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# Draft Animal Policy

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# Have your say on our draft Animal Policy

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For many Wellingtonians, their animals are part of their families, not just acting as pets but also providing companionship. The aim of the Animal Policy is to encourage responsible pet ownership, and to provide information around the requirements of the Animal Bylaw.

We're keen to know what everyone, including residents and ratepayers, thinks of this draft policy. The policy outlines the role of the Council and other agencies that work in the animal sector. There is also information about caring for domestic animals, such as the freedoms that all animals deserve through providing basic animal welfare and processes governing nuisance incidents, unmanageable quantities, and ill treatment of animals.

As well as the policy there are also factsheets to provide more educational information about caring for cats, poultry, livestock, and bees. The sheets provide tips for what people may want to consider before committing to a pet. There are also links to useful sources of information and organisations.

## How to have your say

The Council is keen to know what residents, ratepayers, and stakeholders think about the proposed animal policy and factsheets.

Please make a submission online at [wellington.govt.nz/draftanimalpolicy](https://wellington.govt.nz/draftanimalpolicy)

Alternatively, you can go to visit [wellington.govt.nz/draftanimalpolicy](https://wellington.govt.nz/draftanimalpolicy), print the FreePost submission form and post it to us (no stamp required) at:

FreePost  
Wellington City Council  
Animal Policy consultation (259)  
Wellington City Council  
PO Box 2199  
Wellington 6140

Copies of the draft policy can be viewed at our service centre at 101 Wakefield Street and city libraries.

Submission forms are also available from these locations.

If you would like us to send you a copy of the draft policy and submission form, please phone 04 499 4444 or email [policy.submission@wellington.govt.nz](mailto:policy.submission@wellington.govt.nz)

A final report on the Animal Policy will be considered by the Council's City Strategy Committee in early December, with the Council making a decision later that month.

Written submissions open on 11 September and close at 5pm on 16 October.

# 1

## Proposed Animal Policy

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### 1 Introduction

This Policy has been developed to promote animal welfare, to support and encourage the responsible care of animals, to minimise incidents of harm and nuisance relating to animals, and to aid the implementation of the Animal Bylaw. It sets out:

- the legal framework and key requirements for animal owners
- goals for animals in Wellington
- what the Council does,
- where you can go for further information.

As part of the Policy the Council also has developed factsheets for pet owners, their neighbours, and Wellingtonians. They include general good practice tips to assist animal owners and others to look after their pets, as well as tips for neighbours who encounter issues with neighbour's pets. They also include sources of further useful information.

### 2 Legal framework

The Council adopted the revised Animal Bylaw in August 2016. Amongst other things, the Bylaw requires animal owners and people in charge of animals to:

- ensure their animal has adequate physical wellbeing through acceptable nutrition, environmental, health, behavioural stimulus, and adequate mental well-being; and
- not cause a nuisance to any other person.

These Bylaw requirements are aligned with obligations in the Animal Welfare Act 1999, which also apply to owners and persons in charge of animals.

Dogs and designated dog off-leash areas are covered separately in the Dog Policy, developed under the Dog Control Act 1996. Non-domestic animals in Wellington are largely managed through Our Natural Capital - Wellington's Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan and Greater Wellington Regional Council's Regional Pest Management Strategy.

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### 3 Goals for animals in Wellington

Animals in Wellington are entitled to lead healthy and happy lives. Five domains need to be satisfied to ensure that animals are leading happy lives:

- nutrition: animals are provided with suitable nutritious food and clean water
- environment: animals have a safe home in an appropriate environment with suitable shelter
- health: animals are physically healthy and have access to veterinary care
- behaviour: animals participate in satisfying and engaging activities and play
- mental state: animals experience positive emotions.

Keeping animals in poor conditions and in unmanageable quantities can lead to animal welfare issues. This can create a wide variety of issues for communities and can also have public health impacts.

Animals that roam are more likely to be injured and could potentially cause nuisance to other people in the neighbourhood.

### *Related Goals*

The Council also has a related strategy '*Our Natural Capital: Wellington's biodiversity strategy & action plan*' that aims to protect and restore our indigenous biodiversity. To reach this aim we will promote responsible pet ownership to protect wildlife in our open spaces. This includes:

- Working with partners to reduce the impact of cats on our indigenous wildlife
- Working with communities in high biodiversity risk areas on how to best minimize or avoid impacts of cats and dogs on indigenous biodiversity
- Run education and awareness programmes to encourage people to desex cats and keep them indoors as much as possible
- Investigate subsidising microchipping for cats near sensitive wildlife areas.

