

Hutt City Council

Annual Dog Control Report

2024-2025



Artwork By Joel, Age 10

1. Purpose of Report

Hutt City Council is required to manage and enforce provisions under the **Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act)** and subsequent amendments in 2003, 2004, 2006, 2010 and 2024.

Section 10A of the Act requires the Council to report annually on its dog control policy and operations. This section requires the Council to report on several statistical aspects of its dog control policy and practices and to make the report publicly available.

This report fulfils the statutory requirement for dog registration year 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

2. Dog Control Policy and Practices

The Council adopted a Dog Policy and Dog Control Bylaw in May 2005 which provides a practical framework for the care and control of dogs in the city.

It gives legal powers to enforce bylaws and determines requirements for keeping dogs in a way that:

- Encourages responsible dog ownership and support the needs of dog owners.
- support the right for people to move freely around the city without experiencing danger, distress, or nuisance from dogs.

The policy was revised in 2015. In 2025 Council opened public consultation to review the Dog Control Policy and the Dog Control Bylaws. The policy and bylaw were adopted by Council and became effective on the 31 July 2025.

Key changes include:

- A license requirement for commercial dog walkers in the Bylaw.
- A limit of four dogs under one person's control in public spaces, as outlined in the Bylaw (this does not apply to commercial dog walkers with demonstrated experience); and
- Updated summertime restrictions in the Bylaw regarding dog access to certain beaches (using specified dates rather than the more ambiguous 'daylight saving' - i.e. 1 December to 31 March).
- Provision of additional dog exercise areas and improvements to maps showing dog exercise / parks and prohibited areas.

Full details can be found on HuttCity website.

[Dog laws in Lower Hutt | Hutt City Council](#)

Other Amendments

The Hutt City Dog Control Bylaw 2015 was amended on 28th May 2024 to prohibit dogs from Bird Protection Areas (BPAs) at Sorrento Bay, Whiorau Reserve, CL Bishop Park, and HW Shortt Park. The Bird Protection Areas were required to be established part of the consent conditions for the Tupua Horo Nuku project which is a 4.4-kilometre seawall and shared path along Marine Drive between Ngau Matau (Point Howard) and Eastbourne. The creation of the BPAs requires new fencing and signage to inform the public of the new restrictions. Increased patrols by Animal Control Officers will occur once all the fencing and signage is completed. These amendments remained unchanged under the new Animal Dog Control Bylaw 2025

3. Animal Services Teams

- a) The Hutt City Council Animal Services Team operates for Lower Hutt.
- b) HuttCity council provided services up until the 31st of March 2025 for WCC. This contract concluded by mutual agreement.
- c) The Hutt City team comprises of a Team Leader, a Principal Animal Control Officer, a part time Senior Animal Control Officer, 3 Animal Control Officers and a Shelter Officer. They are based at 21 Meachen Street, Seaview.
- d) The Hutt City Animal Administration team comprises of a Team Leader, 1 full time Administrator, 2 part time administrators and a casual administrator employed for the re-registering of dogs.
- e) Hutt City has a Memorandum of understanding with Upper Hutt City Council which gives UHCC Animal Control Officers access to the Seaview shelter to house its dogs which are seized after hours. All veterinary, sustenance, shelter and other services are charged back to UHCC.

4. Fees

Dog registration fees and impound fees contribute approximately 60% to 79% to the cost of dog control as set out in HCC Revenue and Financing Policy. Dog registration fees are set by Council resolution and were increased from the 1st of July 2025.

- The registration fee for de-sexed dogs paid before the 31st of July, 2025 of \$133 was not increased.
- The registration fee for an entire dogs increased from \$174 to \$189 to reflect inflationary increases and the impact of entire dogs on the production of unwanted puppies, roaming and aggressive behaviour.

How fees are used

Dog registration fees cover a range of different services that allow us to provide a safe and healthy community for all residents and dogs. The fee increase was necessary for us to deliver services that include:

- promoting care and control of over 10,000 dogs in Lower Hutt
- patrolling public areas and enforcement of the Dog Control Bylaw
- encouraging responsible dog ownership - we have over 1,500 dog owners with Responsible Dog Owner status in Lower Hutt
- maintaining national dog database records
- administration associated with registering dogs and other services.
- operation of Animal Shelter at Seaview, Petone
- maintaining a livestock paddock for impounded animals.
- responding to public inquiries about dogs - [Report a problem](#)
- providing education to schools and other groups free of charge
- maintaining dog parks and off-leash exercise areas including the Les Dalton Dog Park.
- Training for staff to respond in natural disasters to animal welfare emergencies.
- Re-homing suitable dogs after completion of temperament and behaviour testing
- Providing dog poo dispensers and signage
- Enforcement action under the Dog Control Act 1996 and the HuttCity By-law 2025 including impounding, classification of dogs and prosecutions.

