

Latrobe Council Dog Management Policy



Approved 11th June, 2019
Policy valid for a five year period

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1. INTRODUCTION

Everyone appreciates that many people enjoy the companionship of dogs, however with this companionship comes responsibility.

We must also remember not everyone likes dogs, in fact some people dislike dogs and many people fear them. To ensure dogs are not a nuisance to the community and other animals, owners are required to make sure that they comply with Council's "Responsible Dog Ownership Code" and most importantly to the relevant legislation "Dog Control Act 2000".

The Act encourages responsible dog ownership and promotes a comprehensive balanced approach to dog management. Under the Act (Section 8) each Council in Tasmania is required to develop and implement a Dog Management Policy, relating to dog management in its municipal area.

2. RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNERSHIP CODE

The legislation gives rights to dog owners and clearly defines their responsibilities.

2.1 Dog Owners Rights

- You may keep 2 dogs on your premises (without a kennel licence).
- You may have up to 4 working dogs on your premises in rural areas. (without a kennel licence)
- You may walk with your dog in built up areas if it is on a lead that does not exceed 2 metres.
- You may walk your dog off lead in other areas as long as they are in your sight and you can demonstrate that they are under effective control.

2.2 Dog Owners Responsibilities

- You must ensure your dog(s) have adequate food/shelter and water.
- You must ensure your dog(s) living area is kept hygienically clean and tidy.
- You must microchip (M/C) and register your dog(s).
- You must ensure that the M/C and registration details are up to date regarding legal ownership of the dog/s
- If you wish to keep more than 2 dogs on your premises, or 4 working dogs, you must apply to Council for a kennel licence.
- When your dog is in a public place or outside an off leash exercise area, it must always be on a lead not exceeding 2 metres.
- You must remove your dog's faeces from any public place, this includes off leash exercise areas and local beaches.
- You must ensure your dog doesn't attack, harass, or frighten any other animal or person.
- You must ensure that your dog is not a nuisance (this includes a dog barking excessively).
- You must be able to demonstrate that your dog is immediately responsive to your commands in an off leash area.

- You must have your dog fitted with a collar and attach its registration tag whilst in a public place.
- You must never take your dog into a Prohibited Area (See Prohibited Areas- Page 15).
- You must restrict (tether) your dog in or on a vehicle.
- A dog that has been declared as a dangerous dog must be muzzled and placed on a lead in a public place.
- You must not allow your dog to run up to people or jump up to greet them.
- Latrobe Council has designated dog exercise areas for your enjoyment and wellbeing, please see pages 12-14 for full details.
- You must ensure your dog can't escape from its yard.
- You must put your dog on a lead when approaching other dogs or people.

Remember breaches of the above may result in "On the Spot Fines".

3. DOG CONTROL ACT 2000

The Dog Control Act 2000 is a statute and forms part of the approved legislation in Tasmania for dealing with dogs.

4. DANGEROUS DOGS

Problems exist with a small section of the dog population, which pose a significant threat to the community through aggressive behaviour. These are the dogs that may threaten or attack people or animals causing injury, damage or distress. It is important that where dogs are perceived (through their behaviour) as dangerous, that the Council or Police are informed to enable a proper investigation to take place and any necessary action to be taken to ensure public safety.

A dog may be declared dangerous if it has caused serious injury to a person or another animal, or there is reasonable cause to believe that the dog is likely to cause serious injury to a person or another animal.

When dealing with dangerous dogs Council may:-

- Issue a warning or an infringement notice
- Prosecute, where the offence or the effects of the offence are significant
- Declare offending dog(s) to be a dangerous dog(s)
- Seize and detain a dog believed to have attacked a person or animal to enable a proper investigation to take place
- Ensure all requirements of the Dog Control Act 2000 are complied
- Euthanase the dog

4.1 What are the Regulations?

Dangerous Dog Collars

The dog must wear an approved dangerous dog collar at all times

Failure to do so may lead to a fine of up to 20 penalty units.

When in a public place

In addition to the regulations regarding collars and microchips:

1. The owner or person in charge of a dangerous dog must ensure that the dog is securely muzzled.
2. The dog must be on a lead not exceeding 2 metres which is capable of controlling and restraining the dog.
3. A dangerous dog must be under the control of someone who is at least 18 years old.

When on private premises

In addition to the regulations regarding collars and microchips:

The owner or person in charge of a dangerous dog must ensure that the dog, when not in a public place, is housed in an enclosure that complies with the prescribed requirements.

