

Dog Owners' Information Manual



Introduction

The intent of this booklet is to provide dog owners with basic information and advice, and as a consequence the booklet contains extracts from Council's Dog Policy and Bylaw highlighting dog owners' legal responsibilities. It also contains extracts from the Dog Control Act 1996. Please note that this booklet is a guide and general information resource only. The most up-to-date copy of Council's Dog Policy and Bylaw can be viewed and downloaded from our website: www.horowhenua.govt.nz.

There are approximately 6,000 registered dogs within the Horowhenua District.

Dogs are a major source of enjoyment and companionship and are always a source of news, but more so when they are uncontrolled. People who do not keep their dogs under control at all times should be aware that the penalties can be harsh and include criminal conviction, fines and the possible destruction of the dog.

Council employs the equivalent of three full-time Animal Control Officers. These officers provide a 24 hour, 7 day a week service to the District, with after-hours responses determined by the urgency of the problem. All calls are accepted after-hours, but non-urgent calls will be attended to during normal working hours.

Emergency After Hours Response Service

Phone: 06 366 0999.

The joys of owning a dog

Once your dog has settled into its new home, it will quickly become the centre of everyone's attention.

Horowhenua District Council wishes you lots of pleasure and fun with your dog.

Being a responsible owner

'Owner', in relation to any dog, means every person who:

- (a) owns the dog; or
- (b) has the dog in their possession, whether the dog is at large or confined for a period longer than 72 hours; or
- (c) if the owner of the dog is under 16 years of age, then the parent or guardian of that person is responsible for the dog's registration and actions.

The obligations of dog owners

The ownership of a dog brings with it certain responsibilities for you towards the public and the dog itself.

- To ensure any dog over the age of three (3) months owned by you is registered in accordance with the Dog Control Act 1996, and that Council is promptly notified of any change of address or ownership.
- To ensure that the dog is kept under control at all times.
- To ensure that the dog receives proper care and attention and is supplied with proper and sufficient food, water and shelter.
- To ensure that the dog receives adequate exercise.
- To take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog does not cause a nuisance to any other person, whether by persistent and loud barking or howling, or by any other means.
- To take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog does not injure, endanger, or cause distress to a person.
- To take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog does not injure, endanger, or cause distress to any stock, poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife.
- To take all reasonable steps to ensure that the dog does not damage or endanger any property belonging to any other person.
- To comply with the requirements of the Dog Control Act 1996 and of all regulations and bylaws made under this Act.
- Dog owners are responsible for the total well-being of their dogs, including proper care and attention, exercise and feeding. Owners found being cruel and abusive, starving their dog(s) or otherwise neglecting their responsibility commit an offence under both the Dog Control Act 1996 and the Horowhenua District Council Bylaw.

Dog fees and registration classifications

Each year Council sets dog registration fees for the period 1 July - 30 June of the following year. These fees are payable in full by 31 July annually, and if not paid, a 50% surcharge is added to the fee. Time payments can also be arranged.

Currently Council has the following classifications for registration purposes:

| Classification | Classification Criteria (Proof required in some cases) |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Guide Dog | Registered as a Guide Dog with National Body |
| Selected owner Status | Issued to owners by way of permit. Conditions apply. Town based dogs only. Application required |
| NZ Kennel Club Permit Holder | Issued to members with kennels registered with the NZ Kennel Club. Application required. |
| Racing Greyhound Permit Holder | Issued to members with stables registered with the Racing Greyhound Association. Application required. |
| Desexed Pet | Town based dogs that have been spayed or neutered. |
| Entire Pet | Town based dogs that have NOT been spayed or neutered. |
| Working Dog | Police, DoC, Registered Security Guards, Registered NZ Search Team members dogs only. |
| Stock Dog | Rural based. Used solely or principally for rounding up of stock, on a stock farm. |
| Rural Dog | Rural based dogs that are not classified as stock dogs. |
| Puppy | All pups registered for the first time during the year on reaching three (3) months of age and before eight (8) months of age. Urban or rural. Relevant classification fee applies in subsequent years. Does not include NZKC or Racing Greyhound Permit Holders. |
| Superannuitant Status | Town based dogs. Owners must produce proof of Superannuitant status at time of first registration. New dogs must be desexed before owner qualifies for this fee classification. |
| Dangerous Dog | Classified as a Dangerous Dog by Council - by deed. |
| Menacing Dog | Classified as a Menacing Dog by Council - by breed or deed. |

What your registration fee covers

Response to complaints including:

