Survey Responses

11 August 2020 - 23 April 2025

Dog Control Policy and Bylaw 2025 Feedback Form

Let's Talk Gore District

Project: Dog Control Policy and Bylaw

GRANICUS

VISITORS					
31					
CONTRIBUTORS			RESPONSES		
7			8		
1 Registered	0 Unverified	6 Anonymous	2 Registered	0 Unverified	6 Anonymous

Respondent No: 1
Login: Gore District Council
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Mar 20, 2025 08:17:30 am
Last Seen: Apr 23, 2025 19:44:44 pm
IP Address: [redacted]

Q1.	**Name**	Katie Smorthwaite
Q2.	**Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?**	No
Q3.	**Email Address**	[redacted]
Q4.	**Phone Number**	not answered
Q5.	**Postal Address**	not answered
Q6.	**Do you want to speak in support of your submission at a hearing?**	No

Q7. **What is your feedback on the proposed changes?**

My feedback is that it's the worst town for dog ownership on the account there is no where to walk your dogs. We are surrounded by countryside and you can only take them in one tiny paddock or around Hamilton park. How many 100s of dogs are registered in the area (paying fees) for the use of one tiny park? We need more spaces (the reasoning behind not having them at dolamore is bizarre) to walk our dogs that isn't around a concrete block of town. Invercargill has multiple areas of park and bushland, why can't this be looked in to here? It's awful for the dogs and also not sure what all our registration fees go towards?

Q8.	**File Upload**	not answered

Respondent No: 2
Login: Gore District Council
Email: [redacted]

Responded At: Mar 20, 2025 08:19:46 am
Last Seen: Apr 23, 2025 19:44:44 pm
IP Address: [redacted]

Q1.	**Name**	Michelle G. McLean
Q2.	**Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?**	No
Q3.	**Email Address**	[redacted]
Q4.	**Phone Number**	not answered
Q5.	**Postal Address**	not answered
Q6.	**Do you want to speak in support of your submission at a hearing?**	No

Q7. **What is your feedback on the proposed changes?**

I am in favour of what is proposed. I would like to add that some cities use DNA tracing to identify which dog has left faeces that has not been cleaned up by the owner. All dogs give a DNA sample when first registered, which is then matched to the offending waste. The technology to do this could be paid for by dog registration fees, and is more affordable now than ever before. It is often children walking to and from school, parents pushing prams, and people in wheelchairs who bear the brunt of dog owner's negligence. Gore DC has impressed me by the mapping of trees, so using gene tech would further promote Gore DC as being progressive. There is an account of using this tech in the book "Freakonomics

Q8.	**File Upload**	not answered

Respondent No: 3
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Mar 20, 2025 16:49:24 pm
Last Seen: Mar 20, 2025 16:49:24 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Name**	Emma Sherie
Q2.	**Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?**	No
Q3.	**Email Address**	[redacted]
Q4.	**Phone Number**	not answered
Q5.	**Postal Address**	not answered
Q6.	**Do you want to speak in support of your submission at a hearing?**	No

Q7. **What is your feedback on the proposed changes?**

Could we please have the areas where dogs are prohibited no longer include the gardens? The gardens are a beautiful space for the whole family to enjoy including dogs on their leads. I have seen many dogs in there where their owners on their leads. Including during festivities like the Gore Rhododendron Festival and the Matariki Light Festival. If we aren't going to enforce it what is the point of it? Especially when it enhances people's wellbeing by being able to be in a space as beautiful as the gardens with our dog.

Q8.	**File Upload**	not answered

Respondent No: 4
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Mar 24, 2025 10:26:29 am
Last Seen: Mar 24, 2025 10:26:29 am
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Name**	Greg Sligo
Q2.	**Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?**	No
Q3.	**Email Address**	[redacted]
Q4.	**Phone Number**	[redacted]
Q5.	**Postal Address**	[redacted]
Q6.	**Do you want to speak in support of your submission at a hearing?**	No

Q7. **What is your feedback on the proposed changes?**

I agree in principle to the changes. Is there a reason for the gardens and reserve being prohibited? I can understand dogs having to be on lead and behaving. It is nice area to sit and have a family picnic too

