
Local dog access rules 2025

WRITTEN FEEDBACK

Puketāpapa parks Volume Two

Date published: Monday, 7 April 2025

Sub #	Organisation Name
6970	Dog Friends Auckland



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6713

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Upper Harbour

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6718

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Henderson-Massey

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

We also need a place where our dogs could run freely, also for their physical and mental well-being.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6719

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Ōrākei

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Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6723

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Puketāpapa

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I support the proposed change

Tell us why

Roaming dogs are an issue in and around Freeland Reserve. I'm not convinced that making Freeland Reserve on leash will resolve this issue but may at least make some owners more mindful of the need to have their dog under control. Many dogs in the area are

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

The bowl area is the only off-leash port of Monte Cecilia. Park users without dogs have access to the whole rest of Monte Cecilia.

Responsible dog owners need safe spaces to exercise and socialise their dogs, and Monte Cecilia is one of the few locations for this in Puketāpapa.

I question what evidence there is of "significant risk" to park users from off-lead dogs. The vast majority of dogs I have encountered at Monte Cecilia are well socialised dogs and mostly under the control of their owners. The Council would be much better placed focusing efforts on irresponsible dog owners who fail to register their dogs and do not exercise and socialise them responsibly, rather than penalising responsible owners by removing important facilities such as Monte Cecilia.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

The Council would be better placed investing time and energy into irresponsible dog owners and roaming dogs, rather than penalising responsible dog owners by restricting their access to facilities important for exercising and socialising their pets.

Similarly, it would be more effective to regulate the dog walking industry rather than impose blanket restrictions on dog walking.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6724

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Waitākere Ranges

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

I would love to know why you are proposing this change? I do not believe it needs to be changed. It is a wonderful park for dogs to be able to have fun with their owners and be social.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

Restricting the number of places dogs can go with cause more wondering dogs, barking dogs at home etc. And more condensed areas of dogs off leash in the few places that would be left in auckland.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6726

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Upper Harbour

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Tell us why

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Tell us why



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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Māngere-Ōtāhuhu

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Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

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Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



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#6733

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Howick

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Tell us why

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John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

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Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

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Walmsley Park

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Tell us why



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#6734

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Waitematā

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Freeland Reserve

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Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

The bowl at Monte Cecilia Park is an ideal space for people to have their dogs off leash. The naturally formed "amphitheater" shape of the bowl creates a discrete space that dogs are unlikely to leave. Being out in the open, the bowl provides safety for women and vulnerable members of the community who may be exercising their dogs alone. There is plenty of space in the park for dog walkers and non-dog walkers. Surely this beautiful community asset can be shared. Dog owners are rate payers.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6743

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Albert-Eden

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Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

There are lots of other parks nearby that people can use which are on-leash parts such as Cornwall Park. There are not many off-leash parks for dogs and their owners to go to. I have walked at this park many times in the evening and the number of walkers without dogs is small.

A better way would be to allow dogs off-leash after a certain time ie after 7pm during summer and 5.30pm during winter.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

These changes seem to be penalising the majority of dog owners that obey the rules and don't cause any hassle to other users. The changes are not targeting the people whose dogs are out of control. Auckland at present is a very dog friendly city, please keep it this way. Dogs require space and the opportunity to run off-leash for their well being. Remembering also that their dog owners also get exercise and enjoyment in interacting with their dog in an area where the dogs have room to play, sniff and explore their environment. Dog owners congregate in areas where dogs are off-leash and form a community.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6754

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Rodney

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

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Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why



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#6755

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Puketāpapa

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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Freeland Reserve

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Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

I have been a regular in this park for the past 6 years. It's a great space for dog to be off-lease & socialise in the bowl part of the park. I live in an apartment & there are more apartments being built nearby - Having a closeby park to release the dog's energy in an off-leash park is so important to keep their behaviour calmer at home (dog become tired etc). When we off leash the dog, we naturally talk & become engage with other dog owners, which I find it really helpful mentally - the very reason why we overcame covid time, which now has become part our daily walk that we are looking forward to - just talk to other dog owners, getting fresh air. I dont believe council understand the community it has built just through having an offleash spot for people to gather & destress after their busy lives at work. We really hope that the above are taken into considerations.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6758

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Kaipātiki

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Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6761

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Maungakiekie-Tāmaki

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Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6769

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Puketāpapa

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

This area is used by a large number of dog owners which provides dogs the ability to run and stretch their legs. Walking around a park on leash does not provide the same exercise advantages. If the council wish to proceed, I suggest instead, that they move to bring fully off leash in the park from 7pm to 7am, similar to beaches. This allows people to exercise their dogs properly, but also allows people to enjoy the park without dogs off leash.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Are there any dog access rules at other local parks and beaches in Auckland that you think council should change?

Your feedback on this section will inform any future review of dog access rules. A future review has not been scheduled at this time and no changes will be made on any location you identify in this section as part of this proposal.

Only provide feedback on one location at a time.

Space is provided for three locations. If you would like to provide feedback on more than three locations, please copy the following pages or include your comments in the other feedback section.

Location 1

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

monte cecelia

What local board area is this location in?

Puketāpapa

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

Tell us why

Change the current rule to a time and season rule / Change the current time and season rule (please specify)

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Entire location

What is the main reason you want to change the current dog access rule?

Please explain your issue in more detail:

To respond to opportunities for greater dog access without impacting other users (e.g. an area to take a dog under control off a leash). Please specify: I suggest the park move to fully off leash under control in the whole park from 7pm to 7am or similar, based on season. This allows people to exercise their dogs properly, but also allows people to enjoy the park without dogs off leash.

Please explain why you want to change the dog access rule at this location, and provide any additional information or evidence

#6769

As above. This would allow dogs to be exercised properly, and also people to enjoy the park without dogs. In winter the park is often empty, especially when a chance of rain, and during these times (based on seasonal restrictions) seems like the park shou

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

No



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#6771

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Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Ōrākei

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4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

The park is big enough to keep the small area of the naturally formed bowl for off-leash exercise. We need these off-leash areas desperately!

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

Keep the dog excess rules as they are. They are very restrictive already and it would be a mistake to restrict the access even more. Most dog owners are very responsible dog owners. It will be a mistake to punish everybody with their dogs for the shortcomings of a few owners of menacing dogs.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6773

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Puketāpapa

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

I attach a survey undertaken about the users of the Monte Cecilia Off-leash Area. The survey is detailed and provides evidence that the designation change will destroy the community, have profound negative impacts on the users and is not justified. In addition it questions the Board's democratic processes and transparency. It raises significant issues that should be taken into account when making any decisions. It also provides Council some advice for on going management. As a social scientist I strongly advise the Council to listen to read the report and take on board the advice.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

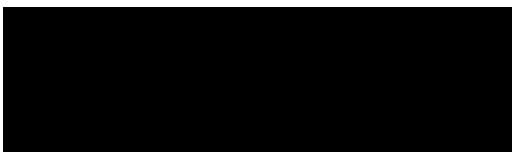
Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

**Results of an Online Survey of
Users of the
Monte Cecilia Dog Park Off-leash Area
and Identification of Impacts by a Designation Change to On-leash.**



Date: February 23, 2025

Author's Credentials

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a social scientist, with 30 years' experience teaching and researching as a social scientist specialising in socio-environmental issues. I have extensive experience in community engagement around socio-environmental issues. My research focuses on understanding how authorities, particularly local and central government engage with communities around socio-environmental issues. I have a particular interest in issues of governance and power and impacts of decision-making .

I have undertaken significant research both nationally and internationally, particularly in the human aspects of biosecurity and community engagement in pest control/forest disease. While I am employed as a social scientist in the tertiary education sector I am not undertaking this survey as part of my current employment but rather in my capacity as a citizen of Auckland who happens to be a social scientist.

I am also an owner of a dog and a current user of the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area. I offered to undertake this survey pro-bono for the users of Monte Cecilia off-leash area to assess impacts of the Local Board's decision to turn the Park into a fully on-leash area. It is submitted to Council – the Puketāpapa Local Board and the Dog Policy and By-Law Review Team, so they may include this 'evidence-based' social research in their decision-making about the Monte Cecilia off-leash area.

As an Aucklander I belong to many communities. The fact that I am a user of the Monte Cecilia Dog Park should not question the quality of this research. The same rigour and robustness has been applied to the collection and analysis of this survey, as I would apply to any of my funded research projects.

The written report however, is presented in a more concise format than would normally be presented for a 'research' report, (e.g the PowerPoint Presentation, Appendix A, serves as an Executive Summary; the discussion is largely contained in the Results section- rather than a separate discussion; there is no literature review).

I also offer some professional advice in Appendix B, regarding management (education) of compliance issues in the on-leash areas of the Park. This advice is not part of the survey, but rather offered as additional information as part of my submission.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the respondents who completed this survey, for taking time to provide their considered comments, thoughts and feelings. This has enabled a deep understanding of the users' of the Monte Cecilia Off-Leash Area. Your comments, perceptions and advice should be considered and valued by those involved in deciding the future management of Monte Cecilia.

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Executive Summary

The PowerPoint Presentation, which was presented to the Local Board at the 'Have Your Say session' acts as an Executive Summary. This can be found in Appendix A. Please note that one slide has been added to offer explanation of the responses around reported incidents of risk to humans, as the authors' explanation was verbally stated at the hearing. For a deeper analysis of the incidents reported in the survey please see section 3.8 (p.24) below.

1.0: Introduction

Auckland Council are proposing changes to their policy on dogs including access rules for dogs to regional and local parks. As part of these proposals, the Monte Cecilia Park is proposed to change to a fully on-leash dog park, meaning the off-leash area will no longer exist. Council's reason for this is stated as: "To protect users as the current off-leash in the bowl creates a significant risk to people".

This proposal was initiated by the Puketāpapa Local Board (a local board of Auckland Council). The Puketāpapa Local Board includes the suburbs of Three Kings, Royal Oak, Mt. Roskill, Hillsborough, Waikowhai, Lynfield and Wesley (Auckland Council, 2025). The inclusion of Monte Cecilia by the Board, was undertaken without any prior consultation with the community who would be immediately affected by their decision, and without transparently providing evidence to ratepayers to support their claim of "significant risk to people" caused by the off-leash bowl at Monte Cecilia.

1.1: Aim

As a result of no impact assessment being undertaken by the Board, this survey was therefore conducted to:

- assess users' (people and dogs') experiences of using the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area to understand how proposed Council changes could impact users' current use, experiences and sense of community.

The survey did not seek to replicate Council's submission process which seeks to assess the level of support for the Local Board's proposal. Instead it sought to understand the impact of the proposal on the users' of the off-leash area of the park. Therefore respondents were required to have some engagement with the off-leash area. People who held any view about the Local Board's proposal had the opportunity to complete the survey, so long as they had some engagement with the off-leash area.

1.2: Report Structure

This report presents the results from the survey conducted with users. The collated survey results were presented to Council at the 'Have Your Say' public hearing in February. The PowerPoint slides from this presentation are presented as Appendix A in place of an Executive

Summary. Please note that one slide in appendix A was added to the slide deck after the meeting, as this was said verbally in the oral presentation.

2.0: Methodology

The survey was conducted online as a google form, from Feb 4 - Feb 18 2025. It contained both qualitative and quantitative questions that covered the following:

- People's use of the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area;
- People's experiences of using the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area;
- Demographic information to assess the diversity of users - humans and dogs.

Any person aged 16 years and over who use the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area (including simply walking on the path around the off-leash dog area) could complete the survey - whether they owned a dog or not. The survey would take most respondents are 10 minutes to complete. However, respondents had an opportunity in the qualitative questions to provide as much as information as they wanted, and many did.

Respondents completed the survey anonymously. Therefore no identifiable information is used in any reporting of the survey results. People's comments however are included (anonymously) as these provide rich insights for decision-makers.

The survey was advertised on the Dog Lovers' of Monte Cecilia's Facebook page and this was shared by group beyond the members. The survey also received RNZ coverage through an interview with the author on Checkpoint and this would have reached a much wider audience.

See Appendix C for a copy of the survey questions.

3.0: Results: Analysis & Discussion

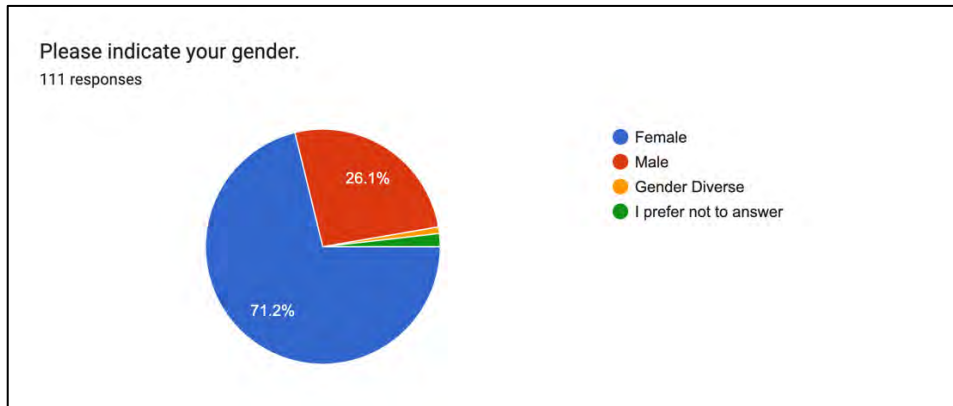
By the close of the survey on February 18, 111 survey responses were received. This was an excellent number of respondents for a locally relevant survey, in the relatively short time it was available. There is empirical confidence, due to the increasing similarity of responses after around 50 surveys, that more respondents would not have provided any further information to address the survey's aims. It can therefore be reliably argued that data collection had reached saturation and reflects the opinions of the principal users of the Monte off-leash dog area, albeit the portion who own dogs, given that was the target audience for this survey.

3.1: Demographics

The survey's demographic evidence provides insight on the diversity of the users of the off-leash area. Some of the demographic questions were optional and in all 'required'

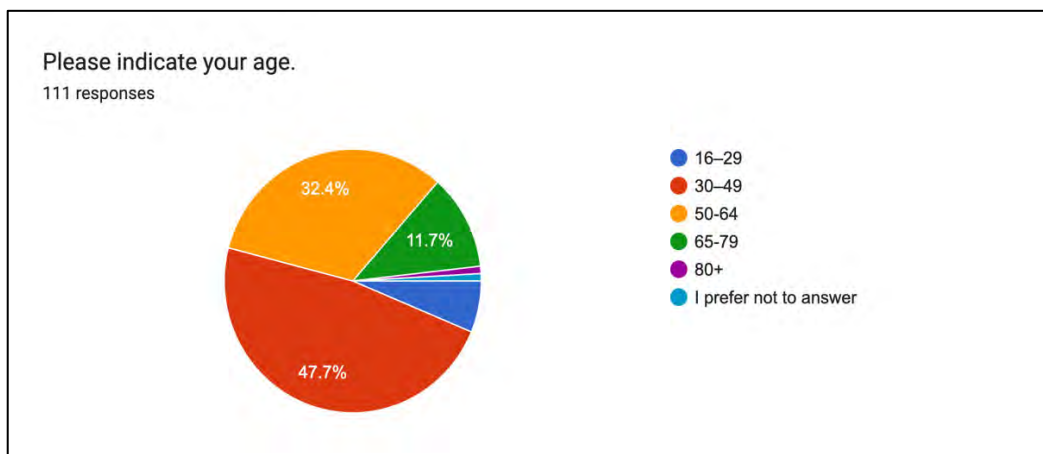
demographic questions, respondents got the option to indicate they preferred not to answer the question.

3.1.1: Gender



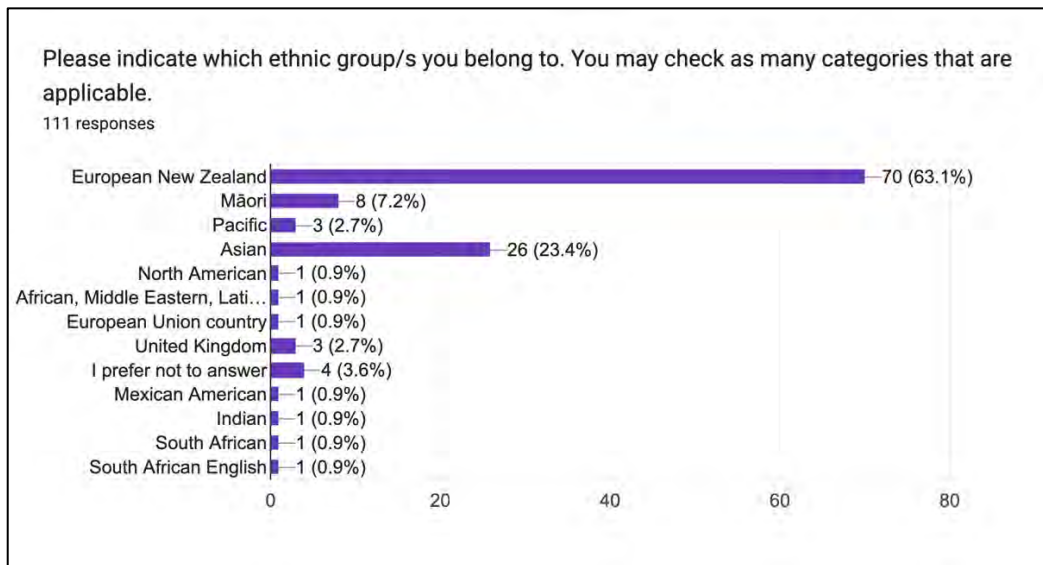
Females dominated the respondents 3: 1 to males, accounting for 71% of respondents. One person identified as gender diverse and two preferred not to answer. The high level of female respondents is interesting and may be attributed to the specific features of the bowl, which females respondents found safe and secure. As such this off-leash area may actually attract female and elderly dog owners.

3.1.2: Age



All ages over the age of 16 participated in the survey but most respondents were in the 39-49 bracket. One respondent was over 80 and almost 12% in the 65-79 age bracket. As the survey did not enable anyone under the age of 16 to participate, it does not capture the number of youth and children who join their dog owner parents, neighbours or friends in the off-leash area.

3.1.3 Ethnicity

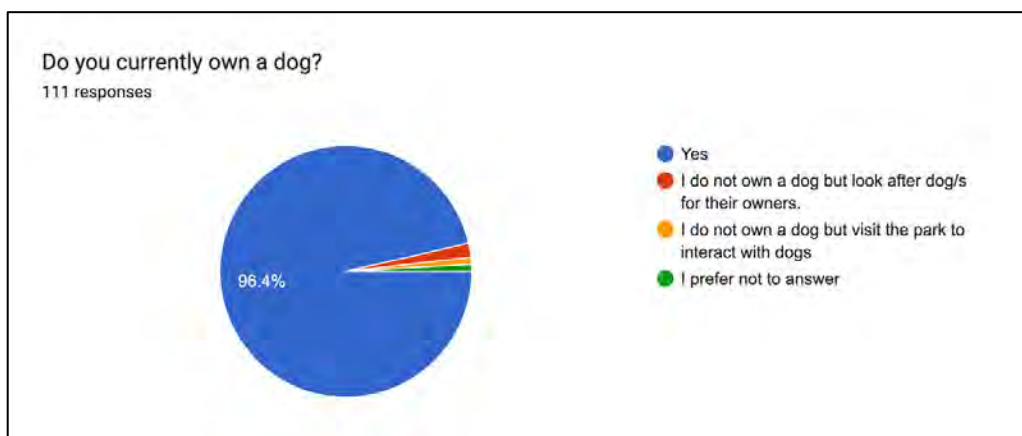


The most dominant ethnic group of users was European New Zealander (63.1%), followed by Asian (23.4%), and then Māori (7.2%). Based on the ethnic data gathered it can be said that the off-leash area attracts a diverse range of people from different ethnic backgrounds. While the off-leash area does attract people from across Auckland and this possibly accounts for a higher percentage of respondents who were European New Zealander, the off-leash users do reflect the cultural diversity of the local Puketāpapa area.

3.1.4: Employment

This was an optional question and 82 respondents provided answers. Nearly all respondents were employed, with a few who were retired or students. The qualitative responses in other parts of the survey showed that a number of people worked alone and so utilised the off-leash area as way of connecting and socialising.

3.1.5: Dog Ownership among respondents



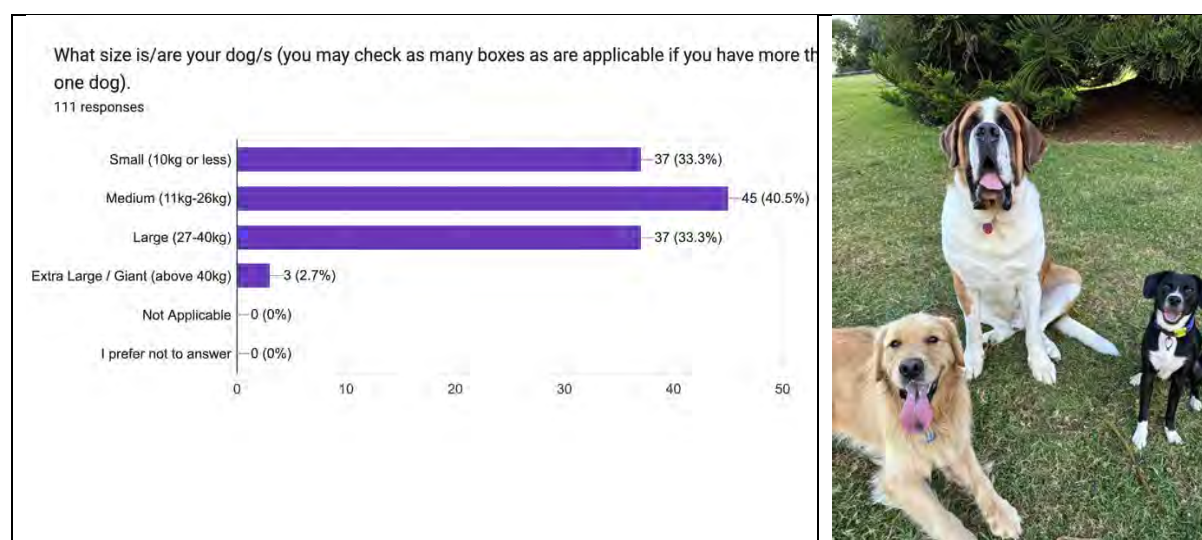
Not unsurprisingly 96.4% were dog owners. Most (71%) owned one dog , 27% owned two and one respondent who looked after dogs, bought five dogs to the Monte Cecilia off-leash area. One person was a non-dog owner who comes to the park to interact with the dogs. While this type of user is a small component of the Monte Cecilia off-leash community, many respondents did talk about these users and welcomed them to the bowl community.

Of all the dog-owner respondents, 77.5% hold a Council responsible dog owner licence (RDOL). This is well above the average of Auckland dog owners (around 30%) who hold this license (Auckland Council’s Animal Management Report 2023-2024). While this registration is not a requirement of dog ownership, it does support the Monte Cecilia off leash area dog users’ claims that they are responsible dog owners. Some 7% of respondents were not aware of this registration, however dog owners said the bowl community acts to socialise positive dog ownership and many had found out about the licencing scheme as a result of their social interaction with other owners in the off-leash area.

None of the Puketāpapa Local Board suburbs are listed in Auckland Council’s most populated suburbs for dogs. So while Monte Cecilia attracts some dog owners from outside its area most are local residents. Respondents have noted that the bowl is not over-populated with dogs. Users are attracted to it because of its spacious, open secure, and safe setting with friendly welcoming responsible dog owners.

Furthermore, none of the Puketāpapa Board suburbs are listed in Auckland Council’s most populated suburbs for having menacing dogs by behaviour or type and given that most users are locals this further supports the claim by respondents that the Monte Cecilia off-leash area attracts owners who are responsible, care for their dogs and seek to use the park to socialise and keep their dogs stimulated and happy and promote natural behaviours. Respondents often wrote “Happy Dogs = Happy People”.

3.1.6: Size of Dog and Dog Breeds



The off-leash area attracts all sizes of dogs and a range of breeds. Respondents indicated that they liked that small, medium and large dogs could intermingle and play together and do so,

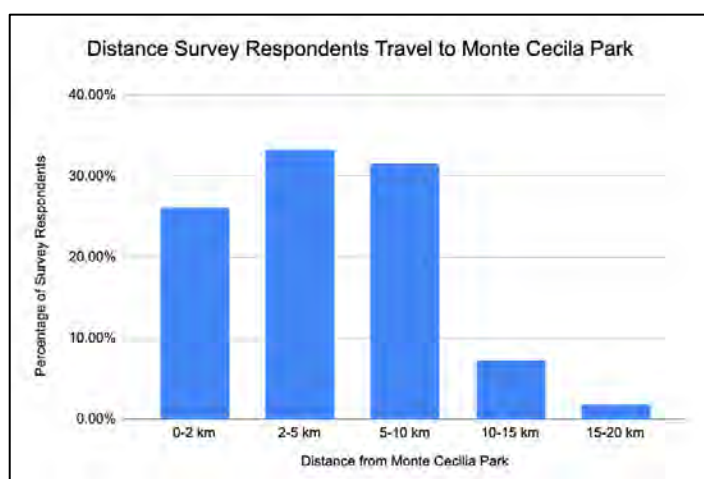
which they recognised was important for dog socialisation. However, respondents have claimed that the bowl is spacious enough to enable smaller dogs to have areas that they can socialise with other smaller dogs away from the larger dogs.

Most of the dogs could be deemed to be pedigree breeds, with Lab Retriever, Collies, Poodle, Terriers, Schnauzer and Spaniels or crosses with these breeds being the most common dogs at the Park. A few shepherds, a rottweiler cross, and a doberman cross were also listed.

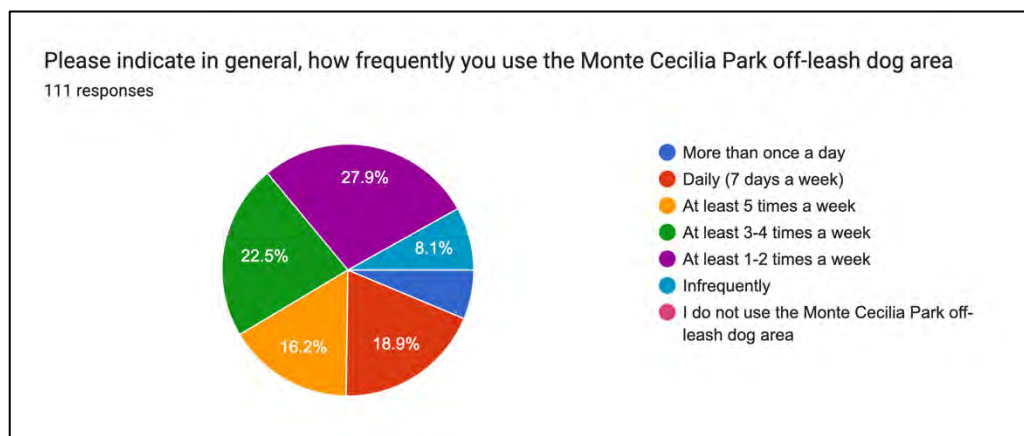
3.2 Use of the Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area

3.2.1: Distance travelled to the Park

The off-leash area is overwhelmingly used by locals from the Puketāpapa Board’s suburbs with just over half of users travelling no more than 5km to the Park.



3.2.2: Frequency of Use

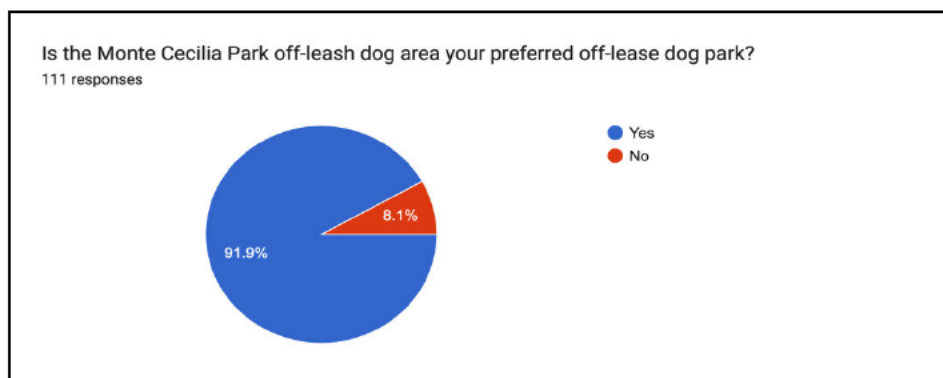


Over half of the respondents are frequent users of the off-leash area of Monte Cecilia Park, engaging at least 3-4 times or more per week, with 18.8% using it daily and 16.2% five times

per week. Some respondents (6.3%) used it more than once a day. Many of the respondents had used it for a number of years and most for over 5 years, with a handful for over 10 years. The off-leash area is a well-used facility for local dog owners.

3.2.3: Preferred Off-Leash Park

For approximately 92% of respondents, the off-leash area at Monte Cecilia is their preferred off-leash dog park.



While the Park’s proximity may seem a likely choice for why Monte Cecilia is the majority of users’ preferred park, in order of frequency, proximity was only the fourth most frequently listed reason. Overwhelmingly respondents found the natural features of bowl as the primary reason why they frequent the Park, as it enables the dogs to engage in natural dog behaviours (e.g sniffing, running) in a secure, safe, spacious and open environment where the owner could easily see their dog and interact directly with them. This is something which has been recognised in research undertaken by Unitec environmental and animal sciences students who found dog/owner interaction was low at Waitarua off-leash area and they attributed this in part to the Park’s design (Wechsler et al. 2023). Respondents claim that the natural features of the bowl which users claim fosters good dog to dog and dog to owner interaction are not replicated in other parks in Auckland. Respondents regard the bowl as a quality environment for promoting positive dog behaviour and enabling owners to fulfil their role as responsible dog owners. Table 1 below lists in order of reported frequency the reasons why Monte Cecilia is preferred as an off-leash area.

Table 1: Respondents reasons for preferring the off-leash area of Monte Cecilia in order of reported frequency.

Reason	Explanation
Park’s unique natural features	Quality of the bowl which is not replicated elsewhere in other parks
Open, Secure, All-Weather and spacious setting	Facilitates natural dog behaviours and enables socialisation and exercising of dogs. Area is away from streets and carparking.
Belong to a Community	Welcoming and friendly community. Many talked of establishing friendships. The Facebook page was cited as full of evidence to illustrate the community.
Park’s Location	Proximity and Convenience with most being local users

Natural Environment	Lovely beautiful trees and fresh air
Type of dog owners	Align with being responsible dog owners. The area has experienced dog owners who recognised playful vs aggressive behaviours and respected non-dog owners who use the park.
Safety of the Park	This was a particular feature for female and elderly users (71% of respondents), who commented on the importance of the off-leash area's open, spacious, secure and safe environment for them to exercise their dogs. Their experience showed that this was not replicated in other parks including close-by parks such as Big King Reserve.
Friendly Dogs	Dog aggression in the off-leash area was noted as rare. The area acted to support dog socialisation and promote positive behaviours and the community socialised such behaviours assisting new owners and dogs.
Personal Well-being	See section 3.4 below

These are examples of respondents' comments and are reflective of the majority of respondents' comments.

"Big bowl area is great for my little dog to run, trees for shade, away from roads so nice and safe, other dogs and owners are friendly and courteous, good location."

"Courteous Owners who respect park & PickUp Poop, Generally well behaved Dogs, Friendliness & Camaraderie amongst dog walkers, large park allows generous area for Dogs to run freely. Beautiful environment, a pleasure to visit."

"Best place in Auckland to take my dog and play with other dogs. It's a very popular area with great dogs and great people all coming together."

"Well away from roads and traffic meaning dogs are safe and not able to cause traffic incidence. Large open areas for dogs of all sizes to play together. Socialization of humans - great dog community. Great walking tracks for humans and dogs."

"A great place for humans and dogs to socialize. A safe environment for a range of interactions for dogs of all shapes and sizes. Its our happy place."

"Easy access / pleasant dogs and dog owners / beautiful trees / ideal for my dog / safe parking away from the main road."

"Dogs enjoy it, they socialise nicely, it's clean, off leash they exercise in a natural way, burn off energy as required, take shade under trees as needed."

"Lovely other people who use the park that we've now become friends with, almost always dogs that our dog can play with, no water, central to meet up with our sister in law and her dog, 15 mins drive from our house."

"Safe area for dogs off lead, away from roads & other dogs off lead seem well managed. Very friendly community, I enjoy social interaction. Great opportunity to socialise & exercise my dog. Only 10 minutes walk from home. Gorgeous park overall & safe to walk around on my own with my dog."

"It's away from roads, the bowl is a marvellous contained space for the dogs to run, and the dogs can get lots of exercise without us having to walk or run with them."

"My local park - 5 minutes walk from home, large open space with good sight lines, enclosed space no near any busy roads, sociable space for humans and dogs, great park with additional pathways to exercise myself and dog on lead."

"The Park offers large, open green spaces where dogs can run freely and play without feeling confined. Also, many local dog owners frequent the park, making it a great place for dogs to socialize and interact with other friendly pets."

"[Dog's name] enjoys socializing with her friends there, it's a beautiful park, we love the cafe, we love the off leash area for her to run around and develop her brain, and it's close to home."

"Excellent walk for the dog owners, excellent exercise for the dogs, Dogs coming to Monte Cecilia are very social with both people and dogs, good community of dog owners, the dog off leash area is great for dogs with the slope working well for their exercise and also keeps them separate from the other people who walk the park."

"Dog can run about without any danger from cars or children's play areas or water/mud, safe area for a woman exercising dog on her own, other dog walkers are nice and friendly and the dogs play together, beautiful park, I have made good friends that I meet regularly at this park."

"Monte Cecelia Park is a huge park that provides ample space for dogs and ease of separation from non dog walking members of the public who also choose to use the park. With so many mature trees it is a great all weather park where the leafy canopies provide shelter from the sun and also from the rain. It is almost fully fenced which makes a safe place for dogs to run free and socialise with very minimal risk of them running onto a road compared to other parks. I have found the people that frequent the park are all very friendly and I have never seen a problem."

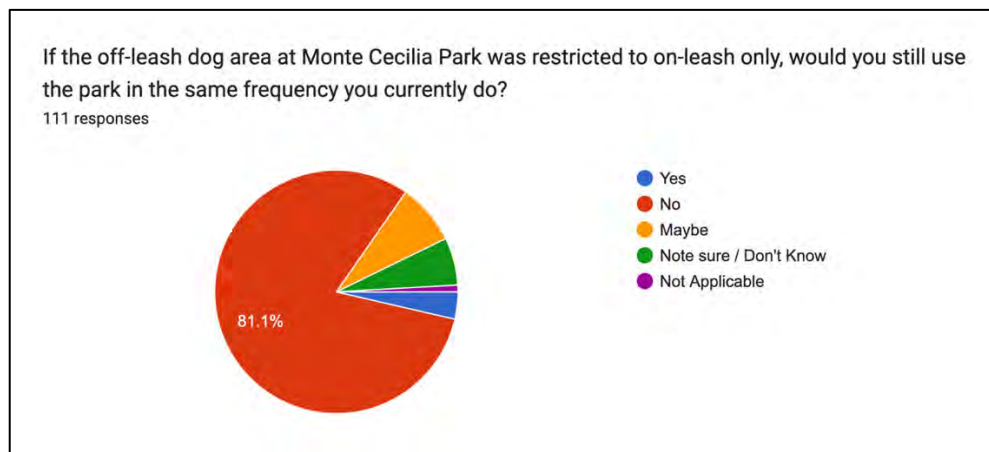
"1. Essential Exercise & Socialization – Off-leash spaces allow dogs to run freely, burn energy, and interact with other dogs, which is crucial for their physical and mental well-being. 2. Safe & Designated Space – The bowl area's natural landscape makes it an ideal, contained environment where dogs can play safely without interfering with other park users. 3. Community & Connection – The off-leash area fosters a strong sense of community among responsible dog owners, creating a space for social interaction, support, and responsible pet ownership. 4. Freedom & Enrichment – Dogs need space to explore, play, and engage in natural behaviors without restriction, which leads to happier, healthier pets. 5. Fair Use of Public Spaces – As dog owners who pay registration fees, we deserve well-maintained off-leash areas that recognize dogs as valued members of the community."

"It is a lovely community where a diverse group of people gather with the common interest of their dogs. Many of these people are single and really appreciate the social contact. We have made lots of new friends since starting to go there with our dog. It's fantastic for the dogs as well, ensuring they are well socialised, which is really important for the behaviour of the dogs around people and other dogs. We have never seen any issues with aggressive dogs at Monte Cecelia, but have felt a bit unsafe at other dog parks (e.g. Big King) where we sometimes see roaming dogs that don't seem to have owners. It is our local park - it is really nice to walk to the park with our dog, walk around it with her on lead, and then let her off lead for a time. It's the only dog park close enough for us to walk to, and we don't want to have to drive somewhere."

There was only one negative comment from one respondent.

"Monte Cecilia is my nearest park. I have walked there nearly every evening until the last year or so when there are so many not well controlled dogs in the off leash area, that I have been driving miles to go somewhere else."

3.2.4: Impact on frequency if park designation changes to fully on-leash



If the Park designation was to change to fully on-leash, 81% of users said they would not use the park in the same frequency as they currently do. Given the reasons why the users choose this park, any designation change would have profound impact on the users and their dogs. This is discussed in detail in the next section.

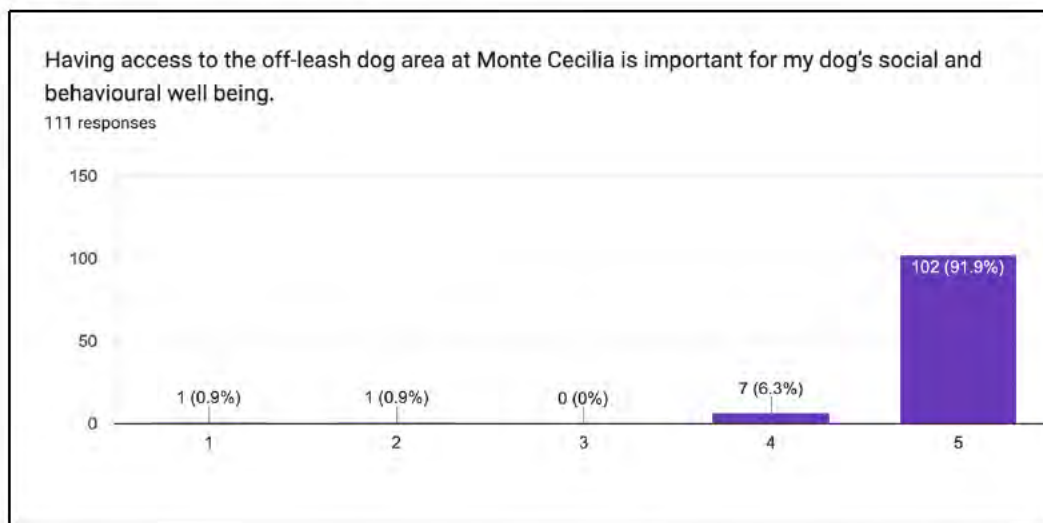
3.3 Benefits for Users from using Monte Cecilia Off-leash Dog Area (for Dogs and People).

3.3.1: Benefits for Dogs

Studies show that off-leash dog parks are essential for socialisation, physical activity and fostering natural animal behaviours and this is important in urban settings particularly like Auckland where backyards are frequently small (and getting smaller with in-fill housing, apartment living and a plethora of retirement villages). The survey therefore explored users' perceptions of the benefits of the Monte Cecilia off leash area for their dog/s.

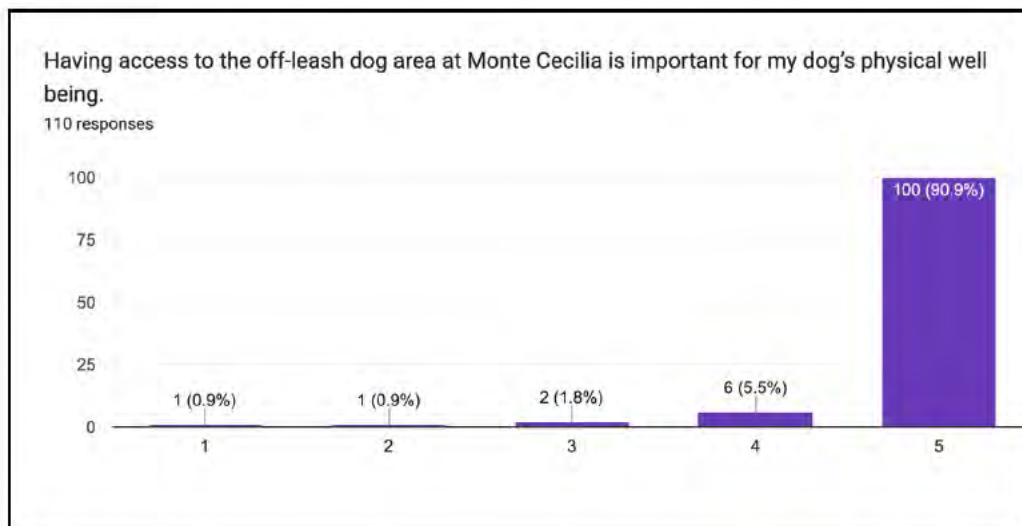
It is important to recognise that the questions and responses are specific to Monte Cecilia and given that the choice for many users is the unique natural features of the bowl with its open, spacious, safe and secure environment, the responses cannot be assumed to apply to users' perceptions of their dogs' experiences at other off-leash Parks in Auckland.

Dog's Social and Behavioural Well Being.



In line with the known benefits of off-leash areas, 98% of users of the off-leash area of Monte Cecilia park rated off-leash access to the area as very/important (levels 4 or 5) for their dog's social and behavioural wellbeing by supporting natural behaviours (sniffing and playing) & promoting social interaction (dog to dog) by running and playing with other dogs and with their owner and other people who use the bowl (dog to human).

Dog's Physical Well Being



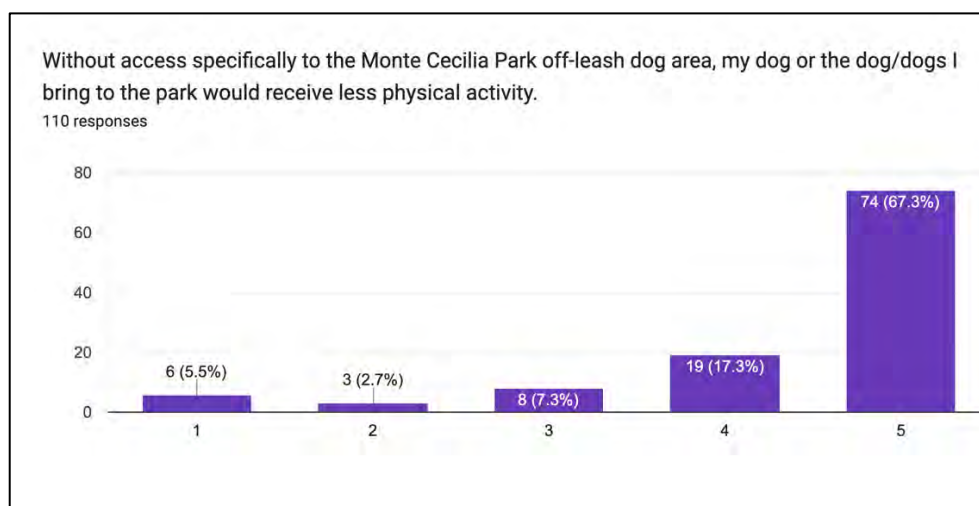
In line with the known benefits of off-leash areas, 96% of respondents rated access to the off-leash area as very/important (levels 4 or 5) for their dog's physical wellbeing with the spacious environment providing ample opportunity to throw and chase balls. It was particularly noted for large dogs and with a large number being lab or lab X (recognised as by far the most popular breed of dog in Auckland, NZ and worldwide, who consume any food), keeping dogs trim through physical activity was critical for dog health. Respondents said this could not be replicated from on-leash activity.

This view was not held by anyone else, who felt exercise and play was critical for dogs' social wellbeing and particularly for owners of medium and large dogs. Indeed most owners stated the opposite, as the following example illustrates, "Socialising with other dogs, dogs with similar play styles, can mentally and physically stimulate him better and faster than taking for a walk."

3.4 Impacts on dogs if park designation changes to fully on-leash.

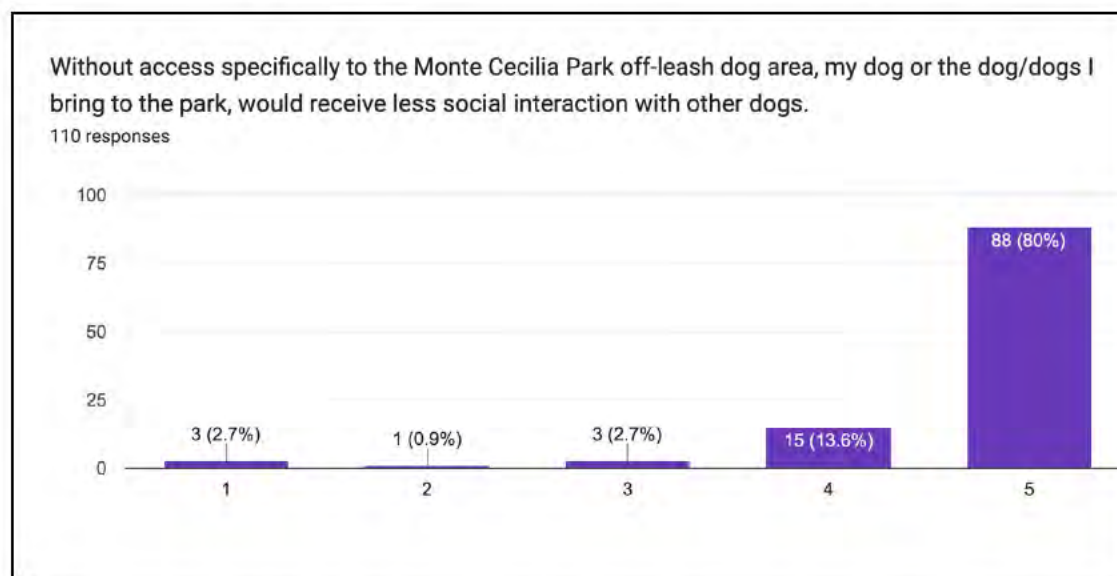
Respondents were asked the level of agreement (1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree) they had with statements about potential impacts on dog wellbeing should the Park's off-leash area change to fully on-leash.

3.4.1 Impact on Dog's Physical Exercise if Monte Cecilia changes to fully on-leash



Most respondents (84.6%) strongly/agreed (level 4 or 5) that changing Monte Cecilia Park to fully on-leash would negatively impact their dog's physical wellbeing by having less access to opportunities and suitable settings for physical exercise. Owners are very emphatic that the bowl provides a unique experience among dog parks and is all weather, which enables even access to grounds in winter months, something they could not access at Onehunga Lagoon, which a number use in weekends for water activity.

3.4.2 Impact on Dog's Social Interaction if Monte Cecilia changes to fully on-leash.



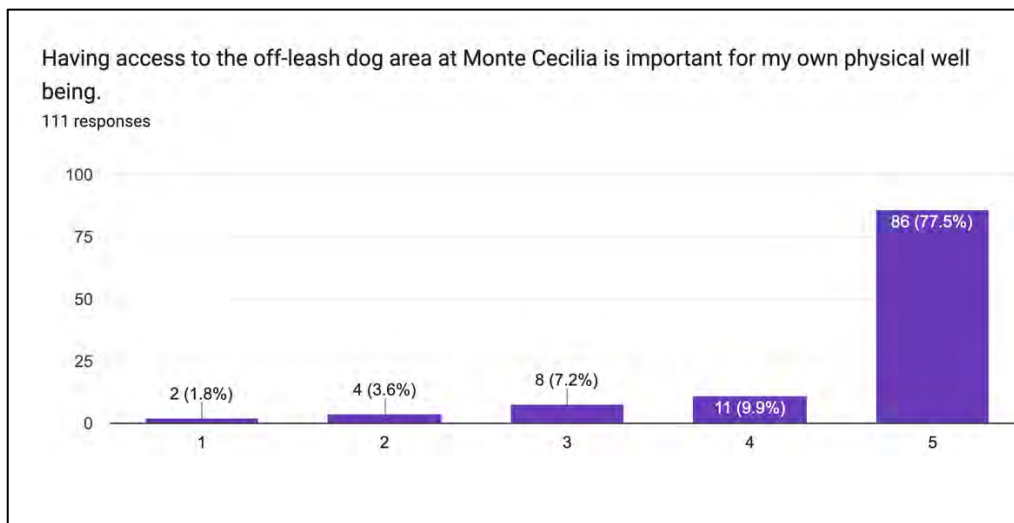
Impacts on a dogs' social interaction / wellbeing from any change to bowl's off-leash designation, received by far the strongest level of support with 93.6% of respondents strongly/agreeing (level 4 or 5) that changing the Park to on-leash would lessen their dog's ability to socially interact with other dogs and people. Respondents talked about their happy dogs, their dog's doggy friends, their dog's joy and excitement at going to the Park. This was reinforced by the strong sense of community the users typically expressed – for dogs, dog owners and others who just enjoy dogs (see *Sense of Community* section below). Users typically claim that dogs do not gain the same social interaction on leash and encounter a higher instance of undesirable and even aggressive behaviours from some dogs when on-lead as dogs cannot express natural behaviours. The interaction of small and large dogs that occurs naturally in the bowl is not generally replicated on-lead as small dogs often feel quite intimidated by being on-lead around larger dogs.

3.5 Benefits for People (Dog owners/carers, Off-leash area visitors without dogs)

Studies show that off-leash dog parks are important for human socialisation and physical activity. Monte Cecilia users also claim the off-leash area has created a strong community. The survey therefore explored users' perceptions of the benefits of the Monte Cecilia off leash area for their users' wellbeing and sense of community.

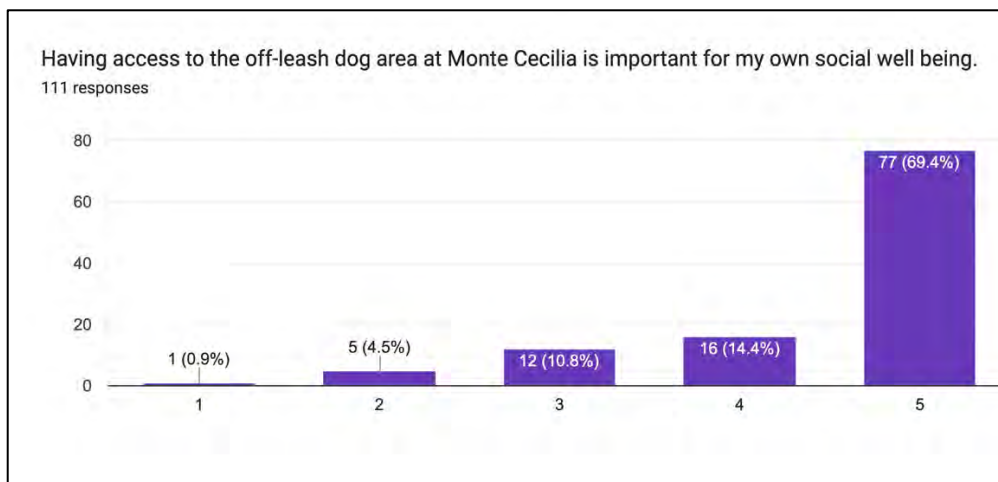
As mentioned above, it is important to recognise that the questions and responses are specific to Monte Cecilia. Given that Monte Cecilia is the preferred Park for 92% of respondents, their responses cannot be assumed to apply to their perceptions of other off-leash dog parks in Auckland.

3.5.1: People’s Physical Well Being



87% of respondents regard the off-leash area as very/important (levels 4 & 5) for their own physical wellbeing. Taking the dog to the park gets them out and about and walking.

3.5.2: People’s Social Well Being

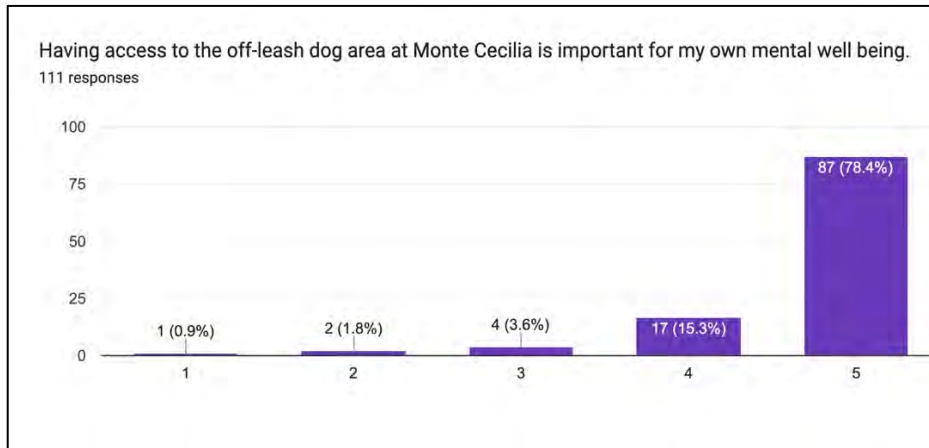


84% of respondents regard the off-leash area as very / important (levels 4 & 5) for their own social wellbeing. For many they could come to the area and chat and engage with other “like-minded” people. Some even said it was their only engagement with others in the day. Many talked about friendships, and the sense of wellbeing they gained from being out and about in the fresh air, socializing with others in a welcoming and friendly community.

3.5.3: People’s Mental Well Being

Of the three human well-being parameters assessed in this survey, benefits to mental well-being received the strongest level of importance, Monte Cecilia off-leash area provides users with the ability to get out in the fresh air, destress, and feel calm and relaxed. Socialisation

and exercise is also connected to mental well-being. For those who lived alone, worked alone from home, were stay at home parents and for elderly the Monte Cecilia park is regarded as a “lifeline” for their mental health. Indeed many provided comments that were deeply personal and revealing about the benefits that engagement with the community in the off-leash area had on their own mental health (see word cloud below for comments)



Community and Public Health (Te Mana Ora) states that recent research has shown that almost half of New Zealanders will experience mental health in their lifetime. Dog ownership is well known to assist with companionship. Monte Cecilia has a much higher proportion of responsible dog owner licence holders that occurs across Auckland. Taking their dogs to the dog park creates happy, stimulated and exercised people (and dogs), and mentally satisfies them and this is further enhanced by the social interaction and physical wellbeing they themselves obtain from engaging in the off-leash area. The Park provides opportunity for all sectors in Puketāpapa region (dog owners being one of them) to gain the mental health benefits of engagement with the park.

Word cloud summary of benefits to human users as perceived by respondents

Respondents were asked to list three words that best described the personal benefits they gained from accessing the Monte Cecilia off-leash area. These were typed into a Mentimeter word cloud and are presented below.



Similar to the benefits to dogs, the principal benefits are social interaction and exercise. Taking a dog to the off-leash area enables them to stop and chat and engage, and the walk to get to the Park, enables exercise and physical activity. Many respondents talked often about the friendships they had developed. Most importantly the socialisation with people combined with the ability to get out into the outdoors was critical for users' mental health and they talked about the happiness they felt engaging with others, including other dogs, and the calmness and peace they gained from being able to stop, rest, de-stress, connect and relax, after a busy day at work. For those who lived alone, worked from home, were stay at home parents and retired, the Park off-leash area was a critical source of engagement and for some the only engagement they got in the day. It was noted that on-leash activity does not allow similar engagement or the opportunity to stop and chat for any length of time. In addition for a number of female respondents, the bowl's features supported their ability to feel secure and safe as they exercised their dogs. This was not replicated in other Parks across Auckland, which did not offer the same safety and security for these users.

These are examples of responses and are reflective of the majority of comments about users perceptions of the benefits to them personally. Some comments are deeply personal particularly relating to mental health.

"Stress free , meeting others."

"Spend time in a beautiful park with fresh air, sun enjoying the surroundings and chatting to other dog owners."

I feel calm. Meditative. Social interaction."

It makes me happy seeing my dog happy with her dog friends, also gets me walking more than I normally would."

I am recovering from depression and learn socializing with other dog owner.

"I have a newborn baby so it is a great way to get out and exercise the dog without wearing me out, great for my social well-being when I'm on parental leave and spend a lot of time with just me, the dog and the baby. I love seeing our dog so happy running freely when we have a relatively small section."

"I love chatting with other responsible dog owners while the dogs exercise."

"Enables me to meet my responsibilities as a dog owner, dog is resting when I go to work because she has enjoyment and stimulation at MC, support and friendship with other people from my community, has been meaningful social interaction to counteract workplace stressors."

"Being elderly, living alone, it is a beautiful, safe area to enjoy the dogs and the dog owners."

"Bonding with my dog in a safe environment."

"Relieve anxiety. Time with my dog."

"Stronger community connections. Peace of mind. Healthy outdoor activity. Quality time with my dog. Stress relief. Safe and controlled environment. Joy and relaxation."

"Happiness, peace and social connections."

"Socialise with other dog owners. Walk my dog to keep both of us fit. Picnic with friends while our dogs enjoy the freedom."

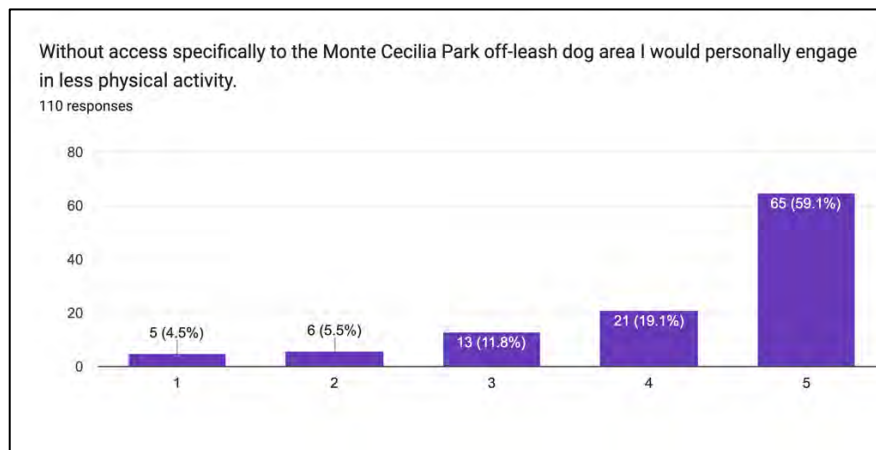
"I'm 75. Need to socialize. Keeps me fit."

"Sense of community, safety, friendship."

3.6 Impacts on people if park designation changes to fully on-leash.

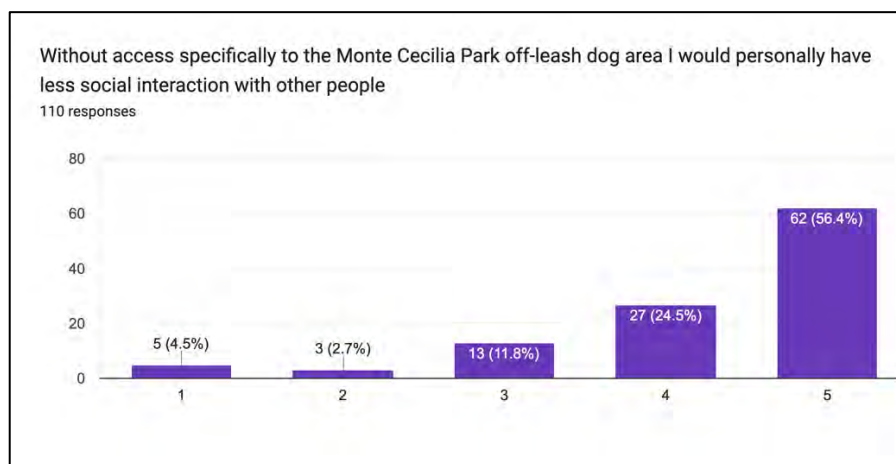
Respondents were asked the level of agreement (1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree) they had with statements about potential impacts on people's wellbeing should the Park's off-leash area change to fully on-leash.

3.6.1 Impact on People’s Physical Exercise if Monte Cecilia changes to fully on-leash



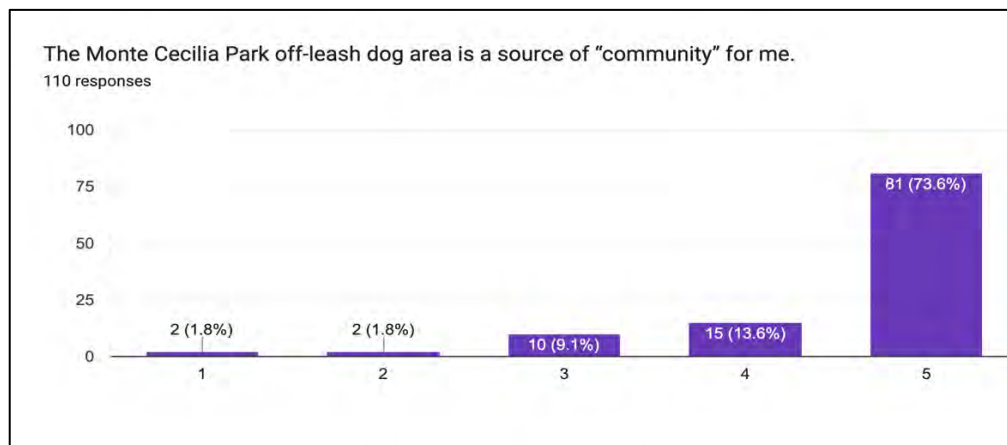
78% of respondents strongly/agreed (level 4 & 5) they would engage in less physical activity

3.6.2 Impact on People’s Social Interaction Exercise if Monte Cecilia changes to fully on-leash



71% of respondents strongly/agreed (level 4 & 5) they would have less social interaction

3.7 Source of Community for Users



Respondents comments throughout the entire survey shows that Monte Cecilia off-leash area supports a vibrant and active community. Community was created by and evident in the following ways:

- Taking time to and chat. Chill Place; Learn about Place; Safe Open Space; Relaxed Environment.
- Connection – Meeting others, Diverse group; New People Welcomed.
- Family; Strengthens the community; Respectful.
- Work alone / Home alone / Parental Leave / Social Challenges – extremely important part of my day – lifeline for mental health; Important for elderly users.
- Friendships – dogs and humans; Formed Bonds; Regulars; Shared Experiences; Like-minded people; Outside my bubble.
- Compare doggy notes, ideas about dog behaviour, health, funny stories, vets, dog care; people who love their dogs; responsible friendly owners.
- Facebook community – informs people; being good citizens.

The following quotes illustrate this sense of community.

“Having an off leash areas means that we take the time to stop and chat in the bowl while our dogs play. This wouldn't happen if it were all on leash.”

“its a great place for people to meet with easy parking and walking being centrally located within Onehunga/Royal Oak/Hillsborough/Mt Roskill areas meaning I get to meet a diverse range of people living in my community.”

“Meeting almost every day with other dogs owners who have also become friends. Taking this away breaks this as now we have just stick to talking our dogs for a walk or going to a park where we don't know anyone. Its unlikely we will all move to another park due to commute.”

“The Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area builds community by connecting dog owners through shared experiences. It fosters social interaction, support, and a sense of belonging, turning the park into a welcoming space for both pets and people.”

“I work alone so the opportunity to socially interact with like minded people is an extremely important part of my working day.”

“We go to the dog park every Saturday and Sunday morning and see the same people every week. They're of all ages and backgrounds which i really like. It allows us to socialise outside our "bubble" which is not so common anymore. I've just started parental leave and will use the park a lot more regularly as our dog will

no longer go to daycare. I think it will really help to continue to chat to other adults over this period since I've lost my normal work socialising."

"Meeting other dog owners who have a shared vision is fantastic. The bond gradually extends to families as well."

"I work from home often and live on my own, I find it very beneficial to be able to go to the park after a tough work day, knowing friendly, familiar faces will be there. Because we stand around watching our dogs play, we naturally have formed bonds, chatting about all sorts of topics and checking in with each other."

"Meeting other people I would not otherwise meet. Meeting people who share a common love of animals. A network to share dog experiences and services eg walking, hrooming, vets, food, carers."

"Dog owners are very friendly people and because I exercise my dog regularly I have made friends with people who are doing the same as me, it has an excellent of community with dog birthday and Christmas parties celebrated there."

"You built friendship with other dog owners, you'll get to relax not until some feral untrained off leash dog started going on that park. I stopped bringing my dogs their and just walking them on beach on leash or have long walks on parks and other not busy roads."

"It's important for people to have "third spaces" - not work or home - to engage with other people. Dog owners create these easily and naturally when they gather with their dogs."

"I have made multiple friends at Monte-Cecilia that I would not otherwise have. I enjoy seeing them when I go there in the evenings."

"Meeting people regularly at the park helps us build a connection with our community. We have made friends with people that we would not have met without the off leash area."

"I have difficulty communicating with strangers. I've always found the dog owners at monte cecilia approachable."

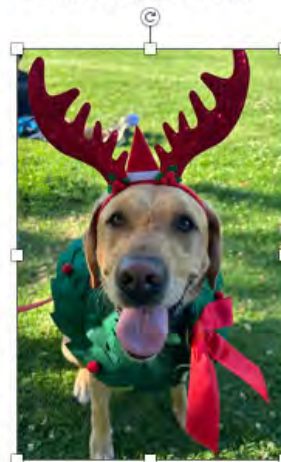
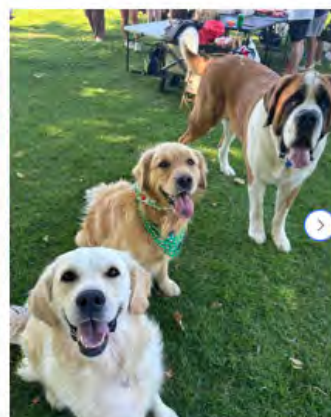
"The Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area is a key source of community for me. It's a place where I connect with other dog owners who share the same love for their pets. We often exchange advice, share stories about our dogs, or simply enjoy each other's company while watching our dogs play. It's a space where I feel a sense of belonging and camaraderie, and where I can appreciate the shared joy of being outdoors with my dog. The park truly brings people together in a way that strengthens the community."

"As i work from home, most of my interactions with others are not in person. Chatting to others at monte Celia helps fulfill the need for human contact. The community there also celebrate each others successes, birthdays, events like Christmas in an all-welcome style."

"I feel safe letting my dog off leash because I frequently see the dogs and owners there and they are all friendly. We exchange tips and stories on how to take care and train our dogs."

"It is an important sense of community when bonding with people who own dogs and are exercising them off leash."

Community Christmas Party at Monte Cecilia 2024



Dog Lovers of Monte Cecilia Facebook Page

3.8 Respondents’ Citing of Incidents They Perceived to be of ‘Significant Risk to Humans from the Bowl’.

The majority of users (85%), many who are long term and frequent users of Monte Cecilia, have not witnessed any incidents that could be deemed to be a ‘Significant Risk to Humans from the Bowl’.

Eleven people did report incidents and these are presented in Table 2 below, with a description of the incident/s, number of times they have seen incidents, the respondents’ frequency of use of the park, to give some indication of the overall frequency of incidents at Monte Cecilia, and whether they support any change to the Park’s off-leash designation.

Table 2: Analysis of Respondents’ Responses Relating to Reporting of Incidents

Respondents’ Explanation of Incident/s in Park (people reported about on-leash <u>and</u> off-leash areas)	Number of Incidents	Dog Owner	Years Visiting Park	Frequency of use of off-leash area	Supports Board’s proposal for on-leash
A runner was running past the off leash area holding a big stick I think for protection but the dogs though he was playing and chased him.	One	Yes	5 years	1-2 times a week	No
I was with my dog one afternoon with other dog owners , and I saw this off leash dog came with no tagged and attacked my dog. My dog ended up harmed and bloody but nothing serious, and the owner of the other dog did not even bother about what happened, took their German shepherd dog and quickly left.	One	Yes	More than one year	Infrequent since incident	No
Large dogs playing off leash in on-leash area on steep slope, caused a woman to slip off path	One	Yes	5 years	Daily	No
Knocked over by unleashed dogs playing in a dog’s on leash area	One	No – looks after dogs	3 years	3-4 times a week	No
Once I saw a dog have a bad reaction and get very aggressive towards another dog but the owner managed it amazingly, broke it up immediately, apologised profusely, calmed the dog down and they left the park. As far as I could tell, no injuries for any dogs or the owner. It seemed to be out of character for the dog and she seemed to be a very responsible dog owner. It was just an unfortunate interaction	One	Yes	1 year	1-2 times a week	No
No explanation provided	One	Yes	3 years	5 times per week	No
A guy who needed to put a muzzle on his dog as it was biting other dogs. No lead in him.	One	Yes	5 years	3-4 times a week	No
Two separate incidents, however, this occurs at other parks/ places I attend with my dog. I don’t think this is exclusive to Monte Cecilia and I have also witnessed bad dog experiences with dogs on leash around the streets of where I live. For the amount of times I attend this park I personally think it’s a very low occurrence of bad dog experiences.	Two	Yes	2.5 years	More than once a day	No

Dogs who are not collared or are clearly not registered with the local council, have put dogs that I have walked, and dogs with friends of mine, at risk with anti-social behaviour and even physical aggression.	3-5 times over 4 years	No – looks after dogs	4 years	3-4 times a week	No
Dog is being walked off leash in clearly marked on leash areas - now feels like the time to follow all of the rules and few people do! aggressive dogs under poor control in the bowl off leash area - this is uncommon, but always a concern	Several!	Yes	3 years	More than once a day	No
My own dog had surgery, had his leg in a cast, was allowed a 10 minute walk during which I was unable to stop dogs running up to him (we were not in the bowl off leash area). Owners kept shouting things like "my dog is friendly!" or "he just wants to play". My dog became quite dog reactive and it has taken a LONG time to get him back to where he was.	10? times	Yes	20 years	Infrequent following incident	Wants off-leash walking not standing around for HOURS in bowl

The analysis reveals that respondents largely provide evidence of non-compliance issues in the on-lead area. This is a Council compliance issue which would need to be managed through education and enforcement.

None of the respondents who reported incidents support the Local Board’s decision to remove the off-leash designation and many vehemently oppose this, although the last respondent in the table above, who says they have witnessed 10? incidents (although provided evidence of only one) would prefer to see the Park allow off-leash walking and not the off-leash area in the bowl, which they claim encourages play that was not necessary for dog’s behaviour and has led to families no longer picnicing in that area.

There are no incidents of dog to human aggression. Respondents reporting possible ‘harm’ to humans, say this has been caused by off-leash dogs ‘playing’ in the on-lead area.

In general respondents in this survey feel that Council should not penalise dog users of the off-leash area for non-compliance in the on-lead areas. A large number of respondents offered a range of ideas to Council for improving non-lead area compliance (see further below).

There are a few instances of dog to dog aggression but this is said to be rare, and not necessarily unique to Monte Cecilia, and can happen on-leash and in ‘ones own street’. The explanations also give some validity to a recognised issue of perceptions over what is deemed to be a significant risk. Animal management themselves recognise this issue with reports of dog aggression to them which may not be dog aggression (Animal Control Council Report 23/24).

Without clarity around what the ‘Local Board’ regard as “significant risk to humans from the bowl”, it is hard to assess what the Local Board deems valid evidence. This lack of definition from the Local Board, and lack of any public transparency around the evidence of the incidents that the Board have used to inform their decision to change the Monte Cecilia designation to fully on-leash have raised questions in the survey by some respondents about privileged power.

3.9 Advice to Council

A range of advice (86 responses) and comments (42 Comments) were provided by respondents to inform the decision-making and long term strategy and management of the Monte Cecilia Park. A thematic analysis of these responses divides them into 5 categories.

- Fairness of Council’s decision and pleading not to change the designation
- Improved Park Design
- Education and Enforcement
- Evidence supporting importance of dog socialisation
- How Council should be managing Responsible Ratepayers Dog Owners

Below are a large range of comments/advice provided by respondents for each of these categories.

Fairness of Council’s decision and pleading not to change the designation

“Why are Council doing this????”

“Do not understand change – feel proposal unfair.”

“Room for all park users in park.”

“Happy Owners / Happy Dogs.”

“Come and see for yourself.”

“Monte Cecilia is our home!”

“Keep it off leash for dogs ...give them the freedom to have a good run around.”

Listen to the people who actually use the park regularly. It is a safe and happy place. Please don't take that away.

I gave other dog parks way closer to me but none are as safe as Monte Cecilia. The people and dogs are friendly and well behaved and it's not close to the road so I can let my dog play without worrying. No one who comes without a dog complains or is scared of the dogs who play. Most people who don't have dogs infact come to relax and pat dogs.

“Think about all the positive of the off leash area rather than the negatives. Happy owners, happy dogs!!!”

There must be other ways to address concerns without making it on leash. There are loads of on leash or no dog areas that people who don't like dogs can go eg. Ambury Park is amazing and no dogs allowed.

“Monte Cecelia is a safe, well managed dog park with a family friendly vibe. Please don't allow a few people who disagree with this be the reason why thousands of people and their dogs no longer get to utilise the space in the same way. I purchased a home next to the park because of the easy access to the off leash dog park for my two girls, it would be a huge disappointment for this access to be revoked.”

“Punishing the 100's of happy dogs and owners that enjoy this park daily because of a tiny proportion of irresponsible dog owners, is classic one rule for all socialist ideology.”

“Please let us keep the park 🙏”

“It feels like Auckland Council are punishing the good dog owners again. There are so many dogs in Auckland that are never walked, or let to roam around the streets causing problems. They aren't feed properly, cared for or given love. All the dogs at Monte are being well cared for by their owners, they are walked daily.”

“Leave it alone there are no issues at the park, it further restricts dogs freedom in Auckland when there are real areas of concern in other parts of the city. Not here.”

“This off leash area has been a big help for dog owners like me. The beaches have already restricted access and of the council does the same, there would be less places for our dogs to be off leash. They need a safe and big space to play around with other dogs. All dogs and owners should not be punished because of bad actions of other owners.”

"I think this is being driven by people who don't rely on the park often and this is very unfair. I have been to Monte maybe 1000+ times and literally never seen a problem. I can't understand why they are punishing us."

"please do not penalise the MANY hundreds of dogs and owners who use this park and cause no issues whatsoever. a much fairer system would be to come down hard on the very small minority who appear to have caused an incident, I am sure all other owners would be more than happy to report information that might help locate anyone who is threatening our ability to attend this area and enjoy our dogs loving the feeling of being able to run about and fetch their favourite toys."

"Think about the whole picture, there are many lovely parks in Auckland that people can go to where dogs are on leash only, this is one of the only parks that allows off leash dogs in a safe are, away from the road, not near water that can be harmful to them. If there are genuine concerns for the safety of people using Monte Cecilia then actually come and talk to the people that are there every day."

Improved Park Design

Some were very widely canvassed while others such as addressing non-compliance on on-leash area with use of CCTV or restricted hours for onleash activity were not widely supported but simply offered as suggestions by one or two respondents.

"I would advise Auckland Council to reconsider restricting Monte Cecilia Park, as the off-leash area is highly valued by the community, it provides essential exercise, socialization, and mental stimulation for dogs while fostering community connections among owners. Instead of restricting off-leash access, the council could focus on clear signage, designated off-leash hours, and improved waste management to address any concerns while maintaining the park's benefits for responsible dog owners."

"You could cordone the walking part and leave the rest for the dogs on the bowl"

"There needs to be better signage on the paths around the off-leash area, that dogs must be on leash outside of the 'bowl'."

"Having the area fenced, make people who doesn't like dogs feel safe."

"Clearer signage for on-leash on the path coming UP the avenue of Morton Bay fig trees and along the top ridge in front of the cafe. Keep the off leash area in the bowl as is currently."

"Suggest more enforcement of the on-leash areas to ensure all dog owners abide by that. Also potentially consider putting times on the off-leash area, say 8am to 10am and 4pm to 6pm. Also clearer signage as to where the boundaries of the off leash area are."

"It would be amazing if the whole area was off leash. This would remove any tension about dogs walking next to the owners on the path circling monte Cecilia."

"Auckland Council should invest more in the park for dogs including drinking water fountain, rubbish bins in the off-leash area and better policing of unregistered dogs in the park."

"Please keep the off leash area as it is a critical community service. I understand that other users of the park may have issues with dogs but there has to be a compromise that can accommodate everyone Perhaps more definite or even physical boundaries between the on and off leash areas ensuring dogs do not upset or offend non dog walkers."

"I am against making the Monte Cecilia park being on leash only dog park. These dog owners need this place. Give it to them, support them by making this park well regulated by fencing it only for registered dogs. I might consider taking my dogs back there again once this happen."

"They should do the opposite, increase off-leash area, allow dog off-leash on the trail."

Only one respondent provided a comment that suggested a change to the Park design to enable off-leash walking in preference to the off leash bowl as they did find the bowl community respectful when their dog was injured and wanted quiet walks, and they believed the off-leash area was not safe for people to picnic.

"I have spoken to many people who have been driven out of Monte Cecilia by the users of the off leash area. They are there for hours and don't respect other users of the park. This is the first summer I can

remember that there have been very few families picnicking there, it just wouldn't be safe or pleasant at the moment as people are using the whole park as off leash."

Education and Enforcement

"They need to focus on the issues that matter, as per their own report most off the attacks are happening cause of Roaming dogs and if that's case why penalize the responsible dogs and owners for it;. Doesn't make any sense. There is also 0 actions taken against aggressive dogs and all we get it sorry we cant do much from Animal Management. The focus should be there rather their what they are proposing."

It's a terrible idea, however, there is a massive lack of respect.for the rest of the park by some dog owners which is really disappointing."

If there is a perceived risk to the public from off-leach dogs then move the off-leach area to the other bowl so it does not directly border the principal pathway through the park as there is room for all park users in this park.

"Would like them to widely advertise acceptable dog ownership practices and expectations."

"License the dog walkers that control a large number of dogs. Don't take away another off leash area. Provide dog training courses in the community."

"I have not seen very many instances where the council has personnel monitoring the off leash dog area. probably once in three years. Instead of just saying no and saving on costs, the council needs to find ways of monitoring and encouraging dog owners to use Monte Cecilia better. Off leash areas make better dogs, bring more smiles and laughter to both dog owners and the people who interact with dogs. Very few people have been impacted by adverse behavior of dogs and their owners, many many more have been positively impacted by the dogs."

"More effort to address unlicensed dogs and dog owners who flout the rules rather than impacting on those of us who are doing the right things."

"Don't do it! If it must change, make it on-leash during certain hours or days only."

"I am strongly against these changes as the Auckland and local councils have not used all available steps to try and curb these issues; such as better signage, more frequent dog control officer patrols etc."

"Why are you thinking of changing this? If someone is being an irresponsible dog owner and putting others at risk then punish the individual, not the whole community. You are prioritising non-dog owners over dog owners - there are many on-leash parks already and very few off-leash parks. Let us have somewhere we can take our dogs and they can be free to run and socialise like they're meant to."

Evidence supporting importance of dog and human socialisation.

"Look to the responsibility of the owners, not the dogs being off leash. Also important to note that many dogs feel scared on leash (trapped) as they cannot get away if approached by another dog. There are more likely to be dog attacks if dogs socialise while on leash than they would off."

"Making spaces on leash, are going to make dogs less social, and more harmful to others. It is backwards."

"You will make the problem many times worse - we are going to end up with so many more dogs developing problematic behaviour due to their owners not having convenient access to areas where they can be exercised and socialised on a daily basis. I have a very active 40kg German Shepherd and know that walking her daily on a leash is nowhere near enough to burn off the excess energy needed to have a calm + well behaved dog. It is not feasible for those of us that work a 40-60 hour week to have to drive home to pick up our dog every day and then, without the luxury of eating dinner, sit in rush hour traffic for up to another hour to get to a decent park. By the time you arrive, exhaustion and lack of daylight (which as a lone female then raises a bunch of other issues regarding personal safety!) become a bit of a barrier to giving our dog the most positive exercise session possible...yes there are a handful of closer parks but none with the feeling of safety due to the level of responsible behaviour that we find both owners and dogs that frequent Monte Cecelia to possess. Having had experiences that have left me feeling personally threatened and very concerned about our pet's safety due to irresponsible owners who seem to find it a source of entertainment to watch their off leash and not well controlled dogs behave aggressively to others."

"The off leash area is critical to the training and socialisation of dogs. Dogs need to learn to interact naturally with other dogs, without confinement to a lead. Larger dogs especially need the ability to run and chase balls or each other which could not be done to the same level on a lead as dogs could only run as fast as owner and only if owner was up to it."

"Please remember that 95% of dog owners are responsible people who care and train their dogs to become good citizens. Having an off leash area is a wonderful way for both owners and dogs to enjoy a very happy time in the park."

It would significantly impact both ourselves and our dog's wellbeing and health. It is already difficult enough to find green spaces that are off leash. Restricting it further is detrimental to our experience living in Auckland. I have never seen any behavior from dogs off leash that has ever made me fearful for myself or my dog."

"I would advise Auckland Council to consider the well-being of both the dogs and the community before making drastic changes. Off-leash areas are not just a luxury—they are essential for the health, socialization, and happiness of our pets, as well as for fostering a sense of community among dog owners. Rather than restricting access, the council should focus on enhancing safety and usability through measures such as proper fencing, signage, more waste stations, and CCTV monitoring to address any issues. These solutions can help maintain the park's accessibility and protect the interests of all park-goers, while ensuring that it remains a welcoming space for everyone. Instead of taking the easy way out, investing in these improvements would benefit the entire community for years to come."

"I'm part of one community within this park, the after work group, but there are many communities within this space, there are groups that come at all different times of the day and week that have naturally formed communities. In a time where people are more and more isolated and our general mental health is on the decline, why take away something that is so important for uniting our community and the people that live within it."

"As a Nurse, Monte Cecilia is one of the places that have provided stress relief for me; particularly the off leash area. Without it, I think that my mental, physical and emotional wellbeing will suffer."

"I believe it is crucial for Auckland Council to listen to the voices of the community and consider the long-term implications of any proposed changes to the park. The off-leash areas at Monte Cecilia Park are vital for both the physical and mental health of our dogs, and they foster a sense of connection and responsibility among dog owners. We all share this public space, and the decisions made should reflect the needs of the diverse groups that use it. Taking away access to these areas without considering other solutions would be a step backward, and I hope the council will make a thoughtful decision that respects both the park's history and its future potential as a space for everyone."

"This stunning park is the safest place I know for me, an elderly, single woman and my dog."

"Auckland has more- Dog owners than ever before and we live in urban housing often with minimal or no outdoor area - communal off leash areas are. Vital."

How Council should be managing Responsible Ratepayers Dog Owners

"Instead of punishing responsible dog owners and their dogs, please use your resources to actually respond appropriately to the few dog owners who don't actually follow the rules. By restricting dog on the lead, your number of dog attacks will increase significantly even from good dogs because they lack the ability to socialize with other dogs. Dogs are trapped at home while their owners work all day so their evening outing is the only form of safe mingling they get so please understand this from our perspectives."

"Important that off leash area retained as few other such facilities in Auckland. Majority of Dog owners Akld residents therefore Rate Payers that should have such facility."

"We are rate payers too and should be able to access safe and convenient parks for our furry friends to enjoy."

"I believe it goes against everything that the council stands for in terms of making Auckland" a more livable City."

"Would like the council to quantify the risk that they are mitigating by changing the rules and whether there are better alternatives to do so (eg better signage/enforcement of people who do not follow rules). Monte Cecilia is a large park and I feel like there is room for everyone to enjoy this, including an off leash area. Would also like consideration as to who the main users of the park are, as from my experience"

(visiting the park multiple times per day) the vast majority of users are at the park with dogs and this change will impact a lot of park users, most of whom are responsible dog owners and pose no risk to other park users."

"Restricting it won't change anything because the problem isn't with the dogs who regularly go to the park and are registered. Where there have been any problems, we have resolved it as responsible owners because we are known to each other. There have been incidences where unregistered and dogs who can't be controlled have been a problem. This won't solve it as they will continue to frequent this. Part of it is a cultural problem - it is shameful for some of the dog owners to own up to what has happened, thus avoiding it or running away is the solution. There will always be incidents - we are currently waiting for the OIA about the incidents that have occurred in Monte Cecilia Dog Bowl. Educate and put signs, fences - but please keep this park as it is one of the best things about living in the area with a dog."

"I am so incensed by what the council is proposing, I feel they are taking away my only joy and the time our family (which includes my dog) spends together. I am a teacher and I need de-stressing activities that allow precious time with my family in a place where I know my dog can play without being threatened by aggressive dogs. I feel totally disenfranchised by the present council's actions, and I feel a right which I have greatly appreciated is being taken away from me. The council is taking a slashing approach to off leash bylaws instead of looking closely at the parks where off leash areas are working well and are patronised by hundreds of dogs owners. I will be attending the stakeholder meeting on the 20th of February to ensure I have my say and know which councillors I will not be voting for in the upcoming elections."

"There are 667 dogs to every 10,000 Aucklanders. Dogs are family and vital for people's wellbeing. I pay rates and council dog fees, and consider off leash areas to be vital for the community and dogs and owners mental health. Exercise leads to calm dogs and owners whereas on lead can be challenging and stressful for both."

"Council should use our registration fee to help dog owners. 1) teach non-dog owners not nervous to the big dogs, they are mostly friendly. A big dog rans to you not means they want to attack you, they usually want to play with you. Dont ran away, just react normally. Before I was a dog owner of big dog, I was nervous when see off-leash dog, but after having big dog, I know most dogs are very friendly. 2) provide more off-leash areas in Auckland by using fences, etc. People and dogs can be good friends and can live together peacefully. 3) punish those irresponsible dog owners whose dog attack people strictly, but dont restrict all the dog owners from access off-leash area, it is unfair and not scientific. Dogs especially big dogs need off-leash area to run freely. 4) should not suggest desexing the dog especially male dogs, because some research shows desex can be harmful to dog's physical and mental health can not help to make dog not aggressive. The best way make dog less aggressive is to let them run!"

"The dog owners I have met in the off leash bowl area of Monte Cecilia Park are among the most responsible and experienced (dog-wise), community-minded people I have ever encountered."

4.0 Conclusions

The following is a list of key points about the off-leash area of Monte Cecilia that can be taken from this report.

- Overwhelmingly users do not support a change to the designation of the Off-leash area.
- The off-leash area supports a diverse range of dog owners, with respect to demographics and a small number of users who come to the bowl for a dog experience.
- Most users are long term and frequent users and over half are located within 5km of the Park.

- Respondents believe that the park enables off-leash and on-leash to co-exist with ample area for non-dog owners in the on-lead area.
- A number of female dog users access the park, and a number of these find the bowl's open environment to provide a safe environment to exercise their dogs;
- The Off-leash area's natural bowl design is unique –which provides safe, secure and spacious off-leash activity – that respondents say is not replicated in any other park and is the main reason why they prefer the bowl
- The area supports the wellbeing of dogs and owners as it socialises dogs and owners - huge dog/people/owner interaction
- In particular many comments related to owners' mental wellbeing – particularly people who work alone, elderly, parental leave, at home parents.
- Monte Cecilia Off-Leash supports a friendly, welcoming community of users who align strongly with responsible dog ownership. It was rare to find any negative comments about the community.
- Respondents argue that well socialised and well exercised dogs are happy dogs not problem/aggressive dogs.
- There is no evidence in the survey of dog to human 'aggression'.
- Reports of incidents that have the potential to place humans at risk (although there is no clarity on what this means) relate primarily to non-compliance in the on-lead area. However, nearly all respondents believe this is a Council education and enforcement issue and that the responsible users of the bowl should not be punished for the actions of a few non-compliance people in the on-lead area.
- There is no evidence in the survey responses of self-entitled dog owners. The respondents believe that Council should be supporting positive behaviour of responsible dog owners, enabling them to fulfil their role to be responsible in natural settings that promote natural dog behaviours.

The survey analysis supports a conclusion that the local board's top-down proposal, without consultation with the community that would be affected by this decision, has led to no understanding of the reality of this community, the importance of this off-leash area to this community and the significant negative impacts that would be caused to the users by a change to on-leash.

- Changing to on-lead will almost certainly destroy the community who currently use the off-leash area at Monte Cecilia and change the usage of the park. The community have provided a raft of evidence in this survey to show their care and concern for the Park, and their opposition to the Local Board's proposal.

7.0 Appendices.

This report contains three appendix as follows:

- 7.1: Appendix A Executive Summary: PowerPoint Presentation to Local Board
- 7.2: Appendix B: Social science 'Behaviour Change' approach that could be used to improve compliance in on-lead area (suggestion for Council proposed by author)
- 7.3: Survey Questions

7.1 Appendix A: Executive Summary: PowerPoint Presentation to Local Board



Survey of Users of the Monte Cecilia Dog Park Off-leash Area

Survey Coordinator & Presenter: [redacted], Social Scientist

Survey Aim



To assess people and dogs' use and experience of the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area to understand how proposed Council changes could impact users.

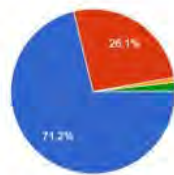


Survey Participation

111 unique respondents over the age of 16 completed the online google form.

Demographics: Gender

Please indicate your gender.
111 responses



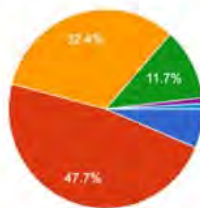
- Female
- Male
- Gender Diverse
- I prefer not to answer

71% of respondents were female

Demographics: Age

Most respondents were in the 30-49 age bracket however all ages participated including 1 participant who was over 80.

Please indicate your age.
111 responses

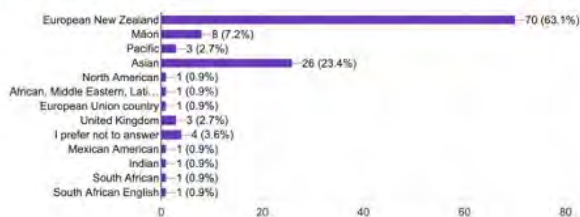


- 16-29
- 30-49
- 50-64
- 65-79
- 80+
- I prefer not to answer

Ethnicity

The most dominant ethnic group was European New Zealander, then Asian, followed by Māori and Pacific.

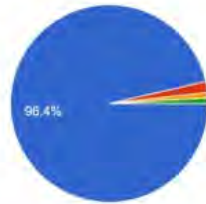
Please indicate which ethnic group/s you belong to. You may check as many categories that are applicable.
111 responses



The Off-leash area attracts a diverse range of ethnicities

Dog ownership among respondents

Do you currently own a dog?
111 responses

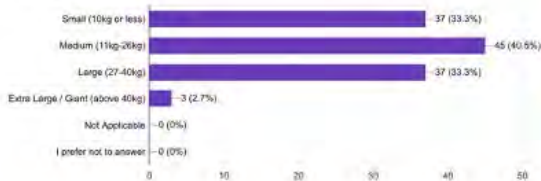


- Yes
- I do not own a dog but look after dog/s for their owners.
- I do not own a dog but visit the park to interact with dogs
- I prefer not to answer

96% of respondents were dog owners – 77% were Council registered as responsible dog owners / 7% were not aware of the registration category.

Dog sizes who use the off-leash area

What size is/are your dog/s (you may check as many boxes as are applicable if you have more than one dog).
111 responses



- The park attracts all sizes of dog.
- Space enables separation if wanted.

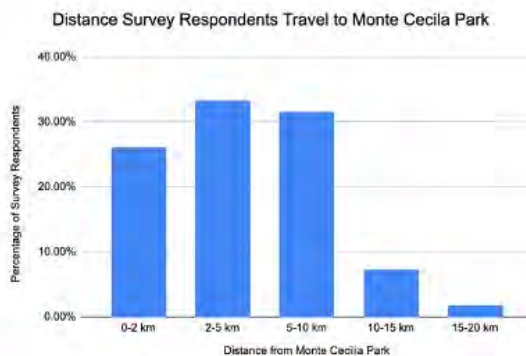
Main Breeds: Lab; Retriever, Collies, Poodle Mixes, Terriers, Schnauzer; Spaniels – Many are 'pedigree dogs' (most pedigree X) with some rescue dogs. A few Shepherds & Rotweiller X; Doberman X; No Pitbulls



Use of the Off-leash Dog Area

Dog Lovers of Monte Cecilia Facebook Page

Distance to Park



The off-leash area is overwhelmingly used by locals who live within 10km

Frequency of Use

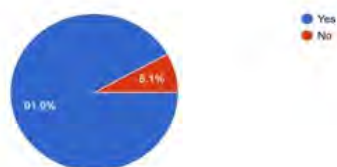
Please indicate in general, how frequently you use the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area
111 responses



Over half of the respondents are frequent users – at least 3-4 times or more per week. Many for many years – most have used it for over 5 years, a number for over 10 years

Preferred Park

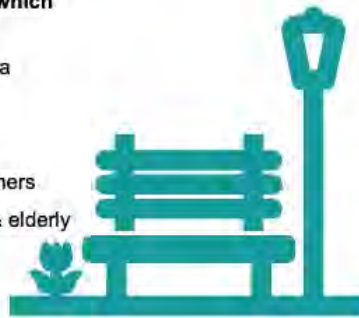
Is the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area your preferred off-leash dog park?
111 responses



Monte Cecilia off-leash area is the preferred off-leash dog park for 92% of all respondents

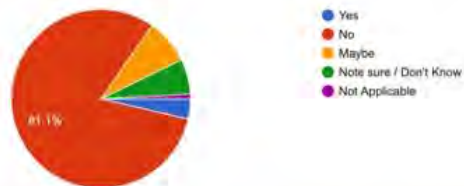
Main reasons for it being the preferred park

1. **Park's features**– quality of bowl area.
2. Socialize/exercise dogs in an **open, secure and spacious which fosters natural dog behaviours.**
3. Friendly **welcoming community** frequents the off-leash area
4. **Park's location:** Proximity and convenience
5. **Natural Environment** – Lovely beautiful trees
6. **Type of Dog Owners:** Align with being responsible dog owners
7. **Safety of the park** to exercise dogs particularly for female & elderly dog owners
8. **Friendly Dogs**
9. **Supports personal well-being**



Impact of on-lead change on frequency of use

If the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia Park was restricted to on-leash only, would you still use the park in the same frequency you currently do?
111 responses



81% of users said any change to on-leash will lower their frequency of use



Benefits of the Monte Cecilia Off-leash dog Area

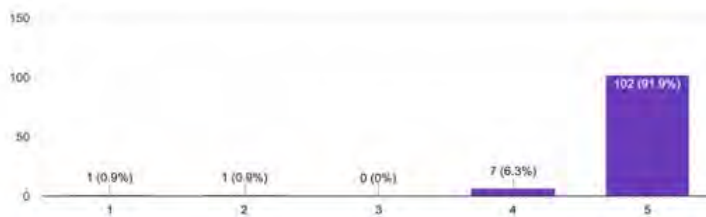


Benefits for Dogs

Dogs' Social & Behavioural Well-being Level of Importance

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my dog's social and behavioural well being.