Failure to do so may lead to a fine of up to 20 penalty units.

Properties containing dangerous dogs will be inspected on a regular basis to ensure compliance with the required conditions and regulations.

4.2 Enclosure to House a Dangerous Dog

A child proof enclosure is to meet the following minimum standards:

- Be fully enclosed
- Be childproof
- Have a minimum height of 1.8 metres and a minimum width of 1.8 metres
- Have a floor area of at least 10 square metres for each dog in the enclosure
- Have the walls, roof and the door or gate made of brick, timber, concrete, iron or mesh, or a combination of these materials, of sufficient strength and durability to prevent the escape of a dog
- Have sufficient weatherproof sleeping area for each dog in the enclosure
- Have a sealed, graded concrete floor
- Be situated so as not to require a person to pass through it to gain access to other parts of the property on which it is situated
- If fitted with a door or gate –
 - (i) be fitted with a self-closing and self –latching mechanism for the door or gate
 - (ii) be locked from the outside when a dog is inside the enclosure
 - (iii) have a clearly legible sign saying “Dangerous Dog” displayed on the door or gate
 - (iv) be sufficient to prevent any dog in it from escaping

- If the walls, roof or door or gate of an enclosure are made of mesh, the mesh must be-
 - (i) chain mesh of at least 3.15mm gauge, with a maximum spacing of 50mm; or
 - (ii) weldmesh of at least 4mm gauge, with a maximum spacing of 50mm.
- There may be a gap of not more than 50mm at the top and bottom of a wall or door or gate of an enclosure to provide ventilation and drainage.

4.3 Warning Signs

The property where a dangerous dog is kept must display approved dangerous dog signs at all entrances.

Failure to do so may lead to a fine of up to 10 penalty units.

4.4 When you must notify Council

The owner or person in charge of a dangerous dog must notify Council if:

- The dog is missing
- The dog dies
- When the owner changes address

Council must be notified as soon as practicable after becoming aware of the fact.

- If a dangerous dog is sold or given away

Council must be notified within 24 hours of the new owners name and address.

Failure to do so may lead to a fine of up to 20 penalty units.

5. NUISANCES

The activities of dogs can cause annoyance and discomfort to members of the community. The nuisances caused by dogs cover a wide range of issues and include:-

- Barking dogs;
- Dog faeces;
- Roaming dogs;
- Aggressive dogs.

5.1 BARKING

Barking dogs can be a difficult issue to deal with as every situation is different. The Dog Control Act 2000 defines a barking nuisance as a noise that consistently occurs or continues to such an extent that it unreasonably

interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of any person in any premises or public place.

If a resident is unable to resolve the issue of a barking dog directly with the owner, contact should be made with Council. The Council will make a personal visit to the dog owner to discuss their dog's behaviour and make suggestions as to how the owners can remedy any problems. Council will endeavour to contact the person who lodged the complaint to ensure the situation is improving. Should there be no improvement then Council will require the resident to complete an official complaint form that will trigger a formal investigation to confirm the existence of the nuisance and take appropriate action to reduce the nuisance behaviour.

Solutions often take time. You may need to try several different things. What works for one dog may not work for another. The more a dog is socialised and taken around its own neighbourhood, the more it will come to recognise all the different environmental sights and sounds and not become so suspicious or alarmed when on its own property.

Some Causes and Solutions for Barking Dogs:

1. Boredom

- Exercise/training
- Give a large bone to chew on
- Toys e.g. container with small holes and food inside
- Leave radio on
- Some dogs like a vantage point to sit and watch things around them but others may just bark more.

2. Left Alone/Not enough Exercise

- Similar solutions as for 'boredom' as above.

3. Barking at Passers-by, Cats and other Noises (Externals)

- Exercise/training
- Socialisation
- Radio left on (low volume)
- Block view
- Warm kennel
- Lock up at night

4. Indoor dogs put outside

- Allow the dog inside when it is quiet so that it does not associate barking with being allowed inside.
- Warm kennel close to the door
- Exercise/training
- Toy or large bone
- Allow access to porch or part of the house
- Leave radio on

5. Barking to Gain Attention

- Only confine for a short period at first
- Never let a dog off the chain or out of its yard whilst he is barking or howling, wait until he is quiet or distracted

6. Dogs in Season

- Desex

5.2 STRAYING

Any dog that wanders onto another property, or the footpath, or nature strip by itself even in front of its owner's house is breaking the law. A dog must be securely confined inside its own property so that it cannot run onto the footpath or harass passers-by. In these instances a dog is said to be at large and the dog can be impounded or the owner fined or maybe both. Just because your dog is wearing a current registration tag does not mean that it can stray (wander). Please ensure your correct details are available to Council's Animal Control Officer via dog registration details or the microchip. Council's contracted ACO will make every attempt to contact the dog owner when a dog at large is reported, however if the owner can't be contacted the dog will be taken to the Pound. (Fees apply to release the dog from the Pound- payable to the Pound). Infringements may also apply.