Q8.	**File Upload**	not answered

Respondent No: 5
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Apr 08, 2025 19:59:39 pm
Last Seen: Apr 08, 2025 19:59:39 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Name**	Michelle Davers
Q2.	**Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?**	No
Q3.	**Email Address**	[redacted]
Q4.	**Phone Number**	[redacted]
Q5.	**Postal Address**	[redacted]
Q6.	**Do you want to speak in support of your submission at a hearing?**	No

Q7. **What is your feedback on the proposed changes?**

Hello - my feedback as follows. I feel that good dog owners are being penalised by bad dog owners. We have 1 dog who is always on a lead and we always pick up after her. We only ever walk on the absolute edges of any green area we go to. We are not impacting the environment or any members of the public because we take dog ownership seriously. I see there is basically nowhere in West Gore that dogs can be walked, this is not realistic given how many dogs are in the West Gore area. This needs looked at please if you are going to enforce a blanket ban. How about asking people to walk on edges only as we do rather than taking access away completely. Fot both dog & human walking is important and should be able to be done in a nice environment for the physical, mental and emotional good of the dog and the human. Please reconsider your blanket approach. Thanks Michelle

Q8.	**File Upload**	not answered

Respondent No: 6
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Apr 14, 2025 10:43:34 am
Last Seen: Apr 14, 2025 10:43:34 am
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Name**	Amy Ritchie
Q2.	**Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?**	No
Q3.	**Email Address**	[redacted]
Q4.	**Phone Number**	[redacted]
Q5.	**Postal Address**	[redacted]
Q6.	**Do you want to speak in support of your submission at a hearing?**	No

Q7. **What is your feedback on the proposed changes?**

Being a dog owner we appreciate the supplied dog bag stations, we have all run out of bags when needed, however Gore needs a significant instant fine if poop is not picked up and disposed of correctly in a bin. Have more dog friendly parks, we enjoy Hamilton park we pick up our dogs poop but others don't do spoil it for all. All dogs on a lead in our business area we love our dog but not everyone does. It's such a a privilege to be allowed dogs in our main Street I hope this remains.

Q8.	**File Upload**	not answered

Respondent No: 7
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Apr 22, 2025 11:33:56 am
Last Seen: Apr 22, 2025 11:33:56 am
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Name**	Nicola McDonald - Companion Animals New Zealand (CANZ)
Q2.	**Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?**	Yes
Q3.	**Email Address**	[redacted]
Q4.	**Phone Number**	[redacted]
Q5.	**Postal Address**	not answered
Q6.	**Do you want to speak in support of your submission at a hearing?**	No

Q7. **What is your feedback on the proposed changes?**

Please see the attached document "Gore April 2025 Submission".

Q8.	**File Upload**	https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/ehq-production-australia/b49f235bc975c5b5d497c0a56d3d5626cf6ac242/original/1745278401/bdc6aac3bf951c0a05698f8f7e32b981_Gore%20April%202025%20submission.pdf?1745278401

17 April 2025

Governance Team
Gore District Council
PO Box 8
Gore 9740
Via email: communications@goredc.govt.nz

Submission re: Control of Dogs Bylaw and Policy Consultation – Statement of Proposal

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed changes to your Control of Dogs Policy and Bylaw.

Companion Animals New Zealand (CANZ), formerly the New Zealand Companion Animal Council, is a respected animal welfare organisation committed to advancing A Good Life for companion animals. We own and manage the New Zealand Companion Animal Register (NZCAR) and actively promote the importance of permanent identification and traceability through microchipping and registration. The NZCAR is NZ's leading microchip database for pets with more than 1.4 million pets registered and over 1000 approved users nationwide, such as vet clinics, SPCA and rescues. We connect companion animals to their guardian details to ensure swift repatriation in case of separation, and we offer a lost and found service. Through our 'Good Life for Animals' research, community engagement and education work we promote improved standards for welfare and responsible companion animal guardianship in New Zealand. Our mission is that all companion animals in New Zealand should enjoy 'A Good Life'.

