

Claire Smith

Hi, my name is Claire Smith.

I have been in the dog world since 1997, taking a few years off from 2008 while I travelled overseas, and have been active again since my return to New Zealand in 2012. I live in Nelson with my husband Phil, and my three Border Collies; Riot, Hype and Wicked. I work full time in finance for a large international helicopter company within the oil and gas sector. I am an active member of the Nelson Dog Training Club, where I have been involved in instructing and planning obedience and agility classes, and have held positions of agility and obedience co-ordinators, and have been on the subcommittees and management committee for numerous years, including as Vice-President, Treasurer, and currently as President. Instructing new people and their dogs helps me keep a broad perspective of the sport which I believe is an asset when change is being debated. I also take advantage of opportunities to educate myself around canine fitness, and handling techniques so I bring a well-rounded understanding of agility and the agility dog. In August 2016 I stood up and filled an open position on the Agility Committee, I genuinely enjoyed my time on the committee, and am looking forward to having the chance to once again step up to support and nurture our sport. I am looking forward to the standardisation of agility equipment and feel that this is the next step in safety for our dogs. I believe that the state of agility is good at the moment. We have come out the other side of some really big changes, and it is important to let these changes now settle, and to see how they will work. However, I believe the agility committee, as our selected leaders, need to be careful of sabotaging change. It can happen when a committee, think, explore, and debate about changes, and then announce changes out of the blue, without any prior communication. Sometimes I think it can be forgotten that the rest of the agility community have not been a part of the discussions and are not as familiar with the reasons for the changes, and it can cause a large amount of resistance. Because of all these recent changes to our regulations, I believe that the Agility Committee needs to enter a state of calm. Unless required for safety reasons or standardisation of equipment, I would like to see no new regulation changes over the next term. If and when changes do happen I would like to see the process slowed down and more time taken to communicate and consult with the agility community. I would also like to see better communication when changes are made as to how clubs are to handle the changes and how they are to be implemented at club level. With this, I support Nick and Steve's ideology of taking time to build a long term strategic vision for our sport, and feel it's important that all agility members are able to contribute to that. I am always happy to be contacted and to voice your ideas, concerns or questions to the agility committee.

Reece Smith

My name is Reece Smith and I currently reside in the lower South Island city of Dunedin.

I have been involved in Agility since 2006, joining the Otago canine training club with my first dog – a Kelpie called Jack – which then turned into me joining their club committee and then becoming the club secretary for approx. 5 years and taking many training classes. In 2016 I joined the Taieri Canine Training club, where I am now a member of the club committee as well as training in the classes there as well.

As well as club committees I have also done a stint on the Gore 2014 NZDAC and now again for the 2019 NZDAC.

These days I have 6 dogs, a retired kelpie, 4 border collies (mediums), and a Parsons Russel Terrier (mini). I've had lots of good times and lots of challenges and I keep coming back because of how much enjoyment I get from working with my dogs, and spending time with my friends, and the greater agility committee.

In my non-dog time I work within local government which gives me some idea of what I might expect on the agility committee, as well as setting and working toward strategic goals.

If I made it on the AC I would like to see transparency continue to improve, most things have been done well lately but there is always room to improve.

I would also like to see club training helped – without clubs training new members we won't see agility thriving, which is what we'd all love to see, I'm sure there is more that could be done to help everyone out.

This is the first time I've even thought about putting my name in the hat for the agility committee, and if I were to be elected, I will put in as much as I can to help out agility to make it better for the future.



Steve Chester

Like Nick Chester & others I have been thinking about the AC and have decided to stand again with the knowledge that I have some like-minded candidates standing alongside me, people who agree on what I think are the basic things the AC should stand for.

I endorse Nick's comments in his Facebook post. To me the key is communication, the community needs to know what the AC are doing, what direction they are heading in and at what speed! I strongly believe that consultation with the community should be a requirement for any significant changes and that good communication would make it clear what changes need to be consulted on formally.

We need to take some time to consolidate recent changes and re-establish the AC as part of the community, not a separate entity and to keep regulation changes to an absolute minimum.

