



Alfie presents:
**DOG
CONTROL
POLICY &
BYLAW
2016
REVIEW**

.....
THE DECISIONS
.....

www.westernbay.govt.nz

DOGS
of the
WESTERN BAY

 Western Bay of Plenty
District Council

Hello everyone,

Alfie here - I wanted to say thank you for taking an interest in the review of our Dog Control Policy and Bylaw.

This book contains the decisions of the review, relating to our six key themes, and explains why we made each decision.

Our job in this review was to make sure our final policy and bylaw struck the right balance between meeting the needs of dog owners, dogs, and the wider community.

As spokesdog for the Western Bay, I was front and centre as my fellow Council humans went out into the community, talking to people about the changes they'd like to see to our dog rules and what was important to them when it comes to dogs.

Before we created the draft policy and bylaw we set up an online forum that asked you what you'd like to see changed or added. Staff and Elected Members also spoke to people at the Katikati A&P show, Te Puke A&P show and at our Doggy Day Out in Omokoroa.

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More than **600** people visited our website and about **87** people had their say.

This helped us create the draft policy and bylaw, which were released to the community for your feedback from 13 April to 13 May 2016. I also led a community dog walk at Te Puna Quarry to launch this feedback period.

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About 60 enthusiastic dogs and their owners joined me - it was so successful we're looking at how we can have more walks in the future.

I'm just a spokesdog, but I believe our efforts to talk to you before we made our draft policy and bylaw meant that what we put out for formal consultation was very close to what the communities wanted. Overall 62 people gave us formal feedback on the draft policy, and were generally very supportive. Because of this we didn't make many changes to the final policy and bylaw.

The new Dog Control Policy and Bylaw 2016 were adopted on 25 August 2016. The new rules come into effect on 4 October 2016. You can find them in full at www.westernbay.govt.nz/??????

Thanks again for taking part!

Alfie,



Spokesdog,
Western Bay of Plenty District Council



Alfie says:

“I NEED
A SAFE &
HEALTHY
HOME”



We received overwhelming support to introduce a range of new minimum standards relating to the welfare of dogs, so this is what we did.

We'll now be able to do more when we get complaints about dogs being kept in inadequate conditions, and fine the owners if they do not comply with the improvements required to meet our new minimum standards.

98% *of people supported the proposed welfare provisions*

WELFARE STANDARDS:

- All dogs must be provided with shelter and dry sleeping quarters.
 - Collars must fit comfortably without damaging the skin or restricting breathing.
 - Dogs must be able to keep warm in winter.
 - Dogs must not be contained or tethered in a way that causes them injury or distress.
 - Food and water containers must be kept clean of contamination and poo.
- See the full list of welfare standards on our website.*



Alfie says:

“I NEED TO BE PROTECTED FROM MENACING & WANDERING DOGS”



NEUTERING MENACING DOGS

We have taken a tougher line on neutering dogs that have been classified as menacing. This approach is in response to community concerns, supports a national push for neutering menacing dogs and is consistent with other councils' approach.

The Dog Control Act gives Council the discretion to decide whether it will require menacing dogs to be neutered and this is not something we have previously done.

Now, under the new policy and bylaw, all dogs classified as menacing in accordance with the Dog Control Act will be required to be neutered. This includes dogs classified as menacing prior to these rules coming into effect, as well as those moving to the District from elsewhere in New Zealand. You can see the new rules and timeframes for compliance in the bylaw on our website.

97% supported the requirements to neuter menacing dogs

NEUTERING REPEAT ROAMING DOGS

We now also require that dogs caught roaming three times within any 12 month period be neutered.

We think this is a sensible idea, as neutering may reduce a dog's desire to wander and may reduce aggression in some dogs. We hope it also means a reduction in unwanted puppies.

97% supported the requirements to neuter repeat roaming dogs

Alfie says:

“I NEED TO BE SAFE AND FOLLOW THE RULES WHEN I’M OUT IN PUBLIC”