111 responses

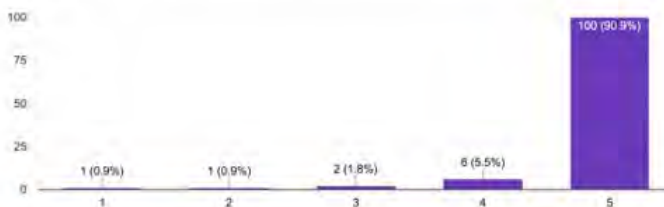


98% of respondents regard the off-leash area as very/important (level 4 or 5) for their dog's social and behavioural wellbeing by supporting natural behaviours & promoting social interaction

Dogs' Physical Well-Being Level of Importance

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my dog's physical well being.

110 responses



96% of respondents regard the off-leash area as important or very important for their dog's physical wellbeing as the bowl is spacious, open and safe for exercise.

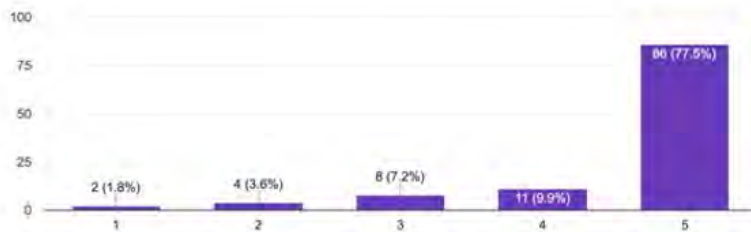


Benefits for People

Human User Physical Well-being Level of Importance

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my own physical well being.

111 responses

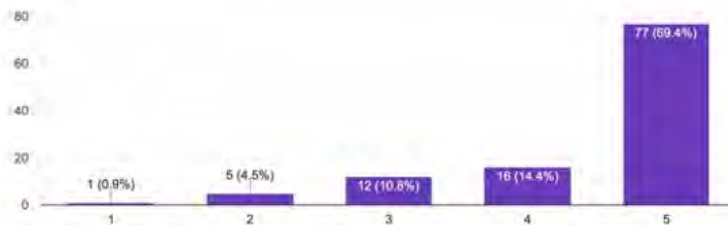


87% of respondents regard the off-leash area as important or very important (Levels 4 & 5) for their own physical wellbeing

Human User Social Well-being Level of Importance

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my own social well being.

111 responses

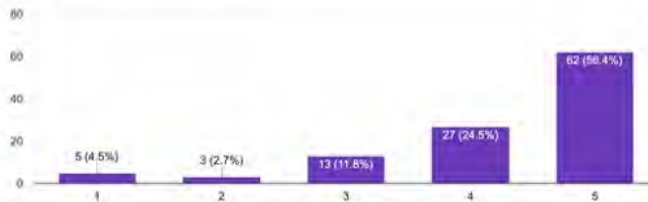


84% of respondents regard the off-leash area as very / important (Levels 4 & 5) for their own social wellbeing

Impact on People’s Social Interaction if On-leash Agreement with statement

Without access specifically to the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area I would personally have less social interaction with other people

110 responses



71% of respondents strongly/agreed (level 4 & 5) they would have less social interaction

Source of Community for Users

The Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area is a source of "community" for me.

110 responses



87% of respondents regard the off-leash area as important or very important (Levels 4 & 5) as a source of community

Creation of a community

Taking time to stop and chat. Chill Place; Learn about Place; Safe Open Space; Relaxed Environment

Connection – Meeting others, Diverse group; New People Welcomed

Family; Strengthens the community; Respectful

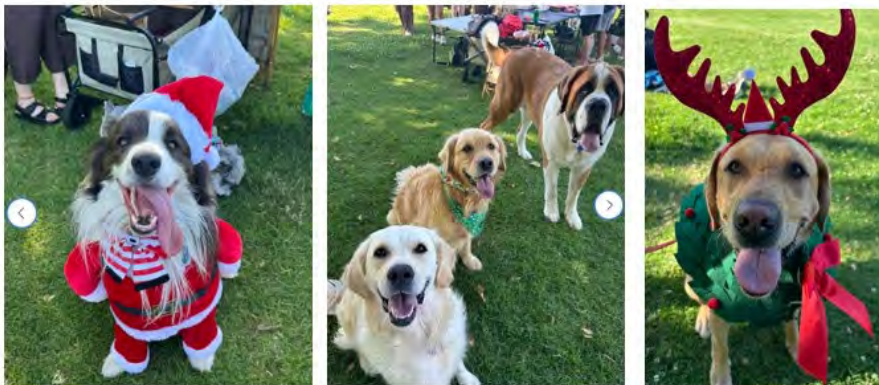
Work alone / Home alone / Parental Leave / Social Challenges – extremely important part of my day – lifeline for mental health; Important for elderly users;

Friendships – dogs and humans ; Formed Bonds; Regulars; Shared Experiences; Like-minded people; Outside my bubble


Compare doggy notes, ideas about dog behaviour, health, funny stories, vets, dog care; people who love their dogs; responsible friendly owners

Facebook community – informs people; being good citizens

Community Christmas Party at Monte Cecilia 2024



Dog Lovers of Monte Cecilia Facebook Page



Evidence of Behaviours

'Significant Risk To Humans.'

Evidence

Have you ever personally witnessed or experienced dog or dog owner behaviour at Monte Cecilia Park that has, or could put park users at significant risk.

111 responses



85% of people have never witnessed behaviours that could put park users at risk

How many times respondents said they had witnessed behaviour that they deemed was 'a significant risk to humans'

(11 responses)

Times witnessed	Number of Respondents
1 time	7
2 times	1
3-5 times	2
Above 5	1



Generic photo

Mainly non-compliance in on-leash area & occasional / rare dog to dog aggression

- Off leash dogs in on-leash area
- Post operative dog needing quiet walks in cast being annoyed by other dogs and owners who did not respect owner's need for quiet walk.
- Runner with stick running past off-leash area chased by dogs who wanted to play
- Aggressive dogs (not registered non-collared dogs) occurs rarely (but occurs at other parks too)
- Off-leash dog biting other dogs in on-leash area.
- Aggressive dog encounter - managed satisfactorily by dog's owner who apologised and left). No dog or human injuries. Out of character for dog.
- German shepherd attacked a dog in off-leash area. Dog owner was unresponsive and quickly left. Injury to dog not serious.
- Two occurrences but happens at all parks and on-leash in their street, very low occurrence in park.
- Large dogs **playing** off-leash in on-leash area caused woman to slip
- Knocked over by off-leash dogs **playing** in on-leash area

No evidence of dog to human aggression

What does this evidence show...

- None of the eleven instances describe aggressive dog to human behaviour.
- Off-leash non-compliance in the on-leash area dominates concerns; The off-leash community feel they cannot be held responsible for non-compliance in the on-leash area. (Non-compliance is not the reason for the proposed designation change).
- None of the respondents reporting incidents support the decision to make the park fully on-leash.
- Respondents feel off-leash non-compliance in the on-leash area is an education and enforcement issue needing to be managed by:
 - Council Dog Enforcement Officers and issuing of fines (this occurs on occasions at the park)
 - Education
 - Better park design e.g signage; rubbish bin in the off-leash bowl area (see advice to council section in written report)
 - Respondents said the off-leash community can assist in socializing on-leash use (in the on-leash areas)

Respondents are concerned about the lack of definition, and transparency around the incidents that have informed the Board's decision-making.

Advice to Council (Detail in Written Submission)

Please do not change the park's designation	Improve Park Design	Education – Enforcement	Evidence to support socialized dogs	Responsible Ratepayer Dog Owners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are Council doing this???? • Do not understand change – feel proposal unfair • Room for all park users in park • Happy Owners / Happy Dogs • Come and see for yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better Signage +++ • Improved waste management • Move off-leash to other bowl to avoid principal path • Fence area • Provide off leash walking areas • Increase off-leash –? all of park • 1 suggested CCTV • Off-leash that allows walking spaces • 2 suggested off-leash times before 10 after 5pm (not preferred option) – only if Council was determined to change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Control should focus on aggressive dogs elsewhere not responsible dog owners and socialized dogs; • Advertise rules and expectations • License dog walkers • Acknowledgement that some dog owners are not respectful in on-lead area • One respondent wanted to ban off-leash area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social dogs are the least problematic dogs – dogs that often attack are unregistered why penalize responsible owners • Great for socializing non-dog owners around dogs • On-leash not effective for socialization – and higher risk of dog/dog attacks • Designation change will create dog-aggression – dog wellbeing • Quantify Risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible Dog Owners feeling they are being punished • Shortage of suitable off-leash spaces in Auckland • Ratepayers who are responsible dog owners and seek Council to support them to be this by providing off-leash facility that is safe and secure

Conclusions

Park's Natural Bowl Design is unique –which provides safe, secure and spacious off-leash activity – particularly note is the safety for large number of female users

Park supports wellbeing of dogs and owners

Supports owners' mental health wellbeing – particularly people who work alone, elderly, parental leave, at home parents

It socialises dogs and owners - huge dog/people/owner interaction

Respondents argue Well Socialised / Well Exercised / Happy dogs are not problem/aggressive dogs

No evidence in survey of dog-human aggression and reports of incidents that might cause risk to humans relates primarily to non-compliance in on-lead area – which respondents believe is an education and management issue

Conclusions

Monte Cecilia Off-Leash supports a friendly, welcoming community of users who align strongly with responsible dog ownership

Changing to on-lead will almost certainly destroy this local community

No evidence in survey responses of self-entitled dog owners - Council should be supporting positive behaviour of responsible dog owners, enabling them to fulfil their role to be responsible in natural settings that promote natural dog behaviours

Local Board did not engage with this community before proposing this change

This Top-Down proposal shows no understanding of the reality of this community, the importance of this off-leash area and the significant negative impacts caused by a change to on-leash.

7.2: Appendix B: Community Based Social Marketing: Social science approach that could be used to improve compliance in on-lead area (suggestion for Council proposed by author)

The off-lead non-compliance (common to all parks and not unique to Monte Cecilia) is a Council compliance and management issue. This should be managed with education first and then enforcement.

While improved signage alone can assist, signage alone is unlikely to change behaviours.

Community Based Social Marketing (developed by Canadian psychologist Doug MacKenzie Mohr) is a social science approach that can be used to get people to see value in "following rules" in the on-lead area.

Council has, or did have a behaviour change group that were utilising MacKenzie Mohr's techniques. It might be an idea to connect with them to see what assistance they might provide around any non-compliance in the on-lead area of Monte Cecilia and Waitatarua (where research also shows non-compliance issues in on-lead areas).

The steps to this approach are:

- Select behaviours
- Identify Barriers and Benefits
- Pilot and test strategies
- Implement and Evaluate.

It can provide valuable insights e.g: Signage actually might be better on the ground that would show when you cross this line your dog needs to be on a lead.

Education is the key. This is about taking people with you. People Ambassadors can be useful for a small period of time.

Embedding psychological techniques in the programme is critical: Rewards, Commitments, Social Norming and Communication are critical to use in this approach.

This approach has been used for encouraging positive behaviours around of track and hygiene station usage for Kauri Dieback.

You might even be able to get some postgraduate student research to support this endeavour.

See: <https://cbsm.com/>
<https://toolsofchange.com/en/programs/community-based-social-marketing/>
<https://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/community-based-social-marketing-what-it-and-what-it-means-me-and-you>
<https://thedecisionlab.com/intervention/how-social-norms-conserved-energy-by-increasing-hotel-towel-reuse-rates-by-36>

7.3 Appendix C: Survey Questions

Monte Cecilia Park Off-leash Dog Area Users' Survey

B *I* U ↻ ✕

Auckland Council are proposing changes to their policy on dogs including access rules for dogs to regional and local parks. As part of these proposals, the Monte Cecilia Park is proposed to change to a fully on-leash dog park, meaning the off-leash area will no longer exist. Council's reason for this is stated as: "To protect users as the current off-leash in the bowl creates a significant risk to people". Council want to know what people think of their proposals.

As an owner of a dog and a current and frequent user of the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area, I have offered to undertake this social research for the 'Dog Lovers of Monte Cecilia' group, to assess users' (people and dogs) experiences of using the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area to understand how proposed Council changes could affect users' current use, sense of well-being and community. The collated survey results will be presented to Council as a presentation, likely at the April Local Board meeting.

The survey will take most respondents about 5-10 minutes to complete. While many of the questions are very quick to answer, there are a few open questions where you can provide your opinion if you wish. Participating in this survey does not prevent you from completing a personal submission to the Council if you wish.

The survey contains questions that cover:

1. Your use of the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area;
2. Users' experiences of using the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area;
3. Demographic information to assess the diversity of users - humans and dogs.

Any person aged 16 years and over who uses the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area may complete the survey - whether you own a dog or not.

You complete the survey anonymously. No identifiable information will be used in any reporting of the survey results and no raw data will be passed to Council. The final section seeks demographic information to enable basic socio-cultural analysis to be undertaken to explore the diversity of park users. However, some of the demographic questions are optional and in all required demographic questions you get the option to indicate that you prefer not to answer the question.

Monte Cecilia Off-leash Dog Park Users' Survey Coordinator

My name is [REDACTED] I am a social scientist, with 30 years experience teaching and researching as a social scientist specialising in socio-environmental research. While I am employed as a social scientist in the tertiary education sector, I am not undertaking this survey as part of my employment.

All information you provide will be collated by me, Dr. Marie McEntee. All completed forms are submitted only to me. To ensure full participant confidentiality, the information will be aggregated so that NO information can be attributed to any individual.

My contact details are as follows.

[REDACTED]

You can contact me should you have any questions about this survey. Please direct all other questions or comments to the Facebook Group "Dog Lovers of Monte Cecilia". You can also have your say at: <https://akhaveyoursay.auckland-council.govt/dog-policy-bylaw-and-access-rules>

Thank you for taking the time to answer this survey.

Please only complete the survey once. All members of a household are able to complete the survey if they are 16 years or over.

The survey will close Feb 18.

...

Please confirm this is the only time you have completed this survey *

Yes

No

Section 2 of 8

Your Age

X ⋮

Survey responses from people aged 16 years or older are being collected. Please indicate on the following question if you are 16 years or older.

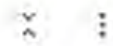
I am 16 years of age or older. *

Yes

No

Section 3 of 8

Your Use of the Monte Cecilia Park Off-leash Dog Area



The following questions relate to your use of the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area.

Is the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area your preferred off-lease dog park? *

- Yes
- No

Please indicate in general, how frequently you use the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area *

- More than once a day
- Daily (7 days a week)
- At least 5 times a week
- At least 3-4 times a week
- At least 1-2 times a week
- Infrequently
- I do not use the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area

Please indicate approximately how long you have been using the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area *

Short answer text

Please provide a maximum of FIVE reasons why you choose to use the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area. *

Long answer text

How far (approximately) is it for you to travel to the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area *

Short answer text

If the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia Park was restricted to on-leash only, would you still use the park in the same frequency you currently do? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Not sure / Don't Know
- Not Applicable

Optional Question: Please indicate what other off-leash dog parks you use to exercise your dog.

Long answer text

How far (approximately) is it to travel to your nearest 'other' off-leash dog area (other than the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area). You may also indicate that you do not know.

Short answer text

After section 3 Continue to next section

Section 4 of 8

Experiences of Using the Monte Cecilia Park Off-leash Dog Area

The following questions assess the level of importance you hold about possible benefits you and your dog/s (if you bring a dog/s to the Park) experience from using the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area.

1 = Not important
5 = Very Important

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my dog's social and behavioural well being.

Please ignore this question if you do not own or take a dog to the Park.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very important

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my dog's physical well being.

Please ignore this question if you do not own or take a dog to the Park.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Important

Please LIST up to three words (or short phrases of two or three words) that best describe the benefits **the dog/s you take to the Monte Cecilia Park** gain/s from using the off-leash dog area..

Please ignore this question if you do not own or take a dog to the Park.

Long answer text

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my own mental well being.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Important

...

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my own social well being.

	1	2	3	4	5	
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

Having access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia is important for my own physical well being.

1 2 3 4 5

Not Important Very Important

Please LIST up to three words (or short phrases of two or three words) that best describe the benefits **you personally** gain from using the Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area.

Long answer text

Have you ever personally witnessed or experienced dog or dog owner behaviour at Monte Cecilia Park that has, or could put park users at significant risk.

- Yes (please move to the next 2 optional questions)
- No
- Not Sure
- I prefer not to answer
- Not Applicable

Section 5 of 8

Optional Questions

If you wish, please provide further details of instances where you have personally witnessed or experienced dog or dog owner behaviour at Monte Cecilia Park that has, or could put park users at significant risk.

Optional Question: If you answered **Yes** to the previous question, please indicate the total number of times you have witnessed or experienced dog or dog owner behaviour at Monte Cecilia Park that has could put park users at significant risk.

Short answer text

Optional Question: If you answered **Yes** to the previous question and you would like to, please provide further details about the incident you witnessed or experienced that has, or could put park users at significant risk.

Long answer text

Section 6 of 8

Perceptions of losing off-leash access at Monte Cecilia Park



The following questions assess your agreement to statements about the impact to you and your dog of losing access to the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia Park

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

1 = Strongly Disagree

5 = Strongly Agree

Without access specifically to the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area, my dog or the dog/dogs I bring to the park would receive less physical activity.

Please ignore this question if you do not own or take a dog to the Park.

1 2 3 4 5



Without access specifically to the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area, my dog or the dog/dogs I bring to the park, would receive less social interaction with other dogs.

Please ignore this question if you do not own or take a dog to the Park.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

Without access specifically to the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area I would personally engage in less physical activity.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

Without access specifically to the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area I would personally have less social interaction with other people

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

...

The Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area is a source of "community" for me.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree

If you wish, please indicate how the Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area is a source of "community" for you.

Long answer text

Is there any advice you would like to offer Auckland Council about their on-going management of the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia and the proposed changes to restrict it to on-leash only.

Long answer text

Do you have any further comments?

Long answer text

After section 6 Continue to next section

Section 7 of 8

Demographic Information

The following questions seek demographic information to assess the socio-cultural diversity of human users of the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area and the diversity of dog users. Two questions are optional. In addition, in all 'required' demographic questions you can indicate that you prefer not to provide an answer.

Please indicate your gender.

- Female
- Male
- Gender Diverse
- I prefer not to answer

Please indicate your age. *

- 16-29
- 30-49
- 50-64
- 65-79
- 80+
- I prefer not to answer

...

Please indicate which ethnic group/s you belong to. You may check as many categories that are applicable. *

- European New Zealand
- Māori
- Pacific
- Asian
- North American
- African, Middle Eastern, Latin American (MELAA)
- European Union country
- United Kingdom
- I prefer not to answer
- Other...

Optional Demographic Question: What is your current main occupation? You can also write 'unemployed', 'student' or 'retired' or another option, or I prefer not to answer.

Short answer text

Do you currently own a dog? *

- Yes
- I do not own a dog but look after dog/s for their owners.
- I do not own a dog but visit the park to interact with dogs
- I prefer not to answer

Please indicate how many dogs you currently own or look after that you take to Monte Cecilia Park? *

Short answer text

What size is/are your dog/s (you may check as many boxes as are applicable if you have more than one dog). *

- Small (10kg or less)
- Medium (11kg-26kg)
- Large (27-40kg)
- Extra Large / Giant (above 40kg)

Optional Demographic Question: What is your current main occupation? You can also write 'unemployed', 'student' or 'retired' or another option, or I prefer not to answer.

Short answer text: _____

Do you currently own a dog? *

- Yes
- I do not own a dog but look after dog/s for their owners.
- I do not own a dog but visit the park to interact with dogs
- I prefer not to answer

Please indicate how many dogs you currently own or look after that you take to Monte Cecilia Park? *

Short answer text: _____

What size is/are your dog/s (you may check as many boxes as are applicable if you have more than one dog). *

- Small (10kg or less)
- Medium (11kg-26kg)
- Large (27-40kg)
- Extra Large / Giant (above 40kg)
- Not Applicable
- I prefer not to answer

Optional Demographic Question: Please indicate the breed/s of the dogs that you bring to the Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area

Long answer text

Are you registered as a responsible dog owner with the Council? *

Please note this is not a requirement of dog ownership

- Yes
- No – I am a dog owner but have never applied.
- No - I am a dog owner but was not aware there was this type of Council registration.
- I do not own a dog
- I prefer not to answer

Section 8 of 8

Thank you for completing this survey.

Please click SUBMIT to send your survey response





Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6774

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Puketāpapa

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

We're living in the area and walk our dog in the park on daily basis. We decided to buy our house here years ago because of the park so we can walk our dog here, especially off-leash. Dogs in the park are friendly and well-behaved when off leash. Putting them on leash will limit their ability to run, burn out the energy, socialise. They will only get more frustrated and aggressive when walked on leash all the time. We have full time jobs and little kid, we can't drive our dog somewhere else every day to let her run off leash (also, it seems there won't be where soon based on the proposal). There are so many places people can go for a walk if they don't like share the space with dogs, it's not all their to take. This proposal must have been made by someone who doesn't have, like or understand dogs.

If there is a confusion, make it clearer. Not only by saying where the off-leash area is but also by setting some expectations (if you have running and screaming kids, maybe don't come in the middle of the off-leash area but rather choose the other side or don't setup your picnic if you are not willing to share it with hungry dogs:). We pay extra fees and also expect to have places where we can walk, play with and enjoy our companions.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

I don't think putting dogs on leash or restricting them access completely is a smart move to integrate them into life with humans. It's setting the expectation that everything is only for human to enjoy. Dogs are part of a family and need a space to run and play and release all the energy from being stuck in the house the whole time. And these spaces must be easily accessible in today's busy times. Some dogs are more protective of their space and owner when on leash too.

I think local boards should work with professional dog trainers to see how to educate and support dog owners. But also how to educate people who are not dog owners too (it's not ok to let your kid to run to and pet every dog, especially without asking).

More restrictions will mean less exercise for dogs and will cause more problems down the line



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6779

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Upper Harbour

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

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4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6782

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Upper Harbour

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

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Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6783

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Ōrākei

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
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Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

This is a lovely, safe for dogs area for some off leash play.

There's enough park area including the loop walk around the perimeter that people without dogs can still enjoy.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

Dogs are very important. They are great companions to many people. NZ has one of the highest dog ownership rates in the world- approx 1 person in 5 has a dog.

We need to ensure that we protect our spaces so that dogs can get adequate exercise and socialising, especially as our housing becomes higher density. Apartment dwellers for example will be very dependent on access to parks so that their pup can be exercised,

Thanks for asking for our feedback.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6787

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Ōrākei

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

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Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Seriously this one is just stupid! Have you been to this park? People pretty much ONLY go there to walk dogs!! What on earth would be the point of stopping people going there to walk dogs, it just won't get used and that is either a whole lot less people and dogs exercising, or you're just putting more pressure on other areas. Don't be ridiculous - just leave it as it is!

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

I've said a fair bit already!

I would add that this whole process has been handled shockingly bad.

The Dog Policy 2019 requires there to be a 'structural change' or a 'significant risk' before any change should be considered and the evidence that has been provided is low impact and tenuous at best.

The findings of the reports have been written in a way that seems to favour a predetermined outcome to significantly reduce dog access in public places.

Further, the process to publicise this process has been severley lacking and the feedback process and timeframes significantly condensed to the point of being unreasonable.

Most people and most responsible dog owners would (and according to your survey do) support sensible changes to improve signage and more enforcement... but these proposed changes are NOT THAT! Keep it simple. Listen to your people, don't make these changes.

In Person Submission to Council regarding proposed changes to the Dog Policy 2019

First, to clarify that I do not support the vast majority of changes proposed.

There is no time today to espouse the benefits of dog ownership and exercising dogs

-no doubt covered in many submissions

-key ones are:

-physical and mental health of dogs and owners

-the importance of socialisation opportunities created while walking

-that a well-exercised dog is a better-behaved dog and therefore less likely to be a 'nuisance'

There is also no time to look into each individual park, so I want to focus on the proposed changes to the overall intent of the Policy on Dogs 2019 that sits across all the proposed access changes - if there is time I will discuss my local park.

While I strongly disagree with almost all of the proposed changes, my biggest concern is the proposed change to the overall objective of the policy, from being very supportive of dogs as a part of our society to being viewed as more of a 'nuisance'.

Key messages:

1. The changes proposed are not mere updates and clarifications, they are massive changes to the core objectives and principles that directly go against the Dog Policy 2019
2. Possibly my biggest concern is the proposed change in the main objective of the policy that shifts from being very supportive of dogs and their owners to very negative assumptions about the role of dogs in society.
3. The way the dog policy is written and is supposed to work is that Council and Dog Management support access for responsible dog owners and educate or enforce against the actions of irresponsible dog owners. The policy expressly encourages managing minor issues directly with irresponsible dog owners and expressly prohibits changes to access without clear structural change and or a significant change in risk profile even then there are measures to ensure balance by providing alternatives. It does not enable mass changes to access. It only encourages better education and enforcement - all the feedback from council reports, and the survey support that the current structure and rules work well and the only thing that might be useful is helping dog owners understand the existing rules better... this can be done with a few good signs and some good social media... NOT changing the vast majority of access rules
4. Underpinning all of these concerns is a consistent theme through all the documents provided that the findings are general at best, and dead wrong at worst. There is a significant lack of real evidence and at worst there are categorically incorrect interpretations of Council's only survey findings, where Council has interpreted support for change where the findings present the opposite. I will show examples below.

Proposed changes - general concerns

The proposed changes are absolutely not a simple restructure and clarification of information. The proposed wording changes are wholesale changes to the objectives and principles, and therefore intention of the Policy.

I am outraged by the extent to which the proposed changes go directly against the current objectives of the Dog Policy 2019, specifically:

"To keep dogs as a positive part of the life of Aucklanders by:

- maintaining opportunities for owners to take their dogs into public places*
- ensuring their welfare."*

The proposed changes are also directly contradictory to the core principle of the policy to *"Recognise dog owners as legitimate users of public places and that dog access is essential for dog welfare" S1(a)*

The requirement (S6) is to consider all *"practicable alternatives"* AND that *'displaced dog owners and their dogs have access to other places as part of the same decision'*.

Based on the documents provided there was no clear and validatable evidence on why these changes should be adopted.

The findings of the reports have been written in a way that seems to favour a predetermined outcome to reduce dog access in public places significantly.

I STRONGLY disagree with these proposed changes on this basis.

I support Option 1 to maintain the current Policy and rules.

1. "Update and Clarify"

Council has introduced these changes as merely 'updating and clarifying' some rules, but what they are actually proposing are huge changes with massive new restrictions on dog walking and in particular off-leash exercise.

In most cases, the evidence provided is both weak and does not meet the threshold criteria for proposing changes, but has been worded in such a way that Council believes it has the right to propose these changes.

2. Concern over core objective and principle changes

The current (2019) Policy and bylaw states one of the key objectives of the policy is to:

"maintain opportunities for owners to take their dogs to public places".

All topics	2019 Policy and Bylaw review	2024 Policy and Bylaw review
Overall Objective	To address problems by: 1. Ensuring legislative requirements are being met under the Dog Control Act 1996 [and] Local Government Act 2002 2. Maintain opportunities for owners to take their dogs into public places 3. Minimising the harm caused by dogs. [To] increase the voluntary compliance with dog management and dog access rules.	To minimise the risk of danger and distress to people, stock, poultry, domestic animals and protected wildlife, nuisance to people, damage to property and environment and not meeting the needs of dogs and their owners from irresponsible dog ownership and the inherent conflict between users of shared spaces in Auckland.
1. Approach to dog management in Auckland	Not specified	... from irresponsible dog ownership.
2. Approach to managing dog access rules in shared spaces	Not specified	... from the inherent conflict between users of shared spaces in Auckland.
3. Region-wide dog access rules	Not specified	
4. Regional Park dog access rules	Not specified	... from the inherent conflict between users of regional parks and associated beaches in Auckland.

The proposal is to change this wording to a bunch of very negative words about dogs that default to assuming that dogs are a *"danger and distress... a nuisance... cause damage"* and that there is an expected or *"inherent conflict between dog owners"* and the rest of society!

3. My understanding of how the Policy is supposed to work:

In principle I would absolutely support a genuine clarification of current rules to be clearer and easy to understand as this would be in line with the existing policy objective to "Educate and inform (responsible) dog owners how to take care of their dogs." (policy objective 2).

However, what Council is proposing are huge changes to the policy, and to dog access across Auckland.

The way the policy is written and should work is that the Council and Dog Management are supposed to manage the low-impact issues from irresponsible dog owners through better education and direct intervention, not massive changes to access.

The policy is NOT designed to enable mass changes to dog access without significant reason and due consideration to alternatives and/ or providing other places – none of which are present in the proposal.

I believe that the proposed measures will only bring in the need for more enforcement of rules that are unfair to responsible dog owners and therefore counterproductive in achieving better support for managing irresponsible dog owners.

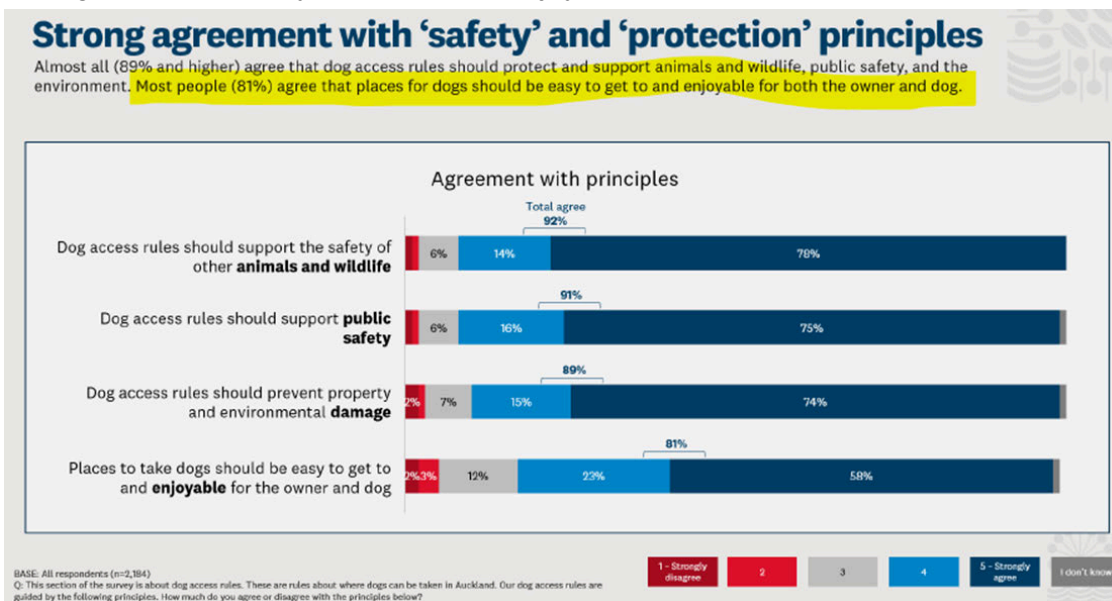
4. Lack of evidence of significant risk or structural change in 'findings'

The policy requires there to be a 'structural change' or a 'significant risk' before any change should be considered and the evidence that has been provided is low impact and tenuous at best.

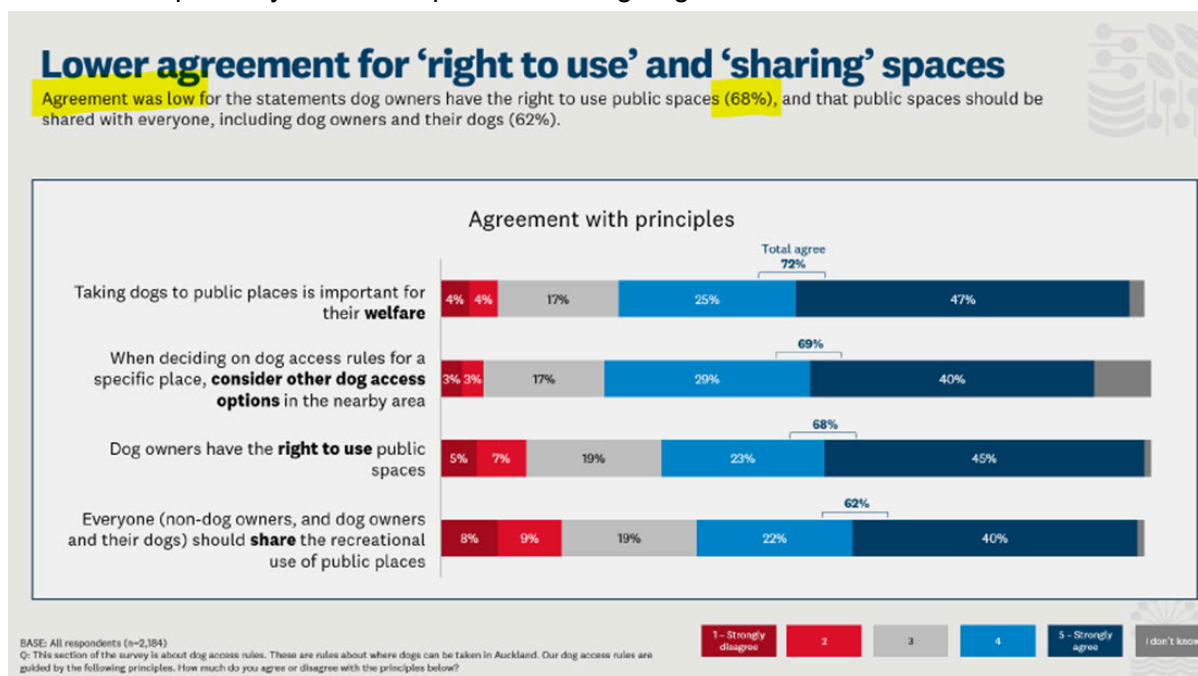
Much of what has been suggested as 'findings' are merely statements of what is happening already and in many cases the completely wrong interpretation of Council's own survey.

For example:

Council interpreted survey results on support for the 'right to access' as being LOW: *"agreement was low for the statements dog owners have the right to use public places"* - there was in fact extremely HIGH majority support for dog access with 81% agreeing 'places for dogs should be easy to access and enjoyable'



A very high 68% majority (that Council findings said was 'low') believe "dog owners should have the right to use public places". Only 12% actually disagreed with that statement. This was despite only 42% of respondents being dog owners!



Most of what has been cited as 'structural change' and 'significant risk' are minor non-structural changes, if any, and low-impact issues (by Councils' own findings).

In the case of Madills - as a proxy to all other findings:

The 'Structural' changes were merely a statement that there is sport at the park - this is not a change, and certainly not structural. Sport has been played at Madills for years (decades?) - that has not changed, so why is it even mentioned as a 'structural change'?? It's just padding findings.

The stated 'significant risk increase' simply doesn't exist:

- 27 rolled ankles - were club first aid records, not official and certainly NO causal link to dogs recorded.
- near misses with mowers were from anecdotal conversations with a subcontractor and had no official evidence at all (regardless 'near misses' by definition would be low impact)
- no cost modelling for cost increases provided, and certainly no modelling provided that showed the expected reduction in cost if the changes were to proceed.

These are all tenuous links to minor non-issues... they simply could not stand up to scrutiny against a threshold for 'Significant' and 'Structural'.

Yet... even if all of these things were evidenced to be true, and directly attributable to being the fault of dogs - are we really willing to trade off a handful of rolled ankles (while playing sport) for the daily physical and mental health of the thousands of people and dogs that walk at this park, during the vast majority of the time that sport is not being played??

This same sentiment can be extrapolated to almost all of the proposed changes.

Monte Cecelia is a great example where the park is almost exclusively only used for dog walking - there is absolutely no good reason why this should change and all that will happen is a small fraction of the number of people will go and exercise there.

Summing up

This whole process has not been approached in good faith or inline with the existing Dog Policy 2019. Research, findings and documents have been vastly misrepresented.

Responsible dog owners would be fully supportive of simple changes that do genuinely clarify what is currently happening - for example better signage at dog parks and better education and even enforcement of the existing policy and laws... but these proposed changes ARE NOT that.

The changes are significant and would have a significant negative impact on dogs and their owners > therefore they do not meet the objectives of the dog policy 2019 > and therefore none of these changes should be adopted.

Question time?

What is underpinning these proposed changes?? They just don't stack up, there must be other real reasons, so let's talk about them and find solutions that would work, together!

If there are mass submissions against it, are Council bound to listen and act according to what the ratepayers have fed back? Surely there should be a 'percentage-against' ratio that would make this decision unequivocal?





Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6789

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Maungakiekie-Tāmaki

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Please see my written submission

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

Please see my written submission



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6792

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Albert-Eden

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

I have an 8 year old Golden Retriever and have been taking my dog to Monte Cecilia Park (The off-leash northern bowl) for 7 years. We are at Monte Cecilia at least twice a week and sometimes every single day.

Monte Cecilia northern bowl is literally my dog's 'happy place'. It is the only place she is excited to arrive at, every time without fail, and runs from the top of the bowl to join 'her friends' at the bottom, a couple of hundred metres. This is notable because my dog DOES NOT RUN ANYWHERE. Such is her excitement and joy at being off-leash, in an open space, naturally flanked by the sides of the bowl. She plays and engages with endless numbers of dogs there.

The proposal to put my dog, and others on a leash will LITERALLY defeat the purpose of me taking her there, as I live a good 15-minute drive away. Gone will be her ability to run freely and safely. Gone will be her ability to play and socialise with other dogs. Gone will be the things that bring my dog and others joy and a good quality of life that they deserve.

QUESTION: Have you ever seen dogs play on-leash? ANSWER: No, because they don't. In fact, some otherwise placid gentle off-leash dogs become aggressive with other dogs when constrained on a leash and confronted with a larger dog. Simply because of a feeling they can escape/run away if they be attacked. Remove the leash and the dog instantly relaxes. I have seen this time and time again while out walking my dog around my local neighbourhood and at Monte Cecilia.

I want to categorically state that in my 7 years of going to the Monte Cecilia Park northern bowl off-leash area (literally many hundreds of times!) I have NEVER seen a dog attack or threaten a person. NEVER. I've never even heard rumours of a dog attacking a human and I talk to every person I come across there.

I am beyond astounded that the rationale for proposing a change to make the northern bowl on-leash at all times because "the current off-leash rule in the bowl area creates a significant risk to people". This is beyond a (bad) joke.

I have, however, heard that a senior member of the Puketāpapa Local Board is driving the proposed changes and is the sole person 'claiming' there has been a dog attack a person.

I'm sorry, but I'm calling bullsh*t given no proof or evidence has been forthcoming. I DEMAND EVIDENCE should the proposed changes progress, as its a blatant and disgraceful misuse of elected power for anyone on the Puketāpapa Local Board to push their own agenda.

If an attack has occurred, why have NO DETAILS been made publicly made available (Date, Dog breed, responsible dog owner or not) AND the total number of dog "attacks" and/or threatening behaviour reported to authorities (not unsubstantiated speculation and claims by a council member and/or member/s of the public). The public have a right to know the facts, the details BEFORE any knee-jerk decision is made by local and Auckland Council.

The proposed change to Monte Cecilia Park's current off-leash northern bowl 'claims' to be because off-leash dogs there supposedly pose "a significant risk to people". So I feel compelled to ask and expect factual answers to the following questions;

- How many dog attacks on people have occurred, to-date, in 2025, inside and not 'around' the northern bowl of Monte Cecilia Park?
- How many dog attacks on people have occurred, to-date, in 2024, inside and not 'around' the northern bowl of Monte Cecilia Park?
- How many dog attacks on people have occurred, to-date, in 2023, inside and not 'around' the northern bowl of Monte Cecilia Park?
- How many dog attacks on people have occurred, to-date, in 2022, inside and not 'around' the northern bowl of Monte Cecilia Park?
- How many dog attacks on people have occurred, to-date, in 2021, inside and not 'around' the northern bowl of Monte Cecilia Park?
- What are the trends and details have been determined.
- What were the circumstances around officially REPORTED, not 'alleged' unsubstantiated claims. E.g. a drunk man kicked a dog, so it bit him.

In my 7 years of coming bringing my dog to Monte Cecilia Park I have NEVER seen council animal control officer. I know other dog owners have, a couple of times, but not many. I'm told when they do turn up at Monte Cecilia, their sole purpose is "catch" dog owners who have their dog/s off-leash outside of the northern bowl off-leash area. NO ONE has ever seen council Animal Control officers in the northern bowl off-leash area engaging with dog owners, talking with them, educating

and discussing the on-leash rules outside the bowl. The "officers" seem only to exist as punitive revenue collection officers. Why are THEY not engaging dog owners and the public alike in a positive informative and constructive manner?

In light of the alleged 'dog attack' on a person INSIDE THE NORTHERN BOWL, I and every other dog owner I have spoken with are asking, "Why have we not seen anyone from the Local Board, or Auckland Council, and Animal ...

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

My experience is that the CURRENT rules at Auckland's local parks and beaches are sensible and more than adequate for dog owners (& their dog/s) and non-dog owners alike.

I would like to see proactive action taken by Auckland Council to educate and inform dog owners and non-dog owners alike on dog safety, responsibilities, how people should behave around dogs (so as to not inadvertently make a dog feel threatened and respond aggressively).

Auckland Council woefully lacks any genuine effort in engaging the public on dog ownership responsibilities (save the 'carrot' of reduced dog registration fee. Which is of no benefit for owners of unregistered dogs who can't afford registration and/or access affordable or free dog training classes due to poverty). Punitive measures and "signs" at beaches & parks are insufficient in addressing the "significant risk to people" that Auckland Council aims to address.

#6792

When it comes to dogs, Auckland Council need less reactive (i.e. "Don't do this" rules) and more proactive (i.e. providing accessible services that aid dog owners and non-dog owners)
I'm happy to help. I have a lot of ideas on this (but not the time to write them tonight)



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6796

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Kaipātiki

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I don't know

Tell us why

As stated in your proposal, the Council itself states the increase of the dog population in Auckland. With this in mind, why would the council be proposing to cut down off-leash areas throughout the city? This is a huge space and should be enough for people and dogs to enjoy the vast space together.

What about much larger and condensed cities with far bigger populations like London for example manage dogs and people together - their perspective and policy?

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

No, I have given a thorough response and it shows I'm very much against changes that yhe council is proposing. The majority of dog owners are very responsible. Don't ruin it for people like myself.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6801

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Maungakiekie-Tāmaki

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

This park offers a large area for all users and a designated area for off-lead which is very popular for locals exercising their dogs. Most do so responsibly. Signage could be better for where on and off-leash areas are.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

Reducing the number of parks that dogs can access and the number of off-leash areas will funnel more dogs into less spaces - this can be dangerous if there are too many dogs accessing one park, and if some of the dogs are reactive.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6805

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Puketāpapa

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

There should be more parks which allow dogs off-leash.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6822

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Albert-Eden

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

This is outrageous. This has been a dream area for dog meet ups and is an absolute joy for dog owners. The vast majority of users of this park are dog owners with the absolute minority being individuals without dogs. Very anti this rule and you are shutting down a core community of people. This is grossly prohibitive and restrictive of a space that has been used positively by the community for years. You will be punishing 90% of users to entertain a 10% that still has full use of the rest of the park. Grossly unfair and whoever has put this forward should go and sit in this park to see how much joy is brought from the dogs that gather in the bowl.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6824

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Whau

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

The area is a wonderful gathering point for responsible dog owners. We walk our rescue dog there and she enjoys the socialisation. There is already a lack of off lead areas in central Auckland and taking one of the best away is disingenuous. Dogs there are, in my experience, well behaved and under control of responsible owners. Reducing the areas in which they can be off lead is a knee jerk reaction which does not address the causative issues of aggressive dogs and punishes responsible dogs and dog owners. Please reconsider. I would invite you to come and join and discuss with the dog walking community in the Monte Cecilia off leash bowl on any Saturday and/or Sunday.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Are there any dog access rules at other local parks and beaches in Auckland that you think council should change?

Your feedback on this section will inform any future review of dog access rules. A future review has not been scheduled at this time and no changes will be made on any location you identify in this section as part of this proposal.

Only provide feedback on one location at a time.

Space is provided for three locations. If you would like to provide feedback on more than three locations, please copy the following pages or include your comments in the other feedback section.

Location 1

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

Madills Farm

What local board area is this location in?

Ōrākei

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

Tell us why

Change the current rule to allow dogs under control off a leash

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Entire location

What is the main reason you want to change the current dog access rule?

Please explain your issue in more detail:

To respond to opportunities for greater dog access without impacting other users (e.g. an area to take a dog under control off a leash). Please specify:

Please explain why you want to change the dog access rule at this location, and provide any additional information or evidence

#6824



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6825

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Whau

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

We regularly walk our beautiful rescue dog, [REDACTED], at Monte Cecilia Park on the weekend and love the community of dogs and their families who gather there to watch them play and socialise.

Monte Cecilia serves a catchment of responsible dog owners and offers a safe space, away from roads, for dogs to play freely. If the concern is public safety, forcing more dogs into increasingly crowded space is surely not the answer. The council's time, resources and efforts should be put towards addressing the causative issues of dog aggression, rather than reducing the amount of space responsible owners can enjoy with their dogs.

Please, please reconsider and keep Monte Cecilia as the beloved space it is for dogs and their families.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6848

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Puketāpapa

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Montecelia park is such a good park safe for dogs , dog owners and the general public. My family and I have been going to the park well before we were dog owners and have never observed any negative interaction from the dogs. I strongly believe there is no reason to change the rules for this park . This park is community hub for the dogs and the owners , playing key part in developing social skills .

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6860

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

That the proposed rule change for Monte Cecilia Park in the PuketÄ papa local Area Board that "Dogs allowed under control on a leash at all times (Schedule 1(4)(a))" be rejected as being ill thought out and subject to question as to the impartiality of the decision

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

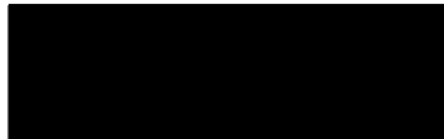
Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

That the area of the Monte Cecilia Park where dogs are allowed off leash be extended

Submission on
**Dog policy, bylaw and regional and local
park access rules**

Submitter



Submitter Details

Full Name:

Address:

Phone:

Summary of my submissions

1. That, from the proposal to “*set a limit on the number of dogs a person may walk at one time (maximum of six dogs, of which no more than three are allowed under control off-leash at any one time)*” delete the following: “, *of which no more than three are allowed under control off-leash at any one time*”.
2. That the proposed rule change for Monte Cecilia Park in the Puketāpapa Local Area Board that “Dogs allowed under control on a leash at all times (Schedule 1 (4)(a))” be rejected as being ill thought out and subject to question as to the impartiality of the decision.
3. That the area of the Monte Cecilia Park where dogs are allowed off-leash be extended.

Introduction

It appears to me that much of this proposal stems from fear and a total lack of appreciation or understanding of the wonderful relationship that exists between humans and dogs, the incredibly positive impact dogs have on the lives of so many of us, particularly the young and the elderly, and from an inability of the proposal drafters to accept that fear of dogs is not rational and that the problem is not the dog but the fear. Dogs are one of the first two mammals introduced to Aotearoa by humans and lived happily alongside Tangata Whenua for many hundreds of years without restriction until the arrival of Pākehā and Tauīwi with their different cultures and prejudices. In fact right up until the last 25 years. There are already far too few places for a dog to run off lead and further reducing the area is simply unconscionable.

According to the Animal Management Annual Report 2023 – 2024 there are >135,546 dogs in Auckland. If each dog has three people living with it that’s over 400,000 people in Auckland sharing their accommodation with a dog. Nearly 25% of the population live with dogs.

In the year of the report there were 22,198 unregistered dogs.

In the year of the report there were 26,746 complaints (15,146 for roaming), i.e. about 110 per working day. There were 109 prosecutions in the year. Obviously there are huge problems with irresponsible dog owners but how is reducing the off leash area going to help those statistics? You need to be increasing the off leash area – not penalising the responsible dog owners.

Dog Walker limits

When I read, on page 2 of the Proposed updates to the dog policy and bylaw, that you recommend setting “...*a limit on the number of dogs a person may walk at one time (maximum of six dogs, of which no more than three are allowed under control off-leash at any one time)*” it became immediately apparent to me that this entire project carries the hallmark of having been captured by people who fear dogs, who have little or no understanding about dogs and who have absolutely no idea how unbelievably stupid that proposal is in practice. It’s beyond stupid, it’s moronic. A maximum of six I totally agree with and think it makes very good sense; I support that part of the proposal. However, dogs on a leash can be very unsettled when there are other dogs in the vicinity running free. Having three of them attached to a handler at once is potentially very dangerous to the dogwalker and limits the ability of the dogwalker to control the other three. I’d have hoped that anyone, and everyone, involved in formulating this proposal would have had some understanding at least of dog behaviour and been aware of this. Obviously not, which again reinforces my questions concerning the objectivity (or lack of) of this proposal and it’s capture by people who are frightened of dogs.

I submit that the words “, of which no more than three are allowed under control off-leash at any one time.” be removed from the proposal.

Monte Cecilia Park

Attached hereto as Appendix A is part of a document I downloaded from the Auckland Council website shortly before the “Dog policy, bylaw and regional and local park access rules” report appeared on 20/01/2025. I have looked for it online again but can’t find it. Either it’s been removed or maybe I simply can’t find it. The page numbering is mine.

Look at Page 1 – note how many requests we are talking about here. Seven!

Look at Page 2 – note the “Criteria not met”. That means the Criteria for change is not met.

Look at Page 7 – note “There is no structural problem nor significant risks identified”

Look at Page 8 – note the Recommendation **“Based on the analysis against the criteria above, Option 1 (status quo) is the most appropriate way to address achieve the objective to provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone.”** and **“for Monte Cecelia Park - it will retain current use of public space that balances the needs of dog owners and other visitors of the park.”**

Now look at Appendix B an extract from the minutes of the Puketapapa Local Board 05 December 2024.

Please read sections 5 & 6. You will note that staff now appear to be recommending option 2.

The staff report clearly recommends Option one yet the minutes of the Board meeting clearly state that staff recommend option two.

Is it possible that the Puketāpapa Local Board may have chosen to ignore the recommendation of staff, and ignored the fact that no consideration was given to the request for more access?

Could this lead one to question whether the Puketāpapa Local Board’s recommendation was a foregone conclusion and is based on the personal preferences of the Puketāpapa Local Board and not based on a staff recommendation at all? Could this whole exercise be a charade?

I submit that the above warrants further investigation before a final decision can be made.

Conclusion

I submit that, based on the above discrepancy, the Puketāpapa Local Board’s decision to amend the dog access rules is, at best, suspect and not based on adequate research. It should be treated as unreliable and ignored. Probably it should be investigated.

I further submit that, at the very least, consideration be given to extending the times and/or areas where off-leash dogs are permitted at Monte Cecilia Park. I suggest the entire area to the north of, and including, the bowl be an off leash area.

I wish to be heard on my submission.

APPENDIX A

1

Attachment B: Assessment of dog access rule change requests against regulatory criteria

Part 1: Summary of Assessment

Change requests:

Location (requestor)	Change requested	Reason for change request
Freeland Reserve (Request from: Auckland Council Park Services staff)	Decrease dog access from under control off a leash at any time to under control on a leash at all times.	The park has been through recent development and is no longer suitable for dog off-leash access.
John Moore Reserve (Request from: Auckland Council Park Services staff)	Increase dog access from under control on a leash at all times to under control off a leash at any time.	Opportunity for off-leash access in an area with limited dog off-leash public spaces.
Monte Cecilia Park (Request from: members of the public)	Conflicting views: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Two requests for more dog access (more off-leash areas).</u> • <u>One request for less dog access (to make the whole park on-leash).</u> • <u>Four requests for more penalties, enforcement, and better signage.</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The request for more dog access is to provide more recreational opportunities for dogs and their owners.</u> • <u>The requests for less dog access are due to requestors having had a negative experience of dogs at the park.</u> • <u>The requests for more penalties, enforcement and better signage is due to non-compliance observed at the park.</u>
Smallfield Reserve (Request from: Auckland Council Park Services staff)	Increase dog access from under control on a leash at all times to under control off a leash at any time.	Opportunity for off-leash access in an area with limited dog off-leash public spaces.
Walsley Park and Underwood Park (Request from: Auckland Council Park Services staff)	Decrease dog access from under control off a leash at any time to under control on a leash at all times.	The parks has been through recent development and is no longer suitable for dog off-leash access.

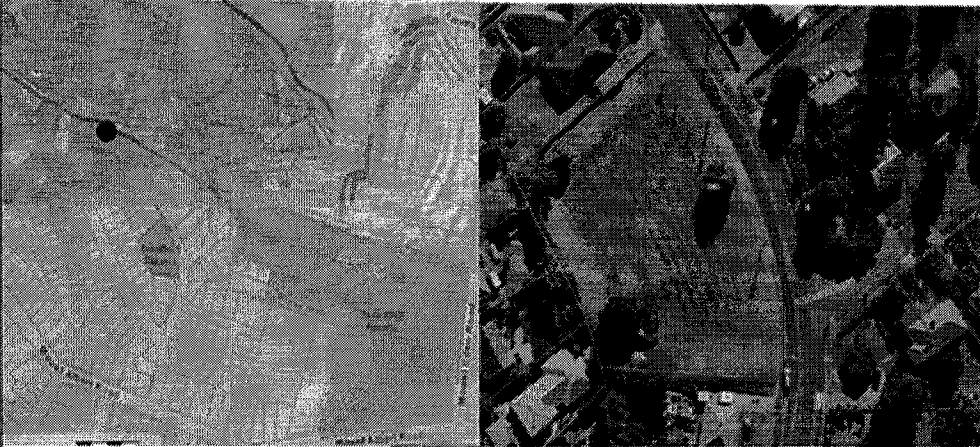
Preliminary assessment summary

Request Location	Key findings of assessment	Criteria met / not met
Smallfield Reserve	There is evidence of an opportunity to better utilise an undeveloped open grass area to provide more recreational opportunities for dogs and their owners without creating significant risks to other users of the park.	✓ Criteria met
John Moore Reserve	There is evidence of an opportunity to provide a new off-leash area that would provide more recreational opportunities for dogs and their owners without creating significant risks to other users of the park.	✓ Criteria met
Freeland Reserve	There is evidence of structural change of increased park use due to recent development of the park but off-leash dogs present no significant risks to visitors.	× Criteria not met
Walmsley Park and Underwood Park	There is evidence of structural change of increased park use due to recent development of the park, but off-leash dogs present no significant risks to visitors.	× Criteria not met
Monte Cecilia Park	<u>There is no evidence of structural change. The park remains popular for people both with and without dogs with equally strong divergent views whether dogs should be allowed off-leash. The Local Board in 2015 [PKTPP/2015/65] created an off-leash area to provide balanced opportunities for everyone. Compliance and signage are addressed as operational matters.</u>	× Criteria not met

Option analysis summary

Smallfield Reserve	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Validity
Option 1 (Status quo) – No change to the current on-leash rule at the reserve.	×	×	×
Option 2 (Amend rule) (Recommended) – Allow dogs off-leash at the reserve.	✓	✓	✓
<p>Recommended option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide more off-leash dog access for responsible dog owners without creating significant risks to other users • will better utilise the open grass area and create additional recreational value for dogs and their owners • is authorised under s10(3)(a-e) and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the DCA, is consistent with the Policy's Dog Access Principles and considers the Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules. <p>There is no trade-off between Options 1 and 2 except a small implementation cost of around \$50 – this covers the signage costs and courier.</p>			

PART 2: Detailed tables

Location – Smallfield Reserve
<p>Smallfield Reserve, Mount Roskill, Auckland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smallfield Reserve is an undeveloped open grassed space located in Smallfield Avenue in the Three Kings suburb. It is 1,200m² in size and does not have other features such as a playground or sports field. On street parking is available. • The reserve is located in an urban suburb, 85m away from Kāinga Ora developments.

Current dog access rule – Smallfield Reserve
<p>Rules in Policy</p>
<p>The current rule is the default rule (on-leash) from Schedule 1 as Smallfield Reserve is not listed under Schedule 2.</p> <p>(4) Default dog access rules</p> <p>Unless otherwise stated in Schedule 2 the following default rules apply:</p> <p>(a) Dogs must be under control on a leash in all council-controlled public places where there are no physical restrictions to access (such as fences or other indoor facilities)</p>
Findings assessment – Smallfield Reserve
<p>Is there a structural change in the nature of the area?</p> <p>✓ Yes. A new off-leash opportunity has been identified at Smallfield Reserve to provide more recreational opportunities for dogs and their owners.</p>
<p>Are there any significant risk factors at location as a result of the change in the nature of the area?</p> <p>× No.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no known risks to people, flora, fauna, domestic animals, livestock, or property. Smallfield Reserve has no key features such as playgrounds, or sports fields as it is undeveloped open space. • There have been no recorded dog related incidents from the 2019 – 2023 Request for Services data.

<p>Is there a structural problem with the current dog access rules that requires an options analysis?</p> <p>✓ Yes. A new off-leash opportunity has been identified at Smallfield Reserve to provide more recreational opportunities for dogs and their owners without creating risks to other users as it is undeveloped green space.</p>

Options assessment – Smallfield Reserve

Note: The effectiveness and efficiency assessment is in relation to the Policy on Dog Access Principles (to "provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone"), consideration of Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the Dog Control Act 1996 (DCA).

Option 1: Status quo	Option 2: Amend rule (Recommended)
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This option would mean – Dogs allowed under control on a leash at all times at Smallfield Reserve (Schedule 1 (4)(a)).	This option would mean – Dogs allowed under control off a leash at any time at Smallfield Reserve (Schedule 2).
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Implementation

<p>Decision-making process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional costs. • No requirement to use of Special Consultative Procedure (SCP) and no change to signage. <p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Management staff continue (as prioritised resource allows) to patrol location to educate dog owners and where appropriate to issue infringements. • Staff to update webpage and signage. 	<p>Decision-making process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires use of the SCP. • Local Board adopts proposed change for public consultation. • Governing Body funds generic SCP process (public notice for feedback and decision, coordinates 'have your say events' and deliberations and updates <u>where you can walk your dog</u> and <u>Policy</u> information. • Local Board funds cost of any bespoke SCP initiatives and local board time and resource for 'have your say events' and deliberations. • One new sign (small sign) and courier cost – around \$50 in total. <p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Option 1.
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Effectiveness

<p>✗ Less effective than Option 2 — Fails to provide off-leash in an area with no significant risks to people, animal or habitat that would provide more recreational opportunities for dog owners and dogs.</p>	<p>✓ More effective than Option 1 — It provides more off-leash opportunities for dog owners and residents without creating significant risks to other users.</p>
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APPENDIX A

Efficiency	
<p>* Least cost option (no cost to local board), however in the long-term it fails to provide off-leash access in a community with limited off-leash opportunities while there are no significant risks to other users.</p>	<p>✓ More efficient than Option 1. Same cost as Option 1, however in the long-term it provides more off-leash opportunities for dogs and dog owners in an area with limited off-leash opportunities and where there are no significant risks to other users.</p>
Validity	
<p>✓ Inclusion of dog access rules in the Policy is authorised by s10(3a-e) of the DCA, the DCA is the primary legislation to manage dog access, and the option has regard to matters in section 10(4) of DCA.</p>	<p>✓ More reasonable than Option 1 — This option removes unreasonable limitations on dog owners' freedom of movement and allows for a more balanced use of public space between users.</p>
<p>* Less reasonable than Option 2 — The restriction on responsible dog owners' freedom is not justifiable as there are no known risks to people, flora, fauna, domestic animals, livestock, or property.</p>	
Risk and mitigation	
<p>Risk: IF the current rules are retained, THEN there will likely be a minor reputational risk to the council for not taking advantage of a new off-leash dog opportunity at an appropriate location that is under-utilised.</p> <p>Mitigation: Communicate available off-leash areas nearby.</p>	<p>Risk: No risks identified.</p> <p>Mitigation: n/a.</p>
RECOMMENDATION	
<p>Based on the analysis against the criteria above, Option 2 (amend rule) is the most appropriate way to address the structural problem and achieve the objective to provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone. Taking this approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will provide more off-leash dog access for responsible dog owners without creating significant risks to other users • will better utilise the open grass area and create additional recreational value for dogs and their owners • is authorised under s10(3)(a-e) and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the DCA, is consistent with the Policy's Dog Access Principles and considers the Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules. <p>No trade-offs were identified in the options analysis except a small implementation cost of around \$50 – for one new sign and courier.</p>	

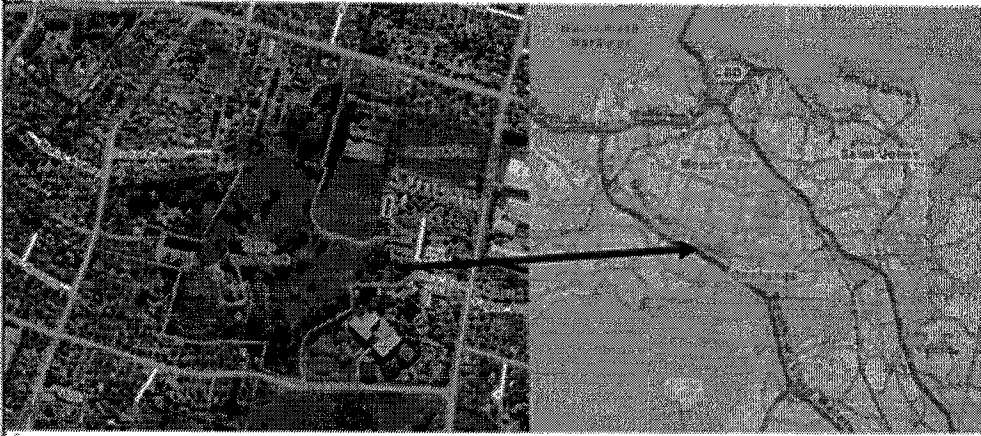
APPENDIX A

6



Location – Monte Cecilia Park

Monte Cecilia Park, Monte Cecilia Park, Auckland.

- Monte Cecilia Park is a medium-sized park located in a residential area. It is relatively central in location with a number of access points, including off a main road (Hillsborough Road) which leads to a carparking area, next to which there is an art gallery (the Pah Homestead) and a café.
- The park is a particularly suitable location for walking, offering both covered and (mostly) uncovered pathways. There is also ample open grass spaces. The steep-bowl area in the northern side of the park allows dogs off-leash at all times. This area is also used for Movies in the Park events in the summer.
- The park is well utilised by locals and is considered to offer an authentic experience of a typical old English countryside estate. It is noted that there are a number of retirement homes in the nearby area.



Current dog access rule – Monte Cecilia Park

Rules in Policy	Rules as stated on webpage
Park areas	
 Off-leash At any time This covers the naturally formed bowl on the north-eastern side of the park between Pah Homestead and the Knoll.	
Other areas	
 On-leash At all times	

APPENDIX A

Findings assessment – Monte Cecilia Park	
Is there a structural change in the nature of the area?	
* No. No structural change identified at Monte Cecilia Park.	
Are there any significant risk factors at location as a result of the change in the nature of the area?	
* No significant risk factors identified.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monte Cecilia Park is a popular park with many visitors. The popularity of the park poses a potential risk of competition over space between dogs, their owners and other users of the park. Local Board in 2015 [PKTPP/2015/65] created an off-leash area to provide balanced opportunities for everyone. • There have been reports of non-compliance of dog owners not following the dog access rules – these incidents were addressed separately as operational matters. 	
Is there a structural problem with the current dog access rules that requires an options analysis?	
* No. There is no structural problem nor significant risks identified.	

Options assessment – Freeland Reserve, Watmley Park and Underwood Park and Monte Cecilia Park	
<p>Note: The effectiveness and efficiency assessment is in relation to the Policy on Dog Access Principles (to "provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone"), consideration of Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the Dog Control Act 1996 (DCA).</p>	
Option 1: Status quo (Recommended)	Option 2: Amend rule
This option would retain the current rules at the three parks.	This option would provide more or less dog access in accordance with the change requests.
Implementation	
<p>Decision-making process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No additional costs. • No requirement to use of Special Consultative Procedure (SCP) and no change to signage. <p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Management staff continue (as prioritised resource allows) to patrol location to educate dog owners and where appropriate to issue infringements. • Staff to update webpage and signage. 	<p>Decision-making process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires use of the SCP. • Local Board adopts proposed change for public consultation. • Governing Body funds generic SCP process (public notice for feedback and decision, co-ordinates 'have your say events' and deliberations and updates <u>where you can walk your dog</u> and Policy information. • Local Board funds cost of any bespoke SCP initiatives and local board time and resource for 'have your say events' and deliberations. • The implementation cost will need to be determined (e.g. new signage). <p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Option 1.

APPENDIX A

Effectiveness and efficiency	
<p>✓ More effective and efficient than Option 2 — For Freeland Reserve, Walmsley Park and Underwood Park, it will continue the current off-leash access that provides recreational value to dogs and their owners without significant risk to other park users. For Monte Cecilia Park, it will continue with previous local board decision that provides balance use of park space between dog owners and other users of the park.</p>	<p>✗ Less effective and efficient than Option 1, as it will change the current balanced use of the public space between dog owners and other park users.</p>
Validity	
<p>✓ Inclusion of dog access rules in the Policy is authorised by s10(3a-e) of the DCA, the DCA is the primary legislation to manage dog access, and the option has regard to matters in section 10(4) of DCA.</p>	
<p>✓ More reasonable option — The current rules already provide a balance of freedom and restrictions to responsible dog owners proportionate to the level of risk dogs pose on other visitors of the parks.</p>	<p>✗ Less reasonable option — Changes to increase or reduce freedom of responsible dog owners will not appropriately reflect the level of risks.</p>
Risk and mitigation	
<p>Risk: IF the current rules are retained, THEN there will likely be a low risk that some people might be concerned about potential risk dogs pose on other visitors of the parks.</p> <p>Mitigation: Staff continue to enforce the rules and communicate the rationale for the current rules.</p>	<p>Risk: IF the current rules are amended to provide more or less dog access in the parks, THEN there is a moderate risk that people may think the change is unreasonable.</p> <p>Mitigation: Communication that public feedback will be sought before making a final decision.</p>
RECOMMENDATION	
<p><u>Based on the analysis against the criteria above, Option1 (status quo) is the most appropriate way to address achieve the objective to provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone. Taking this approach:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for Freeland Reserve, Walmsley Park and Underwood Park – it will remain current off-leash opportunities for dogs and their owners with no significant risk • for Monte Cecilia Park – it will retain current use of public space that balances the needs of dog owners and other visitors of the park • is authorised under s10(3)(a-e) and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the DCA, is consistent with the Policy's Dog Access Principles and considers the Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules. <p>Trade-off between Options 1 and 2 is providing more or less opportunities for dog owners that fails to achieve a balanced use of public space between dog owners and other park users.</p>	



Request for change to local dog access rule

File No.: CP2024/16843

Te take mō te pūrongo**Purpose of the report**

1. To seek a decision on whether to propose changes to local dog access rules in the local board area for the purposes of public consultation.

Whakarāpopototanga matua**Executive summary**

2. The council has received requests to change local dog access rules in the local board area.
3. An assessment against criteria in the Dog Control Act 1996 and Auckland Council Kaupapa mo ngā Kuri | Policy on Dogs 2019 found structural problems with the current rules in relation to some (not all) requests. Structural problems place responsible dog owners, their dogs, other people, animals or property at significant risk or unreasonably restrict responsible dog owner access.
4. The assessment findings of structural problems means the regulatory criteria has been met and the local board can consider whether to change local dog access rules related to those requests. Findings of no structural problems means no further consideration of those requests are required by the local board.
5. To enable the local board to decide whether to change local dog access rules in response to findings of structural problems, staff identified and assessed two options against legislative and Policy criteria. For requests with findings of no structural problems, staff nevertheless undertook a similar options assessment.
 - Option one (Status quo, no change to current local dog access rule)
 - Option two (Amend local dog access rule).
6. Staff recommend Option two (Amend local dog access rule) in response to findings of structural problems and have prepared a Statement of Proposal in Attachment A for the local board to adopt for public consultation. Staff recommend Option one (Status quo) in response to findings of no structural problems. Taking this approach will better achieve the Policy to balance the needs of dogs, people, animals, the environment and property.
7. There is a medium reputational risk that people may feel the proposed changes do not reflect their views. This can be mitigated by communicating the reasons for the proposed changes and that the local board will consult the public before making a final decision.
8. If approved, staff will commence the public consultation process alongside other proposed changes to the council's Policy and Bylaw on dogs by the Governing Body and other local boards in early 2025. The consultation will include an online feedback form and regional Have Your Say events. The local board will consider any public feedback, deliberate, and make a final decision by mid-2025.

Ngā tūhonga

Dog policy, bylaw and regional and local park access rules

- My Say

Presentation:

I've come here today to talk about three things:

1. Dog walkers
2. Monte Cecelia Park
3. Dogs

Dog walkers

When I read, on page 2 of the Proposed updates to the dog policy and bylaw, that you recommend setting "...a limit on the number of dogs a person may walk at one time (maximum of six dogs, of which no more than three are allowed under control off-leash at any one time)" it became immediately apparent to me that this entire project carries the hallmark of having been captured by people who fear dogs and who have little or no understanding about dogs. A maximum of six I totally agree with and think it makes very good sense; I support that part of the proposal.

However, dogs on a leash can be very unsettled when there are other dogs in the vicinity running free. Having three of them attached to a handler at the same time is potentially very dangerous to the dogwalker and limits the ability of the dogwalker to control the three dogs running free. This part of the proposal is, I submit, stupid.

I propose you remove the words "..., of which no more than three are allowed under control off-leash at any one time."

Monte Cecelia

I have part of a document here that I downloaded from the Auckland Council website shortly before the "Dog policy, bylaw and regional and local park access rules" report appeared on 20/01/2025. I have looked for it online again but can't find it. Either it's been removed or maybe I simply can't find it. I have labelled it Appendix A - the page numbering is mine.

Look at Page 1 – note how many requests we are talking about here. Seven! Actually 6 per OIA.

Look at Page 2 – note the "Criteria not met". That means the Criteria for change is not met.

Look at Page 7 – note "There is no structural problem nor significant risks identified"

Look at Page 8 – note the Recommendation **"Based on the analysis against the criteria above, Option 1 (status quo) is the most appropriate way to address achieve (sic) the objective to provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone."** and **"for Monte Cecelia Park - it will retain current use of public space that balances the needs of dog owners and other visitors of the park."**

Now look at the last page **Appendix B 1** which you may recognise as being an extract from the minutes of a Puketāpapa Local Board meeting held on 05 December 2024.

Look at section 6 which clearly states **"Staff recommend Option two"**.

Are you not confused? I certainly am. Are you not just a little suspicious?" I certainly am.

Am I taking part in some kind of Kafkaesque charade where all the rules are followed, i.e., we call for a report from staff, we call for submissions from the public, we listen to submissions from the public, and then we do whatever it is we have already decided to do, notwithstanding it's different from the staff report and the vast majority of the submissions from the public? Or is just a typo?

Further on in the section staff appear to have recommended Option One.

I submit that Option One is the correct option and that Option one (Status quo) be adopted.

Dogs

I've had a look at the Animal Management Annual report 2023 – 2024.
Here are some facts I derived from that report:

There were 135,546 dogs in Auckland – there's probably more.

22,198 or 16%, say again 16%, of them unregistered. That's probably wildly optimistic too.

There were 15,146 roaming dog complaints

There were 22,142 other complaints

That's a total of 37,558 complaints or over 150 complaints every working day.

There were 2,846 dog attacks investigated.

There were 109 prosecutions raised.

Auckland currently has 6,438 dogs classified as menacing and 13 dogs classified as dangerous. This is a 19 per cent increase in the number of high-risk dogs. The overall compliance rate with the requirement for menacing and dangerous dogs to be desexed was 69 per cent., which is 10 per cent lower than the previous year.

Comment

You have to accept that Auckland Council has a serious problem with dogs.

How do you deal with >150 complaints a day? You don't, you can't. It simply isn't possible.

Auckland Council needs to accept that it has very serious problems and that it isn't showing that it has even the remotest idea as to how to deal with it.

There are a number of people who simply don't like dogs, dogs do have some disgusting habits – none of them as disgusting as the habits of some humans, to be fair.

There are a number of people who fear dogs – it's not a totally stupid fear – from time to time dogs do do some serious damage to people. But if my dog is under control and no threat to you then your fear is your problem, not mine, not Auckland Council's, it's yours, and it's yours alone.

Dogs are not going to go away, dogs are here to stay. If you think that making Monte Cecilia an on-lead dog park is going to even scratch the surface of the problem Auckland Council has with dogs you've probably got no right to be sitting in that chair.

Kua mutu.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6861

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Whau

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Propose this area stays as a "control off a leash" area but a wire fence is erected to form a barrier between the lower part of the area and the walkway/path

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6879

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Ōrākei

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I don't know

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I don't know

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

Another example of carte blanche rules recreational reserves are used for all

The onus is on the local board / council to demonstrate the risk.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I don't know

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I don't know

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I don't know

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6882

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

To whom it may concern,

I strongly oppose the proposed changes to the Dog Policy, Bylaw and Regional Local Access Rules, especially concerning Monte Cecilia and Big King Reserve.

We submitted a petition with over 1000 signatures, only to be told that it counts as one submission. This is ridiculous and a completely biased decision against those in favour of no changes.

I suggest you set up a petition for the complainants (at Monte Cecilia Park only) and see if you get anywhere near 1000 signatures. If not, keep the status quo.

I would also suggest that those on the board step away from their computers and come down on a Saturday morning, along with weekdays from 3 pm, to see what a friendly and safe environment it is for people and dogs.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6894

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

This is my submission to this proposal:

I often visit Monte Cecilia Park with my two small dogs for the past 7 years in evenings and weekends. I have never actually seen any problem with dogs in the Off-Leash area.

I occasionally see dogs being walked off-leash in the On-Leash areas.

To remove the On-Leash area will punish responsible owners and you will still have a problem with non-compliant irresponsible owners in the park.

All you do need to do is enforce compliance in the current On-Leash areas.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6938

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

see attached

Summary of Attachment:

Opposition to On-Leash Only Proposal:

The proposal lacks community consultation and transparency.

Changes should be evidence-based and consider a range of options.

Historical and Social Importance of Dogs:

Dogs have been integral to New Zealand's history and society.

They serve various roles, including police, therapy, and companion dogs.

Personal Impact:

The proposal would negatively affect the quality of life for the submitter and their dog, Cole.

Off-leash exercise is crucial for Cole's health and the submitter's mental well-being.

Community and Social Benefits:

The dog-owning community at Monte Cecilia Park provides social interactions and support.

The proposal would disrupt this community and reduce social benefits.

Increased Pressure on Other Areas:

Closing the off-leash area would increase pressure on other parks, leading to potential conflicts and dog aggression.

Need for More Off-Leash Areas:

With increasing population and housing density, more off-leash areas are needed, not fewer.

Adequate exercise areas are essential for well-socialized and well-behaved dogs.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



23 February 2025

Puketāpapa Local Board
Auckland Council
Private Bag 92300
Victoria Street West
Auckland 1142



Dear Board Members

Submission on Proposal to Make Monte Cecilia Park an On-leash Only Dog Area

I write to oppose the proposal to make Monte Cecilia Park an On-leash only dog area. I want an off-leash dog area to be maintained at Monte Cecilia Park. I am not opposed to changes being made to the current off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia Park to improve recreational outcomes for all park users.

Any changes to the status-quo should be evidence based, undertaken with complete transparency and only be implemented once meaningful consultation has been undertaken with the local community, including affected dog off-leash park users, about a range of options for managing an off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia Park. This range of options should cover the full range of possibilities from no change to managed change to no off-leash area.

This type of inclusive process has not been undertaken with the current proposal as the current proposal seeks a radical change to the status-quo that has not come about by community consultation on a range of options for any proposed change. Until the community is consulted on a range of options for improving the recreational outcomes for all park users of Monte Cecilia Park, including off-leash dog users, then the current proposal should be abandoned and a more inclusive and democratic process erected in its place.

I am a self-employed professional ecologist with B.Sc (Hons) and Ph.D degrees in Zoology. My doctoral studies were in the field of animal behavioural ecology, which addresses how animals meet their needs through behaviour and their interactions with other members of their species, members of other species and the wider environment. Accordingly, social behaviour is a large focus of behavioural ecology.

My reasons for opposing the proposal are set out below under subheadings.

Dogs in New Zealand

Dogs are an integral part of the human history of New Zealand. Dogs arrived in Aotearoa / New Zealand with the very first voyaging Polynesians when humans colonised our islands approximately 800 years ago in the 13th Century.

These first people's brought with them from their Pacific homes two mammals, kiore, the polynesian rat and kuri, the polynesian dog. Kuri is now extinct but survived until the 1860's.

Later European settlers brought with them dogs from the northern hemisphere and arguably New Zealand's national prosperity based on its agricultural economy has been built of the relationship

between farmers and their dogs and the ability of the dogs to be trained to answer commands to effectively and efficiently manage livestock. Today, New Zealand's agricultural heritage has led to the Huntaway being internationally recognised as a unique New Zealand breed and the Heading Dog is close to receiving the same recognition.

Today dogs are a deeply embedded and fundamental feature of New Zealand society and its history and they serve a very wide range of roles beyond their traditional farming role including (for example):

- police dogs
- seeing eye dogs
- therapy dogs
- conservation dogs
- search and rescue dogs
- customs and biosecurity dogs
- explosive detection dogs
- companion dogs.

For many people, their companion dogs are deeply loved family members who receive all the privileges of other family members including specific food, clothing and equipment and medical care both proactively and reactively, sometimes costing thousands of dollars.

I am aware there has been discussion that the non dog owning community, including people with cultural backgrounds in which dogs are viewed differently, need to be protected from dogs and I agree with this without hesitation. However, I also believe it is wrong that to achieve this that dog owners must have their options for their use of public space either narrowed or reduced.

Middle ground must be found where all sectors of the community can meet their recreational needs rather than one group being given priority at the expense of another group. People who are new to New Zealand need to understand the place that dogs have in New Zealand society and just as dog owners need to be educated on what is expected of them to own a dog in an urban environment so non-dog owners need to be educated about how they can safely interact with dogs and their owners, particularly when a dog is legitimately being exercised in a public off-lease area.

Dogs that are not being adequately supervised and controlled by a responsible adult in public places either on leash or off leash are highly problematic and I support Council's existing range of enforcement options to ensure compliance with rules and regulations.

My Situation

The board has heard presentations opposing the subject proposal that demonstrate the breadth and depth of opposition to the proposal from Monte Cecilia off-lease dog area users by way of a large community petition, a significant social science survey and personal submissions. Here I would like to provide the board with details of how the proposal, should it be implemented, will significantly affect the quality of life of one dog and its owner.

■■■■ is a six year old Labrador / Heading Dog cross. He was bred on a farming property on the East Cape and my wife and I adopted him as a four month old puppy when he was severely injured after being run over by a vehicle that dislocated his right shoulder. Faced with being euthanased we brought him to Auckland and spent the next eight weeks nursing him back to health. Because of his injury we anticipate that his damaged shoulder will cause medical problems later in life so his life is now arranged to prevent these complications for as long as possible. To do this it is imperative that we keep him under 33-34 kgs of body weight.

On weekdays I exercise ■■■■ twice a day. We walk on-lead for about 40 mins each morning and then he exercises off-leash after work at Monte Cecilia Park chasing a ball or frisbee for at least an hour. This vigorous exercise is crucial for maintaining his body weight at an acceptable level.

On weekends I exercise [REDACTED] once a day but for a longer period. Depending on tides [REDACTED] either swims at the Onehunga Lagoon or we walk off-lead at Big King Reserve, or both. Both of these last at least an hour.

Monte Cecilia Park is a fabulous off-leash exercise area as I can exercise [REDACTED] in excess of 50m away from me and still have clear site of him. It is an all weather park so [REDACTED] can exercise regardless of the weather at any time of year. Additionally, it is very convenient as it is close to my regular commuting route from work to home in the evenings.

Without access to this area maintaining [REDACTED]'s health would be very difficult with the result that he would likely gain weight and his quality of life would suffer. Many other dogs that use Monte Cecilia Park are in similar situations.

I am currently 64 and I usually work alone. Both [REDACTED] morning walk and evening off-leash run gives me an opportunity to meet and speak with other people socially. Having previously suffered severe clinical depression following the sudden death of a family member I am acutely aware of the need and benefits of maintaining daily social interactions. Having [REDACTED] as part of my life is great for my own physical fitness but is critical for my personal emotional and mental wellbeing.

The removal of the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area would have significant impacts on [REDACTED], as discussed above, but also on myself. While I may be able to find another area to use to exercise [REDACTED] albeit less intensively, I would be unlikely to find another social network of friendly, intelligent and engaging people as those I interact with at Monte Cecilia Park with the result that my physical activity and social interactions would both markedly reduce.

Dog Owning Community

There are several separate dog-owning communities that coalesce around Monte Cecilia Park. There is a morning dog exercise group, which [REDACTED] is part of when being looked after by his sitter when we are away from Auckland. The afternoon / evening dog-owning community that I engage with includes many people who work or live alone, including some people who don't own dogs but who come to the park to be with dogs.

This community is dominated by women, one of which brings over 10 litres of water to the park each day for the dogs to drink as Council has not seen fit to support dog owners use of the park with a dog drinking fountain at Monte Cecilia Park. I principally interact with other males and our conversations are wide ranging, including mens health issues. It is widely reported that men discussing health issues is rare in New Zealand, but highly valuable. Like me, many of these people work alone and place great value on their social interactions while exercising their dogs in the evening year round.

The destruction of the dog owning community that uses the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia Park will have significant impacts on people's quality of life and will include the loss of social interactions that go way beyond just the dogs. Accordingly, it is important that this proposal looks beyond the dogs and sees the Auckland City citizens and ratepayers behind the dogs.

This group should be able to expect that Council provides for them the recreational public space afforded to other sectors of the community including sports grounds, golf courses playgrounds, community halls and buildings and on-leash dog areas. After all, these people pay rates as do people who belong to sports clubs and other sectors of the community.

Other Areas

I am aware that it has been suggested that current Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area users could move to other off-leash dog areas should this proposal be enacted. This view does not take

account of the users at those other areas. Each off-leash dog area has a cohort of existing users. Closing the Monte Cecilia off-leash area will significantly increase the pressure on other areas and as dogs will be interacting who do not know each other it can be expected that dog aggression will increase in those other areas as a result.

To illustrate this point, [REDACTED] was attacked and severely bitten while he was exercising at Onehunga Lagoon in an unprovoked attack. This was a full depth bite wound on his chest that needed urgent veterinary intervention. Being a weekend this entailed the use of an after hours vet and a cost to my wife and I of approximately \$1,000.00 plus almost two weeks of wound care.

In my view Onehunga Lagoon is not a suitable substitute for Monte Cecilia Park as its large grass area does not have adequate adjacent parking that is safe for dogs plus the grass area is wholly unsuitable for exercising dogs on during winter. Having large groups of dogs on this area would very quickly turn it into a mud bath. Similarly Big King is also unsuitable as it does not have large open areas where large numbers of dogs can exercise together plus parking is very restricted.

Increasing Population

I am also aware there has been discussion about the increased population that will result from large housing redevelopment in the locale of Monte Cecilia Park. These redevelopments will produce houses that have very small outside areas compared with the 600 sq.m section that [REDACTED] lives on. Accordingly, with the high likelihood that many residents of these redevelopments will be dog owners then given the intensive housing well socialised and well behaved dogs will be critically important. If this cannot be achieved then it can be expected that Auckland Council will be forced to deal both with more adverse dog events and more serious events.

The need for dogs to have social interactions with humans is well illustrated by a dog that neighbours us. This dog has ample space but is left alone for sometimes in excess of 12 hrs per day. It is heart-breaking to hear him barking in the morning as his owners leave and to listen to him whimpering and crying in the evening as he waits for his owners to return. He receives exercise from a dog walker and is street walked on-lead by his owners but while his physical needs are probably met to a minimum level his social needs are woefully unmet. I question what outcomes could be expected should this dog be living in the small outdoor spaces associated with intensive housing redevelopments.

It is imperative that given these housing redevelopments that more off-leash dog exercise areas are provided – not less and dog owners are encouraged to use them by being shown the benefits for them and their dogs. This current proposal is going in exactly the wrong direction because if it seeks to protect the expected larger population of non-dog owners by restricting the off-leash public space available to dog owners then it will do so by growing the population of poorly socialised and under exercised dogs that will actually represent an increasing risk to the non-dog owning population.

Compliance

I am aware there has been much discussion about a lack of compliance with on-leash dog areas at Monte Cecilia Park. While more enforcement is an obvious option this represents a stick approach when often a carrot approach based on education can often be more effective. The Responsible Dog Owner's Licence is a great example of dog owner education and Council should be encouraged to do more education of dog owners.

While it can be argued whether dog ownership is a right or a privilege it nonetheless comes with responsibilities. With the Covid lockdown increase in dog ownership it is likely there is now a large cohort of dog owners who are now reluctant dog owners. Any dog owner who is acting outside the rules in public spaces should first be offered education to increase their knowledge of the rules and why they exist. Recalcitrant offenders need to be subject to enforcement action.

Enforcement first will create a resentful group of dog owners who will then be almost impossible to educate whereas education first can lead to dog owners making better informed choices. People who have unregistered dogs should be subject to significant immediate enforcement as this is simply not acceptable.

Similarly, non-dog owners need to understand that dog owners need space to exercise their dogs both on-leash and off-leash and that dog owners can expect to have space provided for them to do this. If non-dog owners do not want to interact with dogs then they should be encouraged to use public spaces where dog activity is tightly managed. It is simply not fair that non-dog owners should be able to expect to go anywhere at any time and expect to not have to interact with dogs.

As a dog owning resident and ratepayer I have a legitimate expectation that Council provide me with the exercise opportunities I need for my dog to ensure he remains well exercised and well socialised. This is the best safeguard that my dog will not cause a problem for a non dog owning resident. Closing the Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area will make it harder for me to meet my responsibilities as a licence paying Responsible Dog Owner.

Summary

- I am opposed to the proposal to close the off-leash dog area at Monte Cecilia Park.
- The current proposal has not come about by consultation with the different sectors of park users to develop a proposal that meets all users needs
- Dogs are an integral part of the fabric of New Zealand society and have been for hundreds of years
- Companion dogs are important to many people's lives and wellbeing
- My situation demonstrates the benefits of owning a companion dog both for my dog and for myself
- Being part of the dog owning community at Monte Cecilia Park has social and societal benefits that extend beyond dog ownership
- Dog owners should be able to expect that Council looks beyond the dogs and sees the people who are residents and ratepayers with legitimate expectations they be provided the recreational public space they need as afforded to other groups in the community
- Other off-leash dog areas are poor substitutes for Monte Cecilia Park.
- Closing the Monte Cecilia Park off-leash dog area will increase the pressure on these other areas with the result that dog aggression can be expected to increase
- Increasing population and housing density will reduce space for dogs in their homes making public exercise areas critical
- This increased population and housing density means more off-leash dog exercise areas will be needed from now into the future – not less
- Unless adequate dog exercise areas are provided, both on and off leash then dogs in these intensive housing developments can be expected to struggle to meet their exercise and social interaction requirements that will lead to adverse dog events in these areas
- Maintaining the Monte Cecilia off-leash dog area will be the best protection for the non-dog owning population as opposed to the closure of the large and important off-leash dog exercise area.
- Enforcement action can drive compliance with dog rules but education of both the dog and non dog owning populations is a better first step as this way everyone can meet their needs for public recreational space.

Final Point

There is sufficient room for all park users to meet their requirements for passive recreation at Monte Cecilia Park. To achieve this Council should accept that all groups have a legitimate expectation that they have safe and responsible use of the amenity and they should become more active in managing the integration of the different user groups.

Simply closing the off-leash dog area because of perceived risk to the public is an uninformed cop out that risks throwing out the baby with the bathwater that risks having significant unintended adverse consequences. It is clear that there is tension between different groups of park users and Council is the sole agency that is able to craft an integrated response that meets everyones needs.

Council needs to step up to this opportunity and not simply give favour to one group at the expense of another group in a process that is bordering on being undemocratic. As New Zealanders and Aucklanders, park users should be able to expect more from Council.

I oppose the proposal to close the Off-lease dog area at Monte Cecilia Park.

Yours sincerely

 Dr)



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6940

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

This park lies immediately adjacent to both Mount Roskill Intermediate and Primary Schools, and is in one of the most socio-economically deprived areas of Auckland (SES Index 10). Dogs in this area are more likely to be aggressive due to factors relating

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I support the proposed change

Tell us why

I have actively avoided visiting Montec Cecilia park with my children due to this being well known as a dog off-leash area. Having a section of this park that is safe to visit with children would be of benefit to the wider community.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Other (please explain below)

Tell us why

I support this park being off-leash, provided that low-income whanau in surrounding residential houses are provided with financial support for appropriate fencing if they do not have it, and that the council first gains permission from any families who li

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I support the proposed change

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I support the proposed change

Tell us why

Are there any dog access rules at other local parks and beaches in Auckland that you think council should change?

Your feedback on this section will inform any future review of dog access rules. A future review has not been scheduled at this time and no changes will be made on any location you identify in this section as part of this proposal.

Only provide feedback on one location at a time.

Space is provided for three locations. If you would like to provide feedback on more than three locations, please copy the following pages or include your comments in the other feedback section.

Location 1

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

Kiwi Esplanade

What local board area is this location in?

Māngere-Ōtāhuhu

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

Tell us why

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Entire location

What is the main reason you want to change the current dog access rule?

Please explain your issue in more detail:

Protection of children and other vulnerable people.

Please explain why you want to change the dog access rule at this location, and provide any additional information or evidence

The beach and grass reserve areas are extremely small, confluent with each other, and immediately adjacent to the playground. It is insensible to try and implement separate rules for on and off-leash for the beach and also prohibiting dogs from the playgr

Location 2

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

What local board area is this location in?

Māngere-Ōtāhuhu

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

Tell us why

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

What is the main reason you want to change the current dog access rule?

Please explain your issue in more detail:

Child protection and enjoyment of the recreational space.

Please explain why you want to change the dog access rule at this location, and provide any additional information or evidence

Location 3

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

Grey Lynn Park

What local board area is this location in?

Waitematā

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

Tell us why

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Section

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Section

What is the main reason you want to change the current dog access rule?

Please explain your issue in more detail:

Child-protection

Please explain why you want to change the dog access rule at this location, and provide any additional information or evidence

- This park requires either development of a fenced off-leash area, or making the whole park on-leash.
- Dogs should be prohibited from the paths adjacent to the skatepark. We have taken our children to Grey Lynn Park a lot over the years, as it has an amazi

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

- All beaches in the Auckland region should have the majority of the beach on-leash (or prohibited) during the non-summer months.
- Only small sections at the ‘far’ end of the beach (rather than the ‘whole beach’) should be off-leash in ‘not-summer’ months.
- The only time of the day that any larger sections of the beach should be off-leash is before 9am. The status quo for all of the hundreds of beaches in Auckland should be on-leash (or prohibited) all year round.

On-leash should be the status quo and standard, and off-leash sections of the beaches could be created from there, rather than the other way around which currently exists.

Auckland’s temperate climate means that families with young children like to use the beach all year round, as much as people who walk dogs. Children like to have picnics (or fish n chips on the beach) with their families, play on the beach - running ahead or playing games/tag with their families on the sand, or running in the waves at the edge of the water. Older children also have a need for independent mobility in public spaces. [1,2]

As parents ourselves, every time we try to go to a beach with our children during the nine months of the year with off-leash rules, we have to guard our children from dogs running up to them (or jumping on/chasing them). Some people also bring very large and aggressive looking dogs. We end up having to hold our children’s hands, stop them playing, and continually be on the lookout for dogs, to even be on the beach. The only places we can go, where we feel safe from dogs on a beach for the vast majority of the year are Tāwharanui or Pākiri Regional Parks. Times on most beaches where families with young children are basically excluded from using (or can only use with a significant risk to the children) are:

- Nine months of the year (1st March to 1st December)
- All summer evenings (some even after 2pm)
- All mornings before 10am

Expecting small children to ‘stand like a tree’ to protect themselves on a beach is completely inappropriate – instead, an evidence-based approach with adequate dog-access legislation should ensure the children are protected from dogs. [3,4]

I am unable to create a list of beaches and associated reserves where young families are unsafe from off-leash dogs, as there are too many. Beaches where we ourselves have experienced issues with off-leash dogs posing a danger to our own children due to inappropriate leash-legislation, are Ōmana beach, Māngere Bridge beach and Kiwi Esplanade walk, Sunkist Bay, Shelly Bay, Maraetai Beach, Bucklands Beach, Eastern Beach, Cornwallis beach, Wattle Bay, Waiake beach, Ambury-Waikaraka pathway, Campbells bay, Browns bay, Judges Bay, evenings at Cheltenham, St Heliers and Mission Bay, and also Takapuna beach (despite being on-leash the beach is so highly populated with people walking their dogs, it’s impossible to take children there).

Other reserves we have had issues with are: Onehunga Reserve and Beachlands Domain, Grey Lynn Park, Swanson Park, Māngere Domain. But there are too many for me to list here.

Description:

Dog bites and dog related claims registered with ACC between 1 July 2019 and 30 June 2022 including breakdowns for registration financial year, ethnicity, age group, Read code, injury diagnosis, injury site, contact type, external agency, accident (injury) location (TA), residential location (TA), Domicile (residential), dogbiteA, dogbiteB, dog related injury, flag for accident location = Auckland City (TA), Provider Board area, Provider Domicile, Provider mesh block. (TA) = territorial area. The data are presented in order of registration year (primary) and accident location (secondary).

Notes:

- In September 2018 ACC went live with 'Claims Front End Establishment (CFEE)'. This was done as part of an effort to streamline claims registration and cover decision processes and introduced an automatic process to find keywords in the accident description and group them into categories (where previously this was done by hand). These categories include external agency which is filtered for 'Live Dog' and used in conjunction with Contact as 'Kicked/Butted/Bitten by Animal' and a diagnosis type to identify dog bites. In some cases, including the external agency category, this change led to unforeseen increases or decreases which created a break in the data over the go-live date. A partial fix has been created to align the data before and after the CFEE go-live. This has become available since the last update of this data so there will be differences in the 2018 and 2019 data provided previously. A final solution has not yet been implemented so please note that there is potential for the volumes to experience a further shift once a fix is in place.

Caveats:

- All claims are accepted for cover.
- A claim can be registered at any date after the accident date.
- Dog bites are defined as follows:

Dog_BiteA - if readcode = "TE60." then **Dog_BiteA = 1**; else = 0

Dog_BiteB - if (extagency1 = "Live Dog" and Contact1 = "Kicked/Butted/Bitten by Animal") AND (free text within the accident description contains the following non-case sensitive words "bite", "bit", "bitten", "biten" (a common misspell)) AND (readcode does not equal "TE60.") AND (Dog_BiteA = 0), then **Dog_BiteB = 1**; else =0.

