**"Kirby Muxloe parish council working for its residents"**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**Dogs owners fined over nuisance barking**

A Kirby Muxloe couple whose dogs disturbed neighbours with a ‘frenzy of barking’ at all times of the day and night have been prosecuted.

The case against Monic Edwards and Andy Pedu Nelson, from Roundhill, was proved in their absence at Leicester Magistrates’ Court. They were ordered to pay almost £4,000 each for failing to control their noisy animals and so breaching a noise abatement notice.

The court heard Edwards and Pedu Nelson received an initial noise warning letter from the Environmental Health Team at Blaby District Council in March 2023. The letter followed neighbour email complaints and audio recordings uploaded on a Council reporting app.

Subsequent officer visits to a neighbour’s property had confirmed the barking from the eight dogs kennelled in their garden was a potential statutory nuisance.

When complaints intensified, with barking reported not only during the day but throughout the night, a noise abatement notice was served with compliance ordered by 12 May 2023.

Further officer visits were made to a neighbouring property once the compliance period was over to check if the problem persisted. Each time the dogs could be heard barking loudly.

Neighbours also continued to report ‘an absolute frenzy’ of barking sometimes up until 10pm and into the early hours of the morning.

With officers satisfied the abatement order had been breached Edwards and Pedu Nelson were invited to an interview to discuss their failure to stop the dogs barking.

During the separate interviews both Edwards and Pedu Nelson said they had ‘about eight dogs’ but neither could name any of them. They each claimed the dogs were only noisy when provoked and said there had been issues with drones flying above their property and people deliberately walking close to their garden fence which caused the animals to bark.

The couple were advised they needed to take sufficient steps to stop the dog barking causing a nuisance to neighbours. When they failed to do so and the complaints about barking continued, the Council decided to prosecute.

Magistrates were presented with evidence from the officer visits and audio from recording equipment installed at an adjacent property.

The bench was also shown witness statements and noise app submissions from a neighbour. This demonstrated that ‘the noise from the dog barking occurs very frequently, for long durations, at unsocial hours and this is having a significant impact on their quality of life at home’.

Magistrates found Edwards and Pedu Nelson guilty of breaching the abatement notice and were each ordered to pay a £2,000 fine, £1,197.30 in costs and £3,997.30 victim surcharge.

Councillor Les Phillimore, Blaby District Council Portfolio Holder for Housing, Community and Environmental Services, said: “Many of us love dogs and have them as pets, however, ownership comes with a multitude of responsibilities. One of those is ensuring your dogs don’t disturb others.

“Of course dogs bark but continued, loud barking by a large number of dogs at all hours of the day and night is bound to have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of anyone living nearby. This kind of noise is a nuisance and if we are alerted to it, we will act. We have a number of tools people can use now to provide evidence of nuisance, including the noise reporting app, making it easier for us to intervene.”

\* The court case took place on Wednesday 28 February