

Free Press

Dog injures Chepstow boy in attack

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THE family of a teenage boy injured in a dog attack which killed one of their pets, was left furious when police released the dog back onto the streets.

The attack happened when a large lurcher-labrador cross used for hunting rabbits escaped from his owner's garden and jumped a gate into the family's property on Laburnham Way, Chepstow.

Luke Mihailovich, 16, was at home when he heard barking and squealing outside and saw the lurcher attacking his small white jack russell, Dax. He ran outside screaming for help and tried to separate the two dogs, but was bitten himself.

Neighbour Duncan Clark heard the commotion and ran to help Luke. He told the boy to get indoors, grabbed a spade and tried to get the lurcher, also called Luke, away from Dax.

But as the boy opened the front door the lurcher ran inside, chasing after the family's second dog, Shadow.

Mr Clark followed but by the time he had managed to beat the lurcher off both Dax and Shadow had suffered neck injuries. Dax's injuries were so bad Caroline Marlow of Marlow Vets, who treated him, said half the flesh on his neck was ripped off.

She said: "We see a lot of injuries and that was way up at the top of the injury scale."

Luke said: "I couldn't believe what had happened. I can't think of the words. I've been in shock for the past few days."

A police car was called and the lurcher was loaded into the back of the car. But according to eyewitnesses when the policeman radioed in to ask what to do with the dog he was told to drive around the corner and release it.

Daniel Morgan, 35, Luke's guardian, said it was disgraceful the lurcher was released, particularly as there were lots of children in the area.

He said: "The officer couldn't understand why the dog was to be released, knowing that it was a danger with the number of children around."

A spokeswoman for Gwent Police confirmed they were investigating the incident.

She said: "On May 2 we received a call reporting a stray dog was in the vicinity of Laburnham Way and had entered a neighbour's property. Officers attended and enquiries made in the area. No injuries were disclosed or complaints were forthcoming.

"Inquiries were made with the RSPCA and local kennels and because there was no provision the decision was made to let the dog go and find its way back to the owner.

"Subsequently, on May 5 we received a call from another resident in the vicinity saying his son had received a dog bite on May 2. The victim and his family have been visited to establish the nature of their complaint.

"Inquiries are ongoing to establish the identity of the dog and owner to progress the investigation.

"At no time has the victim's family disclosed his dogs had been injured. It's not been established if this dog is the one involved in the incident on May 2.

"Once the owner has been identified appropriate action can be considered.

"Officers have contacted the family to discuss their concerns and the circumstances surrounding the incident are being reviewed."

The lurcher's owner, Mostyn Morgan, admitted what his dog had done was wrong but insisted he "wouldn't usually hurt a fly".

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