### *Emergency Preparedness*

All pet owners should develop their own plans to care for their animals during emergencies as part of a wider household emergency plan. Animal owners should plan to have:

- at least 7 days' worth of food and water per animal and any medications
- a cat carrier, dog leash or other appropriate means to transport a pet to a safe a location, in case of a need to evacuate
- a backup plan in case primary caregivers are unable to take care of animals

The above is not an exhaustive list and will need to be tailored depending on the type of pet that an owner has.

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## 4 What the Council does

To support owners and the welfare of animals in Wellington, the Council:

- investigates and responds to public complaints and queries
- works closely with the SPCA and our community partners to encourage responsible animal care
- assists animal owners to meet their responsibilities through education; and
- supports the community to manage stray cat numbers through humane management practices, including supporting rehoming, de-sexing and microchipping programmes.

Under the Bylaw, the Council may seize any domestic animal (other than domestic cats) found at large and not on their owner's property. If a seized animal is unable to be returned to its owner after 7 days, the Council may sell, re-home, or otherwise dispose of the animal.

The Council will endeavour to return any seized animal to their owner, including scanning any animal for microchips.

The Council will work with community partners, such as the SPCA, to ensure that a suitable arrangement is made for the animal.

### *Ill-treatment of animals*

In Wellington City the SPCA enforces the Animal Welfare Act 1999. The Council endeavours to support them in this role, and if appropriate may share information and resources in accordance with the Privacy Act 1993.

### *Feral animals*

Management of feral animals in Wellington is covered by the Greater Wellington Regional Council's Regional Pest Management Strategy. For detailed information about feral cat and goat management, contact Greater Wellington Regional Council.

## 5 Further information

Wellington City Council (2016), Wellington Consolidated Bylaw: Part 2 - Animals

Greater Wellington Regional Council, Regional Pest Management Strategy

Ministry for Primary Industries (2007), Companion Cats: Code of Welfare

National Cat Management Strategy Group (2016), Draft New Zealand National Cat Management Strategy Background Document

Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan) Order 1998

# 2

## Proposed Cat Factsheet

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Cats are a popular choice of companion pet for Wellingtonians. They are much more independent in comparison to other pets, but with independence there is the potential for conflict with other cats and wildlife, and potential for nuisance. To ensure the happy lives of Wellington's pets, factors such as nutrition, a safe home, health, activities and play and ensuring a positive mental state are vital. This factsheet aims to provide advice on how these elements can be provided for your cat.

This factsheet refers to 'ownership'. This includes any cat you own or one which is in your care.

### Your cat

Responsible cat ownership includes caring for your pet's welfare needs, desexing and microchipping and registering the microchip with the New Zealand Companion Animal Register (NZCAR). As a cat owner you have responsibilities toward your cat, other animals, and members of the community.

There are also local requirements and standards for keeping a cat that must be adhered to. These are:

Wellington City Consolidated Bylaw 2008, Part 2: Animals (Animals Bylaw)

Wellington City Council, Animal Policy, 2017.

### Microchipping and Desexing

All Wellington cats must be microchipped by 12 weeks of age, in accordance with the Council's Animal Bylaw requirements. The microchip is required to be registered with the New Zealand Companion Animal Register, which stores the owners contact details. If a cat is separated from its owners, the owner's details can be looked up and the cat returned to its owner. People need to remember to update the register when contact details change. You can do this yourself through the NZCAR website: [www.animalregister.co.nz](http://www.animalregister.co.nz).

For situations such as earthquakes this has proven an effective method of reuniting cats and owners. In the Canterbury earthquakes thousands of pets went missing. Over 80 per cent of animals that were microchipped were quickly reunited with their owners. Microchips also mean if your cat is involved in an accident and injured or killed, it can be scanned for a microchip and you can be contacted if you are registered as the owner.

Desexing is also strongly recommended. Annually, the SPCA receives over 7,000 unwanted kittens. In addition, many more are inhumanely killed or abandoned in the wild. This problem can easily be prevented by desexing. Cats should be desexed when 1-kilogram in weight, which is approximately around 10 weeks old. Most cats from shelters will already have had the procedure done. For further guidance you should discuss desexing with a vet.

