

**HOROWHENUA DISTRICT COUNCIL
DOG CONTROL POLICY AND PRACTICES
1 JULY 2010 - 30 JUNE 2011**

ANNUAL REPORT

Part 1

Introduction and Overview

Council delivers its Animal (Dog) Control services in-house, and employs two full-time and two part-time officers, who deal with all issues relating to animals. The officers are also rostered to provide an after-hours service 365 days of the year for emergency response needs such as dog attacks and roaming stock.

Funding of the Dog Control activity is a mixture of user pays (Dog Owners) and rates; currently set as 70-80% Private Good Fees and Charges, and 20-30% from rates as Public Good.

Council has a Dog Control Policy and Bylaw that were adopted by Council in 2004. All complaints received by Council are recorded on our Dog database. These complaints are then investigated with the outcome advised to the complainant within three (3) working days, although sometimes this may take a little longer dependent upon the issue. Whilst Council issues infringement notices to errant dog owners, this is normally the last avenue to be followed because all else has failed.

Statistics relating to complaints received, the number and type of infringement notices issued, and the number of prosecutions taken by Council are shown in Part 2 of this Report.

Dog Numbers

The year started with a known 5,915 dogs on Council's Dog Database. At 30 June 2011 there were 5,925 registered dogs and 116 that remained unregistered; a total of 6,031 known dogs.

Dog Registration Fees

Council operates various categories for dog registration fee purposes. The fee structure used is designed to reflect the make up of our community and to reward responsible ownership.

Some dog owners, of course, did not register their dogs, and in these cases, where they came to out attention, infringement notices were issued. If the infringement notice was not paid, it was lodged with the Justice Department of collection - see Part 2 of this Report for details.

Council also offers a time payment arrangement for owners to may not be able to pay their registration fees in full immediately. During the 2010/11 year, 138 dog owners entered into an agreement to pay this way.

Dog registration fees applying for the year were retained at the 2008/09 levels.

Impounded Dogs

570 dogs were impounded during the year compared to 540 in 2009/10. Unfortunately only 260 (46%) were claimed by their owners; however, our staff re-homed 79 dogs during the year.

Complaints

Statistics relating to the types of complaints received during the year are as contained in Part 2 of this Report.

There has been a decrease in the total number of complaints received this year; 1,648 compared to 1,982 in 2009/10.

Dogs Prohibited, Leashed and Unleashed Exercise Areas

There have been no changes to these areas and/or restrictions.

In general terms, dogs being walked in residential areas are required to be leashed, with other leashed areas including:

- selected parks;
- shopping areas in Shannon, Foxton and Levin, after normal trading hours;
- cemeteries.

Unleashed areas are defined in the Dog Bylaw, but generally include defined parks and beach areas outside the patrolled areas of the District beaches.

The majority of the defined leashed and unleashed areas provide Doggy Doo bins, and in some, disposal bags for picking up droppings are also provided for the use of Dog owners.

Infringement

Statistics relating to the number and type of infringement notices issued for the year are as detailed in Part 2 of this Report.

2010/11 has seen a continuing increase in the number of infringement notices issued:

➤ 2007/08	101
➤ 2008/09	146
➤ 2009/10	188
➤ 2010/11	249.

There was an increase in the number of notices issues this year for "Failing to Register a Dog (150 last year; 208 this year).

Prosecutions

Four 4) prosecutions were successfully undertaken during the year. A further prosecution is currently awaiting a Court date.

Disqualified and Probationary Owners

Disqualified:

There are no disqualified owners in the District as at 30 June 2011.

Probationary:

The District has five (5) dog owners classified as Probationary owners compared to one in 2009/10 following a conviction in Court for dog related incidents that were not normal infringement matters.

Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

Statistics relating to the numbers of Menacing and Dangerous Dogs are shown in Part 2 of this report. There was an increase in the number of menacing/dangerous dogs from 156 to 185.

All owners of menacing and dangerous dogs are recorded on Council's dog database. Owners are written to at the time of the Dangerous or Menacing classification being applied, advising them of their legal responsibilities as the owner.

Two owners appealed a menacing classification during the year. Appeals were considered by Council's Hearing Committee acting under delegated authority of Council. Both appeals were declined and the classifications upheld.

After Hours Service

During the year there were 464 after hours calls logged and officers spent 554 hours responding to after hours incidents.

Part 2

Statistical Information

	Category	As at 30 June 2011	For the period 1 July 2010 - 30 June 2011
1	Total Number Registered Dogs	5,925	
2	Total Number Probationary Owners	5	4
3	Total Number Disqualified Owners	-	-
4	Total Number Dangerous Dogs	18	-
	• Dangerous by Owner Conviction under s31(1)(a)	-	-
	• Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	18	-
	• Dangerous by Owner Admittance s31(1)(c)	-	-
5	Total Number Menacing Dogs	167	31
	• Menacing s33A(1)(b)(i) i.e. by behaviour	25	-
	• Menacing by Breed Characteristics s33A(1)(b)(ii)	-	-
	• Menacing by Schedule 4 Breed, i.e. Pitbull s33C(1)	142	31
6	Total Infringement Notice, by type, issued:		249
	• s32(2) - Failure to comply with effects of Dangerous Dog Classification		1
	• s33EC(1) - Failure to comply with effects of Menacing Dog Classification		1
	• s36A - Failure to Implant Microchip		24
	• s42 - Failure to Register Dog		208
	• s52A - Failure to Keep Dog Controlled/Confined		14
	• s54(2) – Failure to provide care		1
	Lodged with the Court		122
7	Total Complaints received by Type		
	• Barking		1,213
	• Wandering		312
	• Attacks		38
	• Aggressive Behaviour		61
	• Stock Worrying		24
	TOTAL		1,648
8	Total Prosecutions Taken		
	• s57(2) Dog attacking person		2
	• s57(2) Dog attacking animal		2
	• s33EC(1) Failing to comply with effects of Menacing Dog Classification		1