

ANNUAL DOG CONTROL REPORT 2025-26



Report on the administration of Gore District Council's Policy and Practices in relation to the control of dogs for the year 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

Dog control in the Gore District

As at 30 June 2026, there were 3,178 registered dogs in the Gore District, compared with 3,290 registered dogs at 30 June 2025. Approximately one-third of these dogs are family pets residing within the district's urban areas.

Council's Animal Services team consists of one full-time Animal Services Officer who provides coverage during standard business hours, Monday to Friday. This role is supported by three part-time Animal Services Officers who provide after-hours and weekend response services on a rotating roster, ensuring dog control services are available across the district when required.

Dog control enforcement practices

During the year under review, Council received 11 formal complaints relating to dog behaviour. Of these, seven involved reported attacks on people and four involved attacks on other animals. All complaints were investigated, and appropriate action was taken to address the concerns raised and ensure compliance with relevant legislation and Council bylaws.

Council continues to face challenges with impounded dogs that are not reclaimed by their owners. This is often due to the costs associated with dog registration, microchipping, and impound fees, all of which must be paid before a dog can be released. Where possible, dogs assessed as having a suitable temperament are rehomed, primarily through Furever Homes in Invercargill, or in some cases with private individuals following thorough checks of both the prospective owner and their property. Dogs deemed unsuitable for rehoming are humanely euthanised by a veterinarian.

A total of 76 infringement notices were issued during the reporting period. Prior to issuing infringements for non-registration, Council staff make significant efforts to encourage compliance by contacting dog owners through phone calls, text messages, and property visits following the issue of reminder notices. While many owners responded positively and registered their dogs, a number failed to take the necessary action, resulting in infringement notices being issued.

To assist owners experiencing financial hardship, Council offers flexible payment arrangements for dog registration fees. This option continues to be well utilised and has helped improve compliance rates by enabling owners to meet their obligations through manageable instalments.

Dog registration and other fees

A comparison of the dog registration fees for the year ending 30 June 2026 with the previous year is as follows:

	2024/25	2025/26
Registration fee – urban dog	\$125.00	\$125.00
a. Less – no dog complaints, impoundments or infringements within a two year period	- \$20.00	-\$20.00
b. Less – neutered or spayed	-\$40.00	-\$40.00
Registration fee if all the requirements as detailed in a and b are met.	\$65.00	\$65.00
Licence fee for three or more dogs	\$150.00	\$150.00
Registration fee – rural dog	\$30.00	\$30.00
a. Add – dog complaints, impoundment or infringement within a two-year period	\$20.00	\$20.00
Late registration fee		
Urban dog	+40%	+40%
Rural dog	+40%	+40%
Poundage		
First impoundment	\$100.00	\$100.00
Every subsequent impoundment	\$150.00	\$150.00
Destruction costs for known owners of dogs	Cost	Cost
Sustenance – per day	\$20.00	\$20.00
Additional fee for impounding or releasing dogs at weekends, public holidays or outside Council office hours	\$100.00	\$100.00

Council takes a proactive approach to promoting compliance with dog registration requirements. Owners who fail to register their dogs may be subject to prosecution under the Dog Control Act. However, before legal proceedings are considered, Council makes every reasonable effort to encourage compliance. These efforts include issuing reminder letters, sending text message notifications, conducting personal visits, and, where necessary, issuing infringement notices. This graduated approach aims to achieve voluntary compliance while ensuring dog owners understand and meet their legal responsibilities.

Dog education

The Council's Animal Services team continues to work proactively with dog owners by providing advice and education on preventing excessive barking and reducing incidents of dogs wandering at large. Regular patrols are undertaken in parks and public spaces throughout Gore and Mataura, where staff engage with owners to promote responsible dog ownership and encourage compliance with dog control requirements while exercising their pets.

In addition, the team has made a concerted effort to address the issue of unregistered dogs within the District. Targeted patrols in Gore and Mataura appear to have had a positive impact, with a noticeable reduction in the number of wandering dogs.

Menacing and dangerous dogs

In the year under review, one dog in the Gore district was classified by the Council. This dog was classified as menacing due to its behaviour. It is noted that we have fewer menacing dogs in this district this year eight down from 11. This is due to the dog either dying or transferring out of the district.

There is currently a total of eight menacing dogs in the Gore District; four of those dogs are classified as menacing by breed under Section 33C of the Dog Control Act 1996 and the other four have been classified as menacing by behaviour under Section 33A of the Dog Control Act 1996. There are three dogs classified as dangerous under Section 31(1)(b).

Overview of other activities

Last financial year, Council completed a comprehensive review of the Dog Control Bylaw and Policy to ensure it remained fit for purpose and reflected community expectations. The updated Bylaw and Policy were adopted in May 2025.

Since their adoption, the revised Bylaw and Policy have been working well, providing a clear and effective framework for responsible dog ownership and dog control across the district.

Late 2024 saw the completion of our new animal care facility, which is now fully operational. The remaining additional dog kennels were completed late last year finishing our purpose-built pound. This has proved to be a significant asset for the Animal Control team, providing a safe, modern, and efficient environment for the care of impounded dogs. In addition to improving working conditions and operational efficiency, the facility has increased our capacity from four dogs to up to ten dogs if required.

Last year's Eastern Southland Clued Up Kids event was cancelled by the organisers. The event is now scheduled to take place in August 2026 and brings together a range of agencies, including New Zealand Police, Hato Hone St John, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ), Animal Services, and Land Search and Rescue (LandSAR), among others. These organisations deliver a series of 12-minute workshops and interactive learning sessions for school children.

This will be the second time our team has participated in this valuable initiative, and we look forward to continuing our involvement in this educational programme. It provides an excellent opportunity to help young children develop a better understanding of how to behave safely and appropriately around dogs.

These initiatives continue to enhance dog control services across the district by supporting effective enforcement, promoting high standards of animal welfare, and strengthening community education and awareness.

Statistical information

In accordance with Section 10A(2)(a) of the Dog Control Act 1996, a schedule is attached outlining key statistics related to dog control activities in the Gore District for the year ending 30 June 2026.

Debbie Lascelles
Chief Executive

Statistical information

Category	As at 30 June 2026	For period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026
Total number of registered dogs	3,178	
Total number of probationary owners	0	
Total number of disqualified owners	0	
Total number of dangerous dogs	3	
• Dangerous by owner conviction under s33(1)(a)	0	0
• Dangerous by sworn evidence under s31(1)(b)	3	0
• Dangerous by owner admittance in writing under s31(1)(c)	0	0
Total number of menacing dogs	8	
• Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(i) – i.e. by behavior	4	0
• Menacing under s33A(1)(b)(ii) – i.e. any characteristics associated with dog's breed	0	0
• Menacing under s33C(1) – i.e. schedule 4 breed/type	4	0
Total number of infringements	76	
Total number of complaints received (see table below)	525	
Total number of prosecutions taken	0	

Complaints received Category	Number for year ended 30 June 2025	Number for year ended 30 June 2026
Total number of complaints received	558	525
Public safety related complaints		
• Dog attacks on people – minor	2	6
• Dog attacks on people – serious	0	1
• Dog attacks on other animals	6	1
• Dog attack on stock (worrying sheep)	3	3
• Dogs rushing	5	4
• Roaming dogs reported by public (including registered dogs that are found)	181	179
Non-safety concerns		
• People's dogs that are reported lost/found	90	77
• Barking	126	131
• Fouling/bylaw breach	N/A	N/A
• Unregistered dogs	N/A	N/A
• Welfare concerns	N/A	N/A
• Miscellaneous – stock calls	119	101
• Miscellaneous – dog enquiries	26	22