

Dog Control Policy and Practices Report

1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires the Council to report on its dog control policies and practices for the financial year.

PART 1 – DOG CONTROL POLICY

The current policy was adopted in December 2020 and outlines the Council's requirements regarding controlling dogs. This policy and the dog control bylaw are currently under review.

Key Aspects of the policy are:

- The requirement for all dogs classified as menacing to be neutered
- When taking dogs out in public, owners must always use or carry a leash
- Specific dog exercise areas have been identified in Alexandra, Clyde, Cromwell, Ranfurly, Naseby, Roxburgh and Pisa Moorings
- A maximum of three dogs are permitted to reside on a private property, unless granted a licence
- Specific on-leash areas have been identified around town centres and sports ground playing surfaces

PART 2 – DOG CONTROL PRACTICES

Dog Control functions were carried out by Cougar Security from 1 July 2021 to 16 January 2022 on a 24-hour basis. An in-house Dog Control Officer has been employed by Central Otago District providing dog control services during office hours (8.30am – 5.00pm) since January 2022. Cougar Security continue to provide contracted services afterhours and during public holidays, weekends and periods of leave.

There were 6794 dogs registered during the 2021/2022 financial year, reflecting a 3.4% increase of 232 dogs. There has also been an increase to 4303 dog owners, a 14.7% rise. Following the employment of an in-house Dog Control Officer providing higher community visibility, we have noted an increase in first time registration for older dogs in the community that have previously been unregistered. Dog registrations were carried out using Council's online Reg the Dog system.

Service Requests

The service requests received through the year generally related to roaming/wandering, barking dogs, aggressive behaviour. There have been two reports of dogs worrying stock. Roaming dogs and barking remains the main issue reported. These areas will continue to be a focus for the team for communications, education, patrols, and enforcement for the coming year.

Dog Registration Fees

Dog control and enforcement activity is funded through dog registration and impounding fees. The registration fees for the 2021-2022 registration period remained the same as the previous year:

- Working dogs \$12.00
- Pet dogs \$55.00

Non-payment of registration fees within the required timeframe incurs a 50% penalty added to the initial registration fee, followed by issue of infringement notices. Unpaid infringement fines are referred to the Courts for collection.

202 deceased dogs were reported in the Central Otago District over this registration period.

Microchipping

All dogs registered for the first time on or after 1 July 2006 and all dogs classified as dangerous or menacing since 1 December 2003 are required to be microchipped.

Council has been working with dog owners throughout the year to microchip dogs as required by legislation, which resulted in an 8% increase (187) in dogs being microchipped:

- 3871 dogs are microchipped
- 2923 dogs are not microchipped, or no microchip number recorded in Reg the Dog

1802 of the dogs not microchipped are required to be, with the remainder currently registered as working dogs and are exempt from microchipping. This is a continued area of focus for 2022–2023, as it appears some dogs have been previously registered as working dogs by the owners incorrectly, in that they do not appear to meet the statutory definition of a working dog.

Disqualified and Probationary Owners

There was one disqualified owner issued during this period.

There are no probationary owners in the Central Otago District.

Menacing and Dangerous Dogs

There is one dog classified as dangerous for the 2021-2022 registration period transferring into the district.

There are 13 dogs classified as menacing under Section 33A (observed or reported behaviour) and 2 dogs identified as menacing under Section 33C (based on type or breed) of the Dog Control Act in 2021/2022.

PART 3 – STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Council received a total of 356 Service Requests including 24 owners notifying of lost dogs. This is an increase of 17% in the previous year, which maybe a reflection of public confidence in Council as a result of the increased level of service provided with our community.

Dog Control is a high area of focus for the Central Otago District Council, which strives to undertake the following key factors:

- a. To have all dogs that live in the district registered
- b. Ensure all dogs are kept under control at all times
- c. Ongoing education of dog owners regarding their responsibilities and obligations

Category of Complaint	2021-2022	2020-2021
Public Safety related complaints		
Dog attack on people - minor	3	1
Dog attack on people - serious	0	0
Dog attack on animal - minor	2	2
Dog attack on animal - serious	2	4
Dog attack on stock (worrying)	2	2
Dog rushing	28	20
Wandering/roaming dogs	183	204
General concern	16	0
Non-safety Concerns		
Barking	88	64
Fouling	8	5

Attacks

When an attack occurs on a person or animal, the incident can be extremely distressing to all parties involved.

The number of dog attacks over the last year has remained low, with increased education and enforcement as necessary.

Wandering and Roaming Dogs

The number of roaming dogs remains the largest issue, however there was a 10% decrease (21) from the previous year. Roaming dogs can frighten, intimidate, and annoy the

community in addition to potentially attacking people and other dogs. Additional patrols and communications on responsible dog ownership were undertaken through the year.

Barking Dogs

There was a 37% (24) increase in the number of complaints received. This may be reflective of our increased dog numbers and community more like to report incidence

The Council has leaflets to raise owners' awareness of the effects of boredom of dogs, and the nuisance aspects of barking dogs. In addition to a bark-box to record the frequency and duration of alleged barking incidents to use at properties, bark collars are also available for owners to use at no cost.

Impounding

There were 8 dogs impounded during the 2021-2022 registration period in the Central Otago District, which were either united with their owner or re-homed. This is a 27% reduction compared to the previous year.

Prosecutions

There were no prosecutions undertaken during the 2021/2022 financial year.

Infringements

There has been slight reduction in the number of infringements issued for failure to register dogs, as officers worked through the education and enforcement process to ensure dogs are registered.

OFFENCE	2021-2022	2020-2021
Failure to Comply with classification	0	0
Failure to register dog	16	22
Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	0	10
Failure to keep dog under control	1	4
Failure to comply with any bylaws authorised by the section	0	0