DRI (dog related injuries) are defined as follows and includes both Dog_Bite A & B:

*DRI - if (extagency1 = "Live Dog" OR Dog_BiteA = 1 OR Dog_BiteB = 1); then **DRI = 1**;*

- Years are given as financial years - 1 July to 30 June at time of the claim registration.
- Age is the age of the claimant (in years) at the time of the accident.
- Ethnicity is prioritised ethnicity
- Location data. The accident location TA is provided. The domicile of the residential location is provided. Where the accident location TA is 'Auckland City' then additional columns pertaining to the provider location are provided in addition to the clients residential information.
- Lifetime cost is a modelled value. The Lifetime costs do not include PHAS related costs.

Dog bite claims by accident TLA and financial year.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Auckland Region Total.	3,568	3,838	3,826	4,297	4,538

Territorial Authority	Claim registration financial year				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Ashburton District	66	61	67	68	83
Auckland City	2,705	2,939	3,006	3,387	3549
Buller District	35	20	27	29	28
Carterton District	28	19	13	13	18
Central Hawke's Bay District	36	32	36	50	48
Central Otago District	69	53	59	71	69
Chatham Islands Territory		3	1	4	<4
Christchurch City	911	942	925	985	1026
Clutha District	42	36	33	33	38
Dunedin City	228	225	224	232	234
Far North District	336	436	337	409	450
Franklin District	184	170	132	144	151
Gisborne District	199	220	194	174	215
Gore District	41	49	45	42	49
Grey District	33	43	38	31	37
Hamilton City	383	423	377	467	479
Hastings District	274	270	221	234	295
Hauraki District	48	47	53	43	51
Horowhenua District	80	99	84	90	101
Hurunui District	45	39	45	36	52
Invercargill City	92	96	91	119	95
Kaikoura District	12	14	15	16	18
Kaipara District	98	87	61	88	86
Kapiti Coast District	142	117	127	124	154
Kawerau District	36	34	25	29	29
Lower Hutt City	233	246	230	205	284
Mackenzie District	20	16	11	19	15
Manawatu District	60	78	57	74	60
Manukau City	223	214	213	252	272
Marlborough District	114	126	107	82	90
Masterton District	87	77	76	96	104
Matamata-Piako District	82	75	87	81	90
Napier City	194	207	188	209	218
Nelson City	122	111	120	124	152
New Plymouth District	237	220	214	214	232
North Shore City	84	107	97	116	138
Opotiki District	72	62	68	52	55
Otorohanga District	20	21	26	22	24
Overseas etc.	84	4	5	57	120
Palmerston North City	181	208	229	260	243
Papakura District	84	87	77	74	78
Porirua City	145	159	142	163	174
Queenstown-Lakes District	72	71	93	117	113

Rangitikei District	37	50	32	43	37
Rodney District	167	196	176	208	243
Rotorua District	280	247	266	297	
Ruapehu District	48	49	38	35	52
Selwyn District	50	59	66	57	84
South Taranaki District	64	66	81	90	90
South Waikato District	73	61	71	76	99
South Wairarapa District	40	33	23	25	50
Southland District	58	47	71	63	80
Stratford District	14	10	11	17	(S)
Tararua District	30	48	44	53	39
Tasman District	94	92	92	103	93
Taupo District	114	121	111	121	148
Tauranga City	361	419	382	409	399
Thames-Coromandel District	122	106	115	118	103
Timaru District	107	125	128	130	135
Upper Hutt City	82	87	81	94	104
Waikato District	219	236	337	278	289
Waimakariri District	107	104	96	116	101
Waimate District	8	12	17	16	18
Waipa District	112	91	89	99	88
Wairoa District	42	43	31	43	38
Waitakere City	121	125	125	116	107
Waitaki District	46	51	60	59	35
Waitomo District	35	32	43	33	33
Wanganui District	183	153	157	180	161
Wellington City	234	286	293	312	302
Western Bay of Plenty District	72	89	68	87	118
Westland District	18	17	21	34	19
Whakatane District	122	138	120	140	158
Whangarei District	279	330	322	305	342
Total	11,576	12,086	11,843	12,892	13,682

All dog related injury (DRI) claims by accident TLA and financial year.

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Auckland Region Total.	6,677	7,575	7,469	8,374	8,761

Territorial Authority	Claim registration financial year				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Ashburton District	136	131	149	149	172
Auckland City	4,839	5,481	5,463	6,091	6292
Buller District	53	53	52	63	63
Carterton District	48	37	38	42	47
Central Hawke's Bay District	86	86	92	110	111
Central Otago District	175	172	182	228	236
Chatham Islands Territory	4	6	4	6	4
Christchurch City	2,009	2,182	2,259	2,395	2480
Clutha District	75	85	80	86	87
Dunedin City	568	596	590	608	704
Far North District	549	687	592	653	732
Franklin District	347	340	306	318	325
Gisborne District	329	366	294	303	359
Gore District	81	83	80	72	93
Grey District	62	74	69	77	79
Hamilton City	743	812	732	914	915
Hastings District	542	569	519	552	633
Hauraki District	106	100	122	91	86
Horowhenua District	136	171	167	177	174
Hurunui District	75	77	82	84	104
Invercargill City	216	238	230	280	250
Kaikoura District	26	36	30	28	45
Kaipara District	163	158	135	178	180
Kapiti Coast District	306	313	322	362	371
Kawerau District	50	55	52	59	57
Lower Hutt City	393	463	409	405	488
Mackenzie District	41	30	30	29	40
Manawatu District	135	155	146	177	157
Manukau City	356	343	355	424	465
Marlborough District	232	277	236	233	228
Masterton District	176	168	177	190	219
Matamata-Piako District	151	168	150	164	189
Napier City	415	486	446	504	496
Nelson City	273	335	352	378	432
New Plymouth District	484	455	444	476	536
North Shore City	334	423	414	491	553
Opotiki District	105	92	101	77	75
Otorohanga District	33	40	43	43	44
Overseas etc.	108	6	10	86	165
Palmerston North City	370	437	477	512	493
Papakura District	128	178	128	132	149
Porirua City	225	257	244	261	303
Queenstown-Lakes District	189	234	293	311	299

Rangitikei District	57	74	61	65	66
Rodney District	413	519	505	596	653
Rotorua District	457	438	425	479	
Ruapehu District	76	83	63	71	72
Selwyn District	159	185	205	202	255
South Taranaki District	100	105	124	136	131
South Waikato District	121	102	103	116	168
South Wairarapa District	72	80	56	63	111
Southland District	115	125	146	147	173
Stratford District	33	25	22	30	27
Tararua District	73	79	75	85	61
Tasman District	193	221	225	280	259
Taupo District	243	225	228	259	286
Tauranga City	850	1,031	935	1,022	1029
Thames-Coromandel District	255	249	242	281	257
Timaru District	223	287	263	309	297
Upper Hutt City	163	191	191	210	209
Waikato District	398	473	575	550	567
Waimakariri District	269	282	269	284	317
Waimate District	16	27	31	30	34
Waipa District	231	222	213	224	232
Wairoa District	53	57	47	63	49
Waitakere City	260	291	298	322	324
Waitaki District	106	108	124	129	105
Waitomo District	61	50	58	48	49
Wanganui District	298	299	305	343	286
Wellington City	584	734	700	768	734
Western Bay of Plenty District	157	177	170	204	248
Westland District	33	37	47	64	48
Whakatane District	217	273	238	234	278
Whangarei District	534	665	626	616	714
Total	22,692	25,169	24,666	27,049	28,445

Dog bite claims by age group and financial year						% change
Age group	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	
00-09 years	1,588	1,563	1,457	1,411	1,432	
10-14 years	655	707	709	815	841	0
15+ years	9,333	9,816	9,677	10,666	11,409	0
Total	11,576	12,086	11,843	12,892	13,682	0
						12,892
All dog related injury claims by age group and financial year						#DIV/0!
Age group	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	#VALUE!
00-09 years	2,028	1,967	1,865	1,815	1,810	- 0
10-14 years	932	993	970	1,075	1,103	0
15+ years	19,732	22,209	21,831	24,159	25,532	0
Total	22,692	25,169	24,666	27,049	28,445	0
						27049

Dog bite claims by Provider Auckland Board Area
(where accident location = Auckland City) and financial year.

Auckland Board Areas	Claim registration financial year				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Albert-Eden Local Board Area	110	99	86	152	151
Devonport-Takapuna Local Board	312	372	376	341	333
Franklin Local Board Area	29	32	50	80	77
Great Barrier Local Board Area	6	1	9	9	4
Henderson-Massey Local Board A	177	221	192	213	234
Hibiscus and Bays Local Board Ar	59	50	55	63	62
Howick Local Board Area	251	287	263	315	278
Kaipatiki Local Board Area	76	76	65	72	75
Mangere-Otahuhu Local Board A	315	341	308	384	422
Manurewa Local Board Area	78	76	105	102	124
Maungakiekie-Tamaki Local Boar	192	196	174	249	272
Orakei Local Board Area	152	172	235	230	238
Otara-Papatoetoe Local Board Ar	196	212	271	306	329
Papakura Local Board Area	105	114	147	167	184
Puketapapa Local Board Area	79	97	112	124	114
Rodney Local Board Area	92	124	113	129	127
Upper Harbour Local Board Area	56	40	52	56	52
Waiheke Local Board Area	34	35	37	29	31
Waikato District	3	3	2	-	
Waitakere Ranges Local Board Ar	11	17	8	12	7
Waitemata Local Board Area	164	191	165	183	223
Whau Local Board Area	161	122	137	113	140
(blank)	47	61	44	58	72
Total	2,705	2,939	3,006	3,387	3,549

All dog related injury (DRI) claims by Auckland Board Area and financial year.

Auckland Board Areas	Claim registration financial year				
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Albert-Eden Local Board Area	274	239	251	372	384
Devonport-Takapuna Local Board	496	604	607	575	538
Franklin Local Board Area	90	99	112	154	161
Great Barrier Local Board Area	9	3	13	12	12
Henderson-Massey Local Board A	298	347	321	353	393
Hibiscus and Bays Local Board Ar	128	129	137	167	159
Howick Local Board Area	468	546	482	562	515
Kaipatiki Local Board Area	154	213	160	205	184
Mangere-Otahuhu Local Board Ar	379	402	382	445	512
Manurewa Local Board Area	121	113	148	155	168
Maungakiekie-Tamaki Local Boar	318	380	365	412	444
Orakei Local Board Area	359	419	495	492	482
Otara-Papatoetoe Local Board Ar	263	298	361	390	415
Papakura Local Board Area	171	188	235	263	272
Puketapapa Local Board Area	128	167	172	207	190
Rodney Local Board Area	188	248	220	244	236
Upper Harbour Local Board Area	129	134	145	154	152
Waiheke Local Board Area	71	78	70	65	81
Waikato District	3	6	5	-	
Waitakere Ranges Local Board Ar	35	51	34	53	56
Waitemata Local Board Area	402	449	423	434	534
Whau Local Board Area	244	243	243	266	273
unmatched meshblock	111	125	82	111	131
Total	4,839	5,481	5,463	6,091	6,292

Dog bite claims by age group and financial year										
Age group	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
00-09 yea	1495	1518	1662	1491	1535	1,588	1,563	1,457	1,411	1432
10-14 yea	590	667	646	667	530	655	707	709	815	841
15+ years	8074	8373	8539	9349	9618	9,333	9,816	9,677	10,666	11409
Total	10159	10558	10847	11507	11683	11,576	12,086	11,843	12,892	13682
All dog related injury claims by age group and financial year										
Age group	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
00-09 yea	1976	1960	2001	2000	1958	2,028	1,967	1,865	1,815	1810
10-14 yea	766	863	892	978	952	932	993	970	1,075	1103
15+ years	17190	17763	19144	19963	19918	19,732	22,209	21,831	24,159	25532
Total	19932	20586	22037	22941	22828	22,692	25,169	24,666	27,049	28445

Dog bite claims by accident TLA and financial year.

	Claim registration financial year					
	Territorial Au	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Correct Statistics	NZ	11,576	12,086	11,843	12,892	13,682
DIA Website	NZ	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

All dog related injury (DRI) claims by accident TLA and financial year.

	Claim registration financial year				
Territorial A	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
NZ	22,692	25,169	24,666	27,049	28,445
NZ	13,178	12,677	13,303	12,918	13,935



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Caregiver perspectives on the value of dogs and their effects on children in private and public spaces

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ABSTRACT

We explored the views of caregivers regarding the value of dogs and the effects of caregiver views on children in private and public spaces in New Zealand.

This was an observational study utilizing a national anonymized online survey and focus groups in Auckland and Kaitiaki to explore caregiver perceptions of the value of dogs within whānau (families) or the community, experiences of dog-related harm in the context of children, and the perceived importance of education as a prevention strategy. Quantitative and qualitative data were sought, using a general inductive approach.

256 caregivers responded to the online survey, and 12 caregivers participated in focus groups. Dogs were highly valued by Māori and non-Māori, predominantly as part of family. 233 dog-related incidents were described, occurring in both public and private settings, with both bite and non-bite harm from being charged at, knocked over, jumped on or attacked, as often significantly intimidating or traumatic experiences for children and their caregivers. Key themes were the emotional effect of an attack, the perception that children could avoid harm through education, blame placed on children, minimization of the trauma a dog can cause, and owner underestimation of risk.

This study revealed a broader picture of how children are physically and emotionally affected by dogs in both private and public spaces, indicating the need for proactive approaches in both. Dogs may become activated to attack due to their nature and unpredictable tendencies in response to children's natural movements, and future strategies may need to include a focus on owner-perception of risk to children in addition to creating child-safe environments and addressing systemic issues, rather than relying on child or dog behavior to prevent harm. The finding of high value people have for dogs is important to understand as this may be a barrier to implementation of evidence-based strategies.

Introduction

While dogs are valued within many societies, dog bite and other dog-related injuries remain a cause of serious child injury internationally, with the risk of sustaining bites to the head or neck region well described, including those causing fatal injuries (Lackmann et al., 1992; Schalamon, 2006; Tsokos et al., 2007; Raghavan, 2008; Hersant et al., 2012; Chen et al., 2013; Eppley and Schleich, 2013; Mannion et al., 2015; Sarcey et al., 2017; Vučinić and Vučičević, 2019; Caffrey et al.,

2019; Abraham and Czerwinski, 2019; Barrios et al., 2019; Sarenbo and Svensson, 2021; Tulloch et al., 2021). Physical dog-related injuries can include bite or non-bite injuries such as fractures or head trauma from being knocked over by a dog (Juang et al., 2011; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022c). Emotional harm due to a dog-attack is also possible, even when no injury has occurred (Peters et al., 2004; Ji et al., 2010). New Zealand (NZ) and Australian studies over the last 30 years demonstrate increasing rates of dog-related injuries in children (Langley, 1992; Marsh et al., 2004; Rajshekar et al., 2017; Mair et al.,

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2019; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022c). Young children are vulnerable, likely due to their small size, developing cognitive awareness and erratic movements, coupled with an inability to either defend themselves or modify their environment.

Inequities are also evident with higher rates of injury in areas of greater deprivation and among Indigenous populations (Bjork et al., 2013; West and Rouen, 2019; Daigle et al., 2022; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022c). Hobbs et al. (2019) describe how this inequity exists on a background of historical trauma and through the process of colonization that elicits the current state of power imbalance. To address this imbalance, health prevention and social strategies must prioritize Indigenous self-determination as paramount (New Zealand Ministry of Health, 2020; Hunt et al., 2021).

Major advances have been made in multiple areas of child injury prevention, particularly when implementing legislated environmental modifications of the injury-prevention framework of 'Engineering, Enforcement and Education' (Pless, 2005). Examples are the introduction of bicycle helmets, seatbelts, traffic calming measures, pool fencing, child-resistant caps and playground safety standards (Jullien, 2021). However, the prevention of paediatric dog-related injuries has largely focussed on child-directed education on how to behave around dogs or identify early signs of dog-aggression to prevent escalation of the dogs behavior, with uncertain effectiveness (Duperrex et al., 2009; Shen et al., 2017; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022b). The circumstances surrounding incidents of harm to children by dogs are not well described internationally (Patterson et al., 2022), or in the NZ context, with no rigorous systematic reviews available, and studies frequently reflecting bias in the formation of study questions (for example, asking about whether an injury was provoked). While an in-depth study exists for adult victims in NZ (Wake et al., 2009) it is unknown how harm occurs to children in either private or public spaces. Researchers internationally have also called for qualitative research that will assist in understanding underlying attitudes or beliefs contributing to harm to children by dogs, to ensure a considered approach when shaping public health strategies (Mouton and Rock, 2022).

This study sought to explore the views of Maori and non-Maori caregivers of young children regarding the value of dogs and their impact on children within public and private spaces in NZ to help inform the development of dog-related harm prevention strategies.

Materials and methods

This observational study utilised data from a nationally available, online survey (OS). In addition, focus groups (FG) and individual interviews were conducted to explore views in more depth. FGs were run in Auckland (NZ's largest city, population 1.6 million; 2018 Census (Stats NZ)), and Kaikohe a small Northland town (population 4305, predominantly Maori (Stats NZ)). These areas were felt to be representative of other cities or small rural communities in NZ.

Adult caregivers (16 years or older) of children under the age of 10 years were eligible to take part in the study. Study design was informed by Kaupapa Maori methodology, and guided by the Te Ara Tika framework for Maori responsiveness in research (Hudson et al., 2010). Maori leaders from a range of disciplines including research experts, child injury prevention specialists, and emergency physicians were consulted at all stages of study development.

Domains of interest included the significance of dogs within the whanau (family) or community; reasons for dog-ownership; the importance of children being around dogs; the extent to which caregivers feel their children are safe around dogs; the extent to which caregivers perceive that children are harmed or intimidated by dogs in public or private spaces; descriptions of dog-related incidents; and the perceived importance of education in prevention of these. Question items were developed after consultation with animal, child and Maori health experts in multiple fields, and considered previous research in the field (Westgarth and Watkins, 2015; Oxley et al., 2017; Saleem et al., 2020;

Brookes et al., 2020). Open-ended questions were designed to aid caregivers to consider if/how dogs were valued and to prompt descriptions of any potential incidents where harm to children may have occurred. Specific factors relating to incidents, including dog size, breed, perceived aggression-type, the use of environmental barriers (fencing, leash-use, muzzles, separate dog-spaces), or severity of incidents were not investigated. The broad term 'incidents of harm to children' was chosen to encompass any perceptions caregivers had of harm to their children by dogs, which could be bite or non-bite injuries or emotional harm, and could occur during a range of dog-related activities incorporating aggression, play, or predatory behavior. This term could also incorporate 'near-miss' incidents, for example if a dog-attack occurred but did not result in physical injury, which could provide valuable information for the development of prevention strategies.

Online survey

A nationally available, anonymised OS was developed in Survey Monkey (Momentive Incorporated) to explore caregiver perspectives of dogs within the above domains of interest using similar question items. The survey included 13 closed and seven open-ended questions (see supplementary data). The survey was available for five weeks during September to October 2021, distributed through existing community networks: Plunket NZ (a national well-child service supporting the health and wellbeing of children under-five and their families); Playcentre Aotearoa (an organization which operates parent-led early childhood education centres throughout NZ); and Safekids Aotearoa (NZ's national child injury prevention service) via their Facebook organization page: with the survey shown to Safekids Facebook followers and members, and further distributed through a paid service to 'friends' of those people. Participants were given an opportunity to read an attached participant information sheet, which included information on data privacy and anonymity, and an explanation that participation in the survey implied consent. As predominantly qualitative data was sought, the intended sample size was 150 responses. When the survey closed after five weeks there were 256 responses. As an acknowledgement of participation, survey respondents could enter the draw for a \$200 shopping voucher. Names and contact details for the prize-draw were not visible to researchers.

Focus-groups

FG participants were recruited from networks of child health providers and community groups within the Auckland and Kaikohe regions, with consideration to include a range of ethnicities, gender, and dog-ownership. We aimed to conduct four FGs, each with six participants. There were no specific criteria to participate, other than being a caregiver. It was not possible to know if FG participants had also completed the on-line survey, as this was anonymous. Participants gave their written and verbal informed consent, after being emailed a participant information sheet, including information on data privacy. Sessions were informal, semi-structured, lasted approximately an hour, and were recorded. A series of 21 open-ended questions within the same domains of interest as the OS were used as prompts to facilitate the sharing of experiences and conversation (see supplementary data). Discussion could also be participant-led, and an initial open-question was used to facilitate the sharing of experiences or views that were important to participants. Groups were co-facilitated with Safekids Aotearoa Maori and Pacific staff members and lead researcher Natasha Duncan-Sutherland (NDS), and conducted in a manner informed by He aha whiria, the braided rivers approach, (Macfarlane and Macfarlane, 2019) in English, with some use of Te Reo Maori (Maori language). Participants were given a koha (gift of appreciation) as acknowledgement of their participation. Audio-recordings were transcribed by a confidential professional transcription service. Names of people or animals were anonymised with the use of unique codes.

Data analysis

The write-up of this study was guided by the STROBE guidelines for reporting observational studies (Von Elm et al., 2007). Collected demographic information included age-group, ethnicity, gender, and area of residence. Survey responses were viewed by all authors. Qualitative responses from both the survey and FG were collated in Microsoft Excel and analysed by an author (NDS) using a general inductive approach, identifying emerging themes by reading through the responses multiple times (Thomas, 2006). Using this approach and having broad objectives allowed for new findings arising directly from analysis of the data not from a priori expectations, and reduced the risk of obtaining pre-determined answers through leading questions. This is particularly important for this topic, where researchers may have a number of biases, particularly if they have an interest in dogs or little experience with child-injury prevention. To support these qualitative findings, quantitative data was provided from the OS in the form of percentages, as descriptive indicators rather than to imply exact statistical representations. Data storage and privacy was in-line with standard organisational and national policies.

Results

Study participants

Two hundred and fifty-six people completed the survey. Respondents were located across the country and were predominantly female (97%; n=247/256). Over half (56%; n=143/256) were 31–40 years of age, with 23% (n=58/256) aged 21–30 years and 16% (n=42/256) 40–50 years. Eighteen percent (n=45/256) identified as NZ Maori who make up 16% of the NZ population (Stats NZ).

Twelve caregivers participated in one of either three FGs and two interviews. Covid impacted recruitment occurring during the region's pandemic restrictions, resulting in these being held via Zoom video calls. Participants included nine females and three males aged between 30 and 50 years. One third identified as NZ Maori. Four had never owned a dog or had a dog as a child, and three were current dog owners.

Value of dogs

More than two thirds (68%; n=175/256) of survey participants were dog-owners (Table 1), with the majority (70%; n=122/175) giving their main reason for ownership as 'part of whanau' (family), or companionship (19%; n=34/175). A minority (10%; n=18/175) stated other reasons including hunting, farming, protection, service, competitions, or to rehome. For some Maori participants hunting dogs were seen as a valuable asset in acquiring food for the family, with associated pride in this.

There were shared perceptions between Maori and non-Maori within both FGs and survey, of the value of dogs, reasons for and rates of ownership (Maori ownership 29%; n=14/48, non-Maori ownership 32%; n=71/219). There were no substantial differences in the responses to the online survey question "How important do you think it is for

children to be around dogs?" between Maori and non-Maori (38% cf. 40%, Table 1). However, dog owners were much more likely to think it was very important for children to be around dogs (51% cf. 15%, Table 1). Maori and non-Maori also shared values around the positive experiences dogs could provide for children, including educational experiences teaching empathy or responsibility, or as a source of emotional support.

Impact of dogs

Across the survey and FGs there were a total of 233 incidents of harm to children by dogs described. Key themes that emerged in relation to these incidents included the emotional impact of an attack, dogs as intimidating to children due to their size and unpredictability, the perception that children could avoid harm through education, victimization and blame placed on children, minimization of the trauma a dog can cause, and owner underestimation of risk.

Maori and non-Maori shared strong views regarding the value and protection of children, with similar experiences of harm to children by dogs in both private and public spaces. Many incidents described were clearly both serious and distressing for both children and caregivers, as evident from the quotes below. However, some descriptions provided in the survey were not detailed enough to make an accurate assessment of the severity of harm caused.

Dog attacks provoked strong emotions, with feelings that their life (or their child's life) was in danger being worse than the physical injury:

"We were just on a walk. I had L (child) in the pram and L will still tell you to this day, there was a massive dog that came running at us. And then my husband had to come and save us, because I threw L in the car....but it was just a scary experience in itself"

(FG - female, Maori, dog owner, Auckland)

"My daughter was about 18 months old when a red setter knocked her flat in the park, stood on her chest and licked her face. My son was a little over 2 years old when a Labrador did exactly the same to him. For both children it was as frightening as being charged by a horse"

(OS - female, non-Maori, non-dog owner, Auckland)

Caregivers described that dogs could be very intimidating to children through boisterousness, play or simply approaching a child.

"My children get really scared from them just coming right up into their face, they (owners) assume that 'oh it's okay, the dog's just smelling you out, they're just being friendly' but that's not how children see it"

(FG - female, non-Maori, non-dog owner, Auckland)

Following an incident involving a dog participants acquired an awareness of the unpredictability and danger of dogs, with subsequent increased protectiveness of their children. Those who had not had those experiences were less protective, allowing their children to play more

Table 1

Responses to the online survey question "How important do you think it is for children to be around dogs?" (n = 256).

Response	Total (n=256)	Maori (17.6%; n=45/256)	Non-Maori (82.4%; n=211/256)	Owners (68.4%; n=175/256)	Non-Owners(31.6%; n=81/256)
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
Very important	35.9 (92/256)	37.8 (17/45)	40.3 (85/211)	51.4 (90/175)	14.8 (12/81)
Somewhat important		40.0 (18/45)	44.5 (94/211)	41.7 (73/175)	48.1 (39/81)
Not very important		22.2 (10/45)	13.7 (29/211)	6.3 (11/175)	34.6 (28/81)
It is better for children not to have contact with dogs		0	1.4 (3/211)	0.6 (1/175)	2.5 (2/81)

with dogs, have dogs jump on the children, or sleep a dog in the same room as an infant.

Public spaces

Survey participants described feeling less safe from dogs in public spaces compared to private (38%; n=96/256) cf 9%; n=23/256 “always safe from dogs”, Table 2), with 100 situations described where a child or caregiver felt/was unsafe from dogs in public spaces.

Eight people described feeling a sense of unease, either due to roaming or off-leash dogs in parks, beaches or local neighborhood either approaching or near the children. “Often we drive to go for a walk in a better neighborhood instead.” Six people described their children felt scared by dogs growling aggressively at them, either by roaming or off-leash dogs, or when out for a walk with children and passing properties with dogs. Six people described their children being intimidated by dogs approaching them boisterously on the beach, parks or playground, one of which was when a dog pushed its head into a child’s pram.

Fourteen people described their children being charged at by a dog, usually by unleashed or roaming/escaped dogs, including a child on a bike, an incident where a dog tried to mount a child, a dog who tried to attack a one-year-old on their driveway, and a caregiver who was holding the hand of their child walking to the playground and having a loose dog jump out from behind a bush.

Twenty-two people described their children being knocked over by a dog, including two children who were on bikes, and one who was eating fish and chips on the beach with a dog trying to get to the food. Fifteen people described their children being jumped on, often scratching them, and including one description of a dog jumping up and trying to bite a child. Other incidents described were a dog scaring a four-year old by going down a slide at the same time as her, having a dog urinate on a sandcastle, eat out of children’s lunchboxes, or jump onto their lap while sitting down.

Four people described their children being put in danger due to incidents of dog-dog aggression, and one further person who described an incident of her children witnessing dog-dog aggression as “devastating and scary” for them.

There were 13 dog bite incidents described. Three of these occurred on the face and two on the hands (one of which was because a child put their fingers through the fence). Three incidents were by a dog tied up outside a shop, and one was by a dog who leapt out of a car when the door was opened and attacked a child. One person described their own dog biting another child, saying this occurred because the child was teasing it.

Six other dog attacks were described. One was an adult who was attacked while swimming, one was a caregiver and her daughter being surrounded by five dogs acting as a pack in a predatory manner which traumatized her child, and one was an attack on a child in a pram by a dog that jumped on the child and scratched/mouthed her. There was a further description of an attack at a beach where a child was knocked over, and another was an attack by two roaming dogs who entered a

school attacking the children, and biting ten.

Seven of these incidents involved babies in prams or a front pack, and three occurred with children on bikes. Many were ‘near misses’, where physical injury did not eventuate.

“Large dog ran at my when I had a toddler and carrying baby in front pack. Dog knocked me and baby over and I had to protect toddler. Another time a dog came and started eating my kids lunch out of their lunchbox. We’ve had dogs wee on the sandcastle our kids are building. I’ve been yelled at by a dog owner for pushing her out of control dog off my lap. All of this has happened in a section of the beach that’s supposed to have dogs on a lead”

(OS - female, non-Maori, non-dog owner, Tauranga)

Where described, the location of incidents in public spaces were diverse (Table 3). Public incidents predominantly arose from dogs escaping neighbouring properties or being walked off-leash, including within areas supposed to be on-leash, and effects on caregiver and children’s use of public resources. Incidents occurred across the country, with beaches, local streets and playgrounds of particular concern.

“Where our local skate park is, it’s actually on like, on a walking path. Quite often the dogs will run over to us, and you know, they (children) are zooming around on their bikes and their skateboards when there’s dogs running around chasing them”

(FG – female, non-Maori, non-dog owner, Auckland)

“Dog running all over playground and went down slide at same time as four-year-old, scaring her terribly. Owner just said the dog loves the playground. We will leave areas if there are unleashed dogs as our kids are scared and won’t play”

(OS - female, non-Maori, non-dog owner, New Plymouth)

Within areas of greater socioeconomic deprivation, stray dogs, or dogs escaping from neighbouring properties were of significant concern. Participants in these areas described being unable to walk with their children and/or dogs in their local area or needing to walk with a stick to fend off stray dogs.

“There’s a lot of stray dogs. I used to walk to the shops before, but ah, I just take the car now. But even if I have to walk I take an umbrella or even a stick with me because it’s just that bad”

(FG – male, non-Maori, non-dog owner, Auckland)

Caregivers described needing to go to great lengths to keep their children safe in public spaces particularly, teaching them caution in approaching unfamiliar dogs, and keeping their children close when

Table 2

Responses to the online survey question “How safe do you feel you and your child/children are around dogs in public/private spaces” (n = 256).

	Always safe	Safe most of the time	Unsafe most of the time	Always unsafe
	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
In Public Spaces	9% (n=23/256)	76% (n=195/256)	14% (n=36/256)	<1% (n=2/256)
In Private Spaces	38% (n=96/256)	59% (n=149/256)	4% (n=10/256)	<1% (n=1/256)

Table 3

Location of incidents involving dogs in public spaces.

Local Streets	Beaches	Parks	Dog-parks	Shops	Playgrounds
% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
30% (n=21/70)	27% (n=19/70)	17% (n=12/70)	11% (n=8/70)	9% (n=6/70)	6% (n=4/70)

seeing an off-leash dog. Many expressed anger at owners who showed no or little concern for their child's safety even when injured, ignored on-leash requirements, or minimized the issue. It was clear that many owners felt their own dog was safe, with little awareness that children may be intimidated or unsafe around the dog.

“Child approached by off-leash dog in parks, beaches, playgrounds. I tend to only go to on-leash public spaces & this still happens. Owners often say “oh the dog is fiiiine” and not make any effort to intervene”

(OS - female, non-Maori, non-dog owner, Auckland)

“I don't appreciate when owners say “it's okay, he won't bite” etc. It invalidates the feelings of the child or the adult that is uncomfortable with the behavior of the dog. Our 1 yr cannot protect himself from dog jumping up & pushing him over. Owners need to not invalidate the feelings of others just because they believe their dog would never hurt anyone”

(OS - female, Maori, non-dog owner, Rotorua)

Private spaces

Nearly half (48%; n=133/268) of survey and FG participants described situations where they felt their child was not safe within private spaces. Of these, 26% (n=35/133) involved a child being attacked, bitten or scratched; 23% (n=30/133) were knocked over, jumped on or chased; 26% (n=35/133) involved being barked at or aggressive behavior directed toward them, including infants; 17% (n=22/133) described other situations where either they or their child felt fear/apprehension around dogs; 6% (n=8/133) had aggressive dogs coming onto their property (roaming); and one person described being scratched and nearly knocked over while holding a baby.

“Family member had left dog at a shared family home. Dog has attacked children before but family has chosen to keep dog. Dog went for children and an adult. Knocked all three over trying to bite them”

(OS - female, non-Maori, non-dog owner, Canterbury)

“Neighbours have 5 aggressive dogs. My son went over there one day and the largest broke it's chain and lunged at him. Only quick thinking by the son of the household stopped him being hurt”

(OS - female, Maori, dog-owner, Far North)

In the 74% (n=98/133) of incidents where the relationship to the dog was described, 83% (n=81/98) belonged to a friend, neighbour, or extended family, and 17% (n=17/98) were the families own dog. Most caregivers demonstrated awareness of safety when owning dogs, for example implementing safety barriers at home to create safe spaces for children or putting the dog away when unable to supervise. In the 74% (90/121) where dog-ownership and visiting status were clear, the vast majority of people (74%, n=67/90) were visiting a friend/relative who owned a dog, ten were dogs who had intruded their property after escaping from a neighboring property (including one description of a Staffordshire Bull Terrier chasing children who were playing in their own yard), one was an aggressive dog at the gate of a whare (home), eight incidents occurred within their own home, and four when the dog-owner was visiting the victim.

There were frequent descriptions of feeling pressured into placing children in unsafe situations with dogs when visiting friends and family in particular, with a perceived lack of concern by the owners making it difficult to advocate for their child's safety.

Cause attribution

Caregivers described how dogs (as often large animals in comparison to a child) frequently invade children's space, and compromised their real or perceived sense of safety, in both public and private spaces. There were very few mentions where issues were caused by children approaching and interacting with dogs. Causal attribution as a theme was described as creating significant conflict between people, at times resulting in loss of relationship or visiting friends/family. Caregivers in this study frequently described frustration and anger that despite their attempts to keep their child safe, in both public and private spaces some owners did not appear to perceive the potential risk or show remorse when incidents occurred, and children were often blamed for incidents occurring. Respondents specifically highlighted that incidents were unprovoked by children, and described feeling angry that their children were being blamed by others, often the owner of the dog. Their perception was that this was because the owner had a high value for their dog, and was not putting the children's needs above those of the dog. There were also references to a reluctance to acknowledge dog aggression, instead attributing the cause to 'bad owners' who did not provide adequate dog care or training.

“My daughter actually got bitten by his dog, my brother's dog. My daughter was traumatized. After that me and my wife spoke about it and we saw that my brother and his wife kind of blamed it on the kids”

(FG - male, Maori, non-dog owner, Auckland)

This triad of cause attribution, directed toward either victims (often children), owners, or the dog, with less awareness of the impacts of policy, resourcing or the socio-political environment in which injuries occur is illustrated in [Figure 1](#).

Education

A high proportion of survey respondents felt that education of children (84%; n=216/256), dog-owners (93%; n=238/256) and caregivers (76%; n=194/256) was 'very important'. Differing views on this became more apparent in the FGs, with conversations relating to issues of 'who is responsible' or 'who is to blame'.

Child directed education programs with messages about how to behave around dogs, including how to stand still when a dog approaches or attacks, were perceived as helpful. Challenges were described, particularly with younger children who are unlikely to follow these instructions in practice. Paradoxically, views on the importance of child education at times followed descriptions of attacks that occurred without warning. Others felt education would be better directed to owners, but pointed out that many do not pay attention to current safety messages, and that enforcement would be required, with current requirements for being 'in-control' of a dog without a lead not providing adequate protection of children. There was a suggestion for discreet public reporting of issues, which could be difficult within small communities. There was also an understanding by some participants of issues such as cost, time and access to resources as a barrier to safety from dogs, including lack of adequate property fencing or gates.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to explore the value of dogs and their impact on children in private and public spaces. Study findings highlight the substantial dog-related physical and emotional harm children experience throughout NZ in both public and private spaces, indicating the need for proactive approaches in both.

Participants highlighted the unpredictability of dog behavior, including aggressive barking or knocking children over as part of an

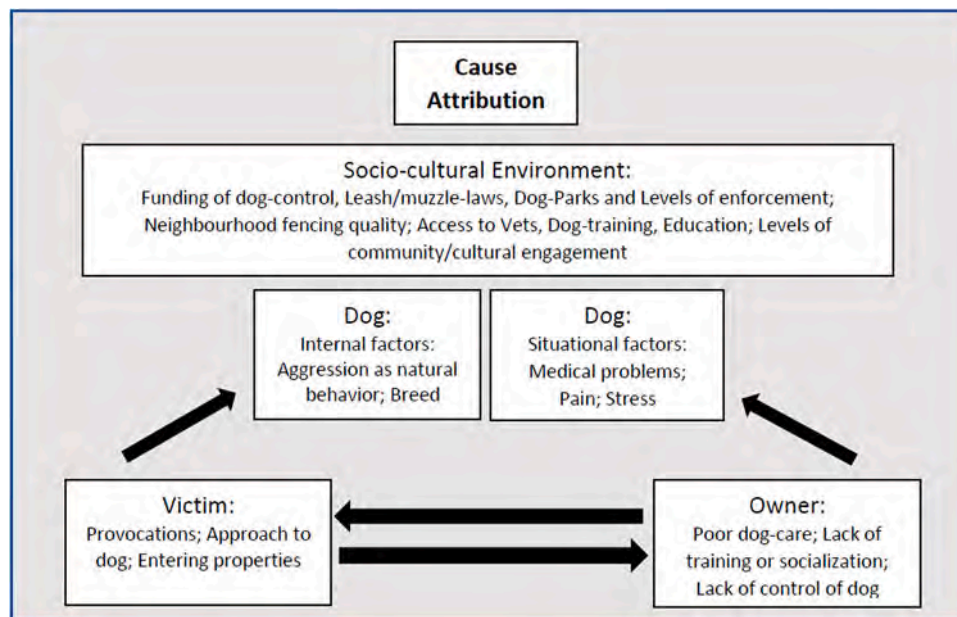


Figure 1. Cause attribution.

overtly threatening event or play, as frightening experiences for children. This differs to previous studies which focus on bite or non-bite injuries (Juang et al., 2011; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022c), and is unsurprising considering the size and strength of many dogs relative to children, and the considerable distances dogs rapidly cover, potentially causing harm or intimidation before a caregiver can intervene. The emotionally traumatic event of dog aggression has been described in previous studies (Peters et al., 2004; Ji et al., 2010), and may distinguish dog-related injuries from many other kinds of unintentional injuries.

Context and education

The findings of this study suggest that many dog-related injuries are frequently not preceded by an interaction with or approach to a dog, as caregivers clearly described how dogs frequently invaded children's space, and compromised their real or perceived sense of safety, in both public and private spaces. This is consistent with studies showing that dogs may be activated into attacking children in a variety of situations, including when guarding properties or food; predatory behaviour as part of a group of dogs; when children are walking to or from school; or after minor interactions such as walking, running or cycling past a dog, or patting a dog (Borchelt et al., 1974; Reisner et al., 2007, 2011; Shen et al., 2014; Notari et al., 2020; Gobbo and Zupan Šemrov, 2022).

Given it is now recognized dogs may attack children simply due to normal child movements or minor interactions, the question is which strategy will be most effective. Should we aim to teach children to change their behavior; increase training or socialization for dogs; or ensure that children are separated from dogs when unable to very closely supervised? Child-directed education programmes aim to change child behavior around dogs, including promotion of standing still around dogs, or ways to approach a dog. Several such educational programs are available in NZ, including information available in both English and Te Reo Maori (Carter et al., 2008; Carter and Swain, 2008). While it has been shown that these programs can improve short-term knowledge retention about how to behave around dogs, it is unclear if they change behavior or prevent injuries in the long term (Shen et al., 2017; Duperrex et al., 2009; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022b). It may be an unrealistic expectation that children consistently modify their natural behavior, particularly given the number of varying hazards that exist in both private and public spaces. Two systematic reviews also found a lack

of good quality evidence on whether dog training or early socialization reduce injuries, and this is an area for future research (Newman, 2012; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022b). Maintaining a child-centric view, educational strategies to decrease injury rates in children may require re-direction toward improved dog-owner recognition of the risk, promoting collective responsibility for child-safety, and creating safe spaces for children to be in, with separation of dogs and children unless they can be closely supervised (within arms-reach), rather than primarily relying on changes to child behavior. It is also important to note that parent-directed education may not be effective in the indigenous environment, where child-care responsibilities are often shared with the wider family.

Cause attribution

Anger from caregivers due to the perception that owners did not see the risk a dog posed to children, and that children were frequently blamed with little remorse from the owner when incidents occurred was a significant theme of this study. Other studies have likewise found that safety issues may not be recognized by some dog owners, thus they may not acknowledge risks associated with normal canine behavior when the potential for aggressive behavior arises (Westgarth and Watkins, 2015; Arhant et al., 2016; Westgarth et al., 2019; Owczarczak-Garstecka et al., 2020; Saleem et al., 2020; Náhlík et al., 2022), and this needs consideration when shaping public health strategies.

The triad of cause attribution illustrated in Figure 1, suggests there is value in taking a root cause analysis approach to dog-related injuries to identify where systemic changes are needed to prevent these events in the future. For example, policy to mandate and enforce leash and muzzle use in public spaces to create safe environments where injuries are less likely to occur; or sterilization or breeding policies, with associated funding to keep the dog population under control. Some studies have also suggested greater responsibility may need to be taken by health professionals and veterinarians, who may know about issues but for various reasons not make a notification to animal management (Harisberger et al., 2012; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022a).

Socio-economic barriers to injury prevention

Some participants felt that prevention was unlikely to be effective through education alone, and that governance of regulations would be required. They described, however, that reporting of dog-related issues

was difficult when incidents occurred within a community of people who knew each other. The same issue has been identified in studies within communities including indigenous groups in NZ, Australia and Canada (Dhillon et al., 2016; Brookes et al., 2020; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022a). Economic barriers to implementing safety measures were also highlighted by participants, and as with other injuries, the reduced ability to modify housing due to living in rental or social housing may be a contributing factor (Smithson et al., 2011; Kendrick et al., 2013; Growing Up in New Zealand, 2014; Hayward et al., 2017). Likewise a deficiency of Indigenous-led strategies that resonate with these groups is potentially a reason behind the inequities (Hunt et al., 2021).

Public spaces

In public spaces, incidents of dog-related harm to children in this study arose primarily through off-leash dogs, or those escaping neighbouring properties/strays. These occurred across the country irrespective of socioeconomic area, including places children frequently use, such as beaches, parks, local streets, shops or playgrounds, impacting on their use of these valuable public resources, including walking to school. Consistent with these findings, an Australian study by Howell et al. (2016) found that 26% of owners allowed their dogs to roam free when outside the home. Other studies also support the finding that dog bite injuries commonly occur in public spaces, and highlight the need for strategies to address this (Wake et al., 2009; Oxley et al., 2017; Mair et al., 2019; Jakeman et al., 2020; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022c). The importance of safety for children to independently mobilize within public spaces has likewise been addressed in studies internationally (Senda, 2015; Chaudhury, 2017). While parental concerns about strangers or road traffic are described as deterrents to children's use of these spaces, safety from dogs is not well investigated (Riazi et al., 2022). Other studies actively promote children walking dogs (Christian et al., 2016, 2022). However, given the concerning descriptions in this study for dog-dog attacks occurring while walking a dog, this could be placing children in potentially dangerous situations.

Modifications to the physical environment to protect young children are thought to be the most effective measure for prevention of child injuries (Craig et al., 2010; Morrongiello, 2018). This is further supported by studies where severe or fatal dog attacks have occurred in children despite adults being nearby (Patronek et al., 2013; Kumar et al., 2017). Legislated engineering barriers for all dogs such as leash and muzzle use and requirements for adequate fencing of properties, schools and dog-parks, may be effective strategies to prevent injuries in many contexts (Shen et al., 2014; Jakeman et al., 2020; Duperrex et al., 2009; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022b).

Private

Incidents on private property in the current study occurred more commonly when visiting friends or family, or by neighbouring dogs escaping/strays, with few incidents occurring with a dog they owned. Previous research has also shown high rates of injury occurring by dogs belonging to neighbours, friends or relatives, or in public (Schalamon, 2006; Chen et al., 2013; Shen et al., 2014; Hasselt et al., 2015; Oxley et al., 2017; Westgarth et al., 2018; Mair et al., 2019; Abraham and Czerwinski, 2019; Reese and Vertalka, 2020; Duncan-Sutherland et al., 2022a). This research is further supported by a study of 256 fatalities in the US, of which nearly half (n=116/256) were in children under the age of five years, showing that while 74% (n=190/256) occurred on the owners property, the vast majority of victims (85%; n=218/256) had only an incidental or no relationship to the dog (Patronek et al., 2013). Awareness of this common context may be important for providers of dog-safety information to understand, in order to promote safety for visiting children.

Strengths and limitations

Strengths of this study include the broad reach of the online survey in terms of regional coverage; Maori representation in study conceptualisation, design and participation; the use of participant-led discussions during FGs; and the qualitative exploration of issues impacting on injury prevention efforts. However, the findings need to be considered in light of several limitations. The low response rate of non-dog owners in the online survey created an owner-weighted bias; the use of closed-ended questions in the OS resulted in limited information given; responses may not be statistically representative of the NZ population given the sample size; and there was potential for researchers to inadvertently influence FG discussions, which had a predominance of Auckland participants. Different results may have been obtained from FGs if participants were selected from other regions in NZ. Study findings are also specific to NZ, and may not be generalizable to countries with different living situations or dog-husbandry practices, including those with a prevalence of free-roaming dogs. Furthermore, this study did not collect data on type of dog (size or breed), confinement strategies, or how training and other historical factors, or dog owner attitudes might affect perceptions dangerousness of dogs to children or the attitude towards dog-related incidents.

Further analysis of the situational/circumstantial factors involved in incidents of dog-related harm, using one-on-one interview methods, including more specific details about: location of incidents; dog size and breed; social and physical situations during which the aggression occurred, whether appropriate environmental barriers were in place (leash-use, fencing, muzzles or a separate dog-space), damage assessments, and perceived severity is required. Future investigation should focus on adult actions to prevent harm, more than child behavior.

Conclusions

This study revealed a broader picture of how children are physically and emotionally affected by dogs in both private and public spaces, indicating the need for proactive approaches in both. Dogs may become activated to attack due to their nature and unpredictable tendencies in response to children's natural movements, and future strategies may need to include a focus on owner-perception of risk to children in addition to creating child-safe environments and addressing systemic issues, rather than relying on child or dog behavior to prevent harm. The finding of high value people have for dogs is important to understand as this may be a barrier to implementation of evidence-based strategies.

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CRedit authorship contribution statement

Bridget Kool: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Supervision, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **Michael Shepherd:** Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Software, Supervision, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **Mareta Hunt:** Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Software, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing. **Natasha Duncan-Sutherland:** Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Software, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Conflict of Interest

All authors have nothing to declare.

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‘Te piko o te mahuri tera te tupu o te rakau’

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Ethics approval

Ethics approval from the Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee was obtained (AHREC: AH22562).

Contributors

The design of this study was developed by all authors. The online survey and focus groups were conducted by Natasha Duncan-Sutherland (NDS), Mareta Hunt (MH) and Moses Alatini (MA). The body of the article was composed by NDS, with ongoing review, feedback and input from all other authors.

Registration

The protocol for this study is held at the Starship Foundation. This study was not registered.

Appendix A. Supporting information

Supplementary data associated with this article can be found in the online version at [doi:10.1016/j.jveb.2025.01.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jveb.2025.01.002).

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Attachment: Locations requesting change to Dog-Access rules:**Location 1:****What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?**

All Auckland beaches

What local board or suburb is this location in?

All local boards

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

- **All** beaches in the Auckland region should have the majority of the beach **on-leash (or prohibited)** during the **non**-summer months.
- Only small sections at the 'far' end of the beach (rather than the 'whole beach') should be off-leash in 'not-summer' months.
- The only time of the day that any larger sections of the beach should be off-leash is before 9am.

The status quo for *all* of the hundreds of beaches in Auckland should be on-leash (or prohibited) all year round.

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Entire locations

What is the main reason you want to change the dog access rules? (list)

Child-protection.

Please explain your issue in more detail.

On-leash should be the status quo and standard, and off-leash sections of the beaches could be created from there, rather than the other way around which currently exists.

Auckland's temperate climate means that families with young children like to use the beach all year round, as much as people who walk dogs. Children like to have picnics (or fish n chips on the beach) with their families, play on the beach - running ahead or playing games/tag with their families on the sand, or running in the waves at the edge of the water. Older children also have a need for independent mobility in public spaces. [1,2]

As parents ourselves, every time we try to go to a beach with our children during the nine months of the year with off-leash rules, we have to guard our children from dogs running up to them (or jumping on/chasing them). Some people also bring very large and aggressive looking dogs. We end up having to hold our children's hands, stop them playing, and continually be on the lookout for dogs, to even be on the beach. The only places we can go, where we feel safe from dogs on a beach for the *vast* majority of the year are Tāwharanui or Pākiri Regional Parks. Times on most beaches where families with young children are basically excluded from using (or can only use with a significant risk to the children) are:

- Nine months of the year (1st March to 1st December)
- All summer evenings (some even after 2pm)
- All mornings before 10am



Expecting small children to 'stand like a tree' to protect themselves on a beach is completely inappropriate – instead, an evidence-based approach with **adequate dog-access legislation should ensure the children are protected from dogs**. [3,4]

Please explain why you want to change dog access at this location and provide any additional information or evidence.

I am unable to create a list of beaches and associated reserves where young families are unsafe from off-leash dogs, as there are too many. Beaches where we ourselves have experienced issues with off-leash dogs posing a danger to our own children **due to inappropriate leash-legislation**, are Ōmana beach, Māngere Bridge beach and Kiwi Esplanade walk, Sunkist Bay, Shelly Bay, Maraetai Beach, Bucklands Beach, Eastern Beach, Cornwallis beach, Wattle Bay, Waiake beach, Ambury-Waikaraka pathway, Campbells bay, Browns bay, Judges Bay, evenings at Cheltenham, St Heliers and Mission Bay, and also Takapuna beach (despite being on-leash the beach is so highly populated with people walking their dogs, it's impossible to take children there).

Other reserves we have had issues with are: Onehunga Reserve and Beachlands Domain, Grey Lynn Park, Swanson Park, Māngere Domain. But there are too many for me to list here.

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- 2 Chaudhury M. Public open space attribute's in relation to children's independent mobility experience in urban neighbourhoods in Auckland, New Zealand. PhD Thesis. 2017.
- 3 Duncan-Sutherland N, Lissaman AC, Shepherd M, *et al*. Systematic review of dog bite prevention strategies. *Inj Prev*. 2022;injuryprev–2021–044477. doi: 10.1136/injuryprev-2021-044477
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- 5 Duncan-Sutherland N, Moaveni Z, Exeter D, *et al*. Epidemiology of dog related injuries in New Zealand. *N Z Med J*. 2022;135.
- 6 Accident Corporation Company. ACC Claims for Dog-Related Injuries by financial year and age-group. 2024.



Location 2:**What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?**

Ōmana Regional Park and Ōmana beach and esplanade

What local board or suburb is this location in?

Rodney.

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

- The whole park should be on-leash, other than the perimeter walk which can be off-leash
 - However, the perimeter walk starts right by the picnic/beach area used by children and families, so the off-leash area of the perimeter walk should be 100m after the start of the walk.
 - Current rules that dogs can be off-leash on the 'foreshore and park' (excluding Omana beach) are unclear and confusing, as it sounds like the whole park is off-leash, but then there is a rule that says in all other areas of the park dogs are prohibited.
- Ōmana reserve should be on-leash the whole year.
- Dogs should be prohibited from the beach the whole year.
- Current rules for prohibiting dogs from the playground should remain.

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

The entire location.

What is the main reason you want to change the dog access rules? (list)

Other: To protect children.

Please explain your issue in more detail.**Please explain why you want to change dog access at this location and provide any additional information or evidence.**

This is an important area to our whānau, as it is where we grew up. I have tried to return to have picnics on the beach, walk in the park or visit the playgrounds in both 'winter' and 'summer' months, with my own children and wider family. Unfortunately, off-leash dogs prohibit us from doing this, and we have had to stop going there. For example, as we were walking back from a picnic one time a large off-leash dog jumped out of the bushes, scared the pre-school children, and started to circle them which was intimidating and unsafe.

Many children and families use the beach, the playground and the reserve, in all months of the year, and all of which are closely connected. This is too small an area (considering how fast dogs move) for any off-leash areas to be so close to any on-leash/prohibited sections.



Location 3:

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

Māngere Domain (also known as Māngere Mountain Education Centre)

Te Pane o Mataoho / Te Ara Pueru / Māngere Mountain (including the playground)

What local board or suburb is this location in?

Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board

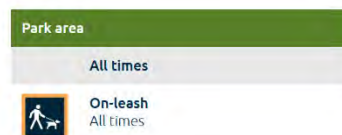
In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

- It is unclear what is defined as Māngere Mountain versus Māngere Domain. Dog rules are inconsistent and hard to follow, as there are two different rules for what is essentially the same space and playground (see below). This needs clarification.

Rule for Māngere domain:



Rule for Māngere mountain:



- The whole mountain (and 'domain') should be on-leash at all times of the year
- Dogs should be prohibited from the playground and entire whānau ātea space (including toilets, the grass area, basketball court, hāngī pit, skatepark, surrounding pathway, slides and stairs).
- Dogs should be prohibited from the sports ground (and club-rooms) and within 100m of this
- Dogs should be prohibited from the Māngere mountain education centre and within 100m of this.
- Dogs should be prohibited from the Māngere bridge tennis club and Scout Hall, and the grass reserve area between the tennis club and playcentre/road.
- A good space for an off-leash area would be at the base on the mountain on the north side, from the top of Scott Ave to the top of Matchett Way (dogs can run up the side of the mountain for exercise and it is a well demarcated area). The base of the south side of the mountain could also potentially be used.

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

The entire location

What is the main reason you want to change the dog access rules? (list)

Protection of children and other vulnerable people.



Please explain your issue in more detail.

Māngere mountain is well utilised by children in the community. Children walk around the maunga with their whānau, use the sports grounds, football club rooms, footpaths, Playcentre, Plunket, Māngere mountain education centre, tennis club reserve and club-rooms/courts, and Scouts Hall.

Recent developments on Māngere mountain have been very positive, and resulted in a large number of people in the surrounding community now using the playground, whānau ātea space, and associated paths and stairs. The whānau ātea space is also used by holiday programmes with groups of children, and the local playcentre which sits directly on the maunga.

The education centre frequently has groups of both pre-school and primary school visiting, sometimes with walks up onto the associated paths of the mountain.

Over the years however, it has been very difficult to take the children to use the maunga, in particular for walks up and around the mountain, due to off-leash dogs. I also have ongoing concerns about dogs being allowed into the playground and whānau ātea area (even on-leash), where there are a large number of young children playing, running and biking in close proximity.

Māngere has one of the highest rates of dog-related injuries in Auckland, due to wider social factors related to deprivation and historical discrimination.[5,6] Dog-access legislation needs to account for this, and be more strict than other regions.

Please explain why you want to change dog access at this location and provide any additional information or evidence.

Location 4:

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

Swanson Park

What local board or suburb is this location in?

Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board

Current rules:



In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

- Dogs should be prohibited from this park.
- An off-leash dog-training area could potentially be developed at the back of the park, which is a space that is not well used, if funding was provided for fencing from the rest of the park and library driveway, and for neighbouring properties.

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Entire location

What is the main reason you want to change the dog access rules? (list)

Child protection and enjoyment of the recreational space.

Please explain your issue in more detail.

The park is predominantly a large sports-ground, and there are almost always people including children on the grounds either playing or practicing. The majority of the remainder of the park consists of the Playground, Boxing club, Library and areas connecting these to the shops.

There are frequently people with off-leash dogs, which then run into the playground because while the overall rule is that the park is 'off-leash', the space is too small and contiguous for there to be separate on/off and prohibited areas as per current rules.

I would also like to allow my older children to independently go down to this park to practice football, but am unable to due to the off-leash dogs.

Please explain why you want to change dog access at this location and provide any additional information or evidence.

[Redacted]

Location 5:

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

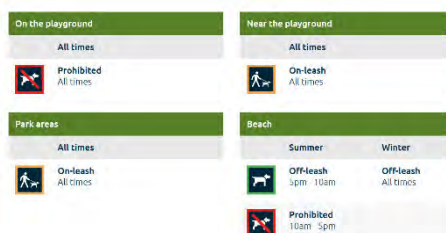
Kiwi Esplanade

What local board or suburb is this location in?

Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board

Current rules:

This covers Shelly Bay Beach and Kiwi Esplanade between Mangere Boat Club and Shortt Ave.



In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

- Dogs should be prohibited from the playground, beach and surrounding grass reserve at all times of the year.
- Dogs should be on-leash in all other areas around Kiwi Esplanade at all times of the year. This includes other grass areas, parking areas, boat clubs, and pathways (including that which runs from Ambury Farm to Mangere Bridge shops).

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Entire location

What is the main reason you want to change the dog access rules? (list)

Protection of children and other vulnerable people.

Please explain your issue in more detail.

The beach and grass reserve areas are extremely small, confluent with each other, and immediately adjacent to the playground. It is insensible to try and implement separate rules for on and off-leash for the beach and also prohibiting dogs from the playground, as an off-leash dog only needs to take a few steps and they will be on the playground.

This is a very busy area, and there are large numbers of children and whānau who use the reserve, walkways and beach, at all times of the year. We have stopped using the beach and nearby playground in the winter with our children due to worries about off-leash dogs, and I have significant concerns about off-leash dogs when my children ride their bikes along the path, which they like to do. The beach is so small, it is also not an appropriate place for dogs to play.

I also think that the reserve itself should be dog-free, to allow families to safely picnic.

Of note, dog-walkers do not comply with current rules, and frequently walk their dogs along the path off-leash. A friend of mine on a bike was bitten by a dog on an extended leash while riding along the footpath.



Location 6:**What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?**

Grey Lynn Park

What local board or suburb is this location in?

Waitematā Local Board area.

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

- This park requires either development of a fenced off-leash area, or making the whole park on-leash.
- Dogs should be prohibited from the paths adjacent to the skatepark

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

Section

What is the main reason you want to change the dog access rules? (list)

Child-protection.

Please explain your issue in more detail.

We have taken our children to Grey Lynn Park a lot over the years, as it has an amazing bike park. However, I notice that dogs are off-leash a lot, and often very near the Playground and Skatepark. I think this is such a busy and well-used recreational area, that any off-leash dogs should be in very well-defined and fenced off areas, ideally with their own dog-training equipment.

It is frightening having children on bikes when people walk nearby with their dogs off-leash, as dogs can become activated by bikes into attacking or chasing.

Patrolling in this park may also help owners to comply with rules, in particular children.

Please explain why you want to change dog access at this location and provide any additional information or evidence.



Dr [REDACTED]
(FACEM, FRNZCUC, MBChB, BA.BMus)
Emergency Physician
Adult Emergency Department
Te Toka Tumai, Auckland

To: Auckland Council
21st February, 2025

Tēnā koutou katoa,

Thank you for allowing the opportunity to give feedback on the proposed changes to the Auckland Council Proposed Updates to the Dog Policy, Bylaw, Regional and Local Dog Access Rules.

Beaches and parks are of very high value and cultural importance to all New Zealanders and should be protected spaces for all to enjoy, at all times of the year, including children. Whilst dogs are also valued by some people as part of a family or for specific purposes, the wider context of the value beaches and parks give for everyone needs to be prioritised.

I would like to bring to your attention the rising number of dog-related injuries in Auckland, particularly among children, and have made suggestions for policy change aimed at protecting vulnerable populations, underpinned by both statistical evidence and real-world incidents.

Statistics:

Tāmaki Makaurau has seen increasing numbers of dog-related injuries over the last five years in particular, as evidenced by published ACC statistics (Table 1 and 2) [1,2], and recent media reports (<https://www.stuff.co.nz/nz-news/360554509/traumatised-mum-bitten-while-saving-child-aggressive-dog-loose>). These statistics represent only a very small proportion of incidents of harm that occur to people by dogs, as many significant incidents result in either no injury or an injury where the person does not seek medical attention.[1] Of note, the vast majority of incidents are not reported in the media.

Table 1: Dog bite ACC claims by financial year.[2]

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	3,568	3,838	3,826	4,297	4,538

Table 2: All dog related injury (DRI) ACC claims by financial year.[2]

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
	6,677	7,575	7,469	8,374	8,761

Tamariki

While children are equally as likely as adults to be bitten by a dog,[1] they are particularly at risk of serious injuries to the head/neck/face area, which can require multiple surgeries with the potential for life-long disfigurement.[1] Incidents of both physical and psychological harm to children by dogs in Aotearoa occur equally in public and private spaces, as highlighted in a recently published study of caregiver's perspectives.[3]

This study highlights the impact of off-leash or roaming dogs on children in public spaces, and their ability to utilise and independently mobilise, particularly in parks and beaches (*"Often we drive to go for a walk in a better neighborhood instead"*), with multiple incidents described.[3]

"Where our local skate park is, it's actually on like, on a walking path. Quite often the dogs will run over to us, and you know, they (children) are zooming around on their bikes and their skateboards when there's dogs running around chasing them"

(FG – female, non-Māori, non-dog owner, Auckland)[3]

Many caregivers expressed anger at owners who showed no or little concern for their child's safety even when following an injury, ignored leash requirements, or minimised the issue. The study highlighted how the high value owners have for their dogs can result in an under-estimation of the risk, with little awareness that children may feel intimidated or be physically unsafe around the dog.[3]

"Child approached by off-leash dog in parks, beaches, playgrounds. I tend to only go to on-leash public spaces & this still happens. Owners often say "oh the dog is fiiiine" and not make any effort to intervene"

(OS - female, non-Māori, non-dog owner, Auckland) [3]

"I don't appreciate when owners say "it's okay, he won't bite" etc. It invalidates the feelings of the child or the adult that is uncomfortable with the behavior of the dog. Our 1yr cannot protect himself from dog jumping up & pushing him over. Owners need to not invalidate the feelings of others just because they believe their dog would never hurt anyone"

(OS - female, Māori, non-dog owner, Rotorua) [3]

Assumptions

Preventing these serious incidents is challenged by incorrect assumptions made about the root causes of dog-attacks, which I have described below.

1. Children:

- a. Dogs, due to their size and unpredictability, can be activated to attack or harm a child simply by normal child movements such as running, playing or biking, or may harm or intimidate children through boisterousness or play.[3]

2. Aggressive breeds or dogs:

- a. Larger/stronger dogs (including German Shepherds and Labradors) are more likely to cause more serious injuries, as found in a NZ study on ACC Claims for dog-bite injuries.[4]
- b. One good quality study of 10,000 dogs found no breed differences in tendency to aggressiveness[5]
- c. I commend the Auckland Council campaign that **'Any Dog Can Bite'**, paralleling a South Australian campaign that **'Good Dogs Have Bad Days'**. [6]

3. Owners:

- a. Anger and frustration is often directed at ‘irresponsible’ owners not paying attention to leash-rules or allowing dogs to roam as being the cause of injuries.[3]
- b. However, many dogs are off-leash/roaming due to a lack of appropriate leash/fencing-policy and financial investment in enforcing these rules.

4. Legislation and Enforcement:

- a. Lack of leash policy and enforcement is one of the most important root causes of injuries, yet often the least considered.[3]
- b. Similar to reducing road-traffic injuries with the use of traffic-calming measures,[7] legislation of leashes and muzzles, limiting dog-access, fencing and sterilisation are the most effective ways to reduce harm to people from dogs in public.
- c. True preventive efforts require application of these engineering strategies to *all* dogs, rather than based on either breed or past behaviour.[8] Of note, there were continuing increases in the number of serious injuries from dogs, with a lack of action taken in the previous review of Auckland’s dog-access legislation in 2019.

Policy Change

I have made some important suggestions for evidence-based policy-change below.[8] When considering these I strongly encourage the council to refrain from attempting to ‘balance’ the needs of children against the needs of dogs. Child-protection is non-negotiable, and should *always* remain paramount over the needs of dogs and owners. The council should consider what their approach would be if this were adults going around and attacking, intimidating and biting children on their faces. Also of importance, inequity exists with a greater number of injuries occurring in the South Auckland region, and this area requires focused attention and partnership with Māori when reviewing dog-access legislation.[1]

The protection of tamariki (children) must remain paramount and beyond reproach when considering strategies for prevention of harm to children from dogs.

Honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi through tino rangatiratanga with, by and for Māori in the development of strategies and research into the prevention of harm to people from dogs is required.

1. Policy Purpose

- The Purpose of the Bylaw is to protect people from dogs, in particular children and other vulnerable populations such as the elderly, those with disabilities or mental health conditions, or other animals (including dogs themselves and wildlife).
- The Dog-Control Act and Bylaws were not implemented to ‘keep dogs a positive part of people’s lives’. This statement demonstrates a bias for dog-welfare over than protection of vulnerable people, including children.
- Dogs cause serious harm, rather than being an ‘annoyance’ and this needs to be reflected in policy wording.

2. Dogs in Parks and Beaches

- Beaches and parks are of very high value and cultural importance to all New Zealanders and should be protected spaces for all to enjoy, at all times of the year, including children.
- Any off-leash space is not a safe space to be in for anyone – in particular vulnerable children, families, elderly, those with disabilities, smaller dogs and wildlife.

- **Off-leash areas should *only* be specific small sections of all parks and beaches (rather than the *whole* Park/Beach, as currently exists), at all times of the year.**
- The *status quo* should be that dog are on-leash in **all** parks and beaches at all times of the year (with specific designated 'off-leash' areas).

3. Children do not only play in playgrounds

- Of importance, children may be **anywhere** within a Parks and Beaches, and need protection well beyond only 'playgrounds and sports-grounds'. Children also walk or ride bikes along paths, build sandcastles and run along beaches, have picnics on grass areas, like to kick balls around, and have a right to protection and to safely enjoy these recreational spaces at all times.
- Groups such as Forest Kindy's, School and pre-school trips out, and holidays programmes are also using these recreational areas, with groups of children at risk.
- Due to nearly all parks and beaches being predominantly off-leash spaces, children remain unprotected, and are currently chased, jumped on, knocked over, bitten, intimidated and prevented from playing and independently mobilizing in those spaces.[3]
- Many dog breeds can run at a speed of 25-30km/hr (7-8 metres per second).[9] Even a 'well-controlled' off-leash dog is clearly a risk if it is nearby a busy area such as a club, or around children/elderly walking along a beach, path or car-park. Having an on-leash rule when 'near' the playground needs to be better defined as at least 100m away from a playground or children.
- When creating specific off-leash areas, these should be designed to be at least **100m away from any busy area, including playgrounds, car-parks, sports-grounds and clubs, or children**. This would allow time for a caregiver to react and protect their child, who also may not be directly next to them. Off-leash areas should not directly adjoin playgrounds, sports-grounds or frequently used paths.

4. Winter Rules

- Current dog-access legislation is based on UK legislation, where winters are extremely cold and beaches in particular are not well used by other people.
- This philosophy does not work in the Auckland context, where our winters are mild and our beaches and parks are often used by many people, including children, all year round.
- Current legislation with off-leash 'winter' rules are preventing children and families from using these extremely culturally important recreational spaces.
- The same dog-access rules should apply all year round.

Off-leash areas should only be specific small sections of all parks and beaches, at least 100m away from all busy areas, at all times of the year, to place the protection of vulnerable people and animals first, whilst also meeting the needs of dogs and their owners.

5. Child-protection Policy:

- Children are even more important to protect than wildlife, yet are not appropriately represented in the policy. The policy currently protects 'Kiwi', our native bird. We need to even more strongly protect 'Kiwi' - our children.
- To highlight the importance of child protection as paramount and non-negotiable, a specific infringement for a child being harmed by a dog in a public space should be developed.

- Web-based information and signage for every beach and park should specifically state that children are protected in all areas, at all times.
- Policy should reflect the importance of child-protection by stating that off-leash dogs should be at least 100m away from children that are not their own.

6. Breed-specific leash-legislation:

- Dog-access, Leash and Muzzle legislation needs application to all dogs.
- Current separate leash legislation for 'dangerous' versus other dogs is ineffective for a number of reasons:
 - i. Waiting for incidents to occur and then applying rules is not a proactive approach to prevention. It is too late to apply leash and muzzle rules once a severe injury has occurred.
 - ii. All dog-breeds are potentially dangerous: particularly larger dogs which can include breeds such as German Shepherds,[4] mixed breeds which make up a large proportion of the dog population, or the large number of unregistered (and therefore uncategorized) dogs that exist.[10]
 - iii. There is a lack of enforcement of leash/muzzle laws for dogs considered 'dangerous', which is unable to be easily rectified due to a current lack of funding and large geographical region covered by Animal Management.[11]
 - iv. Owners of dangerous dogs (whether due to breed or past complaints) do not adhere to the rules, potentially due to the stigma of having what is perceived to be an aggressive dog, and not wanting their dog to appear 'different' to other dogs.

7. Muzzle-use

- Reducing the stigma of muzzles should be done through the introduction of policy regarding muzzle use in busy or high-risk areas.[12]
- Humane basket-muzzles should be mandatory for all dogs when in these higher risk situations. Potential situations could include: visits to veterinarians; public transport and taxis; walking larger/stronger dogs in public spaces; if leaving a dog tied up in a public area; busy shopping areas; schools; or sports grounds.

8. Patrols

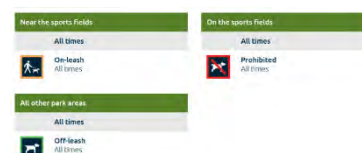
- Provision of funding for patrolling of recreational spaces, prioritising low-income areas is required.
- As a parent myself, I frequently attend sports, and there are almost always dogs on the sports-grounds, despite them being prohibited. Just a few weeks ago an off-leash dog ran into the sandpit as the five-year olds were trying to practice long-jump. Owners can also get very aggressive in all public spaces if politely requested to keep dogs away from the children, despite the rules.

9. Children holding leashes

- Local bylaws also need to reflect that children may not be able to control dogs on-leash, and that adult owners are ultimately responsible.
- This was evidenced by a recent well-publicised incident in the media, where a veterinarian was attacked by a dog being held on-leash by a child. The owners were charged and dog was euthanised, but the council was not made accountable for the lack of legislation regarding children being in control of a dog in a public space.

10. Equity:

- Beaches and parks in South Auckland need a particular focus and review of dog-access policy. For example, dogs are currently allowed off-leash within the new playground on Māngere Domain (see current rules below).



- Current proposed changes have excluded the highest areas of need, with little reviews of beaches or parks in the Māngere-Otahuhu, Manurewa, Otara-Papatoetoe, Papakura, and Howick regions, as well as southern sections of Franklin including Beachlands and Te Puna.

11. Walking Multiple Dogs:

- i. The main issue surrounding professional dog-walkers is not only the number of dogs walked, but the expansive area within of parks and beaches that are off-leash the majority of the year/day.
- ii. However, I support the introduction of restrictions on walking multiple dogs, noting that companies set up for this have a financial conflict of interest and are not considering the safety of children. I myself have had to leave a recreational reserve where I was playing with my children, after the arrival of a dog walker with off-leash dogs.
- iii. The number of dogs being walked should be limited to three, and they should all be on-leash unless in specific off-leash areas as described above.

12. Education Centres

- Currently schools can choose to have dogs within the school. This results in parents entering some schools full of children running around at the before/after school time, with large dogs who are not muzzled, creating an obvious risk. They can also leave dogs unattended outside classrooms at times (in spite of school policy about this).
- Unfortunately, school boards may not perceive the risk, and continue to allow dogs to enter despite the obvious danger.
- Reducing dog-related injuries to children also requires introduction of legislation that all early childhood, primary and intermediate education centres are dog-free (with the exception of reading therapy or guide-dogs, who should obtain individual permission from the school board).

Further strategies

Reducing dog-related injuries requires a multi-pronged approach utilising an established Injury-Prevention framework, including owner-directed education and the following further legislative changes:

<p>Sterilisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of mandatory sterilisation of all dogs by the age of six months unless owned by a registered breeder or veterinary approval for exemption. This legislation has been introduced in South Australia, Western Australia and Australian Capital Territory. • Associated long-term increase in funding for reduced rates for registration and sterilisation for low-income regions, and improved access to services as led by communities.
<p>Clear child-protection legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is required allowing Animal Management Officers to <i>promptly</i> intervene, with the support of Police in any situation where they have concern a dog poses a risk to any children within the wider community. Currently the public informs Animal Management of safety issues (for example a repeatedly roaming dog), but officers are powerless to go onto the property or remove the dog, even when the risk is known and real.
<p>Mandatory notification of dog-attacks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of legal responsibilities for health professionals and veterinarians and the public to notify incidents of dog-aggression, roaming dogs, or dog-related injuries to Animal Management and/or Social work, Police or Oranga Tamariki.[13]

Change in classification system:

- Category names should also be altered to less stigmatising nomenclature, to particularly encourage safety-precautions for higher-risk dogs:
 - From 'Menacing Dogs' to 'High-Risk Kuri': inclusive of all large-dogs
 - From 'Dangerous Dogs' to 'Very High-Risk Kuri': for dogs with a history of aggression

Legislated fencing/gate requirements:

- Should be established for all private properties where dogs reside, and may be linked to other fencing initiatives including driveway-safety.[14] This strategy must only be introduced with provision of funding for low-income owners.[15] Fencing of schools aligns with the prevention of other injuries relating to children in schools.[16]

The Auckland Council has an ethical and legal obligation to ensure that public spaces, including parks, beaches, and education centres, are safe for all users, and that children in particular are protected. Injuries and harm are occurring due to a lack of adequate legislation, and it is crucial the Council urgently addresses this gap.

Ngā mihi nui,

████████████████████

*Please note: I would also like to endorse the submission made by the **Safety Collective Tāmaki Makaurau**.*

References:

- 1 Duncan-Sutherland N, Moaveni Z, Exeter D, *et al.* Epidemiology of dog related injuries in New Zealand. *N Z Med J.* 2022;135.
- 2 Accident Corporation Company. ACC Claims for Dog-Related Injuries by financial year and age-group. 2024.
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- 5 Mikkola S, Salonen M, Puurunen J, *et al.* Aggressive behaviour is affected by demographic, environmental and behavioural factors in purebred dogs. *Sci Rep.* 2021;11:9433. doi: 10.1038/s41598-021-88793-5
- 6 Hazel SJ, Iankov I. A public health campaign to increase awareness of the risk of dog bites in South Australia. *Prev Vet Med.* 2024;231:106298. doi: 10.1016/j.prevetmed.2024.106298
- 7 Hopgood T, Percival T, Stewart J, *et al.* A tale of two cities: paradoxical intensity of traffic calming around Auckland schools. *N Z Med J.* 2013;126:22–8.
- 8 Duncan-Sutherland N, Lissaman AC, Shepherd M, *et al.* Systematic review of dog bite prevention strategies. *Inj Prev.* 2022;injuryprev–2021–044477. doi: 10.1136/injuryprev-2021-044477
- 9 Nannestad C. 13 of the fastest dog breeds in the world.
- 10 Watson L. Does Breed Specific Legislation reduce dog aggression on humans and other animals? A review paper. *Urban Anim Manag Conf Proc.* 2003;14.
- 11 Duncan-Sutherland N, Hunt M, Alatini M, *et al.* Study of dog control strategies. *Inj Prev.* 2022;ip–2022–044686. doi: 10.1136/ip-2022-044686
- 12 The Muzzle Up! Project. Advocacy. Education. Training. 2022.
- 13 Duncan-Sutherland N, Cunningham C, Cooper S, *et al.* An Audit of Dog Related Injury Notification Practices in a New Zealand Public Hospital. *N Z Med J.* 2022;135.
- 14 Housing New Zealand, in partnership with, Safekids Aotearoa,, *et al.* A guide to driveway safety for property owners. 2013.
- 15 Duncan-Sutherland N, Hunt M, Alatini M, *et al.* Study of dog control strategies. *Inj Prev.* 2022;ip–2022–044686. doi: 10.1136/ip-2022-044686
- 16 Te Tāhuhu o Te Mātauranga, Ministry of Education. Fencing at Schools: Design and Specification Guidance. Version 1.0. 2023.



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6964

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

There is no evidence of a 'significant risk to people' as a result of use of the park as an off-leash area.

The bowl area is well suited to, and well used by the dog-owning sector of the community, and large offleash areas such as this are scarce in the area. By contrast, as frequent users of Monte Cecelia, the bowl

area is hardly ever used by people without dogs. There are also a large number of parks, reserves and

other areas where people can visit that are not used by dogs.

As a less preferred alternative to retaining the area as off-leash, a 'shared' approach should be adopted,

where certain hours are allocated for off-leash activity, and others for on-leash. This option has not

been adequately considered to date, but is an obvious alternative to appropriately balance competing

interests

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Are there any dog access rules at other local parks and beaches in Auckland that you think council should change?

Your feedback on this section will inform any future review of dog access rules. A future review has not been scheduled at this time and no changes will be made on any location you identify in this section as part of this proposal.

Only provide feedback on one location at a time.

Space is provided for three locations. If you would like to provide feedback on more than three locations, please copy the following pages or include your comments in the other feedback section.

Location 1

What is the full name of the location where you want to change the dog access rules?

Centennial Park, Marsden Avenue, Balmoral

What local board area is this location in?

Albert-Eden

In general, how would you like dog access at this location to change?

Tell us why

Change the current rule to a time and season rule / Change the current time and season rule (please specify)

Do you want the change to apply to the entire location or a section of it?

A section of it. Please specify: Area outside the playground

What is the main reason you want to change the current dog access rule?

Please explain your issue in more detail:

To respond to opportunities for greater dog access without impacting other users (e.g. an area to take a dog under control off a leash). Please specify: As above, this park is ideally suited for use as an off-leash park at times when it is not being utilised by other users.

The area as a whole is not well served for off-leash areas and this is a missed opportunity.

Please explain why you want to change the dog access rule at this location, and provide any additional information or evidence

Centennial Park is ideally suited for off-leash dogs. There are a large number of local residents with dogs in the

area who should be able to enjoy their local park in this way. Acknowledging the park also has a playground, this is

almost never used in th



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6967

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Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

See attachment:This petition urges the local board to preserve the Bowl Area at Monte Cecilia Park as an off-leash space. It is a vital community asset, fostering social connections and providing a safe exercise area for dogs. Restricting access would negatively impact responsible pet owners and reduce community enjoyment of the park

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Petition to Preserve the Off-Leash Status of the Bowl Area at Monte Cecilia Park



We urge the local board to maintain the Bowl Area at Monte Cecilia Park as an off-leash space. This area is more than just a dog exercise zone—it is a vital community hub where residents connect, dogs socialize safely, and responsible pet owners enjoy the park without disrupting others.

We are grateful for the use of the park. My dogs and I visit Monte Cecilia Park every evening. It's our sanctuary—an all-weather play area where dogs can run free, chase sticks, and build friendships. But it's not just about the dogs. This park is where I connect with like-minded people, share stories, and experience a true sense of belonging that alleviates loneliness and builds a strong community.

The proposal to remove the Bowl Area's off-leash status is deeply concerning. Off-leash spaces allow dogs—especially nervous ones—to develop confidence, form positive social behaviours, and enjoy the freedom they need. The friendships formed here, both human and canine, make Monte Cecilia Park a true community.

Dogs don't have a voice, so I am speaking on their behalf. Losing off-leash access would force more dogs onto crowded footpaths, limit their ability to exercise safely, and weaken the social connections that make this park a well loved space for all our residents living in the area.

But this petition isn't just about dogs—it's about people. The Bowl Area brings residents together, fosters friendships, and creates a safe, welcoming space for all. Many who cannot have dogs of their own come here to enjoy the company of friendly pets in a positive environment.

With **1,065 signatures**, we are demonstrating the overwhelming community support for keeping the Bowl Area off-leash. The park thrives when it is accessible to everyone, and the Bowl's natural layout makes it the ideal space for off-leash activity without interfering with other users.

Most Auckland dog owners are responsible members of the community. We pay dog registration fees, which contribute to council funding, and we believe these contributions should support well-maintained spaces where dogs can exercise freely and safely. The Bowl Area has provided this for years without major issues.

We respectfully ask the local board to listen to the voices of this community and **protect the off-leash status of the Bowl Area** at Monte Cecilia Park.

Petition Request Form

Name of the Petitioner	[REDACTED]
Contact details of the Petitioner (note: for Privacy reasons contact details will be held only for the purposes of this Petition and will only be used to contact you about the Petition).	[REDACTED]
Subject matter of the Petition (note: think about the name of your Petition and how it will look to the public viewing the agenda.	Petition to Preserve Off-Leash Status for the Bowl Area at Monte Cecilia Park
Purpose of the Petition In 50 words or less describe the purpose of your Petition. (note: think about why this Petition is important and being presented to this local board board).	This petition urges the local board to preserve the Bowl Area at Monte Cecilia Park as an off-leash space. It is a vital community asset, fostering social connections and providing a safe exercise area for dogs. Restricting access would negatively impact responsible pet owners and reduce community enjoyment of the park
Date of the business meeting the Petition is to be presented. (Action: DA list the dates of your business meetings)	20 February 2025
Number of Signatures to the Petition (Action: DA check for Privacy Reasons that there is no personal information such as addresses (email or physical) that forms part of the Petition and cannot be publish.	1065

To Auckland Council.


Re considered changes for off leash/dog parks.

Dog-ownership accounts for a significant proportion of households across countries. In a city like **Auckland**, in a **culture that values nature and outdoor activity**, a **dog park is a significant part of health** for thousands. There are significant stressors living in Auckland, including financial, emotional and culturally, and there needs to be access to social and physical environments we draw on to keep our mental, physical and community health. **Research DOES NOT SUPPORT stopping dog (off leash) parks. It's a matter of design issues. Being on leash does not meet the health and social needs of dogs and their owners** (i.e. walking alone on leash, socializing while dogs sit, a lack of natural behaviour for both mammals).

Dog parks are part of the largest growing parts of cities across the world. More than 95 percent of people loved them in some studies. **Evidence based research**, including systemic reviews, have identified that **off leash dog parks enable benefits of:**

- Safe places for dogs to run. Meet the social needs** of a pack mammal (like humans)
- Socialising and establishing friendships** for humans. Meeting partners.
- Most people find dog parks a **relaxing experience**
- Increased **physical activity** and reduced **cardiovascular** risk. All-cause **mortality**.
- Mental health benefits**
- Enhancing community** connection, engagement, sense of cohesion, and support. Greater positive feelings towards the neighbourhood. Enhancing social capital.
- Better controlled dogs due to needs being met.**
- Reduced criminal activity and **increased public safety**.
- Increased **property values**.
- Increased **vibrancy**.

If you compare the amount of area provided for off leash/dog spaces (e.g., at Monte Cecilia Park) with the amount of land area focused on human's needs across areas/Auckland (including parks such as Cornwall Park which are often near), it shows the degree of human centric decision outcomes that have been made. Humans have a poor history of sharing. Please see below article (2024) for how to make off leash parks successful.

