

Kaipara District Council

Annual Animal Management Report 2023-2024



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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Annual Report

Section 10A of the Dog Control Act 1996 requires each territorial authority to report on its dog control policy and practices and to provide specific statistical information. This report fulfils this statutory requirement and provides an update to all stakeholders on the progress and performance of the Kaipara District Council's Animal Management Team for the dog registration year 1 July 2023 to the 30th of June 2024.

1.2 Background

All Dog Control functions in the district are carried out by Kaipara District Council, this includes administration, field, and shelter services (Note SLA with Whangarei Kennels when support is required). In 2023/24 Kaipara District employed a total of Four Animal Management Officers across the district.

The Animal Management team is responsible to undertake duties related to the Dog Control Act 1996, Impounding Act 1955, code of Welfare Temporary Housing and relevant animal management bylaws and policies, including but not limited to complaints about dogs at large, aggressive dog behavior including attacks, dog registration, encouraging responsible dog ownership and education.

The Kaipara District covers a significant geographical area which includes both urban and rural dog owners, the Animal Management team continues to work hard to ensure timely response to complaints while also managing high risk events or emergency after-hours.

2 Kaipara District Council's Dog Control Policy and Practice

2.1 Council adopted its Dog Management Policy in November 2019

On 1 November 2019, the new Policy on Dogs 2019 and the Dog Management Bylaw 2019 came into effect. The objective of the new policy is to see dogs as a positive part of the life in the Kaipara district by:

- Maintaining opportunities for owners to take their dogs into public places.
- Adopting measures to minimise risk around dog behavior, and
- Protecting dogs from harm and ensuring their welfare is taken care of.

Together, the policy and bylaw have:

- Provided a consistent approach to multiple dog ownership.
- Provided a consistent monitoring approach in parks and beaches.

- Provide a balanced approach to dog access in Council controlled public places.

2.2 Our Services and Fees

According to policy, dog registration, fines and impound fees aim to contribute up to 80% of the cost of Animal Management in Kaipara District. The Council does provide discounted registration rates for owners of 'working dogs'; and for those who pay registration prior to end of August. These fees provide for several animal management services:

- Dog Management activities including law enforcement, investigations, and prosecutions.
- Dog incident prevention (including proactive patrols and property checks) classification and enforcement of menacing and dangerous dogs.
- Kennel Services and maintenance of the Kennel facility (adoption/rehoming and microchipping).
- Providing education to the public relating to dog control and other animal management issues
- Control of livestock on roads under the Impounding Act 1955
- Dog Registration and database administration

3 Key Achievements

3.1 Responding to complaints (SR/Requests)

Dog related complaints increased from last year. There were 2,151 dog control service requests over the 2023/2024 period compared to the previous year's total of 1903. The Animal Management team achieved response times with an average of 86% for urgent RFS (attacks and aggressive RFS) in 2023/24, which is below target of 95%, this can be attributed to response considered as onsite within 1 hour of the incident which geographically was always going to be difficult to achieve for our small team.

3.2 Registration

Kaipara District council has worked hard to ensure a high rate of registered dogs in the district with 95.6% of known dogs registered for the 2023/24 registration period. The number of known dogs 5221 has continued to fall since the peak in 2020, a total drop of around 5% over 4 years which is not in line with the Districts population growth, this will be a focus of the 2024/25 registration period.

3.3 Enforcement Activities

There were 359 infringements issued for offences under the Dog Control Act in 2023/24. This represents an 8% decrease from the 391 infringements issued in 2022/2023. Animal Management has continued to focus on wandering dogs especially in urban areas however the number of complaints has continued to increase for the second year in a row, wanderings can lead to increased dog aggression events such as dog attacks and rushings and reducing these complaints is a key task for Animal Management in 2024/25. Dog attacks have remained high compared to our historical

average, there were 67 dog attacks in 2023/24, therefore more work is required in reducing the dog risk in Kaipara communities. There were no prosecutions sought against any dog owners by Kaipara District Council in 2023/24.

3.4 Impounded Dogs

During the year, there were 95 dogs impounded at our Kennel facilities, which is 61 more than in the 2022/2023 year. This increase can be attributed to officers taking a harder line on wandering dogs especially in urban areas, but also post-covid has seen an increase in the number of surrendered dogs as dogs owners struggle with the cost of living and providing care for their pets. The increased number of impounds has meant that the Kaipara kennels are currently running very close to capacity which can affect service levels.

The number of dogs having to be euthanized increased to 43 from 9 last year. This number is the highest it has been in over three reporting years and again can be attributed to both voluntary surrenders by the public and dogs that (for safety reasons) cannot be rehomed.

