

5.1.1 Dog Management – Community Safety

Type:	Ranger Services – Animal Control
Legislation:	<i>Dog Act 1976</i> (as amended) <i>Dog Regulations 2013</i> (as amended)
Delegation:	DA21 Appointment of Authorised Officers
Other Related Document:	Town of East Fremantle Dogs Local Law (2016)

Objective

This Dog Management Policy is an advisory document that complements the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended), which has the necessary legislative and regulatory powers. The terms used in the Policy have the same meaning as in the Act, unless otherwise defined in this document.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- a) actively support and promote responsible dog ownership through the development of a code relating to responsible ownership of dogs, community education, and the provision of information accessible via a range of media, including the internet, direct customer contact, and Town of East Fremantle's publications.
- b) strive to achieve a balance between the needs of residents who own dogs and those that don't in the evaluation of future recreational and strategic development processes.
- c) provide, and regularly review, those areas where dogs are permitted, both on-lead and off-lead, and areas where dogs are prohibited or restricted.
- d) maintain an open dialogue with residents and concerned groups regarding present and future dog management issues.
- e) reduce the risk to the community from anti-social and straying dogs through education, routine patrols, and the prompt investigation of concerns and complaints of dog-related issues. Where appropriate, enforcement provisions of the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended) may be utilised to penalise breaches of those statutes.

Policy Scope

In accordance with the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended), the Town has the responsibility for ensuring that dog owners either domiciling or exercising their dogs within the Town of East Fremantle are compliant with the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended).

Ranger Services has the primary responsibility for monitoring and enforcing of the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended).

The Town acknowledges that dog ownership provides many benefits for those involved, including physical health associated with their exercise, companionship, responsibility related to the care and welfare of the animal, and the opportunity to interact socially with other dog and pet owners.

Equally, there is the potential for problems with straying or poorly socialised dogs and irresponsible owners who fail to properly train, control, or care for their pets, including appropriately disposing of waste.

Policy

Ranger Services

To ensure a high standard of service for the community with regards to dog management within the Town of East Fremantle, the Town will apply this Policy and the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended) and will:

- be understanding and helpful and treat customers with dignity, respect and courtesy;
- act professionally and with propriety;
- provide necessary and relevant information;
- maintain privacy; and
- be efficient and timely in dealing with issues.

The Town will:

- appoint sufficient Ranger Services Officers to effectively meet the obligations of this Policy and the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended) and will ensure that all Officers responsible for the handling of dogs receive relevant training, and execute their duties in a manner that creates minimal distress and avoids harm to the dog.
- ensure that any dog pound facility, utilised by the Town or operated by a contractor, is maintained in a humane manner, with proper regard to health, safety and welfare of all dogs in detention, including food, shelter and water, and where required, the services of a veterinary practitioner.
- transfer to an approved animal welfare organisation any dog deemed suitable for rehoming that has been impounded and not been claimed within the statutory holding period; and where rehoming is not appropriate or possible, the dog will be euthanized by a registered veterinary practitioner.
- where practicable, provide and maintain appropriate dog waste disposal bins at dog exercise areas and other locations subject to high levels of canine activity.
- as required and practicable, install appropriate signage, to ensure the Town continues to educate and support the community on responsible dog ownership.

During normal business hours, Ranger Services will conduct regular patrols throughout the municipality to enforce compliance with the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended) and respond as soon as practicable to:

- a) reports of dogs attacking people or animals.
- b) formal complaints regarding dog nuisance.
- c) reports of dogs at large.

After normal business hours, Ranger Services will provide an emergency out-of-hours service to respond to any reports of:

- a) Reports of dogs attacking people or animals.
- b) Dogs at large that are causing a traffic hazard on a major road.

Community Balance

The Town of East Fremantle accepts the rights of dog owners to enjoy their association with their dogs whilst at the same time accepting the rights of non-dog owners to go about their normal daily activities unimpeded by nuisance or harassment by dogs.

To achieve this, the Town will:

- a) liaise with the community and interest groups to ensure that current declared dog exercise areas, including off-lead and beach areas, are appropriate to the needs of dog owners and are maintained in a fit state for the declared use.
- b) give due consideration to the requirement for new dog exercise areas during recreational and strategic planning processes.
- c) notify the community by public notice of any intention to declare any future area as a designated off lead exercise area.
- d) ensure that residents who may be affected by any new dog recreation area are given timely notice and the ability to make representations for Council consideration.
- e) liaise with local residents and the community in general in relation to any proposed new dog exercise areas prior to the establishment of such an area.
- f) liaise with local residents and the community in general in relation to any proposed removal / closure of an existing dog exercise areas prior to removal/closure of any such proposed area; and
- g) respond in a timely manner to reports of stray, aggressive and nuisance dogs, and where appropriate enforce the relevant sections of the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended) to deter irresponsible behaviour by dog owners.