- Barking dogs/Dangerous dogs
- Wandering dogs/Rushing dogs
- Dogs fouling on public/private land
- Enforcement of the Dog Control Act and the Horowhenua District Council bylaws
- Dog welfare problems
- Attacks on people/domestic pets/stock/wildlife
- Regular monitoring of problem areas and rubbish day areas
- Dogs restrained by the public/caught in traps
- 24 hour service

Promoting better care and control of dogs:

- Visits to schools/community groups
- Radio/newspaper information programmes
- Educating owners with problem dogs
- Advice to dog owners and the public

Provides and maintains the Pound facilities:

- Notifying known owners if their dog is impounded
- Impounding wandering dogs/problem dogs
- Euthanising of unclaimed dogs
- Re-homing suitable dogs to suitable owners
- Accepts all unwanted dogs
- The management of dogs with unknown owners

Legal action for:

- Dogs attacking persons/animals
- Bylaw offences
- Failing to register dogs
- Failing to control dogs
- Barking dogs

Dogs and people

All dogs are capable of biting or attacking, no matter how friendly or passive a dog may seem, or how well you know it, or what size it is.

Many bites may seem unprovoked, but in fact have been triggered by something that we have done unknowingly.

It is important to know how to react around dogs and to understand the reasons why dogs bite. This will prevent or minimise the risk of being bitten.

Avoiding dog bites:

- Never approach:
 - an unknown dog - let it come to you
 - a bitch with puppies
 - a dog that is eating
 - a dog that is sleeping - wake the dog up from a distance
- Always pick up left-over food
- Do not pat a dog on the head or the back of the neck
- Do not lean over or pick up a dog
- Never tease a dog
- Always have a relaxed and calm manner when around dogs

All dogs are territorial and are naturally more prone to aggression on their own property. Many people own dogs for security purposes as they will defend their owner's property.

However, any person with reasonable grounds must be able to walk to your door, or deliver to your letterbox, without being threatened.

Entering a property that has a dog:

- Rattle the gate/call out to see if a dog comes rushing
- Look for obvious signs, i.e. bones, dog poo, chains, holes in the lawn, etc
- Angle away from the corner of houses. You may startle a dog and cause it to bite out of fright
- Always give a wide berth to a dog on a chain
- Walk slowly and not directly at the dog

- If a dog is lying on the doorstep do not approach the door; call out or knock on the window
- If a dog is inside a house, stand off to one side of the door; a dog may feel trapped and bite you as it rushes past

Barking

All dogs bark naturally - it is their way of communicating. However it is the loud and persistent barking that creates a nuisance.

- A lonely dog will bark to attract attention
- Ask neighbours to monitor your dog when you are not there. Often owners are unaware that their dogs bark when they are not home
- Always check to see why a dog is barking. The reason may be obvious and easily solved
- Barking can be beneficial to you and your neighbours; it may be warning of an intruder

To treat or prevent excessive barking:

- Teach your dog to accept regular visitors
- Keep your dog occupied and comfortable by ensuring that it has things to amuse itself with when left alone, i.e. bones, balls, toys, etc. Pick them up while you are at home and give them to the dog when you leave
- Have your dog on a running wire as opposed to a fixed wire
- Ensure the dog receives plenty of daily company and exercise
- Leave a radio on in the house when you leave
- Change the feeding times. Feed the dog when you go out
- House the dog so it is unable to see things to bark at
- House the dog near other pets for companionship
- Change your daily routine - this prevents anticipation barking

If you dog's barking creates a nuisance causing neighbours to complain, Animal Control Officers will make an assessment and if considered appropriate, an abatement notice will be issued. If further justified complaints are received, the dog may be seized and impounded in accordance with the Dog Control Act 1996.

Barking complaints are very common and hard to solve to the satisfaction of all.

Wandering dogs

Dogs are very social animals and will wander at every opportunity. However, a wandering dog is uncontrolled and can cause all sorts of problems, some very serious.

They can be intimidating to the general public and be a hazard to road users. They are also disruptive to other dogs that are under control and can attack other animals and pets.

You are financially liable and responsible for any damage/loss caused by your dog.

Fencing

A fully fenced section is a must for your dog's safety and your sanity. It is best to fence your property so that visitors have access to your front door without coming into contact with your dog.

Many dogs wander because "someone left the gate open". To prevent this from happening, have a return spring fitted to the gate so that it swings shut automatically.

Jumping dogs - a lean-to section or outrigger facing inwards from the top of your fence will stop most dogs from jumping out and is very cost-effective.