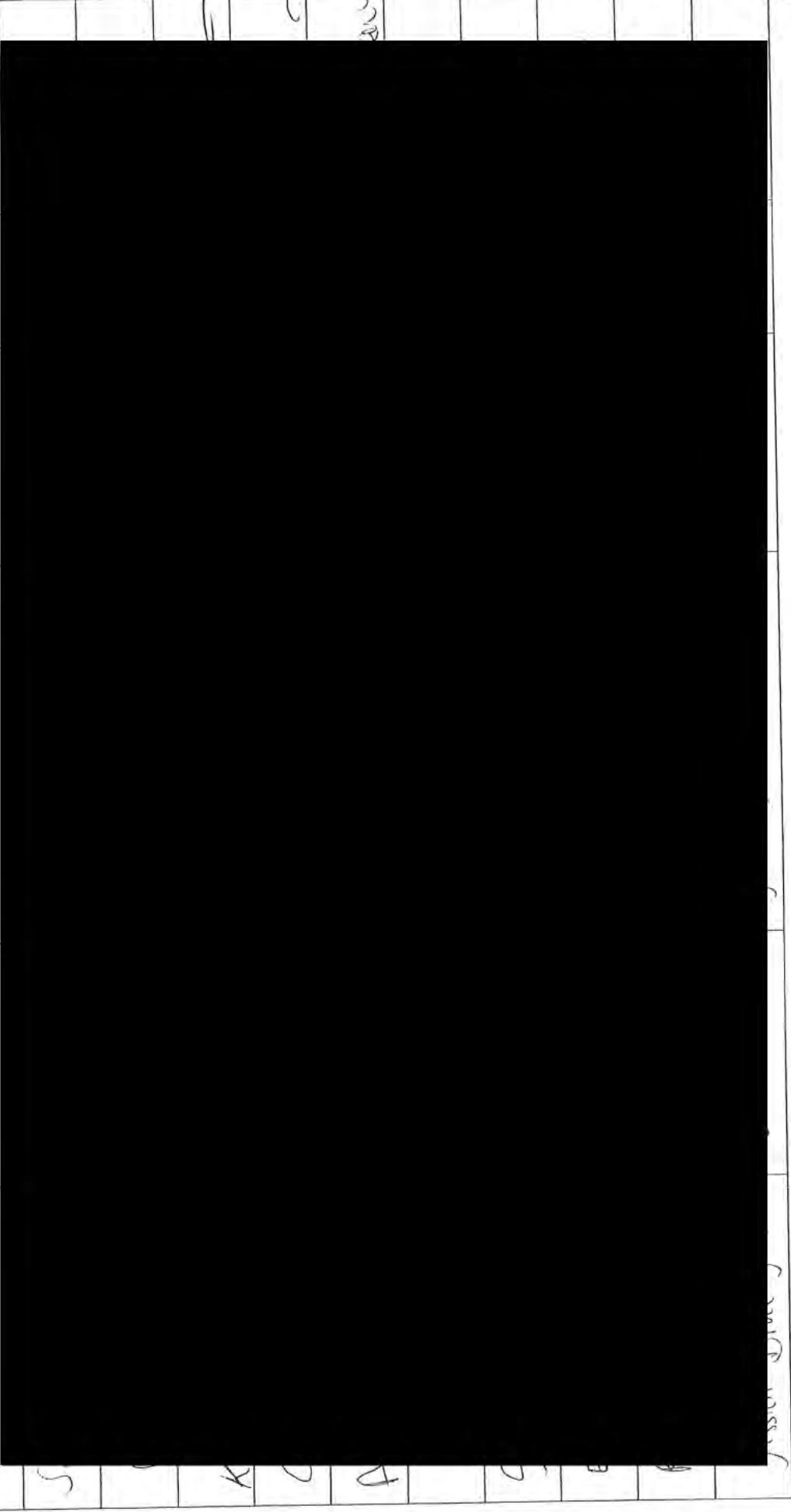

Clinical Psychologist

10/01/01

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16/01/25

#6967

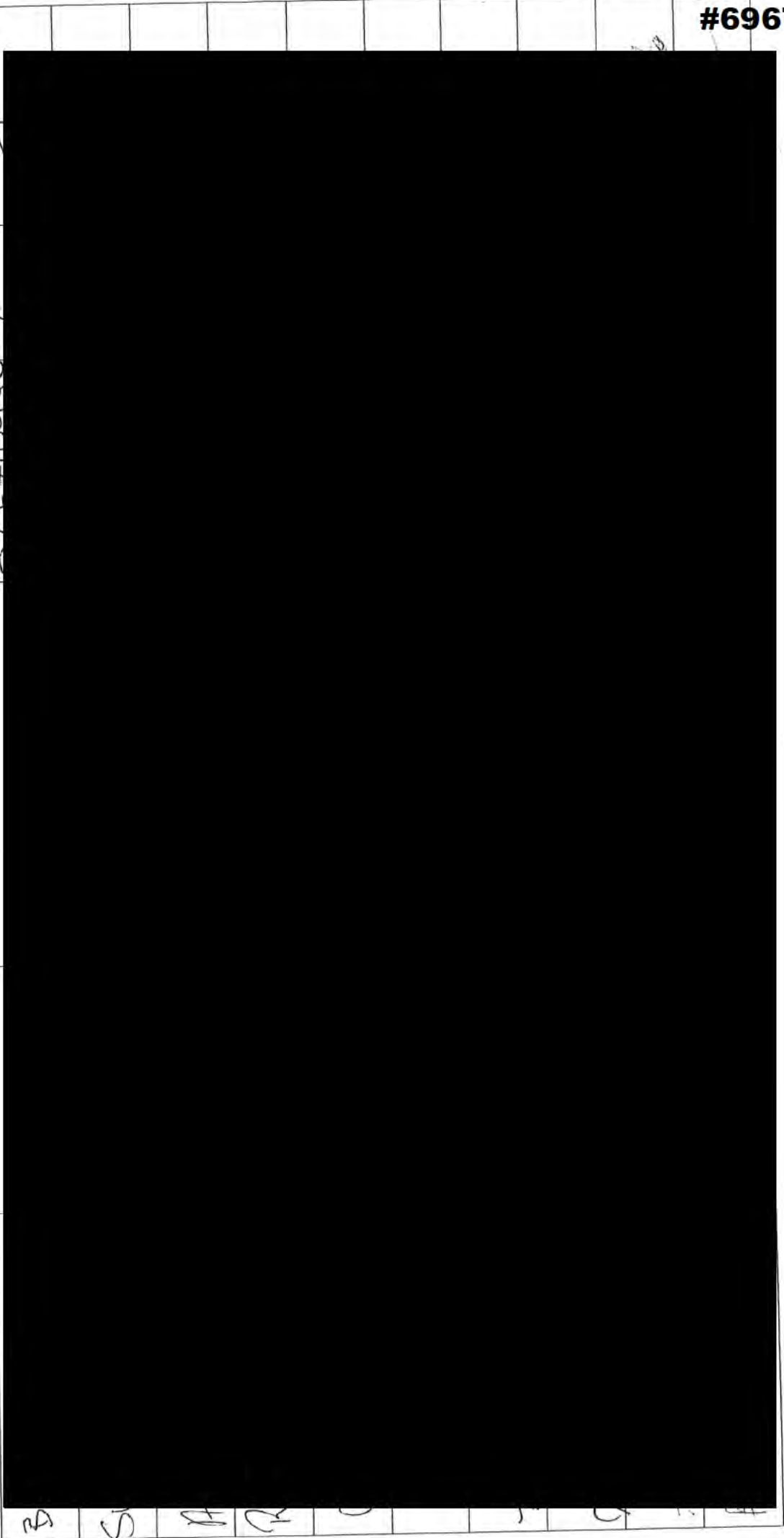
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

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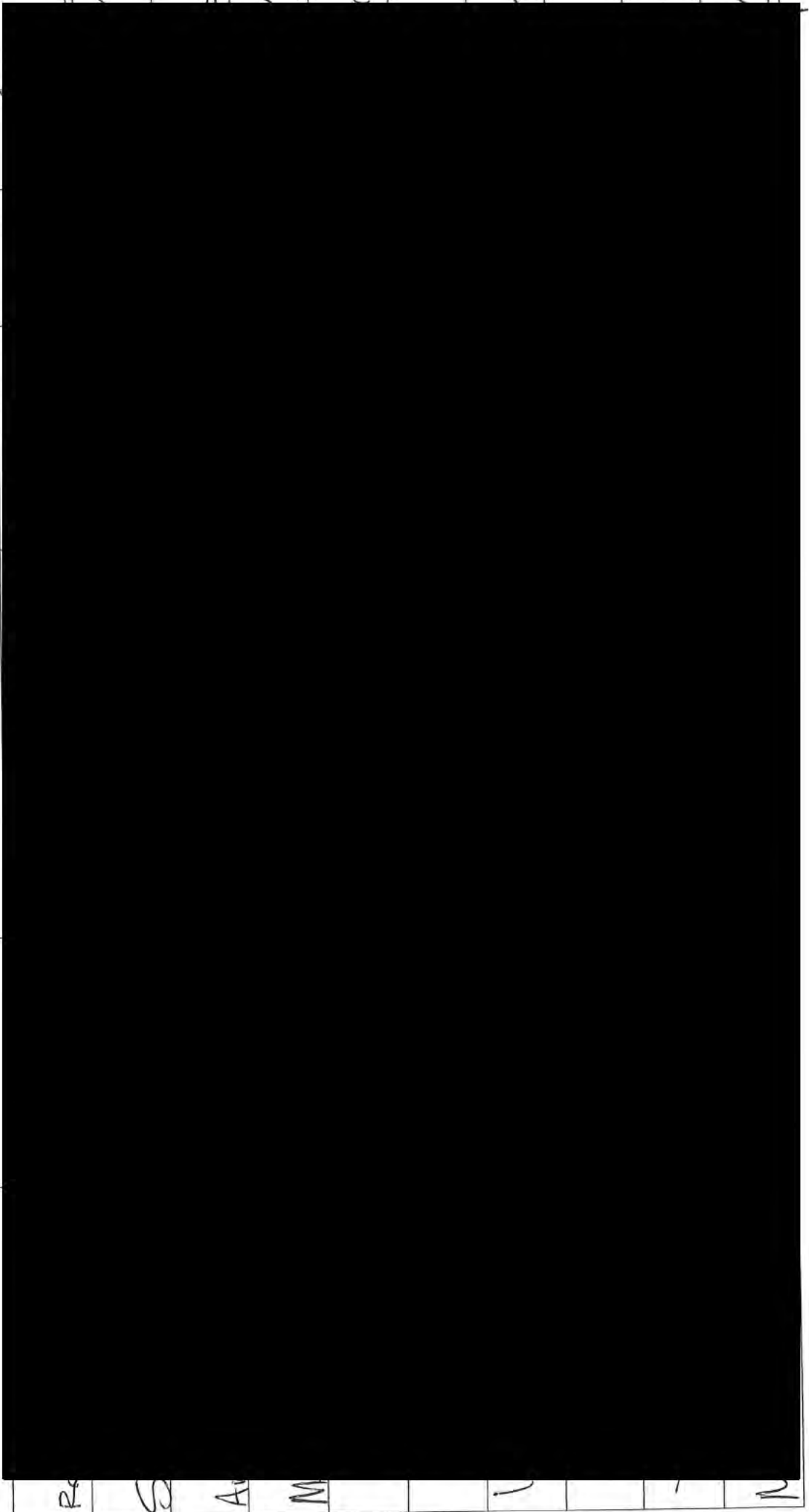
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Jessie Dine

10/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

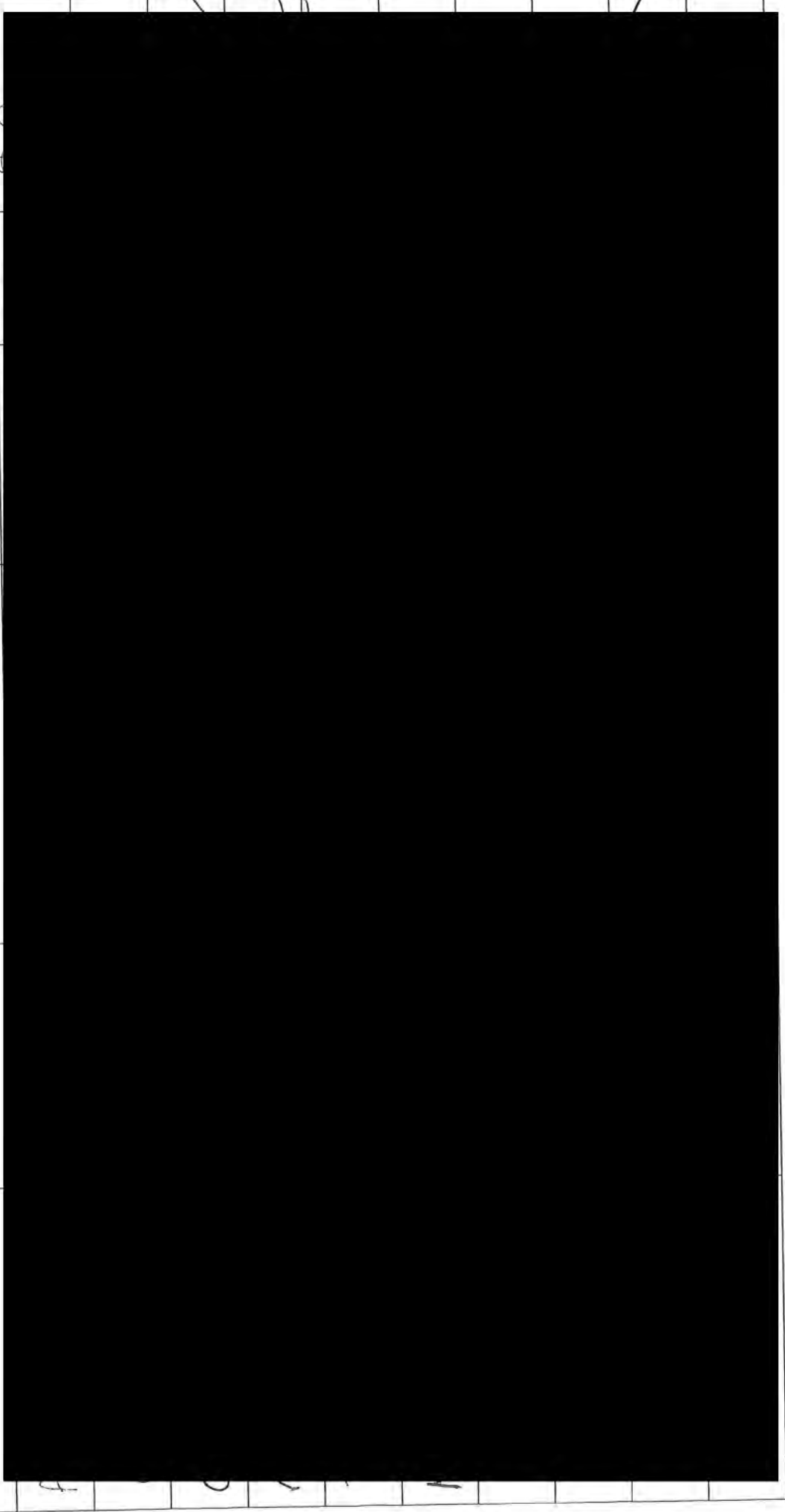
SA S H R C J C H A

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

12/1/11

R S A M J T N

16/01/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

Signature

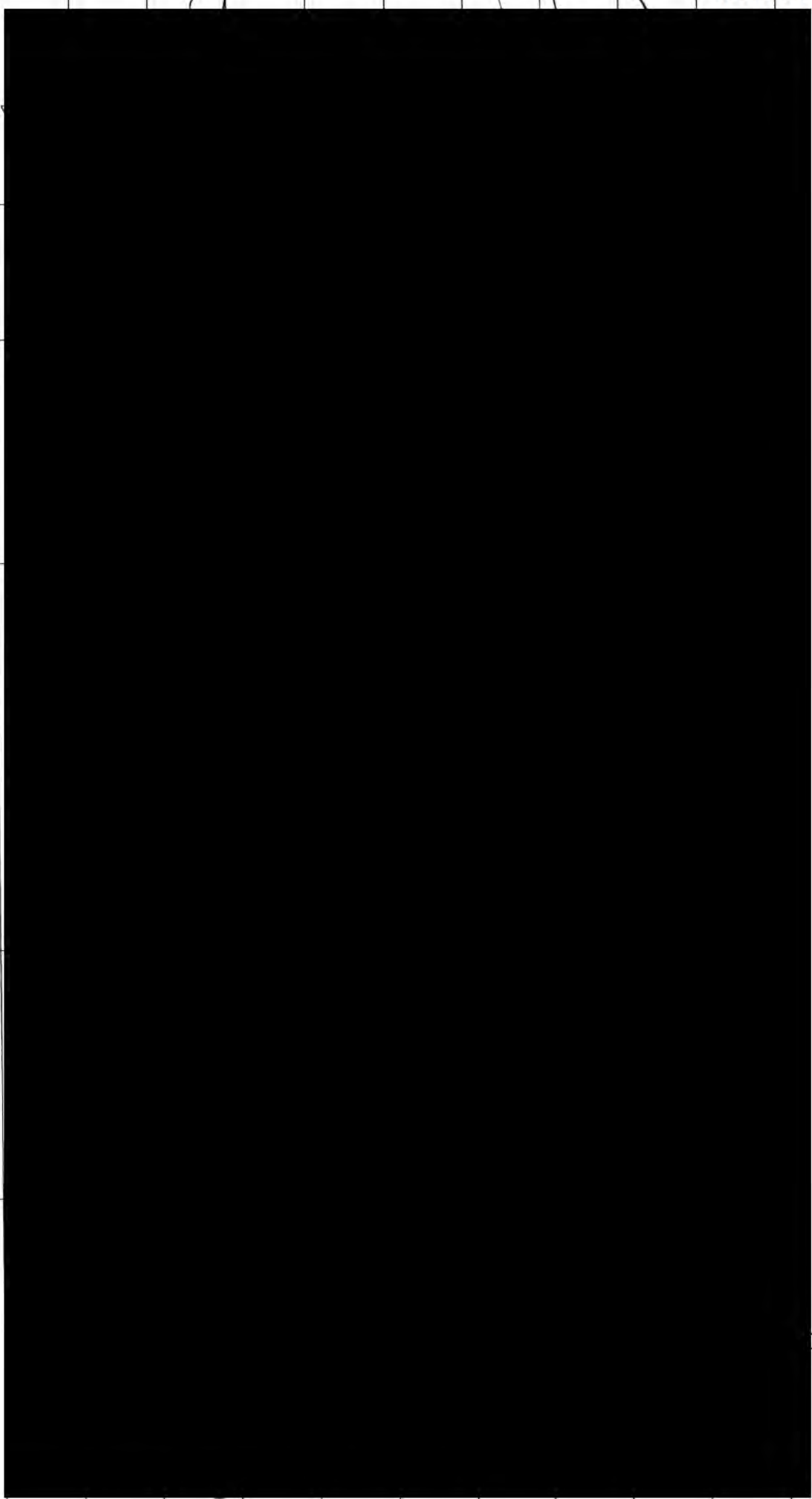
Lives in the local board area

Phone

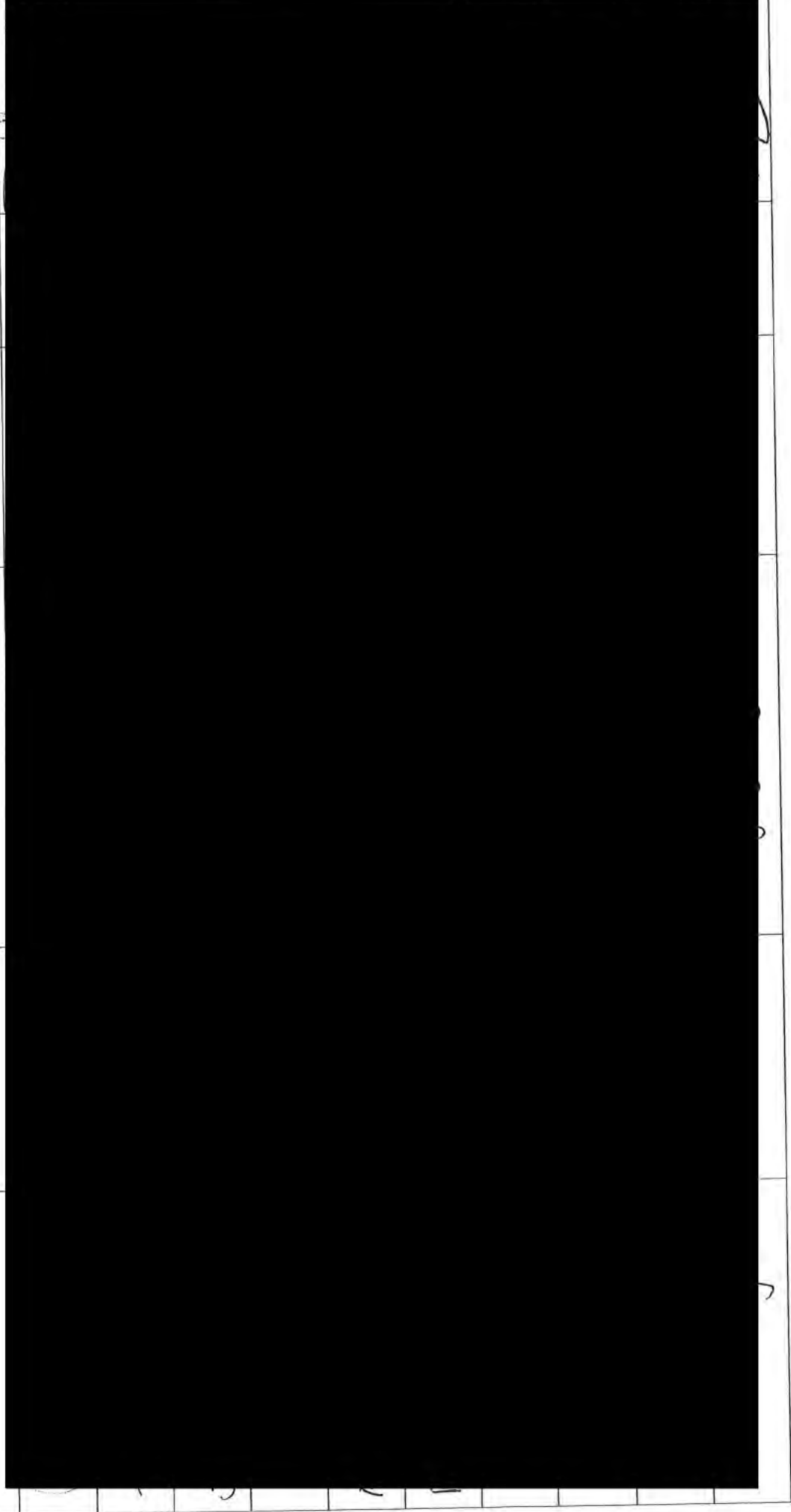
Email

Dog's name

First and last name

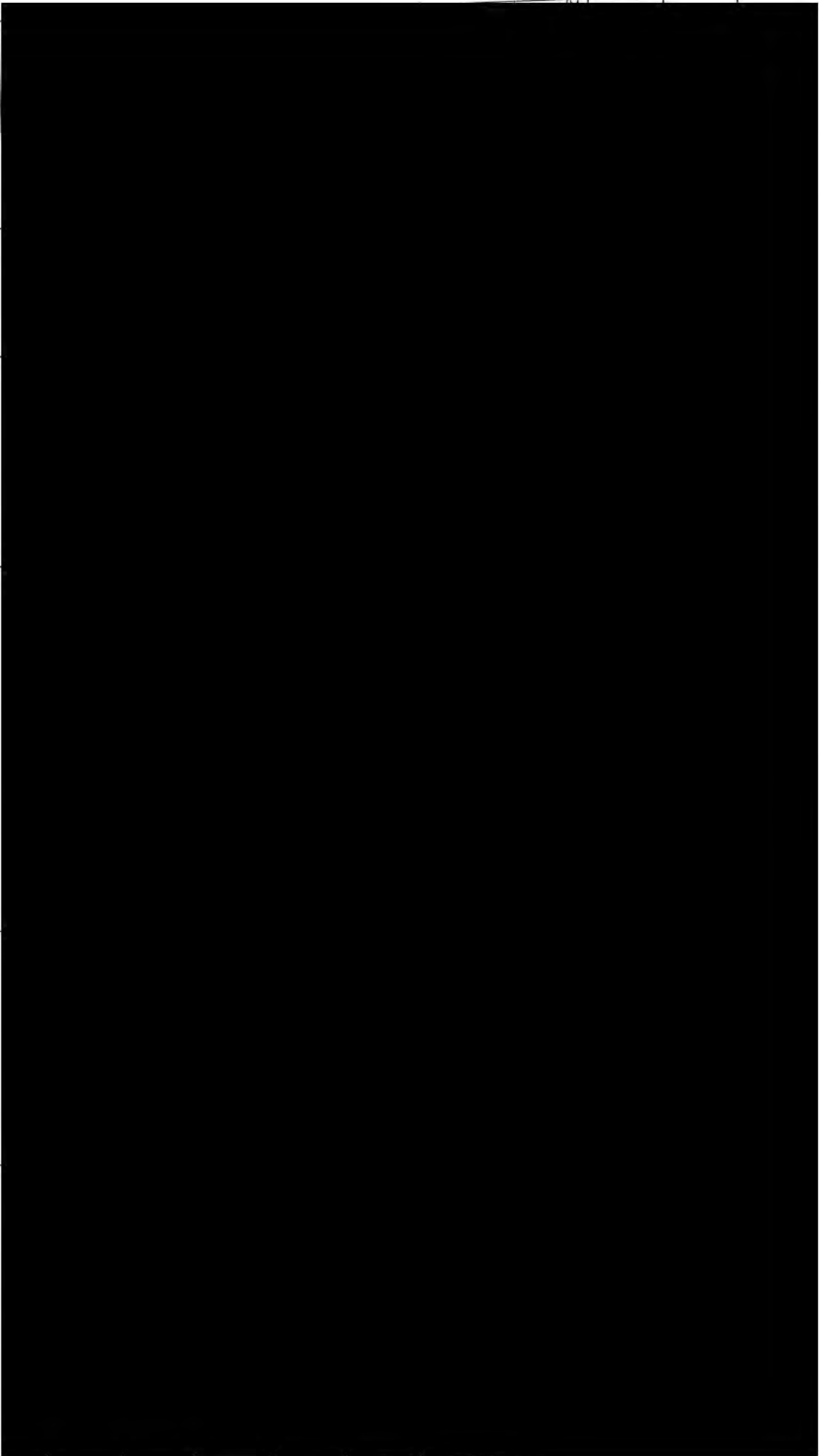


16/01/25

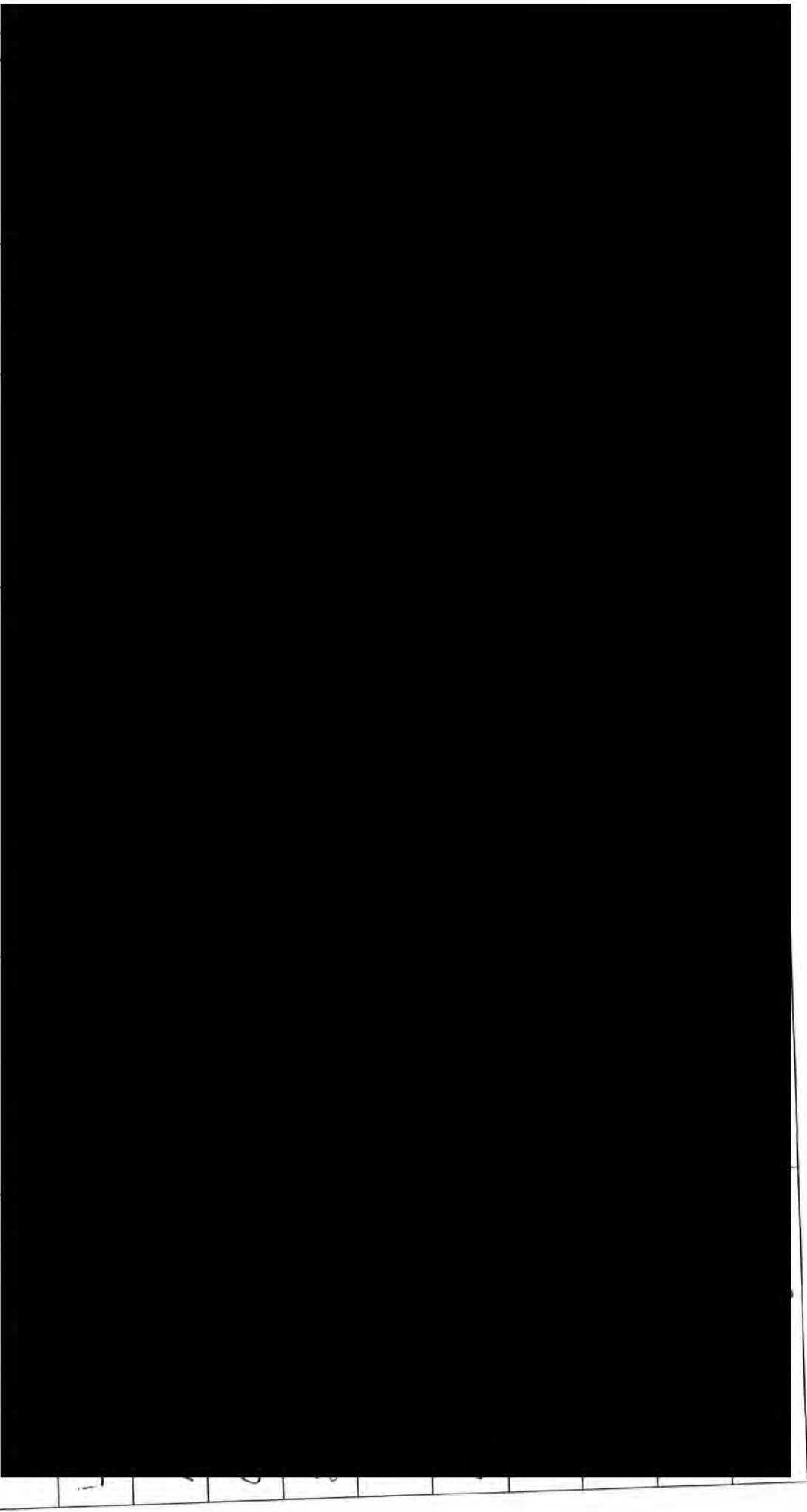
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

17/01/25

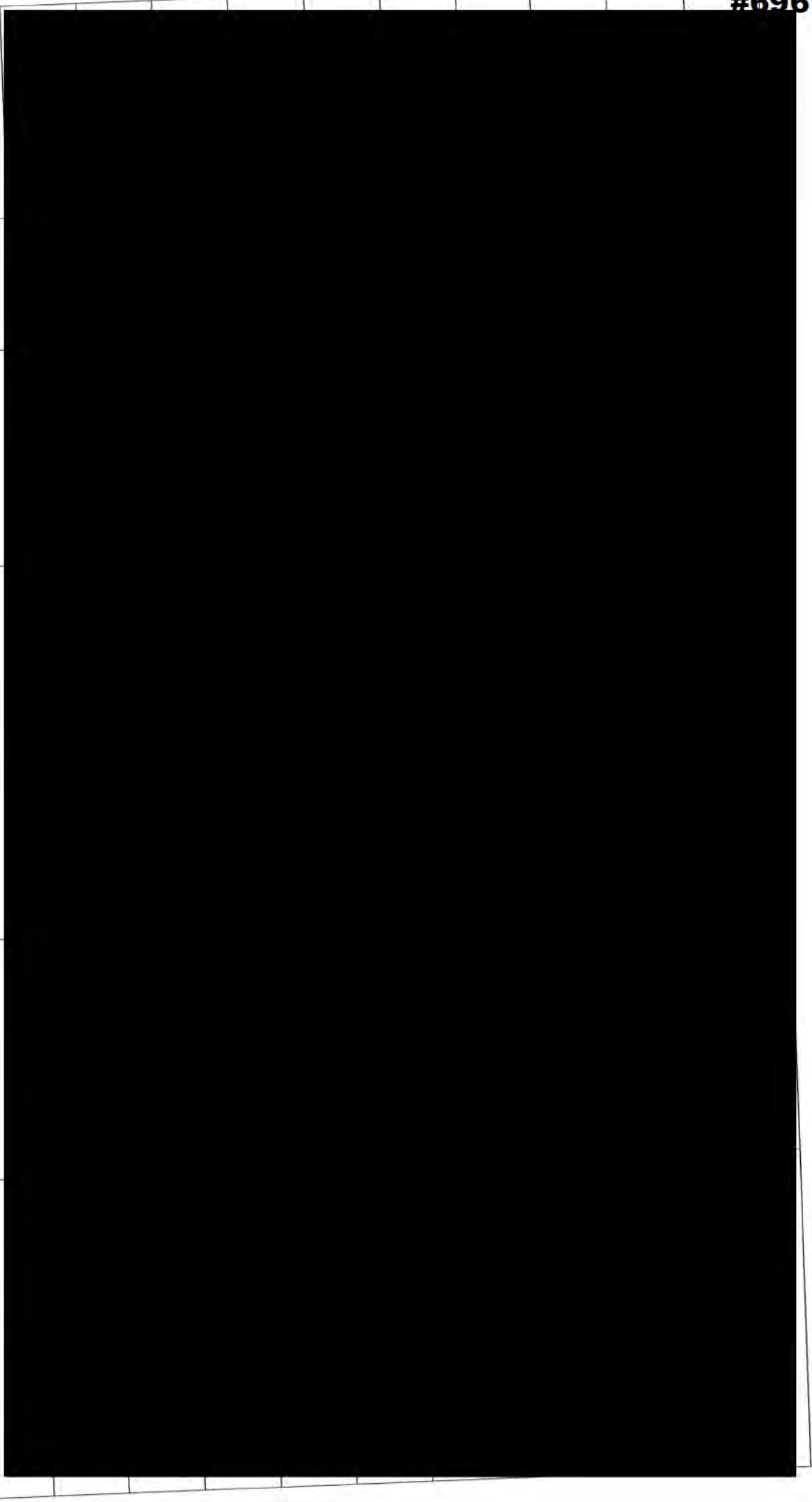
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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17/01/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

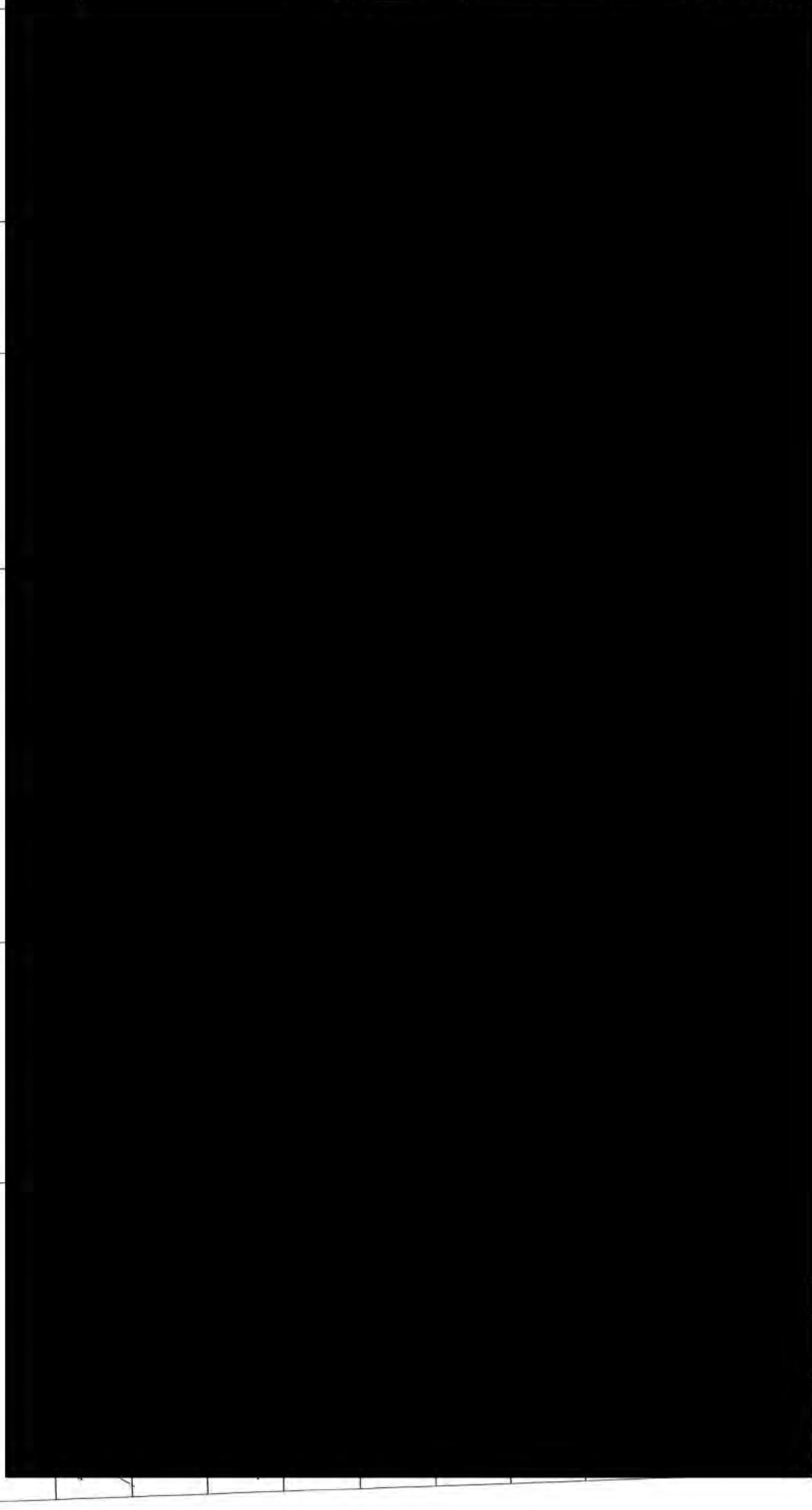
11/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

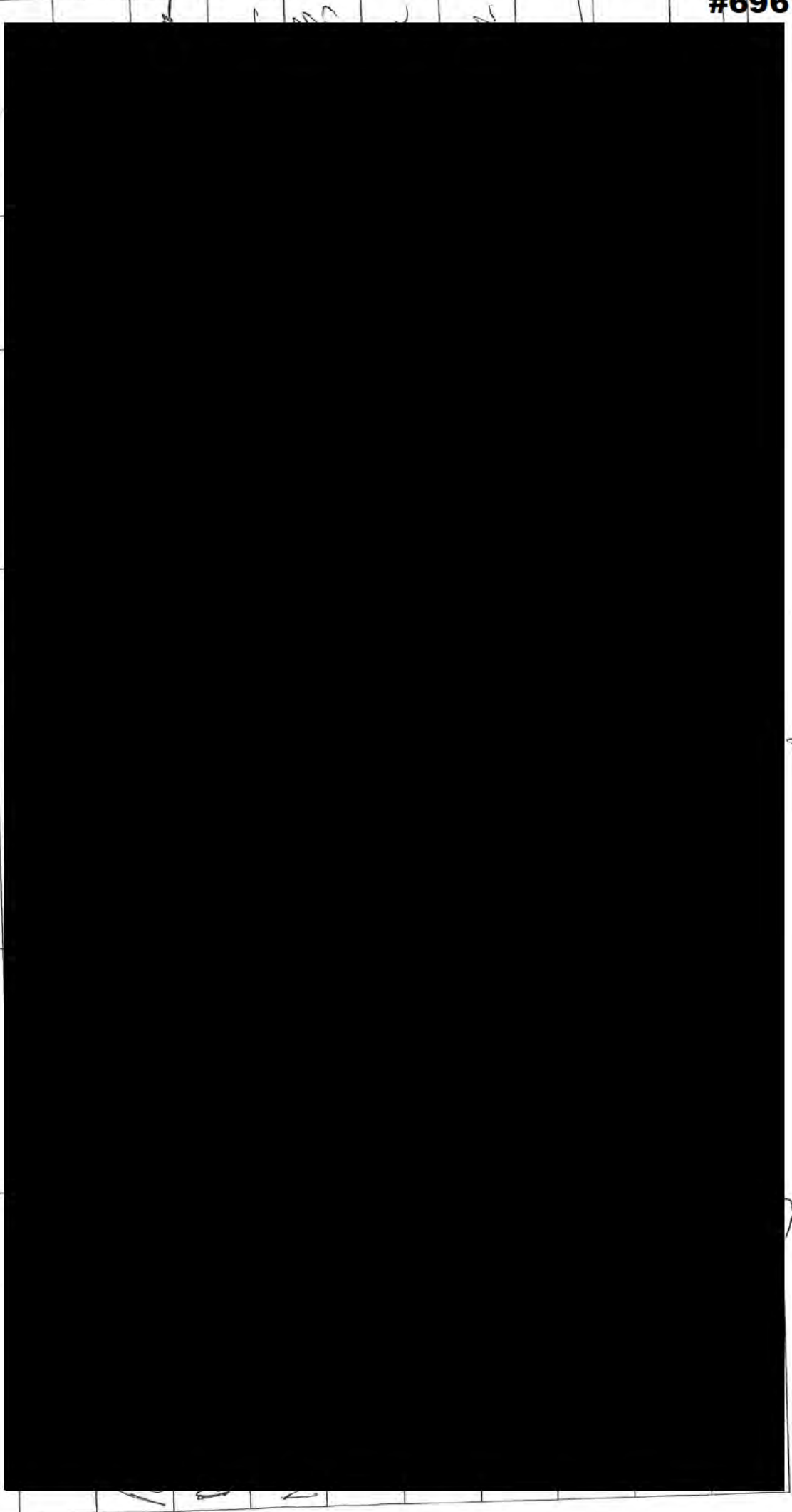
18/01/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

18/01/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

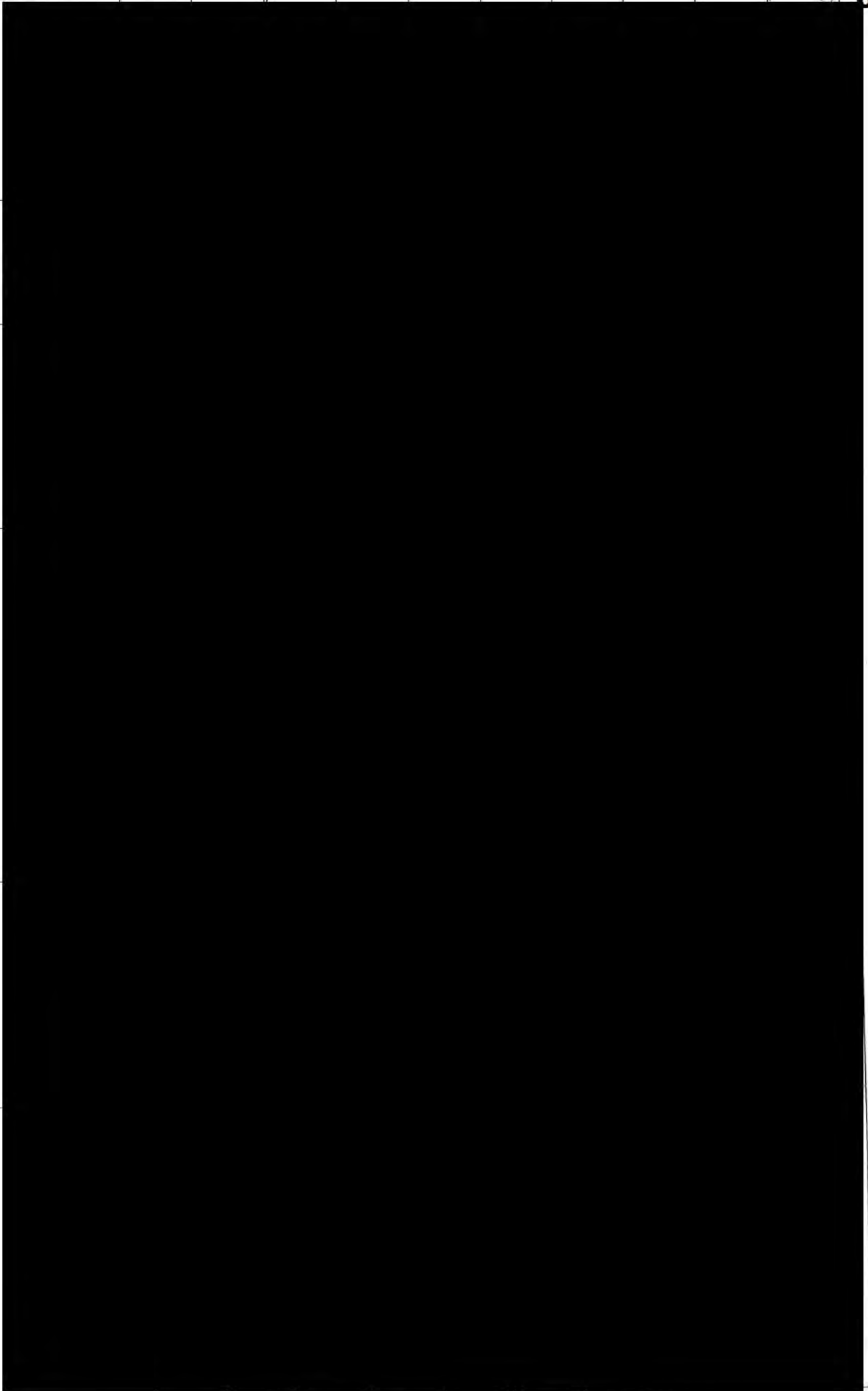
18/01/21

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

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Lives

Nov 10/21



18/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

18/01/20

First and last name

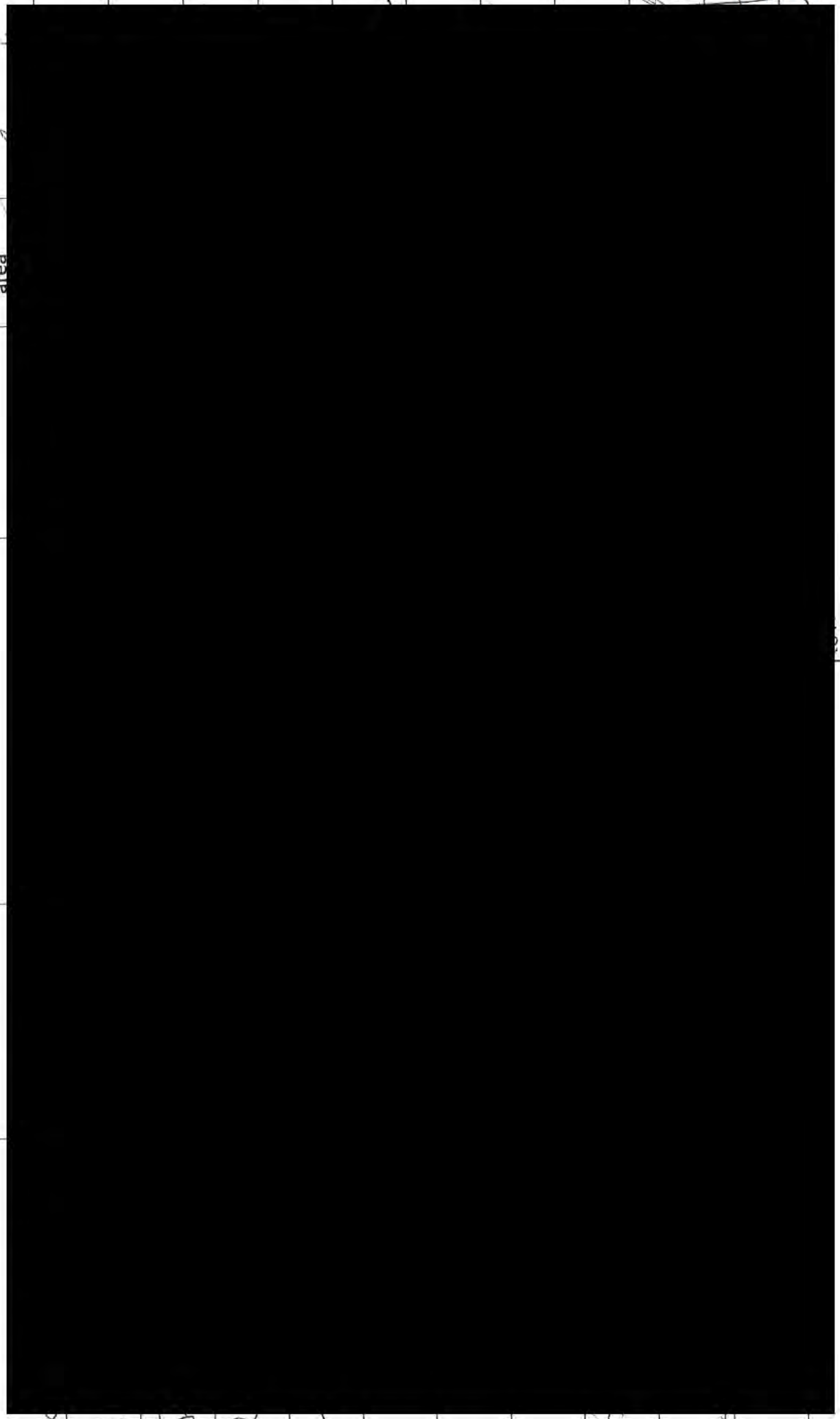
Dog's name

Email

Phone

Lives in the local board area

Signature



18/01/20

First and last name

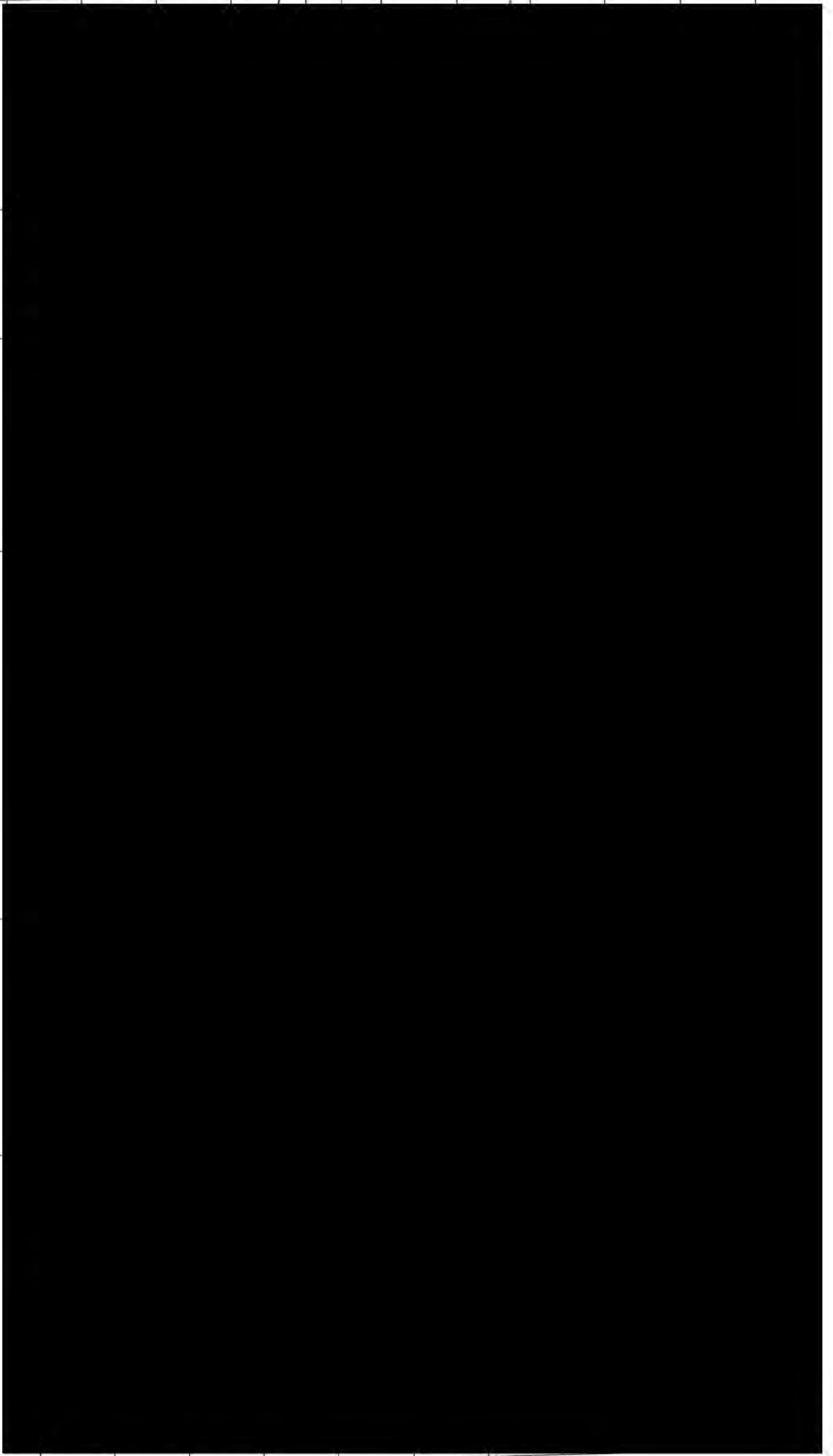
Dog's name

Email

Phone

Lives in the local board area

Signature



18/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

18/01/21

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

18/01/25

First and last name

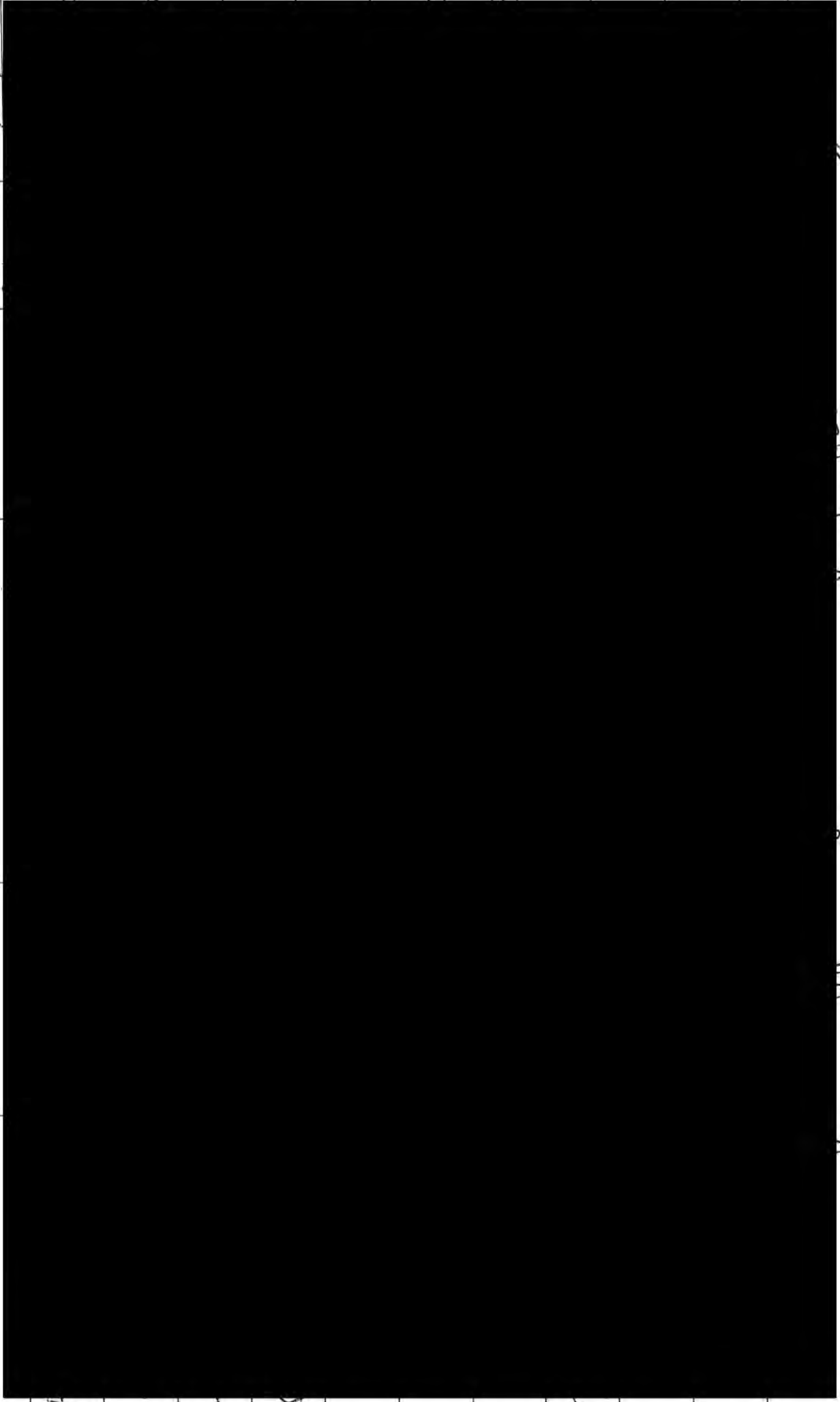
Dog's name

Email

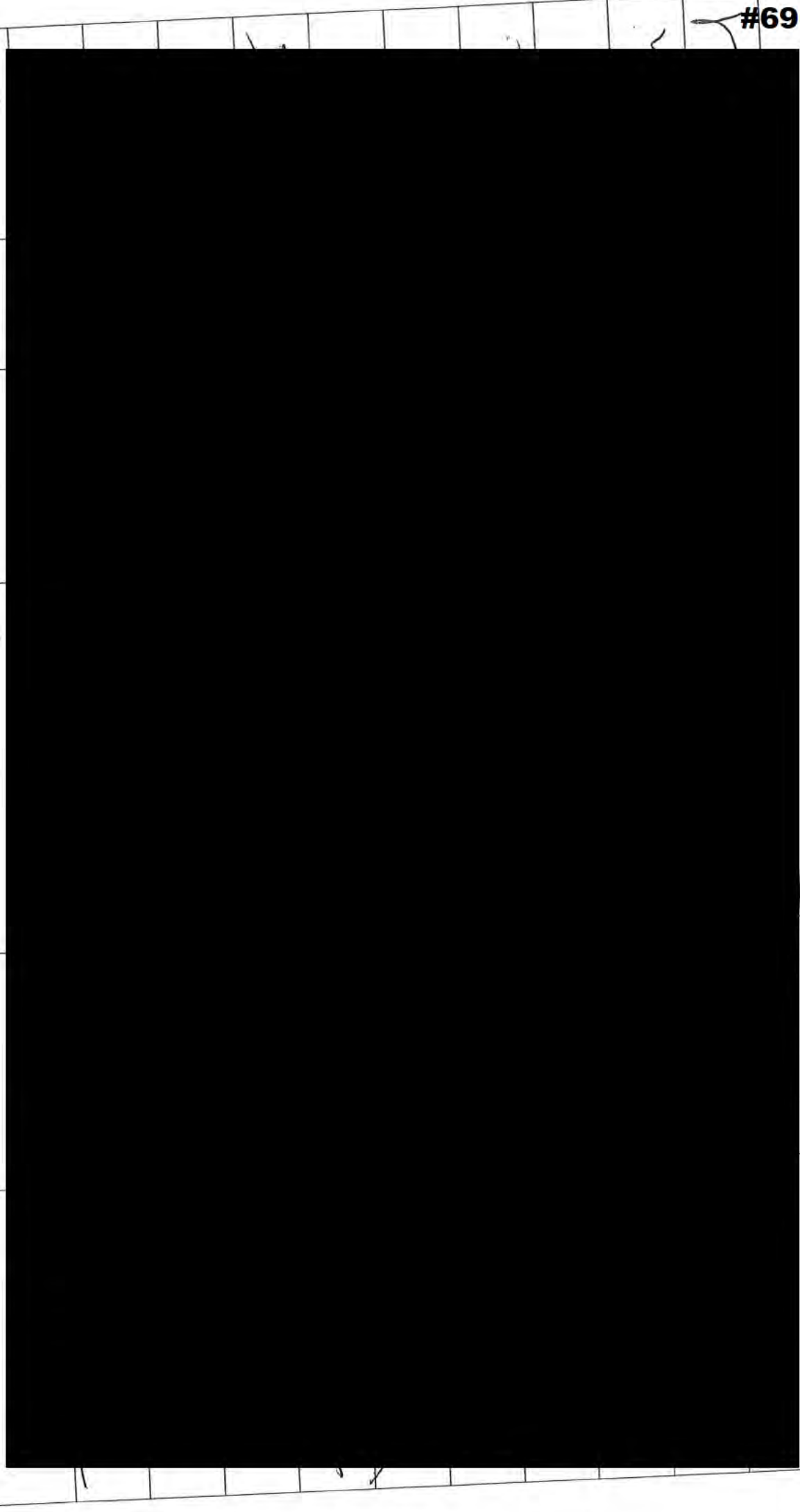
Phone

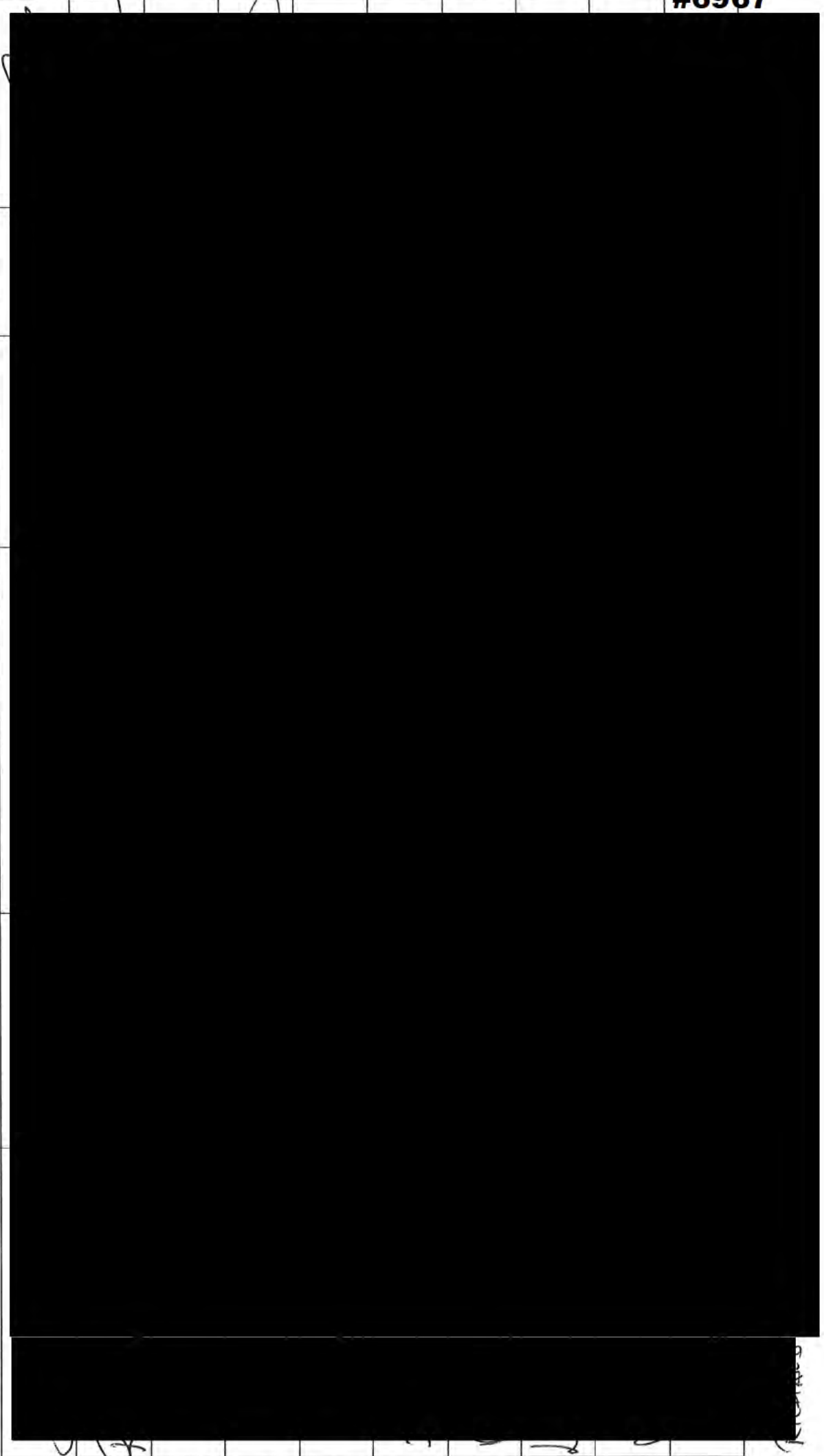
Lives in the local board area

Signature



18/01/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

CP/10181

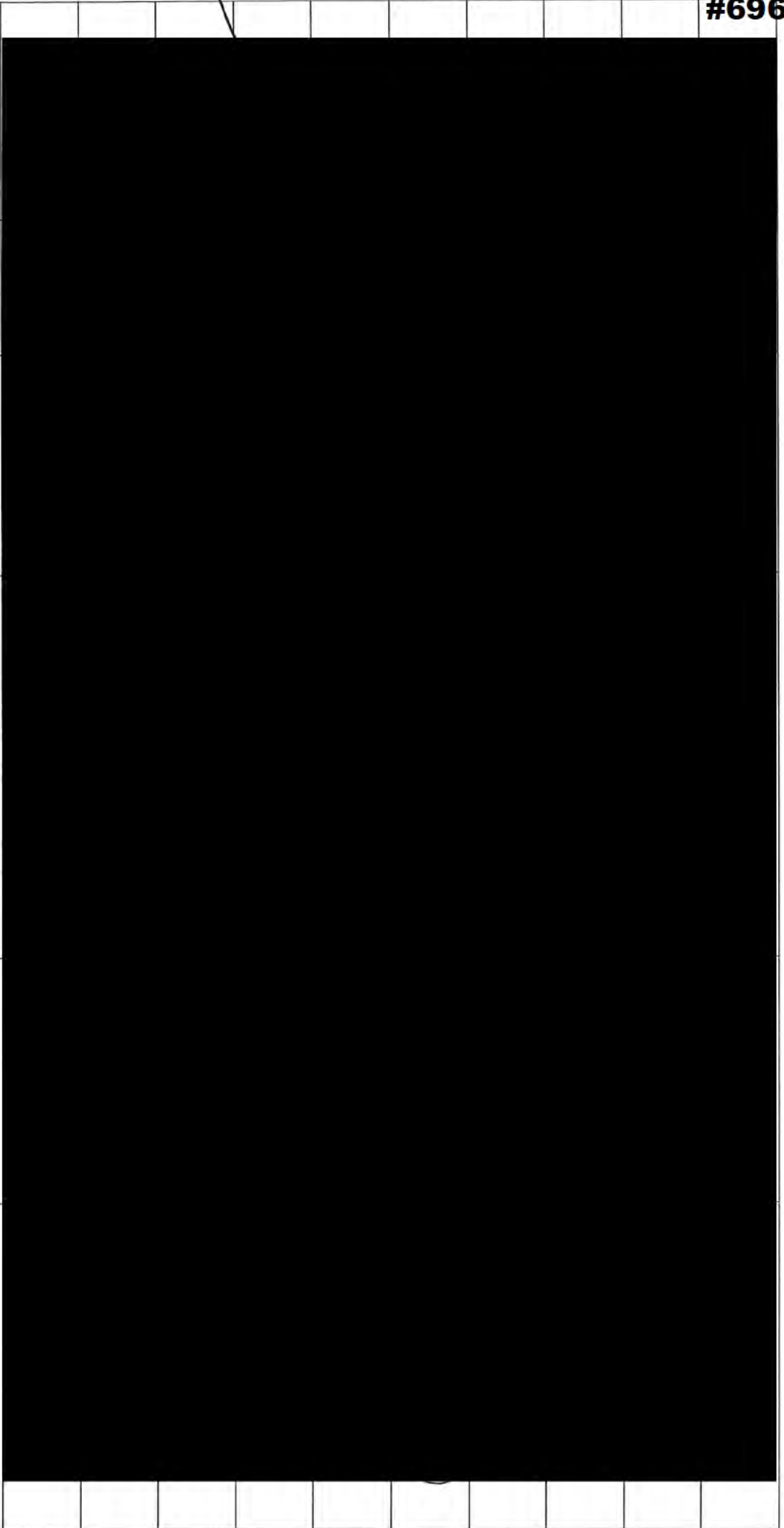
CP/10181

10/11/12

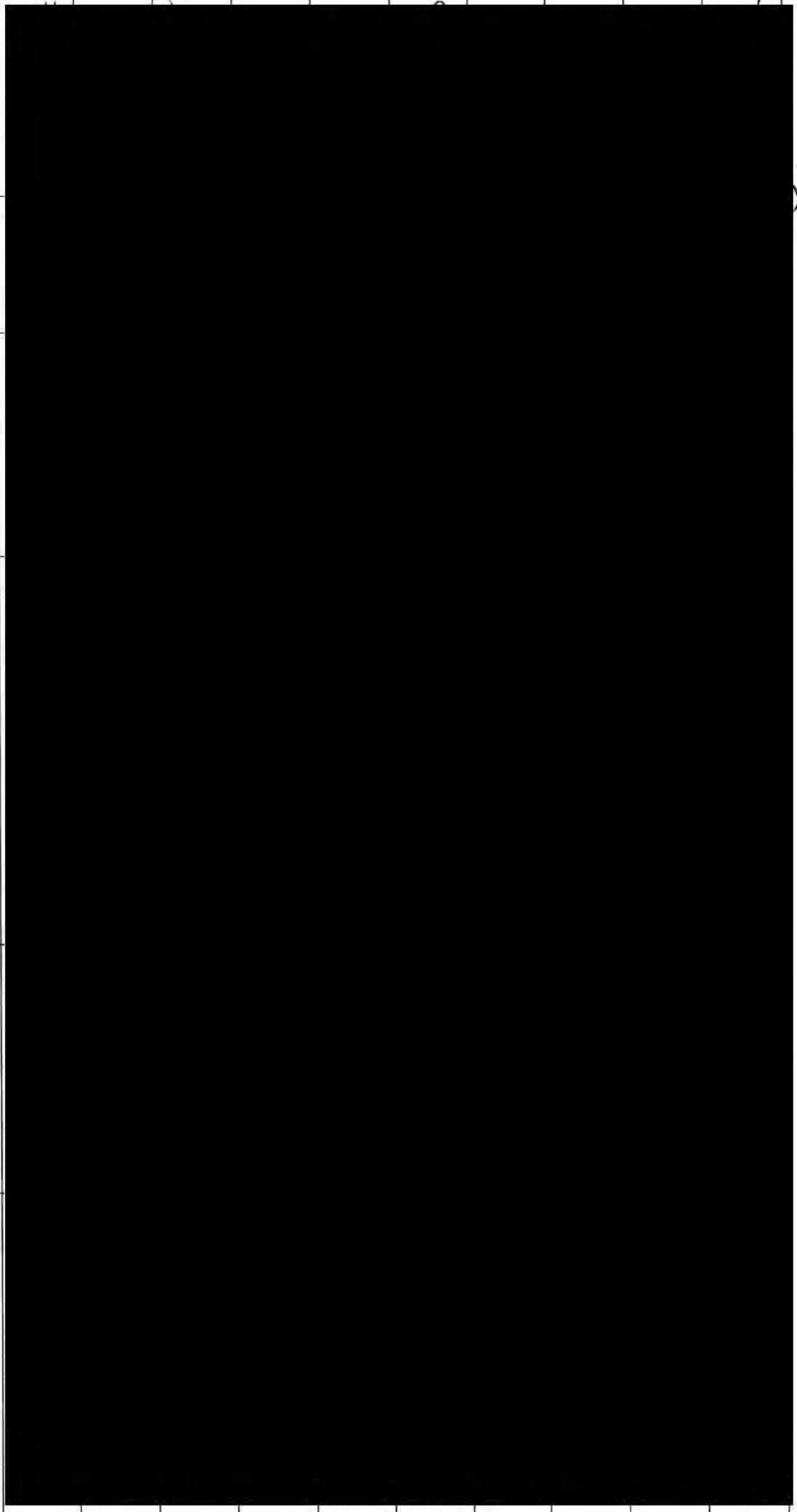
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
[Redacted Content]					

112511

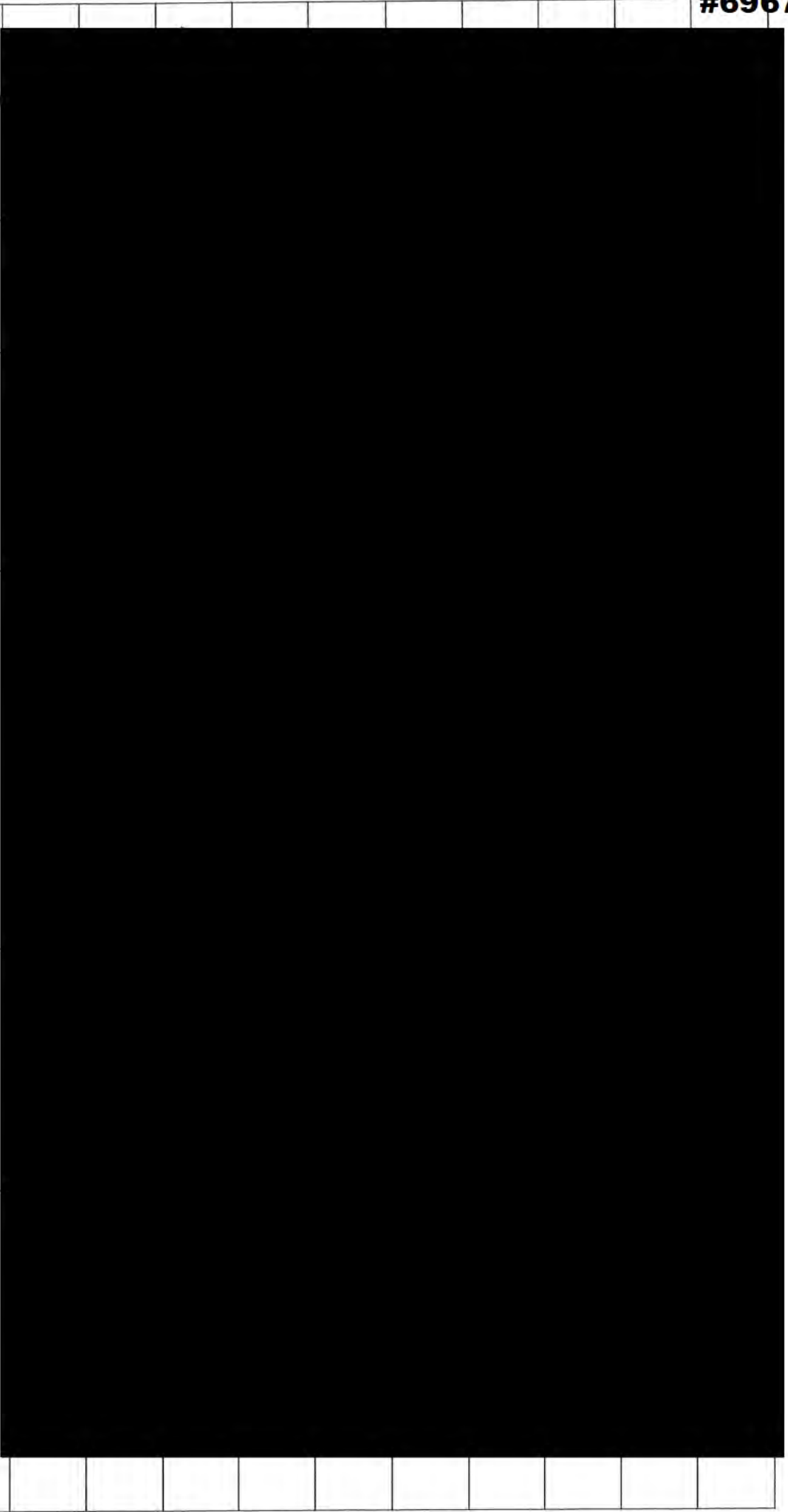
10/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone <input type="radio"/>	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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11/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

Signature

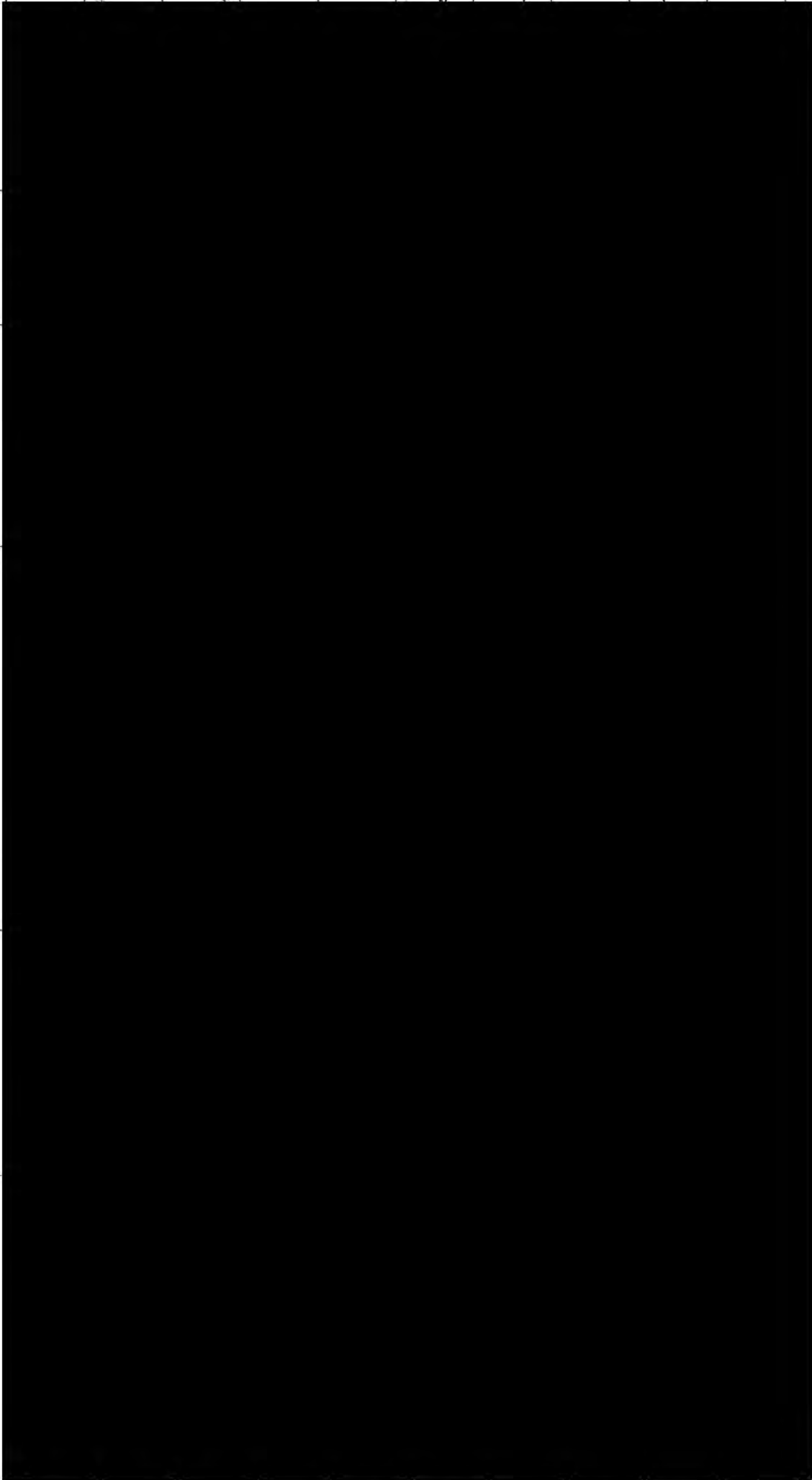
Lives in the local board area

Phone

Email

Dog's name

First and last name



11/20/18

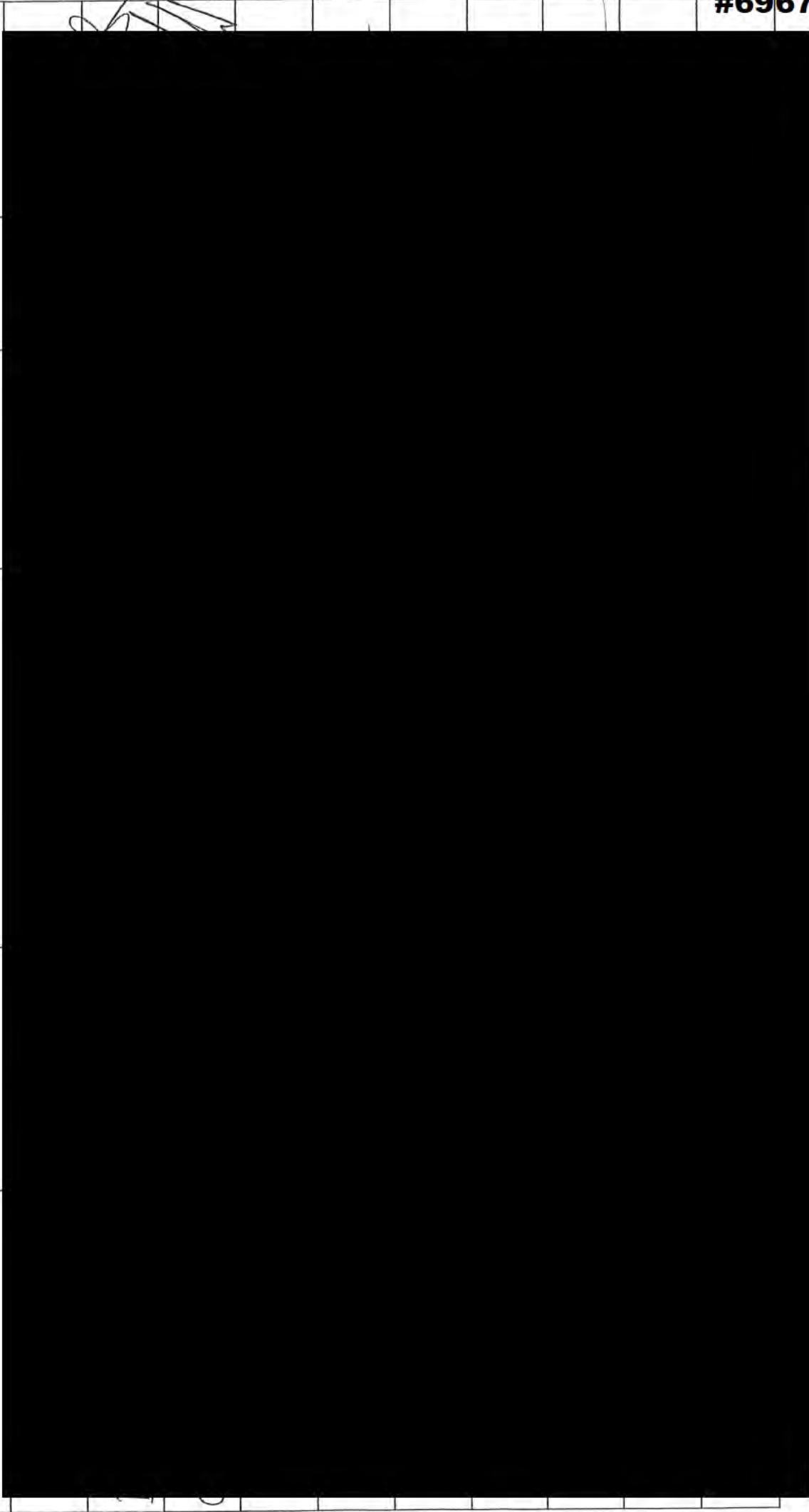
1/10/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

PA E C A

17/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

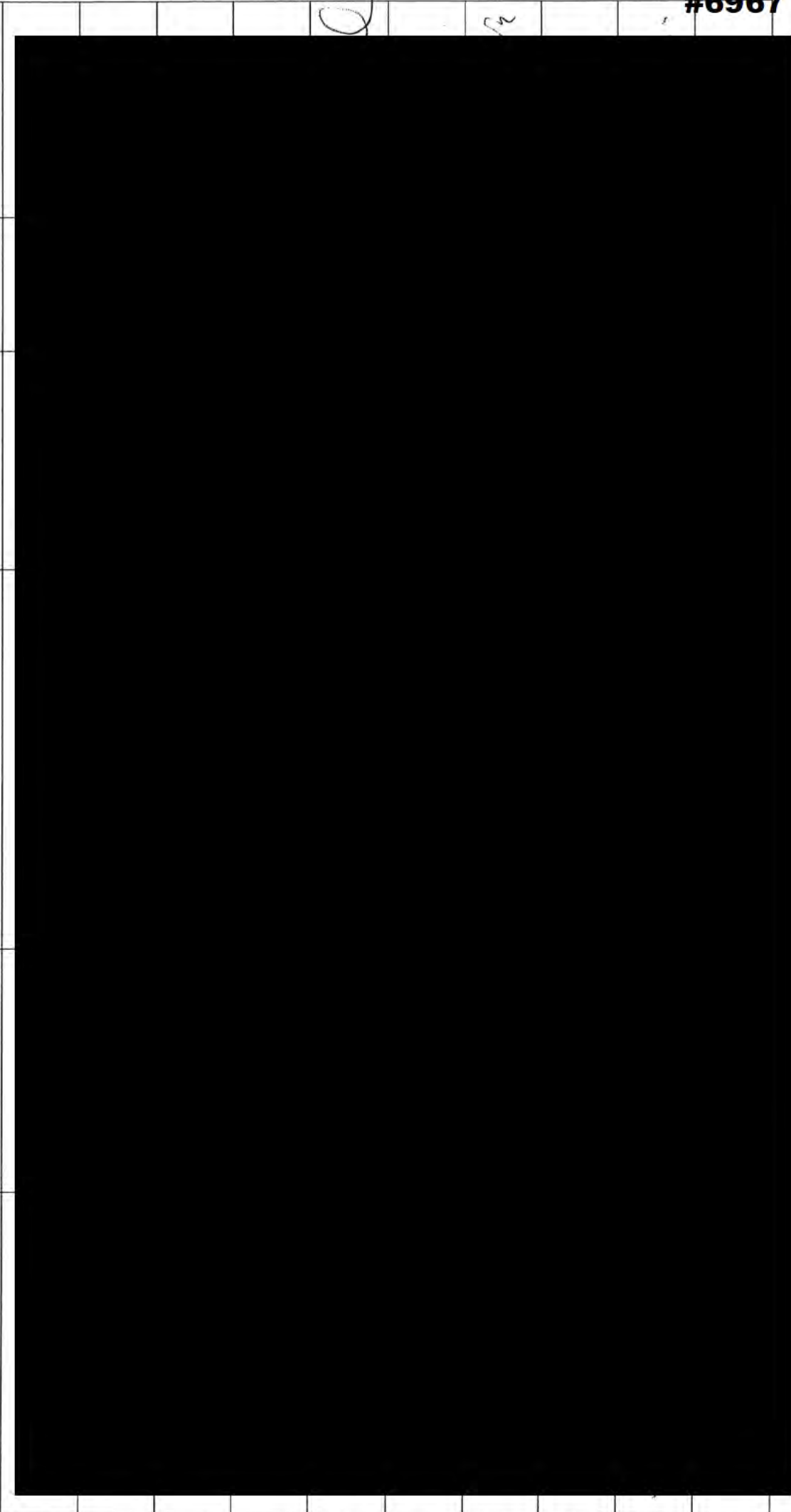
20/01/15

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

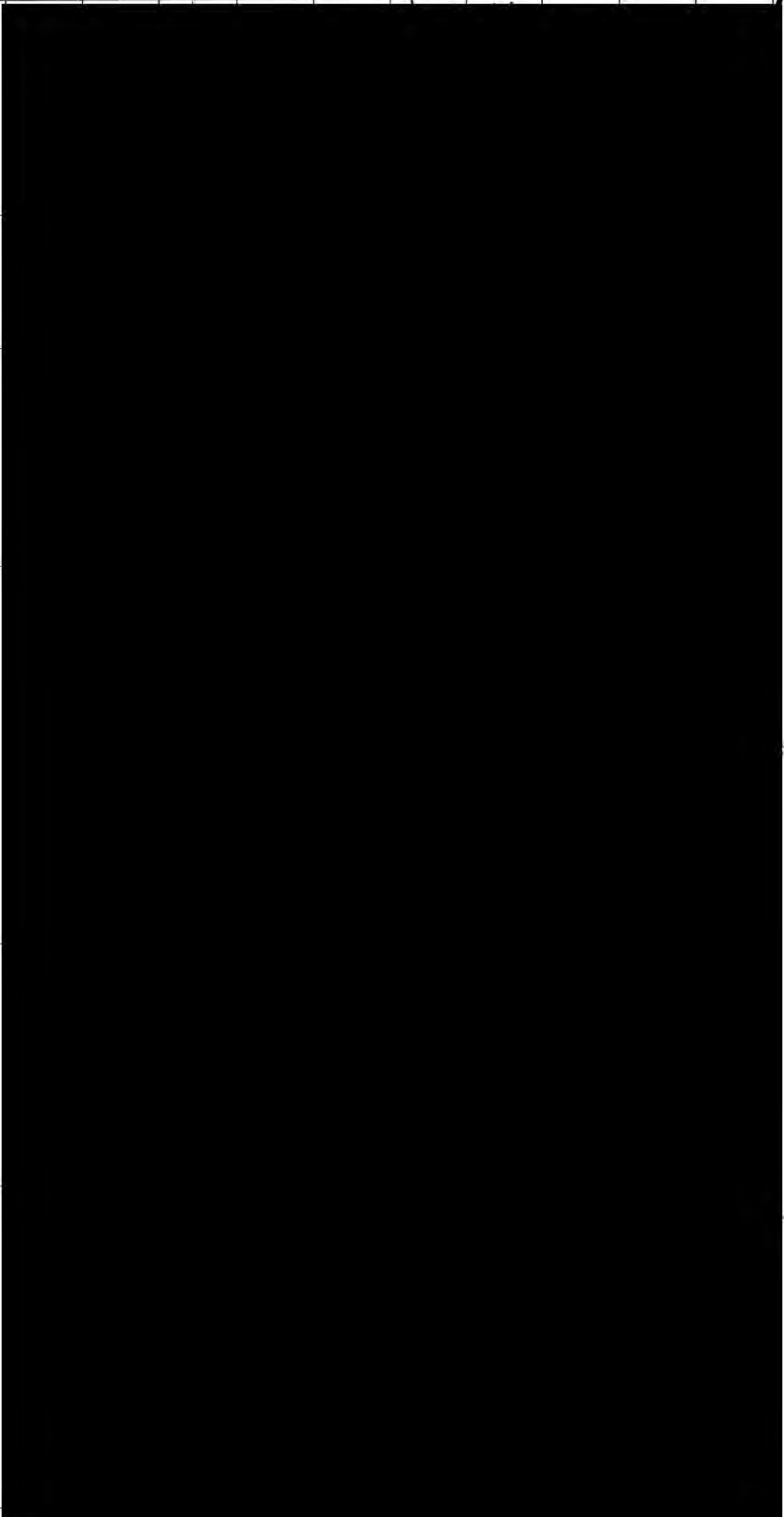
2010/10/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

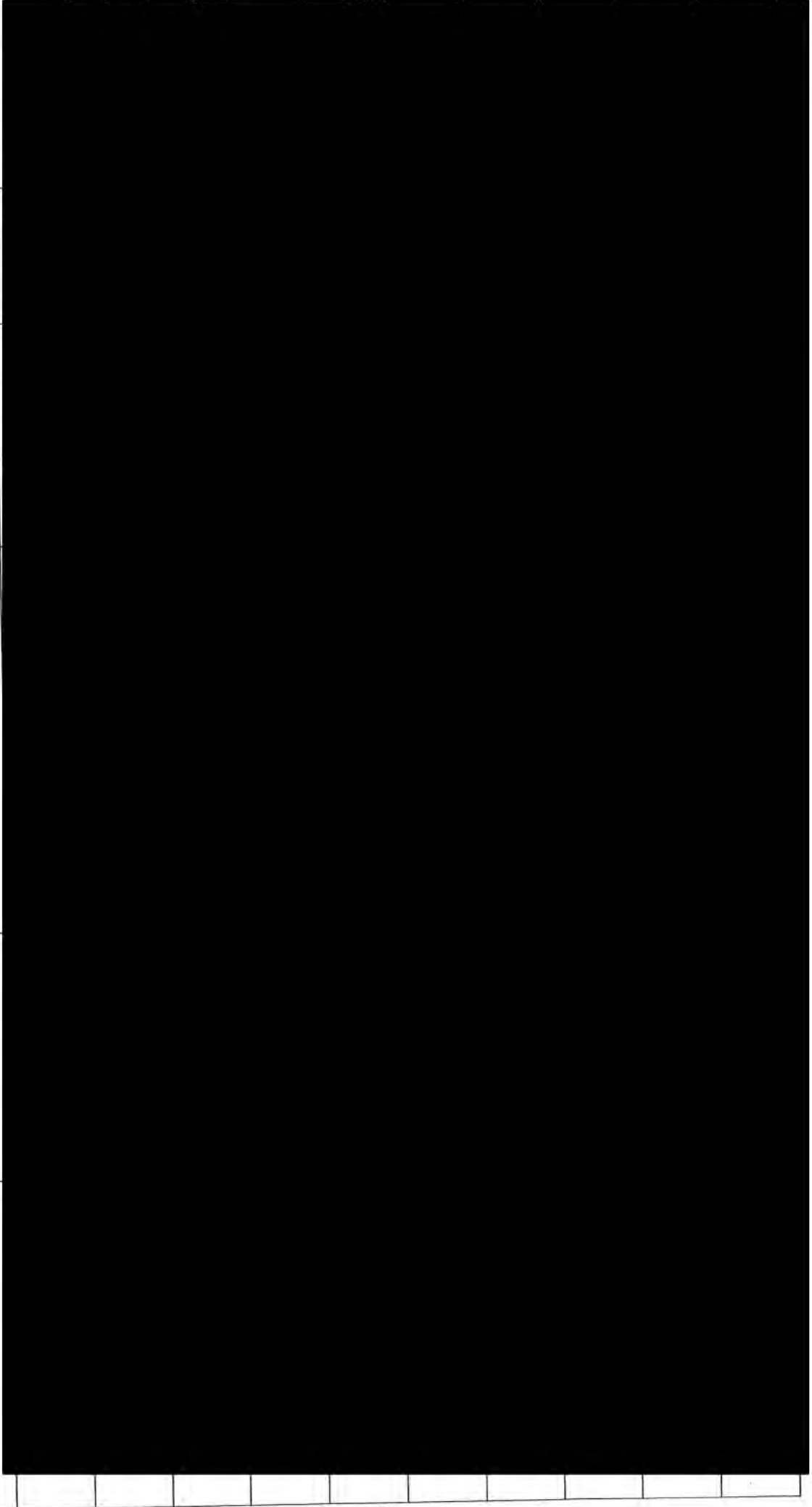
20/01/20

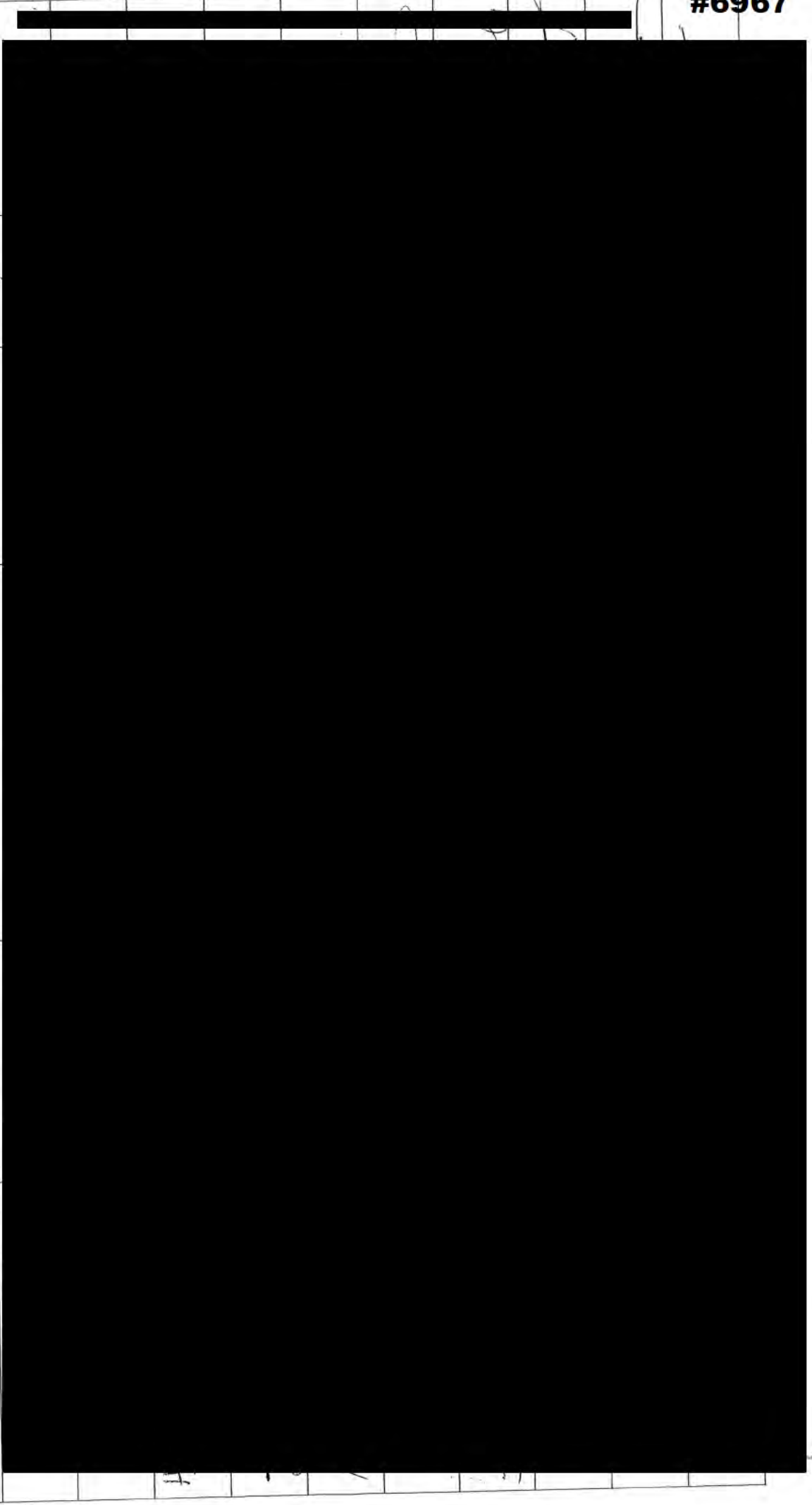
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

02/10/08

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

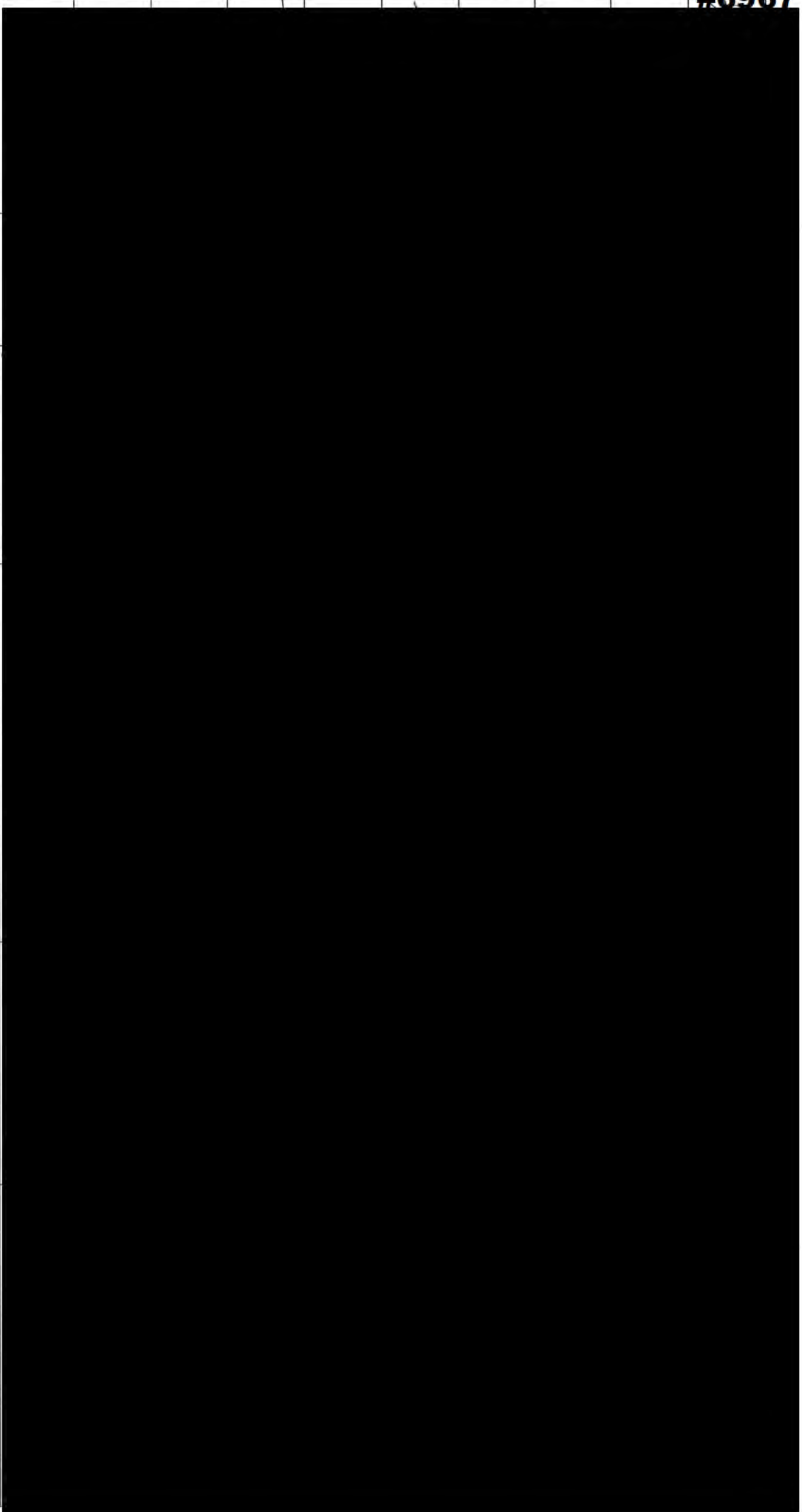
21101/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

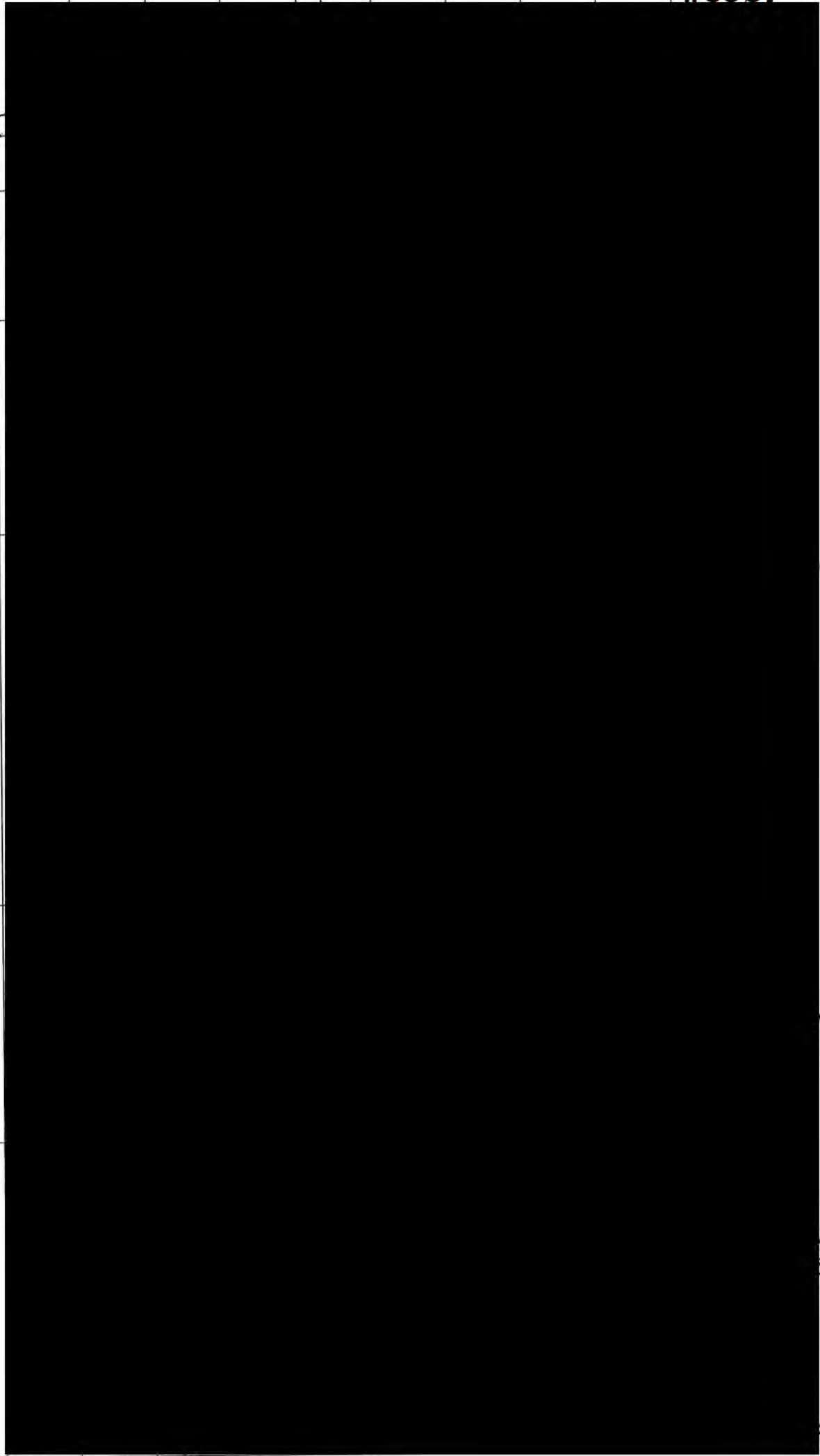
28/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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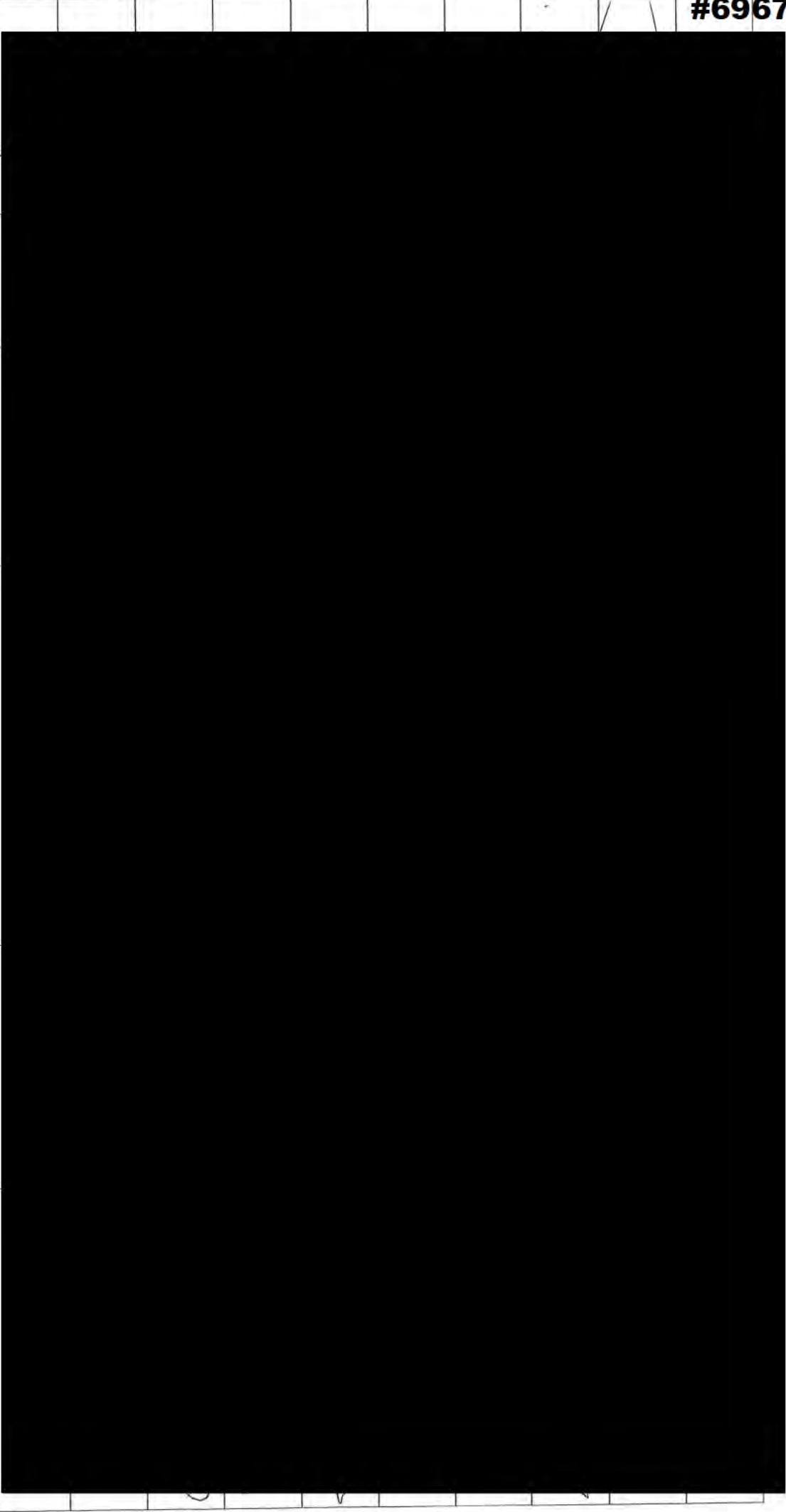
24/01/17