Building a long term strategic vision for our sport which all agility members can contribute to, is very important and should be the main focus for the incoming committee

I've been competing in Agility about 24 years and have fulfilled most roles - Judge, Club president, Chair of the AC, delegate to the NZKC Exec and have gone from being a mad keen competitor who went to any event possible, to someone who now still loves competing but just goes to more convenient shows and enjoys a ribbon trial just as much as a Champ show, so I can appreciate most competitors point of view.

I am the only person to have been on every AC to date (not continuously, but at some stage of each) and have enjoyed some - others less so! I believe that one of the mainstays of a good AC is respect.

Respect for the community, even those who disagree with decisions.

Respect for each other as members of the AC.

Respect for the AC from the community.

Really it should all be about having fun with our dogs!



Karen Grant

Firstly, I would like to thank the outgoing Agility Committee for their hard work and perseverance. It is great to see some of the current AC members re-standing as continuity between committees is very important.

I have been involved in Agility for over 20 years now. During that time I have served on club committees where I have held the positions of Secretary, Show Secretary and Agility Co-ordinator. I have also been a member of the past two Zone 5 NDTA/NZDAC committees and am currently Secretary of the 2019 NZDAC Organising Committee.



I was also a member of the recent Heights Review Sub-committee, something I found both very challenging and very satisfying.

In my life outside Agility I have a background in general and financial administration. I currently work at the University of Otago where I provide support to staff and students in the School of Biomedical Sciences.

When considering a problem I like to take an evidence-based approach and try to look at it from different points of view. I believe I have a can-do attitude and am not afraid to think outside the box to find a solution.

Looking back, it is amazing how far Agility has come in the time I have been competing. I believe that where we are now is a very exciting time for Agility in New Zealand and the future looks bright for our sport. I look forward to being able to play a part in shaping that future over the next two years.

Nick Chester

For those that don't know me, I have been involved in agility for 20 years, and as a judge for nearly 15. I have served on 2 previous AC's, am president of my local agility club and also ran last year's NZDAC in Kihikihi.

Like many others, I am a very busy person - on top of these dog commitments, I also have my personal and family commitments, and a full time job. It is with a certain degree of reluctance that I put my name forward because of this and I want to stress that I will not be able to give as much time to the AC as perhaps people are used to.

However, this is one of my primary drivers for standing. I want to see the agility community start to solve problems collectively, and not look to the AC to do it all. This means less regulation changes, and a greater focus on strategic thinking, supporting clubs and growing the sport through greater inclusion on new competitors.

I am standing on a platform of making no new regulation changes in the next two years (unless required for safety reasons or for the reasons of standardising gear), and instead use this time to build a clear, long term strategic vision for our sport that we all can all contribute to. This will take time, and everyone needs to be brought on the journey. Having a strong vision that we all have contributed to will mean that future committees can make informed decisions and hopefully make the transitions between each committee much smoother.

I also want to demystify the role of the AC, making it clear what they actually do and how they do it. Most people's only interaction is through reading minutes (if they are really interested) or seeing surveys/consultations and endless Facebook arguments. By showing more clearly what they do, this will hopefully make people more interested and less combative.

The end result is that I hope to leave a legacy where many people want to be involved with the AC, rather than the current system where people feel it is too much work or that the expectations on them will be too high.

I have a good track record at working with a lot of different people, and being able to listen to and overcome differences of opinion to get the right result for the agility community.

Emma Gregg

I am in the unique position of having both been in the agility scene for 20 years plus, as well as being a relatively new-comer to the sport by taking a 10-year break. I have now been back into this fantastic sport for about 5 years and wow, agility propelled itself forward by leaps and bounds while I was away!



I am vice president of Feilding Dog Training Club and have been an active member of school PTA's from kindergarten to high school level for over 16 years. This year, I have been a key member of the NZDAC 2018 committee, taking on several roles and responsibilities. NZDAC committee has given me a vast amount of committee experience at a national level, which has been a step up from my previous roles. I am now keen to take the next progression, which is to represent the agility community in the Agility Committee.

I am extremely hard working and give 100% to anything I do. I am a Veterinary Surgical nurse at Massey University and work with a sports dog specialist. I am innovative, extremely enthusiastic, approachable and open. One of the best things about agility is the incredible diversity of people that enjoy the sport, unfortunately this also means there are a wide range of opinions about any issue. I believe any member of the Agility Committee needs to be open minded to everyone's opinion.