Before obtaining a cat you may want to consider ethically sourcing a cat from a rescue centre. In most cases they will already be desexed and microchipped and there are many unwanted cats and kittens in need of a home.

### Lost cats

In the unfortunate event of your cat going missing, there are a number of options available to assist with finding your cat:

- make sure the microchip details are up to date
- create a flyer and distribute it around your neighbourhood, post on Neighbourly.co.nz
- contact neighbours, and ask them to check their properties
- check and post online, such as: [petsonthenet.co.nz](http://petsonthenet.co.nz), Trade Me Lost and Found section, Neighbourly, and social media
- check with local vets and leave a flyer
- check your old property if you have recently moved.

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If you find or come across a cat you suspect is lost, there are numerous avenues that you can use to find the cats owner:

- contact the SPCA for advice
- contact neighbours to check if they are missing a cat
- create a flyer and distribute it around your neighbourhood
- check and post online, such as: [petsonthenet.co.nz](http://petsonthenet.co.nz), Trade Me Lost and Found section, neighbourly, and social media
- notify local vets and leave a flyer.

### **Stray and feral cats in Wellington**

There are three recognised groupings of cats: domestic, stray and feral cats.

**DOMESTIC CATS** live with people as companions and are dependent on humans for their welfare. It is recognised that domestic cats are important companions to many Wellingtonians.

**STRAY CATS** are companion cats which are lost or abandoned and living as an individual or in a group (colony). They have many of their needs indirectly supplied by people. They live around centres of human habitation, either individually or in a colony. Stray cats can also breed with undesexed domestic cats. Stray cat populations can provide unsuitable living conditions for cats due to the lack of care cats receive.

**FERAL CATS** have none of their needs provided by people and do not live around centres of human habitation.

Feral cat management in Wellington is covered by the Greater Wellington Regional Council's Regional Pest Management Strategy. For detailed information about feral cat management, contact Greater Wellington Regional Council.

The Council supports humanely managing the number of stray cats, by supporting suitable community groups to neuter and provide appropriate care to stray cats and stray cat colonies. These programmes would:

- have cat adoption as an integral part of the programme
- prevent or minimise the immigration of cats
- continually monitor the cat population
- include researchers as active participants
- involve carers/semi-owners
- ensure the cat colony is well managed and the programme is adequately resourced over the long term
- ensure stakeholders have an understanding of the programme and its aims
- properly evaluate and report on the programme outcomes.
- not conflict with wildlife management priorities.

The SPCA is responsible under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 to ensure that any community groups manage the animals humanely.

### **Options for wildlife predation minimisation**

There are a number of options available to people who are concerned about conflict between cats and local wildlife. Roaming cats can hunt native wildlife - even well fed cats will hunt. Options to reduce predation include:

- monitored outdoor time
- containment, such as having a cat enclosure or cat proof fencing. If containment is used it is all the more important to provide things to do throughout the day and night.
- providing them with toys that encourage activity and play can be a productive channel for their hunting instincts. This will prevent

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your cat from being bored and provide mental stimulation.

- ensuring your cat has plenty of food, and feeding them indoors. If you feed them at least twice a day it means they are more likely to stay around home.
- anti-predation products, such as bells on cat collars.

If you live close to an ecologically sensitive area you are encouraged to take greater steps to protect local wildlife from predation.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

All cat owners should develop their own plans to care for their animals during emergencies as part of a wider household emergency plan. Animal owners should plan to have:



- at least 7 days' worth of food and water per animal and any medications
- a cat carrier to transport a cat to a safe a location, in case of a need to evacuate
- a litter tray
- a backup plan in case primary caregivers are unable to take care of animals
- microchip details up to date with the NZCAR.

If an event occurs cats should be kept inside in case there is the need to evacuate and need to locate them quickly.

### Care and costs

Cats need your care and attention. Owning a cat is rewarding but there are costs that come with ownership. In 2015, the NZCAC estimated that caring for a cat costs around \$670 a year. Costs include food, veterinary care, and care of your cat while you are travelling. For more information see: [www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/resources/owning-a-cat](http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/resources/owning-a-cat).

### End of life

When your pet reaches the end of its life, as a responsible pet owner it will be your responsibility to make suitable arrangements for your pet's body. In many cases this is arranged through a vet. If burying at home, the burial should be done in an appropriate manner, such as away from waterways. Alternatively, take your pet to the landfill which accepts dead animals. It is an offence under the animal bylaw to bury a carcass in a manner that is or is likely to become a nuisance, injurious or hazardous to health or safety.