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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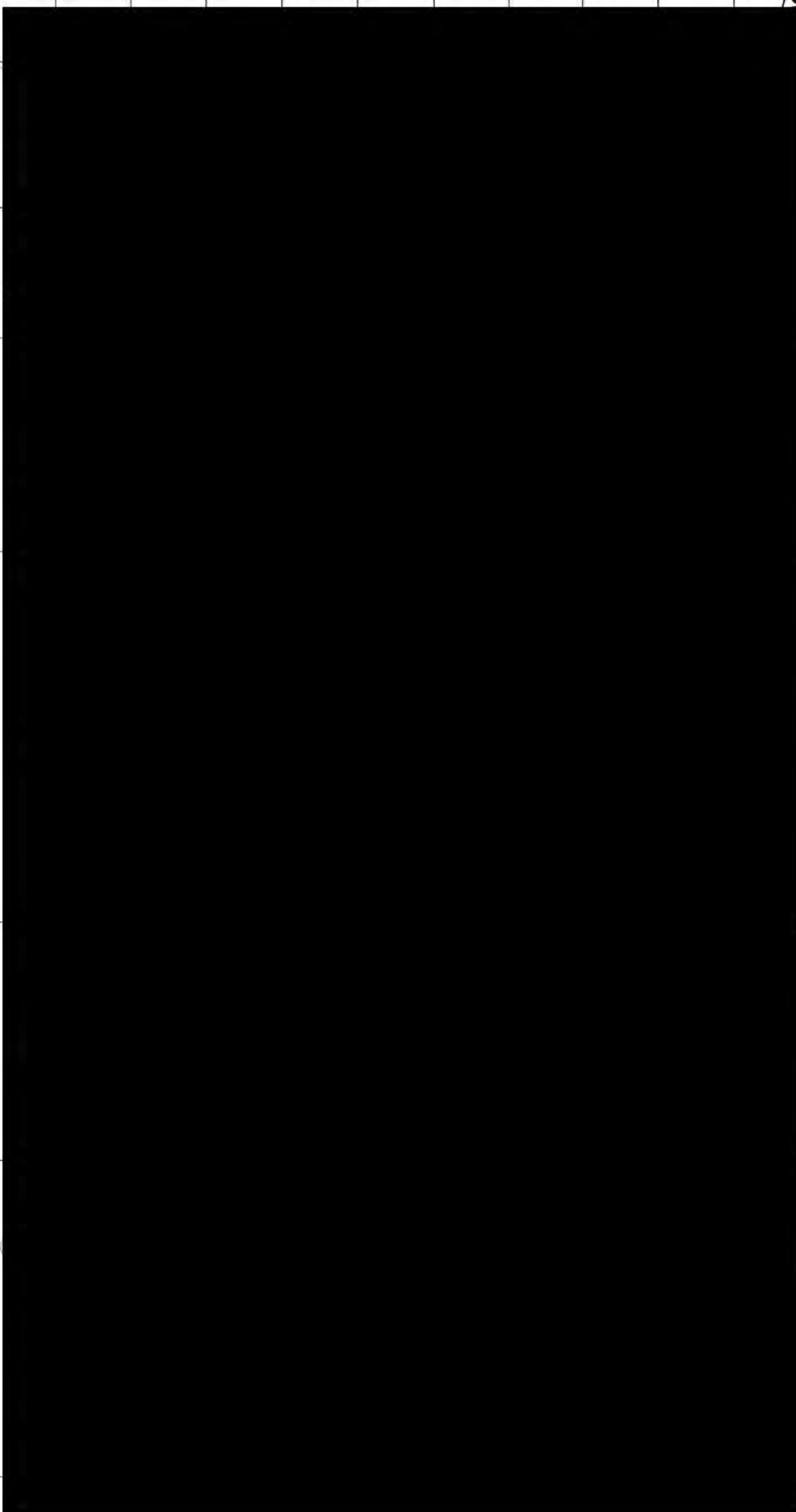
2010/11/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board	Signature

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

Y-10-11-12

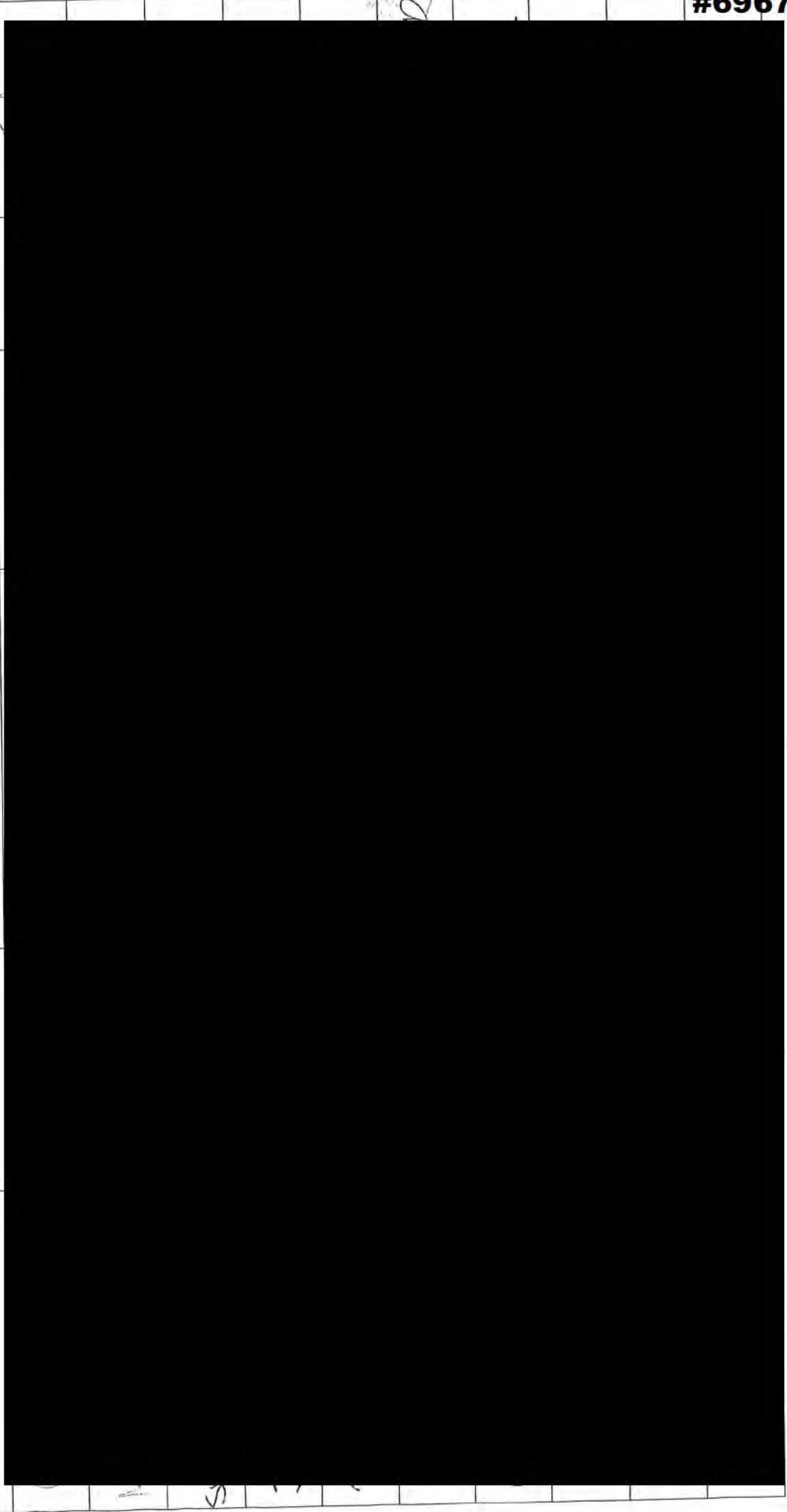
23/01/26

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board	Signature
					

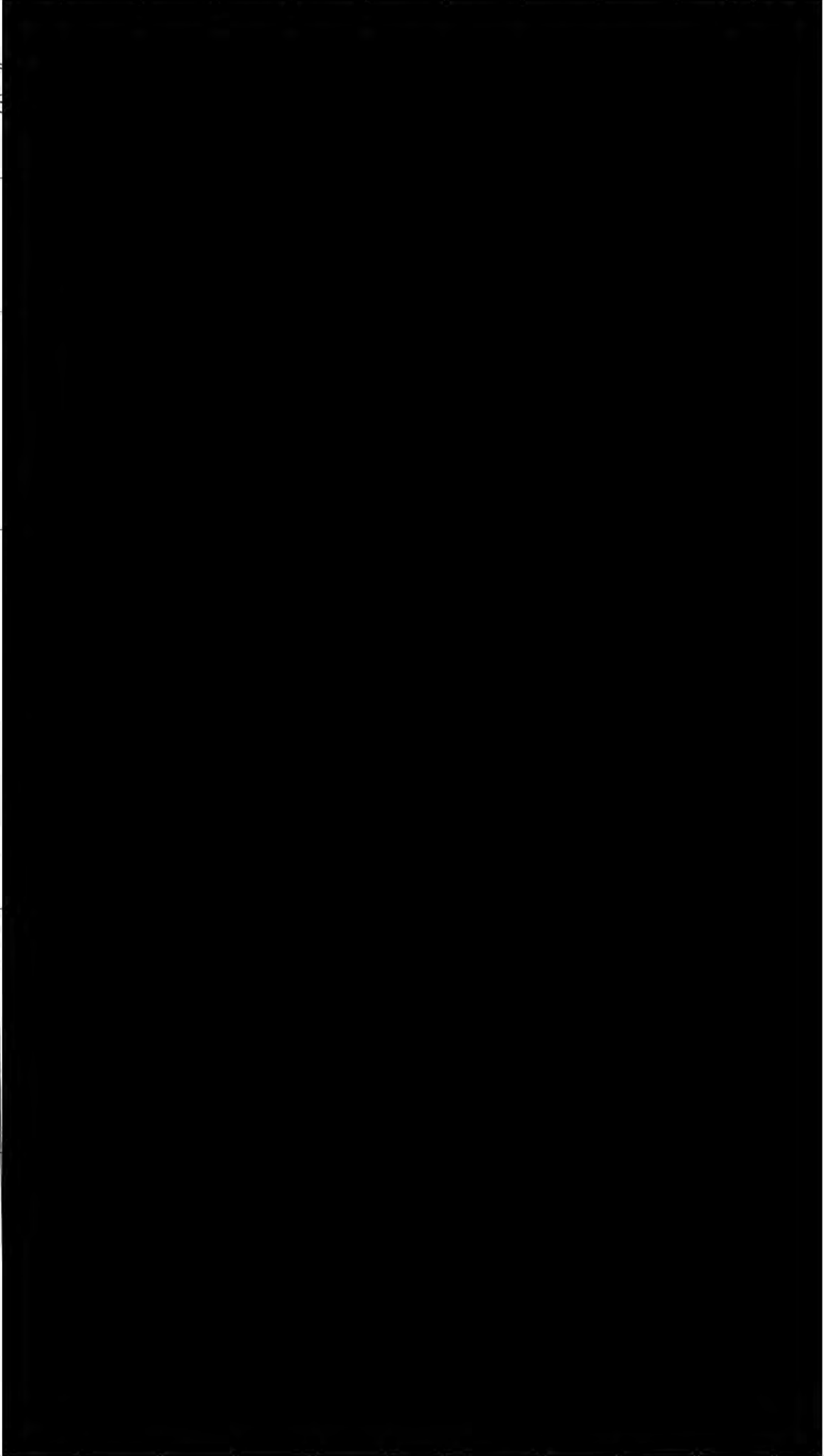
24/01/25 WDKRTE CECILIA APREAC ~ LENA TALL.

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

25/01/23

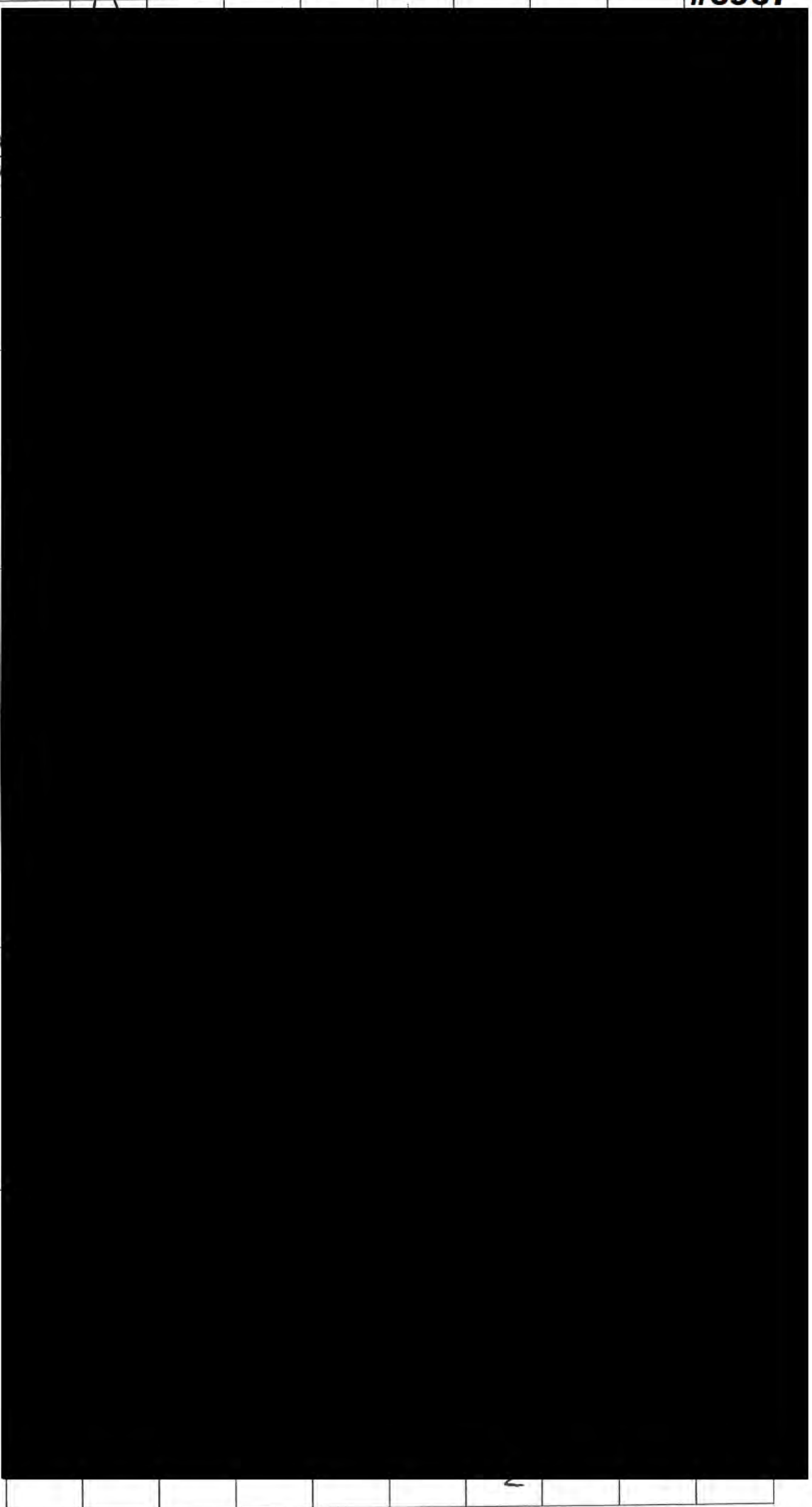
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

26/01/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

2101/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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28/01/25

First and last name

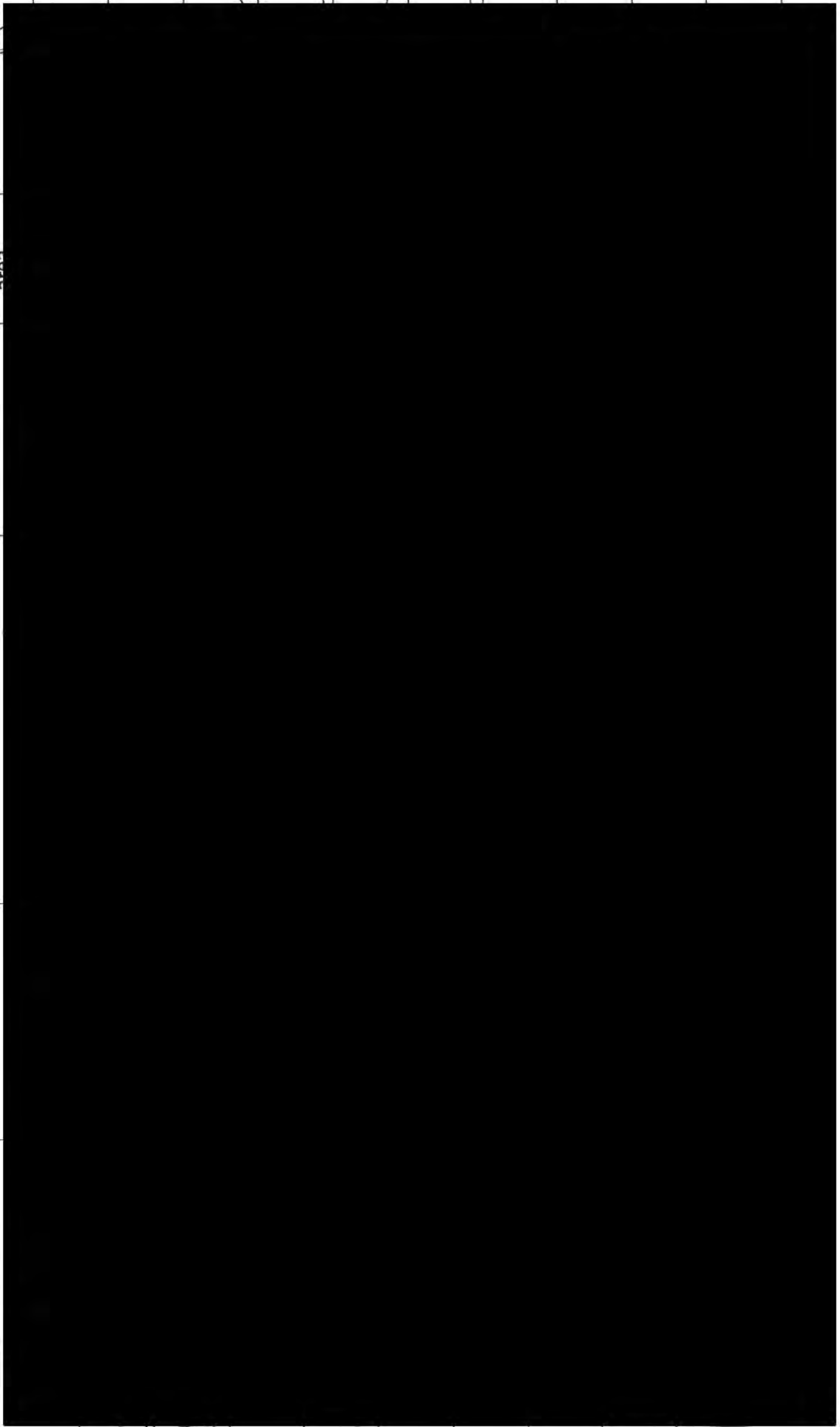
Dog's name

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Lives in the local board

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2010/100

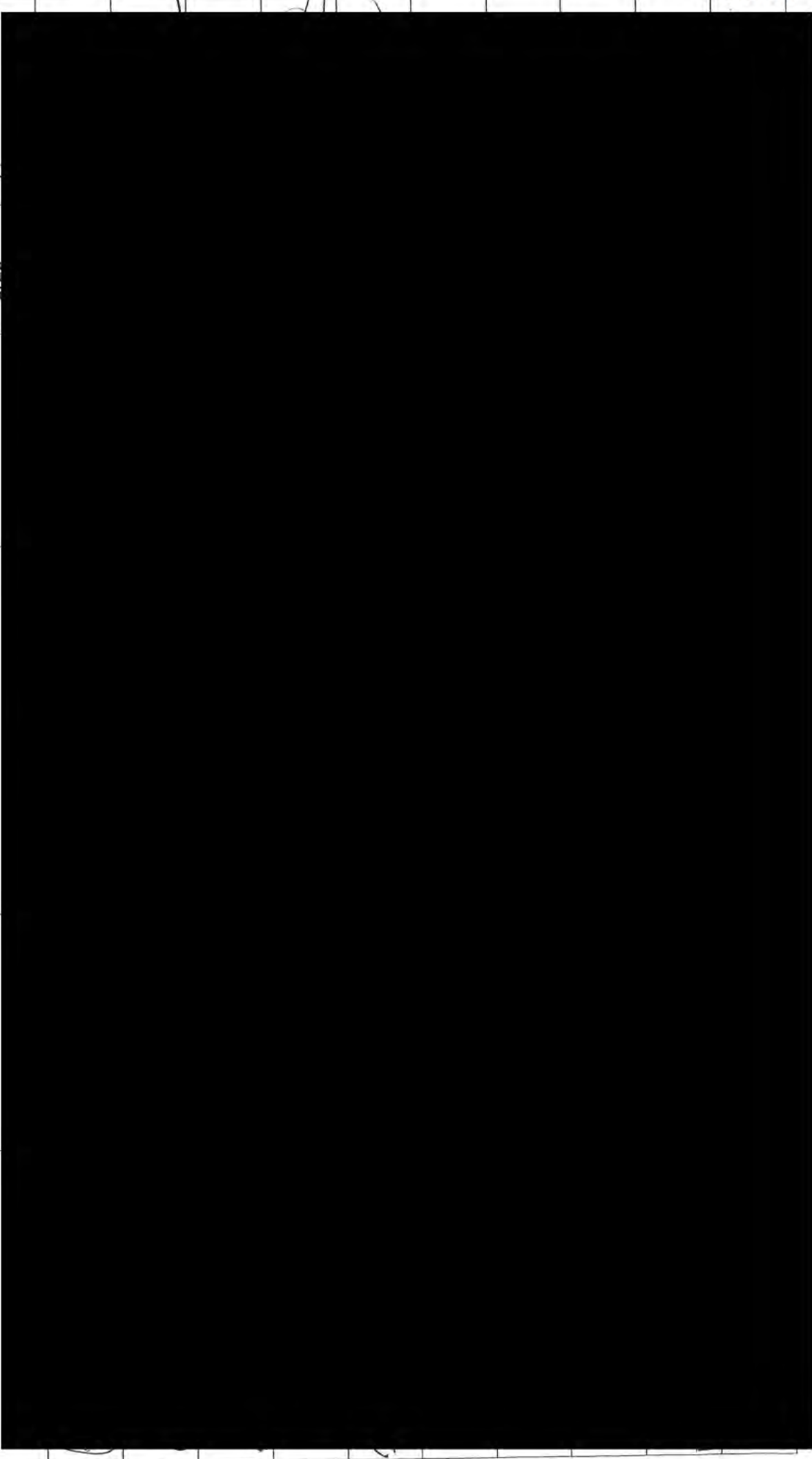
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

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27/01/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

29/01/25

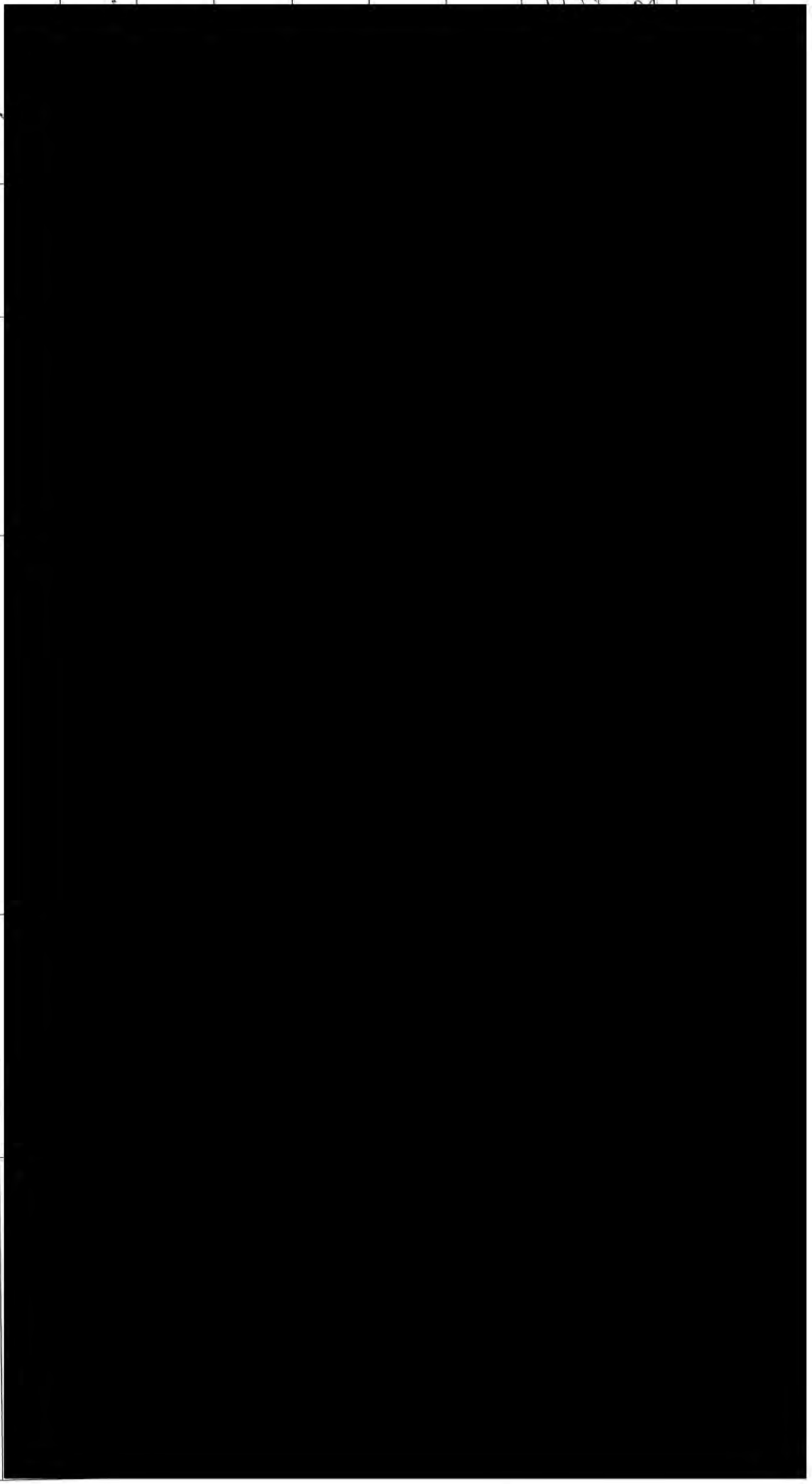
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature _____

102/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

600 Com

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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1/0/12

1/02/20

First and last name

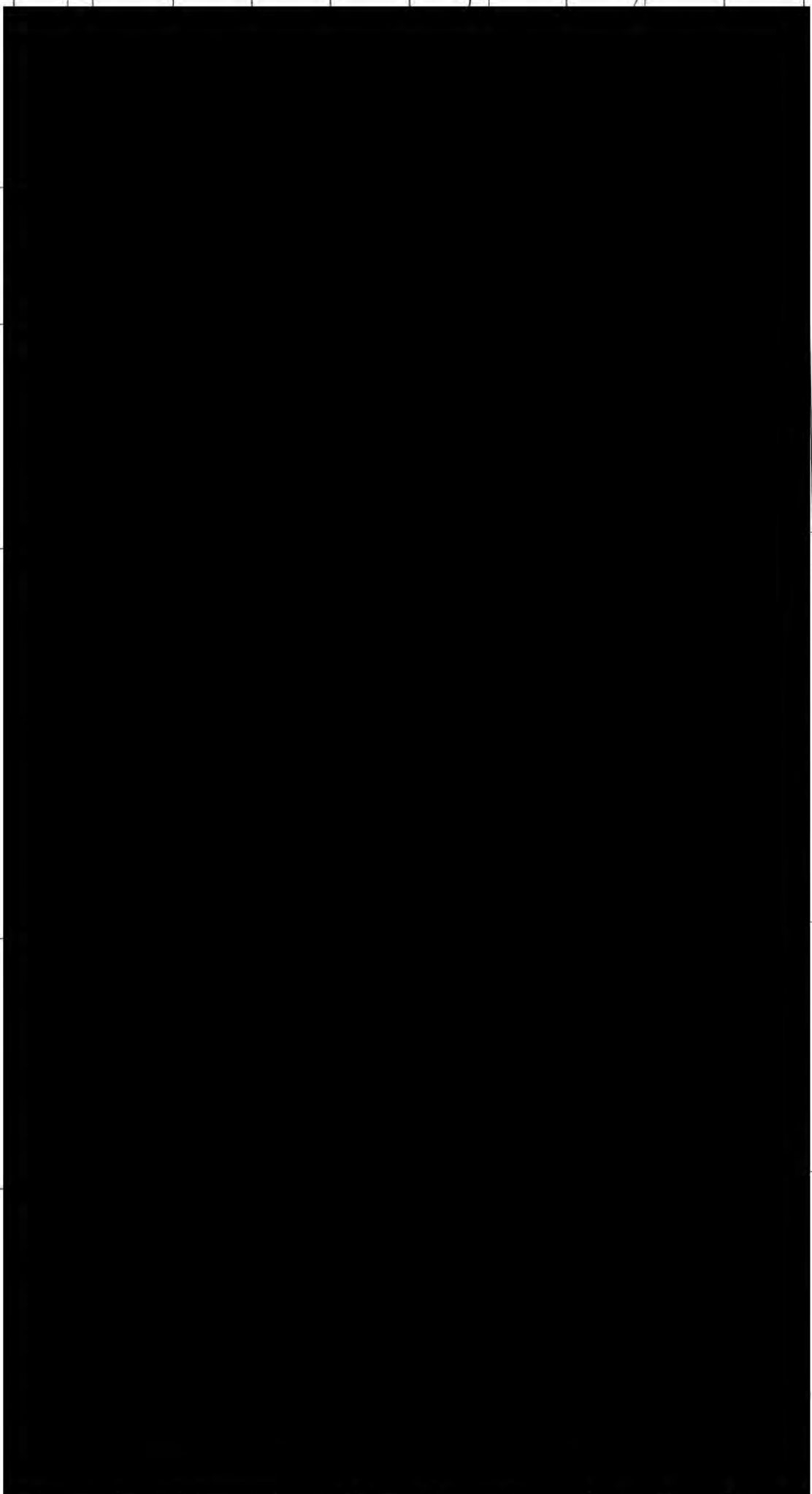
Dog's name

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Phone

Lives in the local board area

Signature



Signature

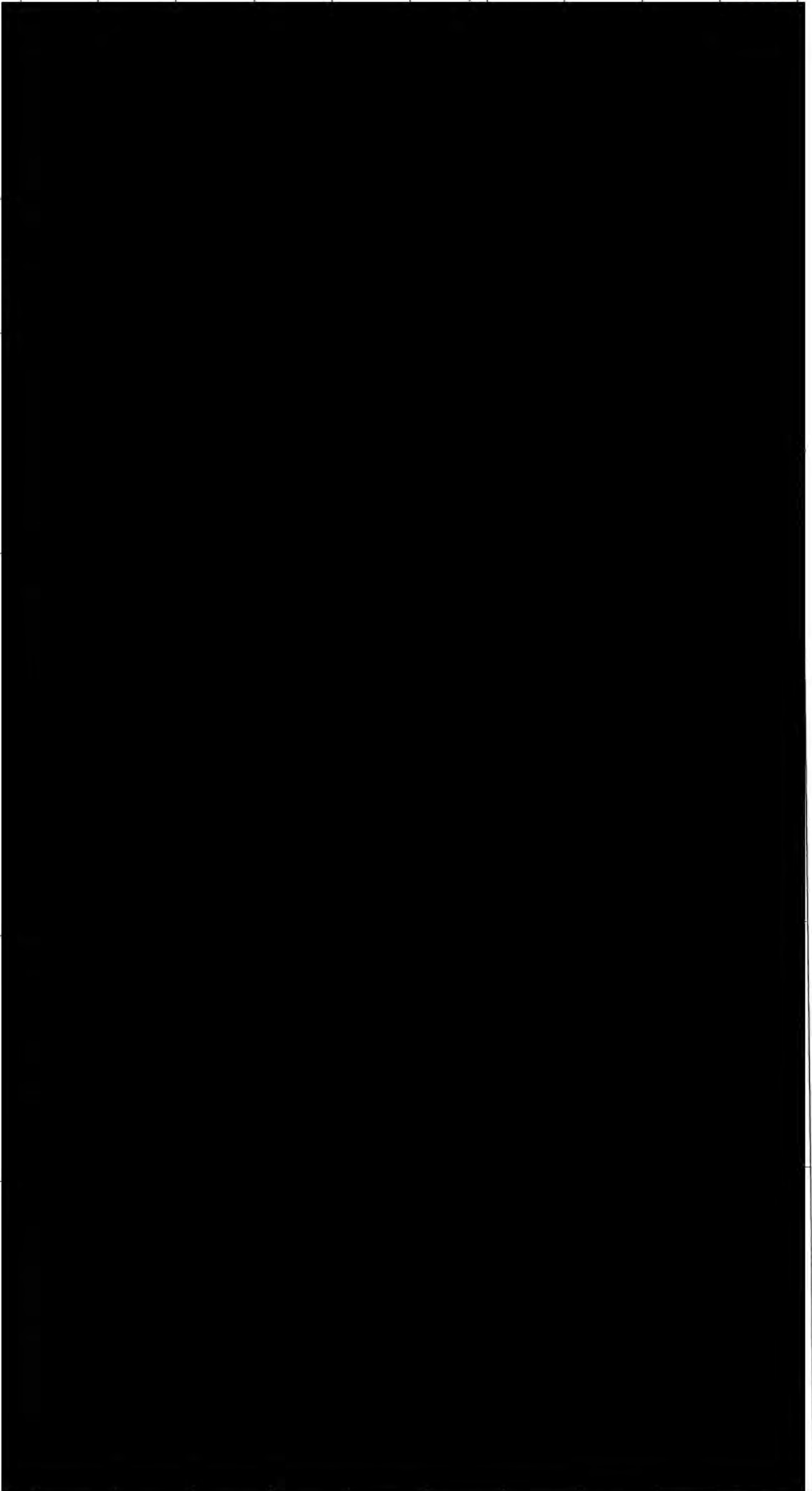
Lives in the local board area

Phone

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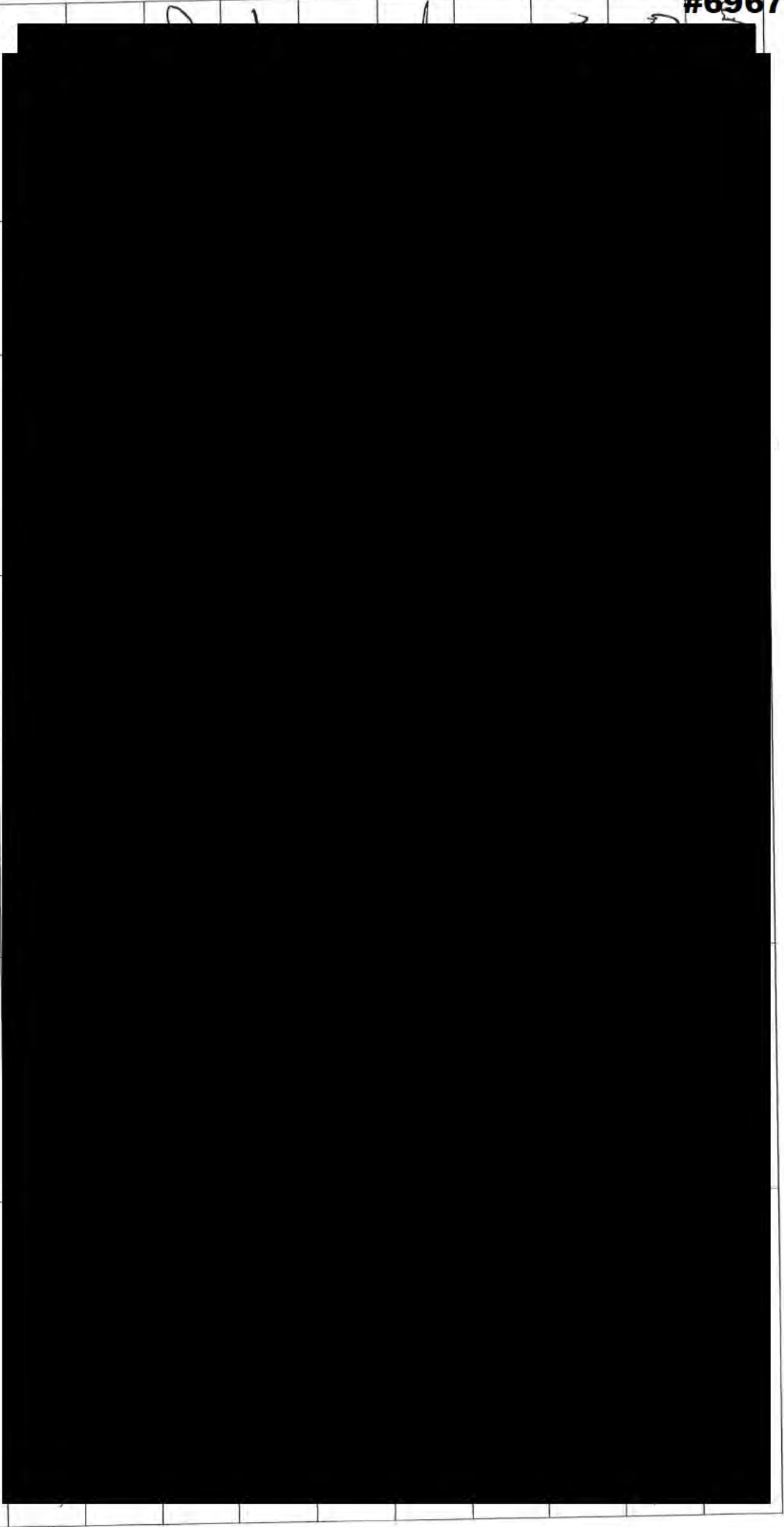
Dog's name

First and last name

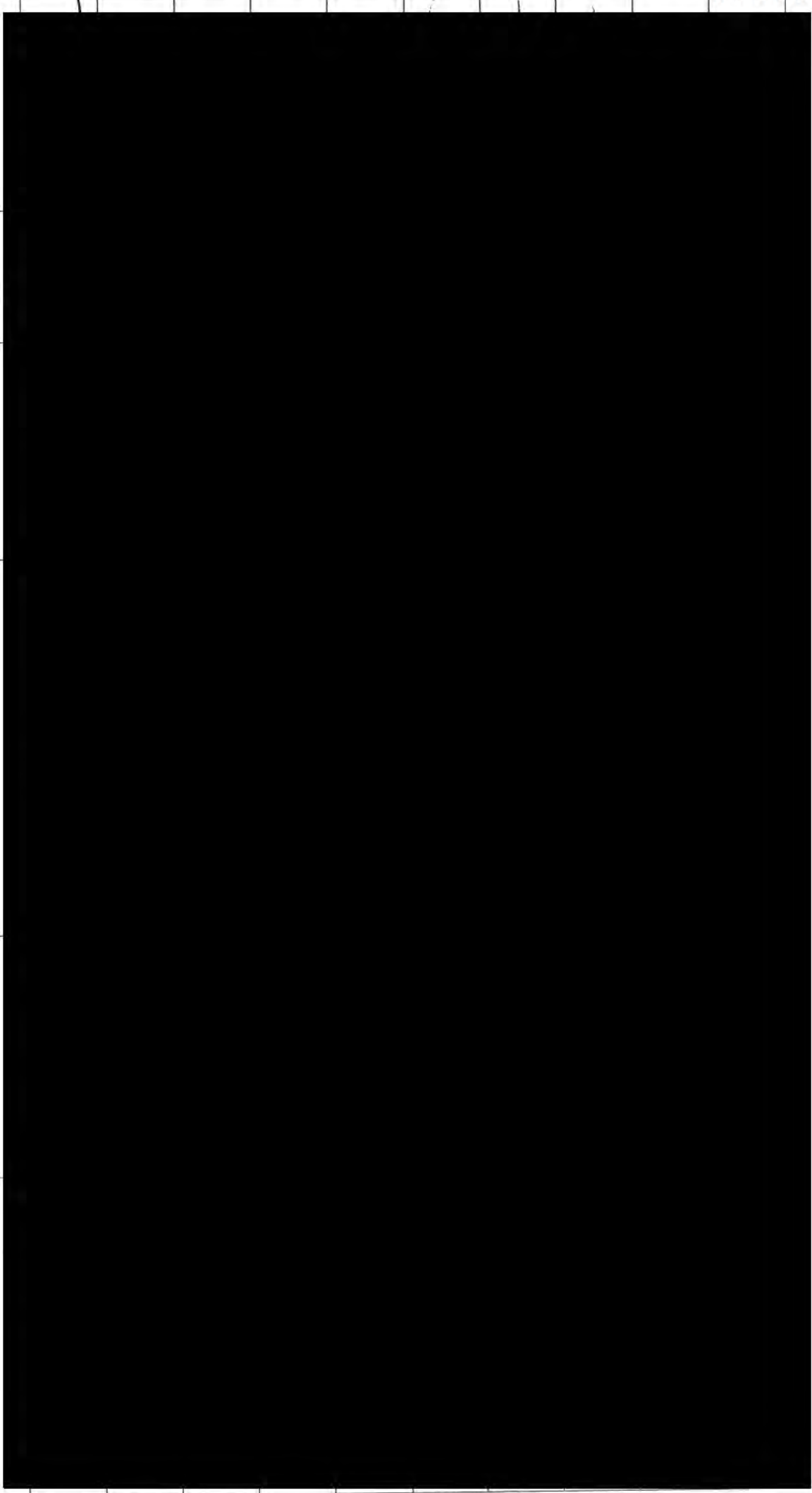


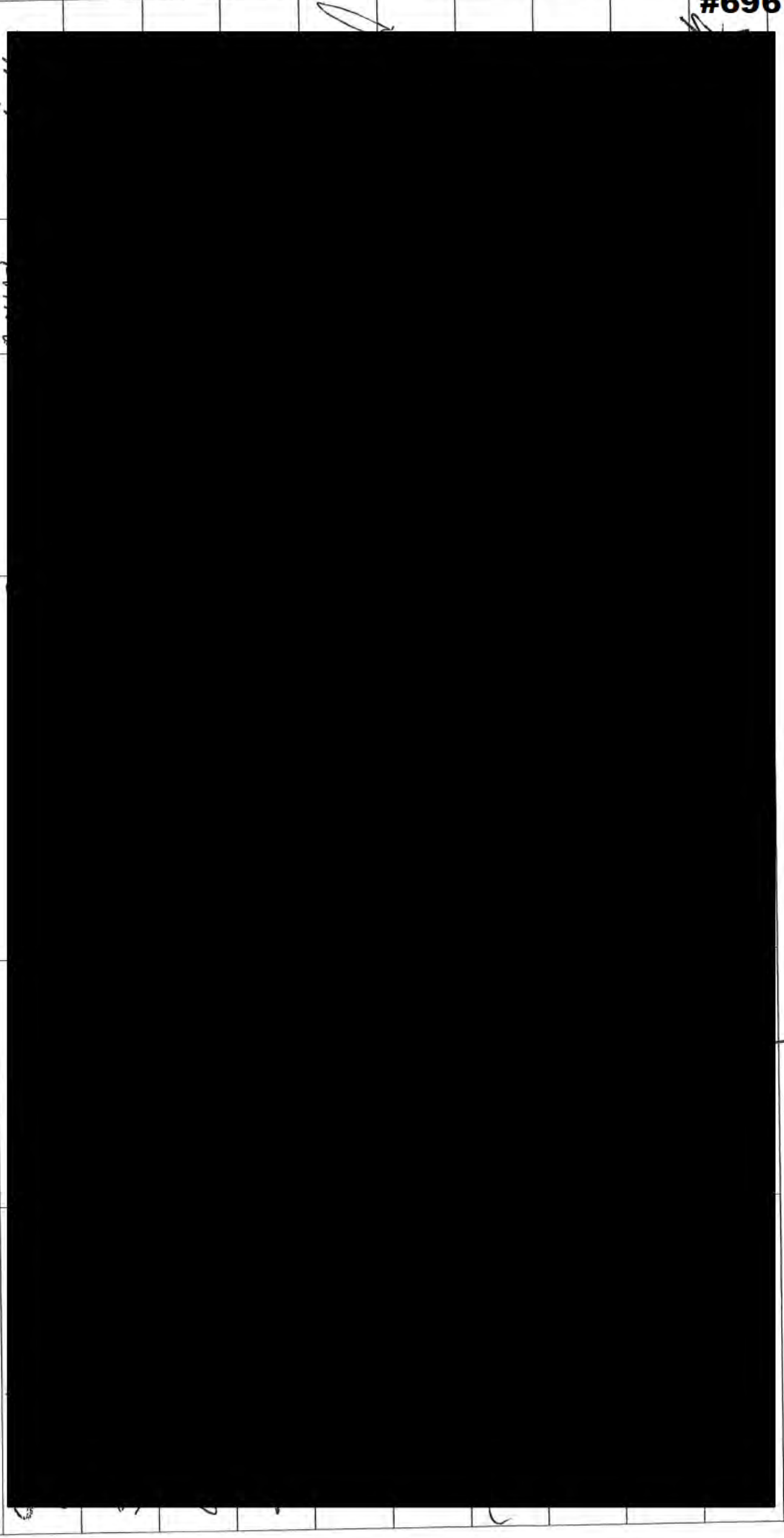
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1/02/25

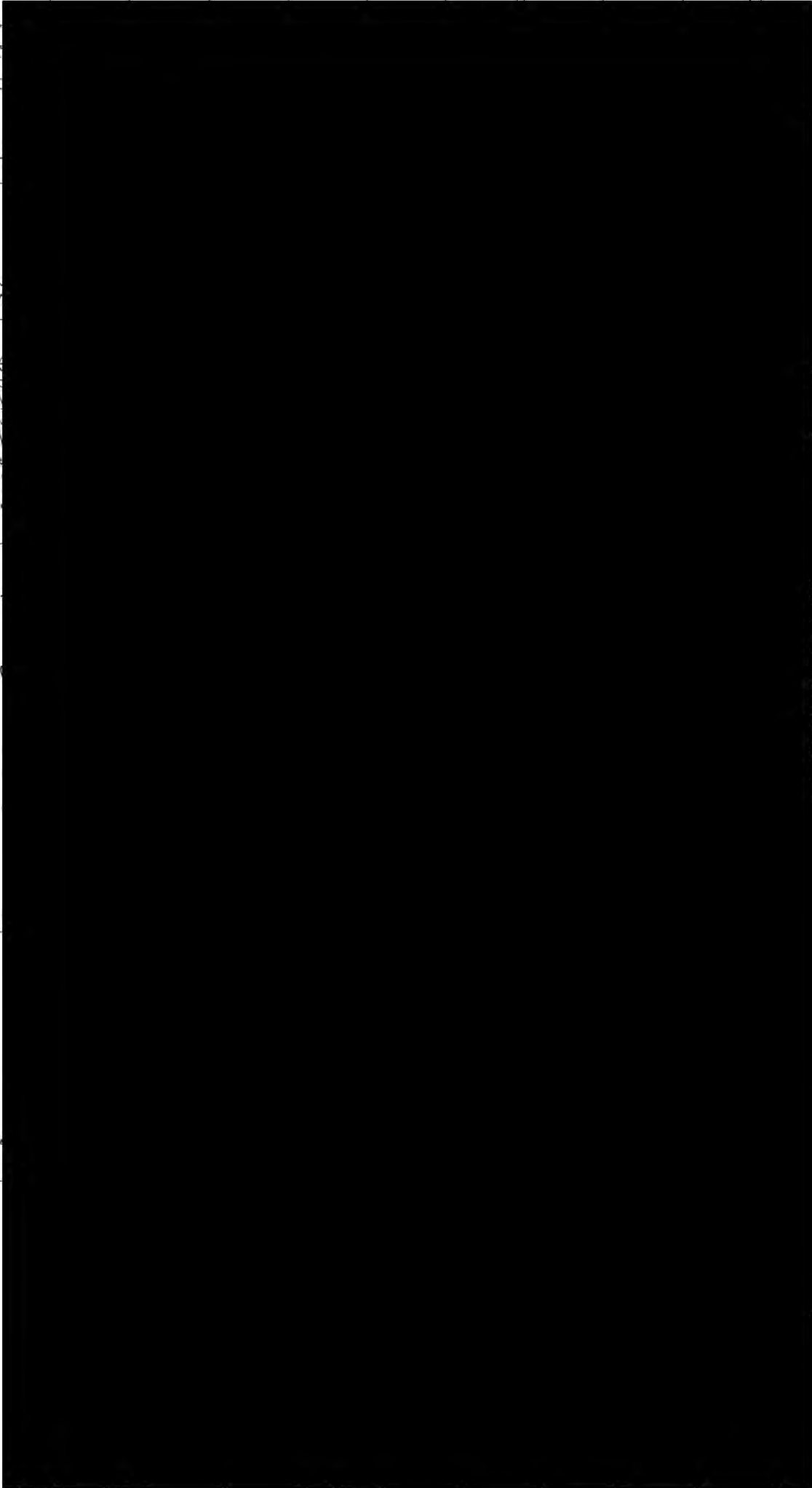
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

4/16/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

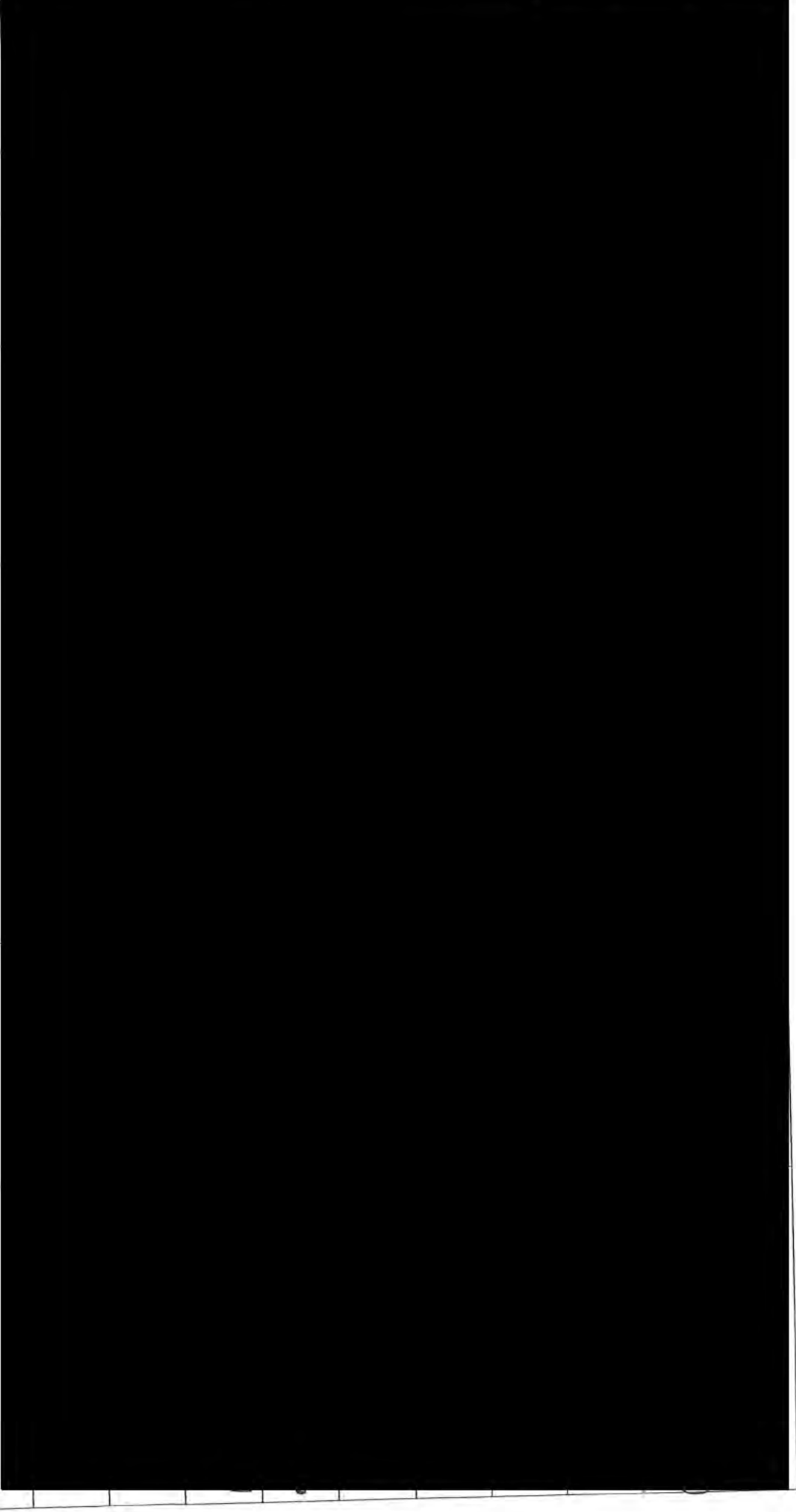
4/20/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

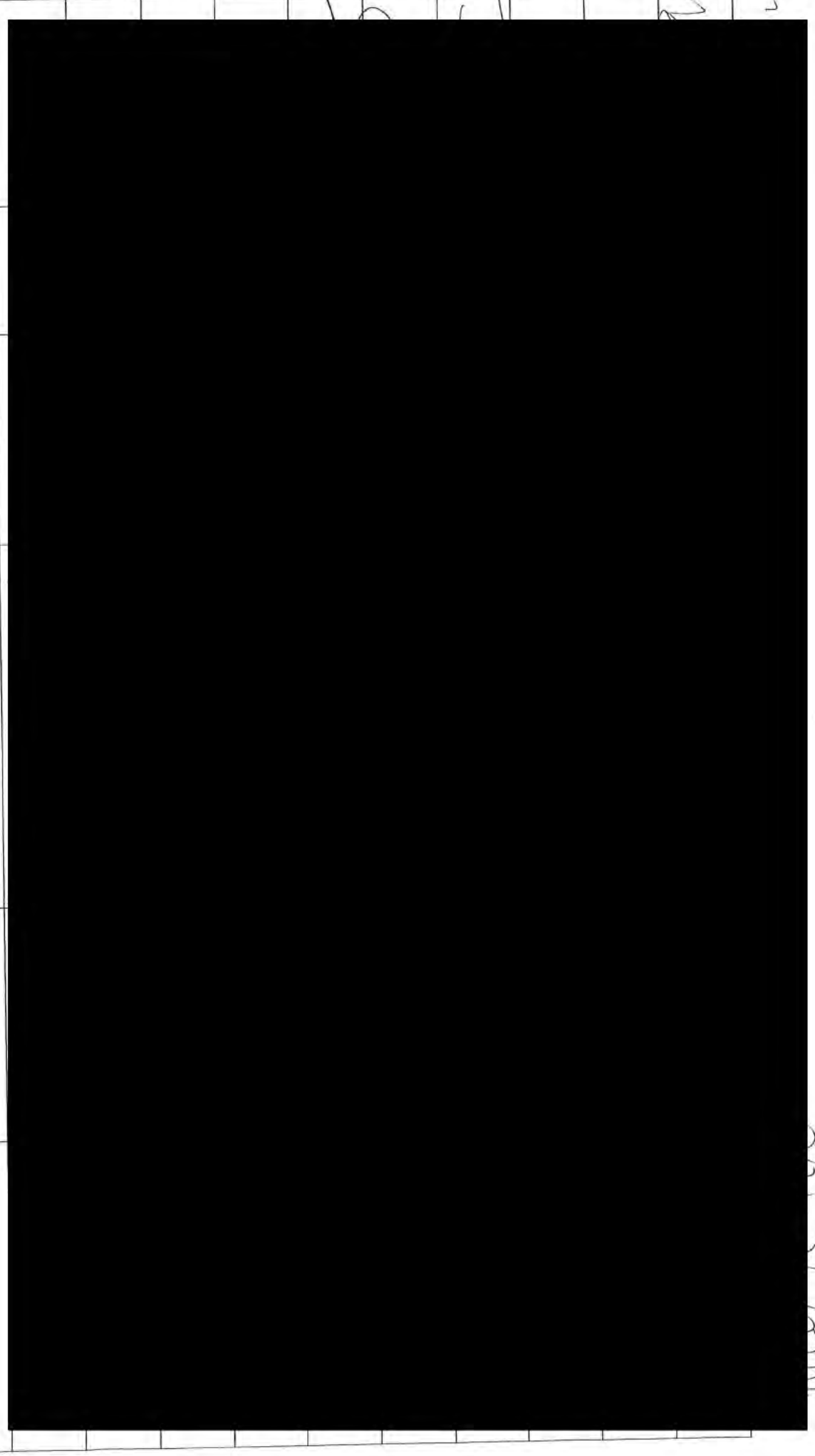
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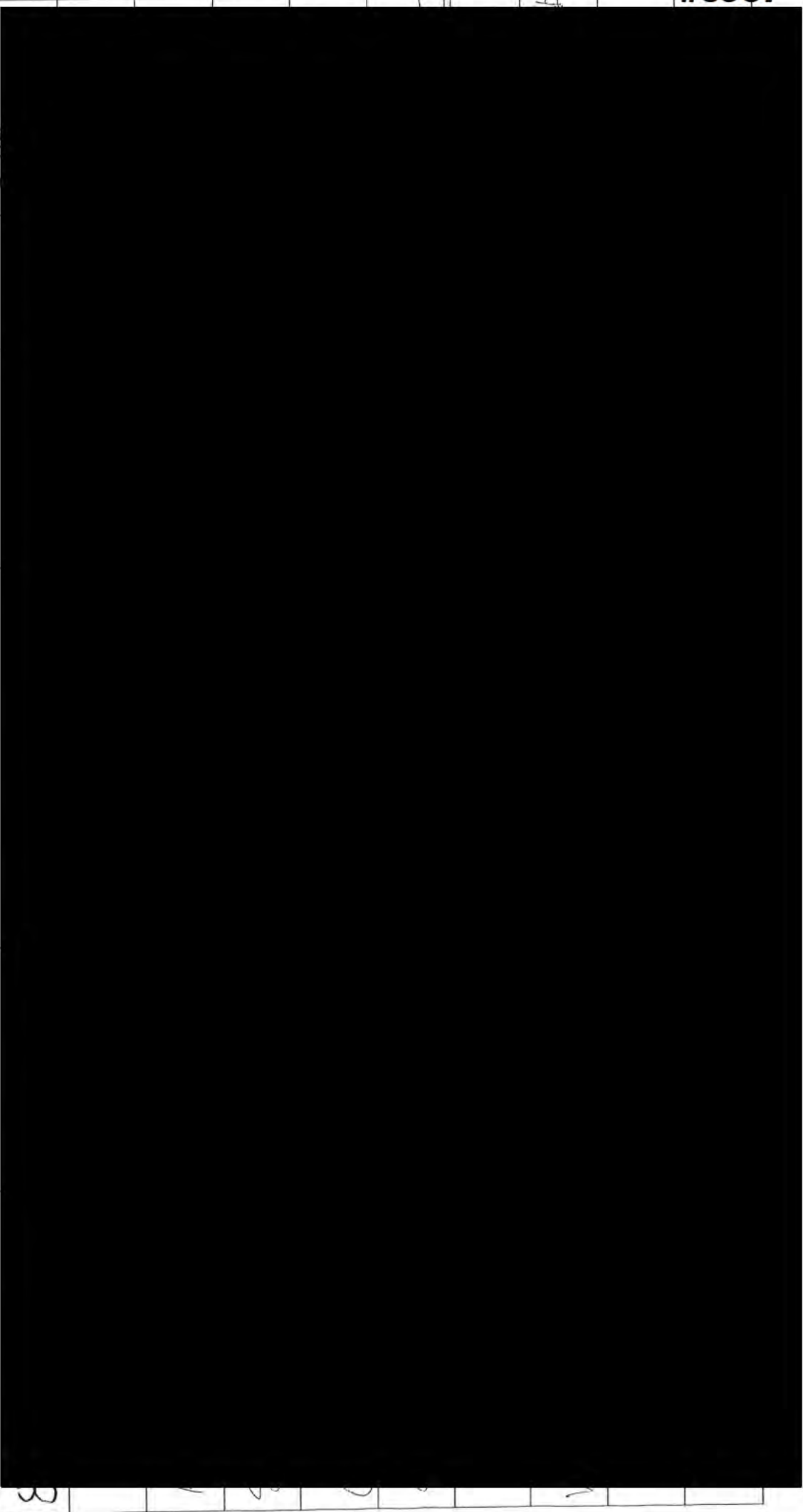
3/2/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

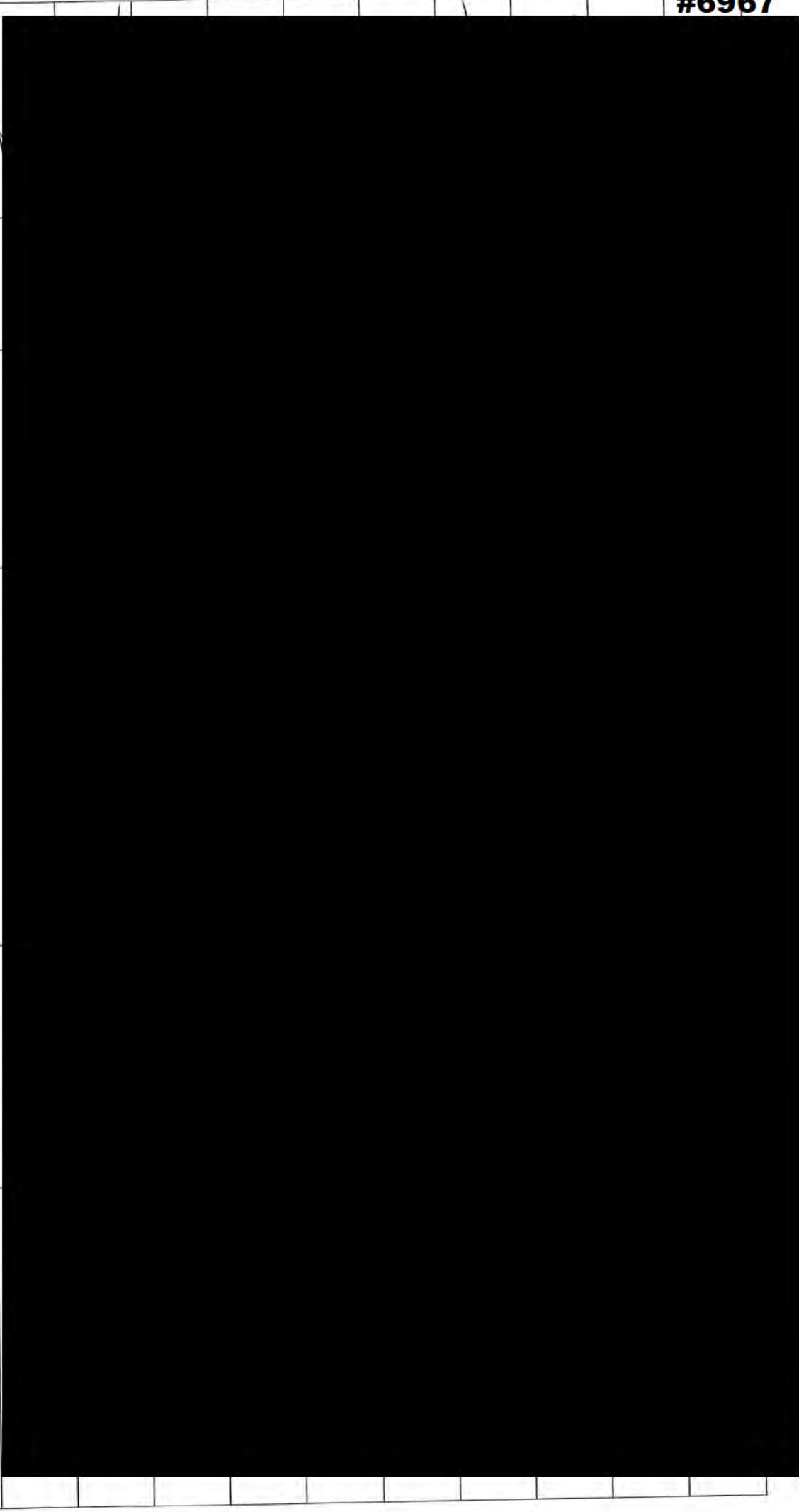
3/2/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

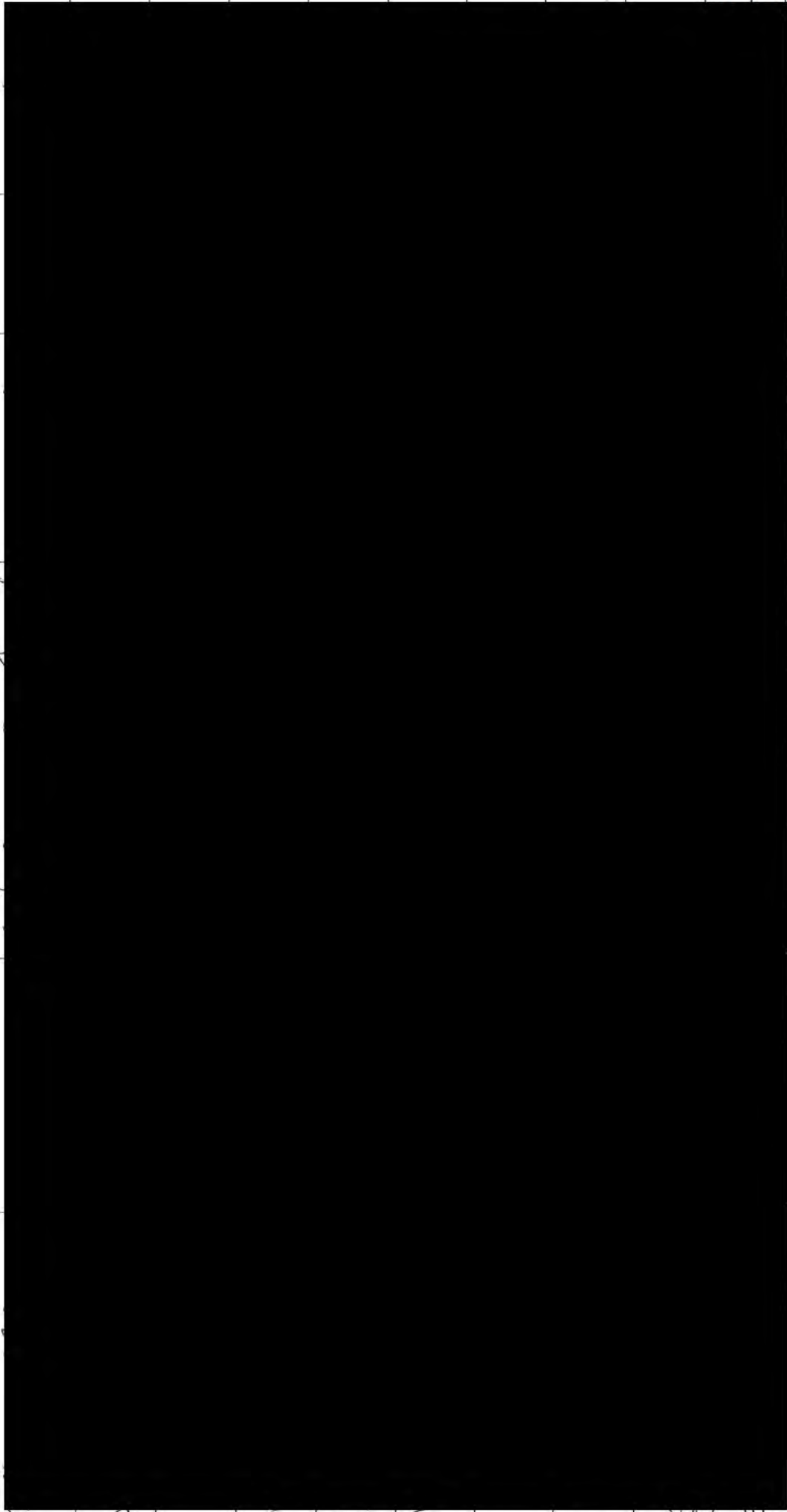
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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

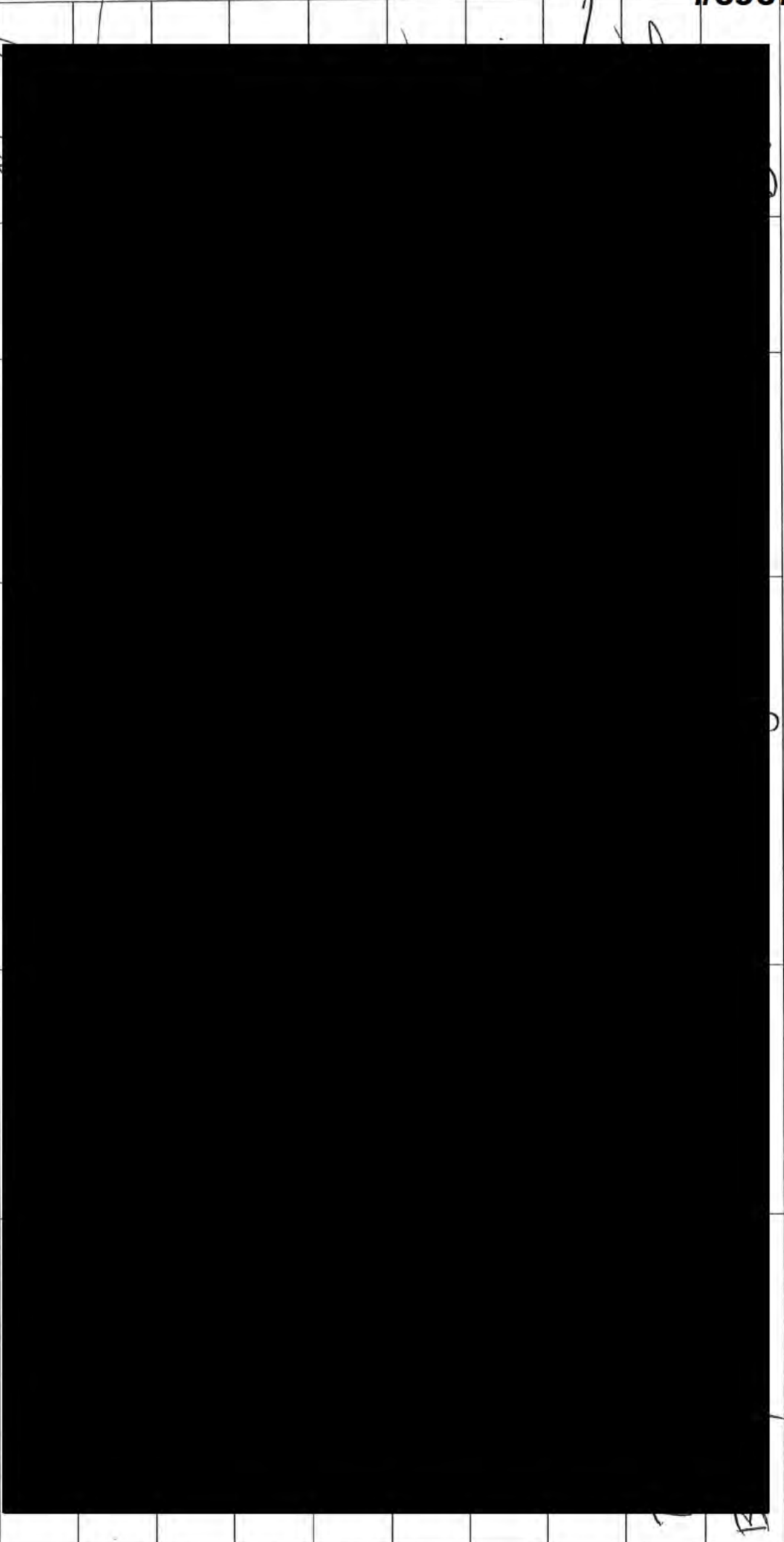
5/4/20

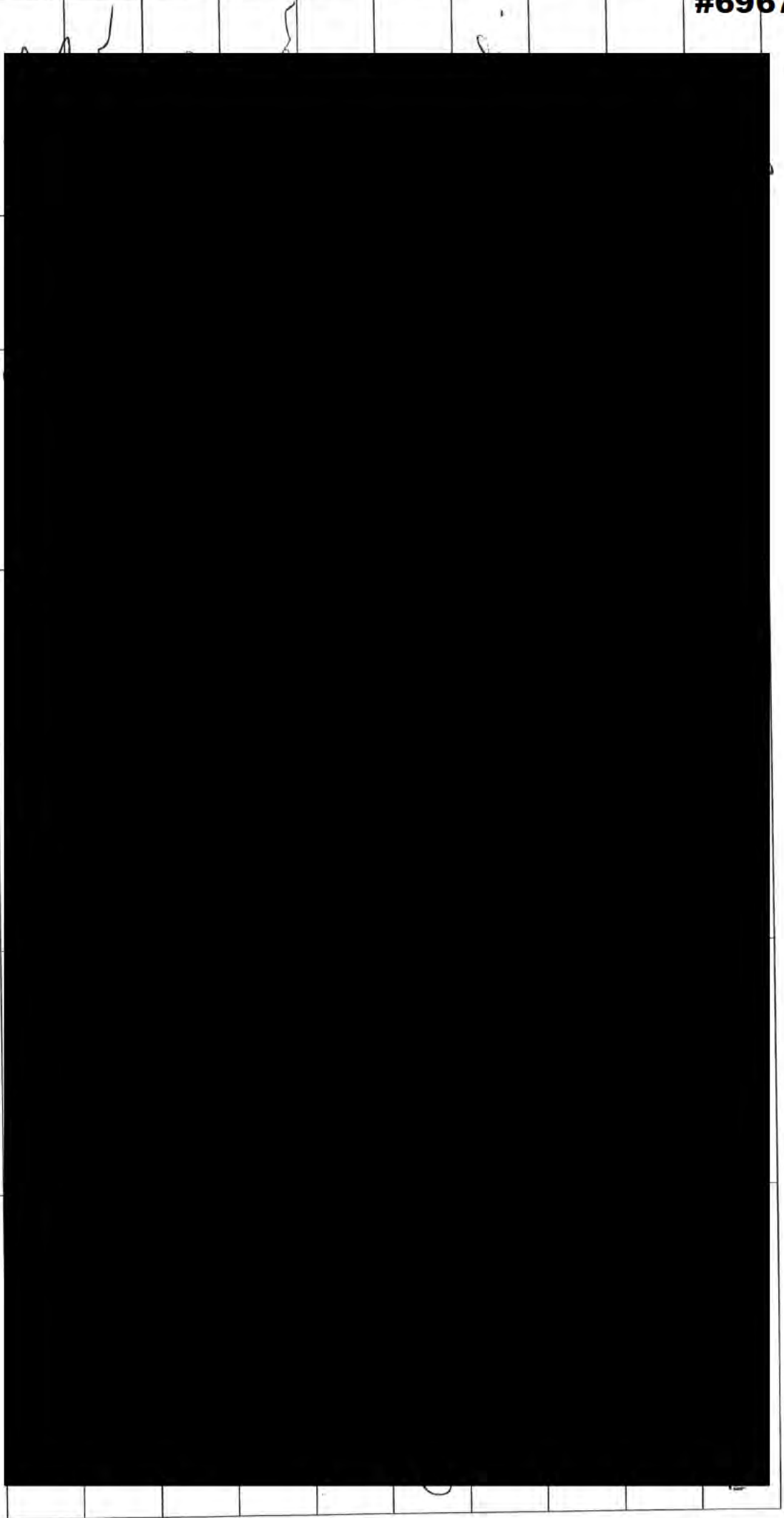
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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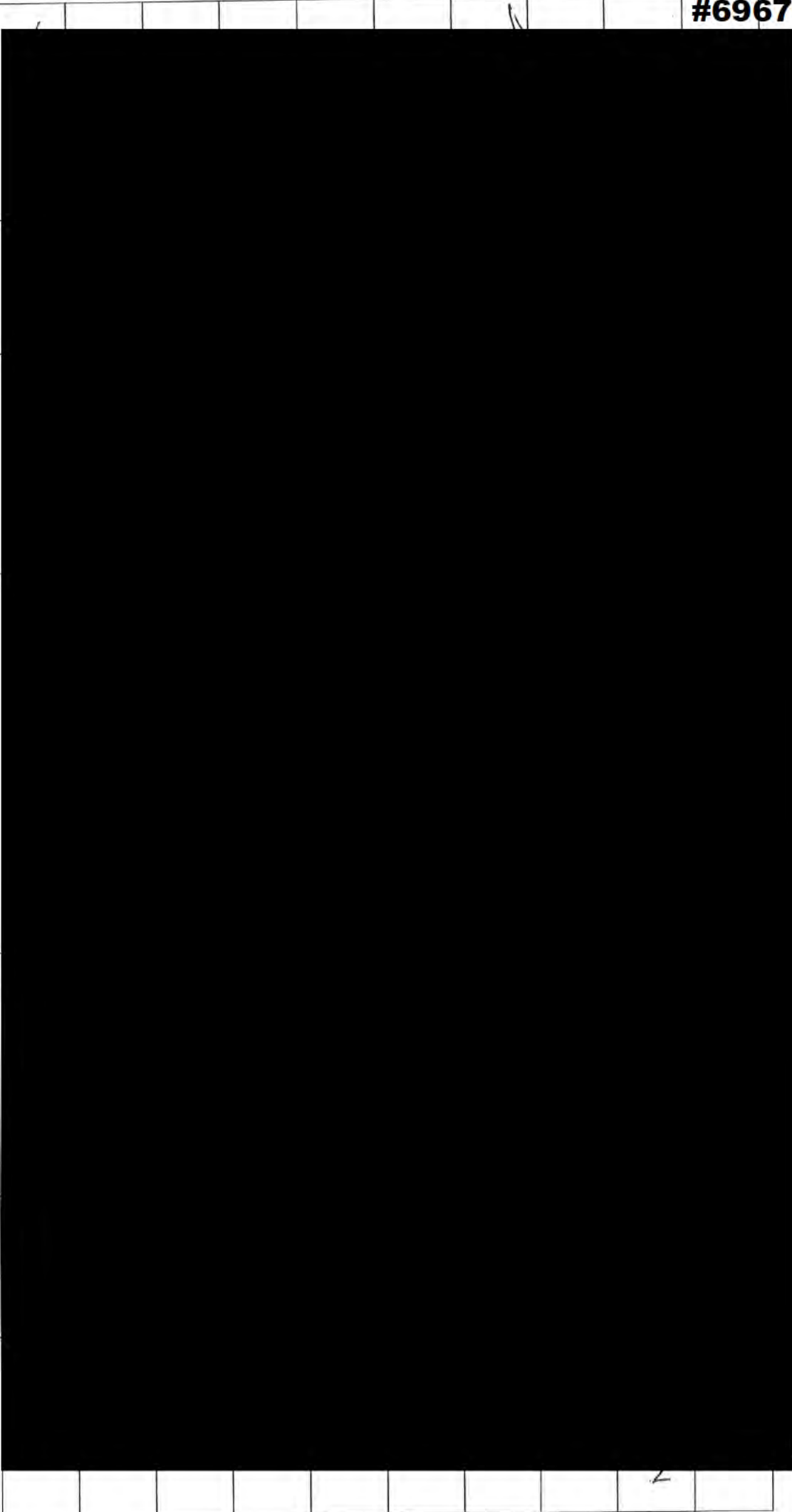


412/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

07/01/14

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

Col 1 L

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4/2/15

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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11/2/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

7/2/14

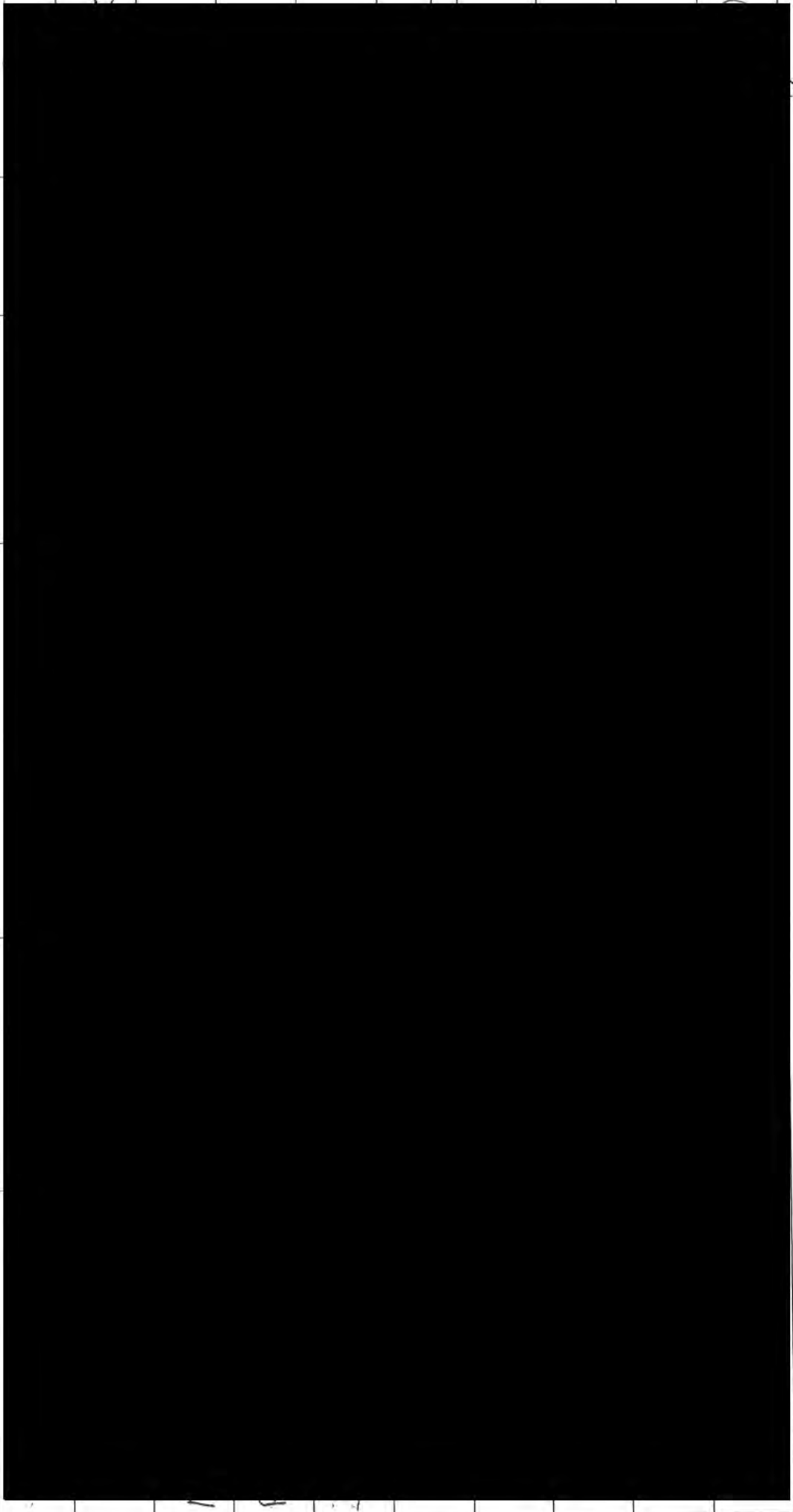
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

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5/2/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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1/2/25

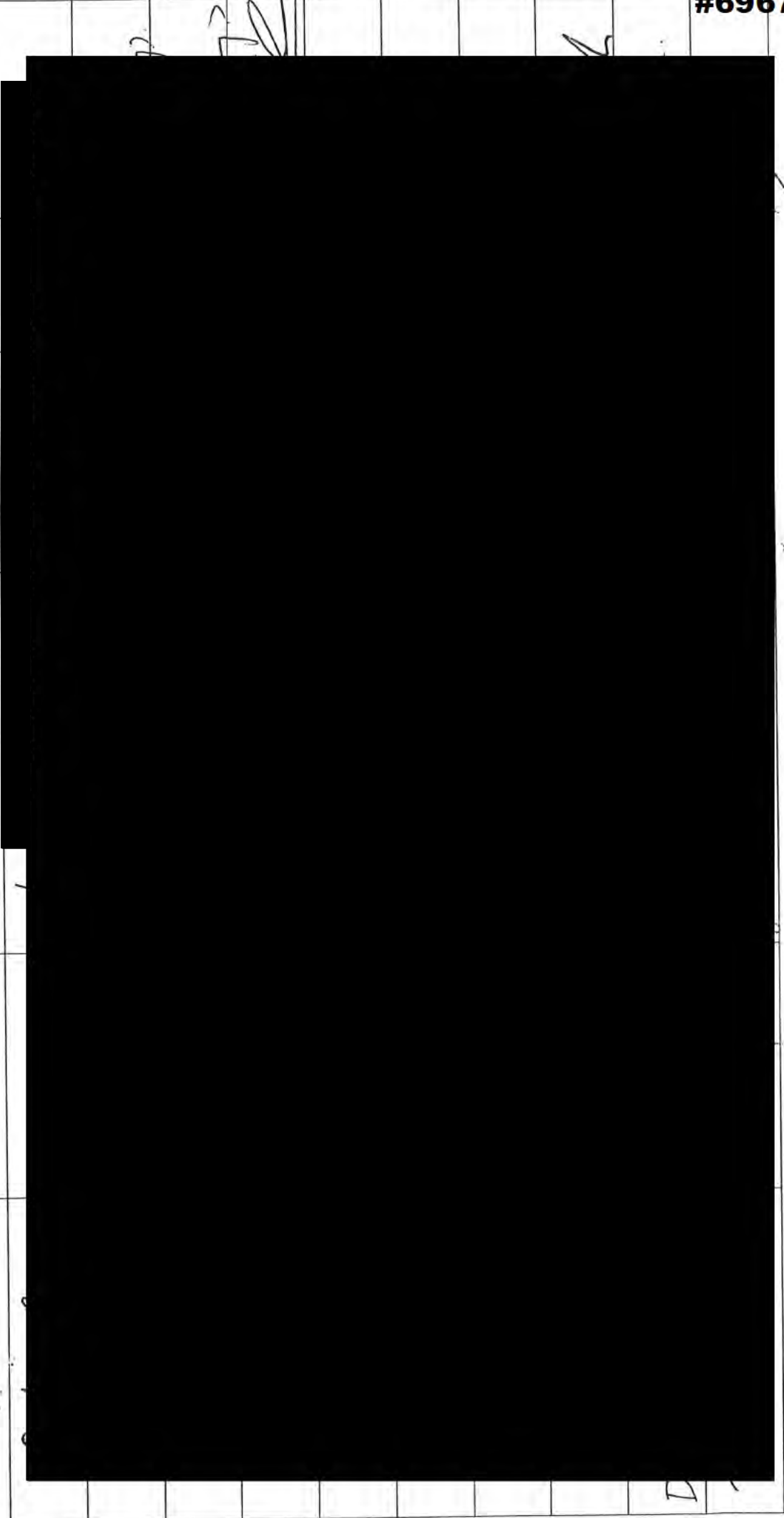
First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