The Importance of Microchipping and Registration

Companion Animals NZ strongly advocates for the microchipping and registration of all dogs on the New Zealand Companion Animal Register (NZCAR). Dogs that are microchipped and registered on the NZCAR are three times more likely to be reunited with their guardians. We encourage councils across New Zealand to check the NZCAR guardianship records when attempting to reunite lost or roaming dogs with their guardians, particularly in cases where

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council records for dogs may be unavailable. We acknowledge and appreciate Gore District Council's inclusion of the New Zealand Companion Animal Register in their Dog Control Policy under clause 5.12 re Microchipping databases.

General Feedback:

While we appreciate that the intention behind the Dog Control Policy and Bylaw is to improve clarity for both the community and council staff, we found the definition of "owner" in clauses 4.1 (Dog Control Policy) and 4.2 (Dog Bylaw)—drawn from the Dog Control Act 1996—to be somewhat difficult to interpret. In particular, the reference to an owner of a dog being "at large or in confinement for a period not exceeding 72 hours" is unclear.

We suggest rewording this section for greater clarity or including an explanatory note to help ensure the clause is easily understood by all stakeholders; e.g. : ***Owner*** *– any person who has a dog in their possession, whether the dog is roaming or confined, unless the person holds the dog for less than 72 hours solely to prevent it from causing injury, damage, or distress, or to return a lost dog to its rightful owner.*

Feedback on the Dog Control Policy 2025 Draft

We support the council's emphasis on importance of education under clause 7.1.

We would like to highlight that we provide a range of online resources specifically developed to support dog guardians in understanding and practicing responsible guardianship. These include an online library of evidence-based articles, free webinars, and videos on topics like dog behaviour modification training and the use of ethical training aids such as longlines.

- Online library: ***https://www.companionanimals.nz/articles-and-advice***
- Free webinars and videos: ***https://www.youtube.com/@companionanimalsnewzealand341/featured***

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Feedback on the Dog Control Bylaw 2025 Draft:

In reference to clause 5.1c: "In the case of a kennel without other means of confinement, a dog must be provided with either a fixed chain or running wire….". CANZ fully supports the new regulation announced by the government, due to take effect later this year, which prohibits prolonged dog tethering. This is a vital step in protecting dog welfare by preventing distress and allowing natural behaviours. CANZ believes dogs should be free to move and express natural behaviours. While we support the ban on prolonged tethering, we also encourage minimising any tether use. Secure fencing and regular supervised exercise are safer, more welfare-friendly options for managing dogs at home. We would suggest rephrasing this clause to encourage dog owners to implement appropriate confinement, such as secure fencing, to ensure their dogs are safely contained while still able to express natural behaviours.

In reference to clause 9.2: We fully support the exemption of disability assistance dogs from the restrictions on prohibited dog areas in Gore and commend the council for this considerate decision.

We do feel that there are currently a significant number of dog-prohibited zones, particularly in the western parts of Gore. We encourage the Council to consider opening/developing additional dog friendly areas where people can exercise their dogs freely and safely. It is possible to provide ample off-leash exercise areas for dogs while ensuring the protection of wildlife, natural habitats, and public safety. Access to safe, designated spaces for off-leash activity promotes better physical and mental health for dogs and their guardians, reducing obesity and improving behaviour (Hurley et al., 2011). With research showing that over 40% of New Zealand's dog population is overweight or obese (Animates. (n.d.); Forrest et al., 2022), providing these areas is crucial for canine health and welfare, allowing for essential exercise, socialisation, enrichment and species-specific behaviours.

For example, dog parks are popular spaces for outdoor activity, and their accessibility increases usage and satisfaction among dog owners (Lee et al, 2009). New Zealand's Code of Welfare for Dogs highlights the importance of exercise, warning that insufficient physical activity can lead to behavioural and health issues that may affect both the dog, humans and the community. Research also indicates that on-leash activities often fail to meet dogs' natural walking pace and

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cognitive needs, while off-leash freedom—when managed responsibly—allows dogs to explore, release energy, and engage with their environment (Foltin & Ganslosser, 2021).

To balance control and freedom, we recommend educating dog guardians on the use of longlines. Longlines offer dogs greater movement while keeping them under direct control, supporting natural behaviours like sniffing and roaming while enhancing safety and satisfaction. For more information on longline use, please check out our informative YouTube video: ***Video: Summer 'Pet-iquette' Series - Long Lines and Safe Play***.