### Minimising nuisance

Providing a litter tray may stop your cat doing its business on your vegetable patch or neighbouring gardens. This can be done through a normal indoor litter tray, or creating an area of soft soil or sand in the garden. This will require

regular cleaning up but may help reduce cat nuisance.

Some people chose to keep their cats in at night and this offers some cat welfare benefits such as they are less likely to be hurt in fights, pick up disease, or be hit by cars.

### Resolving disputes

If you suspect your or your neighbour's cat has become a source of nuisance it is recommended you speak with your neighbour about the situation in the first instance. In most circumstances such matters can be resolved quickly in this manner.

If problems persist, please call Council on 499 4444

If you suspect there are animal welfare issues, please call the SPCA on 389 8044

### Further information

Further information can be found on WCC website: <http://www.wellington.govt.nz>

Animal Bylaw (2016)

Animal Policy (2017)

Animal Welfare Act 1999

### Other

<http://www.animalregister.co.nz>

<http://www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/resources/owning-a-cat>

MPI Animal Welfare (Companion Cats) Code of Welfare 2007

Draft NZ Cat Management Strategy (2016)

# 3

## Proposed Poultry Factsheet

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Wellingtonians may own chickens and other such poultry as pets, or for the purpose of harvesting of eggs. Encouraging urban agriculture is an important part of enabling Wellingtonians to be resilient. This factsheet provides some advice on responsible poultry ownership. To ensure the happy lives of Wellington's pets, factors such as nutrition, a safe home, health, activities and play, and ensuring a positive mental state are vital. This factsheet gives some advice on how these elements can be provided for your poultry.

Poultry includes bird types such as chickens, ducks, geese, roosters, swans, and peacocks. As a poultry owner you have responsibilities toward your poultry and members of the community to not cause nuisance.

### Limits on numbers

There are limitations within urban areas, in accordance with the Animal Bylaw. Permission is required from the Council to have more than eight poultry or to keep a rooster in an urban area. It is difficult to manage roosters to stop them from crowing loudly, so there is high probability that nuisance will occur when kept in urban areas.

Poultry are social animals and it is recommended you keep more than one. However, keeping a large number of poultry can create issues such as noise and odour, and public health issues if kept in unsatisfactory conditions. This problem is exaggerated in urban areas where many households are close together.

### Getting Permission

Applications for permission to keep poultry and roosters in urban areas should be made to the Council and detail the following:

- address of the property, and contact details for the applicant
- the number of poultry/roosters the applicant wishes to keep
- any relevant information about the welfare, hygiene, control, and confinement

- any steps taken by the applicant to minimise any nuisance (including if they have discussed their application with neighbours)
- any other information the applicant may see as being relevant.

### Housing your poultry

Before obtaining any poultry, the proper containment and provision of shelter needs to be considered, particularly in urban areas. Poultry should not be able to leave your property to roam. As well as a chicken coop for sleeping and egg laying, either an enclosed run or adequate fencing of your property is required to keep your chickens safe. Chickens will generally only go into their house to sleep, they won't go into their house during bad weather. For this reason they need to be provided with an alternative shelter so they can get out of the rain.

When starting out with two or three chickens, providing an approximate space of 10 square metres is recommended. More chickens would require more space. If your poultry are too cramped they are likely to fight or have other behavioural issues and will require much more frequent cleaning up after.

It is recommended your enclosed, rainproof chicken coop is set away from neighbouring fences, and that there is consideration of the location of the coop structure to avoid any nuisance. It is advised that you speak with your neighbours before taking ownership of any chickens. Providing facilities for roosting (e.g. perches), a surface for pecking and scratching, and a secluded nesting area is an expectation of chicken owners. Perches should be quite wide (around 10 centimetres), positioned off the ground and in a manner so chickens are able to comfortably perch when roosting. Poultry will also need enrichment and mental stimulation, this can be provided with food, toys such as swings, and an area to dust bathe in.

### Poultry hygiene

Responsible animal ownership includes ensuring they do not cause public health concerns.

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Owners need to ensure they do as much as possible to keep the area clean, with chicken coops thoroughly cleaned out at least once a week. Nesting boxes and the floor of your chicken coop should be kept clean and dry. You could line them with hay, untreated wood chips, sawdust, or shredded newspaper so it can be easily removed when cleaned out.