10/14

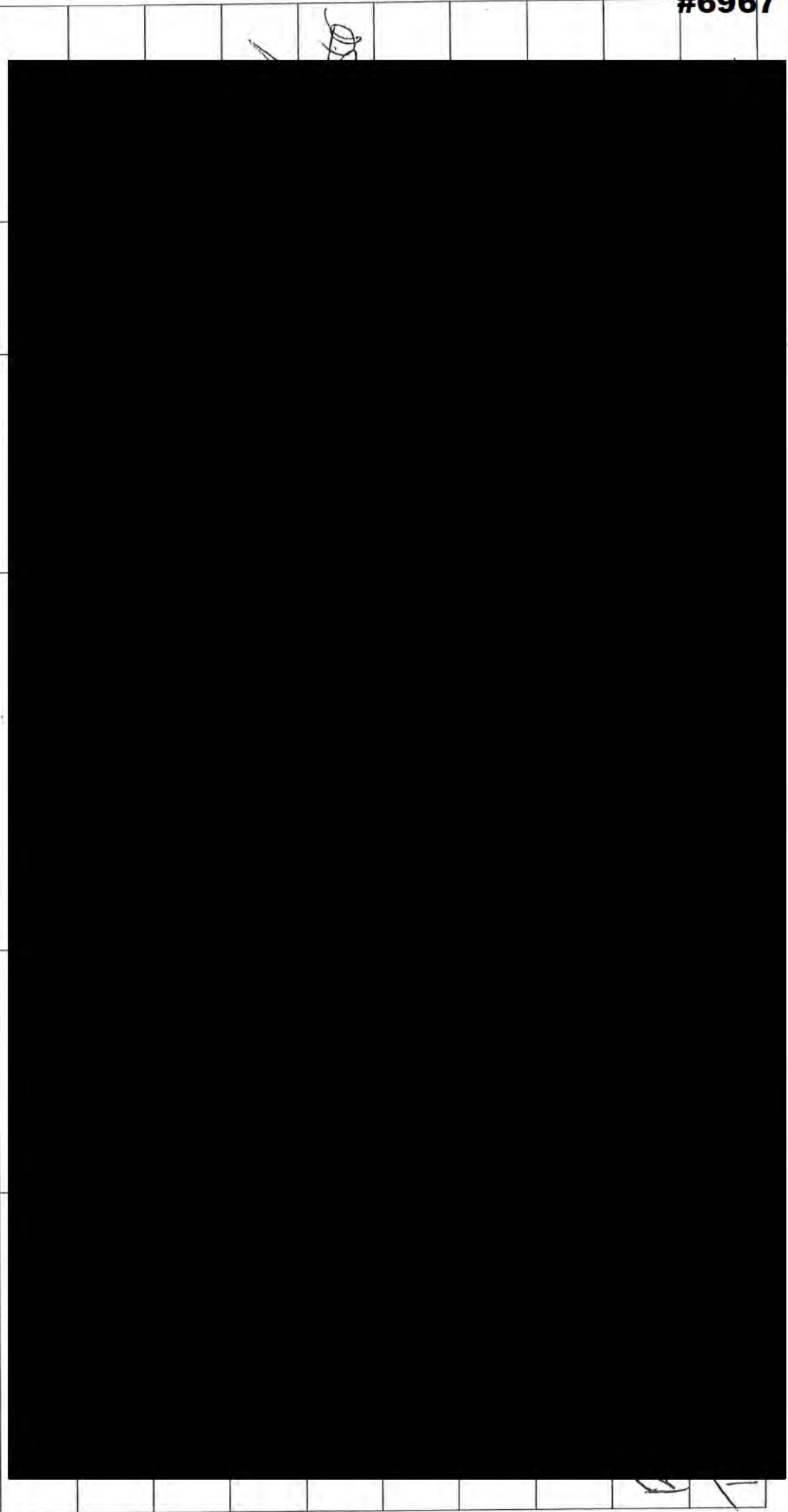
11/1/10

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

1/2/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

6/2/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

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11/1/00

First and last name

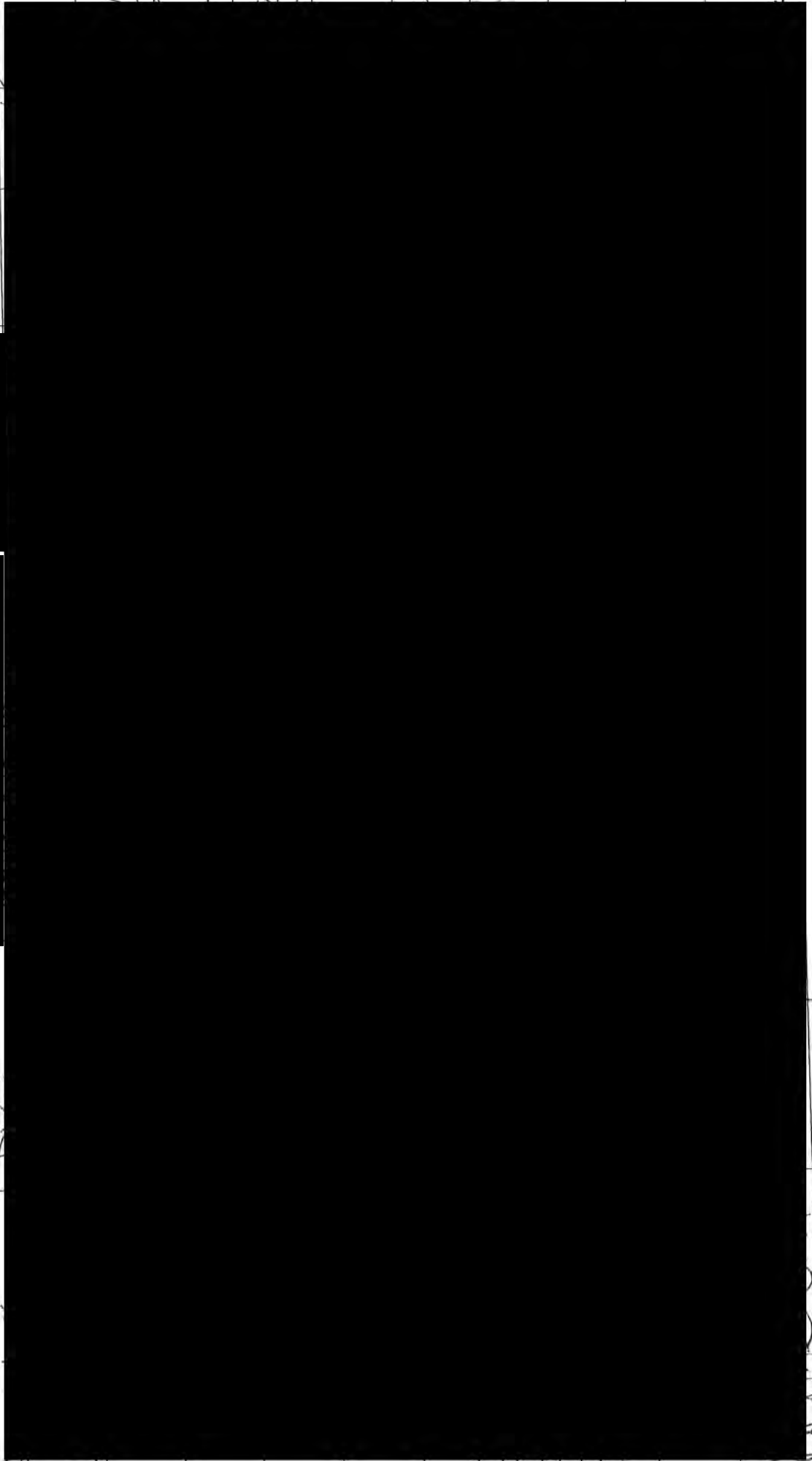
Dog's name

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Phone

Lives in the local board area

Signature



11-160

First and last name

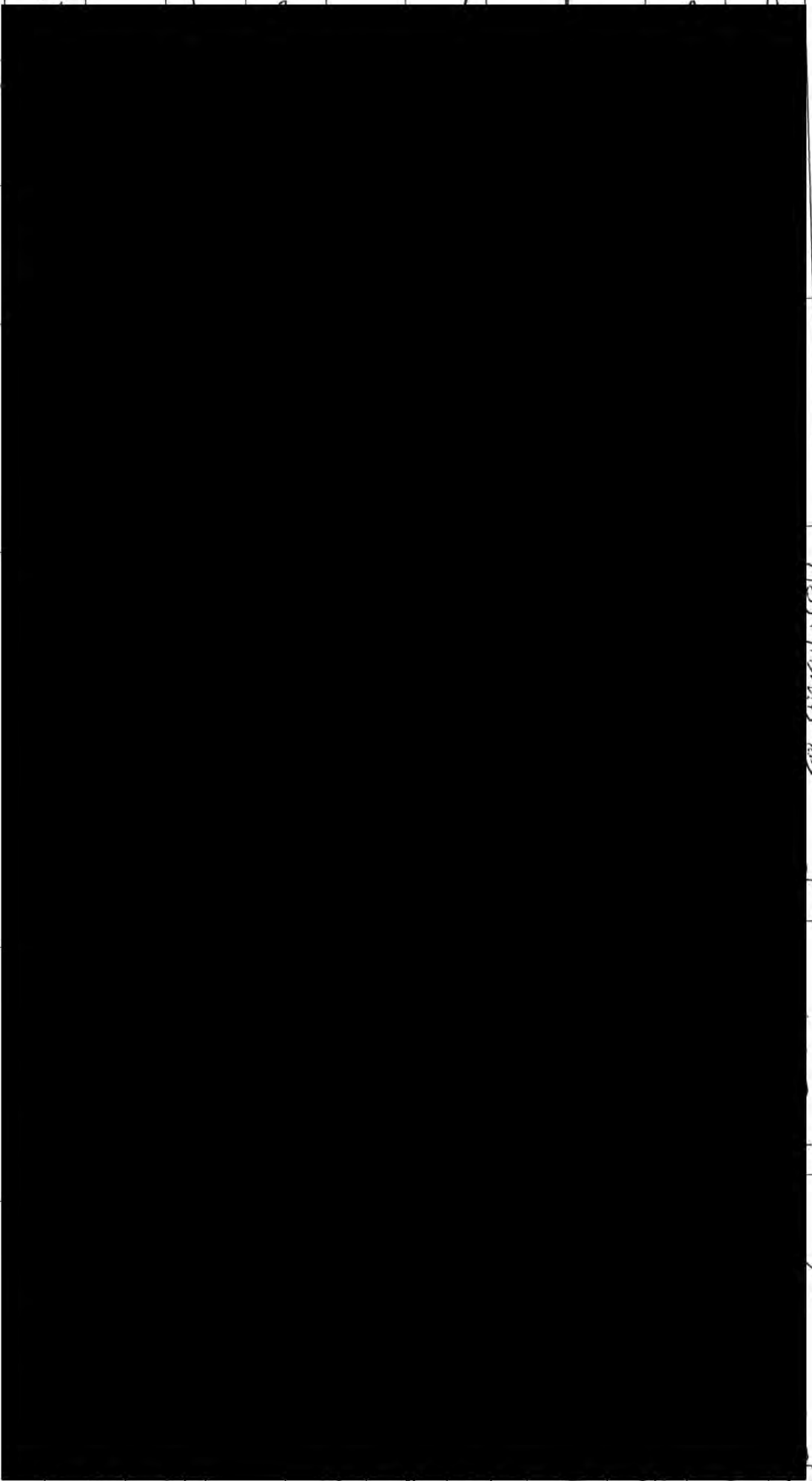
Dog's name

Email

Phone

Lives in the local board area

Signature



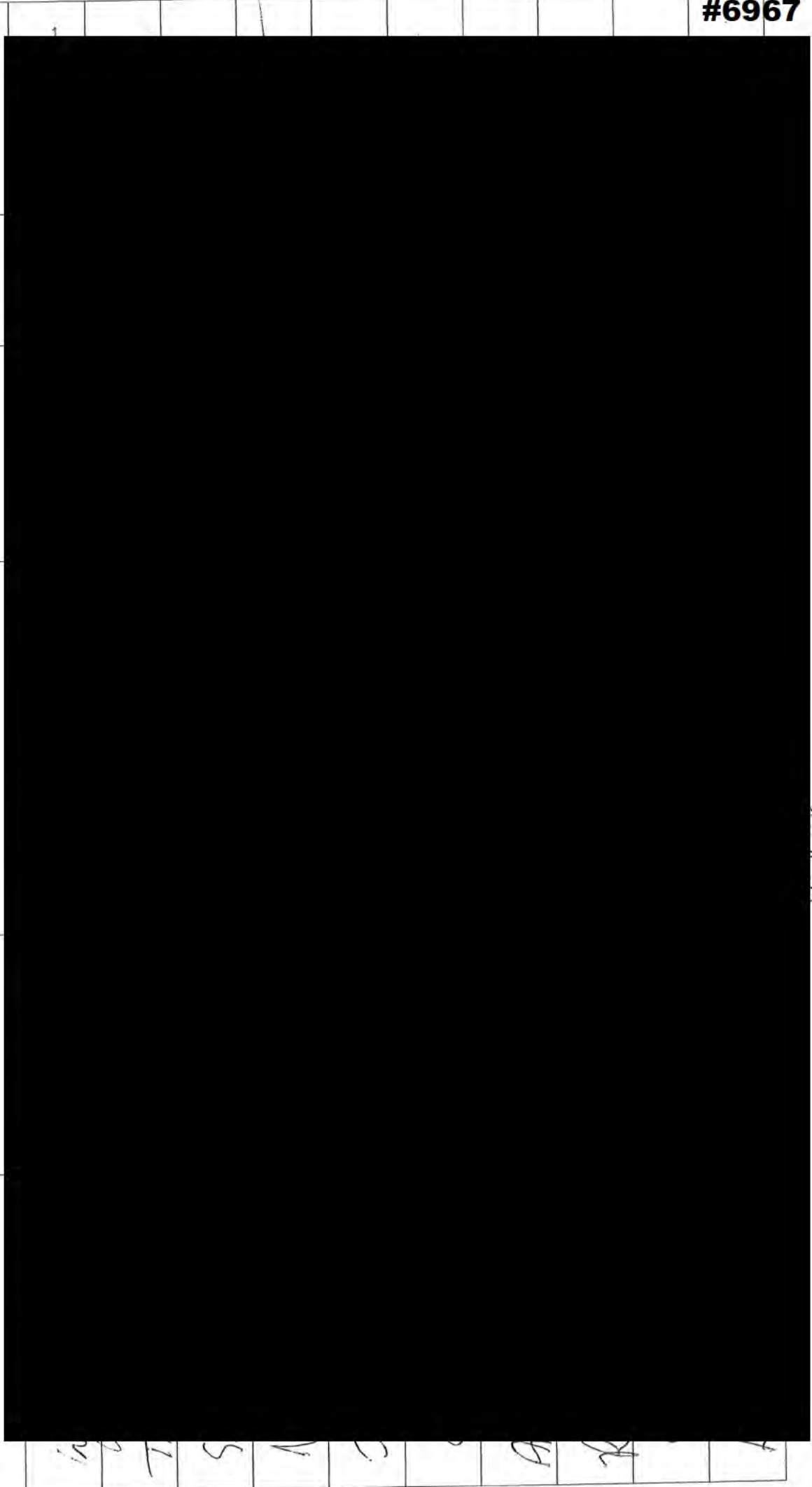
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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
Monte Celia Park	Pam Rd	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]	[Redacted]

0591

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

11-1-11

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7/2/15

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

5/17/16

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature						
						G					
						Mil					
						Car					
						Job					

G
Mil
Car
Job

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27171L

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
[Redacted Content]					

9/2/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

W
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7/4/20

Signature

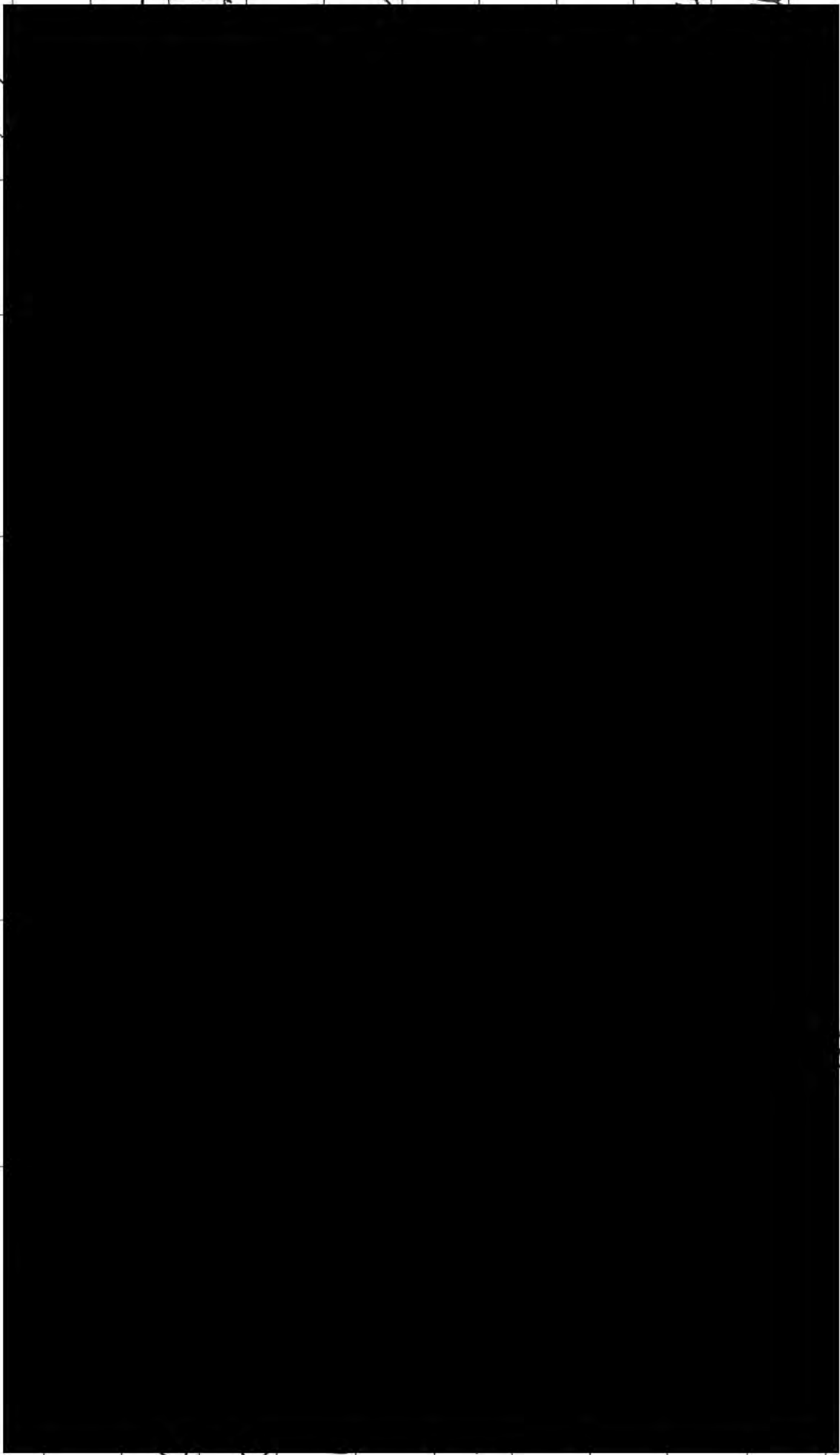
Lives in the local board area

Phone

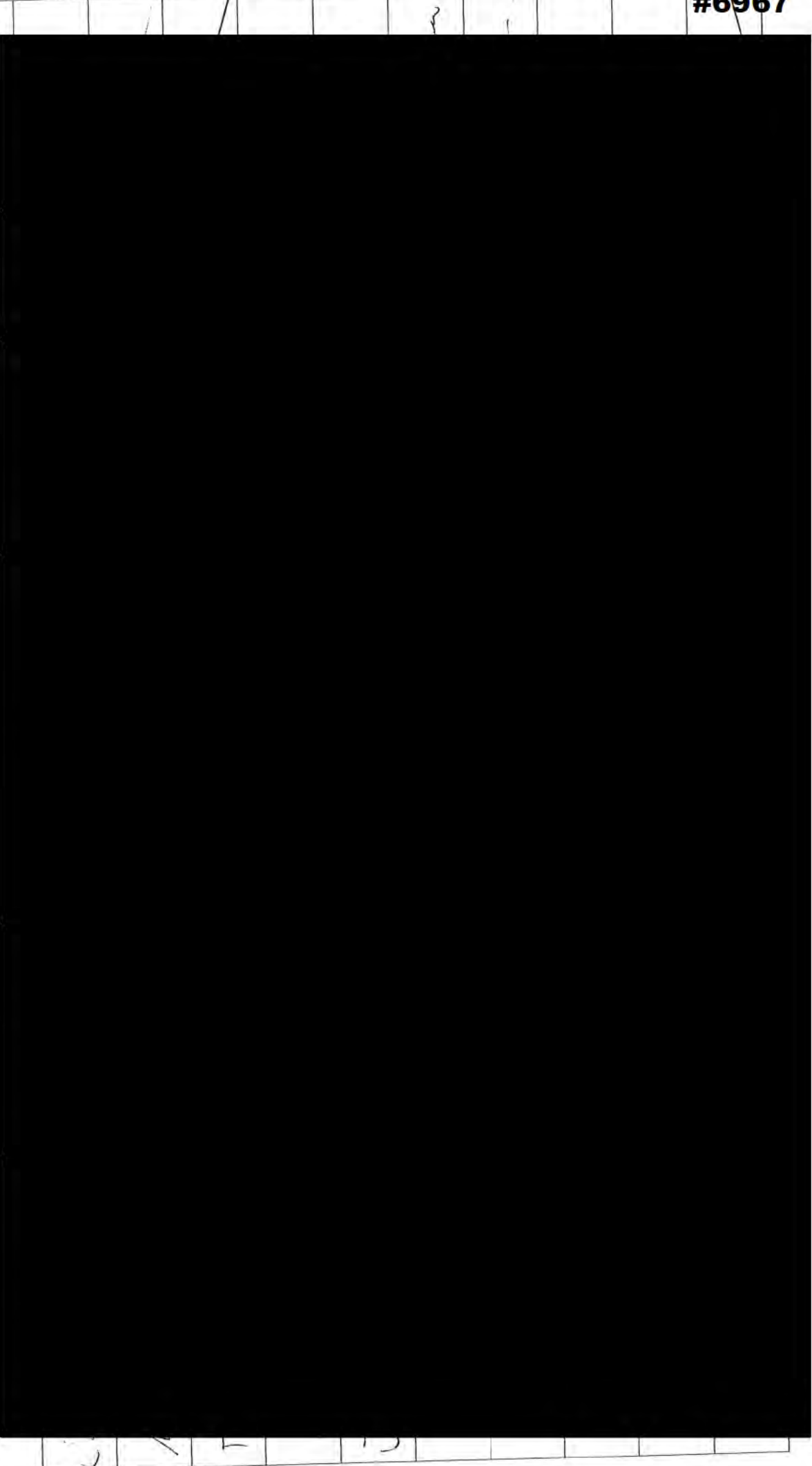
Email

Dog's name

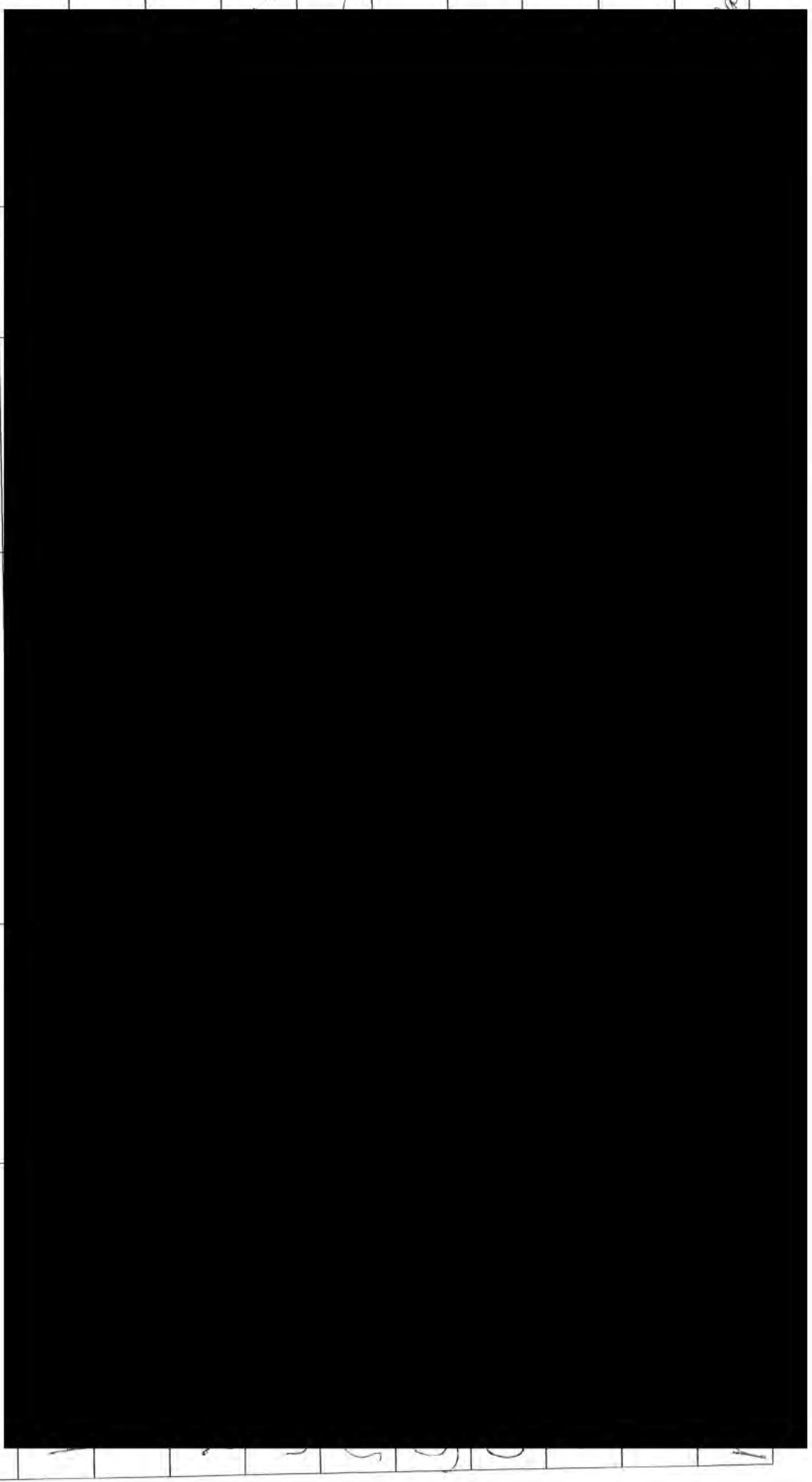
First and last name



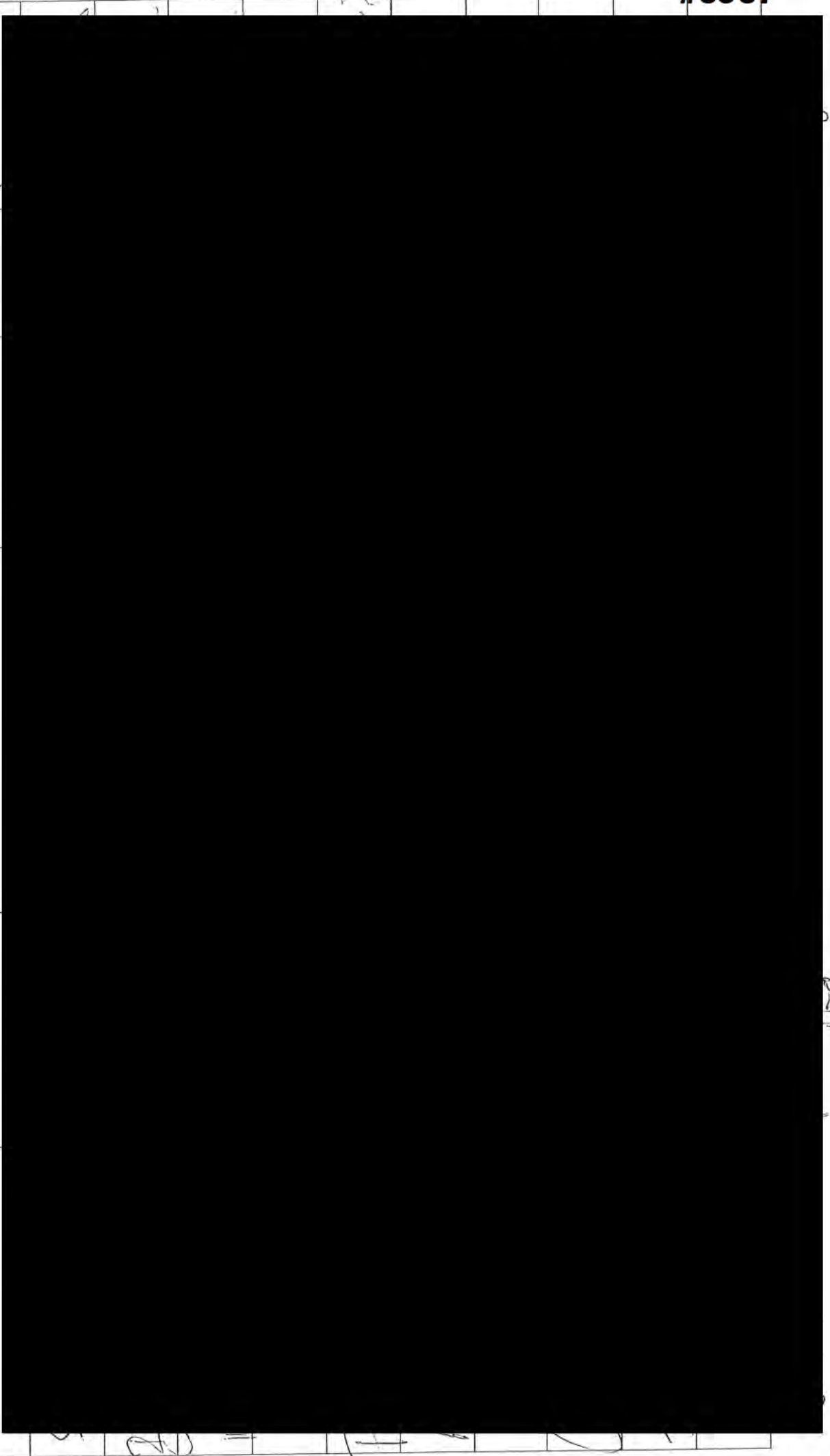
9/2/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

16/02/25

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

10/02/25

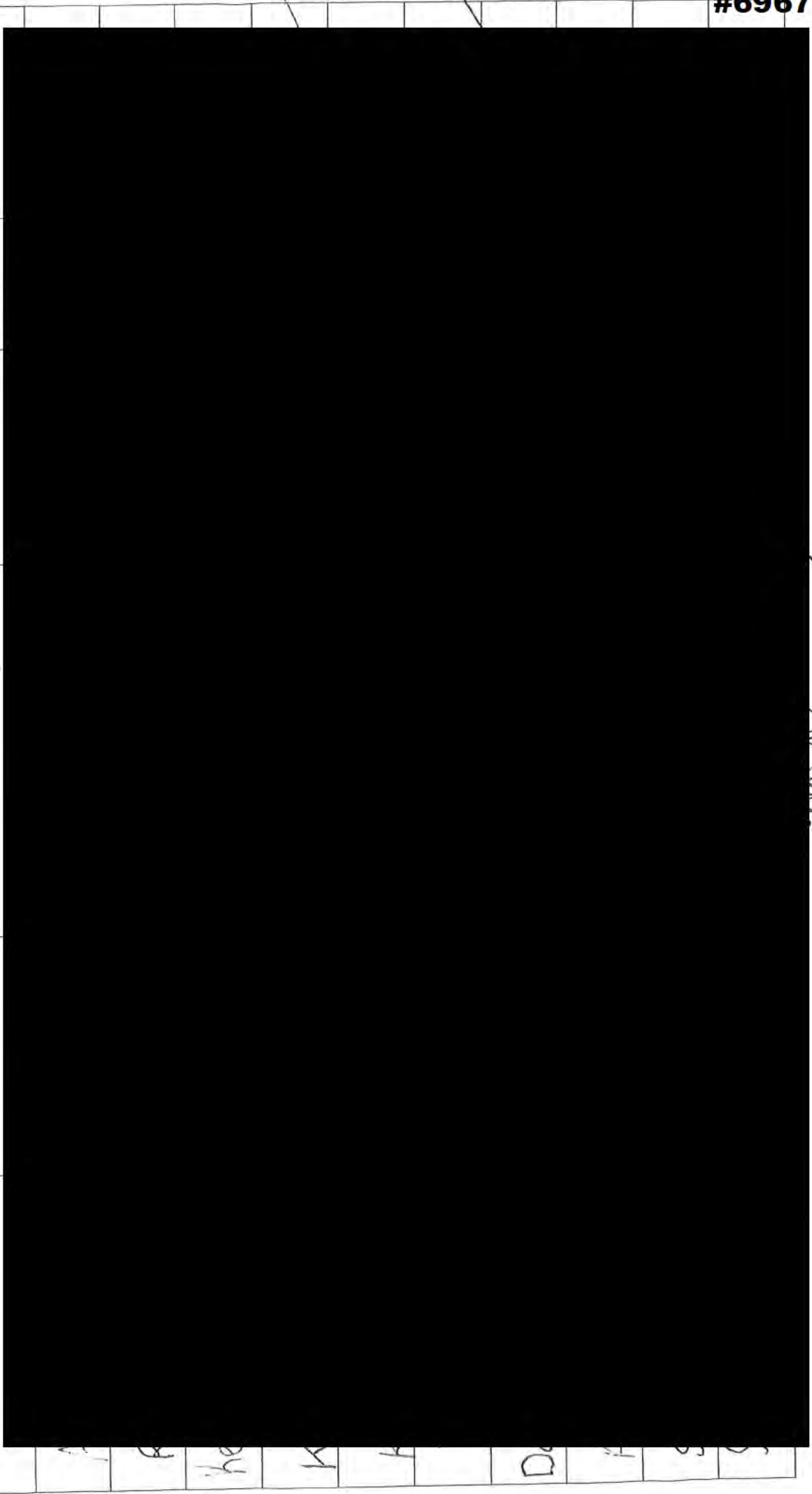
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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

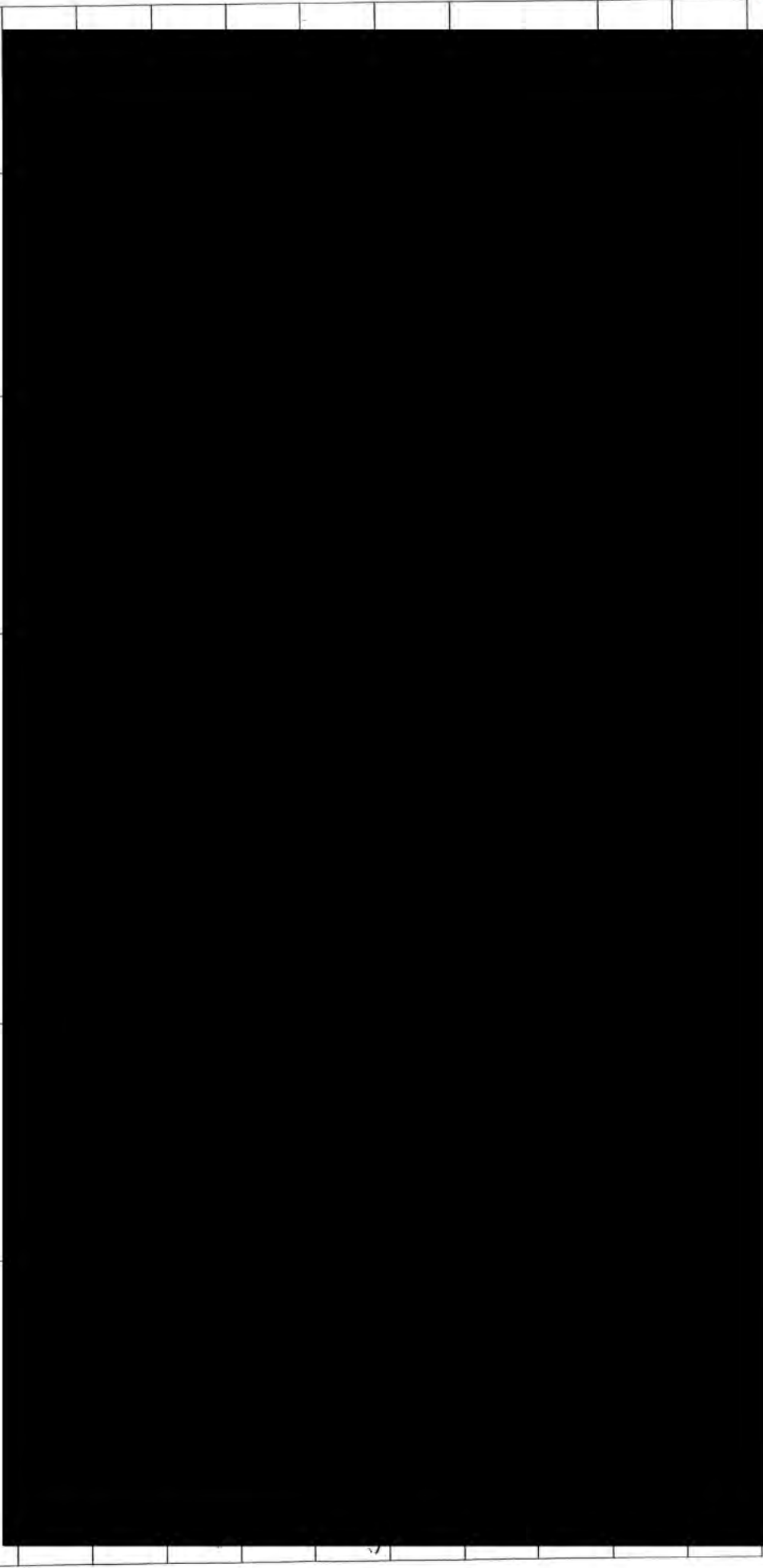
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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the Puketapapa local board area	Signature
					

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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

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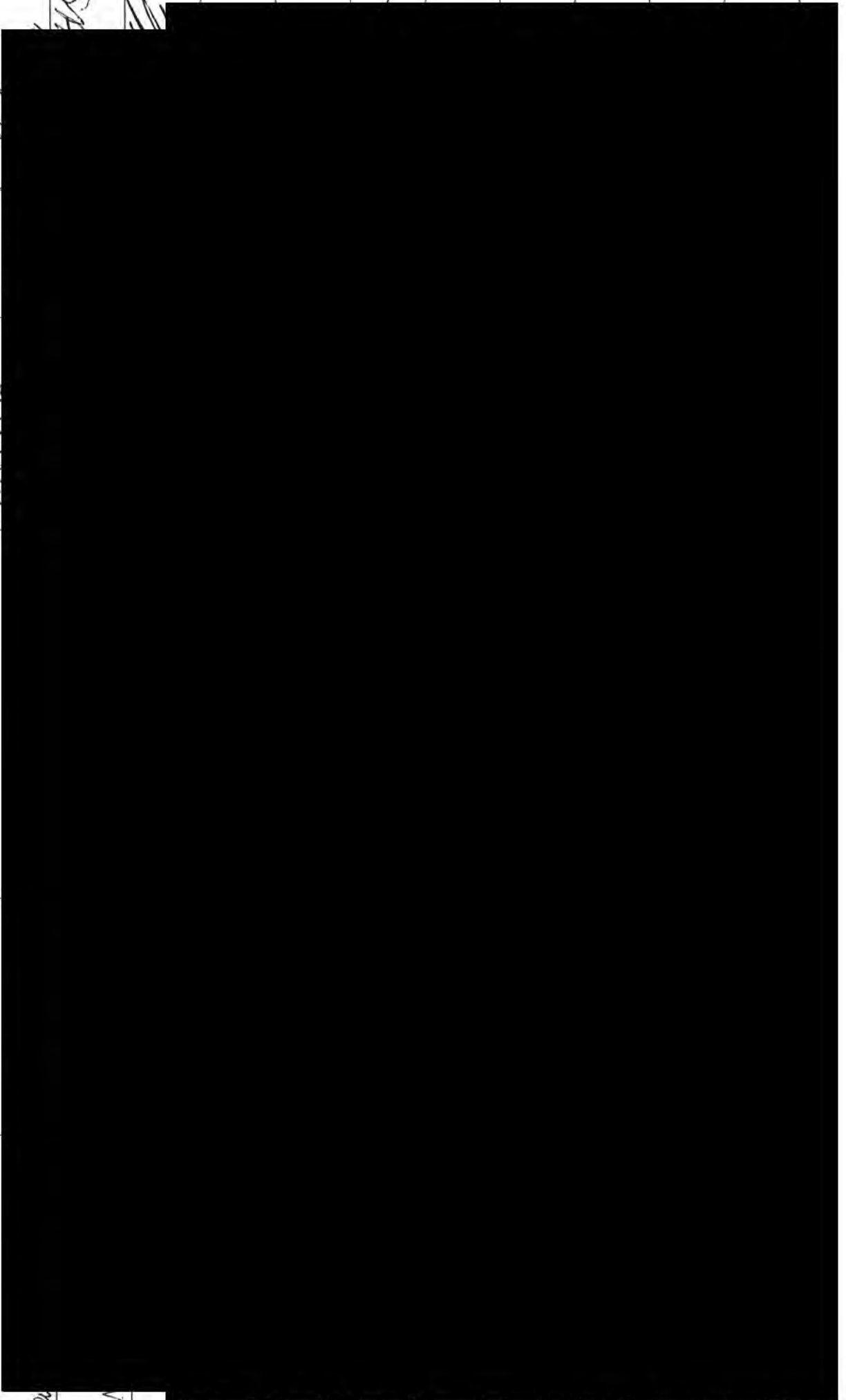
Dog's name

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Lives in the local board

Signature



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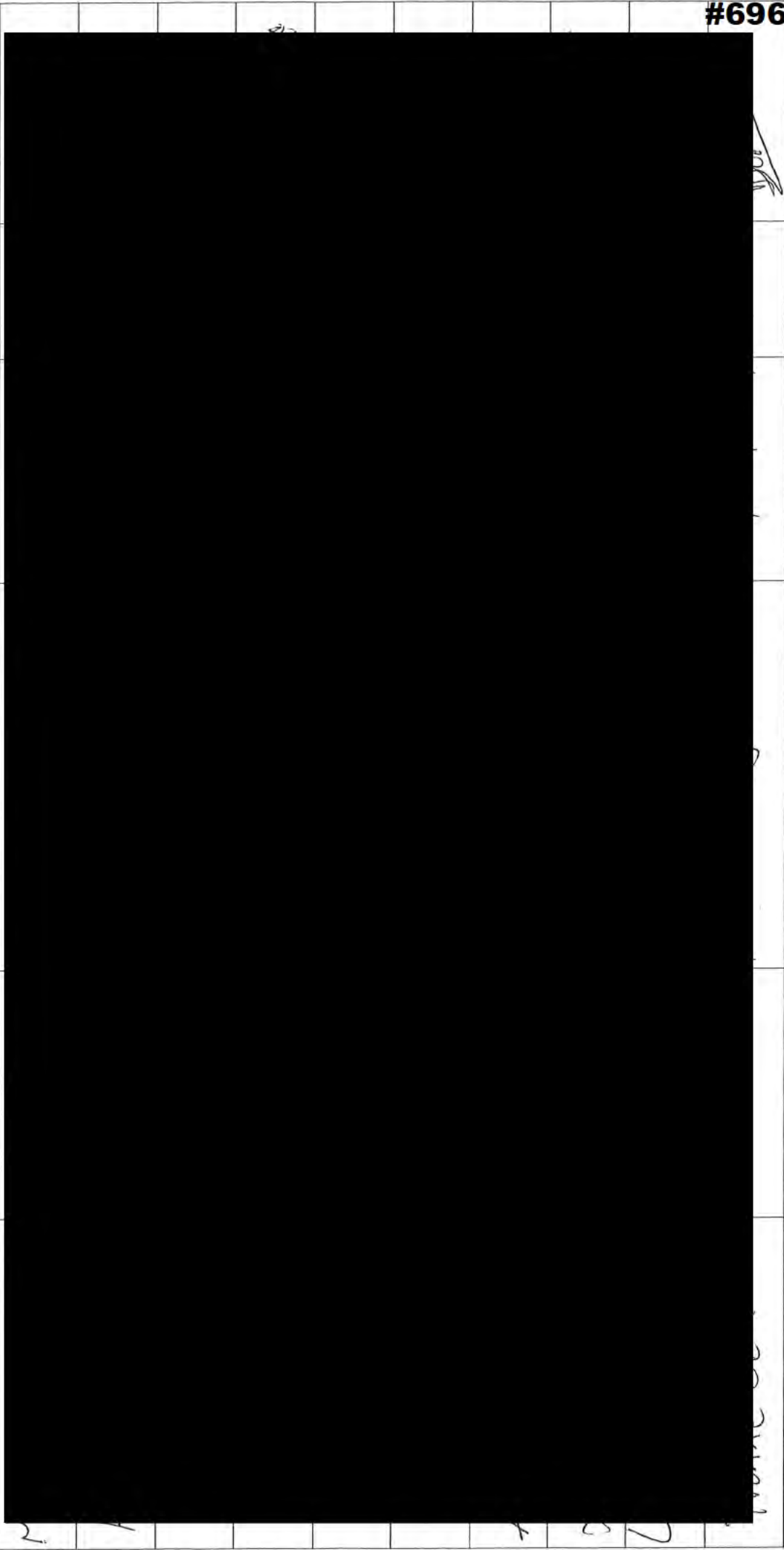
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16/02/20

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature

#6967

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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

17/02/25 - 10

First and last name

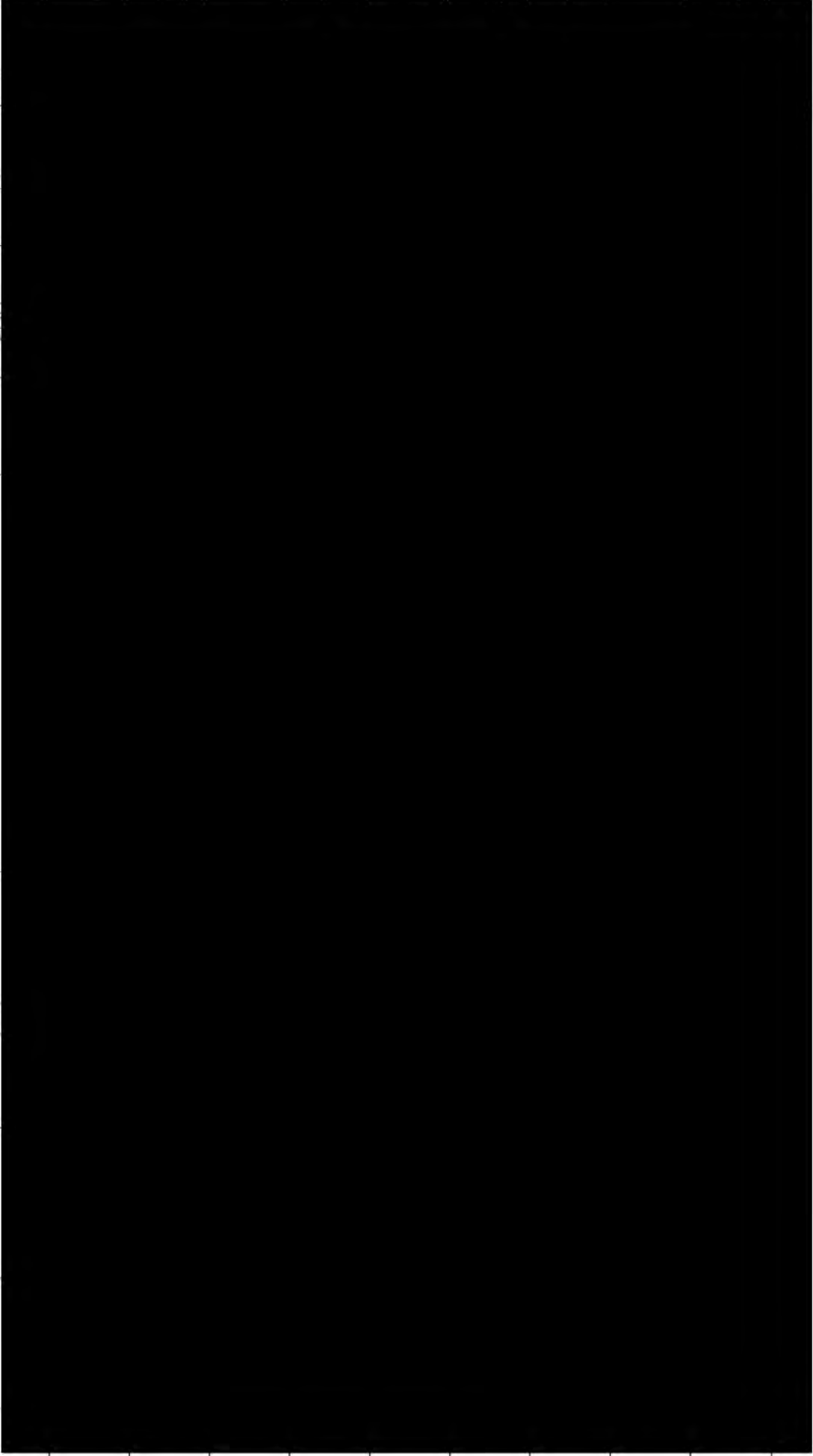
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Lives in the local board area

Signature



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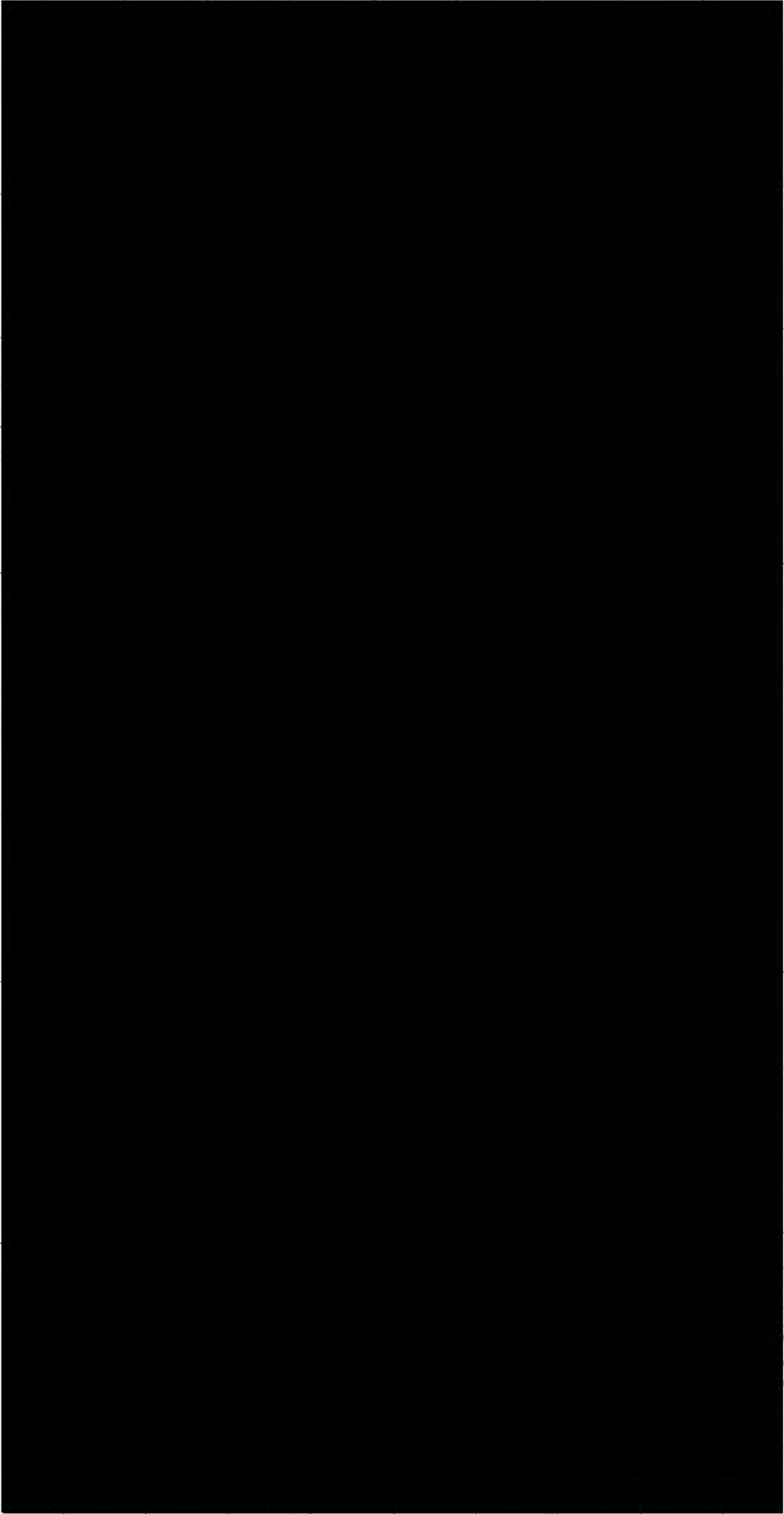
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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
[REDACTED]					
J	E	A	N	B	J
J	E	A	N	B	J

WORLD @ gmail . com

WORLD

WORLD

First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

17/03/25 - 10

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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
					

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Page 35 - 10

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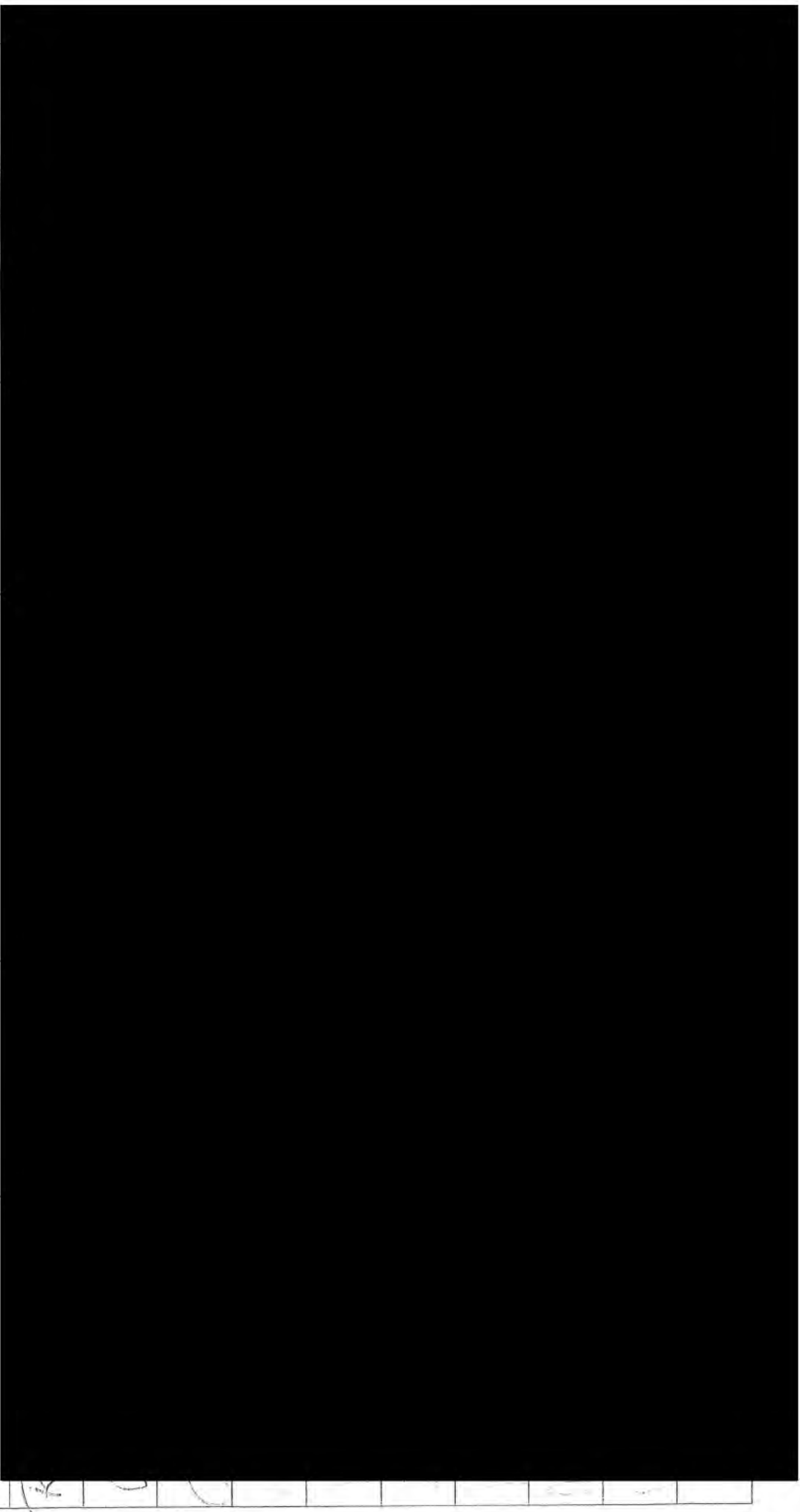
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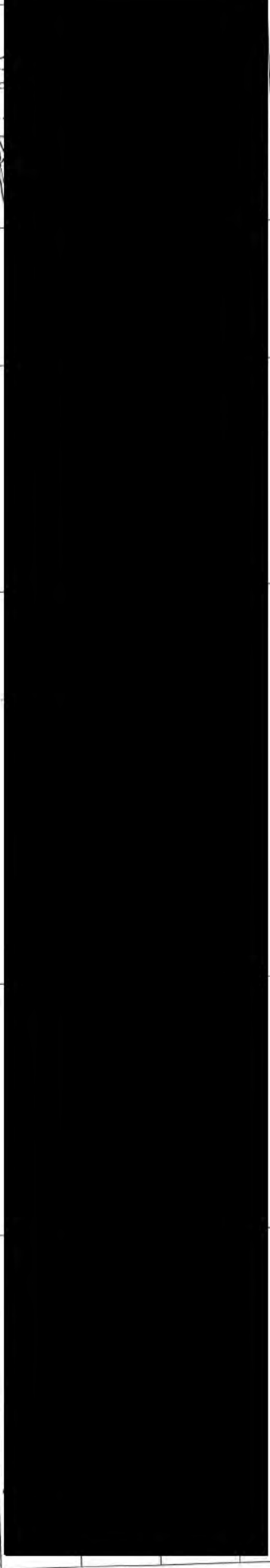
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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature
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First and last name	Dog's name	Email	Phone	Lives in the local board area	Signature						
											

17/02/25 -

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Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6968

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

See attachment: We have to fence and place gate at the off leash bowl area

The signage needs to be big and obvious

I have been taking my dog to walk at Monte Cecilia for a long time. My dogs know the other dogs and greet each other. This is an important part of our community for socialisation.

We all need someone, we all need connection and social groups – why is this restrictions on dogs? They just need a place to run and exercise.

Interacting with other dogs brings joy to the owners and joy to the people who don't own dogs.

Suggestion for CCTV to be placed at Monte Cecilia Park close to the bowl area. Young girls walk in the park and there are suspicious men in the park. Often young women have to finish their evening walks by 6pm because they are scared of the men.

CCTV would also be good if there was a dog attack at the park.

You don't throw out a whole basket of apples because of a couple of rotten ones. Do not punish responsible dog owners due to the actions of a couple of irresponsible ones.

This area of the council receives less funding than others. Why is there less for this area? I am a pensioner, why are we paying dog registration fees if we are not receiving any of the benefits?

When there are irresponsible dog owner actions, we solve the problems.

People would be willing to give money on Give A Little Page to raise money for dogs, and the council should say how much they are willing to contribute.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6969

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

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1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
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This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

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Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

See attachment

Summary of Attachment:

Importance of Dog Parks: Dog parks are crucial for the health and well-being of both dogs and their owners, providing a space for physical activity and social interaction.

Benefits of Off-Leash Dog Parks:

Safe spaces for dogs to run and meet their social needs.

Opportunities for humans to socialize and form friendships.

Increased physical activity and reduced cardiovascular risk.

Mental health benefits.

Enhanced community connection and support.

Better controlled dogs and reduced criminal activity.

Increased property values and neighborhood vibrancy.

Design Issues: The need for well-designed off-leash parks to meet the needs of dogs and their owners.

Comparison with Human-Centric Spaces: Highlighting the disparity in land allocation between dog parks and human-centric spaces in Auckland

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

To Auckland Council.

Re considered changes for off leash/dog parks.

Dog-ownership accounts for a significant proportion of households across countries. In a city like **Auckland**, in a culture that values nature and outdoor activity, a **dog park is a significant part of health** for thousands. There are significant stressors living in Auckland, including financial, emotional and culturally, and there needs to be access to social and physical environments we draw on to keep our mental, physical and community health. **Research DOES NOT SUPPORT stopping dog (off leash) parks. It's a matter of design issues. Being on leash does not meet the health and social needs of dogs and their owners** (i.e. walking alone on leash, socializing while dogs sit, a lack of natural behaviour for both mammals).

Dog parks are part of the largest growing parts of cities across the world. More than 95 percent of people loved them in some studies. **Evidence based research**, including systemic reviews, have identified that **off leash dog parks enable benefits of:**

- Safe places for dogs to run. Meet the social needs** of a pack mammal (like humans)
- Socialising and establishing friendships** for humans. Meeting partners.
- Most people find dog parks a **relaxing experience**
- Increased **physical activity** and reduced **cardiovascular risk. All-cause mortality.**
- Mental health benefits**
- Enhancing community** connection, engagement, sense of cohesion, and support. Greater positive feelings towards the neighbourhood. Enhancing social capital.
- Better controlled dogs due to needs being met.**
- Reduced criminal activity and **increased public safety.**
- Increased **property values.**
- Increased **vibrancy.**

If you compare the amount of area provided for off leash/dog spaces (e.g., at Monte Cecilia Park) with the amount of land area focused on human's needs across areas/Auckland (including parks such as Cornwall Park which are often near), it shows the degree of human centric decision outcomes that have been made. Humans have a poor history of sharing. Please see below article (2024) for how to make off leash parks successful.


Clinical Psychologist



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#6970

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable): Dog Friends Auckland

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

See attached

Summary of Attachment:

Loss of Access for Dogs

- **Impact on Daily Routines:** Changes to access can significantly alter local people's daily routines, requiring dog owners to drive to other locations.
- **Overcrowding:** More dogs in fewer spaces can lead to overcrowding, especially during summer and bird breeding seasons.
- **Safety and Accessibility:** Removal of access to open, flat areas with good sight lines can impact young families, older people, and women

Monte Cecilia Park

- **No Analysis:** No analysis from the Council on the impact on dog owners or alternative off-leash areas.
- **Historical Context:** The off-leash area was developed in 2015 due to limited off-leash areas, with separate spaces for dog owners and non-dog owners.
- **Council's Own Research:** Dog walking is one of the top 5 activities in Auckland parks.

- Dog Walking Assessment: A site visit showed high usage by dog owners, with 42 dogs and 10 people without dogs in the park during a 45-minute morning visit.

Request to Puketapapa Local Board

- Maintain Current Access: Request to keep the current off-leash area at Monte Cecilia as it is, suggesting signage or park design elements to manage any issues

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Do you have any further comments about dog access rules at local parks or beaches?

See attached

Summary of Attachment:

Proposed Changes

- Dog Access Changes: Around 60 changes proposed, including prohibiting dogs in 31 areas, changing access from off-leash to on-leash in 19 areas, and providing new off-leash access in 10 areas.
- Lack of Analysis: Many changes are proposed for consistency across Auckland without analyzing current usage or alternative access areas.

Impact on Daily Routines

- Routine Disruption: Changes can significantly alter daily routines, requiring dog owners to drive to other locations.
- Overcrowding: More dogs in fewer spaces can lead to overcrowding, especially during summer and bird breeding seasons.

Regional Comparisons

- Wellington and Whangarei: Both regions have expanded off-leash areas and made their cities more dog-friendly, unlike Auckland.

Specific Concerns

- Desktop Research: Proposals are based on desktop research rather than local knowledge and site visits.
- Alternative Areas: Identified alternatives are often unsuitable due to size, terrain, or accessibility issues.

Requests to the Council

- Public Input: Request for more public input before finalizing changes.
- Maintain Current Access: Request to keep current off-leash areas and consider new off-leash areas in growing suburbs

Submission to the Franklin Local Board

By Dog Friends Auckland February 2025

- Since the last Dog bylaw review there are over 10,000 more registered dogs (113,343 dogs YE June 2024) in Auckland.
 - In 2018 Franklin had the 2nd highest number of dogs amongst the LB's with 9.5% of all dogs in Auckland
- Since the last Policy & Bylaw of 2019 Dog owners have paid Council approx **\$50 MILLION** in registrations & fines etc.* (YE 2019 - 2024).
- Overall there are approx 60 changes proposed for dog access around Auckland
 - 31 are to prohibit dogs from areas
 - 19 change access from off leash to on
 - 10 give new off leash access.
- Many of the proposed changes that remove access are being proposed simply to have the same rules throughout Auckland.
 - No analysis has been done on how many dog owners currently use these areas as they are now or where the next area they could obtain the same access would be located.

Loss of access for Dogs

- It is worth highlighting that changes to access can change many local people's daily routine. Removing or restricting access to local dog owners means that somewhere they go daily with their dog is suddenly not available or limits their dog's exercise opportunity - sometimes just to meet a region wide rule.
 - As part of your HYS event this came through strongly from the Dog owners who attended. The locations that they frequent daily with their dogs are extremely important to them. Any changes can make a big difference to their daily lives. And in some cases alternative areas are not suitable due to terrain, ground condition, or safety.
- There are more subdivisions in Franklin that are on smaller sites. People who live in these homes do not have the room to exercise a dog on their property and rely on their LB to provide access. At the rate of development that is currently happening the need from these homeowners will increase.
- Any changes Council makes can have a massive impact on dog owners. It might mean having to drive to another location rather than walking to their local park or beach. For shift workers, having close to home access is important.
- More dogs in less spaces means that you can have issues with too many dogs in the same spots - especially during the summer season restrictions. (Time & season and bird breeding seasons).

Franklin Dog Access

As part of the 2019 Dog Bylaw council moved the default rule across Auckland to be 'on leash'. Franklin previously had 'off leash' as it's default rule.

Changing to 'ON LEASH' default and moving the responsibility to Local Boards for access changes has meant no new off leash areas since 2019.

Regulatory staff have told us that "LB's were initially contacted in Dec 2023 where the process to request additional dog access rules for review was outlined."

So our question is why isn't there any new off leash areas put forward for Franklin as part of this review?

#6970

Pre 2019 Most of Auckland was
OFF LEASH by default



Clevedon Showgrounds - a bit more detail

Looking into this situation after hearing submitters at the HYS event it seems as though Council left this off leash area out of the list of areas when they finalised the 2019 Dog Bylaw Policy update. As was stated in the SOP for the 2019 Dog Bylaw review that went out for public consultation:

Proposal 2:

All local board dog access rules within Schedule 2 of the Auckland Council Policy on Dogs will be presented in the same way. The rules will now list designated dog exercise areas, off leash areas, areas where a time and season rule is applied, and prohibited areas. Public spaces not listed in Schedule 2 have the default rule of dogs on leash.

This will not change local dog access rules that are currently applied in any local beach, park or reserve, only the way the rules are presented.

So they told dog owners that the switch to on leash as a default will not change any local dog access rules that were currently applied in any local beach, park or reserve. That's not what they are saying about Clevedon Showgrounds. They are presenting ON LEASH as the current rules, but it should be OFF LEASH.

What staff presented to the LB

#6970

Options assessment – Clevedon Showgrounds Reserve		
Note: The effectiveness and efficiency assessment is in relation to the Policy on Dog Access Principles (to “provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone”), consideration of Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the Dog Control Act 1996 (DCA).		
Option 1 (Status quo)	Option 2A (Amend rule)	Option 2B (Amend rule) <i>(Recommended)</i>
Formerly adopt the under control on a leash error on areas of the showgrounds not otherwise prohibited (Schedule 1). Dogs continue to be prohibited on sports surfaces and areas not under council control (e.g. leased areas) (Schedule 1).	Reinstate the intended 2012 Policy under control off a leash on areas of the showgrounds not otherwise prohibited (Schedule 2). Dogs continue to be prohibited on sports surfaces and areas not under council control (e.g. leased areas), and under control on a leash in vicinity of sports surfaces when in use and on parking areas (Schedule 1).	Dogs allowed under control off a leash on grass areas south of the area used as sports fields and west and north of equestrian areas (See Location Map) (Schedule 2), except during events where temporary dog access rules may apply (Bylaw clause 10). Dogs allowed under control on a leash on all other areas of the showgrounds not otherwise prohibited (Schedule 1) Dogs continue to be prohibited on sports surfaces and areas not under council control (e.g. leased areas) (Schedule 1).

OPTION 1 isn't the Status Quo - it's a mistake that council made in 2019 it should be OFF not on leash

OPTION 2A is what the access should be now.

OPTION 2B is what dog owners at the HYS said makes no sense and seems to have been dreamed up by someone who has never been to the showgrounds.

2012 Dog Bylaw - Franklin District

The following pages are from the 2012 Dog Bylaw which shows that there were no restrictions on Dog access at the Clevedon Showgrounds other than those standard for Auckland which do not need to be laid out - playgrounds etc.

This means that Council did not identify it as an off leash area in the 2019 review - which they should have done. This was what they promised to do as part of the SOP that they put out for consultation in 2019..

This is why the maps in the current piece of consultation are so confusing to people. What they are showing as the current access is wrong - it should have been off leash and that is how the community is still using it.

Franklin Local Board Area

- | |
|---|
| <p>(1) Dogs are allowed under control off a leash in the following areas –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) On all parks, beaches or foreshores in the former Manukau City not specifically identified as a prohibited or under control on a leash area.(b) All beaches in the former Franklin District not specifically identified as a prohibited, under control on a leash area, or dog exercise area.(c) Tawhitokino Regional Park and associated beach. <i>Explanatory Note: Dogs prohibited in campgrounds under Schedule 1</i>(d) Orere Point Regional Park and associated beach. <i>Explanatory Note: Dogs prohibited in campgrounds under Schedule 1.</i> |
| <p>(2) Dogs are allowed under control off a leash in the following dog exercise areas^{**},^{***} –</p> |

Last updated
1 July 2017

Dog Management Bylaw 2012

Franklin Local Board Area

(a) Roosevile Reserve, Totara Avenue and Ngahere Road, Pukekohe, excluding the fenced grazed area.	(f) Esplanade reserve from Huia Street to Totara Street, with access from Rata Street, Waiuku.		
(b) Hickeys Reserve, Pukekohe, from Paerata Road to Childs Avenue.	(g) Karioitahi Beach, Waiuku, south of a line extending east/west from the southern wall of the Karioitahi Beach Lifesaving Clubrooms and north of a line extending east/west from the northern wall of the Public Toilet Block facility.		
(c) Cape Hill Reserve, Brownlee Place, Pukekohe, excluding the fenced grazed area.	(h) Orua Bay, from the Orua Bay creek to Mako Point.		
(d) The catchment reserve between Jackson Place and Ward Street, Pukekohe.	(i) Patumahoe Recreation Reserve, Clive Howe Road, Patumahoe, in the signposted area at the north/western corner.		
(e) Reserve area along estuary access from Edgewater parade and Riverside Drive, Waiuku.	(j) East Coast Rd Reserves, foreshore only, Waharau North.		
(3) Dogs are allowed under control off a leash on the following beaches and adjoining parks before 9.00am and after 7.00pm during daylight saving, and are allowed under control off a leash at all times outside of daylight saving. Dogs are prohibited from 9.00am to 7.00pm during daylight saving.			
(a) Kawakawa Bay Beach	(c) Magazine Bay	(e) Orere Beach	(g) Waiomanu Beach
(b) Maraetai Beach	(d) Omana Beach	(f) Sunkist Bay Beach	(h) Waiti Beach
(4) Dogs are allowed under control off a leash on Karioitahi Beach, Waiuku (within an area bounded by two lines extending east/west from the southern wall of the Karioitahi Beach Lifesaving Clubrooms and the northern wall of the public toilet block facility) and adjoining park –			
(a) Before 10.00am and after 6.00pm on weekends, public holidays and school holidays between the Saturday of Labour Weekend and 31 March;			
(b) At all times on days that are not a weekend, public holiday and school holiday between the Saturday of Labour Weekend and 31 March; and			
(c) At all times between 1 April and Friday before Labour Weekend.			
Dogs are prohibited from 10.00am to 6.00pm during daylight saving on weekends, public holidays and school holidays between the Saturday of Labour Weekend and 31 March.			
(5) Dogs are allowed under control off a leash on the following beaches –			
(a) Before 10.00am and after 6.00pm on weekends, public holidays and school holidays between the Saturday of Labour Weekend and 31 March;			
(b) At all times on days that are not a weekend, public holiday and school holiday between the Saturday of Labour Weekend and 31 March; and			
(c) At all times between 1 April and Friday before Labour Weekend.			
Dogs are allowed under control on a leash from 10.00am to 6.00pm during daylight saving on weekends, public holidays and school holidays between the Saturday of Labour Weekend and 31 March.			
(a) Clarks Beach – from (and including) the beach frontage at Camp Morley and all adjoining beach and access way reserves west of Camp Morley.	(h) Big Bay.	(i) Wattle Bay.	(j) Hamiltons Gap, within 250m either side of the creek mouth at the end of West Coast Road.
(b) Glenbrook Beach and Glenbrook Landing Reserve.			

2012 Dog Bylaw - Franklin District

#6970

Last updated:

7 July 2017

Dog Management Bylaw 2012

Franklin Local Board Area

(c) Te Toro.	(k) Waiau Beach.
(d) Pollok Wharf.	(l) All those beaches and adjoining parks from the south east boundary of Auckland (north of Wharekawa) northwards to and including Lot 1 2 DP 12729 (north of Matingarahi), except those areas identified as a dog exercise area.
(e) Matakawau Point, Matakawau Beach and Sergeants Beach.	
(f) Hudsons Beach, between the boat ramp at the end of Hudsons Beach Road and the boat ramp at Grahams Beach.	(m) Esplanade Reserve at the end of Brook Road, Awhitu.
(g) Orua Bay, west of the Orua Bay creek.	
(6) In the area of Omana Regional Park -	
(a) Dogs are allowed under control off a leash on the perimeter walk and associated foreshore (excluding Omana Beach) at all times	
(b) Dogs are allowed under control on a leash in the arrival area, and on the Beachlands to Maraetai walk/cycle way.	
(c) Dogs are prohibited in all other areas of the park.	
<i>Explanatory Note: Temporary restrictions may apply during seasonal farming operations (lambling and calving) under Clause 10 of Dog Management Bylaw.</i>	
(7) In the area of Tapapakanga Regional Park -	
(a) Dogs are allowed under control off a leash on the associated beach.	
(b) Dogs are allowed under control on a leash on the park between 1 December and 30 June.	
(c) Dogs are prohibited on the park between 1 July and 30 November (lambling and calving).	
(8) In the area of Waitawa Regional Park -	
(a) Dogs are allowed under control off a leash on the associated beach.	
(b) Dogs are allowed under control on a leash on the park. <i>Explanatory Note: Dogs prohibited in camping areas under Schedule 1 and restrictions may apply to protect nesting areas and during seasonal farming operations (lambling and calving) under Clause 10 of Dog Management Bylaw.</i>	
(9) Dogs are allowed under control on a leash in the following areas -	
(a) All farm paddocks in a park in the former Manukau City occupied by stock.	(e) On all recreational walkways in the former Papakura District.
(b) All bush walks in Clevedon Conservation Area and Dr Platt-Mills Reserve.	(f) All areas developed or marked out as a public garden in the former Papakura District.
(c) Esplanade reserves adjacent to Papepape Marginal Strip Foreshore, Waikopua Creek Conservation Area Foreshore, Wairoa River Estuary Bay Foreshore.	(g) All sportsparks** in the former Papakura District.
(d) All parks, beaches and foreshores in the former Papakura District not specifically identified as a prohibited or off-leash area.	(h) Any area in the former Papakura and Franklin Districts that is developed or marked out as a picnic area (not specifically identified as a prohibited area) or fitness apparatus area.
	(i) All parks and foreshores in the former Franklin District not specifically identified as a prohibited, off-leash or dog exercise area.
	(j) Any area developed or marked out as a grass sports surface (sports field) in the former Franklin District when not used for sporting events.
(10) In the area of Awhitu Regional Park , dogs are allowed under control on a leash on the Esplanade Reserve area of the park at the end of Brook	

2012 Dog Bylaw - Franklin District

#6970

Last updated:
3 July 2017

Dog Management Bylaw 2012

Franklin Local Board Area

Road, and dogs are prohibited on all other areas of the park and on the associated beaches.

(11) In the area of **Hunua Ranges Regional Park**, dogs are allowed under control on a leash in areas not specifically identified as being prohibited. Dogs are prohibited in picnic areas, exclusive areas around and including the water supply dams and on the Kohukohunui Track. *Explanatory Note: Dogs prohibited in camping areas under Schedule 1 and temporary restrictions may apply during seasonal farming operations (lambling and calving) under Clause 10 of the Dog Management Bylaw.*

(12) **Dogs are prohibited** in the following areas –

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Duder Regional Park and associated foreshore. | (f) <i>Papepape Marginal Strip and Crown foreshore^{1,2} (DOC Map 5.39, 6.39).</i> |
| (b) In the protected wildlife areas of the George Kern Nature Reserve (Kern Road, Pukekohe East) and Harris Nature Reserve (Rutherford Road, Pukekohe East). | (g) <i>Turanga Creek Conservation Area and Crown foreshore^{1,2} (DOC Maps 5.55, 6.59).</i> |
| (c) <i>Clarks Beach Marginal Strip and adjacent Crown foreshore^{1,2} (DOC Maps 5.7, 6.5).</i> | (h) <i>Waikopua Creek Conservation Area Crown foreshore^{1,2} (DOC Maps 5.56, 6.61).</i> |
| (d) <i>Clifton Bay Marginal Strip and Crown foreshore^{1,2} (DOC Maps 5.8, 6.6).</i> | (i) <i>Waipipi Creek Crown foreshore² (DOC Map 6.63).</i> |
| (e) <i>Crown foreshore of Rangiri Creek and surrounds² (DOC Map 6.43)</i> | (j) <i>Wairoa Estuary and Bay Crown foreshore² (DOC Map 6.64).</i> |

Reasons for Department of Conservation dog access rule:–

- | | |
|--|--|
| ¹ High population of protected wildlife vulnerable to dogs | ² Inter-tidal areas with various species vulnerable to dogs |
| ³ Potential conflict with other users (members of the public) | ⁴ Vulnerable wildlife present |

Department of Conservation conditions of entry –

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| ⁵ Faeces to be removed | ⁶ Leash rule does not apply to hunting dogs. |
|-----------------------------------|---|

* Time restriction. Dogs are only allowed under control off-leash before 8am and after 7pm between the Saturday of Labour Weekend and Easter Monday (summer), and before 8am and after 5pm between the Tuesday after Easter Monday and the Friday before Labour Weekend (winter).

** *Explanatory Note: The region-wide rule that prohibits dogs on any sports surface (unless exceptions are stated) and that requires dogs to be kept under control on a leash in the vicinity of any sports surface when in use as stated in Schedule 1, Rule 1(2) continues to apply. This note is specified in relation to particular parks where a sportsfield is known to exist to assist readers.*

Franklin Dog Access

#6970

- Changes proposed by Council to dog access in Franklin
 - 19 areas that dogs had access to are to be PROHIBITED
 - Kawakawa bay - changes to access.
 - From time & season to prohibited during bird breeding season and some off leash at all times.
- No new off leash areas in Franklin since 2019, despite new home subdivisions
- Proposal to remove access from 15 sports grounds.
 - As part of council's own policy, it stated they should consider 'before making any change to a dog access rule that will provide less dog access; that to the extent that is practicable, that displaced dog owners have access to other places, or that such access is provided as part of the same decision.'
 - In all the documents about the analysis of this decision I cannot find anywhere where council has identified other locations that dog owners using these spaces can go.
 - All I do find is that in these parks pretty much 80-90% of the park area that dog owners had access to is proposed to be removed.... The exceptions being Glenbrook Road Recreation reserve and Puni Recreation Reserve. See maps of these 15 sports grounds on following pages



Bledisloe Park - Franklin

#6970



Clive Howe Rd Recreation Reserve



Colin Lawrie Fields

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#6970

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Glenbrook Road Recreation Reserve

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Hamilton Estate Recreation Reserve

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Date Updated:
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Massey Park - Waiuku

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General Sport 1

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#6970

Johna Street

Rugby 2

Rugby 1

Patumahoe Recreation Reserve

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Puni Recreation Reserve

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20/06/2023



Rosa Birch Park

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Date
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#6970



Waiau Pa Domain

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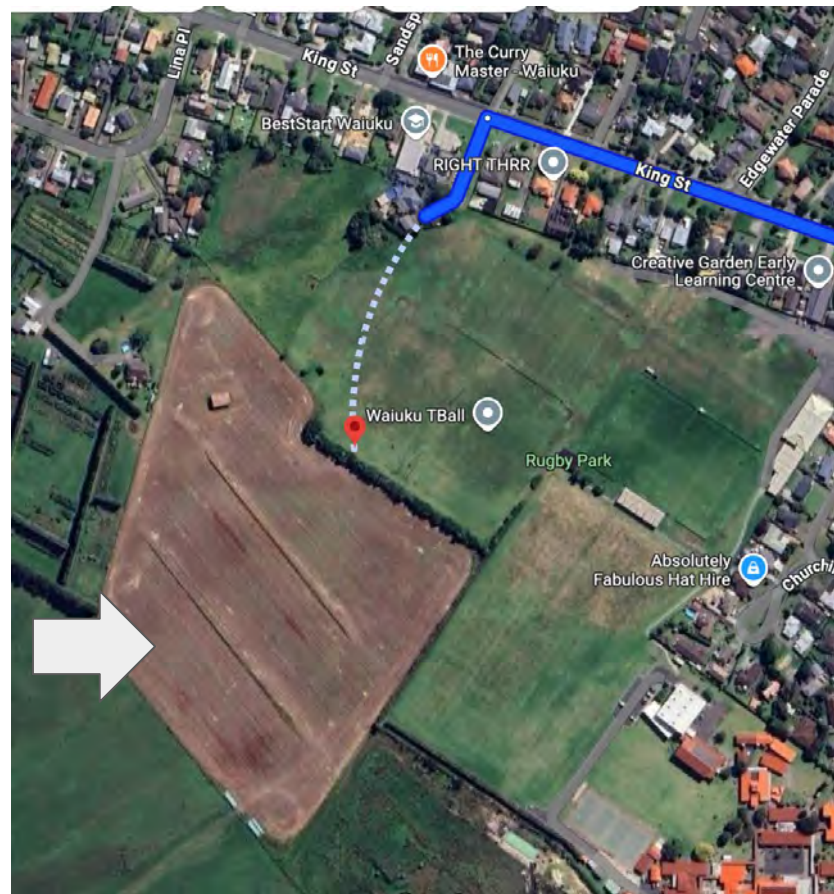
Waiuku Sports park - back area looks like it's not a usable part of the park. #6970



Waiuku Sports Park

0 10 20 30

Date Updated:
20/06/2023



Southern Areas - proposed Access Changes - Franklin

#6970

Sports fields in former Franklin District

Proposed sports field changes are for the following parks:

Bledisloe Park, Clive How Road Recreation Reserve, Colin Lawrie Fields, Franklin A&P Showgrounds, Glenbrook Road Recreation Reserve, Hamilton Estate Recreation Reserve, Karaka Sports Park, Massey Park, Matakawau Recreation Reserve, Navigation Homes Stadium, Patumahoe Recreation Reserve, Puni Recreation Reserve, Rosa Birch Park, Waiau Pa Domain, Waiuku Sports Park.

We are proposing to better protect sports users from nuisance and sports surfaces from damage while still providing for on-leash dog access in other areas of the park that is consistent with dog access rules on all other parks in the local board area and Auckland region by applying the default region-wide prohibition of dogs on sports surfaces.

Current Policy rules

On sports surfaces (marked grass sports fields):

- Dogs allowed **under control on a leash** when not in use or closed (Schedule 1(2) and 2)
- Dogs are **prohibited** when in use or closed (Schedule 1(2) and 2).

Current dog access rules in other park areas (for example on any playgrounds or carparks) would continue to apply (Schedule 1).

Proposed amended Policy rules

On sports surfaces (marked grass sports fields):

- Dogs are **prohibited** at all times (Schedule 1(2)).
- Current dog access rules in other park areas (for example on any playgrounds or carparks) would continue to apply (Schedule 1).

CHANGE: From On leash to PROHIBITED

Loss of ON leash access at 15 locations simply to have a city wide rule be the same.

Dogs are not allowed on sports surfaces when in use or closed. So sports users are not endangered and surfaces are not damaged. There is no alternative access offered in lieu of removal of this access.

How many of these areas have somewhere else of a similar size that dog owners can exercise their dogs?

Sports fields in former Franklin District Council	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Validity
Option 1 (Status quo) – Retain Dogs allowed under control on a leash when not in use or closed.	✗	✗	✗
Option 2 (Amend rule) (Recommended) – Revoke exemption and apply region-wide prohibition on sports fields.	✓	✓	✓

Recommended option:

- will better protect sports users from nuisance and sports surfaces from damage while still providing for on-leash dog access in other areas of the 15 sports parks in this request
- will apply a consistent rule on all sports fields in the Franklin Local Board area and align with the region-wide rule
- is authorised under s10(2)(a-e) and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the DCA, is consistent with the Policy's Dog Access Principles and considers the Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules.

The trade-off with Option 1 of reduced dog access on sports fields (when not in use or closed) and the additional cost to implement, is to better protect sports users from nuisance and sports surfaces from damage while still providing for on-leash dog access in other areas of the park that is consistent with dog access rules on all other parks in the local board area and Auckland region.

The implementation cost is approximately \$700. This covers 30 dog access signs and courier costs.

Part 2: Detailed Assessment

Sports fields in former Franklin District Council

Location – Sports fields in former Franklin District Council

Former Franklin District Council sports parks (Bledisloe Park, Clive How Road Recreation Reserve, Colin Lawrie Fields, Franklin A&P Showgrounds*, Glenbrook Road Recreation Reserve, Hamilton Estate Recreation Reserve, Karaka Sports Park, Massey Park, Matakawau Recreation Reserve, Navigation Homes Stadium, Palumahoe Recreation Reserve, Puni Recreation Reserve, Rosa Birch Park, Waiiau Pa Domain, Waiuku Sports Park*).

- There are 13 council-owned sports parks and two council-leased* sports parks used for sports purposes including football (soccer), rugby league and union, softball, and touch rugby.
NOTE: there is also one privately owned park (Bombay Rugby Club) and two schools (Waiuku Primary and College) to which this request does not apply.
- The parks vary in size and the allocation of training and competition capacity for each parks varies as well (for example, Bledisloe Park, has seven sports fields in the winter and Navigation Homes Stadium only one).

Map below shows council-owned and leased sports parks in the former Franklin District Council area:



Current dog access rule

- Default dog access rules currently apply on the parks in this request, except for the region-wide rule that prohibits dogs on sports surfaces at all times.
- This means for example, that dogs are allowed on-leash on sports fields at Bledisloe Park and Massey Park when not in use or closed.
- This is a legacy exemption of the former Franklin District that the local board can retain without change or revoke to apply the region-wide prohibition of dogs. The prohibition would not apply to other areas of the parks in this request where for example at Bledisloe Park and Massey Park, dogs would continue to be allowed under control on a leash on grass areas outside of marked sports fields.
- Note: The region-wide prohibition currently applies to five other sports parks in the Franklin Local Board area - Beachlands Domain, Clevedon Showgrounds Reserve, Te Puru Park, Whitford Memorial Domain (former Manukau City Council) and Bell Field (former Papakura District Council).

Franklin Local Board sports park dog access rules in Schedule 2 of Policy on Dogs 2019

Dogs are allowed under control on-leash on all local beaches and foreshore areas, local parks and reserves not specifically listed below.

NOTE: None of the parks in this request are specifically listed in Schedule 2 of the Policy.

Part 2: Detailed Assessment

#6970

The prohibition on any sports surfaces does not apply when the sports surface is not in use or closed in any areas developed or marked out as a grass sports surface (sports fields) in the former Franklin District.

Change request

- Requester:** Parks and Community Facilities
- Request:** To align the dog access rule for the sports fields at 15 sports parks in the Franklin Local Board area with the region-wide rule that prohibits dogs on any sports surface at all times.
- NOTE:** This assessment also addresses updating the web pages for all sports parks in the Franklin Local Board area which contain errors. This includes correcting errors in current rules as identified below.
 - Bell Field** (former Papakura District Council), incorrectly stated as off-leash all areas. Correct rule is prohibited on sports fields at all times, on-leash all other areas.
 - Te Puru Park** (former Manukau City Council), include stated as off-leash on sports fields. Correct rule is prohibited on sports fields at all times, on-leash near sports fields when in use.

Findings assessment

- Is there a structural change in the nature of the area?**
- Yes. Since 2013, there has been an increase in investment in the development and maintenance of parks and sports fields in the Franklin Local Board area and an increase in usage.
 - The fields are utilised for a variety of sports, and in the summer months usage on the parks generally increases due to the weather and the division of playing surfaces (for example, one rugby field in the winter caters for two touch rugby fields in the summer).
- Are there any significant risk factors at location as a result of the change in the nature of the area?**
- Yes. The increase in investment and usage increases the significant risk of nuisance and damage (for example from digging or residual dog faeces) on sports surfaces.
 - In general council complaints data indicates that between 2019 and 2024 there have been 13 incidents about dogs being aggressive or attacking an animal or person on Franklin sports parks. However, it is unclear whether the incidents occurred on a sports field with the dog on a leash.
- Is there a structural problem with the current dog access rules that requires an options analysis?**
- Yes. Since 2019, an increased investment and usage of sports parks in the former Franklin District Council area has increased the significant risk of nuisance to people and damage to sports surfaces.

Options assessment

Note: The effectiveness and efficiency assessment is in relation to the Policy on Dog Access Principles (to "provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone"), consideration of Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the Dog Control Act 1996 (DCA).

Option 1: Status quo

This option would mean – On sports surfaces (marked grass sports fields):

- Dogs allowed **except prohibited on or closed** when not in use or closed (Schedule 1(2) and 2)
- Dogs are **prohibited** when in use or closed (Schedule 1(2) and 2).

Current dog access rules in other park areas (for example on any playgrounds or carparks) would continue to apply (Schedule 1).

Option 2: Amend rule (Recommended)

This option would mean – On sports surfaces (marked grass sports fields):

- Dogs are **prohibited** at all times (Schedule 1(2)).
- Current dog access rules in other park areas (for example on any playgrounds or carparks) would continue to apply (Schedule 1).

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis against the criteria above, Option 2 (Revoke exemption and apply region-wide prohibition on sports fields) is the most appropriate way to address the structural problem and achieve the objective of providing a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone.

Taking this approach:

- will better protect sports users from nuisance and sports surfaces from damage while still providing for on-leash dog access in other areas of the 15 sports parks in this request
- will apply a consistent rule on all sports fields in the Franklin Local Board area and align with the region-wide rule.
- is authorised under s10(3)(a-e) and has regard to the matters in s10(4) of the DCA, is consistent with the Policy's Dog Access Principles and considers the Policy criteria for changes to dog access rules.

The trade-off with Option 1 of reduced dog access on sports fields (when not in use or closed) and the additional cost to implement, is to better protect sports users from nuisance and sports surfaces from damage while still providing for on-leash dog access in other areas of the park that is consistent with dog access rules on all other parks in the local board area and Auckland region.

Implementation

Decision-making process

- No additional costs to local board.
- No requirement to use Special Consultative Procedure (SCP) and no change to signage.

Administration

- Animal Management staff continue (as a prioritised resource allows) to patrol locations to educate dog owners and where appropriate to issue infringements.
- Staff to correct errors and update information on the [Where you can walk your dog](#) webpage and signage.

Decision-making process

- Requires use of the SCP.
- Local board adopts proposed changes for public consultation.
- Governing Body funds generic SCP process (public notice for feedback and decision, co-ordinates 'have your say events' and deliberations and updates [Where you can walk your dog](#) and [Policy](#) information.
- Local Board funds cost of any bespoke SCP initiatives and new signage (estimated at \$700 for 30 signs) and local board time and resource for 'have your say events' and deliberations (for example access to local board libraries and offices).

Administration

- Same as Option 1.

Effectiveness

✗ Least effective option. Retains increased significant risks of nuisance to sports users and damage to sports surfaces (although less than if dogs were allowed off-leash).

✓ More effective than Option 1. Would better protect sports users from nuisance and sports surfaces from damage while still providing for dogs on-leash in other areas of the parks.

Efficiency

✗ While no cost in the short-term (no SCP required), the current rules are inconsistent with the region-wide prohibition elsewhere in the local board area and the Auckland region which can lead to confusion.

✓ More efficient than Option 1. While more costly in short-term (SCP plus signage costs), alignment with the region-wide prohibition at all times rule will be easier to understand and administer in terms of consistency.

Validity

✓ Inclusion of dog access rules in the Policy is authorised by s10(3a-e) of the DCA, the DCA is the primary legislation to manage dog access, and the option has regard to matters in section 10(4) of DCA.

✗ Less reasonable option. Fails to balance the needs of dog owners and their dogs and the increased significant risks of nuisance to sports users and damage to property.

✓ More reasonable than Option 1. Applies a consistent region-wide rule that protects sports users and sports surfaces while still allowing dog access in other areas of the parks.

Risk and mitigation

Risk: IF the current rules are retained, THEN there is a low reputational risk of retaining a rule that creates increased significant risks of damage and nuisance due to increased investment and usage and is inconsistent with the region-wide rule.

Mitigation: Communication that the local board consider the legacy exemption to still be appropriate in this more rural area of Auckland.

Risk: IF rules are amended, THEN there is a medium risk that dog owners may perceive the change as unreasonable.

Mitigation: Communication that public feedback will be sought before making a final decision.

No part of this assessment identifies where else dog owners can go when this access is removed. There is no new access as part of the proposed change.

Kawakawa Bay - proposed reduced dog access

#6970

From this

To this

Kawakawa Bay Beach – Current dog access rules



Kawakawa Bay Beach – Proposed dog access rules



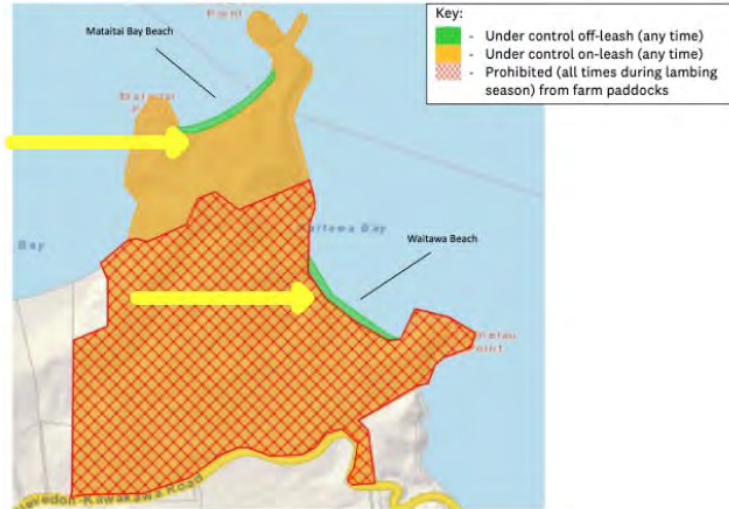
Key:

-  - Under control off-leash (any time)
-  - Under control on-leash (all times)
-  - Prohibited (at all times)
-  - Under control on-leash (when used as a carpark)
-  - Time and season
-  - Bird breeding season

Waitawa Regional Park - more restrictions on dog access

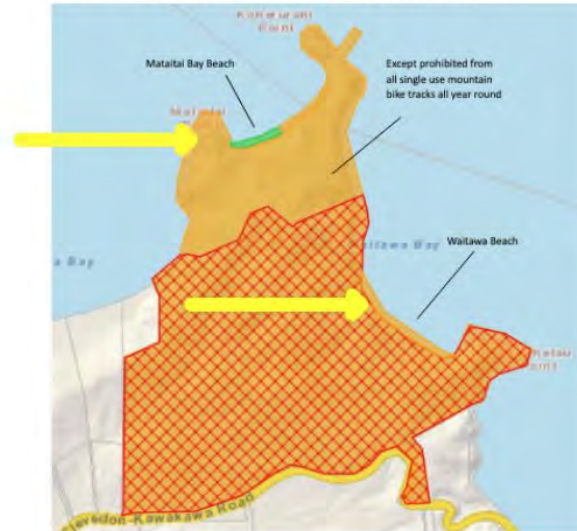
From this

Waitawa Regional Park - Current dog access rules



To this

Waitawa Regional Park - Proposed dog access rules



MAIN CHANGES:

- Removing most of the off leash access and moving to on leash. There seems to be only a ¼ of the off leash area proposed to be remaining as off leash

Kawakawa Bay

#6970

As we are not locals it is hard to state any local facts on the proposals for Kawakawa Bay - but we do note that what has triggered this proposed change to dog access has come from one member of the public.

We also note that council is proposing to reduce dog access at the neighbouring Waitawa Regional Park and at the Clevedon Showgrounds reserve.

At neighbouring Waitawa Regional Park the proposal there is to reduce off leash access by about 75% (what was previously off leash is moving to on leash). This could mean more dog owners wanting to access the off leash areas of Kawakawa Bay.

As there is a large swath of the beach that is in the middle of the two proposed off leash areas of this beach proposed to have dogs prohibited for 7 months during the bird breeding season, we would ask could ON LEASH during the bird breeding season work instead? To go straight from OFF leash during time and season to PROHIBITED for 7 months of the year is a big reduction in access.

If the Franklin Local board plan to go ahead with the prohibiting of dogs during a bird breeding season we would then ask that they do so once they have reviewed the physical access that is available for dog owners to the off leash at all time zones of the beach - are dog owners able to practically get to these areas? Is there car parking?

- Is there safe access for families with prams and dogs, or elderly people with dogs? (I.E - no banks to clamber over or down, safe steps etc).
- Can dog owners walk from one end of the beach to the other around the bird breeding zone? Is there a pathway off the beach they can go along? Or is there a roadside pavement they can follow?

Dogs on lead don't have a massive impact on breeding dotterel vs people ^{#6970}

Auckland Council Staff have referenced the following study in Dotterel proposals regarding Dogs;

A. Lord et al. / Biological Conservation 98 (2001)

Effects of Human Approaches to nests of Dotterel

As part of the field survey sites were rated as receiving high levels of activity if they received between 7-20 visitors per hour - these were identified as busy beaches.

Scenarios tested were; Lone person walking, lone person running, lone person walking a leashed dog. Off leash dog walking was not tested. All of the testing started at 200m out from the nest. All participants walked to within 5 metres of the nest.

Flush distances were observed.