In line with the Town of East Fremantle's objective of maintaining balance within the community and in accordance with the provisions of the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended), the Town may declare and regulate areas of the municipality to be a:

- Dog Exercise Area
An area on which dogs may be exercised either on-lead or off-lead, subject to any specified conditions.
- Dog Training Area
Land on which dogs may be trained, subject to any specified conditions.
- Prohibited Area
An area containing sensitive habitat for native wildlife may be declared as prohibited to dogs, other than a guide dog, hearing dog or any authorised assistance dog as authorised by the Minister and wearing the prescribed assistance dog coat/harness.
- Restricted Areas
Land on which dogs may not be taken at any time, or only on specified hours, days and seasons. When dog are permitted it may be specified as to whether they must be on-lead or may be off-lead.

The above restrictions do not apply to a guide dog, hearing dog or any authorised assistance as authorised by the Minister and wearing the prescribed assistance dog coat/harness.

Council will provide and maintain signage appropriate to identify declared areas where access opportunities or restrictions for dogs apply. In addition to the above, the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended) prohibits dogs in:

- any grounds of a school, pre-school, kindergarten, crèche or other place for the reception of children without the permission of the person in charge of the place.
- any shopping centre, or any shop except a pet shop, premises of a veterinary surgeon, pet grooming shop, or any other premises related to the care and management of dogs.
- any playing area of a sports ground on which sport is being played or an area within 10 metres of a children's playground.

Current Designated Approved Off Leash Exercise Areas

The location's listed below are listed as designated approved off leash exercise areas:

- River Foreshore portion (beach areas only) as indicated by signs
- Preston Point Reserve, Preston Point Road
- Henry Jeffery Oval, Preston Point Road
- Upper Wauhop Park, Wauhop Road
- East Fremantle Oval (outer perimeter only)
- Reserve, corner George and Silas Street.

The Town will provide and maintain signage appropriate to identify declared areas where access opportunities or restrictions for dogs apply.

Nuisance Dogs

The Town recognises the health implications the community is exposed to by dogs creating a nuisance by barking inappropriately. When a formal complaint is lodged the Town will investigate the matter in a timely manner and strive to have the matter resolved within six weeks.

The process will be:

- streamlined and focused on early resolution; educative to both the dog owner and the complainant.
- open, transparent and fair to all parties involved; and conducted within the provisions of the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended).

Where there is evidence that a nuisance dog complaint is justified, the Town will issue the owner of the dog with an abatement notice. This presents the owner with a realistic definite timeline in which to take action to abate the nuisance.

If requested, the Town will provide advice as to corrective measures that may be employed, but it remains the owner's responsibility to determine and implement the necessary corrective action.

Where the nuisance has not been abated after the abatement period, the Town may issue an Infringement Notice. In the case of continued nuisance, the Town may refer the matter to the Courts for a Magistrate to determine. In these cases, the resolution date will be determined by the Court.

Dangerous Dogs

To reduce the risk to the community, the Town will as a matter of urgency investigate and act upon all incidents and allegations of injury and/or harassment caused by dogs. Should such an incident result in a serious injury, the dog may be declared a Dangerous Dog, or may be destroyed.

All commercial security/guard dogs (as defined in the Act) are declared to be a Dangerous Dog.

Where a dog is declared to be a dangerous dog pursuant to the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended), Ranger Services will monitor the property where the dog is domiciled and ensure the property and are owner complies with the relevant provisions of the *Dog Act 1976* (as amended).

Dangerous dogs must be micro-chipped, and must wear an approved advisory collar at all times.

When in a public place the dog must be muzzled and on a lead, even when in an off-lead area.

When not in a public place the dog must be housed in an enclosure that complies with the prescribed requirements. Approved warning signs must be displayed at every entrance to the property.

Further information regarding dangerous dogs is contained within the Town's Policy 1.2.3 Dangerous Dog.

Dog Registration

The registration of dogs has benefits to both the Town and the community. Fees and charges are applied to dog management, permitting the Town to provide a safe and pleasant environment, free of the negative impacts of dogs in the community. Dogs wearing a valid registration tag can quickly be returned to the owner if they accidentally stray. In most cases when Ranger Services finds a lost registered dog, it is directly returned to its owner.

All dogs over three months of age must be registered. Notwithstanding the Town's education and enforcement measures, it is the owner's responsibility to ensure their dog is registered. The Town will maintain a register of all dogs housed within the municipality, and will endeavour to ensure that all eligible dogs are registered.

