

# Police urge public to keep dogs on lead following increase in sheep worrying

Police are urging the public to keep their dogs on leads or under close control following an increase in the number of sheep attacked by dogs in the Pentland Hills.

The Flotterstone area has suffered at least 4 attacks on sheep since April resulting in injury, drowning or death.

Officers are now asking members of the public to contact the police immediately if they witness an attack.



## Pentland Hills

A police spokesperson said: "To own a dog is a privilege, however with ownership comes responsibilities. The vast majority of dog owners are very responsible, but unfortunately there's a small minority who aren't.

"Even if your dog is usually very obedient, it's every dog's instinct to chase. They don't understand the impact of this – but as an owner you do.

"If a dog is found to have attacked livestock, the owner may face criminal action. This is not just when a dog chases or attacks an animal, but can also be when a dog is in close proximity to livestock. This can cause sheep or other livestock to panic and flee, resulting in serious injury or death. As well as the distress and harm caused to the animals, these incidents have both a financial and emotional impact on the farmer that is completely avoidable.

"If you are out walking a dog, remember you can meet livestock anywhere in the countryside. Don't be complacent with routes you've previously travelled. It's important to remember livestock are moved around.

"Be assured that any incidents of attacks will be robustly dealt with and offenders reported to the Procurator Fiscal. Livestock owners may also take direct action at the time including shooting the dog to protect their stock.

"Please enjoy your visit to the Regional Park, support the local farming community, and keep within the law by keeping your dog under proper control at all times."