Problems

- They may frighten or injure both children and adults
- Chase and often attack and kill other animals (e.g. stock, pets etc.)
- Cause traffic accidents
- They can be injured (by other animals, by aggressive people, hit by a car, eat snail bait etc.)
- They can become lost
- Cause noise problems by making other dogs bark
- Get into garbage
- Damage other people's gardens or leave droppings
- Straying dogs often become aggressive because people chase them

Solutions

- Properly confine the dog on the property
- Ensure gates are shut and securely locked
- Ensure fences are high enough to contain the dog
- Check fences regularly for loose palings or holes/gaps
- Ensure the dog cannot dig its way out
- If the dog climbs fences secure some form of barrier at the top of the fence that slopes in towards the property

5.3 SIGNS OF AN AGGRESSIVE DOG

- Growling
- Lifts its lips and shows its teeth
- Raises the hair on its back
- Backs away

5.4 AVOID BEING BITTEN

- Never approach a strange dog

- Stand still but never turn your back on a dog
- Avoid direct eye contact (eye to eye)
- Clasp hands in front of you
- Contact Council's Animal Control Officer if a dog is not under effective control and behaves in a threatening manner towards you.

6. COST OF SERVICE

The provision of a dog control service includes the maintenance of dog registration databases, the monitoring of regulations, management of dog pounds, investigation of complaints, enforcement actions, provision of education programs etc.

Council aims to recover the majority of the costs associated with dog control through:-

- Registration and control fees
- Enforcement through infringement notices.

Fees are reviewed annually, with the focus being to minimize cross subsidization of dog control wherever possible.

7. REGISTRATION

The maintenance of a registration system is both a statutory requirement and an essential component of the efficient operation of a dog control service.

Under the Dog Control Act 2000, all dogs aged from 6 months must be microchipped and registered. Registration will be monitored and action taken against owners who fail to microchip and register their dog. This includes:-

Issuing of a warning or an infringement notice

Requiring all dogs to be registered before they are released from the pound

For the welfare of both the general community and dogs themselves, it is most important that Council has a record of dogs and their owners. This is achieved by registering all dogs once they are six (6) months old, with a renewal of registration in July each year.

Registration not only allows Council to keep better control of the dog population but also to provide improved facilities and conditions for responsible dog owners. Some benefits include:-

- Positive identification of your dog
- Reuniting lost or injured dogs with their owners
- Investigation and resolution of dog problems
- Funding of educational programs to encourage responsible dog ownership
- Operation and maintenance of Animal Pounds
- Dog patrol services to reduce the number of stray dogs on streets and in public places
- Encouragement of de-sexing of dogs through discounted registration fees

- Reduced registration fees for early registration

Registrations will be accepted by Council from July 1. Persons with dogs already registered in the municipality, will receive a renewal of registration by late June.

8. KENNEL LICENCES

Kennel Licences are required for more than 2 dogs over the age of 6 months; or more than 4 working dogs over the age of 6 months. A kennel licence may be considered in an urban area. An information pack and application forms are available from the Council office.

An applicant must place an advertisement in the public notices in the Advocate to give people residing within 200 m the right to object to the licence and the reasons for this. The objection must be in writing, addressed to the General Manager and be received within 14 days of the advertisement.

8.1 Kennel Licence Fees

Kennel licences must be renewed annually, and a renewal form completed with updated information. Kennel licence fees are stated on the application form and on the licence renewal form. Reminders for licence renewals are forwarded to all current licence holders.

9. MICROCHIPPING

Microchipping is a permanent way of having your animal identified. A small chip the size of a grain of rice is inserted under the skin at the scruff of the neck.

Microchipping is a mandatory requirement for dogs over 6 months of age except for, hunting dogs that were born prior to 1 February 2013, or working dogs, as defined in the Dog Control Act 2000

Penalty: Fine not exceeding 10 penalty units.

Please remember even if your dog is microchipped you still must register your dog annually with Council.

