

Code for Responsible Dog Ownership

Purpose

It is acknowledged that dogs can be wonderful work mates, companions, protectors and family members. As their owner, they depend on you for their care and welfare. Council also depends on you being a responsible owner.

The Code for Responsible Dog Ownership is a requirement under the *Dog Control Act 2000*. It is a voluntary code. Essentially the Code provides an overview of the actions that will assist in producing healthy and happy dogs and a congenial community for dog owners and non-dog owners alike. Responsible dog owners provide a safe, caring and happy environment for their animals. They aim to minimise animal welfare concerns, neighbourhood nuisance and the destruction of native wildlife and its habitat. The Code also assists in understanding the dog control regulations.

Being a Responsible Dog Owner

Responsible dog ownership means accepting full responsibility for your dog's needs and the standards set in relation to dog management as set out in the *Dog Control Act 2000*.

The privilege and benefits of owning a dog carries responsibilities of care for the animal and respect for your neighbours and the local community.

Prior to Purchasing a Dog

Before you acquire a dog it is important to consider a number of things to be sure you are able to provide the best outcome for you, your dog and the community where you live. Things to think about are:

- Your property, lifestyle and budget are suited to a dog, e.g. the breed of dog, the number and age of family members, compatibility with other pets, housing for the dog and arrangements (and costs) if you plan to go on holidays
- Your property is secure and any impacts on public safety are minimised by considering the size of the yard, adequacy of fencing, proximity of neighbours, socialising your dog and obedience instruction
- You understand the needs and requirements of the particular breed including correct practices in relation to exercise, housing, dietary requirements, ongoing veterinary requirements and grooming *and* you are able to provide these requirements consistently
- You are clear that you can afford the initial and ongoing costs of vaccinations and veterinary checks, annual registration, microchipping and de-sexing (if required), kennel costs, grooming and obedience training

After Purchasing a Dog

When you have matched your own aspirations with the dog's requirements and brought your dog home you have made a commitment to the ongoing welfare, health and safety of your dog, your family and the wider community. Ongoing commitment relates to:

- Socialising your dog by exposing it to a variety of other dogs, people and situations

- Providing opportunities for training it to be obedient
- Participating with your dog in regular exercise and play
- Registering your dog annually once it reaches 6 months of age and securing the current registration tag to your dog's collar
- Permanently identifying your dog by microchip
- Providing your dog with a healthy diet
- Providing adequate and hygienic shelter

Considering other people

- When you are in public places (including when your dog is on the back of a vehicle) ensure that the dog is under effective control by means of a lead
- Ensure your dog does not bark excessively
- Prevent your dog from wandering off your property
- Always clean up after your dog by removing faeces from public places
- Do not allow your dog to jump at, or lick people. This may be playful but is not appreciated by everyone.
- When exercising your dog, stay on established tracks and trails and keep away from wildlife such as nesting shore birds just above the high tide mark.

As a Council we will:

- Recognise that a well-trained and cared for dog can make a significant contribution to establishing a healthy community.
- Promote responsible dog ownership.
- Ensure Council's Dog Policy and procedures are consistent with the desires of the community to achieve a compatible relationship between dogs, dog owners and non-dog owners, and to minimising impact on the environment.
- Enforce the *Dog Control Act 2000* and Council's Policy.
- Charge for the collection of a lost or wandering dog and for daily impoundment.