



SAFETY CONCERNS AFTER DOG ATTACK

Grant was left traumatised and scared by the incident

By BEN HALL

A COUNCILLOR is appealing for information after a man and his dog were attacked in Whitwick.

Grant Wardle and his Weimaraner were both bitten by a rogue Staffordshire Bull Terrier off its leash in Holly Hayes Woods, near Whitwick Quarry.

The attack happened on the afternoon of Saturday, June 19 and left Grant needing an operation on his thumb while Peadan had to have surgery on her abdomen.

Understandably, Grant was left traumatised and scared by the incident, one which Whitwick Councillor Tony Gillard believes should not be allowed to happen again.

He told the *Times*: "I want to personally appeal for the owner of this dog to come forward and we can sort something out, even if it just gets a muzzle and a lead.

"Lots of people with dogs go walking in that area, never mind all of the children who will be walking there now that it's the summer holidays."

Grant, who was walking with his nephew at the time, described how he saw the dog charge at him from 30 yards away without provocation.

The Leicester Road resident said: "The dog just darted towards us, then the owner came along and walked off without saying a word.

"If it had been someone more vulnerable like a child or elderly person instead of me, they wouldn't have stood a chance.

"It's worrying to think that the dog is out there in our local area and capable of that sort of thing."

Cllr Gillard believes the canine committed the vicious attack without hesitation once and, as such, would not think twice about doing it again.

He continued: "What chance has a youngster got against a dog like that? It shouldn't be the case that you feel lucky it was a larger guy like Grant instead of someone else.

"The Friends of Holly Hayes Wood have done tremendous work to improve that area but a dog like this can make it dangerous."

Grant and Peadan eventually made a full recovery, but not without weeks of emotional stress.

Relaxing and recovering at home with his three dogs, Grant added: "I was supposed to be on holiday after it happened but of course that got cancelled.

"Instead I've had to have more time off work and pay £300 in vet bills."

Steven Havers, a local dog behavioural expert, said of the situation: "Clearly this dog was behaving independently, without the authority of its owner. This is the kind of thing we can help with."

As a professional dog trainer featured in the *Times* two weeks ago, Steven believes he can help the owner of the dog with his pet's behaviour.

More information about his specialist service is available at www.haversspecialiseddogtraining.co.uk.