10. LOST DOGS

If you lose your dog you may wish to contact the Spreyton Dogs Home on 6427 2178 or Council on 6426 4444.

If the dog is taken to the Dogs Home (Pound) there are charges which increase daily. Pound fees are separate to any Council fees and the dog must be registered before release from the Pound. Infringements issued by Council may also be applicable.

If you find a dog please contact Council on 6426 4444.

11. **DECLARED OFF LEASH EXERCISE AREAS**

All dogs enjoy the freedom of running around without a leash – Latrobe Council has established special areas at Port Sorell and Latrobe to give your dog the chance to run around leash free without fear of attracting a fine provided it is still under effective control. These are:

During Daylight Savings - 7pm to 10am. Upon resumption of Eastern Standard time off leash 24 hours/day

1. Squeaking Point 200m each way of the boat ramp.
2. Freers Beach from the Hawley Place Beach access walk- way round to the point that goes out towards Penguin Island

During Daylight Savings – Dawn to Dusk. Upon resumption of Eastern Standard time off leash 24 hours/day

1. Hawley Beach from the end of Vine Street - north to Boom gate into Point Sorell Reserve (Start of Larooma Road)

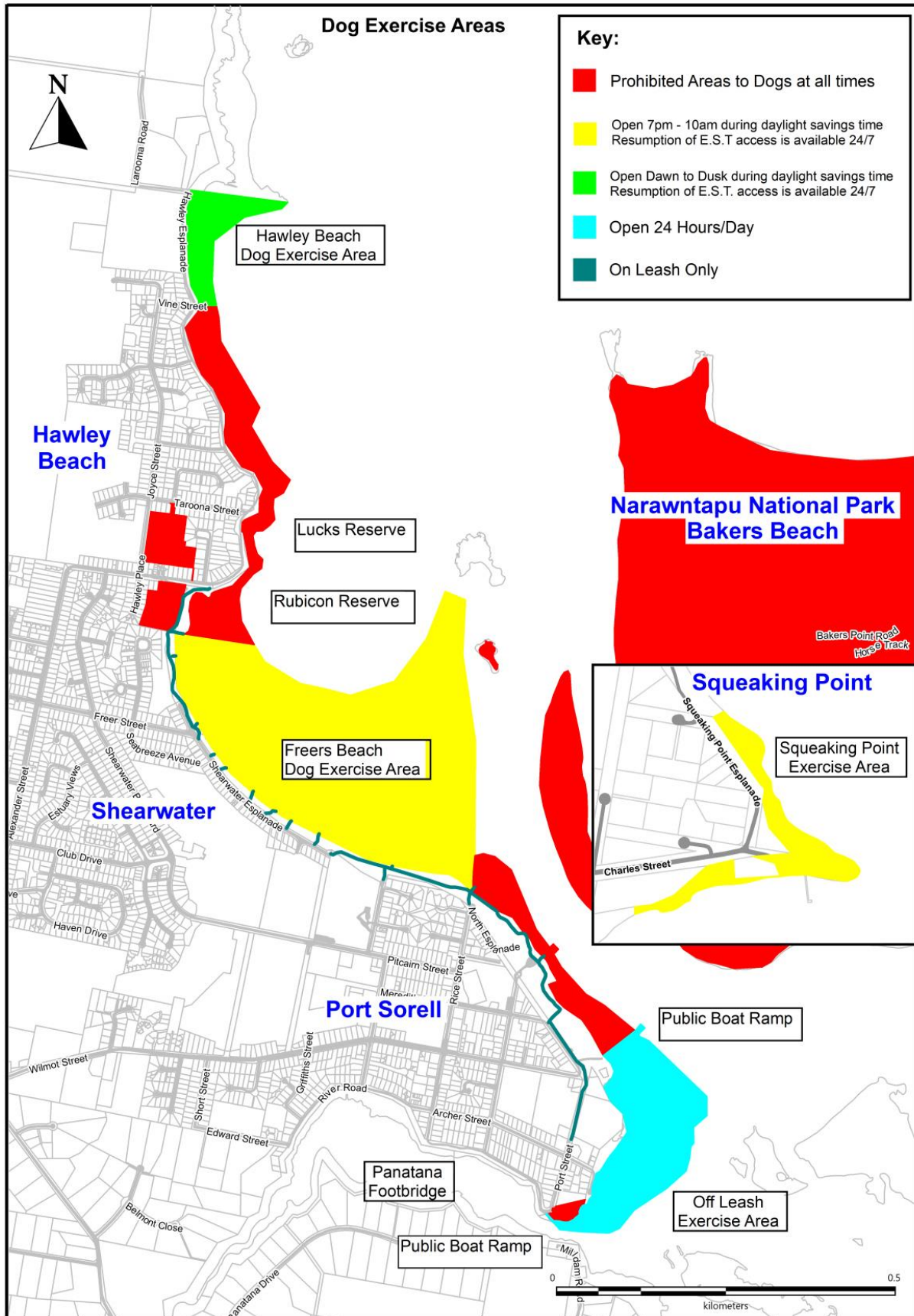
Exercise areas open 24 hours/day/all year

