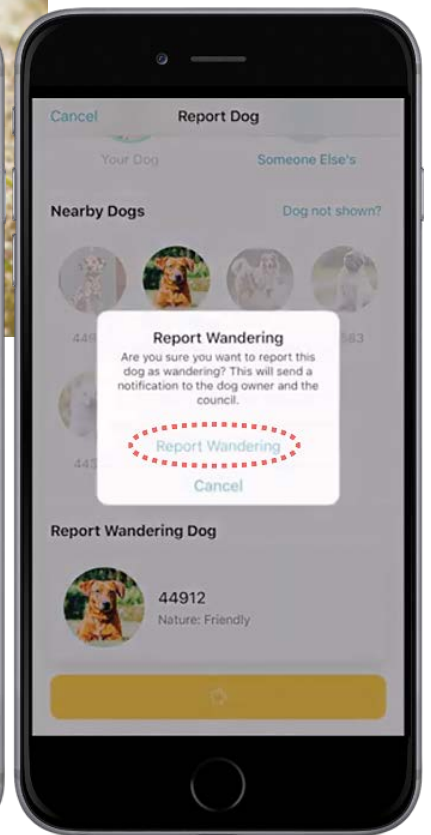
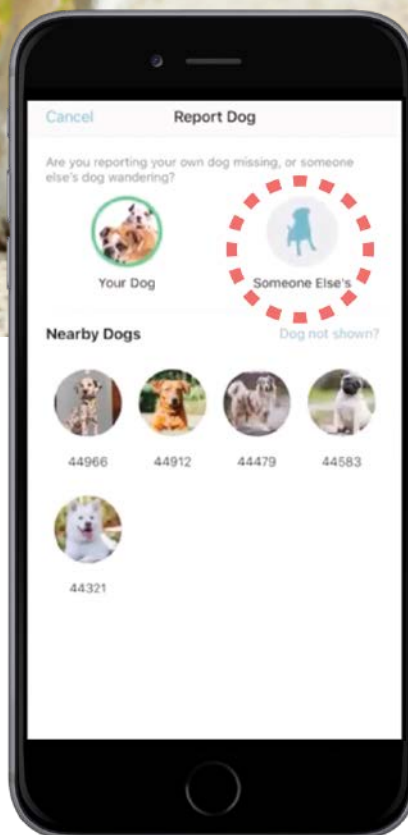




# Doggone that's a clever idea

Doggone is an IT reuniting solution designed to help with the quick and painless reuniting of a lost dog with its owner. In a nutshell, it involves a Smart Bluetooth registration tag, an App and a SMS service, which are both free. **Tracy Austin**, founding director of Doggone, explains.



More than a reuniting tool, Doggone is a Smart tool that provides council both with valuable data for the purposes of animal control and planning, and a targeted comms tool.

The Hutt City Council first offered Doggone to its dog owners as part of the dog registration process in 2019/20, and again for this 2020/21 registration year; and other councils are currently engaging in conversation around potential trials.

Doggone has also just been granted a registered patent for its 'Report a Wandering Dog' feature in the App. The benefits to members of the public, dog owners and council are significant in safety and response terms.

Everyone has at least once in a lifetime seen a wandering dog and wondered how best to find its owner but aborted the thought almost immediately because it was in the too hard basket.

Thanks to the smarts of our Christchurch tech company, Doggone, help is now as straight forward as one tap of a button.

Every day lost dogs are reunited with their owners through Doggone's Smart Bluetooth registration tag and App, and Doggone's free text service. And now every day, any member of the public can assist with reuniting a wandering dog with its owner – all they need is the Doggone app, and that's free.

Doggone's 'Report a Wandering Dog' feature within the App is the first of its kind anywhere in the world and is patent protected. Removing the need to engage with an unknown dog, anyone with the App can help simply by tapping the 'Report a dog as wandering' button in the App, resulting in a photo of all nearby dogs wearing a Doggone Smart tag appearing. By selecting the appropriate photo, the identity of



the wandering dog is verified and a notification that the dog has been sighted is sent directly to the dog's owner, and the animal management team at the council the dog is registered with.

The inspiration behind Doggone was the opportunity to reduce the anxiety and stress felt not only by both by dog owners and dogs, but also people in the community, in the event of a dog being lost, or seen out wandering alone.

I wanted to develop a way of quickly reuniting dog and owner that is smart, safe and easy to use. And I wanted it to be accessible to everyone to encourage a whole of community response to keeping dogs out of shelters and at home where they belong.

And that's really where the 'report a wandering dog' feature in the App is so exciting. Anyone in the wider community with the free Doggone app on their phone can assist by notifying of a wandering dog without the need of engaging with an unknown dog – it's technology with a truly social purpose.

The full Doggone service includes a Smart Bluetooth registration tag, the free App and a free text reuniting service. The Bluetooth chip in every Doggone tag is programmed to connect with the GPS capability on any nearby phone that has the app installed, enabling the GPS on that phone to be used to create a location point for the sighting of a dog.

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Sightings are sent anonymously and encrypted from that device to the dog's owner via the app, showing its last known whereabouts. They can mark their dog as 'lost' should it escape and mark it as 'found' once reunited. When marked as lost, owners receive real-time notifications whenever a sighting for their dog is generated.

Hutt City Council has offered dog owners the option of a Doggone Smart tag as their official registration tag for the past two years.

More than 600 registered dogs were reunited through this app or free text service last year in the Lower Hutt area alone, and we receive daily interest from dog owners around the country asking when their council will be introducing Doggone on some level.

We are now actively working with more Councils around New Zealand looking at how Doggone can be best integrated into the annual dog registration process; whether that's offering dog owners to opt for a smart registration tag or by integrating Doggone's SMS service into dog registration, so all dog owners have access to at least some of the benefits Doggone delivers as a reuniting tool.

To iterate, this is the only reuniting proposition of its kind in Australasia and is available for iPhone and Android devices. **LG**