

# Dog Control Policy and Practices Report

1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

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.

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 residential 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

Central Otago District Council provide an in-house dog control service during office hours (8.30am – 5.00pm) and Cougar Security continue to provide contracted services afterhours, during public holidays, weekends, and periods of leave.

There were 6637 dogs registered, reflecting a 2.1% decrease during the 2023/2024 financial year. There was also a 1.3% decrease in the number of dog owners in the district down to 4439.

Most 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 and aggressive behaviour. There have been three reports of dogs worrying stock.

Roaming dogs and barking remain the main issues 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 2023-2024 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 infringement notices. Unpaid infringement fines are referred to the Courts for collection.

### **Microchipping**

All non-working 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.

Currently:

- 2421 working dogs, exempt from microchipping.
- 2847 dogs are microchipped, with details recorded in the database.
- 1411 dogs are not microchipped or no microchip number currently recorded in the database.

Council continues to work with dog owners to microchip dogs as required by legislation, which is a continued area of focus for 2024–2025.

### **Disqualified and Probationary Owners**

There are no disqualified owners in the Central Otago District.

There is one probationary owner in the Central Otago District.

### **Menacing and Dangerous Dogs**

There were no dogs classified as dangerous for the 2023-2024 registration period.

There are 19 dogs classified as menacing under Section 33A (observed or reported behaviour) and four dogs identified as menacing under Section 33C (based on type or breed) of the Dog Control Act in 2023/2024.

## PART 3 – STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Council received a total of 666 Service Requests including 97 owners notifying of lost dogs. This is an increase of 12% in the previous year.

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	2023-2024	2022-2023
<b>Public Safety related complaints</b>		
Dog attack on people - minor	13	6
Dog attack on people - serious	6	1
Dog attack on animal - minor	12	11
Dog attack on animal - serious	12	7
Dog attack on stock (worrying)	3	2
Dog rushing	26	16
Wandering/roaming dogs	119	83
General concern	69	30
<b>Non-safety Concerns</b>		
Barking	144	104
Fouling	8	4

### 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 increased and is generally as result of poor dog owner management.

### Barking Dogs

The number of barking dog complaints is the largest issue. There was a 38% (40) increase in the number of complaints received, which may be reflective of our community being more likely to report such incidences, knowing Council action such matters.

### Wandering and Roaming Dogs

The number of roaming dogs remains the second largest issue, there has been a 43% increase (36) 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 regarding responsible dog ownership were undertaken through the year.

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 16 dogs impounded during the 2023-2024 registration period, which were either re-united with their owner or re-homed. This is a decrease of 11% (2) compared to the previous year.

### Prosecutions

There were no prosecutions undertaken during the 2023/2024 financial year.

### Infringements

There has been an increase in the number of infringements issued for failure to register dogs, as there has been a rise in reluctance for some dog owners to be self-compliant in this area.

OFFENCE	2023-2024	2022-2023
Failure to Comply with classification	3	2
Failure to register dog	20	3
Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	26	23
Failure to keep dog under control	4	4
Failure to comply with any bylaws authorised by the section	0	7