To achieve this objective the Town will conduct a registration renewal campaign each year by:

- a) forwarding renewal letters to owners of all currently registered dogs;
- b) placing notices through written and digital media; and
- c) conducting an audit of the owners who have failed to re-register their dogs.

The Town will:

- monitor dogs in public places to ensure they are wearing a collar with a valid registration tag.
- ensure that any unregistered dog found at large is registered by the owner before being returned.
- undertake regular patrols of the municipal area and compare evidence of dog ownership against the dog register.

Pro rata adjustment of the registration fee applies within a registration period for:

- the voluntary initial registration of a dog that reaches six months of age;
- the voluntary initial registration of a dog that is newly housed within the municipality, to which the previous paragraph does not apply;
- the de-sexing of a dog; and
- the death of a dog, except where it has been destroyed following an attack on a person or animal, or at the direction of Council.

Fees and Charges

Fees and charges are resolved annually by Council and published on the Town of East Fremantle website.

Attachment:

Appendix A – Town of East Fremantle Dog Exercise Areas

Responsible Directorate:	Corporate Services
Reviewing Officer:	Senior Ranger
Decision making Authority:	Council
Policy Adopted:	20/11/18
Policy Amended/Reviewed:	17/9/19
Former Policy No:	1.2.3

Town of East Fremantle Dog Exercise Areas

Our hairy hounds are often another extended member of our family and are important additions of our community also, but remember that they must be kept on a leash at all times in public (no longer than 2 metres). Dogs must also wear a current registration tag as well as a name tag/owners contact details in public.

We have six (6) exercise areas available in the Town where your dogs can run and play without a lead.

DOG OFFLEAD EXERCISE AREAS

1. River Foreshore portion (beach areas only) as indicated by signs.
2. Preston Point Reserve, Preston Point Road.
3. Henry Jeffery Oval, Preston Point Road.
4. Upper Wauhop Park, Wauhop Road.
5. East Fremantle Oval (outer perimeter only)
6. Reserve, corner George and Silas Street

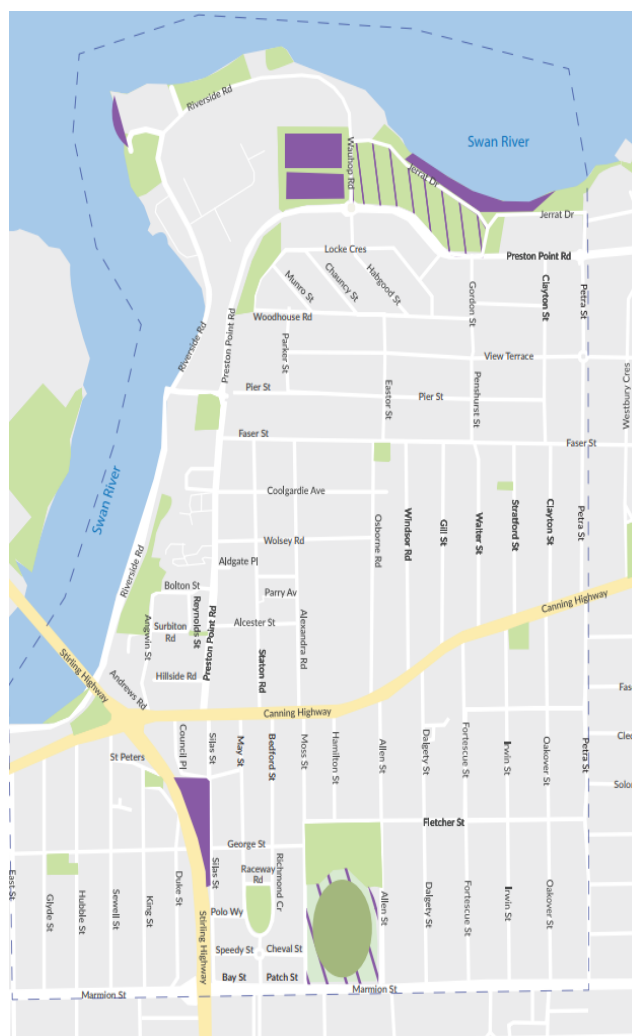
Areas marked with a stripe become on-lead zones during sporting events and training.

Please note, that even though the dog is off lead:

- The dog must be supervised by a competent person who is in reasonable proximity to the dog.
- A lead must be carried and attached to the dog, should the dog need to be controlled.
- Dogs are not permitted in children's playgrounds unless signposted.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Town on 9339 9339 or email: admin@eastfremantle.wa.gov.au

Visit: eastfremantle.wa.gov.au/enjoy-east-fremantle/parks-and-reserves/dog-exercise-areas-in-the-town.aspx



Dog exercise areas
Dog exercise areas when no sport