If your property is not fenced, you are still required to ensure your dog does not freely leave your property.

Running leads

A dog is more content and less likely to bark when attached to a running wire. Have a chain with a swivel attached to a long wire, making sure that the dogs cannot become tangled. Always use a chain - a rope will tangle easily and can be chewed through.



Making a complaint about a dog

If you have a problem with a neighbour's dog, please approach them first and tell them of your concerns. If the problem persists, then phone Council and we will become involved.

We need to know as much of the following as possible:

- The address the dog comes from
- Exactly what the problem is
- The time where/when the incident happened
- Anything that might help identify the dog, i.e. breed, colour, sex
- The identity of the owner
- If the dog(s) came from a vehicle, the registration number of that vehicle
- Your name and contact number in case we need to phone you for more information and to tell you of the outcome of our involvement

It is important that we have your feedback about the problem so that we know whether it has been resolved or not. All complainant details are kept confidential.



Lost dogs

If your dog is lost, phone Council (06 366 0999) immediately and provide us with an accurate description of your dog and the area from which it strayed. Often we can match up your reported lost dog with a reported found dog.

If your dog is found wearing a registration tag we will contact you and inform you of its whereabouts. If it is impounded you will be advised as soon as practical.

Dog pound

The Council Dog Pound is located at 169 Mako Mako Road, Levin, and is open to the public 12.30pm - 1.30pm, and 3.30pm - 4.00pm, Monday to Friday (except for Statutory Holidays).

Approximately 400 dogs are impounded each year in the Council Pound and 90% have no means of identification.

The Pound is very expensive to operate with large overhead costs, as well as housing, feeding, euthanising and disposal costs, meaning there is a large unrecoverable cost involved with dogs that are unclaimed and put down.



Please pick up your dog's poo!

Please help us keep our streets and park exercise areas clean by picking up and disposing of your dog's poo.

Please place it in the rubbish bins at the entrance or exit to a park you are using. If there is not a rubbish bin, please dispose of it in the closest rubbish bin or at home. You can wrap dog poo and dispose of it with domestic rubbish or bury it in the garden.

It is not acceptable to dump a bag full of dog poo on the ground at an exercise area.

If you do not pick up your dog's poo, you can be issued with an infringement fine, currently \$300.00.

Tell us quickly about a dog attack

If you or your pet are attacked by a dog it is important to report the incident as soon as possible. We are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for serious incidents, such as dog attack. Phone 06 366 0999.

We note all the related information and often seize dogs after such incidents. As the information we collect needs to be as accurate as possible, the more information we are given, the easier the investigation.

The kind of information we need includes statements from all parties, bite or medical reports and receipts, any identification of the attacking dog or its owner, or vehicle registration. If there are any witnesses to the incident it is best to get their details at the time as it can be very difficult later when they have left the scene.

Do not leave complaints too long before reporting them as this can often cause confusion when recalling detailed information such as times, dates, and people's recollections.

Microchip to make your dog legal

There is a legal requirement for you to register a puppy at three (3) months of age and arrange for it to be implanted with an approved microchip in the following two (2) months. This requirement has been in place for some time.

This is a plus for dog owners as the microchip properly identifies a dog, and that is a big help if the dog goes missing.

You must also arrange for the microchip if you have:

- a dog that is classified as dangerous and/or menacing
- an unregistered dog impounded
- a registered dog impounded for a second time since 1 July 2006

In these situations you must supply your vet's copy of the implantation certificate.

If you fail to have your dog microchipped you may receive a warning or infringement fine of \$300.00, your dog may be seized or you may be prosecuted.

For more information on microchipping visit the Department of Internal Affairs website dia.govt.nz and search for 'dogs'.

Exercising your dog

The Horowhenua District Council recognises the exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners and has identified:

- areas where dogs can be exercised on a leash; and
- areas where dogs can be exercised at large, although under continuous control; and
- areas in which dogs are prohibited.



Dog Exercise Areas - “Leashed”

Residential Areas of (unless prohibited/banned):

- Tokomaru, Shannon, Foxton, Foxton Beach, Waitarere Beach, Hokio Beach, Manakau, Levin, Mangaore, Ohau, Waikawa Beach

Shopping Areas (after shop trading hours) - Banned at all other times:

- Shannon, Foxton, Levin

Cemeteries:

- Shannon, Foxton, Manakau, Levin Avenue, Tiro Tiro Road.

