

Wellington City Council
**Annual Dog Control Report
2020-2021**



**Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council**
Me Heke Ki Pōneke



1. Introduction

The Wellington City Council, as a territorial authority, is required to manage and enforce provisions pursuant to the Dog Control Act 1996 (the Act) and subsequent amendments in 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2010.

S10A of the Act requires the Council to report annually to the Secretary of Local Government on its Dog Control Policy and Practices.

This report fulfils this statutory requirement for the dog registration year: 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.



2. The Council's Dog Control Policy and Practices

Policy objectives

The Council adopted a Dog Policy in December 2009 making provisions relating to the control of dogs in public places, which are enforceable under the Wellington Consolidated Bylaw 2008 - Part 2: Animals.

The objectives of the policy are to:

- Ensure that the owners of dogs comply with their obligations under the Act, that dogs are well cared for and Wellingtonians are able to enjoy dog ownership;
- Prevent any danger caused by dogs to the public and to wildlife and natural habitats;

- Minimise the risk of distress and nuisance caused by dogs to the public and to wildlife and natural habitats;
- Actively promote the responsible ownership of dogs; and
- Provide for the reasonable exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners.

A review of the current Policy was undertaken during 2015/16. The Council adopted the finalised Dog Policy on 17 August 2016 and also set areas where dogs can exercise off-leash.

3. Fees

Dog registration fees, fines and impound fees contribute approximately 75% to the cost of dog control in Wellington City. The Council also operates a responsible dog owner scheme which provides a discounted rate for dog owners who meet the relevant criteria. Dog registration fees are set by Council resolution and were not increased during this year.

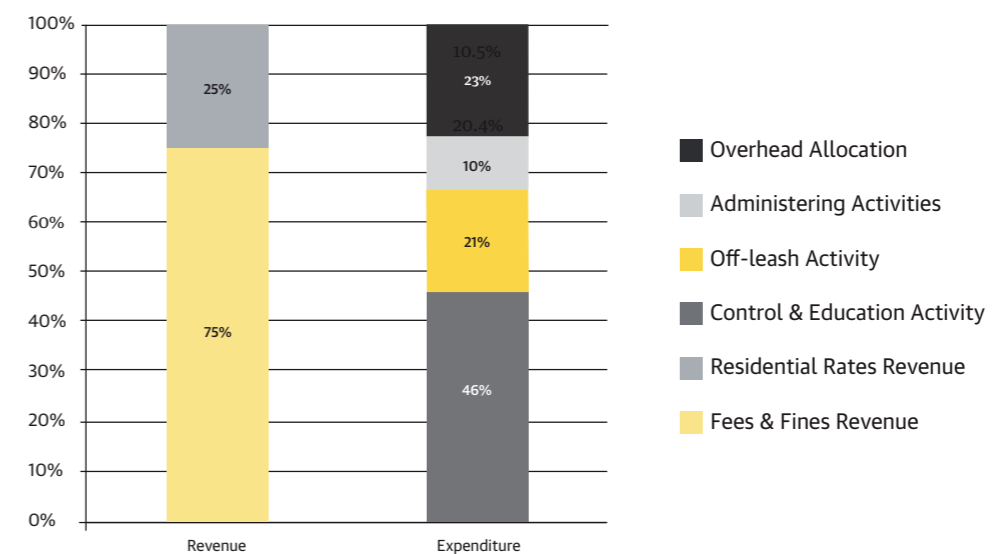
Fees are used for:

- Dog control activities including law enforcement, patrols and complaint investigation.
- Education programmes for schools, community groups and businesses.

- Signs and promotion of the Council's animal bylaw and dog policy.
- Providing shelter facilities.
- Running the dog registration programme - this includes forms, printing, tags, maintaining the national dog database and related promotional material.

The graph below sets out the level of income and expenditure in relation to dog control activities during the year:

2020/21 Dog registration - revenue and expenditure





4. Key achievements

The Wellington City Council contracts the operations of its animal management function to Hutt City Council and has a team of animal management officers based at the Wellington Animal Control Centre at Moa Point.

