

Marlborough District Council

10th October 2020

Submission on:

Dog Control Policy and Dog Control Bylaw

I am a dog owner and have been for over 40years, I currently own two standard poodles which are well trained and obedient. I walk my dogs daily on a leash and they get a chance to run free when the location is suitable. My concern with the new intended bylaws is the free running areas in Marlborough are becoming less and less suitable.

It is ironic that the first two items in your objectives (a), (b), is most likely the reason the Bylaws need to be put in place, my objection to this is that the compliant dog owners suffer from the non-compliant dog owners and we are the ones that are impacted on, not only that we are the ones that pay for the Dog Control Officers through our registration fees.

1. Our Policy

I agree there are areas that are required to have dogs on leash and prohibited in areas of intense use, I disagree with the emotive language that is used in your Policy, for example "significant risk to others" yet I have not heard of anything significant happening, why bring those words in with out identifying what is significant. I have walked my dogs I guess for many hundreds of kilometers over the years and in popular public spaces yet have never witnessed anything significant, a total exaggeration.

1.1 Dog Prohibited Areas

I agree with the rules applying to playgrounds. I disagree that leashes must be only 2m, this is not practical in a number of situations that I have come across, walking two dogs I require one leash in more open areas to be longer than 2m, in measuring the one leash I have is 2.5m, what about the expansion leash which many people use, I have seen people in mobility scooters that require a leash longer than 2m, if the leash is to short the dog can easily get caught in the wheels.

Dog Prohibited Areas

1. I am surprised to see Omaka Landings Spitfire Drive and Kittyhawk Road as prohibited, more policing will be required on those two roads as I frequently see dogs on them, or simply not bring those roads in to the bylaw.

2. Ward Reserve and Beach, living in Ward for over 40 years I have never seen an incident with any dog at Ward Beach, this is ridiculous and do not support banning dogs from Ward Beach and the Reserve. I and my dogs have spent numerous walks off leash at Ward Beach, I see no reason why such a bylaw banning dogs should be introduced in this location. It should remain off leash. Where else in Ward can a dog run free? Who will police this? Why put bylaws in when they will not be policed?

Dog on-leash

3. Dog on-leash areas are reasonable, I do not understand the Omaka Landings road being Lancaster Avenue, this does not make sense, what happens with the rest of Omaka Landings, roam free? Council have identified two roads where dogs are prohibited and one on leash, the rest must be “free roaming” as that is the only dog control wording that has not been commented on.
4. Taylor River, I oppose this bylaw, I use the Taylor River nearly daily, when there are a lot of people around I always leave my dogs on leash, if there are very few people around, I find, like others, they enjoy letting their dogs off for a run. I feel the management of my two dogs as being responsible. To access the section that is recommended on the left hand side of the Taylor River is hard for me to access unless I get in my car and drive to an access point, this defeats the whole purpose of walking from home to the right hand side of the Taylor River. The other consideration is the long grass on that side of the river, wet feet or walk in gumboots, when the grass dries there is a problem with grass seed. I strongly oppose this bylaw.

I would have liked to see some data supporting the changes the Council is wanting to introduce.

How many infringements have been recorded in these locations?

How many nuisance dogs have been apprehended in these locations?

How many dogs are there in Marlborough?

What is the ratio of registered dogs to unregistered?

How many incidents of bad behaviour have been recorded in these locations?

Being a responsible dog owner, I feel we get the weight of the bad dog owners issues put upon us, there is no other explanation in my mind, nor any offered by the Council.

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