Mangaore Park, Mangaore Village:

- Doggy doo bin provided

Moynihan Park, Shannon - Engles Road:

- Doggy doo bin provided

Hennessey Street/Lowe Avenue Grounds, Foxton Beach:

- End of Hennessey West Road

Esplanade Reserve, Waitarere Beach - Off Surf Lifesaving Clubrooms, Southside:

- Doggy doo bin provided

Iona Park, Levin - Corner MacArthur & Bartholomew Roads:

- Doggy doo bin and bag dispenser provided

Cambridge Street Rose Garden, Levin - (including Railway Reserve)

Lincoln Place Reserve, Levin - Goldsmith Crescent

Maire Park, Levin - Maire Street, off Dorset Street

Railway Reserve, Levin North (Information Kiosk Area):

- Doggy doo bin provided

Railway Reserve, Levin - Liverpool Street to Tararua Road

Jubilee Park, Levin (Defined area outside of play equipment area)

Corner Bath Street and Parker Avenue, Levin

Morgan Crescent Reserve, Levin

Prouse Bush, Levin

Ohau Domain:

- On left SH1 opposite Ohau School.



Dog Exercise Areas - “Unleashed”

Tokomaru Domain - State Highway 57, near Tokomaru Township:

- When not being used for sporting or other community uses
- Doggy doo bin and bags provided

Victoria Park, Foxton - Victoria Street, Foxton:

- Excluding the sports grounds
- Doggy doo bin and bags provided

River Loop Reserve, Foxton - Harbour Street, Foxton:

- Doggy doo bin and bags provided

Foxton Beach:

- Outside patrolled areas on beach

Cousins Avenue Reserve, Foxton Beach - Off Nash Parade or Palmer Road

Hartley Street Esplanade, Foxton Beach

- Doggy doo bin provided

Waitarere Beach

- Outside patrolled areas on the beach

Parikawau River Reserve Ohau

- SH1 south of Ohau township on left, entrance immediately prior to Ohau River overbridge

Waikawa

- Waikawa River to the south of the Waikawa River Mouth

Kowhai Park, Levin - Queen Street West (near Lake Horowhenua)

- Four doggy doo bins and two bag dispensers provided

Argyle Avenue Reserve, Levin - Off Kawi Road or Gordon Place

- Doggy doo bin and bags provided

Cambridge Street Park, Levin

Kennedy Drive Park, Levin

- Doggy doo bin provided

Playford Park, Levin - Defined area (not Motor Camp grounds)

Kimberley Reserve, Levin - Kimberley Road, south-east Levin, off Arapaepae Rd

Gladstone Reserve, Levin - Gladstone Road

Areas where dogs are banned

During normal shop trading hours, dogs are not allowed in the general shopping areas of the townships of Levin, Foxton and Shannon, unless they are a dog that is registered with a national body such as a Guide Dog. The general restrictions in these townships are as follows:

A. Levin - in Oxford Street between Bath Street and Stanley Street.

B. Shannon - in Plimmer Terrace between Balance Street and Grey Street; and Balance Street between Plimmer Terrace and Venn Street.

C. Foxton - in Main Street between Ravensworth Street and Union Street.

However, as shown on page 13, dog owners are able to walk their dogs on a leash in these areas outside of normal shop trading hours.

D. Reserves, Parks and other areas (at all times)

Tokomaru:

- Tokomaru Domain - during sporting or community usage times
- Horseshoe Bend Reserve

Shannon:

- Shannon Domain
- Hyde Park
- Te Maire Park (Railway Reserve area)

Foxton:

- Easton Park, including rugby grounds, swimming pool, and outdoor play area
- Victoria Park sports grounds
- Stuart Donnelly Park

Foxton Beach:

- Foxton Surf Beach (patrolled area)
- Holben Parade Reserve

Manakau:

- Manakau Domain

Opiki:

- Okunui Domain

Waitarere:

- Waitarere Domain
- Waitarere Beach (patrolled area)
- Holmwood Park
- Waitarere Beach Motor Camp (except for Caretaker and Camp tenants, but restrained on a leash at all times)

continued overleaf...

Levin:

- Green Avenue Reserve
- Parsons Avenue Reserve
- Public Gardens
- Weraroa Reserve
- Playford park Motor Camp (except for Caretaker and Camp tenants, but restrained on a leash at all times)
- Jubilee Park Play area
- Donnelly Park Sportsgrounds
- Western Park
- Levin Domain
- Playford Park - except for designated area
- Waiopehu Reserve
- Muaupoko Park

E. Motor Camps

Foxton Beach, Waitarere Beach, Playford Park - except Caretaker and Camp tenants only.