Some of the things I would like to see are

- Standardization of equipment
- continuation of improvements to communication with the agility community
- a high level of support to those new to agility
- support of agility at club level including training for instructors
- making sure agility stays fun and inclusive

The current committee has done a great job at progressing equipment standardization and safety for our dogs. My particular passion is those in the community that enjoy dog agility as a social way to spend fun, quality time with their dogs. Agility needs to continue to be a fun sport that includes all our community members and therefore retains our newest members, as they are the future of our sport and without them there is no future for dog agility in New Zealand.

Sallie Remon

Why am I standing for the AC again? To be honest, I want to be able to continue all the good work that this AC has started and I want to be able to offer some continuity to the AC which wouldn't be possible if all the current committee stood down.

I believe in our sport and the hundreds of volunteers who go out week after week, the judges, show managers & secretary's, the ring party, the trainers, the club committee members and anyone else who does anything to enable others to enjoy their hobby. I stand to represent these people.

I am currently on the club trainer's sub-committee, working towards helping clubs inspire new trainers and competitors. I am taking another foundation course for our club at the moment as I love helping and encouraging new handlers into the sport, as well as those coming back again with a new dog.

I am also Chair of the Junior Dog Training section of Dogs NZ and thoroughly enjoy running our annual dog training Camp. To help to nurture and encourage the new generation of our sport to become agility handlers is truly a passion of mine.

As a Senior Judge, I enjoy judging all over the Country and have a broad understanding of Agility in the 5 Zones and how different it can be. I am also on the mentor panel and love helping new judges into the sport as well as putting in place initiatives like the Global Judging Programme taking place in January, to upskill all our judges.

Despite some negative feedback during my first term on the AC, I have still enjoyed this time. I am proud to say that as a committee, although we had our differences of opinion sometimes, we were able to work together for the good of our sport, to survey and listen to people's opinions and put in place some significant changes to improve both safety and fairness across all breeds of dog.

If elected, I hope to continue to follow our vision of a world class sport, supporting and inspiring clubs and promoting individual potential from grass roots to Grand Champions.



Wayne Turner

Hello, my name is Wayne Turner and I am the founder of The Turner Ways Tunnels. I have been the President of Upper Hutt Dog Club for the past 5 years. Dogs are my passion and I believe in working hard and playing safe. I am responsible for introducing The Turner Way collapsible tunnel to agility. Over 5 years have I taken the lead in relocating the Upper Hutt Dog Club to new grounds working very closely with Upper Hutt City Council. This has been one of the highlights of my presidency of the Upper Hutt Dog Club.



I have been competing in dog agility for about 9 years with a number of dogs. I have a background in coaching and administration with Rugby and Basketball

Sue McKee

This will be my first time putting my name forward as a candidate for the AC. I have been in the sport for almost 30 years and am a life member of the Nelson Dog Training Club, where I started out supporting my husband and our GSP who decided after trying obedience that it wasn't the sport for them. Someone suggested they try this new game of Agility and from then on we never looked back. I



was a committee member for many years, which included taking on the role of secretary, and then became agility co-ordinator in charge of training schedules, taking classes and running sub-committee meetings, before we moved to North Canterbury in 2002. I have been on the committee of the famous Hanmer holiday show and on the NZDAC 2016 Rakaia. I ran maxi dogs for many years (Vizslas and a Brittany) and converted to medium Border Collies in 2012. I even had a crack at running a borrowed mini a long time ago, so think I have a good perspective on all heights. I have two Border Collies, a chocolate and a black and white.

I believe I represent the average agility person, the one who turns up week after week and occasionally has some good results, other times not so good, and the ones who contribute to the prize pool. I love agility, enjoy competing and socialising each weekend with my friends and their dogs, doing what we all love doing, hanging out with our human and canine mates. Even if I don't manage to get a clear round all weekend, it is still a buzz to get round a course, especially if it has nice flowing lines for the dogs to enjoy. I compete at senior, intermediate and jumpers A with my older dog and novice, intermediate and jumpers A with the baby.