To avoid unpleasant smells, attracting flies to breed, mice to shelter and/or rats looking for food, owners should not allow excess food and chicken bedding waste to accumulate. At least once a week, make sure waste is

collected, bagged, and disposed of. Scattering food across the ground can attract rodents. Owners can control this by using vermin proof receptacles specifically for poultry feeding. This also keeps the rain out, meaning your poultry have dry pellets or grain. Food should also be stored out of reach of rats, in a sealed shed.

### **Sourcing your chickens**

Remember that when hatching chickens from eggs, 50 percent of eggs hatched may be roosters. In urban areas



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this can result in roosters that cannot be kept without permission. Ethically sourced poultry is recommended, such as rescue hens. Battery farms often only keep hens for around 14 months and then they require new homes.

### **Poultry care courses**

There are courses available locally within Wellington to help with the basics of choosing the appropriate poultry for your situation and getting the right set up for your chickens and poultry to be comfortable. Gaining practical knowledge and experience prior to obtaining poultry is recommended.

### **Poultry Costs**

The costs of poultry and poultry set-ups vary. Chickens from suppliers generally charge \$15 to \$30 per chicken depending on the breed. Rescue hens that have been discarded by local factories are available from Helping You Help Animals for \$5. Chicken coops vary as they can be self-made, bought second hand from Trade Me or for as much as \$400 to \$500 new. A chicken run is also required. These require chicken wire and stakes generally sourced from hardware stores or Trade Me. There are other ongoing costs also such as food and veterinary care. Arrangements will also have to be made for the care of your poultry whilst you are travelling.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

All poultry owners should develop their own plans to care for their animals during emergencies. This can be part of a wider household emergency plan. Animal owners should plan to have:

- at least 7 days' worth of food and water per animal
- a means of moving an animal to a safe a location in case of need to evacuate, such as a box to contain your poultry
- a backup plan in case primary caregivers are unable to take care of animals.

### **End of life**

When your pet reaches the end of its life, as a responsible pet owner it will be your responsibility to make suitable arrangements for your pet's body. In many cases this is arranged through a vet. If burying at home, the burial should be done in an appropriate manner, such as away from waterways. Alternatively, take your pet to the landfill which accepts dead animals. It is an offence under the animal bylaw to bury a carcass in a manner that is or is likely to become a nuisance, injurious or hazardous to health or safety.

For poultry that are kept for meat purposes, some people may consider homekill. This is when animals are slaughtered and butchered for your consumption and use. It is illegal to sell or trade homekill meat. The poultry can be killed by you on your property, or a listed homekill service provider can be hired. There are legal requirements on you as the owner to ensure there is no unreasonable suffering, or unnecessary pain or distress. If you are considering homekill **please see MPI** for advice. You are responsible for meeting legal obligations for animal welfare in the Animal Welfare Act and Codes of Welfare.

### **Resolving disputes**

If you suspect your or your neighbour's poultry has become a source of nuisance it is recommended you speak with your neighbour about the situation in the first instance. In most circumstances such matters can be resolved quickly in this manner.

If problems persist, please call Council on 499 4444.

If you suspect there are animal welfare issues, please call SPCA on 389 8044.

### **Further information**

Further information can be found on WCC website - <http://www.wellington.govt.nz>

Animal Bylaw (2016)

Animal Policy (2017)

Animal Welfare Act

# 4

## Proposed Bee Factsheet

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Beekeeping is becoming more popular in Wellington with more people choosing to care for bees. Bees are very important for the environment as they pollinate crops and gardens. However bees kept in urban areas have the potential to cause a nuisance and therefore good hive management is important.

### **Beekeeping - the basics**

Bees forage for nectar, pollen, and water within a radius of up to 3 kilometres from the hive. The presence of too many bees in a single area can cause competition for food

sources. It is not recommended that properties in urban areas have more than four hives, as this ensures enough food sources for all bees in the area and bee numbers do not become a nuisance or intimidate neighbours.

### **Minimising nuisances**

#### *Flight path management*

Depending on the size and suitability of your property, consider the number of hives, suitability of fencing, and



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controls to limit potential nuisances. Hives should be positioned so they don't become a nuisance, preferably in a sheltered and sunny spot. Avoid placing hives close to a neighbour's house or driveway, or near frequently used areas such as vegetable gardens, clotheslines, or children's play areas. In a residential section the hive should be situated behind a 2-metre high fence, trellis, or hedge so that the bees have to fly up above anyone walking around - especially your next door neighbour.