3.5 Menacing Dogs

Under the Dog Control Act 1996, all dogs must be classified as menacing that belong to a breed or type currently listed in schedule 4 of the Act, or if the local authority considers that the dog poses a threat to people or other animals and wildlife due to its behavior. A classified dog must be muzzled when in a public place and be de-sexed. De-sexing menacing dogs is a key component of reducing dog-related harm.

A total of 27 dogs have been classified in the district as menacing under section 33C of the Act. The majority are classified by breed being primary of the American Pitbull Terrier type. The number of dogs that are classified as menacing based on reported behavior did not increase in 2023/24 year and remains at 5.

3.6 Planned Activities for 2024/2025

- Continued focus on comprehensive and early intervention in response to negative dog behaviors, such as wandering, and aggressive behaviors, rushing and dog attack numbers.
- Continued focus on proactive work carried out by Animal Management in terms of enforcement in relation to unregistered dogs especially in relation to dogs that are unknown to council.
- A renewed focus on working with local schools to provide a dog safety education programme.
- renewed priority on ensuring all dogs that are required to be classified, are identified, and classified.
- Complete Internal review of Animal Management Kennel facilities

4 Summary

The 2023-2024 registration year proved to be a challenging year for Kaipara District Council Animal Management, staffing changes and subsequent recruiting challenges meant resources were stretched and the focus for officers was necessarily on core functions and staff development. It is anticipated that some of the changes made in 2023/24 to the Animal Management team will result in reductions in complaints especially in high-risk areas such as wandering and dog attacks, coupled with a demonstrated increase in the quality of enforcement activity and education to reduce harm within our communities.

5 Dog Management Statistics

1 Registrations Tables

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Registered Dogs	4713*	4812*	4995
Known Dogs	5,237	5,347	5221

**Correction 2022/23 annual report known dogs reported as registered*

2 Classification Tables

	2021-2022	2022-23	2023-24
Dog Owner Classifications			
Warning letters	0	0	0
Probationary Owners	4	1	0
Disqualified Owners	0	0	1
Dangerous Classifications			
Dangerous Dogs - still active	2	2	3
▪ by Owner Conviction under s31(1)(a)	1	1	1
▪ Dangerous by Sworn Evidence s31(1)(b)	1	1	1
▪ Dangerous by Owner Admittance in writing s31(1)(c)	0	0	1
Menacing Classifications			
Menacing Dogs – active total	34	28	27
▪ under s33A(1)(b)(i) – i.e., by behaviors	7	5	5
▪ under s33A(1)(b)(ii) – by breed characteristics	2	1	0
▪ under s33C(1)(ii) by Schedule 4 breed	25	22	22

3 Requests for Service (RFS) Tables

3.1 Service Requests

Type of Service Request breakdown	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Animal management administration	241	348	479
Dog attack	39	69	67
Dog rushing	23	39	36
Dog wandering	236	537	767
Dog not under control	34	76	101
Dog worrying stock	8	16	29
Dog in refuse	3	2	6
Other	0	8	0
Dog barking	95	144	220
Dog fouling	5	7	7
Bylaws	85	233	64
Other	92	68	115
Beach patrols	149	356	260
Total request numbers	1,010	1,903	2,151

Total # of Service Requests for the year	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Service Request received	861	1,547	1,891



4 Enforcement - Tables

4.1 Prosecutions

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Number of Prosecutions	0	0	0

4.2 Infringement Notices

Description of offence			
Description of offence	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Obstruction of a Dog Control Officer (AMO)	0	0	1
Fail to supply or willfully provide false information.	0	1	0
Failure to comply with Council's Dog Policy	0	0	0
Failure to comply with Dangerous Dog Classification	0	0	0
Failure to comply with Menacing Dog Classification	0	0	2
Failure to implant microchip in dog	4	2	7
Kept an unregistered dog	183	360	297
Failure to keep a dog controlled or confined	14	23	49
Failure to keep a dog under control	2	1	0
Failure to provide proper care	0	0	0
Releasing a dog from custody	0	0	0
Failure to comply with Bylaw	5	1	0
Other	0	3	3
Total number of dog infringement issued	208	391	359

5 Animal Shelter – Tables

5.1 Impounded Dogs

Impounded Dogs	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Impounded	34	51	34	95
Returned to owner	15	30	17	40
▪ % dogs returned to owners	44%	59%	50%	42%
Adopted	6	11	6	12
▪ % dogs adopted	18%	21%	18%	13%
Euthanised	11	10	9	43
▪ % dogs euthanised	33%	20%	27%	45%
Reasons for impounded dogs				
Attacked person or animal	13	12	10	15
Wandering	21	33	22	56
Surrendered/Abandoned	0	0	0	24
Other – Non-Reg/Barking/Classification	0	2	2	8
Where impounded				
Whangarei DC	34	35	11	5
(KDC) Dargaville		16	23	90
Total	34	51	34	95

Acknowledgements

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