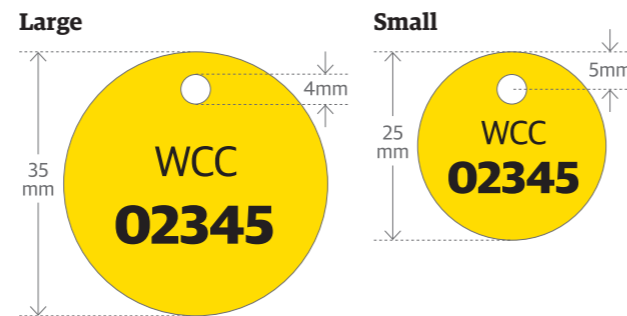
The animal services team have officers dedicated to various wards in the city which allows for the officers to interact with dog owners and the general public in those areas. By having the local knowledge of each ward the officers are able to respond to complaints and requests for service quickly.

This year we paved the way for the introduction of One Tag. In previous years dog owners have been issued with a new plastic tag every time they registered a new dog or re-registered an existing dog. For all dogs registered for the year starting 1 July 2021 onwards dog owners will be issued with a lightweight but durable metal tag. The One Tag lasts for a dog's lifetime, as long as he or she lives in Wellington. The dog owner will still be required to pay registration fees every year to keep their dog's registration current, but they will keep using the same tag.

The benefits of One Tag are:

- Reduces plastic waste and is better for the environment. In the last 5 years alone around 60,000 plastic tags will have been sent to the City's landfill.
- More convenient for dog owners - no need to replace their dog's tag each year.
- Reduces postage costs - as the tag is posted just once, rather a new tag annually.
- The back of the metal tag is left blank so that owners can engrave their dogs' details on the back if they wish.
- Reduces administration costs.
- Provides regional consistency - Hutt City Council also introduced One Tag this year.

The new metal tags come in 2 sizes and owners can decide which size tag they would like for their dog:



5. Community Engagement

The team continued to be involved in community Christmas parades, mobile pop-up dog registrations, responsible dog owner courses and dog safety education courses. Unfortunately, due to COVID 19 restrictions some events had to be postponed or cancelled but during the second half of the year when fewer restrictions were in place, our community engagement programme was very successful.

Our Community Facebook page continues to be very popular with dog stories, helpful information, alerts and the dog rehoming programme that we share with Hutt City Council. We have rehomed dogs to people all over New Zealand and our profile remains very high amongst other organisations.

We look forward to participating in community events in the future, educating dog owners, as education is still the best tool for dog management and a safer, more informed community.

Proactive Patrols

WCC receives numerous complaints about dog bylaw breaches especially in the summer.

During these summer months, extra proactive patrols were conducted in the Wellington area.

Officers spent over 172 hours carrying out 431 patrols in wildlife sensitive areas and locations that feature in reports of non-compliant dog or owner behaviour. These patrols were conducted between the hours 7am -7pm. Officers identified 109 compliance breaches and were able to take enforcement action on 93 of these incidents. At least 207 compliant dog owners were also identified during these patrols.

Responsible dog owner training

To qualify for responsible dog owner approval, dog owners are required to attend training courses and gain a pass certificate on completion.

Animal Services provides a course focussed on educating dog owners. The course is 'dog free' and



covers extensive information regarding dog ownership, owner responsibilities, dog control laws and council bylaws. The courses are well received, a great customer service and education tool. It also provides an opportunity for dog owners to meet animal control officers in a positive learning environment.

Animal Services ran four Responsible Dog Owner courses at the ASB Sports Centre between October 2020-April 2021 with 230 participants registered for the courses, and more than 240 actually attending.

We are looking at running more classes in future as they prove to be very popular. We are also looking for suitable locations to run courses in other areas of the city.