Our fees are set in accordance with Section 37 of the Dog Controls Act 1996 and are available for public submissions before being considered and ratified by the Council ([Section 37: Dog Control Act 1996](#)).

The Council also operates a responsible dog owner scheme which provides a discounted rate for dog owners who meet the relevant criteria.

The current year fees can be found here: [Fees and Charges](#)

Hutt City Council has an Animals Service Manager, 6 ACOs, 2 full-time Administrative Staff members, 2 part-time administration officers, and 1 full-time Kennel Officer.

The Officers are responsible for dog control activities throughout the Hutt City precinct.

After hours urgent requests are contracted to Amourguard Ltd. They respond to requests from 5pm to 8am on weekdays, weekends and on public holidays. Urgent requests cover attacks on animals or people, aggressive roaming dogs, dogs secured by members of the public and dogs on roadways impacting traffic.

5. Key achievements

The animal services team has officers dedicated to 6 city wards which allow for the officers to interact with dog owners and the public in those areas. By having the local knowledge of each ward, the officers can respond to complaints and requests for service in a very timely manner.

A new co-operative initiative has been launched in 2024 with SPCA to specifically target de-sexing dogs to reduce the number of dogs resulting in unwanted litters, straying, and aggressive behaviors from entire dogs in the community. This collaboration has been a success with 36 dogs being de-sexed. The partnership involved HCC Animal Control officers targeting

specific dog owners whose dogs had been causing complaints or the owners faced financial difficulties preventing them getting their dogs de-sexed.

6. Rehoming program

Officers continue to run a very successful rehoming program. The Facebook page ([Animal Services Wellington & Hutt Valley](#)) is well-received nationwide and has a huge following of almost 16,000 followers. Dogs are rehomed throughout New Zealand. Dogs are carefully assessed to ensure their suitability for adoption.

10 dogs were re-homed, and 13 dogs were transferred to either SPCA or HUHA.

7. Community engagement

Animal Control Officers continue to build positive relationships with our dog owners which includes dog behavioural and training advice via home visits on request.

A "Cheap as Chips" discount was offered to all dogs that have not already been microchipped, for a discounted fee, to encourage compliance.

A quarterly newsletter to dog owners has been launched. It features advice for dog owners, recent dog adoptions and events.

Animals Services launched a vet partnership with Carevets Wainuiomata and Valley Cottage Vets, Stoke Valley. Certificates for vaccination, de-sexing and when dogs pass away are shared with Council. This ensures certificates do not go missing making it easier for dog owners when registering their dogs. It also supports dog owners during the difficult time when their dog has passed away.

Animal Services supported the penguin diversion training offered by Willy Marsh from Kiwi Avoidance Training. This training is well recognised as being highly effective in reducing the risk of dog attacks on Kororā (Little Blue Penguin).

7 Community engagement (cont.)

Animal Control Officers continue providing an education program to schools on dog bite prevention and training for those persons who interact with dogs during their day-to-day workout in the community.

Animal Service provided an education program for senior ratepayers at the Wainuiomata Community hub on how to keep safe from dog attacks.

Three Animal Control Officers attended the MPI (Ministry of Primary Industries) exercise 'Poseidon,' covering advanced animal rescue training. Exercise Poseidon was a WREMO (Wellington Region Emergency Management Office) lead exercise supported by NEMA, FENZ (USAR) and other CDEM Groups. The scenario was a Wellington Earthquake combined with a regional severe weather event.

Our online registration system for new and previously registered dogs is continuing to be the most popular method for dog owners to receive their invoices.

Children were invited to take part in a drawing competition with many exceptional entries. The artwork was then featured on billboards and Council website to help promote the dog registration season.

We will continue with our cell phone text alerts to dog owners for registration reminders, river algae warnings in the summer months, and any 1080 operations by the Department of Conservation.

Hutt City Council has 45 Dog Bag Dispenser Locations around Hutt City to keep our city free from dog "land mines".

Animal Control Officers represented Animal Services at the Hutt City Council stalls at the Petone Rotary Fair.

