

## **POLICY:**

# **Dog Control Policy**

Adopted: 11 May 2015

---

## **Introduction**

This Policy on Dogs is prepared according to the requirements of Section 10 of the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act). All references in this document to Council are to the Grey District Council.

This Policy aims to give effect to the Act by ensuring there is a balance between the rights of dog owners and the safety of the general public, and recognises that dog owners, Council and the general public all have a role to play in achieving this balance.

## **Council's Objective**

The overall objective of this policy is to encourage responsible dog ownership and to promote an environment where dogs and people can happily co-exist. In order to meet this objective, dog owners must:

1. Register their dog by the time it is three months of age and every year thereafter.
2. Walk their dog on a leash when in public places, except in those areas that are either prohibited or designated as off leash or dog exercise areas.
3. Ensure their dog doesn't cause a nuisance to other people by persistent and loud barking or howling.
4. Keep their dog under direct control or confined on their property so it doesn't wander or become lost.
5. Pick up any faeces left by their dog on property other than their own.
6. Take all reasonable steps to ensure their dog doesn't injure, endanger, intimidate, or otherwise cause distress to other people.
7. Take all reasonable steps to ensure their dog doesn't injure, endanger or cause distress to any stock, poultry, domestic animal, or protected wildlife.
8. Ensure their dog doesn't damage or endanger any property belonging to other people.
9. Provide adequate shelter, housing, food and water to ensure the dog's physical requirements are met.
10. Provide adequate exercise in a controlled situation, including time off lead, to maintain the dog's physical condition and state of health.

Any breach of the Act or Bylaw may result in a significant fine or prosecution.

## **Council's Policies**

### **[1] Register Your Dog**

All dog owners must register their dogs because Council needs to identify the person responsible for the care and control of every dog. The Act requires that all dogs first registered on or after 1 July 2006 must be

micro-chipped. Also from that date, all dogs that are classified as dangerous or menacing under the Dog Control Act 1996, including dogs so classified since 1 December 2003, must be micro-chipped.

#### **What will Council do to help achieve this?**

- Keep a register of dogs, provide information to the National Dog Control Information Database, set registration fees and provide dog owners with relevant information.
- Inform and educate dog owners of the requirements of registration and micro-chipping.
- Send annual registration renewal forms to all known dog owners.
- Offer registration fee incentives for dog owners who have proven to be good owners, including those who have de-sexed their dog.
- Take enforcement action against owners of unregistered dogs.

## **[2] Provide for Dog Access to Public Places**

Council must provide dog owners with a reasonable level of access to public places without compromising public safety and comfort.

#### **What will Council do to help achieve this?**

(1) When planning or making bylaws controlling the access of dogs to public places:

- Recognise the dog owner as a user of public places;
- Aim for integration (not separation) of dogs and their owners with other park users;
- Consider dog access to parks and reserves on a district-wide basis;
- Aim to provide for a variety of dog owner needs (e.g. bins for dog faeces in designated dog exercise areas);
- Aim to provide designated dog exercise areas with signposting and information that is easily accessible for both dog owners and the general public; and
- Protect sensitive areas from dogs, such as areas where they may be a danger to children, wildlife or other animals, or where their presence may be offensive or disturbing.

(2) Make bylaws that are consistent with the above principles which:

- ***Prohibit dogs from the following public places:***
  - Any public building, including any library, swimming pool, recreation centre, visitor centre or crematorium under the control or management of the Council (unless permitted by the occupier or person having control of those premises and subject to compliance with any reasonable conditions imposed).
  - Any area developed or marked out as a sports field (not including any spectator area) during sporting events, or any outdoor court, skateboard park and cycle park.
  - On or within 10 metres of any area that is developed or marked out as a playground or contains children's play equipment.
  - Any cemetery, unless permitted by the person/organisation having control of that cemetery and subject to compliance with any reasonable conditions imposed.

- Where the conservation or ecological values would be adversely threatened by the presence of dogs.
- At this time the Department of Conservation is not able to formally advise the District Council of controlled or open dog areas under Section 26ZS of the Conservation Act 1987 for inclusion in the policy. As an interim measure, the Department of Conservation has advised that the provision of the Reserves Act 1977 applies. This means that any part of a reserve under the Department of Conservation control which is classified as a national, scenic, nature, or scientific reserve or a wilderness area, is not an open dog area. Authorisation may be granted by permit.
- All areas identified as “*Kiwi Zone*” will be strictly “dog prohibited” areas.