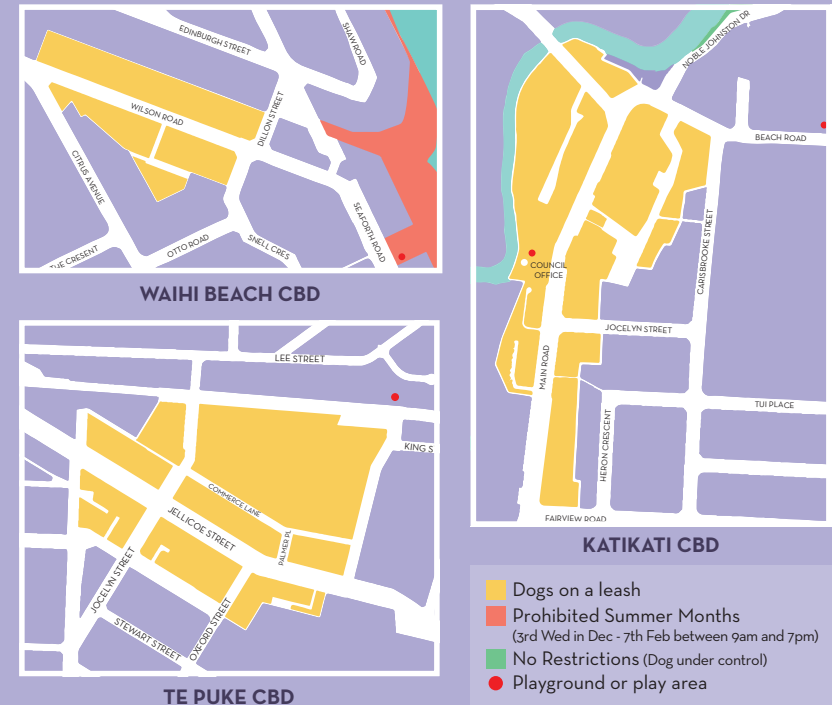


ON LEASH IN TOWN

We have introduced new ‘on leash’ restrictions in the main town centre areas of Te Puke, Katikati and Waihi Beach.

Most of you agreed with us that it’s appropriate all dogs are under leash control in these areas of higher vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

All dogs must now be on a leash within the areas shown below:



97% of feedback supported these ‘on leash’ restrictions

Refer to the bylaw to see all dog restrictions applying in the District.

Alfie says:

“I NEED TO BE SAFE AND FOLLOW THE RULES WHEN I’M OUT IN PUBLIC”



OMOKOROA TO BETHLEHEM CYCLEWAY

We are investing in the development of this great new community facility.

During our pre-engagement, community members told us it was important to ensure the access of dogs is restricted in recognition of the significant coastal bird habitats the new cycleway passes through, and also to reduce the likelihood of conflict between cyclists and loose dogs.

In response we proposed three options in the draft policy and bylaw, with our preferred option being an on leash restriction along the entire cycleway and a new prohibited area on the foreshore between Cooney’s Reserve and Lynley Park.

This means dog walkers can still use the cycleway to exercise their dogs on leash, but they cannot take them on the foreshore area where there are nesting birds. There were mixed views on the proposal, but the majority of those giving feedback supported Council’s preferred option.

Option 1:	<i>On leash restriction on the cycleway in its entirety, and a new prohibited area on the foreshore between Cooney’s Reserve and Lynley Park</i>	67%
Option 2:	<i>No restrictions on the cycleway - dogs allowed off leash while ‘under control’</i>	21%
Option 3:	<i>On leash and prohibited areas between Cooney’s Reserve and Lynley Park, with no restrictions applying to the remainder of the cycleway - dogs off leash whilst ‘under control’ between Lynley Park and Bethlehem.</i>	12%

We have retained option 1 in the final policy and bylaw. See the full map on our website.

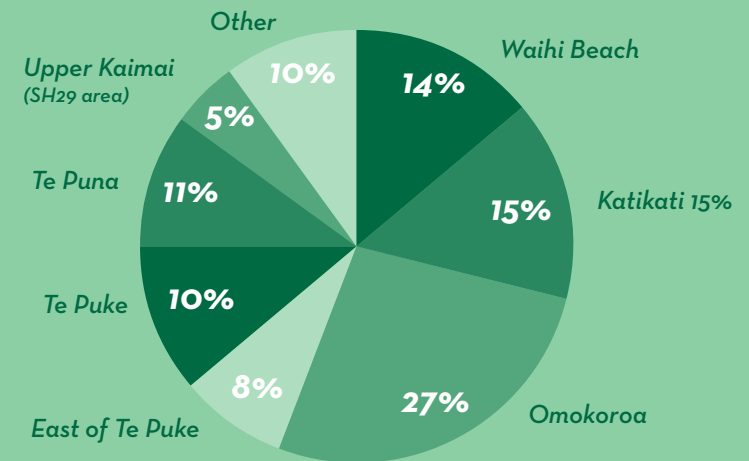
Alfie says:

“I NEED
REGULAR
EXERCISE,
BUT
WHERE?”



We signalled our intent through the new policy to develop designated dog exercise areas across the District, where there is community support to do so. Our off-leash dog exercise area at TECT All Terrain Park has proven a great success.

