

Protection Dogs: More Downsides Than You May Think

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What's the difference between a £40,000 protection dog and a security dog team?

A security dog team is unlikely to bite your kids.

While this may seem like a setup to a really bad joke, the fact is that there are dozens of businesses offering protection dogs for ridiculous sums of money, but what they won't tell you is that protection dogs are only as good as the training their owners are willing to put in. When asked whether protection dogs are safe, one site states that they are "much safer than a dog that has had no training." That's a really low bar to clear.

The Benefits of Protection Dogs

There's nothing like peace of mind, and protection dogs do give that illusion. After all, you have an animal patrolling your property ready to alert you of any intruders. Some are trained to take down intruders when they venture on your property.

A protection dog can also travel with you, just like any other dog. They tend to be highly trained and can make wonderful pets. Footballer Rio Ferdinand amongst other celebrities reportedly bought two after a spate of burglaries at footballers' homes.

The Cons of Protection Dogs

The cost of getting a protection dog is substantial — you can pay anywhere between £20,000 and £40,000. This doesn't take into account the continuous training that is required. And protection dogs do need continuous training. Otherwise, they can easily unlearn protection behaviours and end up becoming either untrained menaces or soppy lapdogs.

Then there's risk.

Under the Animals Act 1971, a dog owner is strictly liable for damage caused by that dog. A dog who is taught to "restrain" anyone it perceives as an intruder is:

- Likely to cause damage
- Caused by a characteristic of the animal (e.g., biting)
- Known by the owner

This would usually satisfy the three-stage test for strict liability.

Additionally, a dog owner has a duty of care to anyone who is likely to come into contact with the animal. This includes staff, delivery people and members of the general public who are likely to be in contact with the animal. That means that if a dog perceives a postman or a takeaway delivery person as a threat, any incident that happens and any injuries caused could result in serious legal matters. A dog has been trained to "restrain" essentially means that it has been trained to bite, and that could open you up to accusations of negligence.

This doesn't even take into account the potential fallout publicly from such an incident.

There Is a Safer Way: Security Dog Teams

Instead of buying multiple protection dogs, a qualified security dog team offers a peace of mind while understanding the ins and outs of the law regarding dogs. They can discern against legitimate threats and ensure that the dogs supplied are always under control but ready to eliminate threats as needed. This helps ensure you get peace of mind while providing a team that keeps you and your family safe.

London based security firm - **Stok K9 Security Services** emphasise that the key lies in close collaboration between experienced and carefully vetted dog handlers and their specially trained security dogs. Stok K9 security dogs and handlers receive constant training to ensure their skills and abilities are

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kept to the highest standards thus ensuring safety for everyone at all times.

Before investing in any security measure, speak to an expert. Don't fall victim to the media whirlwind that can surround current trends or the supposedly countless benefits of guard dogs. Do your research and invest accordingly; the right services will reap endless benefits.

For more information about Stok K9 Security Services visit www.stokk9services.com.

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