



22 September 2025

Liadhan Robinson

s7(2)(a)

Tēnā koe Liadhan,

Request for Information – Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) 1987

We refer to your official information request dated 26 August 2025, seeking information relating to 187 Moores Valley Road, Wainuiomata. Specifically, you requested:

I am requesting any information regarding the property of Sonya Chambers (Wainui Whiskers) at 187 Moores Valley Road, Wainuiomata, where cats were seized in 2025. Specifically:

- 1. Any reports, inspection records or correspondence regarding this property.*
- 2. Any involvement of council animal control officers, public health officers or environmental health inspectors*
- 3. Details of complaints received by the council relating to this property*
- 4. Results of any testing or reporting on ammonia levels, odours, or other hazards at the site.*
- 5. Copies of communications between Council staff and the SPCA or MPI concerning this case.*

Answer:

In response to your request, three documents were identified as being within scope. These documents are detailed in **Appendix 1** below, and copies are attached to this letter.

Please note, some information has been withheld under section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA to protect the privacy of natural persons.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this response. Information about how to make a complaint is available at: [Office of the Ombudsman - Complaints](#), or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response to your information request may be published on Hutt City Council's website: [Proactive releases - Hutt City Council](#).

Ngā mihi nui



Rebekah van der Splinter

Senior Advisor, Official Information and Privacy

Appendix 1: Documents for release

Number	Date	Document Type	Subject Line	Redaction Grounds
1	22 July 2025	Email	[EXTERNAL] concerns regarding residential property in Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt	Some information has been redacted under section 7(2)(a).
2	1 August 2025	Site Notes	N/A	Released to you in full.
3	25 August 2025	Email	Health and Hygiene Concerns - 187 Moores Valley Road, Wainuiomata	Released to you in full.

From: s7(2)(a)
To: Damien Cleland; s7(2)(a)
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL: RE: [EXTERNAL] concerns regarding residential property in Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt
Date: Wednesday, 23 July 2025 9:36:09 am
Attachments: [image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)

Good morning Damien,

Thanks for your response.

The address is 187 Moores valley Road, Wainuiomata. The occupant is Sonya Chambers.

If you plan to attend, FYI we will be there today so it may be advisable to avoid this time – please do not pass that on to anyone.

And just to clarify, the occupant is currently in charge of over 200 cats, however we believe there to be about 185 at the address as some are with us at this time.

Many thanks.



s7(2)(a)
 Inspectorate Team Leader

SPCA | Masterton Office | 299 Ngaumutawa Road | Masterton
 PO Box 15349 | New Lynn | Auckland | 0640 | New Zealand
P: s7(2)(a) ext. s7(2)(a)
M: s7(2)(a)
E: s7(2)(a)@spca.nz | **W:** www.spca.nz

From: Damien Cleland <Damien.Cleland@huttcity.govt.nz>
Sent: Wednesday, 23 July 2025 9:11 am
To: s7(2)(a)@spca.nz>
Cc: s7(2)(a)@spca.nz>
Subject: EXTERNAL: RE: [EXTERNAL] concerns regarding residential property in Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt

This message is from an EXTERNAL SENDER. BE CAUTIOUS, particularly with links and attachments.

Morena s7(2)(a)

Thank you for making contact. That doesn't sound good at all.

We might be able to serve a cleansing order under the Health Act 1956, which would require the occupant to clean things up. That would only work if the 200 cats were also moved somewhere more appropriate. If you clean the property and leave the cats there, it will quickly return to an unacceptable condition.

Could you please provide the address of the property?

Thank you.

Damien Cleland

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Food Team Lead

Hutt City Council, 30 Laings Road, Hutt Central, Lower Hutt 5010

P: 04 570 6896 M: s7(2)(a) W: www.huttcity.govt.nz



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From: s7(2)(a) <[redacted]@spca.nz>
Sent: Tuesday, 22 July 2025 4:07 pm
To: Damien Cleland <Damien.Cleland@huttcity.govt.nz>
Cc: s7(2)(a) <[redacted]@spca.nz>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] concerns regarding residential property in Wainuiomata, Lower Hutt

You don't often get email from s7(2)(a) <[redacted]@spca.nz>. [Learn why this is important](#)
Good afternoon Damien

I am contact you in regards to serious concerns for an address in Wainiomata. The SPCA are actively involved with a case of over 200 cats confined inside a residential property in extremely unhygienic conditions.

