



# Westland District Council Annual Dog Control Policy and Practices Report 2023/2024

## 1. The Dog Control Act 1996

The Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act) requires Territorial Authorities to publicly report on Dog Control Policies and Practices as outlined under Section 10A. This report contains information and statistics on the Westland District Council's Dog Control activity for the year 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024.

## 2. Dog Control Policy and Bylaw

There have been no reviews or amendments made to the Westland District Council Dog Control Bylaw or Dog Control Policy during this reporting period.

## 3. Administration

### 3.1. Personnel

Council employs one full-time Warranted Animal Control Officer (ACO). Rotational rostered after-hours, and annual / sick leave, cover, is carried out by Council's Health and Safety & Compliance Officer.

Two additional Warranted Compliance Personnel are available to be rostered to cover ACO functions when primary personnel are on leave.

### 3.2. Hours of Operation

The Animal Control Officer generally works from 8:30am to 4:30pm, Monday to Friday and responds to appropriate animal complaints. ACO's respond to complaints 24 hours a day on rostered days, weekends, and statutory holidays, ensuring Council has appropriate cover to deliver service delivery expectations throughout the year.

### 3.3. Dog Pound

Council continues to manage three designated pound/kennels, one within the SPCA facility on Hau Hau Road, two kennels situated at the Haast Police Station, and one kennel situated at the Franz Josef Police Station. A rental is paid for the use of part of the SPCA building.

Council is responsible for the maintenance and management of its own pound assets and facilities, and the stewardship and feeding of any dogs coming into its care. The pound operates 24/7 with public access by appointment only via the on-duty ACO, to claim any dog/s under their ownership that have been impounded.

Access to the Pound facilities is restricted to Authorised Council personnel.

Dogs are only released to owners on full payment of due fees (registration and penalty fees), and the cost of microchipping if required.

Any dog not claimed within seven days, is deemed to be abandoned and is assessed for rehoming suitability.

All dogs are assessed by an ACO Officer, and if applicable, a suitable qualified officer of the SPCA or equivalent abandoned animal care facility, to determine suitability for rehoming.

## 4. Fees and Charges

The fees and criteria were set in 2019/2020 and have remained unchanged as part of the 2023/2024 fee setting process.

The following fees and charges were adopted by Council for the delivery of Animal Control services for the 2023/2024 year. There needs to be a modest annual increase in the fees to ensure that the animal control operations are close to cost neutral.

Animal Control	Fee (GST inclusive) 2023/2024
Urban Registration (Hokitika and Kaniere Township)	\$74
Registration other Areas	\$58
Responsible Dog Owners (RDO)	\$50 Inspection Fee – First Year \$50 Registration Fee – All Areas
Registration Dangerous Dog	Standard Registration Fee plus 50%
Late Registration – 1 August	Standard Registration Fee plus 50%
First Impounding Offence	\$82
Second Impounding Offence	\$164
Third Impounding offence	\$245
Feeding/Day	\$30
Call-out for Dog Reclaiming	\$150 per hour

## 5. Dog Population Analysis

A total of 2091 dogs and 1885 owners are recorded in the Council Database for the reporting period. It is unknown how many dogs are unregistered in Westland. A total of 1431 dogs are recorded in the rural zone with 660 in an urban zone.

## 6. Enforcement

The format for reporting of complaints, impounding, classification, infringements, and court proceedings was modified for the 2018/19 period and continues in use for this reporting period. Fees for prosecution have increased per the letter from MOJ, where applicable, generalised figures from previous years have been included in the tables below. “NR” identifies where specifics were ‘Not Recorded’ by category.

### 6.1. Complaints

A total of 202 complaints were received during the 2023/2024 reporting period compared to previous years as shown.

Complaints Received	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Dog Attack	19	5	6	4
Rushing/Threatening	11	2	1	0
Roaming	102	40	150	110
Barking	19	13	25	20
Welfare	26	0	4	8
General	3	5	40	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>202</b>

### 6.2. Impounding

33 dogs were impounded during the reporting period of which 29 were returned to their owners, and 1 re-homed. 3 dogs were euthanised during the reporting period. 16 dogs were surrendered.

### 6.3. Classification of Dog Owners

The Council did not classify any dog owners as ‘disqualified from owning a dog’ in the 2023/2024 year. There are no registered ‘disqualified’ or ‘probationary’ owners within the Westland District.

## 6.4. Classification of Dogs

Dogs can be classified in three different ways:

- Menacing classifications under Section 33A of the Act are applied to a dog which the Council considers may pose a threat to any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife due to observed or reported behaviour; or any characteristic associated with the dog (their behaviour).
- Menacing classifications under Section 33C of the Act are applied to a dog which belongs wholly or predominantly to one or more breeds or types listed in Schedule 4 of the Act (their breed).
- Dangerous dogs under Section 31 of the Act are applied to a dog if the owner is convicted under 57A(2), if there is evidence that the dog is aggressive, or the owner admits that the dog is aggressive.

There are 33 dogs registered as 'Menacing' in the Westland District. For the reporting period 6 dogs were registered as 'Menacing' under Section 33A, none registered as 'Menacing' under Section 33C and 1 dog was registered as 'Dangerous'.

Under Council's Dog Control Policy, all dogs classified as menacing must be neutered, and muzzled when in a public area.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
<b>Menacing S 33A</b>	0	6	6	6
<b>Menacing S 33C</b>	2	0	0	0
<b>Dangerous S 31</b>	0	2	1	1

## 6.5 Infringements

A total of 138 infringement notices were issued for the following offences:

Infringement Offence	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
<b>Fails to comply with any bylaw</b>	12	0	16	20
<b>Fails to comply with effects of classification</b>	3	3	8	0
<b>Fails to register dog</b>	107	11	106	111
<b>Fails to keep dog under control</b>	4	4	3	5
<b>Failure to provide proper care</b>	0	0	0	0

Two other \$750 infringements were issued for falsely reporting that a dog had died

## 6.6. Court Proceedings

There were no court prosecutions undertaken for offences under the Act for the 2023/2024 reporting period.

## 7. Other Services

### 7.1. Multiple Dog Permits (3+ Dogs – Urban Zone)

A permit is required to keep more than two dogs on a property in an urban area. The issue of a permit is conditional on the suitability of an owner, their property and obtaining of approval from affected neighbours.

1 multiple dog permit was issued during this reporting period.

### 7.2. Responsible Dog Owner Policy (RDO) Status

RDO status provides a discounted rate of dog registration as an incentive to responsible dog owners.

To qualify for RDO status all dogs must be registered on or by 1st August of the current registration year, dog/s must be micro-chipped, there have been no justified complaints against, infringement, or impounding of any dog in the past two years, and the property has been inspected and approved in relation to appropriately fenced areas or kennel runs.

There are 101 approved Responsible Dog Owners recorded in the District.

## 8. Fees and finance

Animal control fees have not been adjusted for several years and there is a need to raise fees generally. Westland District Council fees are very low compared to other councils on the West Coast. This impacts adversely on the costs of the animal control budget which is being topped up by ratepayers. Revenue collected from dog owners does not cover costs.