6. Moa Point upgrade

The Moa Point Animal Shelter received a long overdue upgrade to kennel facilities and security, and it looks great! The old wooden kennels have been replaced with draft free fibreglass pods which are more comfortable for the dogs, easier to clean and more suitable for withstanding the challenges of being located on Wellington's south coast. A strong and durable mesh has taken the place of rusting chain link fences and security cameras have been installed on the property, including in the offices where our team deal with customer enquiries.



7. Emergency Evacuation

During the storm and large sea swells in at the end of June we evacuated the dogs and staff from the animal shelter in case of flooding. The dogs were relocated to Hutt City Council's pound in Seaview and the staff worked from home for a couple of days. Luckily the shelter was not flooded or damaged and dogs and people returned safely to the Moa Point shelter.

8. Neutering menacing dogs

In 2016 the Department for Internal Affairs launched a nationwide campaign for the neutering of menacing dogs. In January 2017 we were successful in obtaining a DIA grant to fund the neutering of all dogs in Wellington classified as menacing. Under the Act, a dog may be classified as menacing if it belongs to a breed or type listed in the Act, or if the local authority considers the dog poses a threat to people or animals on the basis of its behaviour.

During the year we worked alongside our SPCA partners to contact the owners of menacing dogs and arrange for neutering to take place. Overall, three dogs were neutered this year under the programme.





9. Dog Control Statistics

9.1 Dogs registered for the 2020/21 year: 12,751

Previous years	2019/2020	2018/2019	2017/2018	2016/2017
Number	12,328	11,897	11,615	11,398

9.2 Dangerous and menacing dogs

Number of dogs that have been classified as **dangerous** this year (S31 Dog Control Act 1996):

Category	2020/21	Previous years			
		2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Dangerous by owner conviction S31(1)(a)	0	0	0	0	1
Dangerous by sworn evidence S31(1)(b)	8	4	5	1	6
Dangerous by owner admitting in writing S31(1)(c)	0	0	0	0	0
Total dangerous dogs classified	8	4	5	1	7

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

Category	2020/21	Previous years			
		2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Menacing by behaviour S33A(1)(b)(i)	2	0	2	7	4
Menacing by breed characteristics S33A(1)(b)(ii)	19	9	15	0	16
Menacing by Schedule 4 breed S33C(1)	6	14	5	12	19
Total menacing dogs classified	27	25	22	19	39

9.3 Probationary owners and disqualified owners:

We have not disqualified or applied probationary classifications on any dog owners during this period.

9.4 Number of dog owners prosecuted by Wellington City Council:

We did not prosecute any dog owners during the year.

9.5 Number of infringement notices issued:

We issued 104 infringement notices.

Previous years:

2019/2020	2018/2019	2017/2018	2016/2017
103	101	110	117

9.6 Dog-related complaints: Response to service requests:

The target time for responses to service requests is within one hour for urgent requests and 24 hours for non-urgent requests:

Urgent dog complaints responded to within 1 hour: 95% (the target is 100%)

The 100% target was not achieved due to our complaint logging system not relaying some complaint details through to the animal control officers - this is an intermittent issue which is being investigated. Additionally, some complaints were emailed to inboxes that are only monitored during office hours - we have now amended information on our website encouraging people to contact the Council by phone for after-hours complaints.

Category	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Attacks on people	37	53	56	48	39
Attacks on animals	65	99	77	80	68
Barking dogs	527	455	660	651	627
Uncontrolled dogs	529	650	731	805	775
Miscellaneous	574	731	655	783	796
Total number of dog-related complaints	1732	2188	2179	2367	2305

For this reporting year, miscellaneous complaints can be broken down into the following categories:

Category	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Challenging (dog may be on a lead but moves towards person/animal)	94	79	95	106	95
Education (giving advice to owner)	11	44	0	5	14
Fouling	24	50	55	32	50
Relinquishing a dog (handing dog over)	0	4	2	7	1
Stray pickups	440	544	501	632	633
Concerns for welfare	5	10	2	1	3
Total	574	731	655	783	796

J013574

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council

Me Heke Ki Pōneke