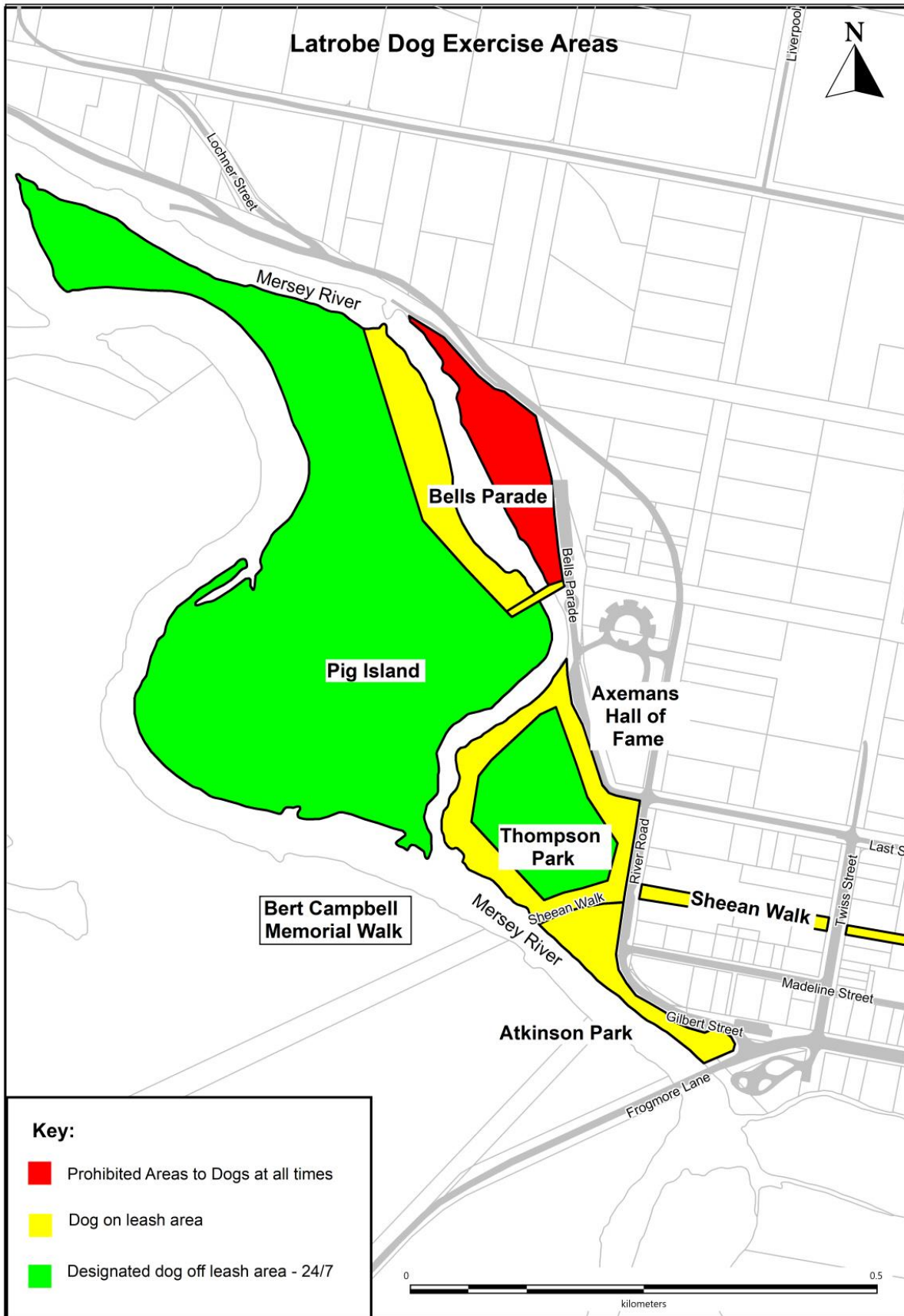
1. Port Sorell Foreshore from the boat ramp south to Panatana Rivulet
2. Thompson Park – Latrobe
3. Pig Island – Bells Parade - Please note there is an on-leash area (see maps)

Correct Use of Exercise Area

While using off-leash areas, dog owners are required to abide by the conditions that are clearly displayed on site. For the safety and convenience of other residents, users must dispose of a dogs droppings in the bins provided.