We would like to thank you for considering our feedback. If you have any questions regarding this, please feel free to contact me.

Ngā mihi

Dr Nicola McDonald
Animal Welfare Operations Officer
Companion Animal New Zealand
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References:

Animates. (n.d.). *Pet obesity*. Retrieved March 19, 2025, from https://www.animates.co.nz/articles/pet-obesity

Foltin, S., & Ganslosser, U. (2021). Exploration behavior of pet dogs during off-leash walks. *Journal of Veterinary Science Medicine,* 9(9), 1-9.

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Respondent No: 8
Login: Anonymous
Email: n/a

Responded At: Apr 23, 2025 15:47:14 pm
Last Seen: Apr 23, 2025 15:47:14 pm
IP Address: n/a

Q1.	**Name**	Dr Arnja Dale
Q2.	**Are you submitting on behalf of an organisation?**	Yes
Q3.	**Email Address**	[redacted]
Q4.	**Phone Number**	[redacted]
Q5.	**Postal Address**	[redacted]
Q6.	**Do you want to speak in support of your submission at a hearing?**	Yes
Q7.	**What is your feedback on the proposed changes?**	Please see our SPCA submission attached.
Q8.	**File Upload**	https://s3-ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/ehq-production-australia/fd78637e9ea7f25d9cf63514739872ebc5b798a9/original/1745380014/89cf1683a6180031cba00fcc83deb0ce_SPCA%20submission_Gore%20District%20Council%20Control%20of%20Dogs%20Policy%20and%20Bylaw%202025_23.04.25.pdf?1745380014

Submission by the

Royal New Zealand Society for the

Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Inc.

on

Gore District Council Control of Dogs Policy & Bylaw

23 April 2025

Executive Summary

- We support the proposed changes to clarify exemptions to dog prohibited areas for disability assist dogs and the addition of maps to clarify designated areas for dog exercise, leash control and prohibited areas.

- SPCA supports dog friendly communities. Dogs are an important part of our communities, and we support the explicit recognition of this in the Dog Control Policy. We also commend Council on their inclusive and education-first approach to encouraging responsible dog ownership.

- SPCA supports the acknowledgement of the New Zealand Companion Animal Register. As this tool is accessible to veterinarians, rescues and shelters, raising awareness of this microchip register assists with reuniting dogs with their owners.

- SPCA encourages Council to consider desexing of dogs repeatedly found roaming and desexing of unclaimed dogs deemed suitable for rehoming prior to transferring ownership.

- SPCA advocates for the inclusion of a pathway to appeal menacing classification with eligibility based on demonstrated steps towards responsible dog ownership.

- SPCA would like to make Council aware of that dog tethering regulations are likely to be introduced later this year. We recommend Council consider amending 13.2(d) and 15(c) of the bylaw to reflect these regulations when they come into force.

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Introduction

The following submission is made on behalf of The Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (trading as SPCA).

SPCA is the preeminent animal welfare and advocacy organisation in New Zealand. The Society has been in existence for over 150 years with a supporter base representing more than 100,000 New Zealanders across the nation.

The organisation includes 28 Animal Welfare Centres across New Zealand and approximately 60 inspectors appointed under the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

SPCA welcomes the opportunity to submit on the consultation for the Gore District Council Control of Dogs Policy & Bylaw.

Submission

SPCA advocates for responsible dog ownership. Below we provide feedback on proposed changes to the Dog Control Policy and Bylaw, additional suggestions for the Council to consider that promote responsible dog ownership, and background information and research in support of our submission.

Feedback on proposed changes to the draft Dog Control Policy & Bylaw

SPCA supports the proposed changes to clarify exemptions to dog prohibited areas for disability assist dogs and the addition of maps to clarify designated areas for dog exercise, leash control and prohibited areas.

Additional feedback on the draft Dog Control Policy & Bylaw

Below SPCA suggests some additional feedback on the draft dog control policy and bylaw for consideration.