For those deemed to be a busy beach the mean result showed;

- A lone walker would flush a bird off the nest at approx 20m
- A lone runner would flush a bird off the nest at approx 50m
- A lone walker with a leashed dog would flush a bird off the nest at approx 70m

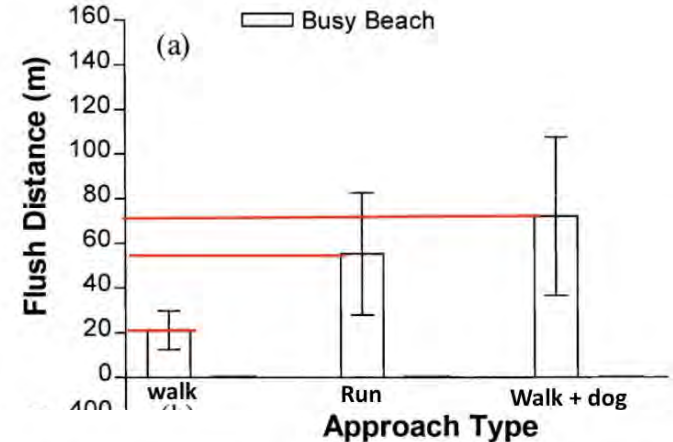


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

After having someone (+dog) come within 5m of the nest & standing there for 1 minute the time spent off the nest on a busy beach was:

- A lone walker kept the birds off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes (150 seconds)
- A lone runner kept the birds off the nest for approx 3 minutes (180 seconds)
- A lone walk with a leashed dog kept the birds off the nest for approx 3.7 minutes (210 seconds). **Only 40 seconds approx longer than a runner.**

The impact of a dog on leash vs a runner is only 40 seconds. A walker will still mean that the birds will be off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes.

In the assessment for the Kawakawa Bay changes it states that 'dotterels and oystercatchers can be easily spooked & are significantly impacted by dogs - even on a lead.' But we question the 'significantly' statement for dogs on lead based on this study when comparing to human only impact. We don't doubt that the birds need help - but dogs are the only ones restricted - not people, or vehicles, or cats or other predators - just dogs are the ones that council keep prohibiting and restricting. The public then see us, not human activity as a whole as the issue.

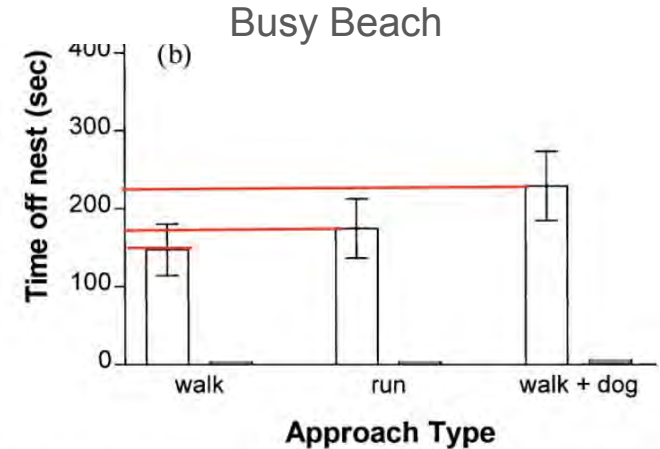


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

HYS events

- What came through strongly from the dog owners present at the HYS was that for Clevedon what was provided for dogs owners to give feedback as part of this was not fit for purpose. Regular users of this area felt that what was proposed was done by someone who had no knowledge of the space and it's current usage and would not work.
- The same for those who frequented the Colin Lawrie park who felt that the other areas available were unsuitable due to terrain, ground conditions and safety. They felt strongly that no one had actually visited the area in making these recommendations and that it was proposed 'on paper', with no local input or knowledge.

We would ask that:

- The proposed restrictions of PROHIBITING Dogs from Sports fields not go ahead and the current access rules remain.
- That the Local board plan new off leash areas for dog owners in the new subdivisions that are already in place and for the planned Growth areas within Franklin.
- And upon hearing the local support at the HYS event we request that the off leash access to remain as it was pre 2019 at the Clevedon Showgrounds Reserve.

Dogs aren't the only threat to Dotterels...

...but because the council has a bylaw in place to control dog access they are always the ones to be restricted.

Cats are proving a huge issue at the Dotterel population at Omaha and locals are crying out for council to do something.

People running, kids playing can also cause the dotterels to move off their nest. Kite surfing has been shown to affect breeding dotterel in Auckland.

But the only ones who have any infringements on their movements are dog owners.

Threats to Dotterels are not limited to Dogs

Kite Surfing - risk to breeding;

Council's own expert witness in a Council Environment Court action¹ - Dr Lovegrove (Auckland Council) - said that an increase in kite-surfing at the Karaka shell banks in the South Manukau harbour had been found to be disturbing migratory species such as godwits and preventing breeding of New Zealand dotterel for whom this was an important site. In addition another expert witness who was supporting Council's position in this action cited "an evaluation of 17 studies from five countries, including New Zealand, Mr Don said that birds perceive kite surfers as large predators and avoid them by taking long flights or leaving a site altogether. In his view, unregulated kite-surfing had the potential to *"significantly degrade the existing habitats of coastal birds as a result of continual disturbance"*.

Snells beach is one of the most popular kite/foil surfing areas of Auckland

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - cats. Cats have been a major problem for Dotterel breeding sites in the north auckland area but council has no plan in place to limit or control cats



Cat attacks dotterels at Snells

0:12 MON, 24 OCT

Snells Beach cat owners are being asked to keep an eye on their pets, after dotterels were attacked early last Wednesday morning, October 19, forcing...



Omaha dotterel team mourns cat attack

0:12 SUN, 13 DEC

Night photos at the sanctuary, taken after the dotterel died, clearly show a cat on the prowl. A domestic cat is believed to have killed...



Tragic end for dotterel egg

10:10 TUE, 19 NOV

The sole dotterel (tūturiwhatu) egg remaining at Tindalls Bay disappeared overnight on Friday, November 8. Forest and Bir volunteer Derek Kelsey discovered the empty nest...



Council's dithering on dotterels criticised

8:08 TUE, 19 MAR

Auckland Council has been urged to do its job in protecting the seabirds and their chicks on Omaha Spit, which are being decimated by cats...



Council pussyfoots over dotterel destruction

14:02 FRI, 16 FEB

A refusal by Auckland Council to seriously address the cat problem on the Omaha Spit could sound the death knell for the area as a...



Community groups seek more cat control

13:01 TUE, 21 MAR

When cats were first captured on camera on the chenier (shell bank) in the Weiti River, last October, environmental group Friends of Okura Bush (FOOB)...



Stop pussyfooting around – keep cats indoors, pet owners urged

8:08 MON, 27 FEB

Cat burglar – this pet stole several eggs and wrecked dotterel nests this season at Snells Beach. Though their owners might not realise it, pet...

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - black back gulls

Case study; Matakana Island

DOC began to worry about the apparent failure of New Zealand dotterel chicks to fledge on Matakana Island and set video cameras to monitor dotterel nests.

Surprise, the cameras revealed that predation by black-backed gulls was the main cause of mortality among dotterel chicks.

An eradication was successful, and there are now no black-backed gulls nesting on Matakana Island. .Dotterels have since made a huge comeback on Matakana Island, now the most successful nesting area for the waders in the country. During the 2004–05 breeding season 30 chicks were raised from 42 pairs of New Zealand dotterels, and banded dotterels from previous broods are turning up all round the Bay of Plenty and nesting in new areas. Other birds, such as variable oystercatchers, are also benefiting from the absence of the predatory gulls

<https://www.nzgeo.com/stories/black-backed-gulls/>

Submission to the Hibiscus & Bays Local Board

Dog Friends Auckland
February 2025

Overview

#6970

- Since the last Dog bylaw review there are over 10,000 more registered dogs (113,343 dogs YE June 2024) in Auckland.
 - H&B Local board had the 3rd highest number of dog registrations in 2018 & 36% of dog owners were RDOL holders.
- Since the last Policy & Bylaw of 2019 Dog owners have paid Council approx **\$50 MILLION** in registrations & fines etc.* (YE 2019 - 2024).
- Overall there are approx 60 changes proposed for dog access around Auckland
 - 31 are to prohibit dogs from areas
 - 19 change access from off leash to on
 - 10 give new off leash access.
- Many of the proposed changes that remove access are being proposed simply to have the same rules throughout Auckland.
 - No analysis has been done on how many dog owners currently use these areas as they are now or where the next area they could obtain the same access would be located.

* Based on 113,343 dog registrations at average \$79.57 per dog and \$1.1M in infringements etc - \$10 M per anum

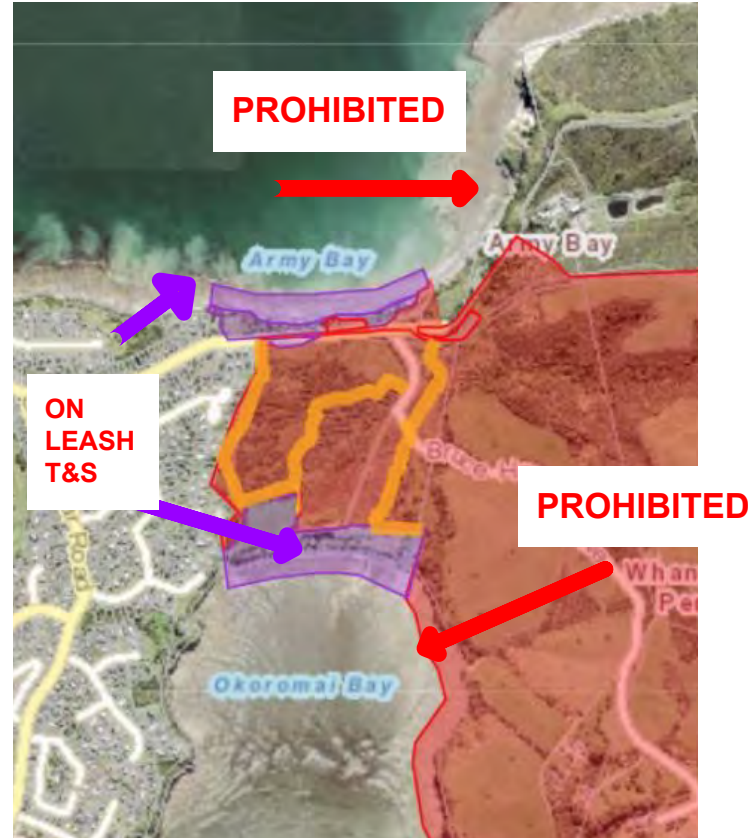
- It is worth highlighting that changes to access can change many local people's daily routine. Removing or restricting access to local dog owners means that somewhere they go daily with their dog is suddenly not available or limits their dog's exercise opportunity - sometimes just to meet a region wide rule.
- Any changes Council makes can have a massive impact on dog owners. It might mean having to drive to another location rather than walking to their local park or beach. For shift workers, having close to home access is important.
- More dogs in less spaces means that you can have issues with too many dogs in the same spots - especially during the summer season restrictions. (Time & season and bird breeding seasons).

- Within the H&B Local board are two Regional Parks, but these are located within urban suburbs of Auckland. Shakespear & Long Bay - both of these have local households that treat these as their local parks/beaches.
- Council is proposing the following;
 - To apply the regional time and season rule of Dogs on leash on the grass areas next to Okoromai and Army Bay. This would mean current OFF leash access would become ON leash during summer hours restrictions (between 10am and 5pm).
 - To PROHIBIT dogs from east of the Army Bay boat ramp.
 - To PROHIBIT dogs from the eastern end of Okoromai Bay

Current



Proposed



This map isn't showing the prohibited beach area of Army Bay

Hibiscus & Bays - Shakespear Regional Park

Prohibiting Dogs from East of the Army Bay boat ramp. The reason given is to stop dogs from accessing the sanctuary area. But there are cliffs here and no access to the park. There is no need to prohibit dogs from the east of the boat ramp at Army Bay beach. These photos clearly demonstrate the lack of access to the Sanctuary in this area of the beach.



Hibiscus & Bays - Shakespear

#6970

Prohibiting Dogs from the Eastern end of Okoromai Bay as there is a chance they might access the sanctuary area. There is signposting saying 'no dogs' beyond X point to stop this. There is no actual issue to address, just a risk. Unlike cats, dogs are accompanied by an owner & can be stopped from entering. Access is only available at low tide so it is not a hugely used area, but for people with reactive dogs it's a good place to be away from other dogs. The photos below show the area in question.



COUNCIL PROPOSED CHANGE

We are proposing to protect dotterels that nest near the headland of Big Manly Beach and Tindalls beach from being disturbed, harmed or killed by dogs by requiring dogs to be on-leash (currently a time and season rule applies).

HOW THE PUBLIC SEES THE OPTIONS TO THE PROPOSAL ON COUNCIL FEEDBACK FORM

A. What do you think of this proposed change?

- I support the proposed change
- I do not support the proposed change
- I don't know

B. If you **do not support** the proposed change, would you support one of the alternative options presented to decision-makers in December 2024?

- No change to current Policy (dog access) rules
- Apply a **bird breeding season rule** (Schedule 2).

Doesn't state time & season

Bird Breeding Season (1 September to 31 March)	Out of Bird Breeding Season
Big Manly Beach between Cross Street to the headland connecting to Tindalls Beach	
 At all times Prohibited	 At all times Under control on-leash

NOW PROHIBITED IS AN OPTION AS WELL

- Apply the current **time and season** restrictions on remaining areas of the beach.
- Other (please explain below)

Hibiscus & Bays - Manly & Tindalls Beach

Map showing approx area of proposed council access restrictions;



Manly/Tindalls and surrounding beaches are Urban Beaches

As part of an urban environment are activities and human interactions that are detrimental to the Dotterels, including;

- Walking and running
- Dog walking
- Family days at the beach with kids playing
- Water sports - jet skis, boats, sailing, and especially at Manly - foiling and kite surfing.
- Drone activity
- Vehicles being driven and parked on the beach - including at speed.

Byproducts of an urban environment also include predators - cats, hedgehogs, rats, stoats, black back gulls etc.

With Penlink underway the resident population and day tripping population will only increase at Manly & Tindalls.

Manly/Tindalls and surrounding beaches are Urban Beaches

As far as we are aware, some of issues that have caused breeding failure over the years (approx 2019 onwards) for the Manly/Tindalls Dotterels include; nests being washed away by the tide, using a nesting spot that had had been poisoned prior to their arrival, hedgehogs predated the eggs, a builder removing eggs & stopping the birds from returning to the nest and a probable dog attack on an adult bird.

Most local dog owners actively avoid the nests and put their dogs on lead when they are nearby.

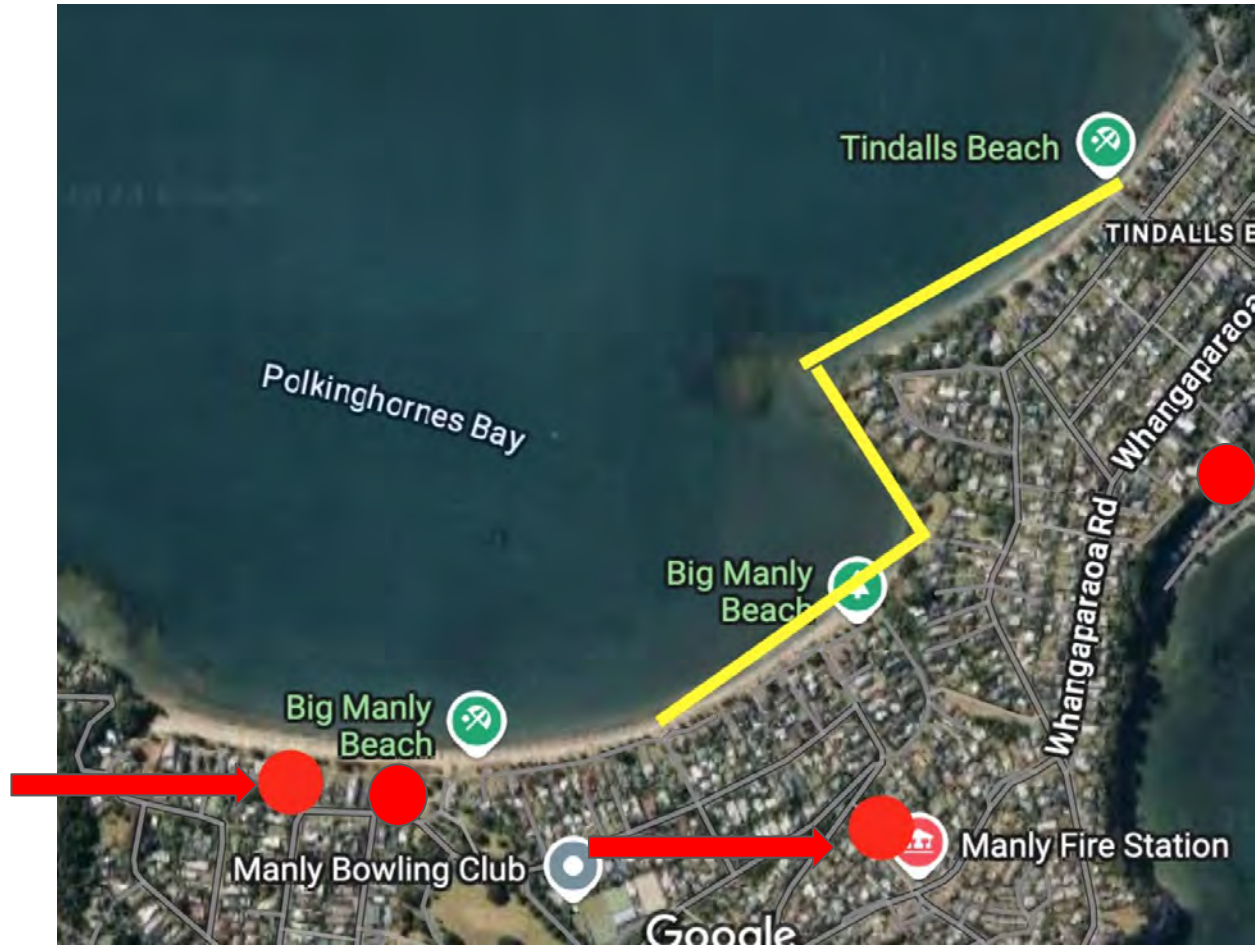
We believe that if the council proposal goes through it is likely they will want to, eventually, prohibit dogs from this area during the 7 month bird breeding season. (This is an option that is available to submitters on the council 'have your say' website when they complete the Council form online).

Manly/Tindalls and surrounding beaches are Urban Beaches

#6970

The very real risk to Council is it could end up with restrictions and no nests in that area of restrictions.

These birds have nested at multiple locations, including those outside of the proposed area as shown by the red dots.



Why can't we have a local solution?

THE CRUX OF OUR PROPOSAL FOR TINDALLS BEACH & MANLY BEACHES IS:

That on leash restrictions apply within 200m of a marked dotterel nest & dogs are prohibited within a marked 50m zone of a nest.

We have worked with Hibiscus Coast Forest & Bird to hopefully reach a solution that works for the birds & for dog owners. This will mean that where a dotterel is nesting has protection. It also means that the protection is there for the time that the nest is active (approximately two months) rather than 7 months of the breeding season.

Our submission forms state the following;

I OPPOSE the proposed Dog access rule change on BIG MANLY BEACH & TINDALLS BEACH to restrict dogs to being UNDER CONTROL ON A LEASH AT ALL TIMES from Cross Street to Hardley Avenue (including the headland between) (Schedule 1(4)(a)).

I WISH TO SEE THE FOLLOWING CHANGE: I strongly request that on BIG MANLY BEACH & TINDALLS BEACH the current time and season rule remains but that, where a Dotterel nest is identified and marked, dogs must be on a lead within 200 metres of the nest and prohibited from entering a 50 metre zone, to be cordoned off around the nest itself during the nesting season.

How we got to this proposal?

Auckland Council Staff have referenced the following study in other Dotterel proposals regarding Dogs;

A. Lord et al. / Biological Conservation 98 (2001)

Effects of Human Approaches to nests of Dotterel

As part of the field survey sites were rated as receiving high levels of activity if they received between 7-20 visitors per hour - these were identified as busy beaches.

Scenarios tested were; Lone person walking, lone person running, lone person walking a leashed dog. Off leash dog walking was not tested. All of the testing started at 200m out from the nest. All participants walked to within 5 metres of the nest.

Flush distances were observed.

For those deemed to be a busy beach the mean result showed;

- A lone walker would flush a bird off the nest at approx 20m
- A lone runner would flush a bird off the nest at approx 50m
- A lone walker with a leashed dog would flush a bird off the nest at approx 70m

You can see that at the lower end of the scale a dog on leash would flush a bird off the nest at under 40m. Given how busy Manly and Tindalls are and that the birds remain rather than giving up and moving to another Beach altogether their tolerance to people and dogs could be at this lower end. By having a 50 metre cordon area it would help the dotterels have space from people and dogs.

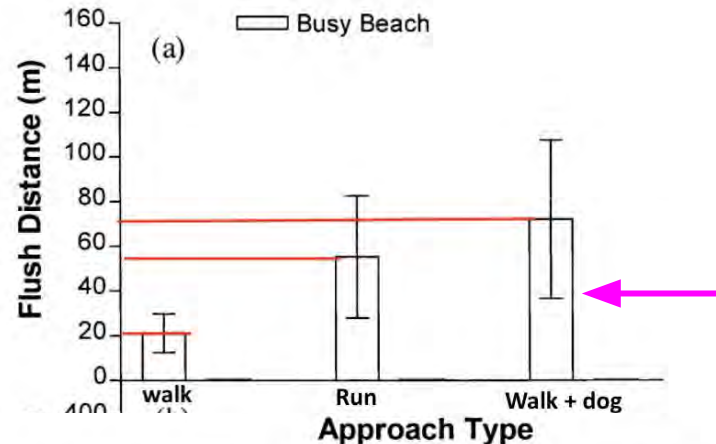


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

Making dogs the bad guy means people think we are the only problem

#6970

Having a 50m cordon around the nest would give the birds the best chance of being undisturbed. Much is made of prohibiting dogs from bird breeding areas - but as you can see from the previous page people walking or running are also an issue. And they are also an issue in keeping birds OFF the nest.

After having someone (+dog) come within 5m of the nest & standing there for 1 minute the time spent off the nest on a busy beach was:

- A lone walker kept the birds off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes (150 seconds)
- A lone runner kept the birds off the nest for approx 3 minutes (180 seconds)
- A lone walk with a leashed dog kept the birds off the nest for approx 3.7 minutes (210 seconds). **Only 40 seconds approx longer than a runner.**

Often the gist from Council staff is that the Dotterel spent more time off their nest when approached by a walker with a dog.

The impact of a dog on leash vs a runner is only 40 seconds. A walker will still mean that the birds will be off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes.

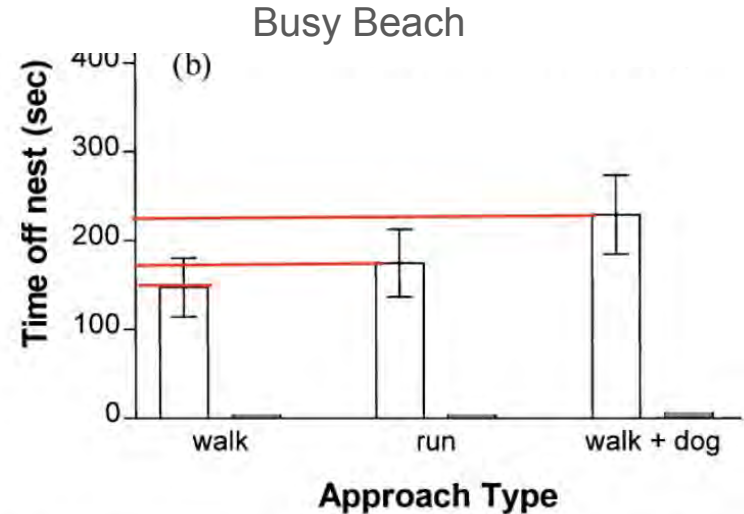


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

What council need to do to help the Dotterels and dog owners

#6970

What the local community and the Dotterels need from council is;

- A local mindset
- Good & LARGE signage ready to go (like the old Rodney Council signs we used to have)
 - that clearly states that there are active Dotterel nest zones on this beach that require dogs to be on lead within 200m & where they are.
 - that clearly states that within the nest cordon dogs are prohibited (50m).
 - that from this point (at 200m from the nest) your dog needs to be on a lead (facing the beach as well as access points) .
- A local PR campaign and info sent to locally registered dog owners (not just Tindalls/Manly but the whole Peninsula) when nesting season commences so that people are on the look out for updates.
- A plan for enforcement of the rule to be stepped up. Primarily in the first two weeks of the signage going up and if needed - over the school holiday period to help with non local dog owners. Most dog owners walk either mornings or afternoon/evenings so a focus on those times would reach the most people so they know that it is being policed.

We need council to be flexible

This is a solution that both Forest & Bird and Dog Friends are proposing. We don't want our community to be against one another.

As a dog owner it often feels like all Council ever wants to do is remove and restrict access. The dotterels are facing many threats because of where they are choosing to be, this proposal seeks to help mitigate one of them, but many others are not being addressed as there is no bylaw to curtail them.

Supplementary information;

The following is from our presentation to the LB in December so it is on record as part of our submission to Council as part of the Dog Bylaw Review.

Dogs aren't the only threat to Dotterels...

...but because the council has a bylaw in place to control dog access they are always the ones to be restricted.

Cats are proving a huge issue at the Dotterel population at Omaha and locals are crying out for council to do something.

People running, kids playing can also cause the dotterels to move off their nest. Kite surfing has been shown to affect breeding dotterel in Auckland.

But the only ones who have any infringements on their movements are dog owners.

Threats to Dotterels are not limited to Dogs

Kite Surfing - risk to breeding;

Council's own expert witness in a Council Environment Court action¹ - Dr Lovegrove (Auckland Council) - said that an increase in kite-surfing at the Karaka shell banks in the South Manukau harbour had been found to be disturbing migratory species such as godwits and preventing breeding of New Zealand dotterel for whom this was an important site. In addition another expert witness who was supporting Council's position in this action cited "an evaluation of 17 studies from five countries, including New Zealand, Mr Don said that birds perceive kite surfers as large predators and avoid them by taking long flights or leaving a site altogether. In his view, unregulated kite-surfing had the potential to *"significantly degrade the existing habitats of coastal birds as a result of continual disturbance"*.

Manly beach is the most popular kite surfing location on the Peninsula as well as for wing foilers.

On Sunday 8th December around 3.30pm 10 kite surfers and wing foilers were visible on the water from Tindalls.



Threats to Dotterels are not limited to Dogs

Vehicles on beaches

Manly, in particular, has multiple vehicle access points along the beach - 5 provide access.

When the Dotterels were first nesting at the Browns Road end of Manly a vehicle narrowly missed driving over their nest. Vehicles on beaches, especially during summer have been an ongoing, and unenforced, issue on beaches. Including driving at speed.

One boat ramp access point is near to the current Dotterel nest area at the eastern end.



Vehicles parked on Manly Beach 7th December 7pm



Go Kart hooning on Stanmore Bay beach - headed towards a flock of seagulls 6th December 7pm

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - cats. Cats have been a major problem for Dotterel breeding sites in the north auckland area but council has no plan in place to limit or control cats



Cat attacks dotterels at Snells

0:12 MON, 24 OCT

Snells Beach cat owners are being asked to keep an eye on their pets, after dotterels were attacked early last Wednesday morning, October 19, forcing...



Omaha dotterel team mourns cat attack

0:12 SUN, 13 DEC

Night photos at the sanctuary, taken after the dotterel died, clearly show a cat on the prowl. A domestic cat is believed to have killed...



Tragic end for dotterel egg

10:10 TUE, 19 NOV

The sole dotterel (tūturiwhatu) egg remaining at Tindalls Bay disappeared overnight on Friday, November 8. Forest and Bir volunteer Derek Kelsey discovered the empty nest...



Council's dithering on dotterels criticised

8:08 TUE, 19 MAR

Auckland Council has been urged to do its job in protecting the seabirds and their chicks on Omaha Spit, which are being decimated by cats...



Council pussyfoots over dotterel destruction

14:02 FRI, 16 FEB

A refusal by Auckland Council to seriously address the cat problem on the Omaha Spit could sound the death knell for the area as a...



Community groups seek more cat control

13:01 TUE, 21 MAR

When cats were first captured on camera on the chenier (shell bank) in the Weiti River, last October, environmental group Friends of Okura Bush (FOOB)...



Stop pussyfooting around – keep cats indoors, pet owners urged

8:08 MON, 27 FEB

Cat burglar – this pet stole several eggs and wrecked dotterel nests this season at Snells Beach. Though their owners might not realise it, pet...

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - black back gulls

November 2024 - Tindalls Bay Nest egg lost..... *“closer inspection revealed no sign of egg shells, which could have indicated the nest was predated by a black-backed gull, cat or hedgehog.”* Hibiscus Matters 19th Nov 2024

Case study; Matakana Island

DOC began to worry about the apparent failure of New Zealand dotterel chicks to fledge on Matakana Island and set video cameras to monitor dotterel nests.

Surprise, the cameras revealed that predation by black-backed gulls was the main cause of mortality among dotterel chicks.

An eradication was successful, and there are now no black-backed gulls nesting on Matakana Island. Dotterels have since made a huge comeback on Matakana Island, now the most successful nesting area for the waders in the country. During the 2004–05 breeding season 30 chicks were raised from 42 pairs of New Zealand dotterels, and banded dotterels from previous broods are turning up all round the Bay of Plenty and nesting in new areas. Other birds, such as variable oystercatchers, are also benefiting from the absence of the predatory gulls

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - Hedgehogs

2022 - a hedgehog ate 3 eggs in a Manly dotterels nest. It was later discovered in a nearby trap. (<https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/resources/prickly-problem>)

Submission to the Orakei Local Board

Dog Friends Auckland Submission
February 2025

Overview

#6970

- Since the last Dog bylaw review there are over 10,000 more registered dogs (113,343 dogs YE June 2024) in Auckland.
 - In 2018 the Orakei LB had the 6th highest number of registered dogs in Auckland and 25% of Orakei dog owners were RDOL holders.
- Since the last Policy & Bylaw of 2019 Dog owners have paid Council approx **\$50 MILLION** in registrations & fines etc.* (YE 2019 - 2024).
- Overall there are approx 60 changes proposed for dog access around Auckland
 - 31 are to prohibit dogs from areas
 - 19 change access from off leash to on
 - 10 give new off leash access.
- Many of the proposed changes that remove access are being proposed simply to have the same rules throughout Auckland.
 - No analysis has been done on how many dog owners currently use these areas as they are now or where the next area they could obtain the same access would be located.

* Based on 113,343 dog registrations at average \$79.57 per dog and \$1.1M in infringements etc - \$10 M per anum

Loss of access for Dogs

- It is worth highlighting that changes to access can change many local people's daily routine. Removing or restricting access to local dog owners means that somewhere they go daily with their dog is suddenly not available or limits their dog's exercise opportunity - sometimes just to meet a region wide rule.
- Any changes Council makes can have a massive impact on dog owners. It might mean having to drive to another location rather than walking to their local park or beach. For shift workers, having close to home access is important.
- More dogs in less spaces means that you can have issues with too many dogs in the same spots - especially during the summer season restrictions. (Time & season and bird breeding seasons).
- Removal of access to an area which is open, flat, with good sight lines and in a safe area cannot be underestimated. Dog owners are young families, older people and women, all of these factors are important when considering access for dog owners when exercising their dogs.... And often themselves too.

Central Areas - proposed Access Changes - Orakei Local Board

#6970

Madills Farm Recreation Reserve and Glover Park

We are proposing to better protect the health and safety of sports users and dogs and sports surfaces from damage, while still providing off-leash dog access on other areas of the parks that is consistent with dog access rules on all other parks in the local board area and Auckland region by applying the default region-wide prohibition of dogs on sports surfaces.

Current Policy rules

Dogs allowed **under control off a leash** on sports surfaces (marked grass sports fields) when not in use or not closed (Schedules 1(2) and 2).

Dogs **prohibited** on sports surfaces when in use or closed (Schedules 1(2) and 2) and must be **under control on a leash** in the vicinity when in use (Schedule 1(2)).

Dogs **prohibited** on playgrounds at all times and must be **under control on a leash** in the vicinity when in use (Schedule 1(1)).

Dogs must be **under control on a leash** in car parks at all times (Schedule 1(4)).

Dogs allowed **under control off a leash** at any time on other parts of the Park (Schedule 2).

Proposed amended Policy rules

Dogs **prohibited** at all times on sports surfaces and must be **under control on a leash** in the vicinity when in use (Schedule 1(2)).

Dogs **prohibited** on playgrounds at all times and must be **under control on a leash** in the vicinity when in use (Schedule 1(1)).

Dogs must be **under control on a leash** in car parks at all times (Schedule 1(4)).

Dogs allowed **under control off a leash** on other parts of the Park (Schedule 2).

See map in Appendix B of "Proposed updates to dog access rules at local parks and beaches".

CHANGE: Loss of off leash access simply to have a city wide rule be the same. It's a big area to lose access to.

Dogs are not allowed on sports surfaces when in use or closed. So sports users are not endangered and surfaces are not damaged. There is no alternative off leash access offered in lieu of removal of this access.

Orakei has other dog access rules that are inconsistent with the regional rule - winter restrictions on beaches. These are not proposed to be changed. So why do they stay and this access go?

NOTE this loss of off leash access is on top of off leash access already lost at Shore Road & Thomas Bloodworth sports fields in previous bylaw reviews.

See maps on next page

Central Areas - proposed Access Changes - Orakei Local Board

#6970

Glover Park - Current rule (when sports fields not in use)



Glover Park - Proposed rule (when sports fields not in use)



CURRENTLY: On the left when the fields aren't in use the whole park is off leash,
PROPOSED: on the right dogs will be prohibited from the sports fields at all times - even if not in use.

Central Areas - proposed Access Changes - Orakei Local Board

#6970

Madills Farm Recreation Reserve – Current rules (when sports fields not in use)



Madills Farm Recreation Reserve – Proposed rules (when sports fields not in use)



CURRENTLY: On the left when the fields aren't in use the whole park is off leash,
PROPOSED: on the right dogs will be prohibited from the sports fields at all times - even if not in use.

Orakei Dog Access

#6970

- Prior to 2012 Orakei Dog owners had similar access to sports fields at Thomas Bloodworth Park and Shore Road Reserve but this was removed in the 2012 Bylaw review.

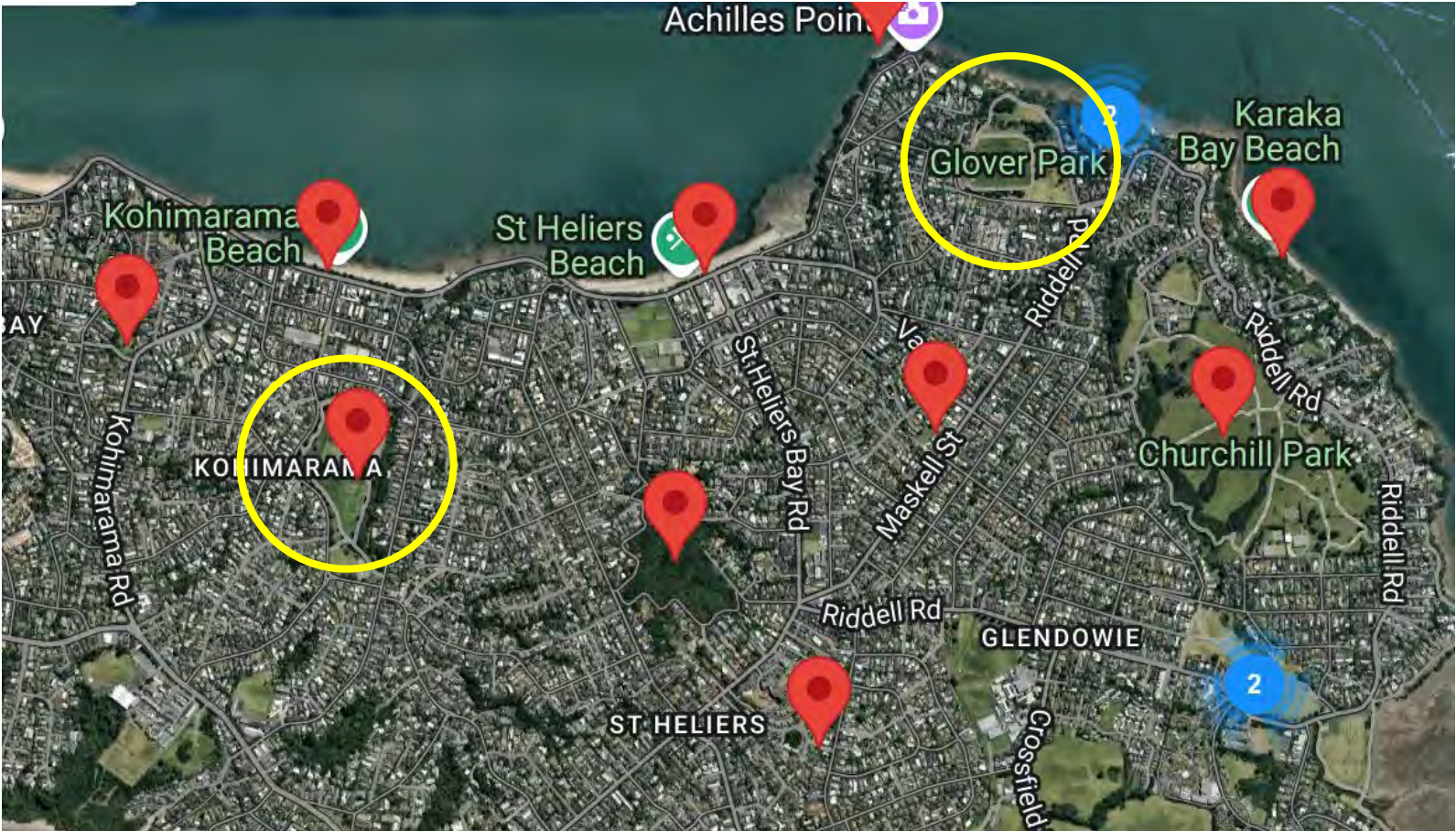
Sports surfaces under council control. Prohibition of dogs on sports surfaces at all times and under control on a leash in the vicinity of sports surfaces when in use. This rule would revoke current rules that allow dogs on marked fields in Shore Road Reserve (Orakei) and Thomas Bloodworth Park (Orakei),



Orakei Dog Access Proposed removal of off leash to prohibited ^{#6970}

- No analysis from Council as to how many dog owners this will affect. No understanding of dog usage of these areas.
- No analysis of where else dog owners in the local areas can go for off leash access and what that will mean just a plan to remove access. Are any other locations going to offer the same space, terrain, accessibility etc?

Where else can local dog owners go for off leash access? #6970



Alternative off leash areas in nearby locale

- St Heliers and Kohi beach - subject to time and season rules for both Summer & winter. No off leash access during summer - on leash or prohibited. Restrictions during winter - on leash between 10am and 4pm.
- Dingle Dell bush reserve - not an open space to exercise your dog, terrain not suitable for older owners or pram access for young families.
- Maskell park - small area probably smaller than one sportsfield.
- Ladies Bay/Gentlemens Bay - access issues for many (and dogs) and not family friendly
- Karaka Bay - access issues
- Mary Atkin reserve - small area about the size of one sportsfield







- So that leaves only Churchill Reserve in Glendowie, so more dogs coming into this space to get off leash access.
- Then no decent off leash dog walking parks for Kohimarama and St Helier's Dog owners simply to have a consistent rule.

Rationale given for change is to have a consistent rule

#6970

- The Orakei LB is not the only board with dog access on Sportsgrounds - so does the Franklin LB - they have 15 that give access to dog owners when sportsgrounds are not in use.
- The Orakei LB is an outlier with another dog access rule that is NOT proposed to be removed. It has winter restrictions on beaches - one of only 6 LB's that have this and yet there is no proposal to remove this rule to achieve consistency.
- The Orakei LB access rules during summer are some of the most restrictive - with both MORNING and EVENING as being ON LEASH.

- Summary of Ōrākei local dog access rules on beaches
Time and season rule applies to the following areas

Summer (1 December to 1 March)**	Out of Summer Season
 Morning (Before 10am) Under control on leash*	 Before 10am Under control off leash
 Daytime (10am to 5pm) Prohibited	 10am to 4pm Under control on leash*
 Evening (After 5pm) Under control on leash*	 After 4pm Under control off leash

* Dogs are allowed under control off leash when swimming or walking in the water.

** Summer defined in Dog Access Principles "4. Apply the following time and season."

Most other Auckland Beaches

Summer	Out of Summer Season
 Morning Under control off leash	All times Under control off leash 
 Daytime Under control on leash	
 Evening Under control off leash	

Orakei Local Board

We request that the Orakei Local board keep the current access rules for dogs for Madills & Glover as they are; allowing off leash dog access when the sportsgrounds are not in use or closed.

It makes sense that when there is no sport activities on these sports grounds or when they are closed that other park users can use them, including dog owners.

Submission to the Puketapapa Local Board

Dog Friends Auckland Submission
February 2025

Overview

#6970

- Since the last Dog bylaw review there are over 10,000 more registered dogs (113,343 dogs YE June 2024) in Auckland.
- Since the last Policy & Bylaw of 2019 Dog owners have paid Council approx **\$50 MILLION** in registrations & fines etc.* (YE 2019 - 2024).
- Overall there are approx 60 changes proposed for dog access around Auckland
 - 31 are to prohibit dogs from areas
 - 19 change access from off leash to on
 - 10 give new off leash access.
- Many of the proposed changes that remove access are being proposed simply to have the same rules throughout Auckland.
 - No analysis has been done on how many dog owners currently use these areas as they are now or where the next area they could obtain the same access would be located.

* Based on 113,343 dog registrations at average \$79.57 per dog and \$1.1M in infringements etc - \$10 M per annum

Loss of access for Dogs

- It is worth highlighting that changes to access can change many local people's daily routine. Removing or restricting access to local dog owners means that somewhere they go daily with their dog is suddenly not available or limits their dog's exercise opportunity - sometimes just to meet a region wide rule.
- Any changes Council makes can have a massive impact on dog owners. It might mean having to drive to another location rather than walking to their local park or beach. For shift workers, having close to home access is important.
- More dogs in less spaces means that you can have issues with too many dogs in the same spots - especially during the summer season restrictions. (Time & season and bird breeding seasons).
- Removal of access to an area which is open, flat, with good sight lines and in a safe area cannot be underestimated. Dog owners are young families, older people and women, all of these factors are important when considering access for dog owners when exercising their dogs.... And often themselves too.

Puketapapa - proposed access changes

From OFF leash to ON leash

- Freeland Reserve
- Underwood Park
- Walmsley Park
- The off leash area of Monte Cecilia

From ON leash to OFF leash

- John Moore Reserve
- Smallfield Reserve

(two small reserves)

Central Areas - proposed Access Changes - Puketapapa Local Board

#6970

Monte Cecilia Park

We are proposing to protect the users of the park as the current off-leash rule in the bowl area creates a significant risk to people by changing the rule from off-leash to on-leash.

Current Policy rules

Dogs allowed **control off a leash** at all times (Schedule 2) in the naturally formed bowl on the north-eastern side of the park between Pah Homestead and the Knoll.

Proposed amended Policy rules

Dogs allowed **under control on a leash** at all times (Schedule 1(4)(a)).

Puketapapa Dog Access Proposed removal of off leash - Monte Cecilia ^{#6970}

- No analysis from Council as to how many dog owners this will affect. No understanding of dog usage of these areas.
- No analysis of where else dog owners in the local areas can go for off leash access and what that will mean just a plan to remove access.
- In 2015 this off leash area was developed within the park as there were limited off leash areas and the majority of the park would remain on leash - this was seen as both dog owners and non dog owners being able to enjoy the park as there were separate spaces for each.
- In 2015 it was noted that Big King Reserve, Onehunga Bay Reserve, Waikowhai Park and Walmsley/Underwood Park offer off-leash areas and are all heavily used.
- As part of this review the LB are also proposing to remove off leash access at Walmsley and Underwood parks due to the changes that have been made in them. So the LB are wanting to remove more off leash access. This will just put more pressure on the remaining off leash spaces which is not a good situation.

Puketapapa Dog Access Proposed removal of off leash - Monte Cecilia ^{#6970}

- Council's own research showed that "Dog walking is one of the top 5 things done in Auckland parks."
- From the LB's own Dog Walking Assessment site visit for Monte Cecilia showed;
- Monte Cecilia (45 mins in morning)
 - 42 Dogs
 - 10 people in park with no dogs(20%)
 - 2 commercial dog walkers
 - Lots of infrastructure toe nable
 - Possibly more conflicting uses
 - Everyone seemed well behaved during visit

Council's own Dog walking assessment presented to this LB ^{#6970}

Research

Chen et al. Benefits and Conflicts: A Systematic Review of Dog Park Design and Management Strategies. *Animals* **2022**, 12, 2251.

- “Dog parks contribute physical and social benefits for both canines and their owners. This has increased during and since the COVID-19 pandemic.”
- “A sustainable and healthy coexistence of canines and residents of built environments through appropriate design and management strategies is possible.”

Brown. B, Jensen, W. Dog Ownership and Walking: Perceived and Audited Walkability and Activity Correlates. *Int. J. Environmental Research and Public Health* **2020**, 17, 1385.

- “Increased densities of housing may negatively affect dog ownership levels unless compensating supports for dog ownership and walking are created by public health messaging, dog-friendly policies, and dog-friendly housing and community design.

In making decisions to reduce dog access LB's should....

Council's own policy states that

6. Consider the following before making any change to a dog access rule on parks and beaches that would provide less dog access:

- (a) Consider whether there are practicable alternative solutions to address the conflict between uses of the place³
- (b) Ensure, to the extent that is practicable, that displaced dog owners and their dogs have access to other places or that such access is provided as part of the same decision.

of resources to people.

³ Design and management solutions include fencing, different zones in one place, time-share arrangements, and under control on a leash dog access in relation to considering a change to prohibited dog access.

Puketapapa Local Board

We request that the Puketapapa Local board keep the current access rules for dogs for the off leash area at Monte Cecilia as they are.

Surely through signage, or other park design elements, any possible straying of off leash dogs into on leash areas could be managed.

Submission to the Rodney Local Board

Dog Friends Auckland Submission
February 2025

Overview

#6970

- Since the last Dog bylaw review there are over 10,000 more registered dogs (113,343 dogs YE June 2024) in Auckland.
 - In 2018 Rodney LB had the largest number of registered Dogs in Auckland, and one of the highest numbers of RDOL holders with 38% of Rodney dog owners having an RDOL
- Since the last Policy & Bylaw of 2019 Dog owners have paid Council approx **\$50 MILLION** in registrations & fines etc.* (YE 2019 - 2024).
- Overall there are approx 60 changes proposed for dog access around Auckland
 - 31 are to prohibit dogs from areas
 - 19 change access from off leash to on
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- Many of the proposed changes that remove access are being proposed simply to have the same rules throughout Auckland.
 - No analysis has been done on how many dog owners currently use these areas as they are now or where the next area they could obtain the same access would be located.

* Based on 113,343 dog registrations at average \$79.57 per dog and \$1.1M in infringements etc - \$10 M per anum

Loss of access for Dogs

#6970

- It is worth highlighting that changes to access can change many local people's daily routine. Removing or restricting access to local dog owners means that somewhere they go daily with their dog is suddenly not available or limits their dog's exercise opportunity - sometimes just to meet a region wide rule.
- Any changes Council makes can have a massive impact on dog owners. It might mean having to drive to another location rather than walking to their local park or beach. For shift workers, having close to home access is important.
- More dogs in less spaces means that you can have issues with too many dogs in the same spots - especially during the summer season restrictions. (Time & season and bird breeding seasons).
- Removing Dog access as proposed in the Te Arai and Pakiri Regional parks means over 24KM of Rodney beaches would be off limits to dog families and more pressure on the Rodney LB to create off leash areas for dog owners in these areas. Growth of residential development and on smaller plots is likely to increase, especially with the planned Northern Motorway extension.

Rodney Dog Access

#6970

- Changes proposed by Council to dog access in Rodney
 - 4 areas that dogs had access to are to be PROHIBITED
 - 6 areas that were OFF leash become ON leash
 - 1 area moves from time & season restrictions to OFF leash at all times
- No new off leash areas in Rodney since 2019, despite new home subdivisions
 - Milldale - 4,500 homes, no new off leash areas
 - Kumeu/Huapai - new subdivisions - no new off leash areas
 - Warkworth - new subdivisions - no new off leash areas
- Proposed REMOVAL of dog access around Te Arai/Pakiri. If residents in this area have dogs where can they exercise them?

Rodney Dog Access

As part of the 2019 Dog Bylaw council moved the default rule across Auckland to be 'on leash'. Rodney previously had 'off leash' as it's default rule.

Changing to 'ON LEASH' default and moving the responsibility to Local Boards for access changes has meant no new off leash areas since 2019.

Regulatory staff have told us that "LB's were initially contacted in Dec 2023 where the process to request additional dog access rules for review was outlined."

So our question is why isn't there any new off leash areas put forward for Rodney as part of this review?

#6970

Pre 2019 Most of Auckland was
OFF LEASH by default



Northern Areas - proposed Access Changes - Rodney Local Board

#6970

Vera Reserve Baddeleys Road, Baddeleys Creek Reserve and Pigeon Place Accessway

We are proposing to protect kiwi dispersing from Tāwharanui Regional Park into the three associated reserves where they are vulnerable to being disturbed, harmed or killed by dogs by changing the rule from off-leash to on-leash.

Current Policy rules

Dogs allowed **under control off a leash** at any time (Schedule 2).

Proposed amended Policy rules

Dogs allowed **under control on a leash** at all times (Schedule 1(4)(a)).

This proposal makes no sense.

These reserves are not associated to Tawharanui Regional park. They are miles away.

There is no need to restrict access in these reserves due to kiwi dispersing from the Regional park. The number of far worse dangers they would need to navigate to get to these areas and then remain there would be huge.

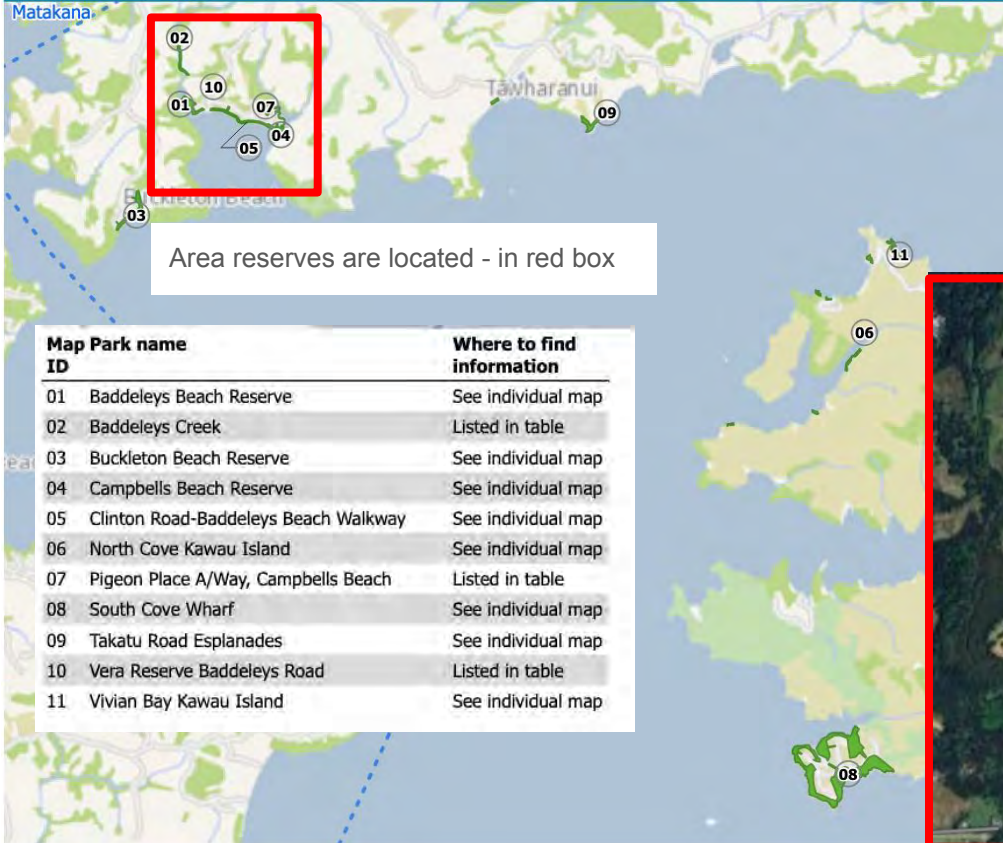
See maps on following pages.

Northern Areas - proposed Access Changes - Rodney Local Board

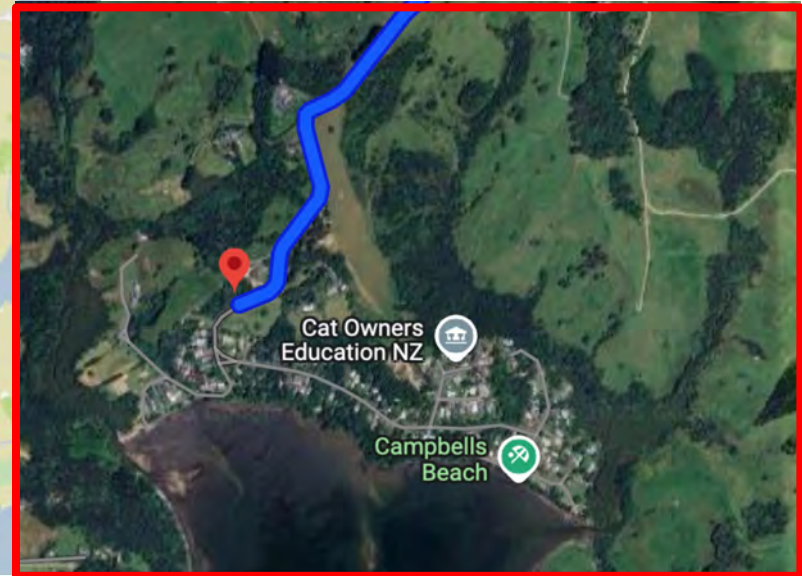
#6970



Kawau Bay



Below is a satellite view of area reserves are in. More danger from cats & cars than dogs.



Rodney - Snells Beach

#6970

- For the last 5 years a ‘temporary’ restriction on Dogs has been in place at Snells Beach. Council stated that this protection was required “When shorebirds are breeding and roosting, they are vulnerable to disturbance and predation.”
- This restriction of Dog’s being prohibited was during the 7 month breeding and resting season.
- Council is now proposing to prohibit dogs outside of this breeding and resting season in this area so dog owners will lose access to this area of the beach even when walking dogs on lead which is currently permissible outside of the breeding season and has been in place for 5 years.
- As has been the restriction for 5 years, Council has stated that protection has been required during the breeding season.

Dogs on lead don't have a massive impact on breeding dotterel vs people ^{#6970}

Auckland Council Staff have referenced the following study in Dotterel proposals regarding Dogs;

A. Lord et al. / Biological Conservation 98 (2001)

Effects of Human Approaches to nests of Dotterel

As part of the field survey sites were rated as receiving high levels of activity if they received between 7-20 visitors per hour - these were identified as busy beaches.

Scenarios tested were; Lone person walking, lone person running, lone person walking a leashed dog. Off leash dog walking was not tested. All of the testing started at 200m out from the nest. All participants walked to within 5 metres of the nest.

Flush distances were observed.

For those deemed to be a busy beach the mean result showed;

- A lone walker would flush a bird off the nest at approx 20m
- A lone runner would flush a bird off the nest at approx 50m
- A lone walker with a leashed dog would flush a bird off the nest at approx 70m

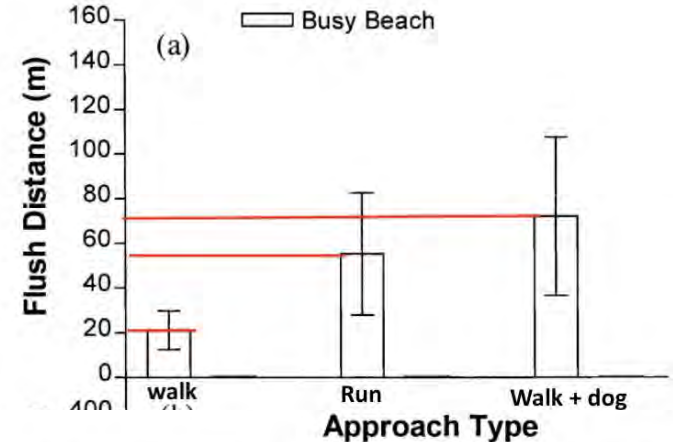


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

Making dogs the bad guy means people think we are the only problem

After having someone (+dog) come within 5m of the nest & standing there for 1 minute the time spent off the nest on a busy beach was:

- A lone walker kept the birds off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes (150 seconds)
- A lone runner kept the birds off the nest for approx 3 minutes (180 seconds)
- A lone walk with a leashed dog kept the birds off the nest for approx 3.7 minutes (210 seconds). **Only 40 seconds approx longer than a runner.**

Often the gist from Council staff is that the Dotterel spent more time off their nest when approached by a walker with a dog.

The impact of a dog on leash vs a runner is only 40 seconds. A walker will still mean that the birds will be off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes.

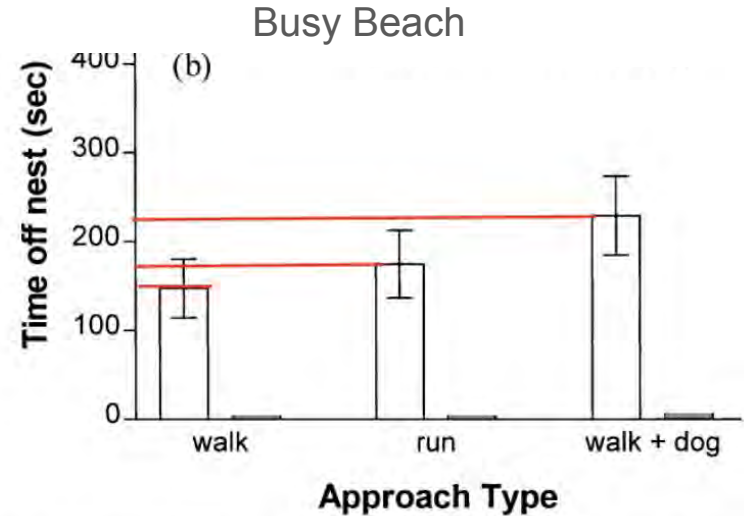


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

Dogs aren't the only threat to Dotterels...

...but because the council has a bylaw in place to control dog access they are always the ones to be restricted.

Cats are proving a huge issue at the Dotterel population at Omaha and locals are crying out for council to do something.

People running, kids playing can also cause the dotterels to move off their nest. Kite surfing has been shown to affect breeding dotterel in Auckland.

But the only ones who have any infringements on their movements are dog owners.

Threats to Dotterels are not limited to Dogs

Kite Surfing - risk to breeding;

Council's own expert witness in a Council Environment Court action¹ - Dr Lovegrove (Auckland Council) - said that an increase in kite-surfing at the Karaka shell banks in the South Manukau harbour had been found to be disturbing migratory species such as godwits and preventing breeding of New Zealand dotterel for whom this was an important site. In addition another expert witness who was supporting Council's position in this action cited "an evaluation of 17 studies from five countries, including New Zealand, Mr Don said that birds perceive kite surfers as large predators and avoid them by taking long flights or leaving a site altogether. In his view, unregulated kite-surfing had the potential to *"significantly degrade the existing habitats of coastal birds as a result of continual disturbance"*.

Snells beach is one of the most popular kite/foil surfing areas of Auckland

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - cats. Cats have been a major problem for Dotterel breeding sites in the north auckland area but council has no plan in place to limit or control cats



Cat attacks dotterels at Snells

0:12 MON, 24 OCT

Snells Beach cat owners are being asked to keep an eye on their pets, after dotterels were attacked early last Wednesday morning, October 19, forcing...



Omaha dotterel team mourns cat attack

0:12 SUN, 13 DEC

Night photos at the sanctuary, taken after the dotterel died, clearly show a cat on the prowl. A domestic cat is believed to have killed...



Tragic end for dotterel egg

10:10 TUE, 19 NOV

The sole dotterel (tūturiwhatu) egg remaining at Tindalls Bay disappeared overnight on Friday, November 8. Forest and Bir volunteer Derek Kelsey discovered the empty nest...



Council's dithering on dotterels criticised

8:08 TUE, 19 MAR

Auckland Council has been urged to do its job in protecting the seabirds and their chicks on Omaha Spit, which are being decimated by cats...



Council pussyfoots over dotterel destruction

14:02 FRI, 16 FEB

A refusal by Auckland Council to seriously address the cat problem on the Omaha Spit could sound the death knell for the area as a...



Community groups seek more cat control

13:01 TUE, 21 MAR

When cats were first captured on camera on the chenier (shell bank) in the Weiti River, last October, environmental group Friends of Okura Bush (FOOB)...



Stop pussyfooting around – keep cats indoors, pet owners urged

8:08 MON, 27 FEB

Cat burglar – this pet stole several eggs and wrecked dotterel nests this season at Snells Beach. Though their owners might not realise it, pet...

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - black back gulls

Case study; Matakana Island

DOC began to worry about the apparent failure of New Zealand dotterel chicks to fledge on Matakana Island and set video cameras to monitor dotterel nests.

Surprise, the cameras revealed that predation by black-backed gulls was the main cause of mortality among dotterel chicks.

An eradication was successful, and there are now no black-backed gulls nesting on Matakana Island. .Dotterels have since made a huge comeback on Matakana Island, now the most successful nesting area for the waders in the country. During the 2004–05 breeding season 30 chicks were raised from 42 pairs of New Zealand dotterels, and banded dotterels from previous broods are turning up all round the Bay of Plenty and nesting in new areas. Other birds, such as variable oystercatchers, are also benefiting from the absence of the predatory gulls

<https://www.nzgeo.com/stories/black-backed-gulls/>

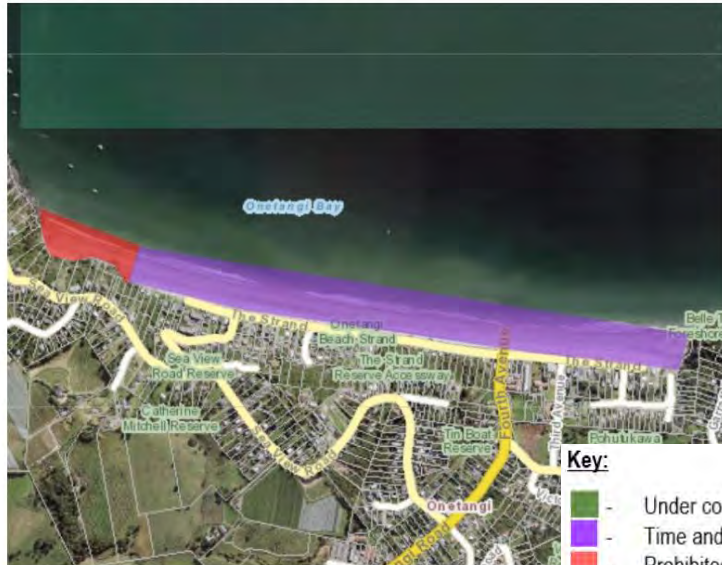
These researched impacts on disturbance are during nesting season

#6970

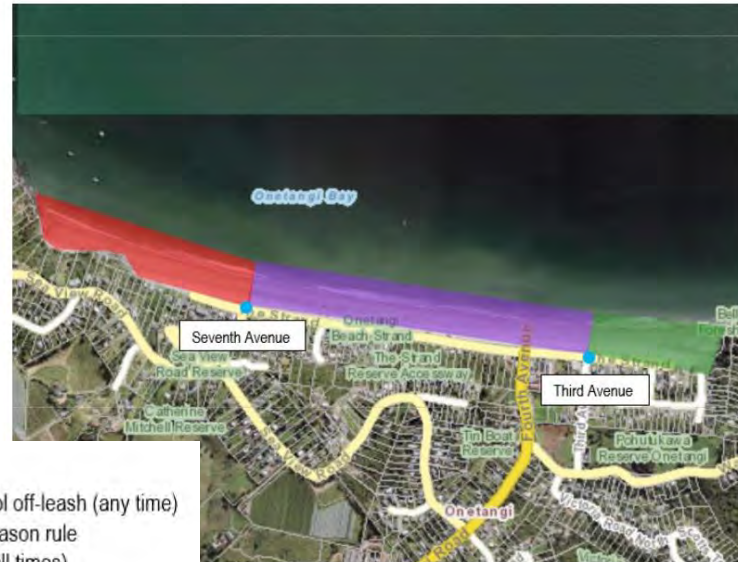
So outside of nesting season surely dogs on lead, which has been in place for 5 years, is workable. Otherwise a third of the beach becomes permanently off limits all year round.

In other areas of Auckland when council has proposed to remove access altogether there has at least been some attempt to mitigate this by having some of the area as 'off leash at all times' rather than having time and season rules. EG - Onetangi at Waiheke

Onetangi Beach – Current dog access rules



Onetangi Beach – Proposed dog access rules



Forestry Beach

#6970

With the gifting of land to Auckland Council through the Te Arai South development council has moved to enlarge the park land of the Te Arai Regional Park area - creating Te Arai North and Te Arai South park - land.

However Forestry Beach was not part of this gift and as such remained a beach within the Rodney local board area. It was not identified as an off leash area as part of the 2019 Dog Bylaw review as we believe it should have and has ended up in a grey area with council now wanting to review the rules around dog access and make it part of the Te Arai regional park.

It is the biggest, and main area of dog access for locals & visitors. If council goes ahead with prohibiting dogs from as proposed in this review at Pakiri Beach (adjacent to the Regional Park) and Forestry Beach that will mean that 24km of Rodney coastline will be prohibited to dog families.

Given the plans to tar seal to Te Arai South/Forestry beach from SH1 and the relative quick drive (25 mins currently), it is likely that Te Arai Regional park will get greater numbers of visitors in the coming year, along with locals with the approved 60 home subdivision at Te Arai South and the recent submission by Te Arai South Holdings & Darby Partners for an additional 180 visitor accommodation units and 420 residential and retirement living units at Te Arai South along with sand mining activity..

According to Council's own data, there were 165,000 visitors to Te Arai in 2020 and 130,000 in 2021. The planned northern motorway extension and northern growth and development is likely to increase these numbers.

Te Arai South and Forestry Beach are the logical areas along this 24KM coastline to have dog access as it is also likely to be where more people will be visiting.

We would ask that:

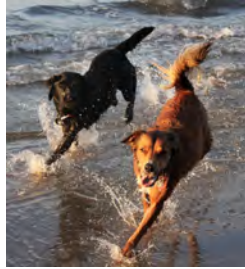
- The Local board do not approve the proposed restrictions of ON LEASH for Vera Reserve, Baddelys Creek Reserve and Pigeon Place Accessway. That you decide that they remain OFF LEASH at all times.
- The Local Board keep ON LEASH access outside of Bird breeding season for on the northern end of Snells Beach. (North of Sunburst Avenue)
- That the local board recommend to the GB hearing panel that dog access remain at Forestry Beach.
- That the Local board plan new off leash areas for dog owners in the new subdivisions that are already in place and for the planned Northern Growth areas within Rodney.

Submission to GB Hearing Panel

#6970

Dog Friends Auckland & Hibiscus Coast Dog Training Club - February 2025
We are here representing these dogs & their families, plus many more

Zara, Rusty, Toffee, Shadow, Fluffy, Maia, Banksy, Bruce, Harriet, Max, Billy, Tilly, Millie, Buddy, Lily, Freddie, Raffy, Willow, Bonnie, Holly, Scottie, Chloe, Molly, Lottie, Tyson, Poppy, Monty, Benny, Jet, Maddie, Bella, Rosie, Archie, Lacey, Young Lily, Spike, Chico, Gracie, Alice, Rio, Poodle Molly, Ollie, Rocky, Indie, Kobe, Bear, Bailey, Jack, Billie, Spotty, Shade, Daisy, Mia, Lola, Lucy, Jack, Leo, Floki, Ruby.... Etc etc



Overview

- Since the last Dog bylaw review there are **over 10,000 more registered dogs** (113,343 dogs YE June 2024) in Auckland.
- Since the last Policy & Bylaw of 2019 Dog owners have paid Council approx **\$50 MILLION** in registrations & fines etc.* (YE 2019 - 2024).

Dog Access in Auckland

#6970

- Another Dog Bylaw review, another fight to keep the access we already have around Auckland for Dog Families even though there are more dogs.
- Overall there are approx 60 changes proposed for dog access around Auckland
 - 31 are to prohibit dogs from areas
 - 19 change access from off leash to on
 - 10 give new off leash access.

Dog Access in Auckland

#6970

- Many of the proposed changes that remove access are being proposed simply to have the same rules throughout Auckland.
 - No analysis has been done on how many dog owners currently use these areas as they are now or where the next area they could obtain the same access would be located.
- Most of the proposals for change are to remove or restrict dog access
 - 50 proposals to do this across Auckland.
- Of the 10 proposals to give OFF leash at all times; in most cases they are allowing OFF leash when they had been **previously ON leash or subject to a time & season rule** and the majority are being offered as a part of another proposal to restrict access. So you lose access, or access is restricted here, but over here (usually a smaller area) you can have off leash at all times.
 - From what we can see these areas are mostly relatively small.

So what does that mean?

#6970

NO **NEW** OFF LEASH AREAS in the entire Auckland Region of any decent size for Dog Families since 2019. By the time this review is completed that's a 6 year period.

So all that is happening is more dogs in the same areas.

The need is there. From Council's own 'Dog Walking Assessment' in 2023 for a Local Board it states that ***"Dog Walking is one of the top 5 things done in Auckland parks."***

34% of New Zealand households report having at least one dog, up from 28% in 2015*

Compare Auckland to the WDC and the Wellington City Council Animal/Dog Bylaw recent reviews.

Council leads the way so dogs can have a ball

Wellington City Council's Kōrau Mātinitini | Social, Cultural, and Economic Committee adopted the proposed Animal Bylaw, Domestic Animal and Dog Policy today.



There'll be more spaces for dogs to exercise and socialise in Wellington, including the smaller end of Ori Bay Beach during the warmer months – but due to popular demand, Island Bay keeps its status quo.

April 2024 - Wellington City Council - Animal Bylaw, Domestic Animal and Dog Policy

Key changes adopted include:

- Stick with status quo on Island Bay Beach where **dogs are allowed off-leash at all times** in the area from the pier to the western end of the beach.
- **Expand off-leash access** in the CBD by allowing dogs to take a splash on the righthand side of the Band Rotunda in Oriental Bay during off-peak hours in the warmer months. Dogs remain prohibited from the longer section of the beach and Freyberg Beach for people wanting a dog-free experience.
- **Expand off-leash provision across nine suburbs** in Wellington.
- Require the mandatory desexing of cats, which supports Predator Free initiatives and the efforts of local rescues to reduce the stray cat population.

Compare Auckland to the WDC and the Wellington City Council #6970 Animal/Dog Bylaw recent reviews.

October 2024 - Whangarei District Council

Parts of Whangārei are now more dog friendly as new dog rules have come in today, Monday 28 October 2024:

Dogs are now allowed on-leash in Whangārei's city centre and **off-leash year-round at nine beach locations:**

- Whananaki North (foreshore between boat ramps)
- Tūtūkākā Marina beach
- Between Kauakarangi Bay sandspit (Ngunguru) and Whangaumu Bay
- Ngunguru estuary foreshore (village side)
- Waikaraka Beach
- One Tree Point (northeastern side)
- Ruakākā Beach north (between Mair Road and Taotahi Walk)
- Ruakākā Beach south (between surf club and campground)
- Uretiti Beach (Tip Road northwards).

The Whangarei Mayor says **one common theme was a shortage of places to take dogs off-leash in summer.** Another was that the 'no dog' rule in the city centre meant fewer customers visiting the centre of town.

Changes to dog access impact dog families daily lives

- Changes to access can impact many local people's daily routine negatively. Removing or restricting access to local dog owners means that somewhere they go daily with their dog is suddenly not available or limits their dog's exercise opportunity - sometimes just to meet a region wide rule.
- Any changes Council makes can have a massive impact on dog owners. It might mean having to drive to another location rather than walking to their local park or beach. For shift workers, having close to home access is important.
- More dogs in less spaces means that you can have issues with too many dogs in the same spots - especially during the summer season restrictions. (Time & season and bird breeding seasons).

Auckland Council dog bylaw review is 'in house'

- For this Dog Bylaw review Auckland Council, from what we can find in documents, focused on 'in house' inputs with a limited number of external stakeholders which we understand to be;
 - SPCA, Chained Dog Rehabilitation & Homing, 4 Commercial Dog Walkers, Friends of Regional Parks, Forest & Bird and Pest Free Kaipatiki.
- In a business environment that approach is called 'navel gazing' & it's not recommended. Especially when it comes to engagement or connecting with an affected audience outside of the business.
 - 'Navel gazing' - Looking inwards, instead of outwards for direction and inputs.

Compare to the WDC approach for their bylaw review

“In 2023 we asked (the public) what we should change in our dog rules and more than 600 people gave us their ideas,” says Mayor Vince Cocurullo.

“Our teams drafted up changes to our Dog Policy and Bylaw and consulted again. We received more than 800 submissions and then held hearings in July this year (2024).”

He says one common theme was a shortage of places to take dogs off-leash in summer. Another was that the ‘no dog’ rule in the city centre meant fewer customers visiting the centre of town. People also said providing places for dogs to go needed to be balanced against the need to protect the health and safety of people, especially children, as well as wildlife.

<https://www.wdc.govt.nz/Whats-new/News-and-notice/Changes-to-dog-bylaws-20241016>

Whereas Auckland Council isn’t getting any public input until they have already put the proposed Bylaw and Policy changes together, meaning there is no room for any change outside of what they have put together. Any possible changes that aren’t in this SOP will have to wait another 5 years or more.

It doesn’t seem as though Auckland Council staff have a desire to get input from the public to help with developing a policy and looking for opportunities or issues.

We ask that the Governing Body/Regulatory Committee instruct staff to change the process to mirror that of WDC for the next review & go out asking for suggestions BEFORE the review starts. Engage with those like ourselves & others who can activate the dog owning community.

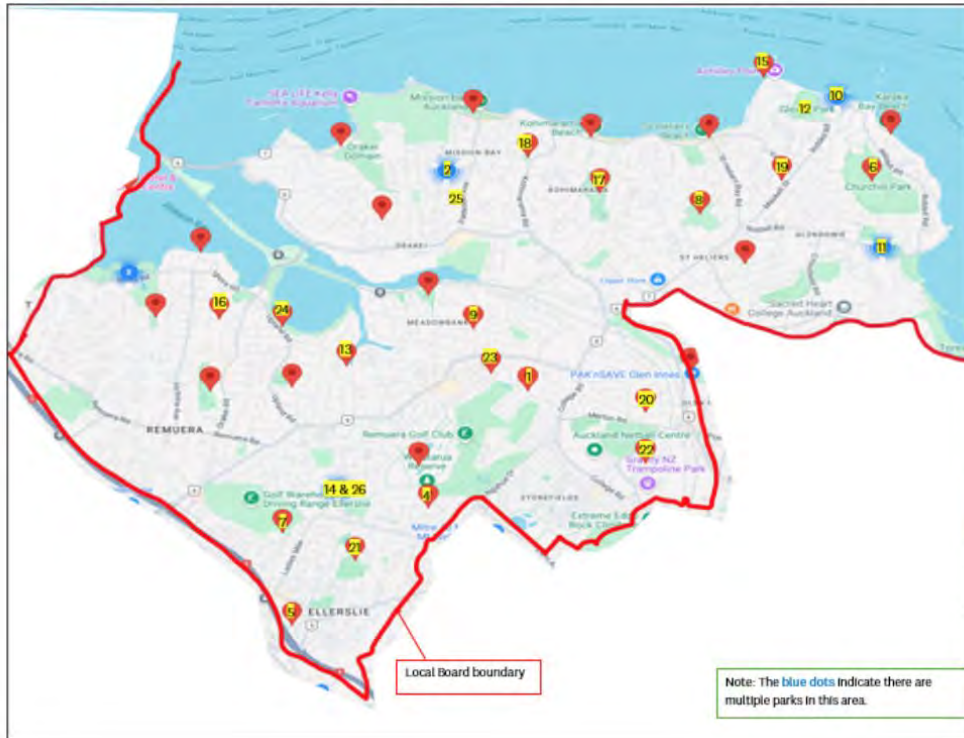
A focus on desktop research rather than local knowledge #6970

- An outcome from an inward approach is 'desktop research'. Where analysis is done by looking on a google map, or a council 'where to walk your dog' map. It isn't involving site visits or locals who are regular users of locations.
- An example of this is with the proposal to move from off leash access to prohibited on dogs in the Orakei area at Madills & Glover Parks Sports Surfaces.
- There was no understanding of how many dog owners are using these two parks currently.
- 'Desktop research' was done in identifying alternative areas;
 - This did not capture the accessibility of the local alternatives.
 - It did not identify how many dog owners are already going to these areas and whether a new population of dogs and their owners would put pressure on these alternatives.
 - It did not review the size, terrain, user safety (something women and older people are concerned with) or ground conditions of the alternatives.
 - No analysis of the distance from Glover or Madills and the time it would take users of Madills or Glover to drive to these alternatives during morning or evening 'rush' hour traffic during the week (when most people are walking their dogs).

From Council documents to Orakei Local Board as part of analysis supporting an access rule change to prohibited from off leash.

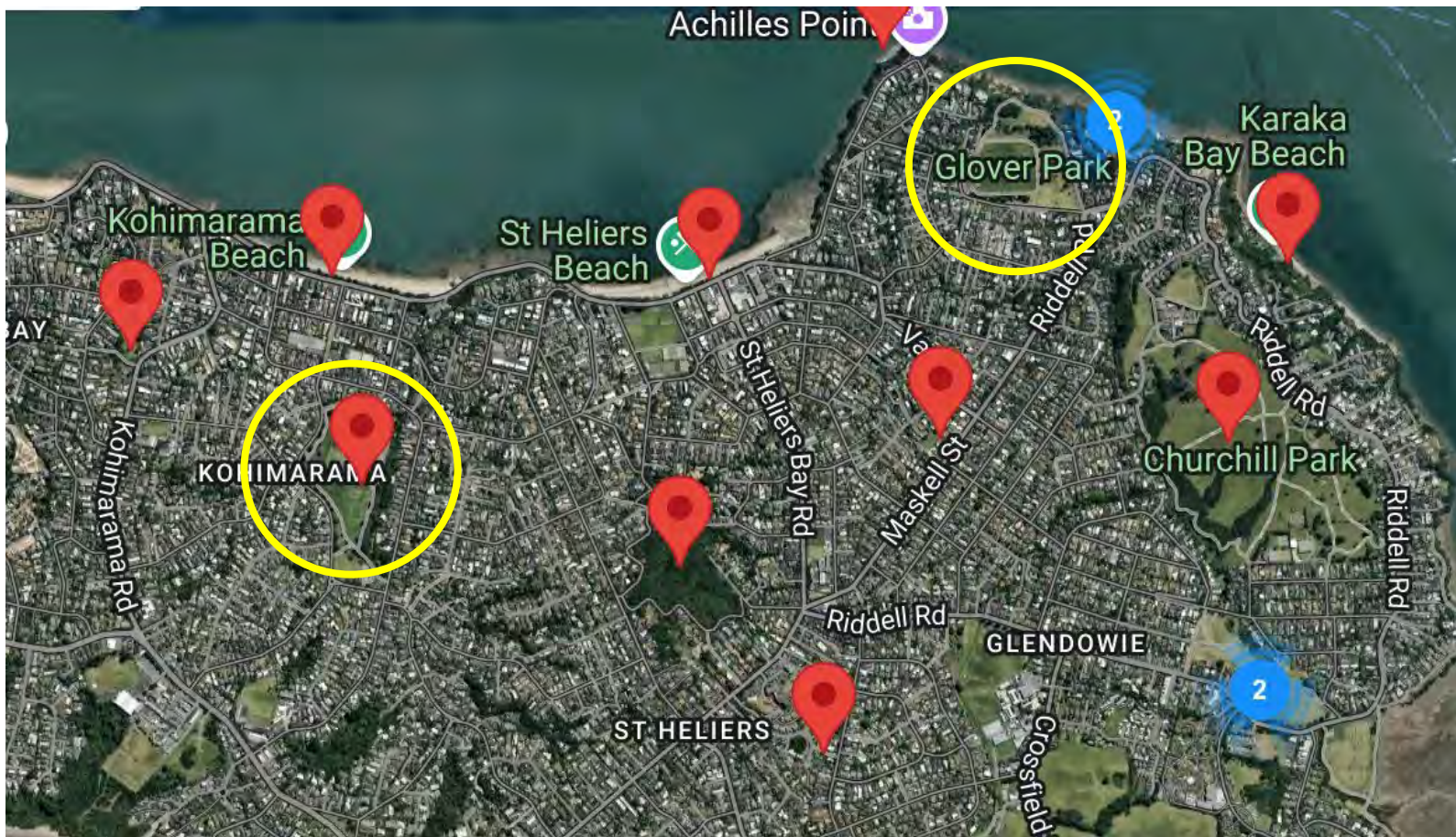
Part 3: Additional information

- Maps and lists of off leash areas in Ōrākei Local Board area



- List of off-leash parks (refer to yellow highlighted number):
1. Allen Johnston Reserve
 2. Aotea Reserve
 3. Atkin Reserve (see note below)
 4. Canon Park also known as Kenneth Small Reserve
 5. Cawley Street Reserve
 6. Churchill Park: excluding the area on eastern side of Churchill Park School from the Riddell Road entrance to 366B Riddell Road
 7. Derby Downs Domain
 8. Dingle Dell Reserve: restricted to the flat-grassed areas only. The paths are for dogs on leashes only
 9. Fancourt Reserve
 10. Gentleman's Bay
 11. Glendowie Park
 12. Glover Park: including on marked sports field when not in use
 13. Kelvin Reserve
 14. Koraha Reserve
 15. Ladies Bay
 16. Lingarth Reserve
 17. Madills Farm: including on marked sports field when not in use
 18. Mary Atkin Reserve
 19. Maskell Street Reserve
 20. Merton Road Reserve
 21. Michaels Avenue Reserve: southern end of the reserve only
 22. Morrin Road Reserve
 23. Norman Lesser Reserve/Pyatt Reserve
 24. Orakei Basin West and East Reserve from the car park from Orakei Road and from the pathway from Upland Road to the bottom of the Lucerne Road access way
 25. Patteson Reserve
 26. Regents Park
- Note: Atkin Reserve stated in 2019 Policy, does not show in map.

Our analysis of where else local dog owners could go for off leash access in their local area. #6970



Alternative off leash areas in nearby locale

- St Heliers and Kohi beach - subject to time and season rules for both Summer & winter. No off leash access during summer - on leash or prohibited. Restrictions during winter - on leash between 10am and 4pm.
- Dingle Dell bush reserve - not an open space to exercise your dog, terrain not suitable for older owners or pram access for young families.
- Maskell park - small area probably smaller than one sportsfield.
- Ladies Bay/Gentlemens Bay - access issues for many (and dogs) and not family friendly
- Karaka Bay - access issues
- Mary Atkin reserve - small area about the size of one sportsfield

- So that leaves only Churchill Park in Glendowie, so more dogs coming into this space to get off leash access.

Some proposals for access change don't make sense

It's concerning that there are proposals to restrict and reduce dog access that don't seem to stack up when looked at in detail. (3 reserves in Rodney & Shakespear Regional Park).

If we weren't flagging this would anyone notice?

Vera Reserve Baddeleys Road, Baddeleys Creek Reserve and Pigeon Place Accessway

We are proposing to protect kiwi dispersing from Tāwharanui Regional Park into the three associated reserves where they are vulnerable to being disturbed, harmed or killed by dogs by changing the rule from off-leash to on-leash.

Current Policy rules

Dogs allowed **under control off a leash** at any time (Schedule 2).

Proposed amended Policy rules

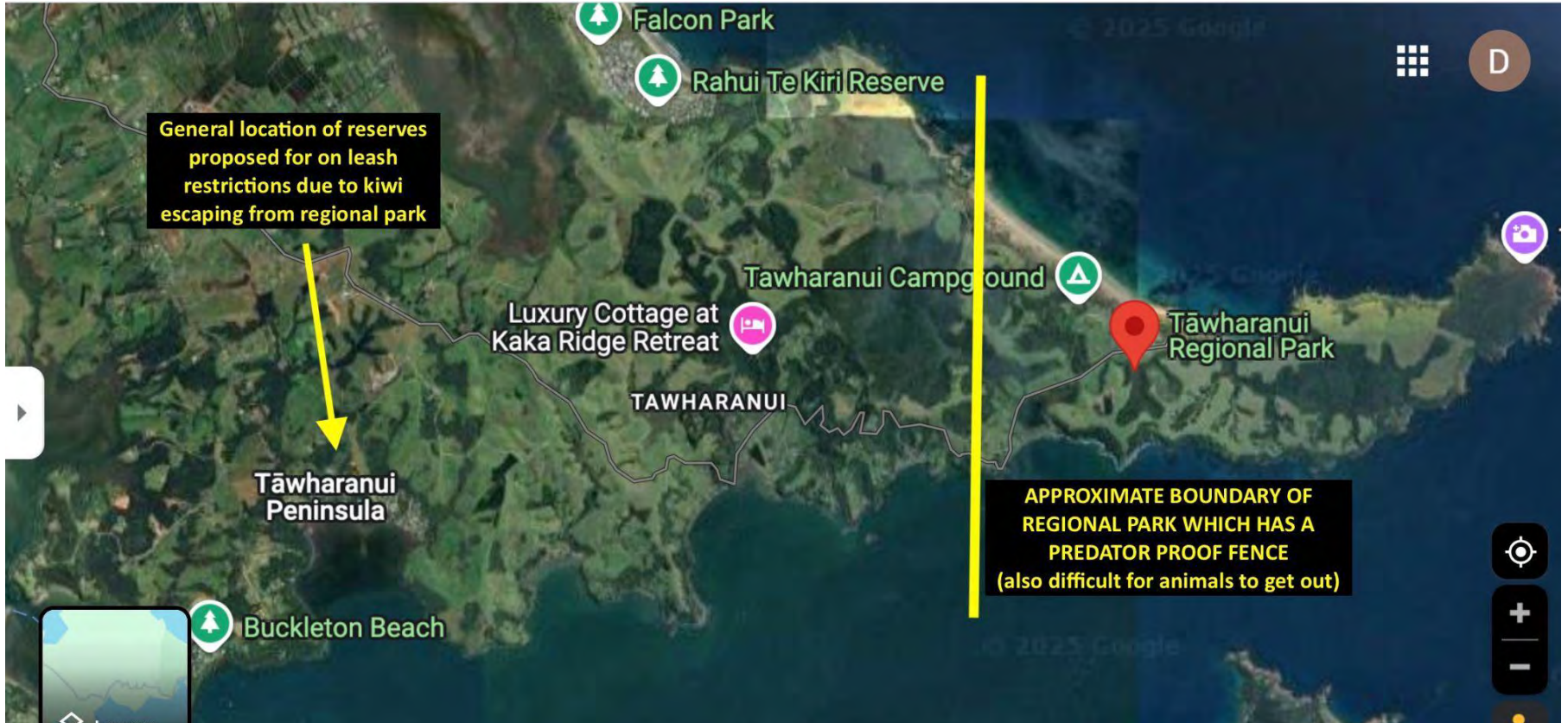
Dogs allowed **under control on a leash** at all times (Schedule 1(4)(a)).

This proposal makes no sense. These reserves are not associated to Tawharanui Regional park. They are miles away. (8 kms by road)
There is no need to restrict access in these reserves due to kiwi dispersing from the Regional park. The number of far worse dangers they would need to navigate to get to these areas and then remain there would be huge.

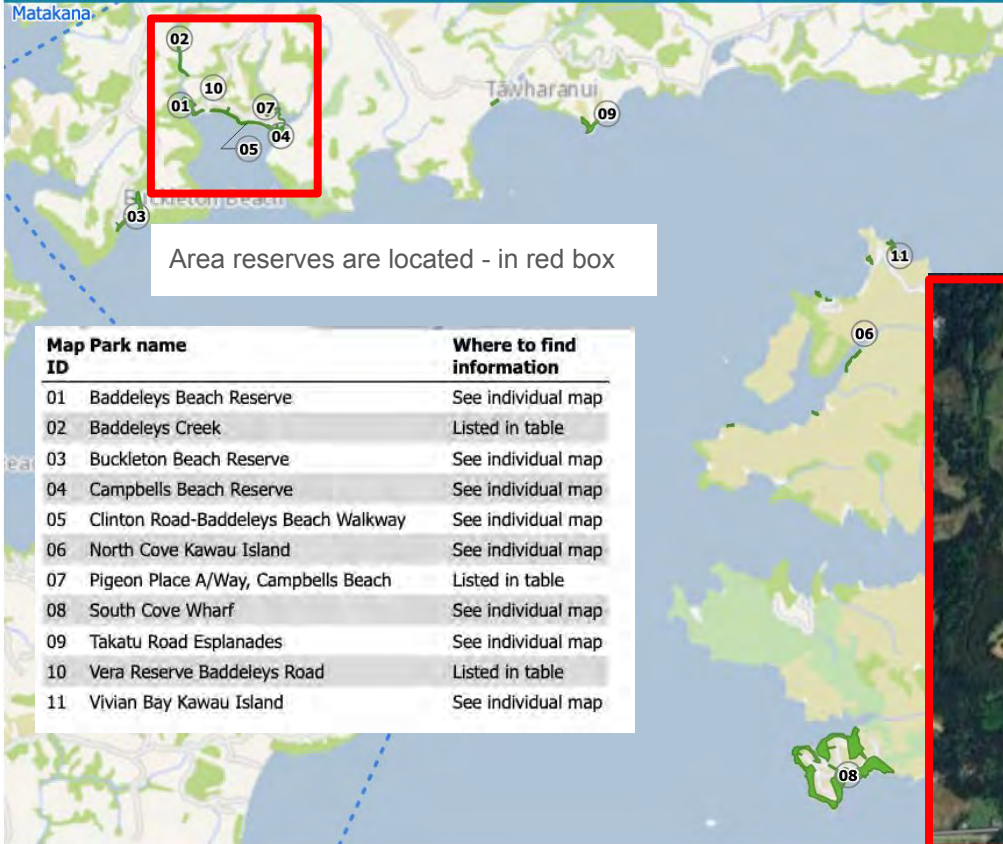
See maps on following pages.

Northern Areas - proposed Access Changes - Rodney Local Board

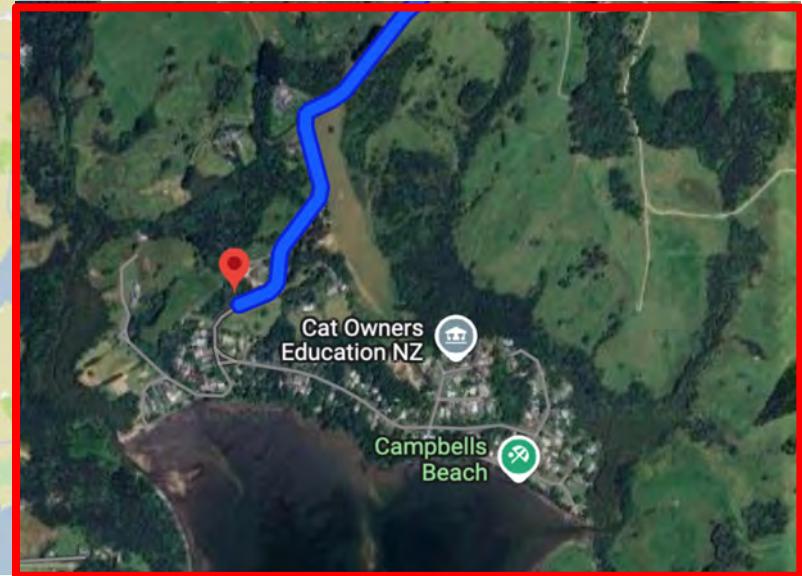
#6970



Kawau Bay



Below is a satellite view of area reserves are in. More danger from cats & cars than dogs.



How Dog Policy is presented

#6970

We showed a number of dog owners the way the 2019 Dog Policy was laid out for dog owners vs the proposed 2025 Dog Policy and not one of them thought the new proposal was delivering on “more clearly showing its goal, focus areas, council actions, and rules.”

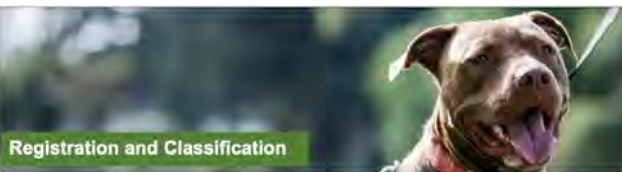
The restructure of the new policy certainly isn't laid out in a user friendly way.

It has also removed the sections within each policy theme of “What does Auckland Council expect of dog owners?” Which was a good way to show responsible dog owners what was expected of them. We don't understand why this has been done?

For a lay person the proposed new layout is not making it better for people to understand council policy.

We DO NOT support the proposed change & would like the 2019 layout to remain.

2019 Dog Policy was laid out in easy user friendly themes - we ask for this to remain #6970



Registration and Classification

All dogs in Auckland, including dangerous and menacing dogs, will be registered with council

What will Auckland Council do?

1. Provide registration administration services including:
 - (a) maintain a record of all dogs registered in Auckland, including those classified as dangerous and menacing
 - (b) maintain a record of probationary and disqualified owners
 - (c) inform and educate dog owners through the registration process
 - (d) set fees to cover costs of essential services to support dog management activities to achieve this policy
 - (e) provide incentives to promote responsible dog ownership
 - (f) follow up on non-registered dogs and non-compliance with local authority bylaws.
2. Provide incentives, information, education and services
3. Maintain dog compliance and enforcement best-practice that proactively uses Auckland Council's powers¹ to:
 - (a) enforce registration (including through the use of seizure powers) and microchipping of dogs
 - (b) enforce the de-sexing of uncontrolled dogs
 - (c) seize and hold dogs that are a threat to public safety
 - (d) classify certain dogs identified in the Dog Control Act 1996, as dangerous or menacing based on the behaviour of the dogs, or the dogs' breed or type
 - (e) ensure compliance with classification requirements.

Council must classify a dog as dangerous where:

- the owner of the dog has been convicted of an offence because:
 - (a) the dog has attacked a person, stock poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife, and the court has not made a destruction order on the dog
 - (b) the dog rushed at any person, animal or vehicle in a manner that was likely to cause a vehicle accident or to endanger, injure or kill a person
- the dog is considered a threat to the safety of any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife, based on sworn evidence of aggressive behaviour.
- The owner admits in writing the dog poses a threat to any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife.

¹ powers include issuing warnings and instant fines (infringement notices), powers to seize, destroy, or take custody of dogs and to classify dogs, and to the classify, prosecute and recover costs from owners.



Responsible Dog Ownership

Dog owners will care for their dogs and control them around people to protect wildlife, other animals, property and natural habitats

What will Auckland Council do?

