

Were dogs driven to kill by the smell of a pensioner's roast lamb dinner?

- **Armed police called to a house in Clubmoor, Liverpool, last night**
- **When officers arrived they found body of a man outside his home**
- **The dog that killed him was out-of-control and had to be shot dead**
- **Neighbour says he had been cooking when he was attacked**
- **The two women were first arrested under Dangerous Dogs Act**
- **They have now been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter, and bailed**

By [Jaya Narain](#)

A pensioner was mauled to death after dogs smelled his roast dinner and broke through his garden fence.

Cliff Clarke slightly burnt the lamb shank he was cooking for his evening meal so he opened his back door. But the smell of the food attracted two large dogs.



Police at the scene removing the dog, that was shot dead by armed police, from the house in Clubmoor

One – a Staffordshire bull terrier crossed with a bull mastiff, according to neighbours – jumped at the retired hospital porter as he stepped out of his back door.

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- [Gruesome dog attack caught on camera as witnesses try to pull them off and even hit them with a stick](#)
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The dog's jaws clamped round one of Mr Clarke's limbs and dragged him to the ground where he was bitten a number of times.

Neighbours heard his screams and rushed to the three-bedroom terraced house. One of them armed himself with a golf club and tried to beat the animal away from the pensioner.



Police forensics officers at the scene carrying out examinations. Richard Kelly Close is a small cul-de-sac over the road from a public park

When police arrived, four armed officers shot the dog dead. It took three of them to carry its body away. Mr Clarke's next-door neighbours – two women, 27 and 28 – were arrested on suspicion of manslaughter then released on bail pending further inquiries.

Another neighbour Paul McGlynn, 46, said: 'I heard his screams – it was horrible. He seemed in a lot of pain.

'The neighbour tried to beat them back but it was too late.'

Joiner Gary Dignan, 36, said: 'The two huge dogs had got out a few hours before and were in people's gardens. One [neighbour] was too frightened to go out but called someone to report it.'



The house in Richard Kelly Close, Clubmoor. It is believed he was attacked in his garden

He added that Mr Clarke walked with a stick and described him as 'pretty frail', adding that he 'wouldn't have stood a chance against such big dogs'.

The attack, at 9pm on Saturday in the Clubmoor district of Liverpool, is the second death by dogs in the past two months. In March, Jade Anderson, 14, was killed by two Staffordshire bull terriers and two bull mastiffs at a house in Atherton, near Wigan.

Police say they are powerless to prosecute anyone in relation to Jade's death, because the attack happened on private property.

But when Mr Clarke was killed, he was on his own property where the dog was not permitted, which constitutes an offence under the Dangerous Dogs Act.



Powerful: A Staffordshire bull terrier crossed with a bull mastiff. File picture

Mr Clarke, who joined the Army in 1954 for National Service, had celebrated his 79th birthday the day before the attack.

One friend Susan Carson, 60, who lives across the road in the quiet cul-de-sac, said: 'He came round for a cup of tea at mine just before he died. He called me afterwards to say he had burnt his tea but said, "I'll be OK".'

She added: 'He's lived in that house all his life and told us that he had been born there. It is awful for him to die in such a senseless way right in his own garden.'



Police said the dog attacked the pensioner in the garden of his home in Clubmoor, Liverpool, just before 8.40pm last night

She said Mr Clarke had complained about the dogs and was going to report them to the police. 'He said they could attack somebody and was worried that the biggest dog had been trying to escape and had made a hole in the fence that it could get through,' she said. 'Cliff was in a terrible state when they brought him out, he was a bloody mess. He was only wearing his underwear and one slipper.'

It is not clear whether the second dog was involved in the attack. It was not killed but put on a lead. Police were last night questioning the two arrested women on suspicion of manslaughter.



Richard Kelly Close, in Clubmoor, is around three miles from Liverpool city centre