Part of Paparoa National Park (as constituted under National Parks Act 1980) is in the Grey District.

- ***Require dogs to be kept on a leash in every private way and the following public places:***

- Any public place unless otherwise specified as a prohibited area, off leash area or designated dog exercise area.
- Any road, including footpath and berm.
- Any area that is developed or marked out as a picnic area (except those prohibited above), fitness apparatus, boat ramp, boat marshalling area or car park.

- ***Allow dogs, other than those classified as dangerous dogs, to be exercised off a leash, but under control, in the following public places:***

- All beaches except those when specifically prohibited above or specified below as a designated dog exercise area.
- Rural public land and river banks not otherwise specifically excluded above.

- ***Allow dogs to be exercised off a leash, but under control, in the following designated dog exercise areas:***

- The Preston Road dog exercise area.
- Dog exercise area on the corner of Nelson Quay/Hill Quay, Cobden.

- Recognise that dogs confined in a vehicle or cage, dogs secured on a vehicle, dogs taking part in Council-approved special events or working dogs carrying out work duties should not be prohibited from public places or required to be on a leash.

- Provide for dogs to be conveyed by leash to or from a veterinary clinic.

### **[3] Encourage Responsible Dog Ownership**

Dog owners should be encouraged to meet their obligations under the Act, in order to ensure that neighbourhoods remain safe and pleasant.

#### **What will Council do to help achieve this?**

- Reduce registration fees for owners who have proven their responsibility by having their dog desexed.
- Limit the number of dogs registered to individual properties.

- Require dog owners, on all areas other than their own property, to remove immediately any faeces left by their dog.
- Require owners of bitches in season or diseased dogs to keep those dogs continuously contained on their property.
- Require owners allowing dogs to ride on the open tray of a vehicle to keep their dog secured at all times.

#### **[4] Enforce Dog Owner Obligations**

Powers of enforcement under the Act should be used to the extent considered necessary to ensure public safety and comfort and to penalise and deter irresponsible dog ownership.

##### **What will Council do to help achieve this?**

- Establish a response service to receive, investigate and resolve dog complaints from members of the public.
- Remove dogs threatening public safety and comfort.
- Issue infringement notices, prosecute owners and use menacing dog, dangerous dog, probationary and disqualified dog owner classifications where considered appropriate.
- Carry out property inspections as necessary to ensure compliance with the Act and any dog control bylaw.
- Take enforcement action against owners who breach the Act or any dog control bylaws by failing to contain or control their dogs where considered appropriate.
- May require that dogs classified as menacing dogs are neutered within one month after receipt of notice of the classification.

#### **[5] Educate the Community About Dogs (in partnership with other parties)**

Community awareness of how to live with dogs will minimise danger, distress and nuisance to members of the public.

##### **What will Council do to help achieve this?**

- Consult and work with other interested parties, (e.g. West Coast Kennel Association, local veterinary surgeons, SPCA, Federated Farmers) to inform and educate dog owners and the general public through media such as brochures, websites and school education programmes.

#### **[6] Work Towards Regional Consistency in the Management of Dogs**

Council will endeavour to work towards closer alignment of dog-related policies, bylaws, services and practices with the regional council, other West Coast district councils and the Department of Conservation to provide greater certainty and understanding for the citizens of the district.

##### **What will Council do to help achieve this?**

- Participate in regional meetings to discuss dog-related policies, bylaws, services and practices.

## **[7] Provide Adequate Funding for Dog Management Services**

Adequate funding must be provided to maintain an acceptable level of dog management services. When considering dog-related fees, Council must take into account the user-pays principle, penalty-based fees, legislative requirements, Council's funding policies and community responsibilities.

### **What will Council do to help achieve this?**

- Set reasonable fees for the registration and control of dogs in accordance with the information above.
- Set lower registration fees for working dogs and for owners who have proven to be responsible by de-sexing their dog.
- Set a higher registration fee for owners who do not meet the registration date given for payment.

## **[8] Assess the Effectiveness of Policy on Dogs**

Information will be gathered to determine if Council's methods are working towards achieving the objectives in this policy.

### **What will Council do to help achieve this?**

- Report annually on Council's administration of dog control methods and the Policy on Dogs.
- Give public notice of the report and send a copy of it to the Secretary for Local Government.
- In consultation with the West Coast Kennel Association and other interested parties, conduct surveys as appropriate to assess the effectiveness of, and attitudes towards, the Policy on Dogs.