Please note: All dogs in a public place outside Councils off leash exercise areas must be on a lead not exceeding 2 metres, and all dogs in the leash free area must still remain under effective control, and be responsive to their owners commands, failure to do so, may result in an 'on the spot fine'.





12. DECLARED PROHIBITED AREAS

No dog is allowed in the following areas at any time without written permission from the General Manager (excluding Guide Dogs).

Port Sorell

- All schools/crèches
- All playgrounds
- All sports grounds/ovals
- Beach area in front of the Surf Club around to Boat Ramp
- Port Sorell Jetty
- Point Sorell (from the boom gate end of Hawley Esplanade)
- Narawntapu National Park
- Penguin Island (including 100m of the surrounding sand)
- Rabbit Island
- Shell Island
- ALL ISLANDS IN THE RUBICON ESTUARY
- Hawley Beach Foreshore from Hawley Place Beach access walkway (South of Surf Club) to the Hawley Beach exercise area starting at Vine Street/Esplanade
- Port Sorell foreshore from end of Rice Street to the Port Sorell Boat Ramp
- Port Sorell Caravan Park – camping with dogs permitted in small section of the park close to Port Sorell exercise area (by invitation only).
- Camp Banksia
- Shearwater and Thirlstane Golf Course
- Hawley Reserve
- Panatana Park and beach area near Panatana boat ramp
- Aub Luck Reserve and Rubicon Reserve

Latrobe

- All schools/crèches
- All playgrounds
- All Sports grounds/ovals
- Hospital
- Bells Parade (other than access to Pig Island off leash area and western bank of river on-leash area)
- Cemetery

13. WILDLIFE AND DOGS

Native or protected wildlife can be adversely affected by dogs, which can damage both populations and habitat. Where it is identified that dogs have a significant adverse effect on wildlife or their habitats, access for dogs may be restricted or in some instances prohibited (with the exception of Guide and Hearing dogs). Areas declared to be restricted or prohibited will be identified by the appropriate signage.

14. DOG TIDY BAG DISPENSERS

To assist with the clean up of dog faeces Council has also placed a number of dog tidy bags in dispensers in the following locations:

Port Sorell

- Cnr Hawley Esplanade and Vine Street
- Cnr Sankey Street / Hawley Esplanade
- Cnr Frederick Street / Hawley Esplanade
- Cnr Freer Street / Shearwater Esplanade
- Opposite 24 Shearwater Esplanade
- Shearwater Shopping Centre (Fairway Crescent)
- Beach end of Anderson Street
- Beach end of Rice Street
- Cnr Darling and Meredith Street
- Port Sorell Boat Ramp
- Cnr Wilmot and Rice Street
- Cnr Port and Archer Street
- Middle of Park Esplanade

Latrobe

- Station Square
- Council Chambers
- Thompson Park x 2
- Kings Park
- Dooley's Hill Walking Track (end of William Street)
- Cnr Bradshaw and Cotton Street
- Percival and Last Street
- Cnr Thomas and Lewis Street
- Cnr Hamilton and Reibey Street

15. DOG POO LOOS

If a dog, while in control of any person, defecates in a public place or in any private property which is not owned by the person in control of the dog, that person shall immediately remove the faeces and shall dispose of them in a lawful and suitable manner.

To assist dog owners, Council has placed a number of dog poo loos throughout the municipality.

These are located at: -

Port Sorell

- Port Sorell Boat Ramp
- Panatana Footbridge
- Freers Beach (end of Freer Street)
- Freers Beach (end of Rice Street)
- Hawley Esplanade (1st toilet block near shop)
- Hawley Esplanade (opposite Sankey Street)
- Hawley Esplanade (end of Vine Street)

Latrobe

- King's Park
- Dooley's Hill Walking Track (cnr William and Last Streets)
- Thompson Park x 2
- Bert Campbell Walk, opposite Australian Axemans Hall of Fame entry
- Pig Island off leash exercise area