Dog friendly communities

SPCA supports dog-friendly communities. New Zealanders overwhelmingly consider their companion animals part of their whānau (Companion Animals New Zealand, 2020).

We would like to commend the Council on the explicit on the explicit recognition of this in the Dog Control Policy. We also commend Council on their inclusive and education-first approach to encouraging responsible dog ownership.

Creating dog-friendly communities facilitates socialisation of puppies and dogs. Dogs which have been adequately and appropriately socialised are less likely to show undesirable behaviours, such as barking and aggression (Dietz et al., 2018). We commend councils which take proactive steps to foster positive community attitudes and practices.

New Zealand Companion Animal Register

SPCA supports the acknowledgement of the New Zealand Companion Animal Register. As this tool is accessible to veterinarians, rescues and shelters, raising awareness of this microchip register assists with reuniting dogs with their owners.

Desexing

SPCA encourages Council to consider desexing of dogs repeatedly found roaming and desexing of unclaimed dogs deemed suitable for rehoming prior to transferring ownership.

Several Councils, including Auckland, Hamilton and New Plymouth, already include desexing – along with microchipping and registration – as part of their rehoming fees. Many Councils also have targeted desexing requirements for dogs that are repeatedly found roaming, such as those recently introduced by Auckland and Rotorua Lakes Councils.

Desexing is a well-established approach for reducing the number of unwanted litters, decreasing roaming behaviours, and contributing to improved behaviour outcomes.

Dog tethering

SPCA would like to make Council aware of that dog tethering regulations are likely to be introduced later this year, following public consultation in March 2023 (Hoggard, 2025).

When these regulations come into force, they will allow Animal Welfare Inspectors to intervene where dogs are suffering physically, emotionally, or are kept in unsafe conditions due to the way they are tethered and to ensure that vulnerable categories of dog are not subject to tethered, including puppies and female dogs who are in heat, pregnant or lactating, or where a vet advises in writing that a dog should not be tethered (1News reporters, 2025).

We recommend Council consider updating the current wording of sections 13.2(d) and 15.1(c) of the draft bylaw to ensure alignment with the wording of these new regulations.

Menacing Classification

Under the Dog Control Act 1996, dogs may be classified as menacing due to behaviour (section 33A) or due to appearance (section 33C).

SPCA supports councils providing a pathway for owners of dogs with a menacing by behaviour classification to request a review of their dog's classification, provided they take specific steps to demonstrate responsible dog owner. This approach has been successfully adopted by other territorial authorities (for example, see Auckland Council Dog Bylaw), which provide an opportunity to apply for review after 12 months of holding this classification. This incentivises human behaviour change and adoption of responsible dog ownership practices.

SPCA understands that councils are required to comply with the Dog Control Act 1996, which currently requires classification of dogs listed in Schedule 4 (as assessed based on visual assessment of the dog's physical characteristics) as "menacing". SPCA strongly opposes breed specific legislation, such as New Zealand's Dog Control Act 1996, as evidence shows that targeting specific dog breeds or types is subjective, does not reduce the risk of dog bites, and places additional obligations on responsible owners.

The Act does not contain a definition of what constitutes an "American Pit Bull Terrier type" and thus it is left up to each territorial authority to determine how they establish reasonable grounds for believing a dog is wholly or predominantly one of the impacted dog breeds or types. SPCA cautions that research has clearly shown that visual assessment of mixed breed dogs is highly inaccurate, even when conducted by experts such as shelter workers, veterinarians and dog control officers (Hoffman et al., 2014; Olson et al., 2015; Voith et al., 2013). Classification as menacing has serious consequences for a dog's welfare and can impact responsible dog owners. SPCA encourages councils to consider these impacts, and the high rates of error in visual identification of cross breeds, when determining their criteria for classifying dogs as 'menacing' based solely on appearance.

Conclusion

SPCA appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the Gore District Council Control of Dogs Policy & Bylaw. Our organisation is happy to discuss this matter if further information is required.

References

1News. (2025, April 15). Govt proposes new rules to tackle prolonged tethering of dogs. 1News. https://www.1news.co.nz/2025/04/15/govt-proposes-new-rules-to-tackle-prolonged-tethering-of-dogs/

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