

Michael Rowan

KDWA Dog Survey 2022	Michael Rowan's answers
1. Council and KDWA currently meet quarterly to discuss dog-related issues. The meeting is between the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and our President and Vice President and lasts less than an hour. Do you support the continuation of these meetings? If you nominated for Mayor or Deputy Mayor, would you attend these meetings in person?	I have not nominated for either position but if I had I would support these meetings and would hope they were arranged to fit into my schedule to ensure I could attend.
2. Do you support the allocation of funds in the next budget for the development of a Kingborough dog strategy (similar to many other strategies such as waste, green-space, cycling etc)?	I will give the same answer to everyone and every group that asks this kind of question. It is very poor financial management to commit to expenditures one at a time, in advance of considering the whole set of budget allocations. This leads to pork barrelling, and spending money where the voices of demand are loudest not where the need is greatest. And who knows what needs might emerge between a councillor making such a commitment and framing the next budget. Who can predict floods, fires or pandemics? What I can say is that I have almost always had a dog and will support members of the Kingborough community owning dogs, and being able to exercise them in a way that is good for the dog and the owner. I have more to say on this below.
3. Do you support connecting the Alum Cliffs track to Taroona for dog walkers? This might involve permitting dogs on-lead across a small part of Hinsby Beach.	Dogs are free to be walked on a lead on public roads and I think this should be the default option for paths and beaches, with exclusions only for well defined purposes. If there are people who think dogs should not be allowed on leads on a part of Hinsby Beach I would listen to them, but would need persuading that the value to the community overall of extending a track for walking dogs on leads, shared with other users, is outweighed by not allowing dogs on leads on any part of the beach.

Michael Rowan

4. What are your views on permitting dogs on most or all beaches during the colder months when the beaches are otherwise rarely used? Should this access be limited to certain times?	I arrived in Tasmania on a yacht with my (late) wife, a chocolate Lab and a brown Burmese cat. Before that I lived at Henley Beach in SA. The rule there was dogs could be on the beach at all times, but on a lead of no more than 2m between 10am and 8pm during daylight saving months, and under effective control at all other times. Dogs are always required to be on leads on paths through the dunes where birds may be nesting, That seemed to work well for everyone, and their dog. Some cats too, though all but one always on a lead. I don't see why a similar set of rules would not work in Kingborough.
5. About 40% of households own dogs and these owners need access to on-lead and off-lead dog exercise areas; this is becoming more challenging with rapid development in our area. Do you support continued growth and development of community facilities that are designed for and/or accessible to dog owners?	Yes, remembering always that dogs do not belong in areas where families with small children gather (though they may choose to play in areas where they can interact with dogs), national parks, culturally sensitive areas, or bird nesting sites.
6. If the current Taswater site at Dru Point becomes Council land, would you support the development of this land as an extension of the existing dog exercise area? Would you consider the construction of a large all-weather covered section for the use of the whole community via a booking system?	A bit like my answer above to the budget question, I would need to assess all the possible uses of this site together before committing to one. But that said, I do support the expansion of areas where dogs can exercise - and socialise - off lead. And people with them. As to the all weather covered section, I would need information on need and cost before saying anything useful on this.
7. Kingborough Council and KDWA developed a very effective Dog Management Policy in 2019 and this is due for review in 2023. What are your priorities when it comes up for review?	I would like to see the Policy more clearly espouse the health benefits - mental and physical - and community benefits of dog ownership, and be more permissive of where dogs can be exercised.

Michael Rowan

8. Are there any other comments related to dogs that you would like to make?	The KCC Policy refers to the health benefits of dog ownership. I would like to see this explained in more detail, and quantified, and likewise the extent to which the interactions between people in the course of exercising their dogs builds community connections. When more people are living alone, and into older age, I think promoting dog ownership is potentially a major mental and physical health, and community development strategy for the municipality. There is no doubt good research on this in the literature, but it would be good to do something like offer a modest scholarship for a UTAS student in psychology or sociology to do an Honours thesis on the topic .Perhaps we will find that promoting dog ownership by providing more facilities for their exercise is a cost effective way of promoting the health of the Kingborough community.
--	--