Bees defecate small round waxy yellow spots usually soon after leaving the hive and sometimes beekeepers receive complaints from neighbours about bee droppings on windows, freshly washed cars, and washing. If bee flightpaths become a nuisance, the problem may be alleviated by turning the hive so that the entrance faces a different direction or moving it to another location on the section (no more than 1 to 2 metres per day otherwise bees may get lost). It is important that flightpaths are not directed across pathways on private and public land. Beekeeping associations may be able to provide further advice on this topic (see below).

#### ***Water***

Beekeepers should provide water within several metres of the hive if no natural resources are available. This will reduce visits by thirsty bees to neighbours' wet washing, swimming pools, and bird baths etc. Provide water by letting a tap drip very slowly into a shallow dish or tray containing sand or pebbles (so bees won't drown when drinking).

#### ***Nectar/Pollen***

Bees should have access to a variety of bee-friendly plants and trees preferably as close to the hive as possible. Garden catalogues often identify which plants attract bees. You can also visit <http://www.treesforbees.org.nz>.

#### ***Swarm prevention***

Although swarming is the natural means of dispersal of honey bee colonies, responsible beekeepers can minimise swarming in urban areas by re-queening on an annual basis, splitting a nucleus colony from populous hives (artificial swarming), and re-queening colonies that have been started from swarms.

#### **Community Beekeeping**

Permission is required to keep bees on any Council administered land, such as parks and reserves. Applications are assessed by the Council, and may be granted subject to conditions. If a licence is approved, a fee is payable. For more information on applications and the conditions, please see Wellington City Council Guidelines for Community Beekeeping on Public Land, available on the website.

#### **Legal Requirements**

Beekeepers are required by law to register their apiary with AsureQuality Ltd to enable surveillance of hives for exotic pests and diseases. Beekeepers must display their Apiary Registration number at each apiary (usually on each hive). More information on pest management can be found at [afb.org.nz](http://afb.org.nz). Monitoring needs to be carried out to protect honey bees from exotic pests and diseases.

It is not necessary to obtain a licence from the Council to keep bees on private land in Wellington City.

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## Starting with Bees

The best way to test your liking for beekeeping is to gain practical experience before you get hives of your own - either with an individual beekeeper or by joining the local beekeeping club. If you are not prepared to look after hives properly, do not get any. Varroa is a parasitic mite that will kill any colonies that are not managed on a regular basis, and neglected hives are a nuisance to the public and a potential source of bee diseases. In general, hives will need to be checked or 'worked' by the beekeeper at least every three weeks in summer and about once or twice over the winter months.

## Beekeeper Costs

You will need a protective suit (usually one-piece that includes a veil), gumboots, gloves, a smoker and hive tool (about \$250 in total). An initial hive with four boxes will cost about \$400, a nucleus colony of bees with a new queen (\$250). Apiary registration (a legal requirement) costs about \$35. All up you should be prepared to pay about \$1,000 initially for one hive. Two hives will cost about \$1650 in total. It is recommended that you start with two nucleus colonies as an insurance against one queen failing. If this happens you can unite the hives or swap broods between them.

## Resolving issues

If you suspect your or your neighbour's bees have become a source of nuisance it is recommended you speak with your neighbour about the situation in the first instance. In most circumstances such matters can be resolved quickly in this manner.

If problems persist, please call Council on 499 4444.

## Further information

Further information can be found on WCC website - <http://www.wellington.govt.nz>

Animal Bylaw (2016)

Animal Policy (2017)

### *Other useful websites about bees and beekeeping:*

Wellington Beekeepers Association. - <http://www.beehive.org.nz/>

American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan - <http://www.afb.org.nz>

Trees For Bees - <http://www.treesforbees.org.nz>

AsureQuality - <http://www.asurequality.com>

Apiculture NZ - [www.apinz.org.nz](http://www.apinz.org.nz)

# 5

## Proposed Livestock Factsheet

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### Traditional stock and companions?

