

I oppose the following changes to the dog laws as there are no justified grounds:

- Increase of distance of dogs from playgrounds from 3m to 10m.
- On leash area extended along Taylor River
- Prohibition of dogs at Pollard Park
- Prohibition of dogs at Ward Beach

I support the change to allow dogs in the CBD of Blenheim & ability to walk dogs on leash through athletic park to access the river as I believe these are in support of the Dog Control Act.

The Dog Control Act 1996 asks Councils to

1. Minimise danger distress and nuisance to the community;
2. Avoid danger to children,
3. Consider the safety of public places and the recreational needs of dogs and their owners.

The proposed dog laws I oppose do not adhere to the Act for the following reasons:

- Dogs strenuously exercised in a public location:
- Will show more social behaviour as they are meeting many different people, animals and other dogs– therefore supporting 1,2 & 3 of the Act above.
- Are more likely to stay home– therefore supporting 1 & 2 of the Act above. i.e. Well exercised dogs will be less likely to bark or display signs of distress when left at home & will be happy to stay in the limits of their property.

TAYLOR RIVER

The Taylor River has local walkable access to most of Blenheim. I oppose:

- Restrict easy-walking access to Taylor river for those living at the Perkiss Street or Burleigh Bridge ends of town.
- This will affect owners who have limited car access, are less able or have young children.
- Increase the chance of spreadable disease by concentrating people and dogs into a small location.
- Increase accidents for cyclists by having dogs on leash across the path.
- Increase accidents for cyclists wishing to exercise their dogs on leash due to tangles.
- Increase accidents for runners on paved area by having their dogs on leash. Particularly those who run with children in a Buggy.
- Parents with buggies will be unable to take their dogs running as the designated area is unpaved and small children in buggies are best running on paved areas to protect their heads and neck. Likewise managing buggies and leashed dogs has a potential for the leash to get caught in the wheels and injure the dog, children and parent alike.
- Increase accidents for owners with mobility issues exercising their dogs on uneven ground
- Decrease socialisation of dogs in the paved area. Dogs will not be able to carry out normal dog behaviour with each other.
- Increase anti-social dog behaviour through poor owner leash management – this can lead to dog fights and children and adults being harmed.
- Pony Club will find it hard to carry out their events due to enormous dog population.
- Well exercised dogs are significantly less likely to wander from their homes.

With the prevention of off leash exercise on the paved area of Taylor river we will see a breach of the Dog Control with

1. Increased danger distress and nuisance to the community;
2. Increased danger to children,
3. No consideration to the safety of public places and the recreational needs of dogs and their owners.

POLLARD PARK

Pollard park is an easily accessed location for Springlands residents and families of the local schools. Preventing these owners walking dogs at the gardens, we will see the same effect as mentioned above.

PLAYGROUNDS

Increasing the distance for dogs at playgrounds means that families with dogs will see an increase in anti-social dog behaviour. Responsible owners should never take dangerous or anti-social dogs to playgrounds anyway, this is why we have not seen any accidents with children in these locations. To increase the distance from 3m to 10m will see distressed dogs (and therefore nuisance) and decreased exposure of children to them (particularly puppies) resulting in anti-social behaviour and an increase in danger to children in the long term.

WARD BEACH

Ward beach does not have any reason to prevent dog walking – I do not support this change and believe this is also in breach of the Act.

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