

# Scotland's dog attack 'epidemic': 20 hurt every day

By John Paul Breslin

SCOTLAND is in the grip of a dog attack 'epidemic', it's claimed, with 20 incidents recorded every day last year.

Demands for tougher control laws have been made after it emerged the number of people needing hospital treatment for attacks has soared.

In the last year alone, victims were treated at Scottish hospitals more than 7,600 times for injuries inflicted by dogs, with some patients including babies and very young children undergoing major surgery for their wounds.

There are around 600,000 pet dogs in Scotland. Last year, 28 Scottish local authorities issued 355 Dog Control Notices – a 44.8 per cent rise from 2020.

Scottish Conservative MSP Maurice Golden said the rise 'is a cause for serious concern'.

Caprice Finlay knows only too well how terrifying a dog attack can be. Her daughter, Harley Chatterton, was just four when she was savaged by a dog in a communal garden in Glasgow last year.

The attack resulted in Harley undergoing two hours of plastic surgery, including 60 stitches on her face.

Despite the injuries the dog inflicted, the owner was allowed their pet back with no charges ever being brought. Ms Finlay, 25, said: 'Harley has to live with the scars for the rest of her life and yet the owner got the dog back. How is that fair?'

Dave Joyce, an official with the Communications Workers Union, which represents postmen and women, is part of a Scottish Government-led working group set up to advise and assist with reviewing the Dangerous Dogs Act.

He said: 'I remain very concerned about the continuing UK dog attack epidemic.'

'The unacceptably high prevalence, scale and volume of dog attacks, plus the impact on victims – which can be life changing – is nothing less than a national crisis.'

Gaye Fisher, of Protect our Pets, is also among those calling for a DNA register of dogs. This would include compulsory registration of all dogs, linked to one owner and underpinned by dog DNA registration, as well as compulsory third-party liability insurance.

## Now Barbie takes over the charts

THE soundtrack for the Barbie movie has taken over the UK singles charts by breaking previous records, the Official Charts Company has said.

Barbie: The Album, which accompanies the Greta Gerwig-directed comedy, has become the first film soundtrack to land three top five songs at the same time.

American singer Billie Eilish's contemplative What Was I Made For? has reached number three this week. Dua Lipa's Dance The Night is now at number four and in fifth position is the reworking of Aqua's Barbie World by rappers Nicki Minaj and Ice Spice.

The movie starring Margot Robbie and Gosling hit British cinemas last week.



Horror attack: Harley Chatterton, aged four

# My au pair's been sleeping with my husband and THREE sons.

## My husband's left me... for my mother

### Two of the anguished calls for pastoral advice received by one of Britain's leading rabbis, who says his faith views sex as (mostly!) a force for good

**I** WON'T say the life of a minister of religion is non-stop sex – but it can sometimes feel like that.

Yes, much of my time as a rabbi is taken up by prayer, discussions about the meaning of life, hospital visits and the like, but it also involves dealing with the messy bits of congregants' lives... which is where the sex comes in.

Over the years, I've encountered couples who have broken every 'Thou shalt not' in the book. Take the case of Deidre, a woman in her mid-40s, whose personal circumstances took a dramatic turn after she fell down the stairs at home and broke her leg.

Her husband recoiled at the idea of catering to the whims of their three teenage sons alone and so arranged for an au pair to move in and take on all the household chores.

With her leg in plaster and confined to a wheelchair, Deidre accepted every invitation that came her way from friends offering to pick

her up and take her out for the day. It seemed like a good arrangement until the day she came home to find that the au pair – an attractive 20-something – had left a notebook on the table.

When she idly picked it up, Deidre couldn't help noticing that the page at which it fell open featured a sketch of her husband – naked. She flicked through the pages of what turned out to be a shockingly explicit diary with mounting horror. The au pair, who was clearly a domestic goddess in more ways than one, had not only slept with her husband, but each of her three sons.

So it was a distraught woman who called me seeking advice on what to do next.

After much anguished debate, we decided her family was worth saving and that, while each of her menfolk had gone astray, the triumphant nature of the remarks in the au pair's notebook suggested that the various episodes could be attributed more to her nymphomaniac tendencies than their predatoriness.

The au pair was sacked, the

husband severely reprimanded and – to protect their fragile egos – the boys were not told quite how generously their in-house femme fatale had shared her sexual favours.

The leg eventually healed, as did the marital relationship (after the husband was given time off for good behaviour). But the worst part was the waiting as they sought to establish whether any of the various energetic couplings had left the au pair pregnant. Such an outcome would have

### Judaism sees pleasure as a positive act

been devastating – not least because it would leave them with the embarrassing problem of having to work out who was the dad.

If you are wondering why Deidre's first phone call was

to me and not to one of her friends, it is because Judaism has always had a very liberal attitude to sex.

While traditional Christianity often presents abstinence as the ideal – with monks and nuns at the top of the sex-free tree – Judaism sees sex as a positive act. Indeed, a lack of it is grounds for divorce.

The pleasures of the flesh are also discussed very openly in rabbinic writings and sermons, which tend to be about daily realities rather than the next world, so it is not uncommon to discuss one's love life with a rabbi. The rabbi may not be a sexpert, but he or she is no prude either.

Still, even I was taken aback when a member of my congregation called Kate phoned me in distress. She told me her husband had just walked out to live with another woman, but in a way that made me sense a bigger problem.

I arranged to go round to see her that afternoon and the full story came out: the other woman was her mother. Her husband had run off with his mother-in-law. Now the