The property is rented by a tenant, who is the sole person in charge of over 200 cats. They are operating as a "rescue". The public continue to reach out to his rescue in good faith, unaware of the issues inside the property.

While at the address last week, Fire Emergency Services were called to assess the ammonia levels inside the house. FENZ advised that the ammonia levels are very high and pose a health and safety risk to humans. SPCA staff were advised we must work in shifts and wear PPE gear to limit exposure to the ammonia. We are obviously very concerned, given the person operating the cat rescue resides inside the house, and does not appear to appreciate the seriousness of the situation. The landlord appears to be supportive of their tenant, despite the carpet throughout the house being contaminated in cat waste.

I am reaching out to see whether the Council can offer any advice or assistance in dealing with this matter. Any assistance would be appreciated.

I look forward to hearing from you, thanks

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s7(2)(a)
Animal Welfare Inspector | Wellington Centre

SPCA | Wellington Centre | 140 Alexandra Road | Newtown
P: s7(2)(a) ext. s7(2)(a) | M: s7(2)(a)
E: s7(2)(a)@spca.nz | W: www.spca.nz

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1-8-25 187 Moores Valley Rd.

* Adoption room. - ammonia odour present
- soiling of carpet
- lower walls
- cardboard & timber soiled (bases)

* Feral room

* Disco room

* Sun room

* Front room

* Upstairs lounge

* Upstairs hall

} all similar to above.

* Sonia has removed carpet from 2 upstairs rooms & plans to continue.

* This will allow for better cleaning being able to mop (clean & disinfect) floor surfaces.

* Discard cardboard & timber (boxes) & use of vinyl.

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From: [Dean Bentley](#)
To: wainuiwhiskers@gmail.com
Cc: [Dean Bentley](#)
Subject: Health and Hygiene Concerns - 187 Moores Valley Road, Wainuiomata

Kia ora,

This is to confirm the inspection of the above property by Council's environmental health officers, 1st August 2025 at 1.00pm.

The inspection was undertaken after concerns were raised to Council regarding the hygiene and cleanliness of the internal dwelling environs, and health of its occupant(s).

The premises is being used as a charitable feline shelter by the occupant, under the name Wainui Whiskers. Various rooms within the dwelling are used to house caged cats, while they are being rehabilitated or awaiting to be rehomed.

During the inspection, it was observed that there was some degree of soiling apparent on the carpeted flooring, cardboard and other surfaces. This combined with the litter trays present resulted in an ammonia odour not uncommon with cat urine.

It was noted that remedial works had already commenced, with carpeting having been removed from two rooms.

In such situations as was found during the inspection, Section 41 of the Health Act 1956 makes provision for the service of a cleansing order, as below:

Owners or occupiers may be required to cleanse premises

(1)

If any local authority is of opinion that the cleansing of any premises is necessary for preventing danger to health or for rendering the premises fit for occupation, it may cause an order (in this section referred to as a **cleansing order**) to be served on the owner or occupier of the premises requiring him to cleanse the same in the manner and within the time specified in the order in that behalf.

(2)

If the person on whom the cleansing order is served does not comply therewith, the local authority may cause the premises to be cleansed in the manner specified in the order at the cost in all things of the owner or occupier.

(3)

Every person commits an offence against this Act who fails to comply with any cleansing order served on him under this section.

In this situation, the following matters were considered:

- A significant number of cats had recently been removed from the property.
- The occupier had already commenced remedial work, having removed carpet from two rooms.
- The occupier understood what works and cleaning/disinfecting were required.
- The occupier had undertaken works to improve ventilation in the premises.
- The occupier was both helpful and co-operative and has agreed to provide Council with regular progress updates.

Taking all of the above into account, a cleansing order was not considered necessary for preventing a danger to health or rendering the premises fit for habitation.

Nga mihi

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