Wellingtonians on occasion keep animals as pets that were traditionally kept as livestock. This includes sheep, pigs, llamas, alpacas, donkeys, goats, cattle, and horses. However, in urban areas, there is higher probability that nuisance may occur. Whether kept as pets or for the purpose of being farmed, responsible ownership is vital. To ensure the happy lives of Wellington's pets, factors such as nutrition, a safe home, health, activities and play and ensuring a positive mental state are vital. This factsheet provides advice on how these elements can be provided for your livestock.

### Stock animals - the basics

As with all animals, livestock rely on owners to provide for a number of essentials. Responsible pet ownership helps ensure animals do not create any nuisance or welfare related issues. Before obtaining any livestock the suitability and size of your property should be considered for the type of stock in mind. All animals require shelter and a form of housing, to be contained on a property with fencing, drainage, and waste disposal to limit any potential nuisances. It is also important to remember that you are responsible for the health of your animal, including veterinary care.

### Caring for your livestock

Stock animals need to be provided with fresh food and water daily and to be kept in clean environments, with dry and warm sleeping areas. A number of materials can be used for such purposes, such as hay, sawdust, and untreated wood chips that should be cleaned and replaced at least once a week.

### Hygiene

Responsible ownership includes ensuring your livestock do not cause public health concerns. Owners need to ensure they do as much as possible to keep the area in and around a stock housing structure clean.

It is strongly recommended that cleaned out bedding is removed from the property within a week. Vermin such as mice and rats can become an issue if food is left out and on the ground. Rat and mouse excrement can contaminate livestock feed and water, as well as expose humans to the diseases rats and mice carry in their excrement. Vermin proof receptacles are available, which also keep out the rain, providing stock with good access to food.

### Tethering of stock animals

Tethering is sometimes used as a method of confining animals. Such a method should only be carried out for temporary and short periods of time. If tethering is necessary, the animal must be checked on regularly, at least once every 12 hours to check there is enough food and water and that the animal has not become entangled. Clean fresh water should be placed well within the perimeter of the tether, as well as supplementary food where grazing is not possible. There should also be shelter from weather conditions. A strong tether such as a light chain with a durable collar is recommended to keep the animal secure.

### Walking your stock in public

Exercise and mental stimulation is important for all animals. As with dogs, it is important that stock be kept on a lead and under control at all times. This will ensure the safety of the animal and members of the community. Any mess left by the animal should also be appropriately cleaned up and disposed of.

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### **Emergency Preparedness**

All livestock owners should develop their own plans to care for their animals during emergencies as part of a wider household emergency plan. Animal owners should plan to have:

- At least 7 days' worth of food and water per animal
- A means of moving an animal to a safe a location in case of need to evacuate
- A back up plan in case primary caregivers are unable to take care of animals.

### **Goat Tags**

The population of feral goats is managed in Wellington and therefore all owned goats must wear an ear tag (an RFID, radio frequency identification device or similar) or collar to indicate they are not feral.

### **End of life**

When your pet reaches the end of its life, as a responsible pet owner it will be your responsibility to make suitable arrangements for your pet's body. In many cases this is arranged through a vet. If burying at home, the burial should be done in an appropriate manner, such as away



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from waterways. Alternatively, take your pet to the landfill which accepts dead animals. It is an offence under the animal bylaw to bury a carcass in a manner that is or is likely to become a nuisance, injurious or hazardous to health or safety.

For livestock that are kept for meat purposes, some people may consider homekill. This is when animals are slaughtered and butchered for your consumption and use. It is illegal to sell or trade homekill meat. The animal can be killed by you on your property, or a listed homekill service provider can be hired. There are legal requirements on you as the owner to ensure there is no unreasonable suffering, or unnecessary pain or distress. If you are considering homekill **please see MPI** for advice. You are responsible for meeting legal obligations for animal welfare in the Animal Welfare Act and Codes of Welfare.

### **Resolving disputes**

If you suspect your or your neighbour's livestock has become a source of nuisance it is recommended you speak with your neighbour about the situation in the first instance. In most circumstances such matters can be resolved quickly in this manner.

If problems persist, please call Council on 499 4444

If you suspect there are animal welfare issues, please call the SPCA on 389 8044

### **Further information**

Further information can be found on the following websites: [www.wellington.govt.nz](http://www.wellington.govt.nz)

Animal Bylaw (2016)

Animal Policy (2017)

[www.mpi.govt.nz](http://www.mpi.govt.nz)

Animal Welfare (Goats), Code of Welfare 2012



