

About Cromwell Dogs Charitable Trust

880+

Petition Signatures

Registered

Community Charity

Community

Funded

Cromwell

Local Initiative

Who we are

- A community-led organisation founded to advocate for safe, shaded, accessible off-leash dog exercise space in Cromwell.
- Now a registered charity reflecting the seriousness and long-term nature of this community concern.
- Over 880 Cromwell residents have signed our petition.
- Community members have contributed their own funds for independent reports.

Our approach

- Evidence-based, professional and constructive.
- We do not assume council has acted incorrectly.
- We seek informed, collaborative decision-making.
- We welcome dialogue and are open to solutions that work for the whole community.

We are pleased the felling is likely to be paused. After reviewing the agenda, we are concerned that both options remove dog walking status

Please take option 1 with this modification to retain the status quo:

Option 1 – (Recommended)

To delay harvesting of the block until global stability returns to maximise financial return.
To keep the dog walking status ~~removed~~ and install adequate signage.

Advantages:

- Allows Council to wait until there is more certainty globally with the potential to maximise returns and diesel pricing to de-escalate.
- Reduces risk and increases safety of the community by limiting access to the Forestry Block
- Does not require additional budget or rely on staff availability to dedicate the necessary requirement to maintain a high level of safety.

Disadvantages:

- The block is a Forestry Block and will need to be Harvest in the future, potential savings missed by sharing site establishment and crew costs.
- ~~Reduce area for dog owners to exercise their dogs~~

Additional advantages

- No carbon credit repayments (Currently \$2.5-3million)
- Maximise financial return with a further 25 years growth to produce high quality lumber.
- To keep community access to a well loved fully shaded recreation space
- Cromwell community has used this space safely for over 30 years, this option allows this to continue
- Potential savings lost will be regained by felling mature trees in 25 years time
- This option allows time for future planning and engagement with long term management plan.
- **Status Quo = \$1200 council current expenditure + the community continuing self management = No injuries to community = extremely low risk exposure to council funds.**

Additional Disadvantages



Both Arborist Reports Conclude the Forest is Safe

Council Forestry Report | Laurie Forestry Ltd (May 2026)

“Of the total **44.9 hectares of Crop Type 1**, a total of **21 trees** were identified as containing elements of **low to moderate risk to the public**. Given there is likely to be about **12,350 trees** in these blocks, this confirms only about **0.17% of the trees comprise some risk.**”

“During the walkthrough, any trees found to present a low to moderate risk were marked with a full circumference band of blue paint, noting there were no trees found representing a high risk.”

TREES NOT FULLY MATURE, WILL INCREASE IN VALUE/ VALUE WON'T BE AFFECTED.

“**The trees can be regarded as extremely slow growing and small for their age.**”: Professional advice states that delaying the Harvest of the trees will not impact the estimated return as even though they are of age they **are still considered small/average in size.**”

A HIGH USE AREA = EXTREME IMPACT

“About 20 people were noted to be walking dogs or otherwise interacting in the forest in the 4.5 hours I was there, confirming it is indeed a high use area.”

Independent Arborist Report | Mathew Olsen, Cut Above Tree Services (March 2026)

“The trees that are proposed to stay are in a healthy and stable condition, with only minor maintenance required.”

“There are a small number of trees that require pruning or removal to **address minor safety concerns.**”

“The absence of wind-related damage suggests good structural integrity **and stable root systems among dominant and co-dominant stems.**”

“**Dominant and co-dominant stems are structurally stable.**”

“Finally, the stand of pinus trees is still currently immature for harvest and currently low value. Retaining them provides immediate environmental and amenity benefits. Deferring harvest for 25-30 years would allow further growth and increased timber value.”

ONLY 21 OUT OF 12,350 TREES ARE A LOW TO MODERATE RISK.

Community-Reported Dog Incidents in Cromwell's Shared Public Spaces

KEY FINDING: All incidents below occurred in shared public spaces — NOT in the Sandflat Road off-leash forest. The forest functions as a containment mechanism. Removing it removes that containment.

Date	Incident Type	Location	Outcome / Severity	Contributing Factors
Apr 15, 2026	Dog-to-human aggression (off-leash dog, dark hours)	Near Paper Plus PO Boxes, Cromwell	191 community reactions	No designated off-leash area nearby; shared pedestrian space; low visibility
May 2026 (~5 days ago)	Off-leash dog charging on-leash dogs	Cromwell public space	Dogs & owner distressed; 209 community reactions	Dogs using shared walkways due to lack of contained space
May 2026	Dog with no recall — owner refused to retrieve	Cromwell (unspecified)	Public safety concern; owner confrontation	Absence of designated off-leash area; no recall training evident
May 2026 (new resident)	5+ off-leash dogs spotted in 2 days	Cromwell general	Resident afraid to walk reactive dog in public	Insufficient contained space; nowhere safe for reactive dogs
May 2026	Off-leash dog ran across main road near prams	Wanaka waterfront (comparable area)	Car emergency stop; pedestrian near-miss	Dog displaced from appropriate zones into traffic areas
Ongoing	Roaming/unleashed dogs near pedestrians & children	Cromwell general	Community concern; predicted serious incident imminent	Insufficient contained off-leash areas; dog activity in shared zones

Community-Reported Dog Incidents in Cromwell's Shared Public Spaces

KEY FINDING: All incidents below occurred in shared public spaces — NOT in the Sandflat Road off-leash forest. The forest functions as a containment mechanism. Removing it removes that containment.

This will only continue to get worse as Cromwell grows. Imagine this WITHOUT a safe off leash area.

Off leash status is an important designation for the exercise of dogs in this area. This is the safest place.

just had an offleash dog run over owner with no recall and she refused to come and get it and told me to just keep walking and she DOESNT HAVE

This seems to be more and more of a problem in Cromwell, random dogs roaming around with no owners and unleashed dogs running up on people. It's just a matter of time before there's a bad dog attack

100% agree with you. I moved here only 2 days ago and have spotted more than 5 dogs walking around without a leash. My dog is exceptionally aggressive to other dogs and I'm afraid of walking him now

Every morning my wife is up early, and out walking. This morning i woke up to a shivering, visablely upset and terrified wife. Unfortunately, she was walking in the dark, with her head lamp on, and as she had walked past the PO boxes by Paper Plus, a black shepherd (Estimated breed, but relevant size) bolted upto her, bailing her up, showing its teeth and barking.

My wife screamed, yelling in fear, as it snapped and growled. The owner appeared shortly after and grabbed the dog away.

People...please put your dog on a leash...especially in the dark. My dogs dont understand that your dog is "friendly" when they run full speed at them, out of no where, in the pitch black. Get them a longer leash if you want them to have a bit of freedom, but still keep them leashed! Dog owners like you are the reason my dogs are so anxious and untrusting of other dogs.

👍 209 💬 63 ➦



Let's Work Together: How can we help?

Council Forestry Report | Laurie Forestry Ltd (May 2026)

In Summary

Whilst my inspection found a forest which presents as an overall low risk to users, if it is not to be harvested in the immediate future, I would recommend Council adopt a public notifications and management policy.

This would include appropriate signage which should have an emphasis on simplicity with the primary goals being information sharing and risk mitigation.

Some observation and possible management inputs are also recommended following severe storm events.

We want to work WITH CODC with ongoing management of this site.

We love this space and want to help maintain it for the 880+ community members that we represent.

Volunteers, fundraising, putting up signs ourselves during wind events ETC