



Ashburton District Council

Section 10A Dog Control Act 1996

Dog Control Policy & Practices

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 (DCA) requires territorial authorities to publicly report each financial year on:

- the administration of their dog control policy and their dog control practices (Section 10A(1)); and
- a variety of dog control related statistics (Section 10A(2)).

This report allows the communities to see how Ashburton District Council is managing its dog control responsibilities.

Part 1 – Dog Control Policy and Practices

1. Dog Control in Ashburton District

Dog control in Ashburton is carried out using Council Staff and a contractor. Within Council we employ an Animal Control Systems Officer who is responsible for all of the administration relating to Dog and Stock control. She is also a fully qualified Animal Control Officer and gives technical and practical guidance to both the contractor and Council Managers. The Regulatory Manager supports the animal control function and deals with Court cases, customer complaints and legal questions regarding dog and animal control.

The contractor – First Security, dealt with dog control call outs on a 24 hour / 7 day per week basis. They employ approximately 10 staff, although not all of these are directly involved in dog control.

The major focus over the last 12 months has been on enforcement and making the exacerbator pay.

Council has a good working relationship with local veterinarians and several Christchurch based animal welfare charities. Over the year sixty three dogs were re-homed through Christchurch animal charities and four puppies through the local SPCA.

2. Dog Control in Enforcement Practices

Council has been rigorous in enforcing the Dog Control Act and the Dog Control bylaw. In addition to responding to complaints we have carried out targeted compliance operations on particular streets in Ashburton, Methven and Rakaia.

We have dealt with nearly 1300 complaints. A breakdown of these is shown in the Table in Part 2. We have issued 281 infringement notices, these have been for most offences under the Dog Control Act including obstruction and releasing a dog from custody. A breakdown of these is shown below:

Table 1: Showing Number and Type of Infringement Notices Issued during 2008-2009 by Ashburton District Council under the Dog Control Act 1996

Serial	Offence	Section of The Act	Number	Fine Level
1	Failure top Register a Dog	Section 42	212	\$300
2	Failure to Keep a Dog Controlled or Confined	Section 52A & 53(1)	42	\$200
3	Wilful Obstruction of a Dog Control Officer	Section 18	7	\$750
4	Failure to Advise Change of Address	Section 49(4)	5	\$100
5	Failure to Implant Microchip transponder in dog	Section 36(A)(6)	5	\$300
6	Failure to Advise Change of Dog Ownership	Section 48(3)	3	\$100
7	Releasing Dog from Custody	Section 72(2)	3	\$750
8	Failure or Refusal to Supply Information or Wilfully Providing False Particulars.	Section 19(2)	2	\$750
9	Failure to Comply with Effects of Disqualification	Section 28(5)	2	\$750
TOTAL	281			

We have taken six prosecutions to Court all for dogs attacking persons and/or other animals. We have been successful in all cases and fines and compensation was awarded against the offenders.

3. Dogs Prohibited, Leash Only and Dog Exercise Areas

The new Bylaw came into force on 1 July 2008, and included Lake Camp as an additional “no dog” area. Visits have been conducted to assess compliance in this and other “no dogs” areas.

Council has allocated funds in this financial year for the creation of a new fenced dog exercise area, construction of this could be commenced within the next few months.

Clarification is awaited from the Department of Conservation as to what restrictions (if any) on dogs they will apply on DoC controlled land within the District.

4. Dog Registration and Other Fees

All money raised through dog registration fees has been allocated to dog control. Income from fines and impounding fees has allowed funding of the new dog exercise area without increase in dog registration fees. The fees have not been raised since the 2006 / 2007 financial year. Owners of unregistered dogs have been actively pursued and infringed when found.

5. Dog Education and Dog Obedience Course

Ashburton District Council has not required any owners to undergo dog education or obedience courses. Such training is available through the Mid Canterbury Canine Obedience Club and would be available under agreement with them. Local veterinarians carry out dog education programmes in local schools.

6. Disqualified and Probationary Dog Owners

Ashburton District Council has not classified anyone as a Probationary Owner over the reporting period. Five individuals have been made Disqualified Owners and there have been two incidents individuals have not complied with their classification. The disqualifications have all resulted following Court cases which resulted in a prosecution.

7. Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

Ashburton District Council has declared thirty dogs as menacing over the reporting period. This is a significant increase on previous years and is primarily due to more effective enforcement. Four dogs have also been classified as dangerous through sworn evidence; this is also an increase on previous years.

8. Other Information

During the period there have been a total of twenty five visits conducted by the Contractor on welfare grounds. The limited capacity of the local SPCA has meant that on occasion Ashburton District Council has had to act as a welfare service and seize such dogs. This is done under Section 14 of the Act and the Ashburton District Council Bylaw. Owners are given the opportunity to make adequate provision for their dogs or to surrender them to Ashburton District Council for re-homing. A total of sixty three dogs were seized or found wandering, which have not been claimed after 7 days, have been re-homed through charitable organisations. Six dogs deemed unfit for re-homing were euthanized by a veterinarian.

Three complaints of dog faeces on footpaths have been investigated and appropriate action taken against offenders.

A new Dog Control policy has been drafted and will soon be sent out for public submission as a Special Consultative Procedure in accordance with the Local Government Act 2002.

The existing Dog and Animal Control Contract is being extensively reviewed and a tender process will be instigated once the document is finalised.

Part 2 – Statistical Information

Table 2 -

Category	As at 30 June 2009	For Period 01 July 2008 - 30 June 2009
1) Total # Registered Dogs	6685	~ Not Required ~
2) Total # Probationary Owners	Nil	nil
3) Total # Disqualified Owners	5	5
4) Total # Dangerous Dogs	4	4
➤ Dangerous by Owner Conviction Under s31(1)(a)	0	0
➤ Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	4	4
➤ Dangerous by Owner Admittance in Writing s31(1)(c)	0	0
5) Total # Menacing Dogs	34	30
➤ Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) - i.e. by Behaviour	7	5
➤ Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii)- by Breed Characteristics	N/A	N/A
➤ Menacing under s33C(1) by Schedule 4 Breed.	27	27
6) Total # Infringement Notices.	Not Required	281

7) Total # Complaints Received	<i>~ Not Required ~</i>	<i>1294 approx</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>TA Complaint Category 1</i> ➤ <i>TA Complaint Category 2...</i> 	<i>~ Not Required ~</i>	Wandering 473 Barking 153 Lost 220 Welfare 25 Attack 12 Rushing/aggressive 35 Unregistered 58 Other 318
Prosecutions	<i>~ Not Required ~</i>	<i>6</i>

30 July 2009