1. Provide services that support promoting responsible dog management, including:
 - (a) 24-hour dog management service
 - (b) dog education community events and the production of supporting publications
 - (c) advice on dog related problems
 - (d) emergency assistance with dogs involved in accidents or police operations
 - (e) street patrols
 - (f) investigation and resolution of incidents of:
 - i. wandering, barking, fouling, aggressive, and menacing or dangerous dogs
 - ii. impounding and kennel maintenance
 - iii. proceedings against dog owners for offences where all other means have failed
 - iv. livestock concerns
 - v. abandoned dogs.
2. Proactively promote the welfare of dogs, as stated in the Code of Welfare for Dogs, Animal Welfare Act 1999. This includes, but not limited to, providing sufficient food, water, shelter and care.
3. Reduce the danger and nuisance caused by dogs by:
 - (a) receiving, investigating and resolving dog complaints
 - (b) providing community education to increase public awareness on how to be safe around dogs (target children, families and people working in the community)
 - (c) promoting dog safe communities through encouraging compliance and undertaking enforcement
 - (d) ensuring public safety and comfort, working to change attitudes and behaviours of irresponsible dog owners, and where appropriate penalising irresponsible dog owners.

What does Auckland Council expect of dog owners?

1. Know and comply with the laws concerning the management of your dog
2. To be responsible for your dog's behaviour
3. Provide proper care and attention to your dog, including providing sufficient food, water, shelter and adequate exercise, as defined by the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and Dog Control Act 1996
4. Consider neutering your dog at an early age
5. Microchip your dog
6. Take all reasonable steps to ensure your dog does not cause a nuisance to any other person. Be particularly vigilant near children and closely supervise interaction
7. Keep your dog under control at all times, this may include putting your dog on a leash, or a shortened leash in areas where your dog is likely to ignore commands (even if it is an off-leash or designated dog exercise area)
8. Respect other people's personal space. Public places are for everyone's enjoyment and not everyone is fond of dogs
9. Ensure your dog cannot leave your property by itself



Dog Access Principles

Provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone

What will Auckland Council do?

1. Provide dog access rules that are comprehensive, consistent and easy to understand and comply with the following approaches:
 - (a) Recognise dog owners as legitimate users of public places and dog access is essential for dog welfare
 - (b) Integrate, where practicable, dog owners and their dogs with other users of public places
 - (c) Provide opportunities for dog owners to take their dog to public places that are accessible, desirable, and provide diversity of experience for both the dog and owner
 - (d) Consider access on a comprehensive region-wide basis, as well as a place-by-place basis
 - (e) Promote safe interaction between dogs and people using public places and private ways to ensure that dogs do not injure, endanger, intimidate or otherwise cause distress to any person, in particular, children and vulnerable adults
 - (f) Manage the conflict between dogs and protected wildlife, stock, poultry, domestic animals, property and natural habitat.
2. Maintain rules on dog access in public places and private ways (see Schedule 1 and 2)
The types of dog access rules are:
 - (a) **prohibited area** – a place where dogs are not permitted to be, and other users have absolute priority
 - (b) **on-leash area** – a place shared with other users, where dogs must be on a leash and under control at all times
 - (c) **off-leash area** – a place shared with other users, where dogs may be off a leash but must still be under control at all times
 - (d) **designated dog exercise area** – a place where dog owners are the priority user. Dog owners may take their dogs off a leash (including Dangerous Dogs) but they must be under control at all times
 - (e) **time and season areas** – a place shared with other users, where the dog access rules will be different depending on the time of day during the summer season. This is to minimise the conflict between dogs and other users of the space during peak hours.
3. Apply default dog access rules to ensure that there is a rule applied to all public places in Auckland
 - (a) Dogs must be under control on-leash in council-controlled public places unless otherwise stated in Schedule 1 and 2. This includes:
 - i. all formed public roads (including any street, highway, access way, service lane, and any footpath; cycle track, bus stop and berm within the boundaries of the road)
 - ii. private ways
 - iii. council-controlled car parks



Council's NEW proposal 2025 - doesn't seem to have ease of use for general public & has nothing about what is expected of dog owners.

#6970

3 Our actions

3.1 Provide services and incentives that promote responsible dog ownership

This includes –

- (a) issuing a licence that rewards owners with a discounted dog registration fee
- (b) rewarding dog owners of neutered dogs with a discounted dog registration fee
- (c) advice and events to help and encourage dog owners meet their responsibilities to their dog, neighbours and when in public places
- (d) advice about the welfare of dogs, including their obligations in the [Dog Control Act 1996](#), [Code of Welfare for Dogs](#), [Animal Welfare Act 1999](#).

3.2 Provide community education services

This includes to increase public awareness on how to be safe around dogs and advice on dog related problems.

3.3 Provide registration administration services

This includes to –

- (a) maintain a record of all dogs registered in Auckland
- (b) inform and educate dog owners through the registration process
- (c) set fees to cover costs of essential services to support dog management activities to achieve this policy
- (d) enforce registration (including through the use of seizure powers) and microchipping of dogs
- (e) follow up on non-registered dogs.

3.4 Provide classification administration services

This includes to –

- (a) classify dogs identified in the [Dog Control Act 1996](#), as dangerous or menacing based on the dogs' breed or type, or the behaviour of the dogs
 - (b) maintain a record of dogs classified as dangerous and menacing under the [Dog Control Act 1996](#)
 - (c) maintain a record of probationary and disqualified owners
 - (d) ensure compliance with classification requirements, including that –
 - (i) owners of dogs classified as dangerous or menacing meet the expectations under the [Dog Control Act 1996](#) (section 32 and section 33)
 - (ii) dogs classified as dangerous or menacing are neutered
- For the purposes of the [Dog Control Act 1996](#) (section 10(3)(ea) and (eb)) the requirement to neuter dogs classified as menacing applies to all dogs classified as menacing by

- Auckland Council or by any other territorial authority and relocated to Auckland (even if the other authority that classified the dog did not require it to be neutered).
- (iii) owners of dogs classified as probationary or disqualified meet the requirements under the [Dog Control Act 1996](#) (sections 23, 23A, 24, and 28).
- (e) allow the owner of a dog classified as menacing due to its behaviour under section 33A of the [Dog Control Act 1996](#), to request a review of the classification after 12 months, if –
- (i) the owner provides (at their cost) a dog behavioural assessment report that –
 - is conducted by an assessor approved by council
 - contains the assessor's professional opinion on whether the dog's classification should be maintained, revised, or removed
 - contains an evaluation of the dog's behaviour in various settings
 - recommends any conditions under which the dog's classification might be reconsidered (for example training programmes or a regular assessment), and
 - recommends any further trainings or strategies, if necessary.
 - (ii) the owner has not obtained any infringements in relation to the dog within the preceding 12-month period; and
 - (iii) the owner has obtained a responsible dog ownership licence.
- Removing the classification of the dog is at the council's discretion.

3.5 Provide services that reduce and respond to problems caused by dogs

This includes –

- (a) a 24-hour dog management service
- (b) shelter services, for example safe custody and re-homing.
- (c) patrols of public places, for example streets, parks and beaches
- (d) issuing licenses to keep more than two dogs on a property under council bylaws
- (e) emergency assistance with dogs involved in accidents or police operations
- (f) investigation and resolution of incidents, for example dog attacks on people or animals, roaming, barking, fouling, aggressive dog behaviour, abandoned dogs, or dog welfare concerns
- (g) seizing and holding dogs, including dogs that are a threat to public safety
- (h) working to change attitudes and behaviours of irresponsible dog owners and where appropriate, proactively using powers to ensure public safety and comfort and penalise irresponsible dog owners
- (i) issuing warnings, abatement notices and infringement notices (where appropriate)
- (j) requiring the neutering of uncontrolled dogs under council bylaws (where appropriate)
- (k) classifying dogs and dog owners (where appropriate)
- (l) court proceedings against dog owners for offences (where appropriate).

3.6 Provide dog access rules in public places and private ways

3.6.1 Apply the following principles to ensure dog access rules balance the needs of people, dogs, animals, environment and property

- (a) recognise responsible dog owners as legitimate users of public places and that dog access is

essential for dog welfare.

- (b) integrate, where practicable, dog owners and their dogs with other users of public places (for example public roads, parks and beaches)
- (c) provide opportunities for dog owners to take their dog to public places that are accessible, desirable, and provide diversity of experience for both the dog and owner
- (d) promote safe interaction between dogs and people using public places and private ways to ensure that dogs do not injure, endanger, intimidate or otherwise cause distress to any person, in particular, children and vulnerable adults
- (e) manage the conflict between dogs and protected wildlife and environment (natural habitat)
- (f) manage the conflict between dogs and stock, poultry, domestic animals and property.

3.6.2 Consider dog access on a comprehensive region-wide basis, as well as place-by-place basis

- (a) apply default and general rules in Schedule 1 that apply Auckland-wide to ensure there is a rule for every public place and private way in Auckland
- (b) apply rules for specific places in Auckland in Schedule 2
- (c) apply the following terms and definitions when setting dog access rules –
 - (i) **under control off a leash** (off-leash) area – a place shared with other users, where dogs may be off a leash but must still be under control at all times.
 - (ii) **shared leash or a leash** (on-leash) area – a place shared with other users, where dogs must be on a leash and under control at all times
 - (iii) **prohibited area** – a place where dogs are not permitted to be, and other users have absolute priority
 - (iv) **designated dog exercise** area – a place where dog owners are the priority user. Dog owners may take their dogs off a leash (including dogs classified as dangerous) but they must be under control at all times.
 - (v) **time and season** area – a place shared with other users, where the dog access rules will be different depending on the time of day and year. This is to minimise the conflict between dogs and other users of the space during peak times.
- (d) use the following time and season definition when restricting dog access to ensure the safe interaction between people and dogs at popular locations:

10.00am to 5.00pm between 1 December to 1 March, inclusive (summer)

Related information about time and season rules

- Different time and season definitions may apply to (manage conflict between dogs and animals or natural habitat for example sanding season).
 - The relevant authority (local boards or regional council committee) will decide:
 - where a time and season rule applies (location)
 - the type of dog access (prohibited, on-leash, off-leash or designated dog exercise area)
 - what the rule outside of the summer season access will be (including any times).
- For example, a local board may decide that a beach is off-leash before 10am, on-leash and between 10.00am and 5.00pm and off-leash after 5.00pm in summer, and off-leash at any time of the year.

3.6.3 Consider the following before making any change to a dog access rule on a park or beach that would provide more dog access

- (a) the current and future usage patterns and behaviours
- (b) the potential conflicts between dogs and people, animals, environment and property

Dog Access principles changes - Time & season

#6970

During deliberations, the 2019 Hearing Panel wanted to remove the 'winter' time and season restrictions that were in place and varied amongst each other across 6 LB's (Devonport-Takapuna, Waitemata, Albert-Eden, Orakei, Maungakiekie-Tamaki and Manger-Otahuhu).

Staff advised that they could not do this as the removal had not been consulted on. The Reg chair at the time was noticeably frustrated at this as the panel felt that it had been shown there was no need and the community didn't want it during the consultation process.

The 2019 Hearing panel then deliberated at length to develop an information note for local boards when changing a 'out of summer season' rule that "The policy intends that the outside of summer rule provides more access than the summer season rule that applies in the same area."

This information has been removed from the proposed Dog Policy. **We ask for it to remain to give Local Boards guidance.**

2019 (Current)

4. Apply the following time and season definition
(a) 10.00am to 5.00pm between the 1 December and 1 March (summer)

Explanatory Note:

The relevant authority (local boards or delegated council committee) will decide:

- where a time and season rule applies (location)
- the type of dog access (i.e. prohibited, on-leash, off-leash or designated dog exercise area)
- what the outside of summer season access rule will be.

For example, a local board may decide that a beach is off-leash before 10am, prohibited between 10.00am and 5.00pm and off-leash after 5.00pm.

Information Note:

The Policy intends that the outside of summer rule provides more access than the summer season rule that applies in the same area.



2025 (Proposed)

- (d) use the following time and season definition when restricting dog access to ensure the safe interaction between people and dogs at popular locations:

10.00am to 5.00pm between 1 December to 1 March, inclusive (summer)

Related information about time and season rules

- Different time and season definitions may apply to manage conflict between dogs and animals or natural habitat (for example lambing season).
 - The relevant authority (local boards or delegated council committee) will decide:
 - where a time and season rule applies (location)
 - the type of dog access (prohibited, on-leash, off-leash or designated dog exercise area)
 - what the rule outside of the summer season access will be (including any times).
- For example, a local board may decide that a beach is off-leash before 10am, prohibited between 10.00am and 5.00pm and off-leash after 5.00pm in summer, and off-leash at any time of the year.

Dog Access principles changes -

#6970

Council's proposed access principle change around when a rule change is proposed that would provide less dog access is now proposed to have an additional element to it;

- that a 'catchment approach' to consider any gaps in dog access provision that may arise.

We can't find any reference or explanation as to what this 'catchment approach' is and how it works? We can't give any view on whether we think this is a good addition towards dog access evaluation or a hindrance. We would like to get clarification around this and we suspect that local boards may need that too?

2019 (Current)

6. Consider the following before making any change to a dog access rule on parks and beaches that would provide less dog access:

- (a) Consider whether there are practicable alternative solutions to address the conflict between uses of the place³
- (b) Ensure, to the extent that is practicable, that displaced dog owners and their dogs have access to other places or that such access is provided as part of the same decision.

2025 (Proposed)

3.6.4 Consider the following before making any change to a dog access rule on a park or beach that would provide less dog access

- (a) evidence of a significant risk of conflict between responsible dog owners and their dogs and other people, animals, environment or property
- (b) whether there are practicable alternative solutions to address the conflict, such as ways to enable better sharing of the public place.²
- (c) the need to ensure, to the extent that is practicable, that displaced dog owners and their dogs have access to other places or that such access is provided as part of the same decision, including a catchment approach to consider any gaps in dog access provision that may arise.



Proposed 2025 Dog Access Policy still lacks details -

#6970

Normally for Dog access rules the areas/place that the rule applies to is listed - example shown

This means that;

- signage of the access rules for off leash, prohibited, time and season or for environmental rules can be erected at the location they apply to.
- The 'where to walk your dog' website lists the location and the rules that apply to it
- That dog owners know the rules for a space

But there are still issues with location identification that we raised in 2019 that remain in the proposed 2025 policy.

3 Dogs are allowed in the following areas during the following times and seasons -

- (1) Arkles Bay: headland to headland
- (2) Big Manly Beach: headland to headland
- (3) Browns Bay Beach
- (4) Campbells Bay Beach: including grass area at end of The Esplanade, parts of Campbells Bay Esplanade Reserve adjacent to the beach and wastewater pipeline to Mairangi Bay Beach
- (5) Fisherman's Rock
- (6) Hatfields Beach: headland to headland
- (7) Little Manly Beach: headland to headland
- (8) Mairangi Bay Beach: including wastewater pipeline to Mairangi Bay Beach
- (9) Matakatia Bay: headland to headland
- (10) Murrays Bay Beach: including wastewater pipeline to Campbells Bay Beach
- (11) Orewa Beach: north headland to estuary bridge southern end
- (12) Red Beach: headland to headland
- (13) Rothesay Bay Beach
- (14) Stanmore Bay: headland to headland
- (15) Swann Beach: headland to headland
- (16) Tindalls Beach: headland to headland
- (17) Waiake Beach: including Rock Islé Beach
- (18) Waiwera Beach: from The Strand roundabout to southern headland.
- (19) Winstones Cove: beach and reserve.

Summer (1 December to 1 March)	Other seasons
 Under control off leash Morning (Before 10am)	 Under control off leash All times
 Prohibited Daytime (10am to 5pm)	
 Under control off leash Evening (After 5pm)	

Proposed 2025 Dog Access Policy still lacks details -

#6970

For the 2025 Proposed Dog Policy **Maungakiekie-Tamaki Local Board** area is still showing a completely vague description of where dogs are allowed during the Summer and Winter time restrictions **which we raised in 2019**.

We don't see how this can be signposted at the relevant beaches if they aren't named in the policy and we can't see how Council is identifying them on their 'where to walk your dog' website.

Fundamentally, if council can't identify or name them, how are dog owners meant to?

If no beaches can be identified for the rule to apply to then surely the rule should be removed for this LB area?

3 Dogs are allowed in the following areas during the following times and seasons –

All beaches excluding Onehunga foreshore on the southern side of Orpheus Drive between the coastline below 54A Seacliffe Road and the Manukau Cruising Club.

Summer (1 December to 1 March)	Other seasons
 Under control on leash* Morning (Before 10am)	 Under control off leash Before 10am
 Prohibited Daytime (10am to 5pm)	 Under control on leash* 10am to 4pm
 Under control on leash* Evening (After 5pm)	 Under control off leash After 4pm
 Prohibited At all times from safe swimming areas or lanes marked out by council	 Prohibited At all times from safe swimming areas or lanes marked out by council

* Except in the water where dogs are allowed under control off a leash.

Proposed 2025 Dog Access Policy still lacks details -

#6970

For the 2025 Proposed Dog Policy **Mangere-Otahuhu Local Board** area is still showing a completely vague description of where dogs are allowed during the Summer and Winter time restrictions which **we raised in 2019**.

“ON BEACHES IN THE FORMER AUCKLAND CITY AREA” - who would know this? This is from 15 years ago!

We don't see how this can be signposted at the relevant beaches if they aren't named in the policy and we can't see how Council is identifying them on their 'where to walk your dog' website.

Fundamentally, if council can't identify or name them, how are dog owners meant to?

If no beaches can be identified for the rule to apply to then surely the rule should be removed for this LB area?

9 Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board area

(2) On beaches in the former Auckland City area:

Summer (1 December to 1 March)	Other seasons
 Under control on leash* Morning (Before 10am)	 Under control off leash Before 10am
 Prohibited Daytime (10am to 5pm)	 Under control on leash 10am to 4pm
 Under control on leash* Evening (After 5pm)	 Under control off leash After 4pm
 Prohibited At all times from safe swimming areas or lanes marked out or identified by council	 Prohibited At all times from safe swimming areas or lanes marked out or identified by council

* Except in the water where dogs are allowed under control off a leash.

4 There are no areas where dogs are **prohibited** in the Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board area.

Regional Park proposals - overwhelmingly increasing restrictions and reducing access. #6970

North:

Mahurangi Regional Park;

- **lose** all access to a track, go **from on to off** at another location

Pakiri Regional Park;

- **lose all off leash access, move to prohibited**

Te Arai Regional Park;

- **lose off leash access** on Forestry Beach, **move to prohibited**

Shakespear Regional Park

- **lose off leash access, move to prohibited** on part of Army Bay and Okoromai Bay

- summer time & season rule on park, **off leash to on leash**

Long Bay Regional Park;

- **lose on leash access** during summer, **move to prohibited**

Whakanewha (Waiheke)

- **gain on leash access** on tracks to access existing on leash area

- Waitawa

- **Lose 75% of current off leash access, move to on leash**

Muriwai, Tawharanui, Wenderholm - no change to access

Regional Park proposals - overwhelmingly increasing restrictions and reducing access. **#6970**

South:

Auckland Botanic Gardens

- **lose off leash**, area reduced

Hunua Ranges

- **lose access** from **on leash to prohibited** on named tracks and roads

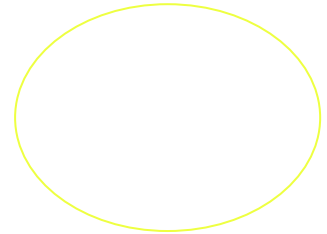
Tapapakanga

- **gain** on leash **in a carpark** during lambing season

Ambury - no change to access

Regional Parks - Shakespear

- Council is proposing the following;
 - To apply the regional time and season rule of Dogs on leash on the grass areas next to Okoromai and Army Bay. This would mean current OFF leash access would become ON leash during summer hours restrictions (between 10am and 5pm).
 - To PROHIBIT dogs from east of the Army Bay boat ramp.
 - To PROHIBIT dogs from the eastern end of Okoromai Bay



Current



Proposed



This map isn't showing the prohibited beach area of Army Bay

Shakespear Regional Park

#6970

Proposed

Prohibiting Dogs from East of the Army Bay boat ramp. The reason given is to stop dogs from accessing the sanctuary area. But there are cliffs here and no access to the park. There is no need to prohibit dogs from the east of the boat ramp at Army Bay beach. These photos clearly demonstrate the lack of access to the Sanctuary in this area of the beach.



This proposal SHOULD NOT go ahead as dogs cannot physically access the Sanctuary.



Hibiscus & Bays - Shakespear

#6970

Prohibiting Dogs from the Eastern end of Okoromai Bay as there is a chance they might access the sanctuary area. There is signposting saying 'no dogs' beyond X point to stop this. From the findings report it doesn't seem like an actual issue to address, just a risk. Unlike cats, dogs are accompanied by an owner & can be stopped from entering. Access to this area of the beach is only available at low tide so it is not a hugely used area, but for people with reactive dogs it's a good place to be away from other dogs. The photos below show the area in question in both high & low tide

Low Tide



High Tide



Te Arai Regional Park - Forestry Beach

#6970

Te Arai Regional Park was originally the Park land and beach north of Te Arai Point

With the gifting of land to Auckland Council through the Te Arai South development council has moved to enlarge the park land of the Te Arai Regional Park area - creating Te Arai North and Te Arai South park - land.

However Forestry Beach, south of Te Arai Point, was not part of this gift and, we believe, remained a beach within the Rodney local board area. It was not identified as an off leash area as part of the 2019 Dog Bylaw review as we believe it should have and has ended up in a grey area with council now wanting to review the rules around dog access and make it part of the Te Arai regional park.

It is the biggest, and main area of dog access for locals & visitors. If council goes ahead with prohibiting dogs from as proposed in this review at Pakiri Beach (adjacent to the Regional Park) and Forestry Beach that will mean that 24km of Rodney coastline will be prohibited to dog families.

Given the plans to tar seal to Te Arai South/Forestry beach from SH1 and the relative quick drive (25 mins currently), it is likely that Te Arai Regional park will get greater numbers of visitors in the coming years, along with locals with the approved 60 home subdivision at Te Arai South and the recent submission by Te Arai South Holdings & Darby Partners for an additional 180 visitor accommodation units and 420 residential and retirement living units at Te Arai South along with sand mining activity..

According to Council's own data, there were 165,000 visitors to Te Arai in 2020 and 130,000 in 2021. The planned northern motorway extension and northern growth and development is likely to increase these numbers.

Te Arai South and Forestry Beach are the logical areas along this 24KM coastline to have dog access as it is also likely to be where more people will be visiting. There is no other area along this coastline that will have intensive development next to it. In fact I can't think of any other regional park beach that has/will have such intensive development fronting it.

Coastline - Goat Island to Te Arai

Removing Dog access as proposed on the beaches bordering the Te Arai South and Pakiri Regional parks means over 24KM of Rodney beaches would be off limits to dog families.



Forestry Beach January 2024



This is likely to be more the norm over summer in coming years

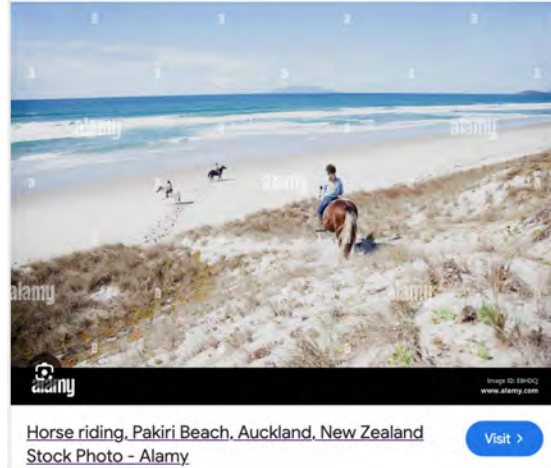
Te Arai Regional Park - Forestry Beach

#6970

Council states protection of Sand dunes is a reason to keep dogs off Forestry Beach. However signage, education and maps can achieve this. But people can do more damage. Horse riding on the beach is still allowed & seem to be on the dunes?.



Te Arai Lodge Walks image



Horse riding, Pakiri Beach, Auckland, New Zealand
Stock Photo - Alamy

Visit >

Pakiri Beach horse riding on dunes



Forestry Beach

#6970

Te Arai Links golf course has helicopters coming and going from the beach side - something that will disturb shorebirds. Visitors to the golf course and beach users also use drones.



Dotterel

DOC guidelines for nesting Dotterel.

Surely there can be a compromise rather than simply prohibiting dogs and their families

You can help protect the New Zealand dotterel

- Walk and ride your horse below the high-tide mark on beaches where dotterels are breeding.
- Please stay outside the fenced-off areas with 'birds nesting' signs.
- If you see a dotterel pretending to be injured, or come across eggs or chicks, please leave them alone.
- Please do not take vehicles on beaches.
- Keep your dog on a leash at all times. Remember that some beaches are only open for dog-walking at certain times. Check first with your district council.

Making dogs the bad guy means people think we are the only problem

Auckland Council Staff have referenced the following study in other Dotterel proposals regarding Dogs;

A. Lord et al. / Biological Conservation 98 (2001)

New Zealand dotterels leave their nests if potential **predators (including humans) approach**. It is desirable, although often not practical, to prohibit human access from breeding areas occupied by threatened or endangered species.

Effects of Human Approaches to nests of Dotterel

As part of the field survey sites were rated as receiving high levels of activity if they received between 7-20 visitors per hour (popular beaches with easy access and near housing settlements) - these were identified as busy beaches.

Scenarios tested were; Lone person walking, lone person running, lone person walking a leashed dog. Off leash dog walking was not tested. All of the testing started at 200m out from the nest. All participants walked to within 5 metres of the nest.

Flush distances were observed.

For those deemed to be a busy beach the mean result showed:

- A lone walker would flush a bird off the nest at approx 20m
- A lone runner would flush a bird off the nest at approx 50m
- A lone walker with a leashed dog would flush a bird off the nest at approx 70m

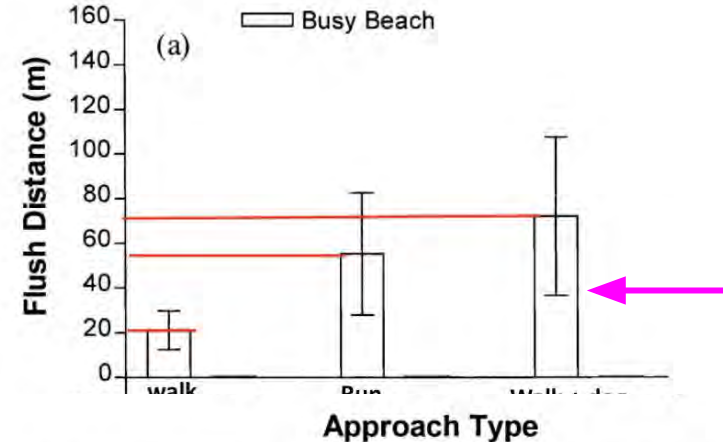


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

Making dogs the bad guy means people think we are the only problem

After having someone (+dog) come within 5m of the nest & standing there for 1 minute the time spent off the nest on a busy beach was:

- A lone walker kept the birds off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes (150 seconds)
- A lone runner kept the birds off the nest for approx 3 minutes (180 seconds)
- A lone walk with a leashed dog kept the birds off the nest for approx 3.7 minutes (210 seconds). **Only 40 seconds approx longer than a runner.**

Often the gist from Council staff is that the Dotterel spent more time off their nest when approached by a walker with a dog.

The impact of a dog on leash vs a runner is only 40 seconds. A walker will still mean that the birds will be off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes.

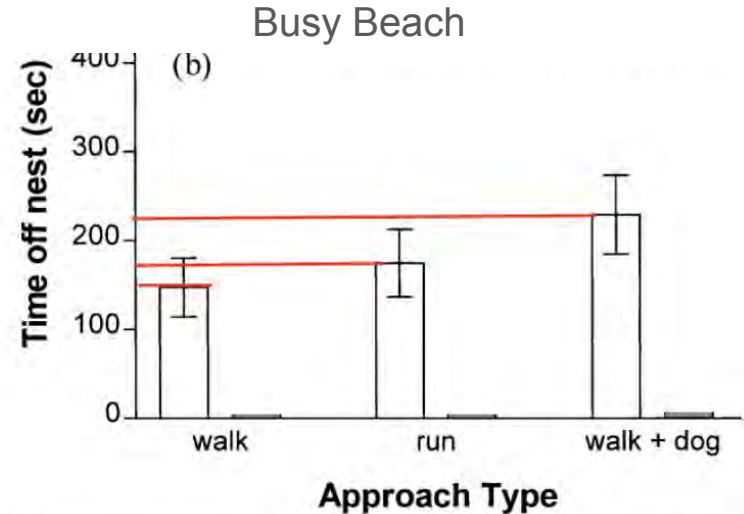


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

Dogs aren't the only threat to Dotterels...

...but because the council has a bylaw in place to control dog access they are always the ones to be restricted.

Cats are proving a huge issue at the Dotterel population at Omaha and locals are crying out for council to do something.

People running, kids playing can also cause the dotterels to move off their nest. Kite surfing has been shown to affect breeding dotterel in Auckland.

Manly Dotterel minder group report drones and golf balls are also a disturbance to nesting birds.

But the only ones who have any infringements on their movements are dog owners.

Threats to Dotterels are not limited to Dogs

Kite Surfing - risk to breeding;

Council's own expert witness in a Council Environment Court action¹ - Dr Lovegrove (Auckland Council) - said that an increase in kite-surfing at the Karaka shell banks in the South Manukau harbour had been found to be disturbing migratory species such as godwits and preventing breeding of New Zealand dotterel for whom this was an important site. In addition another expert witness who was supporting Council's position in this action cited "an evaluation of 17 studies from five countries, including New Zealand, Mr Don said that birds perceive kite surfers as large predators and avoid them by taking long flights or leaving a site altogether. In his view, unregulated kite-surfing had the potential to *"significantly degrade the existing habitats of coastal birds as a result of continual disturbance."*

Vehicles on beaches

This has been identified as an issue at Te Arai regional park

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - cats. Cats have been a major problem for Dotterel breeding sites in the north auckland area but council has no plan in place to limit or control cats



Cat attacks dotterels at Snells

0:12 MON, 24 OCT

Snells Beach cat owners are being asked to keep an eye on their pets, after dotterels were attacked early last Wednesday morning, October 19, forcing...



Omaha dotterel team mourns cat attack

0:12 SUN, 13 DEC

Night photos at the sanctuary, taken after the dotterel died, clearly show a cat on the prowl. A domestic cat is believed to have killed...



Tragic end for dotterel egg

10:10 TUE, 19 NOV

The sole dotterel (tūturiwhatu) egg remaining at Tindalls Bay disappeared overnight on Friday, November 8. Forest and Bir volunteer Derek Kelsey discovered the empty nest...



Council's dithering on dotterels criticised

8:08 TUE, 19 MAR

Auckland Council has been urged to do its job in protecting the seabirds and their chicks on Omaha Spit, which are being decimated by cats...



Council pussyfoots over dotterel destruction

14:02 FRI, 16 FEB

A refusal by Auckland Council to seriously address the cat problem on the Omaha Spit could sound the death knell for the area as a...



Community groups seek more cat control

13:01 TUE, 21 MAR

When cats were first captured on camera on the chenier (shell bank) in the Weiti River, last October, environmental group Friends of Okura Bush (FOOB)...



Stop pussyfooting around – keep cats indoors, pet owners urged

8:08 MON, 27 FEB

Cat burglar – this pet stole several eggs and wrecked dotterel nests this season at Snells Beach. Though their owners might not realise it, pet...

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - black back gulls

November 2024 - Tindalls Bay Nest egg lost..... *“closer inspection revealed no sign of egg shells, which could have indicated the nest was predated by a black-backed gull, cat or hedgehog.”* Hibiscus Matters 19th Nov 2024

Case study; Matakana Island

DOC began to worry about the apparent failure of New Zealand dotterel chicks to fledge on Matakana Island and set video cameras to monitor dotterel nests.

Surprise, the cameras revealed that predation by black-backed gulls was the main cause of mortality among dotterel chicks.

An eradication was successful, and there are now no black-backed gulls nesting on Matakana Island. Dotterels have since made a huge comeback on Matakana Island, now the most successful nesting area for the waders in the country. During the 2004–05 breeding season 30 chicks were raised from 42 pairs of New Zealand dotterels, and banded dotterels from previous broods are turning up all round the Bay of Plenty and nesting in new areas. Other birds, such as variable oystercatchers, are also benefiting from the absence of the predatory gulls

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

Predators - Hedgehogs

2022 - a hedgehog ate 3 eggs in a Manly dotterels nest. It was later discovered in a nearby trap. (<https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/resources/prickly-problem>)

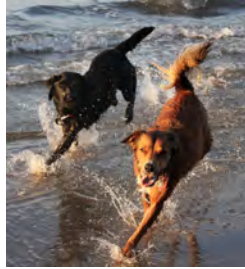
Submission to GB Hearing Panel

#6970

Dog Friends Auckland & Hibiscus Coast Dog Training Club - February 2025

We are here representing these dogs & their families, plus many more

Zara, Rusty, Toffee, Shadow, Fluffy, Maia, Banksy, Bruce, Harriet, Max, Billy, Tilly, Millie, Buddy, Lily, Freddie, Raffy, Willow, Bonnie, Holly, Scottie, Chloe, Molly, Lottie, Tyson, Poppy, Monty, Benny, Jet, Maddie, Bella, Rosie, Archie, Lacey, Young Lily, Spike, Chico, Gracie, Alice, Rio, Poodle Molly, Ollie, Rocky, Indie, Kobe, Bear, Bailey, Jack, Billie, Spotty, Shade, Daisy, Mia, Lola, Lucy, Jack, Leo, Floki, Ruby.... Etc etc



Overview

#6970

- Since the last Dog bylaw review there are **over 10,000 more registered dogs** (113,343 dogs YE June 2024) in Auckland.
- Since the last Policy & Bylaw of 2019 Dog owners have paid Council approx **\$50 MILLION** in registrations & fines etc.* (YE 2019 - 2024).

* Based on 113,343 dog registrations at average \$79.57 per dog and \$1.1M in infringements etc - \$10 M per anum

Dog Access in Auckland

#6970

- Another Dog Bylaw review, another fight to keep the access we already have around Auckland for Dog Families even though there are more dogs.
- Overall there are approx 60 changes proposed for dog access around Auckland
 - 31 are to prohibit dogs from areas
 - 19 change access from off leash to on
 - 10 give new off leash access.

Dog Access in Auckland

#6970

- Many of the proposed changes that remove access are being proposed simply to have the same rules throughout Auckland.
 - No analysis has been done on how many dog owners currently use these areas as they are now or where the next area they could obtain the same access would be located.
- Most of the proposals for change are to remove or restrict dog access
 - 50 proposals to do this across Auckland.
- Of the 10 proposals to give OFF leash at all times; in most cases they are allowing OFF leash when they had been **previously ON leash or subject to a time & season rule** and the majority are being offered as a part of another proposal to restrict access. So you lose access, or access is restricted here, but over here (usually a smaller area) you can have off leash at all times.
 - From what we can see these areas are mostly relatively small.

So what does that mean?

#6970

NO **NEW** OFF LEASH AREAS in the entire Auckland Region of any decent size for Dog Families since 2019. By the time this review is completed that's a 6 year period.

So all that is happening is more dogs in the same areas.

The need is there. From Council's own 'Dog Walking Assessment' in 2023 for a Local Board it states that ***"Dog Walking is one of the top 5 things done in Auckland parks."***

34% of New Zealand households report having at least one dog, up from 28% in 2015*

Compare Auckland to the WDC and the Wellington City Council #6970 Animal/Dog Bylaw recent reviews.

Council leads the way so dogs can have a ball

Wellington City Council's Kōrau Mātinitini | Social, Cultural, and Economic Committee adopted the proposed Animal Bylaw, Domestic Animal and Dog Policy today.



There'll be more spaces for dogs to exercise and socialise in Wellington, including the smaller end of Ori Bay Beach during the warmer months – but due to popular demand, Island Bay keeps its status quo.

April 2024 - Wellington City Council - Animal Bylaw, Domestic Animal and Dog Policy

Key changes adopted include:

- Stick with status quo on Island Bay Beach where **dogs are allowed off-leash at all times** in the area from the pier to the western end of the beach.
- **Expand off-leash access** in the CBD by allowing dogs to take a splash on the righthand side of the Band Rotunda in Oriental Bay during off-peak hours in the warmer months. Dogs remain prohibited from the longer section of the beach and Freyberg Beach for people wanting a dog-free experience.
- **Expand off-leash provision across nine suburbs** in Wellington.
- Require the mandatory desexing of cats, which supports Predator Free initiatives and the efforts of local rescues to reduce the stray cat population.

Compare Auckland to the WDC and the Wellington City Council Animal/Dog Bylaw recent reviews.

#6970

October 2024 - Whangarei District Council

Parts of Whangārei are now more dog friendly as new dog rules have come in today, Monday 28 October 2024:

Dogs are now allowed on-leash in Whangārei's city centre and **off-leash year-round at nine beach locations:**

- Whananaki North (foreshore between boat ramps)
- Tūtūkākā Marina beach
- Between Kauakarangi Bay sandspit (Ngunguru) and Whangaumu Bay
- Ngunguru estuary foreshore (village side)
- Waikaraka Beach
- One Tree Point (northeastern side)
- Ruakākā Beach north (between Mair Road and Taotahi Walk)
- Ruakākā Beach south (between surf club and campground)
- Uretiti Beach (Tip Road northwards).

The Whangarei Mayor says **one common theme was a shortage of places to take dogs off-leash in summer.** Another was that the 'no dog' rule in the city centre meant fewer customers visiting the centre of town.

Changes to dog access impact dog families daily lives

#6970

- Changes to access can impact many local people's daily routine negatively. Removing or restricting access to local dog owners means that somewhere they go daily with their dog is suddenly not available or limits their dog's exercise opportunity - sometimes just to meet a region wide rule.
- Any changes Council makes can have a massive impact on dog owners. It might mean having to drive to another location rather than walking to their local park or beach. For shift workers, having close to home access is important.
- More dogs in less spaces means that you can have issues with too many dogs in the same spots - especially during the summer season restrictions. (Time & season and bird breeding seasons).

Auckland Council dog bylaw review is 'in house'

#6970

- For this Dog Bylaw review Auckland Council, from what we can find in documents, focused on 'in house' inputs with a limited number of external stakeholders which we understand to be;
 - SPCA, Chained Dog Rehabilitation & Homing, 4 Commercial Dog Walkers, Friends of Regional Parks, Forest & Bird and Pest Free Kaipatiki.
- In a business environment that approach is called 'navel gazing' & it's not recommended. Especially when it comes to engagement or connecting with an affected audience outside of the business.
 - 'Navel gazing' - Looking inwards, instead of outwards for direction and inputs.

Compare to the WDC approach for their bylaw review

#6970

“In 2023 we asked (the public) what we should change in our dog rules and more than 600 people gave us their ideas,” says Mayor Vince Cocurullo.

“Our teams drafted up changes to our Dog Policy and Bylaw and consulted again. We received more than 800 submissions and then held hearings in July this year (2024).”

He says one common theme was a shortage of places to take dogs off-leash in summer. Another was that the ‘no dog’ rule in the city centre meant fewer customers visiting the centre of town. People also said providing places for dogs to go needed to be balanced against the need to protect the health and safety of people, especially children, as well as wildlife.

<https://www.wdc.govt.nz/Whats-new/News-and-notice/Changes-to-dog-bylaws-20241016>

Whereas Auckland Council isn’t getting any public input until they have already put the proposed Bylaw and Policy changes together, meaning there is no room for any change outside of what they have put together. Any possible changes that aren’t in this SOP will have to wait another 5 years or more.

It doesn’t seem as though Auckland Council staff have a desire to get input from the public to help with developing a policy and looking for opportunities or issues.

We ask that the Governing Body/Regulatory Committee instruct staff to change the process to mirror that of WDC for the next review & go out asking for suggestions BEFORE the review starts. Engage with those like ourselves & others who can activate the dog owning community.

A focus on desktop research rather than local knowledge **#6970**

- An outcome from an inward approach is 'desktop research'. Where analysis is done by looking on a google map, or a council 'where to walk your dog' map. It isn't involving site visits or locals who are regular users of locations.
- An example of this is with the proposal to move from off leash access to prohibited on dogs in the Orakei area at Madills & Glover Parks Sports Surfaces.
- There was no understanding of how many dog owners are using these two parks currently.
- 'Desktop research' was done in identifying alternative areas;
 - This did not capture the accessibility of the local alternatives.
 - It did not identify how many dog owners are already going to these areas and whether a new population of dogs and their owners would put pressure on these alternatives.
 - It did not review the size, terrain, user safety (something women and older people are concerned with) or ground conditions of the alternatives.
 - No analysis of the distance from Glover or Madills and the time it would take users of Madills or Glover to drive to these alternatives during morning or evening 'rush' hour traffic during the week (when most people are walking their dogs).

From Council documents to Orakei Local Board as part of analysis supporting an access rule change to prohibited from off leash. **#6970**

Part 3: Additional information

- Maps and lists of off leash areas in Ōrākei Local Board area



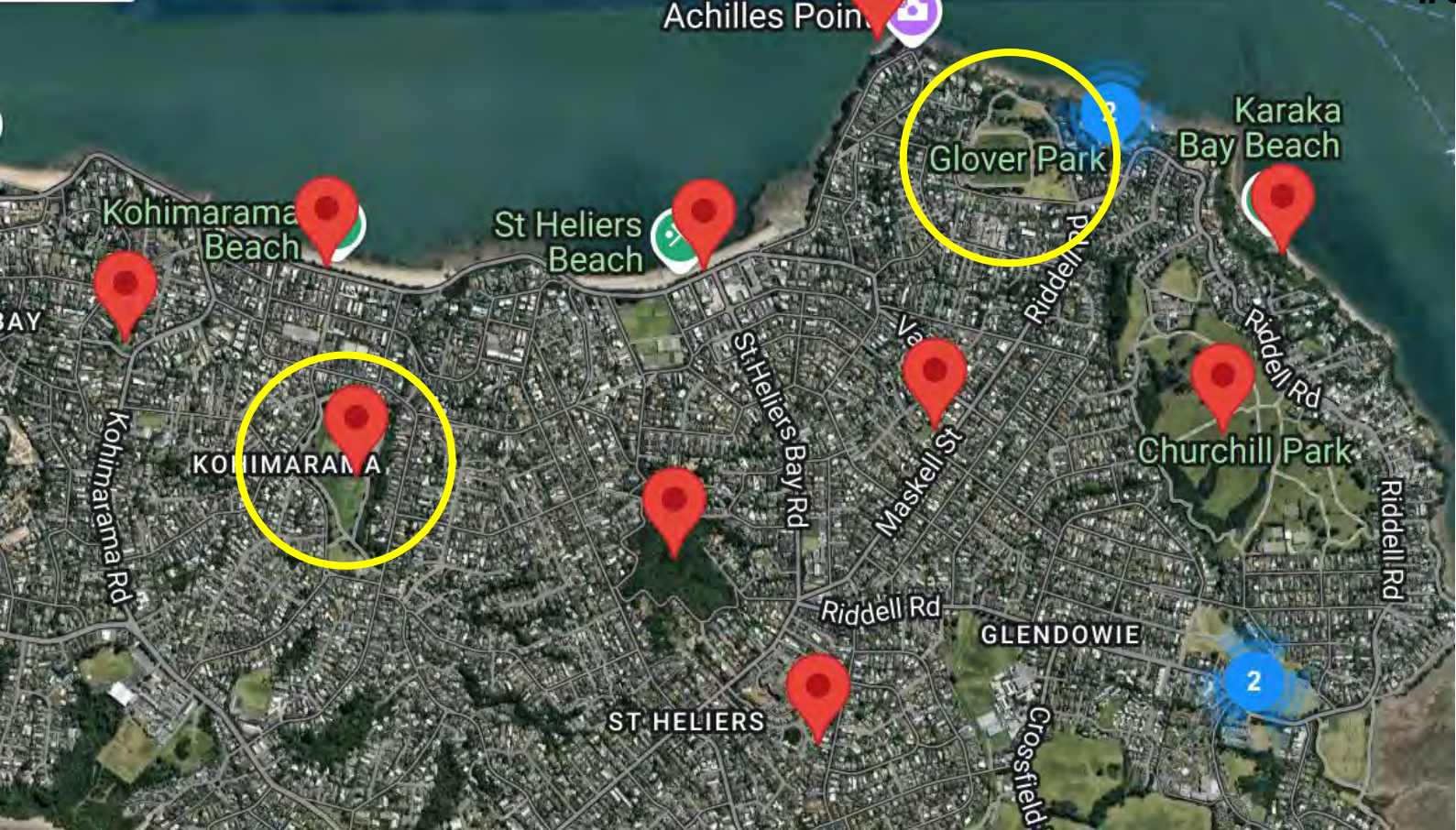
List of off-leash parks (refer to yellow highlighted number):

1. Allen Johnston Reserve
2. Aotea Reserve
3. Atkin Reserve (see note below)
4. Canon Park also known as Kenneth Small Reserve
5. Cawley Street Reserve
6. Churchill Park: excluding the area on eastern side of Churchill Park School from the Riddell Road entrance to 366B Riddell Road
7. Derby Downs Domain
8. Dingle Dell Reserve: restricted to the flat-grassed areas only. The paths are for dogs on leashes only
9. Fancourt Reserve
10. Gentleman's Bay
11. Glendowie Park
12. Glover Park: including on marked sports field when not in use
13. Kelvin Reserve
14. Koraha Reserve
15. Ladies Bay
16. Lingarth Reserve
17. Madills Farm: including on marked sports field when not in use
18. Mary Atkin Reserve
19. Maskell Street Reserve
20. Merton Road Reserve
21. Michaels Avenue Reserve: southern end of the reserve only
22. Morrin Road Reserve
23. Norman Lesser Reserve/Pyatt Reserve
24. Orakei Basin West and East Reserve from the car park from Orakei Road and from the pathway from Upland Road to the bottom of the Lucerne Road access way
25. Patteson Reserve
26. Regents Park

Note: Atkin Reserve stated in 2019 Policy, does not show in map.

Our analysis of where else local dog owners could go for off leash access in their local area.

#6970



Alternative off leash areas in nearby locale

#6970

- St Heliers and Kohi beach - subject to time and season rules for both Summer & winter. No off leash access during summer - on leash or prohibited. Restrictions during winter - on leash between 10am and 4pm.
- Dingle Dell bush reserve - not an open space to exercise your dog, terrain not suitable for older owners or pram access for young families.
- Maskell park - small area probably smaller than one sportsfield.
- Ladies Bay/Gentlemens Bay - access issues for many (and dogs) and not family friendly
- Karaka Bay - access issues
- Mary Atkin reserve - small area about the size of one sportsfield

- So that leaves only Churchill Park in Glendowie, so more dogs coming into this space to get off leash access.

#6970

Some proposals for access change don't make sense

It's concerning that there are proposals to restrict and reduce dog access that don't seem to stack up when looked at in detail. (3 reserves in Rodney & Shakespear Regional Park).

If we weren't flagging this would anyone notice?

Northern Areas - proposed Access Changes - Rodney Local Board

#6970

Vera Reserve Baddeleys Road, Baddeleys Creek Reserve and Pigeon Place Accessway

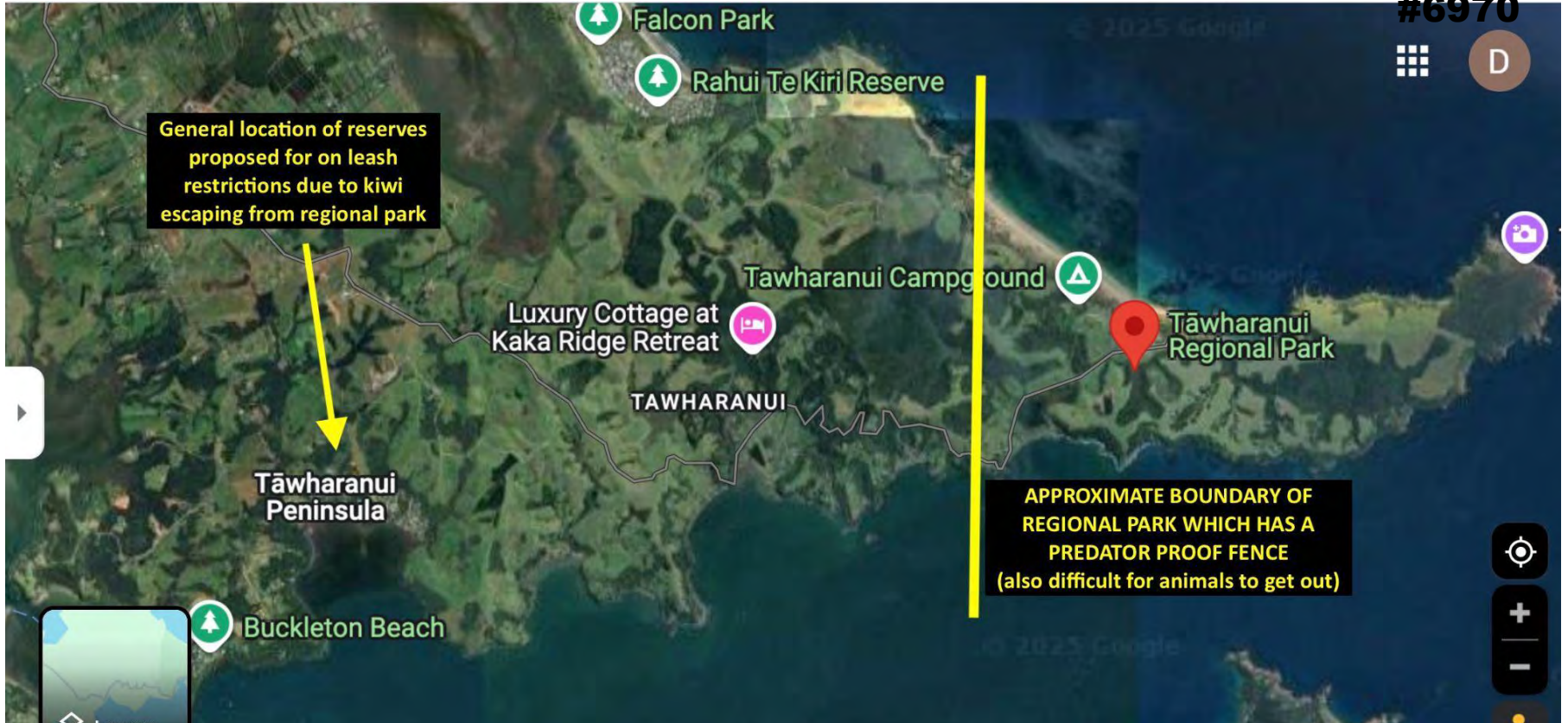
We are proposing to protect kiwi dispersing from Tāwharanui Regional Park into the three associated reserves where they are vulnerable to being disturbed, harmed or killed by dogs by changing the rule from off-leash to on-leash.

Current Policy rules
Dogs allowed under control off a leash at any time (Schedule 2).
Proposed amended Policy rules
Dogs allowed under control on a leash at all times (Schedule 1(4)(a)).

This proposal makes no sense. These reserves are not associated to Tawharanui Regional park. They are miles away. (8 kms by road)
There is no need to restrict access in these reserves due to kiwi dispersing from the Regional park. The number of far worse dangers they would need to navigate to get to these areas and then remain there would be huge.

See maps on following pages.

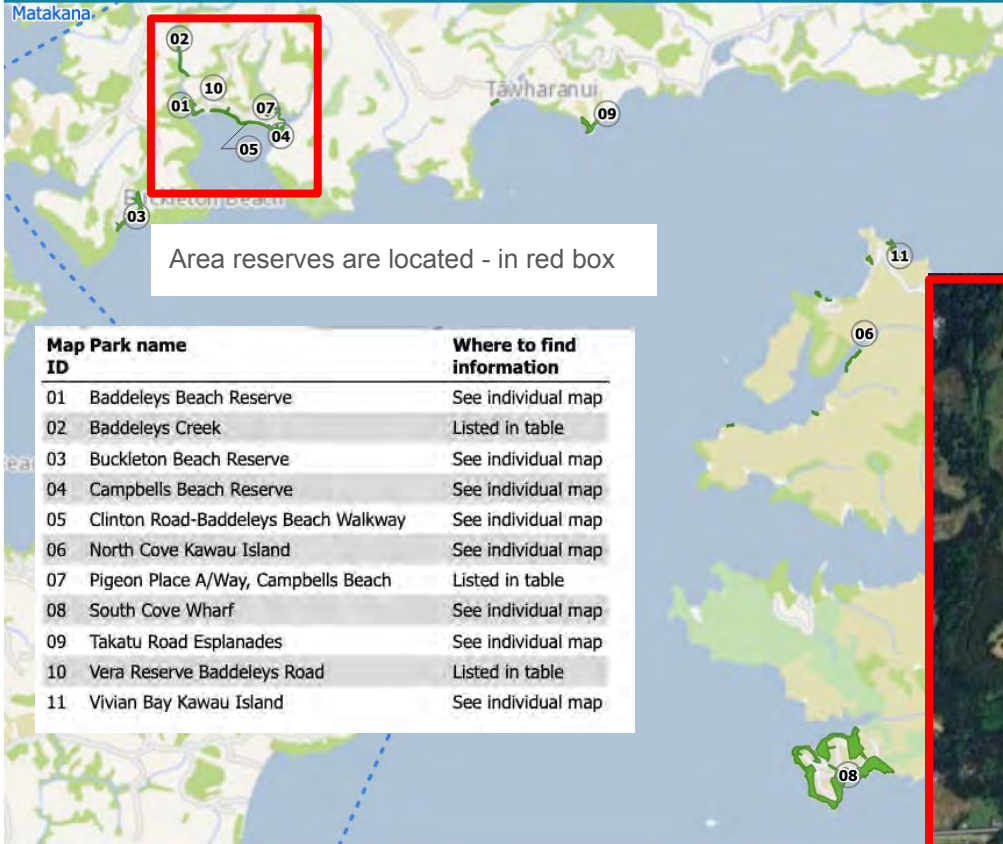
Northern Areas - proposed Access Changes - Rodney Local Board



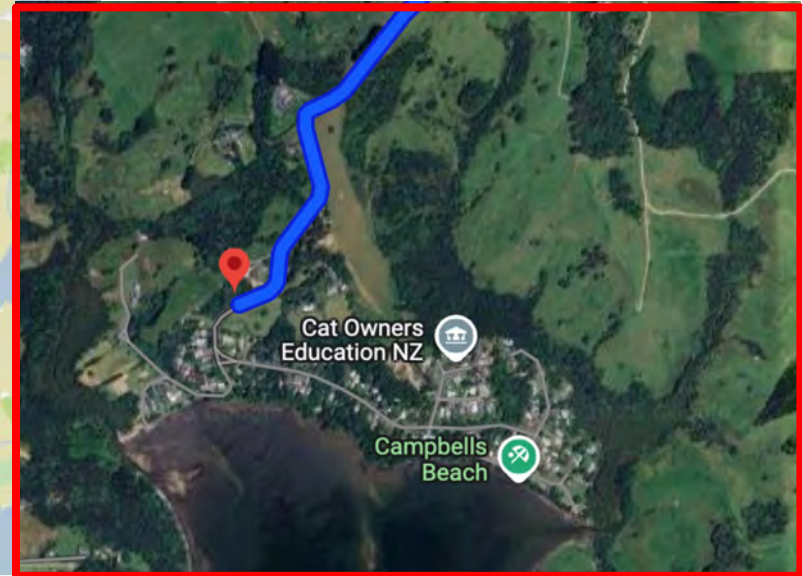
Northern Areas - proposed Access Changes - Rodney Local Board

#6970

Kawau Bay



Below is a satellite view of area reserves are in. More danger from cats & cars than dogs.



How Dog Policy is presented

#6970

We showed a number of dog owners the way the 2019 Dog Policy was laid out for dog owners vs the proposed 2025 Dog Policy and not one of them thought the new proposal was delivering on “more clearly showing its goal, focus areas, council actions, and rules.”

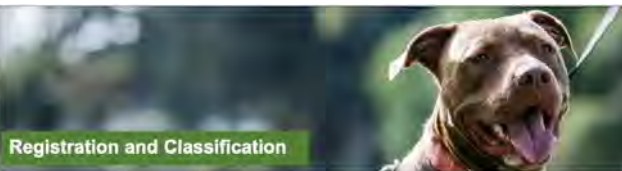
The restructure of the new policy certainly isn't laid out in a user friendly way.

It has also removed the sections within each policy theme of “What does Auckland Council expect of dog owners?” Which was a good way to show responsible dog owners what was expected of them. We don't understand why this has been done?

For a lay person the proposed new layout is not making it better for people to understand council policy.

We DO NOT support the proposed change & would like the 2019 layout to remain.

2019 Dog Policy was laid out in easy user friendly themes - we ask for this to remain #6970



Registration and Classification

All dogs in Auckland, including dangerous and menacing dogs, will be registered with council

What will Auckland Council do?

1. Provide registration administration services including:
 - (a) maintain a record of all dogs registered in Auckland, including those classified as dangerous and menacing
 - (b) maintain a record of probationary and disqualified owners
 - (c) inform and educate dog owners through the registration process
 - (d) set fees to cover costs of essential services to support dog management activities to achieve this policy
 - (e) provide incentives to promote responsible dog ownership
 - (f) follow up on non-registered dogs and non-compliance with local authority bylaws.
2. Provide incentives, information, education and services
3. Maintain dog compliance and enforcement best-practice that proactively uses Auckland Council's powers¹ to:
 - (a) enforce registration (including through the use of seizure powers) and microchipping of dogs
 - (b) enforce the de-sexing of uncontrolled dogs
 - (c) seize and hold dogs that are a threat to public safety
 - (d) classify certain dogs identified in the Dog Control Act 1996, as dangerous or menacing based on the behaviour of the dogs, or the dogs' breed or type
 - (e) ensure compliance with classification requirements.

Council must classify a dog as dangerous where:

- the owner of the dog has been convicted of an offence because:
 - (a) the dog has attacked a person, stock poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife, and the court has not made a destruction order on the dog
 - (b) the dog rushed at any person, animal or vehicle in a manner that was likely to cause a vehicle accident or to endanger, injure or kill a person
- the dog is considered a threat to the safety of any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife, based on sworn evidence of aggressive behaviour.
- The owner admits in writing the dog poses a threat to any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife.

¹ powers include issuing warnings and instant fines (infringement notices), powers to seize, destroy, or take custody of dogs and to classify dogs, and to the classify, prosecute and recover costs from owners.



Responsible Dog Ownership

Dog owners will care for their dogs and control them around people to protect wildlife, other animals, property and natural habitats

What will Auckland Council do?

1. Provide services that support promoting responsible dog management, including:
 - (a) 24-hour dog management service
 - (b) dog education community events and the production of supporting publications
 - (c) advice on dog related problems
 - (d) emergency assistance with dogs involved in accidents or police operations
 - (e) street patrols
 - (f) investigation and resolution of incidents of:
 - i. wandering, barking, fouling, aggressive, and menacing or dangerous dogs
 - ii. impounding and kennel maintenance
 - iii. proceedings against dog owners for offences where all other means have failed
 - iv. livestock concerns
 - v. abandoned dogs.
2. Proactively promote the welfare of dogs, as stated in the Code of Welfare for Dogs, Animal Welfare Act 1999. This includes, but not limited to, providing sufficient food, water, shelter and care.
3. Reduce the danger and nuisance caused by dogs by:
 - (a) receiving, investigating and resolving dog complaints
 - (b) providing community education to increase public awareness on how to be safe around dogs (target children, families and people working in the community)
 - (c) promoting dog safe communities through encouraging compliance and undertaking enforcement
 - (d) ensuring public safety and comfort, working to change attitudes and behaviours of irresponsible dog owners, and where appropriate penalising irresponsible dog owners.

What does Auckland Council expect of dog owners?

1. Know and comply with the laws concerning the management of your dog
2. To be responsible for your dog's behaviour
3. Provide proper care and attention to your dog, including providing sufficient food, water, shelter and adequate exercise, as defined by the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and Dog Control Act 1996
4. Consider neutering your dog at an early age
5. Microchip your dog
6. Take all reasonable steps to ensure your dog does not cause a nuisance to any other person. Be particularly vigilant near children and closely supervise interaction
7. Keep your dog under control at all times, this may include putting your dog on a leash, or a shortened leash in areas where your dog is likely to ignore commands (even if it is an off-leash or designated dog exercise area)
8. Respect other people's personal space. Public places are for everyone's enjoyment and not everyone is fond of dogs
9. Ensure your dog cannot leave your property by itself



Dog Access Principles

Provide a balanced use of public places for dogs and their owners that is safe for everyone

What will Auckland Council do?

1. Provide dog access rules that are comprehensive, consistent and easy to understand and comply with the following approaches:
 - (a) Recognise dog owners as legitimate users of public places and dog access is essential for dog welfare
 - (b) Integrate, where practicable, dog owners and their dogs with other users of public places
 - (c) Provide opportunities for dog owners to take their dog to public places that are accessible, desirable, and provide diversity of experience for both the dog and owner
 - (d) Consider access on a comprehensive region-wide basis, as well as a place-by-place basis
 - (e) Promote safe interaction between dogs and people using public places and private ways to ensure that dogs do not injure, endanger, intimidate or otherwise cause distress to any person, in particular, children and vulnerable adults
 - (f) Manage the conflict between dogs and protected wildlife, stock, poultry, domestic animals, property and natural habitat.
2. Maintain rules on dog access in public places and private ways (see Schedule 1 and 2)
The types of dog access rules are:
 - (a) **prohibited area** – a place where dogs are not permitted to be, and other users have absolute priority
 - (b) **on-leash area** – a place shared with other users, where dogs must be on a leash and under control at all times
 - (c) **off-leash area** – a place shared with other users, where dogs may be off a leash but must still be under control at all times
 - (d) **designated dog exercise area** – a place where dog owners are the priority user. Dog owners may take their dogs off a leash (including Dangerous Dogs) but they must be under control at all times
 - (e) **time and season areas** – a place shared with other users, where the dog access rules will be different depending on the time of day during the summer season. This is to minimise the conflict between dogs and other users of the space during peak hours.
3. Apply default dog access rules to ensure that there is a rule applied to all public places in Auckland
 - (a) Dogs must be under control on-leash in council-controlled public places unless otherwise stated in Schedule 1 and 2. This includes:
 - i. all formed public roads (including any street, highway, access way, service lane, and any footpath, cycle track, bus stop and berm within the boundaries of the road)
 - ii. private ways
 - iii. council-controlled car parks



Council's NEW proposal 2025 - doesn't seem to have ease of use for general public & has nothing about what is expected of dog owners.

#6970

3 Our actions

3.1 Provide services and incentives that promote responsible dog ownership

This includes –

- (a) issuing a licence that rewards owners with a discounted dog registration fee
- (b) rewarding dog owners of neutered dogs with a discounted dog registration fee
- (c) advice and events to help and encourage dog owners meet their responsibilities to their dog, neighbours and when in public places
- (d) advice about the welfare of dogs, including their obligations in the [Dog Control Act 1996](#), [Code of Welfare for Dogs](#), [Animal Welfare Act 1999](#).

3.2 Provide community education services

This includes to increase public awareness on how to be safe around dogs and advice on dog related problems.

3.3 Provide registration administration services

This includes to –

- (a) maintain a record of all dogs registered in Auckland
- (b) inform and educate dog owners through the registration process
- (c) set fees to cover costs of essential services to support dog management activities to achieve this policy
- (d) enforce registration (including through the use of seizure powers) and microchipping of dogs
- (e) follow up on non-registered dogs.

3.4 Provide classification administration services

This includes to –

- (a) classify dogs identified in the [Dog Control Act 1996](#), as dangerous or menacing based on the dogs' breed or type, or the behaviour of the dogs
 - (b) maintain a record of dogs classified as dangerous and menacing under the [Dog Control Act 1996](#)
 - (c) maintain a record of probationary and disqualified owners
 - (d) ensure compliance with classification requirements, including that –
 - (i) owners of dogs classified as dangerous or menacing meet the expectations under the [Dog Control Act 1996](#) (section 32 and section 33)
 - (ii) dogs classified as dangerous or menacing are neutered
- For the purposes of the [Dog Control Act 1996](#) (section 10(3)(e) and (b)) the requirement to neuter dogs classified as menacing applies to all dogs classified as menacing by

- Auckland Council or by any other territorial authority and relocated to Auckland (even if the other authority that classified the dog did not require it to be neutered).
- (iii) owners of dogs classified as probationary or disqualified meet the requirements under the [Dog Control Act 1996](#) (sections 23, 23A, 24, and 28).
- (e) allow the owner of a dog classified as menacing due to its behaviour under section 33A of the [Dog Control Act 1996](#), to request a review of the classification after 12 months, if –
- (i) the owner provides (at their cost) a dog behavioural assessment report that –
 - is conducted by an assessor approved by council
 - contains the assessor's professional opinion on whether the dog's classification should be maintained, revised, or removed
 - contains an evaluation of the dog's behaviour in various settings
 - recommends any conditions under which the dog's classification might be reconsidered (for example training programmes or a regular assessment), and
 - recommends any for further trainings or strategies, if necessary.
 - (ii) the owner has not obtained any infringements in relation to the dog within the preceding 12-month period; and
 - (iii) the owner has obtained a responsible dog ownership licence.
- Removing the classification of the dog is at the council's discretion.

3.5 Provide services that reduce and respond to problems caused by dogs

This includes –

- (a) a 24-hour dog management service
- (b) shelter services, for example safe custody and re-homing.
- (c) patrols of public places, for example streets, parks and beaches
- (d) issuing licenses to keep more than two dogs on a property under council bylaws
- (e) emergency assistance with dogs involved in accidents or police operations
- (f) investigation and resolution of incidents, for example dog attacks on people or animals, roaming, barking, fouling, aggressive dog behaviour, abandoned dogs, or dog welfare concerns
- (g) seizing and holding dogs, including dogs that are a threat to public safety
- (h) working to change attitudes and behaviours of irresponsible dog owners and where appropriate, proactively using powers to ensure public safety and comfort and penalise irresponsible dog owners
- (i) issuing warnings, abatement notices and infringement notices (where appropriate)
- (j) requiring the neutering of uncontrolled dogs under council bylaws (where appropriate)
- (k) classifying dogs and dog owners (where appropriate)
- (l) court proceedings against dog owners for offences (where appropriate).

3.6 Provide dog access rules in public places and private ways

3.6.1 Apply the following principles to ensure dog access rules balance the needs of people, dogs, animals, environment and property

- (a) recognise responsible dog owners as legitimate users of public places and that dog access is

essential for dog welfare.

- (b) integrate, where practicable, dog owners and their dogs with other users of public places (for example public roads, parks and beaches)
- (c) provide opportunities for dog owners to take their dogs to public places that are accessible, desirable, and provide diversity of experience for both the dog and owner
- (d) promote safe interaction between dogs and people using public places and private ways to ensure that dogs do not injure, endanger, intimidate or otherwise cause distress to any person, in particular, children and vulnerable adults
- (e) manage the conflict between dogs and protected wildlife and environment (natural habitat)
- (f) manage the conflict between dogs and stock, poultry, domestic animals and property.

3.6.2 Consider dog access on a comprehensive region-wide basis, as well as place-by-place basis

- (a) apply default and general rules in Schedule 1 that apply Auckland-wide to ensure there is a rule for every public place and private way in Auckland
- (b) apply rules for specific places in Auckland in Schedule 2
- (c) apply the following terms and definitions when setting dog access rules –
 - (i) **under control off a leash** (off-leash) area – a place shared with other users, where dogs may be off a leash but must still be under control at all times.
 - (ii) **shared leash or a leash** (on-leash) area – a place shared with other users, where dogs must be on a leash and under control at all times
 - (iii) **prohibited area** – a place where dogs are not permitted to be, and other users have absolute priority
 - (iv) **designated dog exercise** area – a place where dog owners are the priority user. Dog owners may take their dogs off a leash (including dogs classified as dangerous) but they must be under control at all times.
 - (v) **time and season** area – a place shared with other users, where the dog access rules will be different depending on the time of day and year. This is to minimise the conflict between dogs and other users of the space during peak times.
- (d) use the following time and season definition when restricting dog access to ensure the safe interaction between people and dogs at popular locations:

10.00am to 5.00pm between 1 December to 1 March, inclusive (summer)

Related information about time and season rules

- Different time and season definitions may apply to (manage conflict between dogs and animals or natural habitat for example sanding season).
 - The relevant authority (local boards or regional council committee) will decide:
 - where a time and season rule applies (location)
 - the type of dog access (prohibited, on-leash, off-leash or designated dog exercise area)
 - what the rule outside of the summer season access will be (including any times).
- For example, a local board may decide that a beach is off-leash before 10am, on-leash and between 10.00am and 5.00pm and off-leash after 5.00pm in summer, and off-leash at any time of the year.

3.6.3 Consider the following before making any change to a dog access rule on a park or beach that would provide more dog access

- (a) the current and future usage patterns and behaviours
- (b) the potential conflicts between dogs and people, animals, environment and property

Dog Access principles changes - Time & season

#6970

During deliberations, the 2019 Hearing Panel wanted to remove the 'winter' time and season restrictions that were in place and varied amongst each other across 6 LB's (Devonport-Takapuna, Waitemata, Albert-Eden, Orakei, Maungakiekie-Tamaki and Manger-Otahuhu).

Staff advised that they could not do this as the removal had not been consulted on. The Reg chair at the time was noticeably frustrated at this as the panel felt that it had been shown there was no need and the community didn't want it during the consultation process.

The 2019 Hearing panel then deliberated at length to develop an information note for local boards when changing a 'out of summer season' rule that "The policy intends that the outside of summer rule provides more access than the summer season rule that applies in the same area."

This information has been removed from the proposed Dog Policy. **We ask for it to remain to give Local Boards guidance.**

2019 (Current)

4. Apply the following time and season definition

- (a) 10.00am to 5.00pm between the 1 December and 1 March (summer)

Explanatory Note:

The relevant authority (local boards or delegated council committee) will decide:

- where a time and season rule applies (location)
- the type of dog access (i.e. prohibited, on-leash, off-leash or designated dog exercise area)
- what the outside of summer season access rule will be.

For example, a local board may decide that a beach is off-leash before 10am, prohibited between 10.00am and 5.00pm and off-leash after 5.00pm.

Information Note:

The Policy intends that the outside of summer rule provides more access than the summer season rule that applies in the same area.



2025 (Proposed)

- (d) use the following time and season definition when restricting dog access to ensure the safe interaction between people and dogs at popular locations:

10.00am to 5.00pm between 1 December to 1 March, inclusive (summer)

Related information about time and season rules

- Different time and season definitions may apply to manage conflict between dogs and animals or natural habitat (for example lambing season).
- The relevant authority (local boards or delegated council committee) will decide:
 - where a time and season rule applies (location)
 - the type of dog access (prohibited, on-leash, off-leash or designated dog exercise area)
 - what the rule outside of the summer season access will be (including any times).

For example, a local board may decide that a beach is off-leash before 10am, prohibited between 10.00am and 5.00pm and off-leash after 5.00pm in summer, and off-leash at any time of the year.

Dog Access principles changes -

#6970

Council's proposed access principle change around when a rule change is proposed that would provide less dog access is now proposed to have an additional element to it;

- that a 'catchment approach' to consider any gaps in dog access provision that may arise.

We can't find any reference or explanation as to what this 'catchment approach' is and how it works? We can't give any view on whether we think this is a good addition towards dog access evaluation or a hindrance. We would like to get clarification around this and we suspect that local boards may need that too?

2019 (Current)

6. Consider the following before making any change to a dog access rule on parks and beaches that would provide less dog access:

- (a) Consider whether there are practicable alternative solutions to address the conflict between uses of the place³
- (b) Ensure, to the extent that is practicable, that displaced dog owners and their dogs have access to other places or that such access is provided as part of the same decision.

2025 (Proposed)

3.6.4 Consider the following before making any change to a dog access rule on a park or beach that would provide less dog access

- (a) evidence of a significant risk of conflict between responsible dog owners and their dogs and other people, animals, environment or property
- (b) whether there are practicable alternative solutions to address the conflict, such as ways to enable better sharing of the public place.²
- (c) the need to ensure, to the extent that is practicable, that displaced dog owners and their dogs have access to other places or that such access is provided as part of the same decision, including a catchment approach to consider any gaps in dog access provision that may arise.



Proposed 2025 Dog Access Policy still lacks details -

#6970

Normally for Dog access rules the areas/place that the rule applies to is listed - example shown

This means that;

- signage of the access rules for off leash, prohibited, time and season or for environmental rules can be erected at the location they apply to.
- The 'where to walk your dog' website lists the location and the rules that apply to it
- That dog owners know the rules for a space

But there are still issues with location identification that we raised in 2019 that remain in the proposed 2025 policy.

3 Dogs are allowed in the following areas during the following times and seasons -

- (1) Arkles Bay: headland to headland
- (2) Big Manly Beach: headland to headland
- (3) Browns Bay Beach
- (4) Campbells Bay Beach: including grass area at end of The Esplanade, parts of Campbells Bay Esplanade Reserve adjacent to the beach and wastewater pipeline to Mairangi Bay Beach
- (5) Fisherman's Rock
- (6) Hatfields Beach: headland to headland
- (7) Little Manly Beach: headland to headland
- (8) Mairangi Bay Beach: including wastewater pipeline to Mairangi Bay Beach
- (9) Matakatia Bay: headland to headland
- (10) Murrays Bay Beach: including wastewater pipeline to Campbells Bay Beach
- (11) Orewa Beach: north headland to estuary bridge southern end
- (12) Red Beach: headland to headland
- (13) Rothesay Bay Beach
- (14) Stanmore Bay: headland to headland
- (15) Swann Beach: headland to headland
- (16) Tindalls Beach: headland to headland
- (17) Waiake Beach: including Rock Islé Beach
- (18) Waiwera Beach: from The Strand roundabout to southern headland.
- (19) Winstones Cove: beach and reserve.

Summer (1 December to 1 March)	Other seasons
 Under control off leash Morning (Before 10am)	 Under control off leash All times
 Prohibited Daytime (10am to 5pm)	
 Under control off leash Evening (After 5pm)	

Proposed 2025 Dog Access Policy still lacks details -

#6970

For the 2025 Proposed Dog Policy **Maungakiekie-Tamaki Local Board** area is still showing a completely vague description of where dogs are allowed during the Summer and Winter time restrictions **which we raised in 2019**.

We don't see how this can be signposted at the relevant beaches if they aren't named in the policy and we can't see how Council is identifying them on their 'where to walk your dog' website.

Fundamentally, if council can't identify or name them, how are dog owners meant to?

If no beaches can be identified for the rule to apply to then surely the rule should be removed for this LB area?

3 Dogs are allowed in the following areas during the following times and seasons –

All beaches excluding Onehunga foreshore on the southern side of Orpheus Drive between the coastline below 54A Seacliffe Road and the Manukau Cruising Club.

Summer (1 December to 1 March)	Other seasons
 Under control on leash* Morning (Before 10am)	 Under control off leash Before 10am
 Prohibited Daytime (10am to 5pm)	 Under control on leash* 10am to 4pm
 Under control on leash* Evening (After 5pm)	 Under control off leash After 4pm
 Prohibited At all times from safe swimming areas or lanes marked out by council	 Prohibited At all times from safe swimming areas or lanes marked out by council

* Except in the water where dogs are allowed under control off a leash.

Proposed 2025 Dog Access Policy still lacks details -

#6970

For the 2025 Proposed Dog Policy **Mangere-Otahuhu Local Board** area is still showing a completely vague description of where dogs are allowed during the Summer and Winter time restrictions which **we raised in 2019**.

“ON BEACHES IN THE FORMER AUCKLAND CITY AREA” - who would know this? This is from 15 years ago!

We don't see how this can be signposted at the relevant beaches if they aren't named in the policy and we can't see how Council is identifying them on their 'where to walk your dog' website.

Fundamentally, if council can't identify or name them, how are dog owners meant to?

If no beaches can be identified for the rule to apply to then surely the rule should be removed for this LB area?

9 Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board area

(2) On beaches in the former Auckland City area:

Summer (1 December to 1 March)	Other seasons
 Under control on leash* Morning (Before 10am)	 Under control off leash Before 10am
 Prohibited Daytime (10am to 5pm)	 Under control on leash 10am to 4pm
 Under control on leash* Evening (After 5pm)	 Under control off leash After 4pm
 Prohibited At all times from safe swimming areas or lanes marked out or identified by council	 Prohibited At all times from safe swimming areas or lanes marked out or identified by council

* Except in the water where dogs are allowed under control off a leash.

4 There are no areas where dogs are **prohibited** in the Māngere-Ōtāhuhu Local Board area.

Regional Park proposals - overwhelmingly increasing restrictions and reducing access. #6970

North:

Mahurangi Regional Park;

- **lose** all access to a track, go **from on to off** at another location

Pakiri Regional Park;

- **lose all off leash access, move to prohibited**

Te Arai Regional Park;

- **lose off leash access** on Forestry Beach, **move to prohibited**

Shakespear Regional Park

- **lose off leash access, move to prohibited** on part of Army Bay and Okoromai Bay

- summer time & season rule on park, **off leash to on leash**

Long Bay Regional Park;

- **lose on leash access** during summer, **move to prohibited**

Whakanewha (Waiheke)

- **gain on leash access** on tracks to access existing on leash area

- Waitawa

- **Lose 75% of current off leash access, move to on leash**

Muriwai, Tawharanui, Wenderholm - no change to access

Regional Park proposals - overwhelmingly increasing restrictions and reducing access. **#6970**

South:

Auckland Botanic Gardens

- **lose off leash**, area reduced

Hunua Ranges

- **lose access** from **on leash to prohibited** on named tracks and roads

Tapapakanga

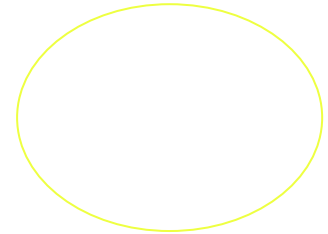
- **gain** on leash **in a carpark** during lambing season

Ambury - no change to access

Regional Parks - Shakespear

#6970

- Council is proposing the following;
 - To apply the regional time and season rule of Dogs on leash on the grass areas next to Okoromai and Army Bay. This would mean current OFF leash access would become ON leash during summer hours restrictions (between 10am and 5pm).
 - To PROHIBIT dogs from east of the Army Bay boat ramp.
 - To PROHIBIT dogs from the eastern end of Okoromai Bay



Northern Areas - proposed Access Changes - Hibiscus & Bays - Shakespear Regional Park

#6970

Current



Proposed



This map isn't showing the prohibited beach area of Army Bay

Shakespear Regional Park

Prohibiting Dogs from East of the Army Bay boat ramp. The reason given is to stop dogs from accessing the sanctuary area. But there are cliffs here and no access to the park. There is no need to prohibit dogs from the east of the boat ramp at Army Bay beach. These photos clearly demonstrate the lack of access to the Sanctuary in this area of the beach.

This proposal **SHOULD NOT** go ahead as dogs cannot physically access the Sanctuary.

Proposed **#6970**



Hibiscus & Bays - Shakespear

#6970

Prohibiting Dogs from the Eastern end of Okoromai Bay as there is a chance they might access the sanctuary area. There is signposting saying 'no dogs' beyond X point to stop this. From the findings report it doesn't seem like an actual issue to address, just a risk. Unlike cats, dogs are accompanied by an owner & can be stopped from entering. Access to this area of the beach is only available at low tide so it is not a hugely used area, but for people with reactive dogs it's a good place to be away from other dogs. The photos below show the area in question in both high & low tide

Low Tide



High Tide



Te Arai Regional Park - Forestry Beach

#6970

Te Arai Regional Park was originally the Park land and beach north of Te Arai Point

With the gifting of land to Auckland Council through the Te Arai South development council has moved to enlarge the park land of the Te Arai Regional Park area - creating Te Arai North and Te Arai South park - land.

However Forestry Beach, south of Te Arai Point, was not part of this gift and, we believe, remained a beach within the Rodney local board area. It was not identified as an off leash area as part of the 2019 Dog Bylaw review as we believe it should have and has ended up in a grey area with council now wanting to review the rules around dog access and make it part of the Te Arai regional park.

It is the biggest, and main area of dog access for locals & visitors. If council goes ahead with prohibiting dogs from as proposed in this review at Pakiri Beach (adjacent to the Regional Park) and Forestry Beach that will mean that 24km of Rodney coastline will be prohibited to dog families.

Given the plans to tar seal to Te Arai South/Forestry beach from SH1 and the relative quick drive (25 mins currently), it is likely that Te Arai Regional park will get greater numbers of visitors in the coming years, along with locals with the approved 60 home subdivision at Te Arai South and the recent submission by Te Arai South Holdings & Darby Partners for an additional 180 visitor accommodation units and 420 residential and retirement living units at Te Arai South along with sand mining activity..

According to Council's own data, there were 165,000 visitors to Te Arai in 2020 and 130,000 in 2021. The planned northern motorway extension and northern growth and development is likely to increase these numbers.

Te Arai South and Forestry Beach are the logical areas along this 24KM coastline to have dog access as it is also likely to be where more people will be visiting. There is no other area along this coastline that will have intensive development next to it. In fact I can't think of any other regional park beach that has/will have such intensive development fronting it.

Coastline - Goat Island to Te Arai

Removing Dog access as proposed on the beaches bordering the Te Arai South and Pakiri Regional parks means over 24KM of Rodney beaches would be off limits to dog families.



Forestry Beach January 2024

#6970



This is likely to be more the norm over summer in coming years

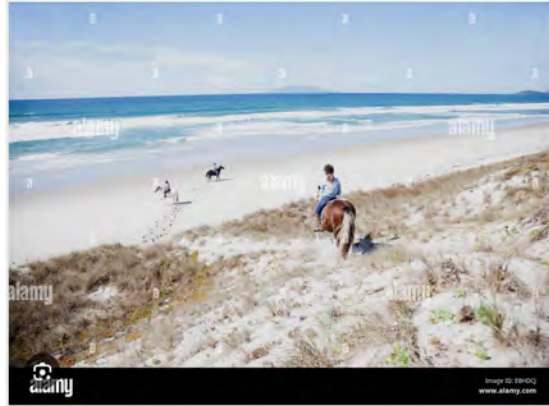
Te Arai Regional Park - Forestry Beach

#6970

Council states protection of Sand dunes is a reason to keep dogs off Forestry Beach. However signage, education and maps can achieve this. But people can do more damage. Horse riding on the beach is still allowed & seem to be on the dunes?.



Te Arai Lodge Walks image



Horse riding, Pakiri Beach, Auckland, New Zealand
Stock Photo - Alamy [Visit >](#)

Pakiri Beach horse riding on dunes



Forestry Beach

#6970

Te Arai Links golf course has helicopters coming and going from the beach side - something that will disturb shorebirds. Visitors to the golf course and beach users also use drones.



Dotterel

DOC guidelines for nesting
Dotterel.

Surely there can be a compromise
rather than simply prohibiting
dogs and their families

You can help protect the New Zealand dotterel

- Walk and ride your horse below the high-tide mark on beaches where dotterels are breeding.
- Please stay outside the fenced-off areas with 'birds nesting' signs.
- If you see a dotterel pretending to be injured, or come across eggs or chicks, please leave them alone.
- Please do not take vehicles on beaches.
- Keep your dog on a leash at all times. Remember that some beaches are only open for dog-walking at certain times. Check first with your district council.

Making dogs the bad guy means people think we are the only problem

#6970

Auckland Council Staff have referenced the following study in other Dotterel proposals regarding Dogs;

A. Lord et al. / Biological Conservation 98 (2001)

New Zealand dotterels leave their nests if potential **predators (including humans) approach**. It is desirable, although often not practical, to prohibit human access from breeding areas occupied by threatened or endangered species.

Effects of Human Approaches to nests of Dotterel

As part of the field survey sites were rated as receiving high levels of activity if they received between 7-20 visitors per hour (popular beaches with easy access and near housing settlements) - these were identified as busy beaches.

Scenarios tested were; Lone person walking, lone person running, lone person walking a leashed dog. Off leash dog walking was not tested. All of the testing started at 200m out from the nest. All participants walked to within 5 metres of the nest.

Flush distances were observed.

For those deemed to be a busy beach the mean result showed:

- A lone walker would flush a bird off the nest at approx 20m
- A lone runner would flush a bird off the nest at approx 50m
- A lone walker with a leashed dog would flush a bird off the nest at approx 70m

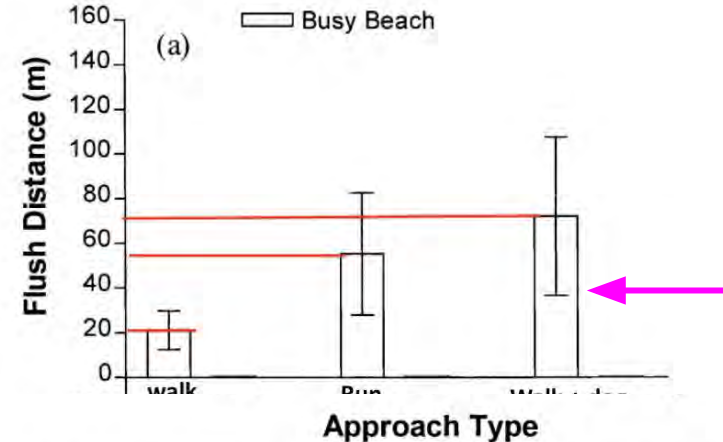


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

A. Lord et al. - Effects of Human Approaches to Nests of Northern NZ Dotterel

Making dogs the bad guy means people think we are the only problem

#6970

After having someone (+dog) come within 5m of the nest & standing there for 1 minute the time spent off the nest on a busy beach was:

- A lone walker kept the birds off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes (150 seconds)
- A lone runner kept the birds off the nest for approx 3 minutes (180 seconds)
- A lone walk with a leashed dog kept the birds off the nest for approx 3.7 minutes (210 seconds). **Only 40 seconds approx longer than a runner.**

Often the gist from Council staff is that the Dotterel spent more time off their nest when approached by a walker with a dog.

The impact of a dog on leash vs a runner is only 40 seconds. A walker will still mean that the birds will be off the nest for approx 2.5 minutes.

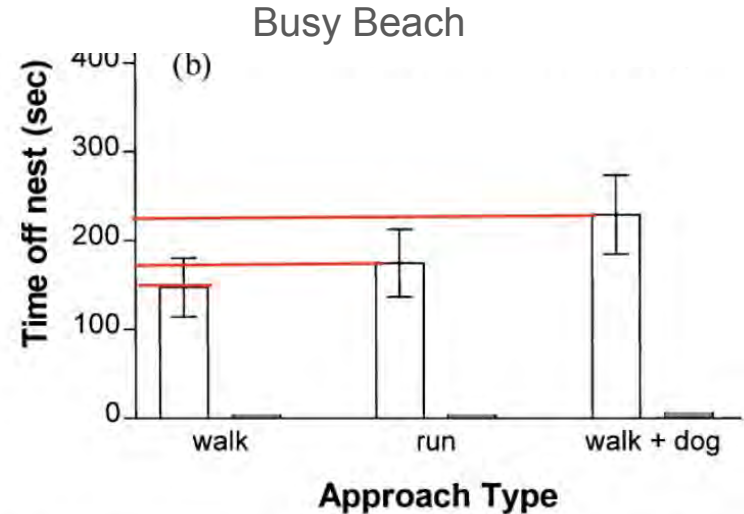


Fig. 2. Effect of beach activity level on (a) flush distance and (b) time spent off nest (back transformed means and standard errors).

Dogs aren't the only threat to Dotterels...

...but because the council has a bylaw in place to control dog access they are always the ones to be restricted.

Cats are proving a huge issue at the Dotterel population at Omaha and locals are crying out for council to do something.

People running, kids playing can also cause the dotterels to move off their nest. Kite surfing has been shown to affect breeding dotterel in Auckland.

Manly Dotterel minder group report drones and golf balls are also a disturbance to nesting birds.

But the only ones who have any infringements on their movements are dog owners.

Threats to Dotterels are not limited to Dogs

#6970

Kite Surfing - risk to breeding;

Council's own expert witness in a Council Environment Court action¹ - Dr Lovegrove (Auckland Council) - said that an increase in kite-surfing at the Karaka shell banks in the South Manukau harbour had been found to be disturbing migratory species such as godwits and preventing breeding of New Zealand dotterel for whom this was an important site. In addition another expert witness who was supporting Council's position in this action cited "an evaluation of 17 studies from five countries, including New Zealand, Mr Don said that birds perceive kite surfers as large predators and avoid them by taking long flights or leaving a site altogether. In his view, unregulated kite-surfing had the potential to *"significantly degrade the existing habitats of coastal birds as a result of continual disturbance."*

Vehicles on beaches

This has been identified as an issue at Te Arai regional park

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

#6970

Predators - cats. Cats have been a major problem for Dotterel breeding sites in the north auckland area but council has no plan in place to limit or control cats



Cat attacks dotterels at Snells

0:12 MON, 24 OCT

Snells Beach cat owners are being asked to keep an eye on their pets, after dotterels were attacked early last Wednesday morning, October 19, forcing...



Omaha dotterel team mourns cat attack

0:12 SUN, 13 DEC

Night photos at the sanctuary, taken after the dotterel died, clearly show a cat on the prowl. A domestic cat is believed to have killed...



Tragic end for dotterel egg

10:10 TUE, 19 NOV

The sole dotterel (tūturiwhatu) egg remaining at Tindalls Bay disappeared overnight on Friday, November 8. Forest and Bir volunteer Derek Kelsey discovered the empty nest...



Council's dithering on dotterels criticised

8:08 TUE, 19 MAR

Auckland Council has been urged to do its job in protecting the seabirds and their chicks on Omaha Spit, which are being decimated by cats...



Council pussyfoots over dotterel destruction

14:02 FRI, 16 FEB

A refusal by Auckland Council to seriously address the cat problem on the Omaha Spit could sound the death knell for the area as a...



Community groups seek more cat control

13:01 TUE, 21 MAR

When cats were first captured on camera on the chenier (shell bank) in the Weiti River, last October, environmental group Friends of Okura Bush (FOOB)...



Stop pussyfooting around – keep cats indoors, pet owners urged

8:08 MON, 27 FEB

Cat burglar – this pet stole several eggs and wrecked dotterel nests this season at Snells Beach. Though their owners might not realise it, pet...

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

#6970

Predators - black back gulls

November 2024 - Tindalls Bay Nest egg lost..... *“closer inspection revealed no sign of egg shells, which could have indicated the nest was predated by a black-backed gull, cat or hedgehog.”* Hibiscus Matters 19th Nov 2024

Case study; Matakana Island

DOC began to worry about the apparent failure of New Zealand dotterel chicks to fledge on Matakana Island and set video cameras to monitor dotterel nests.

Surprise, the cameras revealed that predation by black-backed gulls was the main cause of mortality among dotterel chicks.

An eradication was successful, and there are now no black-backed gulls nesting on Matakana Island. Dotterels have since made a huge comeback on Matakana Island, now the most successful nesting area for the waders in the country. During the 2004–05 breeding season 30 chicks were raised from 42 pairs of New Zealand dotterels, and banded dotterels from previous broods are turning up all round the Bay of Plenty and nesting in new areas. Other birds, such as variable oystercatchers, are also benefiting from the absence of the predatory gulls

<https://www.nzgeo.com/stories/black-backed-gulls/>

Threats to Dotterels are not just from dogs

#6970

Predators - Hedgehogs

2022 - a hedgehog ate 3 eggs in a Manly dotterels nest. It was later discovered in a nearby trap. (<https://www.forestandbird.org.nz/resources/prickly-problem>)



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#7266

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: Puketāpapa

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Other (please explain below)

Tell us why

Our property backs onto Monte Cecilia Park at [REDACTED]. On several occasions we have had dogs enter our property where they have been off leash and entered under the fence (presumably installed by Council). This has been terrifying for my children given the nature of some of these dogs and are now very wary when dogs enter our property or are at our back fence.

Yesterday alone I was in the back garden and noticed three dogs not on leash at the back fence. As an adult I was nervous about this. I would therefore like to advocate that more is done to ensure dogs are on leash outside of the dog bowl area currently permitted.

I generally walk in the park 1 to 2 times per week. Generally the dogs in the dog bowl area are ok. There have also been a few instances outside of this area that dog behaviour has been a concern. My daughter became afraid of dogs after a dog tried to go at her off leash. On another time, another dog off leash was trying to attack me. As above, I therefore think more needs to be done to ensure dogs are on leash outside the bowl area.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#7271

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

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Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

I do not support the proposed change

Tell us why

- Support of status quo at Monte Cecilia
- Been going to Monte Cecilia park for two years, there between 3-7 times a week
- The main point is how do we have a park that can be used by everyone in a safe manor?
- Wanted to highlight a few incidents, the first being prior to Christmas on Saturday morning. There between 8-10:30 with up to 40 dogs. There was a sports group that had set up cones in the middle of the dog area. The dog owners didn't encroach on that area, dog owners didn't complain and dog owners through their balls away from the kids training. This is an example of how we can cohabitate in the park.
- The signage at the bottom entrance of the park is above my line of sight (I am 6ft) – most people will not be looking up to see that sign. My suggestion is moving this down to make it more obvious and moving it to the area where dog owners use.
- Other parks in the area, Monte Cecilia is a flat walk to the designated dog area and its an easy walk for them and safe. In Monte Cecilia your dog is always in your line of sight.

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why



Proposed updates to the council's local park dog access rules

#7280

Note: this version of the feedback form has been created for the purpose of publishing submissions. As such, name, contact and demographic information has been removed, and handwritten submissions have been transcribed.

Submitter details:

Organisation (if applicable):

Local Board: I don't know

Your feedback (all questions are optional)

The public feedback form was separated into four sections:

1. Walking multiple dogs
2. General policy and bylaw matters (for example clarifying existing rules and reformatting to make the documents more user-friendly)
3. Changes to dog access rules at Regional Parks
4. Changes to dog access rules at local parks and beaches.

This submission only contains submission content for sections 4 (local park access).

4. Dog access rules at local parks and beaches

Submitters were able to select from a list of parks with proposed local dog access rules changes to provide feedback.

Feedback is only included for the parks chosen to respond to.

Q4 PTP-A

Freeland Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-B

John Moore Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-C

Monte Cecilia Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Other (please explain below)

Tell us why

- Dog places are quite important, the main options in this area are Albert Domain dog park, Big King and Monte Cecilia.
- Monte Cecilia is the main option for dog owners as we are limited by traffic and parking.
- Used to volunteer at no-kill dog shelters.
- Responsible people tend not to own dangerous breeds and go to dog parks with them
- In Mount Albert domain there is a fenced dog area
- A lot of owners like to play tag with their dog when it comes to calling their dog back as they don't have any control over their dog
- Because of the 1%, the other 99% tend to be targeted
- Big King has very experienced dog owners
- Monte Cecilia is like a community hub with no equivalence anywhere else, it draws nurturing people who teach each other about responsible dog ownership

Q4 PTP-D

Smallfield Reserve

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-E

Underwood Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why

Q4 PTP-F

Walmsley Park

What do you think of this proposed change?

Tell us why