

Being responsible for your animals

Pets are an important part of family life for many people. As well as providing companionship, affection and fun, having a pet can provide children with an opportunity to learn about responsibility.

Having a pet brings with it a number of responsibilities. All pets involve some extra work and cost. Being a pet owner can be a very rewarding experience, but it is not for everyone.

As a pet owner, you are responsible for your animal's well-being. This includes regular feeding, care and contact. Depending on the type of pet you choose, you may also need to provide other necessities, such as regular exercise, grooming, foot or dental care, training and control.

Animal Welfare

In New Zealand, the legislation regarding animal welfare is the Animal Welfare Act 1999. It is a very wide-ranging act that deals with offences in the handling and management of animals (including birds). Common offences include failing to provide an animal with adequate food, water and shelter, deliberate acts of cruelty towards an animal and failing to seek necessary veterinary advice.

Owning a pet

Whether you own a dog, cat, horse, mouse, rabbit, fish or bird, anyone of them can become your friend for life, provided that their needs are met by you, the caregiver.

If you are looking for more information on choosing or caring for a pet, there is more information on the New Zealand SPCA website - www.rspca.org.nz or ask your local vet for advice.

For more information, please contact:

Animal Control
Buller District Council
Brougham St
Westport
Ph: (03) 788 9112