I thoroughly support the recent changes to jump heights and am excited to see other changes ahead for the benefit of all dogs and competitors. I would like to think that I am approachable and fair-minded, and that people realise that I have the good of agility and our dogs at the heart of everything that I do. I take a keen interest in overseas trends and seminars to improve handling and am open to new ideas.

After a long break away from any position of responsibility within a club I now feel it is again time to give back to the sport that has given me so much over the years and hope that if I am elected I can help to ensure Agility remains enjoyable for everyone for many years to come.

Chris Richardson

Well, where to start... Most of you will have had some experience with me in the past... maybe you know me because you're local... maybe you know me because I have judged you... or maybe you have heard rumours about me... For those of you who don't, I'm Chris...



I have been involved in Agility for just on 10 years now, and Facebook told me the other day, that I have been judging for 7 of those years... how time flies when you're having fun... and that's what agility is supposed to be.. FUN!! Something you can do with your dog, to help meld that bond you have with them... however, having just spent the last year and a half on the AC, it hasn't all been fun... so why am I re-standing you're probably wondering... well here it is...

The time I have spent on the AC already hasn't actually all been doom and gloom, there have been a lot of laughs along the way, and in fact there has been a lot of good that has been started, some of which I have been closely involved with, and I would like to see that continue. I know this term there have been a lot of changes going on, which makes people nervous, and I get that, but at the start of our term we all sat down and formulated a vision for the sport... and the changes that have been made so far, are all in line with that vision... however, I do feel at times, part of the vision gets left behind.. the part that involves the agility community more, so one of the things I would like to work on over the next term of AC is to get the AC more involved with the community and really working together as an open book, to all make sure we are heading in the direction of our vision.

I have always been one to call a spade a spade and at times that doesn't go down so well, and sometimes my twisted sense of humour can be mistaken for malice, but I try to keep an even and unbiased keel when it comes to decision making and if someone has a compelling enough argument as to why the spade is actually a shovel, then cool... convince me, and I'll call it a shovel... after all, everyone needs a shovel from time to time to shovel through all the you get my point...

Part of my election campaign isn't going to be plastering bill boards everywhere that say "Vote for me" while I try to pretend I don't look like a horse (yeah, I'm not exactly a fan of Jacinda) or anything too serious like that... but what I will do, is be as approachable as I can be when I'm at shows so that people can come and talk to me about my thoughts on different topic... just beware, if it's early in the morning, do a quick check first that I've had at least 2 coffees, and if in doubt, bring me another one just to be on the safe side, otherwise it might not go so well...

Over this last term, I have been part of the Judges Sub Committee, and we are working on ways to improve the education and betterment of our judges, both existing and upcoming, and I feel while we are on the right track, there is still a long way to go, and I would like to continue working through this to ensure that judges are given the tools they need to become great judges. I have also been a part of the Equipment Sub Committee and the standardisation of equipment, which is making great progress, and I would like to continue working through that if I am voted on to the new committee.

So now that you all know a bit more about me, it's up to you to decide, am I someone that can represent YOU and YOUR voice on the next Agility Committee...

Robyn Fargher

Robyn lives in Otane, Central Hawke's Bay and has been a teacher at Hastings Girls' High School for over 35 years.

Her passion though, is her five dogs; Leo, Shuffle, Wyn, Astro and new to the Hairy Maclary Bunch, Tigger. Her dogs compete from Starters to Senior with a Veteran in there for good measure.

Because she has competed at all levels, heights and splits (or lack thereof!), she has a firm understanding of competitors viewpoints and the implications of making changes.



Robyn has been a member of the Hawke's Bay Dog Training Club for 25 years, dedicating 22 of those as a Committee member and she was presented with Life Membership in 2017. The other hats she often dons for the club are Agility Coordinator, Show Secretary and measurer. On quieter weekends, where running 5 dogs at a show hasn't been enough to keep Robyn busy, she is a Judge and Show Secretary for other clubs.

Robyn has been a part of past innovations within the agility community, being one of the first people to adopt electronic Clear Round Certificates and processing of show results. Looking forwards, she wants to nurture grass roots agility, encouraging beginners to stay in this sport to ensure its growth and success. Whilst most people are "in it to win it", for some success may be just completing the course! Her firm belief is that Agility should be a sport that nearly anybody can take part in and achieve some level of success.