8. Dog Welfare

We have responsibilities under the Dog Control Act 1996 to ensure all dogs receive proper care and attention and is supplied with proper and sufficient food, water, and shelter

We work alongside SPCA and HUHANS officers in most cases to ensure that dogs are receiving the care required and, in some cases, will seize those dogs where owners have failed to adhere to warnings previously.

9. Responsible dog owner ([How to be a responsible dog owner](#))

The Responsible Dog Ownership application process was made easier for dog owners. This recognises the majority of HuttCity Dog owners care and take responsibility for their dogs.

There is now an online questionnaire to complete. A property inspection and a demonstration may require if an Animal Control Officer deems it necessary.

Additionally, as a responsible dog owner (RDO) you are to meet the following conditions and requirements:

- Your dog is vaccinated and microchipped.
- your annual dog registration fees are paid on time.
- your dog has free access to a fully enclosed containment area on your property (this doesn't have to be a fully fenced garden or yard)
- in the last year, your dog has not been impounded, been the subject of a substantiated public complaint, or received an infringement notice.
- you have not received any convictions under the HuttCity Council Dog Control By-law 2025, the Dog Control Act 1996; or the Animal Welfare Act 1999.
- Your dog has been registered with HCC for at least 1 year.

Where you can take your dog to exercise (See all [Dog exercise areas](#))

In designated dog exercise areas, your dog doesn't need to be on a lead, but you need to have one with you. Even when you're exercising off-leash, you must keep your dog under control at all times.

In public places, your dog needs to be on a lead.

If you're taking your dog out in public, it's your responsibility to clean up after it. Used litter bags can be placed in public rubbish bins on the street.

Where you can't take your dog (See all [Prohibited Areas](#))

Unless your dog is a guide dog, hearing ear dog, companion dog, or a working dog being used by the Police or a Security Company, you can't take your dog to:

- public libraries
- playgrounds
- council swimming pools
- kindergartens and play centres.
- marked sports fields.
- special events, where advertised.

Microchipping is enforced. ([Dog Control Act 1996 Section 36A](#))

Dog registration and microchipping are not the same things. You must register your dog each year, but you only need to microchip your dog once.

Microchipping is a simple procedure. A microchip is a tiny chip with a unique ID number that is inserted into your dog's neck. It only takes seconds to insert. The chip can then be scanned at vet clinics and animal shelters to identify your dog.

All new puppies and any dogs registered from 1 July 1996 (except working farm dogs) in New Zealand for the first time must be microchipped within two months of being registered.

10. Dog Control Statistics 2023/2024

Dogs registered for the year:

- 8641 as of 1 September 2025

Active dogs in HuttCity

- 10,197 as of 1 September 2025

Probationary owners and disqualified owners:

- A dog owner was disqualified for a period of 3 years for repeated instances of failing to keep a dog controlled or confined. The dog had been classed as menacing and had multiple complaints for aggressive behaviour while roaming.

Dogs that have been classified as dangerous this year (S31 Dog Control Act 1996):

- 6

The number of dogs that have been classified as menacing this year (S33A and S33C):

- By deed 32
- By breed 3

The number of infringement notices issued:

We have issued:

- 774 - S42 Failure to register Dog
- 66 – Other offences

In addition

- 1201 dog owners with outstanding registration fees were sent to debt collection.

Dog related complaints

Complaint	Total	Change from 2023/2024
Barking dogs	564	-147
Dogs attacking people	108	-16
Dogs attacking animal	118	+10
Dogs threatening	212	-9
Uncontrolled dogs	1252	-14
Roaming dogs	788	+76
Lost dogs	196	-6
Found dogs	278	-37

Miscellaneous	Total
Roaming Stock	34
Dogs returned to owner	210
Welfare Investigations	74
Microchipping	114
Adoptions	10
Transferred to another TA	13
Impounded dogs	390

Number of owners prosecuted by Hutt City Council

2 dog owners were prosecuted.

Hutt city Council completed a prosecution against a dog owner for breach of section 57(2) Dog Attacks a Domestic Animal and a 32(2) failing to comply with dangerous dog classification. of the Dog Control Act 1996. The owner was discharged on both charges. An order for destruction was sought by HCC however this was not made by the court. The dogs were surrendered by the owner, and they were destroyed.

A dog owner was convicted on two charges on under sections 57(2) Owner of a dog that attacks a person and 32(2) failing to comply with dangerous dog classification. An order for the destruction of the dog was made by the courts.

Author: Justin Roberts
Head of Regulatory Services



Approved By: Alison Geddes
Director of Environmental and Sustainability