Overall 89 percent of people agreed with this intent. According to your feedback, the locations you would most prefer are:



We'll look for opportunities to progress these facilities through our Reserve Management Planning processes. Once we have identified a specific site, we will need to ask you whether you agree with the location, what equipment or facilities you might want on the site, and how it should be funded.

Keep an eye out!



Alfie says:

“WHEN
I’VE GOTTA
GO, I’VE
GOTTA
GO”



We asked you if dog poo was a problem in the District, and whether we should be doing more in this area. During our conversations there were mixed views on the role Council should take, and how big the problem is.

We proposed a few options for consultation, and included the requirement for all owners to carry a poo bag (or other means) to pick up their dog’s poo when in public – meaning we can issue infringements if this isn’t followed.

It can be hard for our Animal Control Officers to catch a dog in the act and the owner not picking it up, so it is easier for us to enforce the requirement to carry a bag. The current fine for not removing dog poo from a public place remains. Based on your feedback we retained option one in the final policy and bylaw. Other options were not well supported.

Option 1:	<i>Bylaw requirement to carry a poo bag, infringements can be issued to those not complying</i>	52%
Option 2:	<i>Council installs bins and bag dispensers at dog free exercise areas</i>	11%
Option 3:	<i>Council installs more bins at specific parks where there is demand from dog walkers</i>	23%
Option 4:	<i>Council takes no new action and enforces current rule that poo must be picked up in public places</i>	14%

Alfie says:

“I WANT TO
REWARD
GOOD
HUMANS”



We asked you whether we should be doing more to encourage dog owners to be responsible for their dogs. Quite a few other Councils have ‘good dog owner’ programmes in place, which give a fee reduction to those meeting the criteria set by that Council.

The implementation of such programmes is administratively and technologically complex. We think our current fee structure sufficiently recognises good dog owners, and this year we have further increased the fee gap between the fee for working dogs and for a neutered dog, versus dogs unneutered or classified as dangerous. We can further revise this in the future, as appropriate.

There is also a further significant discount for payment on time (prior to 1 August). The majority of your feedback supported this.

Option 1:	<i>Retain the same fee structure and increase the gap between fees for “good” and “not so good” owners</i>	64%
Option 2:	<i>Introduce a new fee category for those with a particular qualification, like Good Canine Citizen Certification</i>	12%
Option 3:	<i>Offer a one-off rebate when proof neutering and microchipping is provided</i>	17%
Option 4:	<i>All those registered on time will be sent a vet voucher or entered into a prize draw</i>	3%
Option 5:	<i>No incentives should be offered</i>	3%

TALE OF A SPOKESDOG

It was such a simple idea - to use a dog to lead the review of dog rules in the Western Bay. But we never expected such an overwhelmingly positive response.

Alfie, the pound pup turned spokesdog, has captured the hearts of our communities.

Like every dog Alfie dreamed of being the centre of attention. When he showed up at our pound in December 2015 with a fractured back leg, he was never short of care. Alfie instantly had our staff swooning over him with his friendly, fun nature - and calm temperament - despite being in obvious discomfort.

Initially we thought he'd need surgery for his leg, but a visit to the vets confirmed he would heal with regular injections and a couple of months' rest. Our staff together raised the \$250 dollars needed for Alfie's treatment, and Animal Services Officer Betty took Alfie under her wing for the duration of his stay.

We joked that while he was with us, we should use him as an ambassador for the Dog Control Policy and Bylaw Review. What started as fun, turned into something real - and before we knew it Alfie was immortalised in animation and fast becoming a local canine celebrity.

The plan was to look after Alfie until his leg healed, then he'd be up for adoption like our other pound pups. Interest was high! But behind the scenes we could see Betty and Alfie were developing a bond stronger than ever planned.



Alfie sitting in on an early planning meeting for the Doggy Day Out.

When she bought him his own lifejacket for their kayaking missions, we knew he wasn't going anywhere. Sure enough, at our Doggy Day Out in March, Betty announced she would be keeping Alfie. His one-of-a-kind personality had Betty hook, line and sinker.

"He's literally changed my life," says Betty. "He's with me every day. I have people come into the office and have a chat, they'll just have a moment with him if they're having a rough day and it's so sweet."

"Generally when I'm out and about people just adore him - they say 'Oh I've seen him on Facebook or in the news', he's just so awesome."

Alfie will take a break from his spokesdog duties now the review has ended - but one thing's for sure - his adventures with Betty are only just beginning.

You can check out Alfie's pound pals up for adoption at:

www.westernbay.govt.nz/adoptadog



Alfie with his new life jacket, ready for adventures.



Dynamic Duo: Alfie and Betty are near inseparable.



Alfie met his look-a-likes for a photoshoot in The Weekend Sun.