With the Heights Review Subcommittee having done a fantastic job and new equipment standardisation regulations for the collapsible tunnel, weaves and bi-directional long jump coming into force, Robyn is looking forward to the opportunity of picking up from where the current Agility Committee has taken these changes to and continuing to make agility safe and fun for everyone.

Robyn has already served a term on the Agility Committee where she had responsibility for the calendar organisation and measurement overview.

Fiona Hodgson

In 2007 I stood for the inaugural AC and my letter of application from that time is below.

I am applying for candidacy to a position on the NZAC as I am keen to be involved in the inaugural sitting of this body which we have all worked so hard to bring into existence.

My involvement with agility started in 1988, and since then I have been a member of both Rotorua and Napier clubs, more lately joining Upper Hutt since moving to the area in late 2005. I am currently involved primarily in developing and instructing Foundation level agility classes.

My interest in the governance of agility saw me involved in discussions with the NZKC in 1998 resulting from a petition of agility people with regard the governance of our sport.

In 2005, I became a member of the NZAWG instrumental in bringing about the inception of the NZAC.

My particular areas of interest are Judges and Training.

I would very much like to see a more comprehensive judges training program resulting in greater support and more help for new judges and avenues for up-skilling as appropriate. I am also passionate about agility training and I would like to see club instructors have access to quality training material and assistance as I feel there is always room for up-skilling in this area.

I believe I would be a valuable member of the NZAC team as I am familiar with and currently involved in all levels of the sport from those taking their first steps in our sport, to the very top end of the agility spectrum all over NZ.

So here we are 11 years later. This is all mostly still true (except I've been back in Hawkes Bay for 6 years now). So what has changed since then?

I competed with the first bunch of kiwis to go to the Aussie Nationals in 2007 and have since judged a few times on the "West Island"

Having taken a year off the judge's panel in 2018. I will be back in 2019 and have my first appointment for January. I am not running a dog much at present as the two I have been running are just that bit older now but still have a play now and then.

It is one of my greatest regrets that a major revamp of the Judges training and support system was not undertaken in the first term of the AC (or since) as other priorities seemed more important at the time. I see judges training and ongoing development as one of the most important areas which could benefit from some updating. I am on the Judges sub-committee of the current AC and I feel that there are things in that area which I would like to drive forward.

One of my best assets is that I know and understand well all Dogs NZ codes and have been active in all of them over time. I am also (as Nick would say) one of "those" detail people who know the regulations pretty much inside out.

I would also be very keen to take up the role of Agility representative to the Dogs NZ Executive if elected to the AC.

Phil Johnson

For those who don't know me, I have been involved in Dog Agility for over 15 years along with my fiancé Lisa Duff. I am a builder and run a small building and landscaping company in North Canterbury. In my earlier life, I was a solicitor and practised in Company and Commercial law for many years. I am a member of the great Waimakariri Dog Training Club and would be proud to represent the Zone 4 agility region.

I have chosen to stand for the AC because I would like the opportunity to give back to the sport that has given us so much over the many years.

I am a practical, common sense kind of guy. I am a logical thinker and a team player, and I am able to look at things from a variety of perspectives. I call a spade a spade and wear my heart on my sleeve. Fortunately, I also have a very thick skin. I have previously been the President and Vice-President of our dog club as well as being involved in WDC committee for many years. I have also been involved with the organisation and management of various sports clubs over the years.

I believe the existing AC has done a fantastic job in their current term and made an enormous amount of progress for the betterment of our sport, in particular the recent height changes. I would love to be involved with the continuation of this great work keeping the focus on equipment safety and equipment standardisation. I would also like the future AC to explore and possibly implement the next step after the heights changes including looking at various options for splits.

Additionally I would like to see more people getting into judging and for the AC to look at ways of encouraging this. I firmly believe that everyone has a voice, and everyone is entitled to have that voice heard. We may not always agree with someone's opinions but I am always willing to listen and engage when appropriate. If elected I hope to be able to represent your voice.

I also believe that agility is fun, but some of the fun seems to have been lost in recent times so I would love to help bring the fun back. (I'm always open to suggestions)

So that's me in a nutshell. I am always available for a chat and am happy to answer any queries you may have.