority, so please let me know of any dates you may need me as soon as possible.

Awards/Reviews/Evaluation

I am lucky enough to be in the running for an Essex Chronicle Business Excellence Award later in the year (Corporate Responsibility) as well as the Essex Countryside Awards for Best New Company. I am very excited simply to be among the entrants!

I am also on The Pet Net (<http://www.thepet.net/services/560>) which has its own awards, so if you feel you can, a review and a rating would be most appreciated. Registration is needed, and you can also check out dog trainers, groomers and other services in the area.

I have also included an evaluation form which I would really appreciate if you could fill in and leave for me. This will help me to provide the best possible service to suit your needs.

Supplements

I am now a supplier of Pooch and Mutt natural supplements for dogs. This is Bionic Biotic for digestion, immunity, skin & coat and Mobile Bones for mobility, agility & joint health. I use both for my dogs - Beauty has the biotics to help with her digestion - when she came to me she made a terrible mess and it was impossible to clear up. Now I could play football with it... Both Fred and Beauty have Mobile Bones. It's usually for big or elderly dogs, so Beauty has it as she is 8 now, but Fred has it as well as he is so active and rather clumsy. Please let me know if you are interested in trying a bag. It's cheaper than in the shops or online!

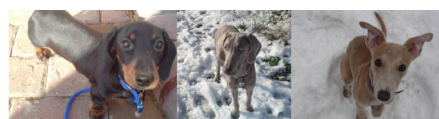
Puppies

Some of you have puppies coming up to 6 months in the next month or two (or may already be there). Be aware that after this they will be speeding towards adolescence – a time when they may decide they don't have to do what you've carefully taught them after all. The age of adolescence differs with gender, breed, whether they have been neutered or not and the individual dog, so carefully begin to reinforce the training they already have, keep practising in secure areas so they don't suddenly 'forget' what they've been taught. Keep up training classes until at least a year old if possible.

Puppies should have all their adult teeth by 7 months although they may still be in some discomfort for a while. They may chew for other reasons as they try to learn about the world – or learn what gets your attention, so continue being careful what you leave in their reach until they are at least 12/14 months old. Try to give them appropriate things to chew on.

Adolescence is a time when a lot of dogs become very hard work and is the most common age for dogs to be given up to rescues. The more difficult your dog might be now, the prouder you will be when they come through it! My Fred came to me at 11 months because he was so difficult, and now he's mature he's got a string of rosettes, has been a model for magazines and to date one book, and is now working on his Gold Good Citizen Award. It could be you!

Another thing to think about is how you want your dog walked – with a compatible group, or on their own? One hourly visit, or stick with two? Please let me know as the time approaches – I usually bring my dogs with me before introducing pups to 'strangers' if they are not used to other dogs.



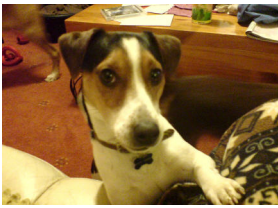
Training Tips

Recall and Away

Recall is one of the most important things to teach dogs, but often it's seen as difficult to train. You can get by without it, but with it, life with your dog becomes a joy, even if he can't do anything else. 'Away' goes hand in hand with recall, and is almost a side effect of training.

Make sure you adjust your dog's dinner if you use food as a reward. How long this takes depends on how long your dog might have been playing 'chase me' every time you try to catch him!

Recall training, as with most training, starts in the home.



Regularly call your dog to you, as many times as possible, using a high-pitched and interesting tone of voice. Pick a word to use and stick to it, making sure all members of the family are happy to use it. If time is hard

to find, try doing it when the adverts come on during your favourite telly programme, or if you watch soaps and serials, call every time someone has a drink, an argument, or a snog! Don't try calling him if he's doing something far more rewarding, wait until he's lying down, or looking a bit bored and needing some attention. You want to start with success.

Reward your dog every time he comes with a treat, a game, throwing a toy, or just a lot of love and attention. If at first he won't come, split his dinner into small amounts, and call him for his dinner. Wait until he's given up hope of any more and has wandered off, and call him for the next 'course', and so on.

Once he's understood this new game and is nice and reliable, drop the treats or games to every other time, then one in three, then randomly until finally you are rewarding only the very best, super quickest returns - aim for the 'whiplash' effect where your dog's head swivels to you when you call no matter what he's doing - his body should be following!

Now is the time to move into the garden, where there are more distractions - be prepared to start from the very beginning if necessary.

The scariest time might be taking your dog off the lead in a public place for the first time. Try to find somewhere safe, away from roads, and quiet without too many distractions - a country park just before lunchtime on a Sunday is probably not going to give you the results you are looking for. Don't do this just after dinner either. You want your dog to come back for food, if nothing else!



Take some high value treats or a toy your dog loves with you (if you can keep this toy ONLY for walks from now on this will help a great deal, as with my Fred). If you are really worried, do the following on a long lead first.

Don't take the long line off until you are successful on a regular basis. Some dogs may never be able to be let off lead, but the vast majority will be fine.

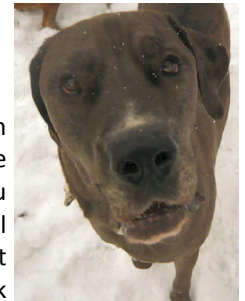
Take your dog's lead off. Then walk in the opposite direction a short way. If properly prepared at home your dog should stay quite close to you, or he may decide to scamper off, but as you are in a safe area, DON'T PANIC.



Don't chase him either. Or call, unless you think he really will come back. Run further away, or make sounds as if you are. Sit down, lie down. Make noises as if you've just found the most

wonderful thing in the world, and his natural curiosity should bring him to you. Don't try to catch him. Go away again. He'll think this is a wonderful new game and follow. If he comes close enough, give him a treat and tell HIM to go away, ideally before he's gone, but while he's going will do nearly as well. Repeat this a few times, making sure to send him away again each time, and then begin calling him back to you.

After a while you may find it difficult to get your dog to leave you.



Now is the time to make contact, a pat on the head, flap his ears, if you can, stroke his collar, or even grasp it briefly if you can. Send him away again. Your eventual aim is to be able to call him to you and put his lead on. Once you've done that, walk

few steps, take the lead off again, and send him away. This will stop any silliness where the dog sees the lead come out and knows it means the end of the walk and won't come to you.

While you're walking, occasionally hide behind a tree. Your dog will wonder where you are. Give them a few seconds, and call them (you don't want them thinking you've gone home and trying to run off home by themselves so don't leave it too long). Try to vary your route, or suddenly turn and go back the way you came, without telling your dog. Give him a chance to realise you've changed direction and he will learn to watch where you are going, rather than going his own sweet way.

If you leave the area by the same gate, or always end up at your car, do the same thing there if it's safe to do so - call the dog, send him away, call, send away, on lead, off lead, send away. If there is a distraction your dog will not leave, try to call before he gets there, or even before he's made one pawstep in that direction. Keep your eye out, and sometimes you can call before he even spots it. If you have to put him on a lead to walk him past the distraction, he should be quite happy with this by now because he will know there is off-lead time coming again.

Hopefully by now you will have a dog you can trust to let off the lead. Be realistic, my Greyhound Beauty has plenty of off-lead time, but only in areas we know well because of her habit of chasing squirrels and rabbits. I can't recall her from a squirrel, but I know she will come back to me once its safely in a tree and she can't see it. I can never get her away from rabbit warrens, and she won't give up. As she risks putting her foot in a hole and breaking her leg, she stays on lead when rabbits are about. She never comes off at dusk and dawn! Too many rabbits out and about!