

Animal Management Plan



Adopted by Campbelltown City Council on 5 September 2022

A safe, sustainable, vibrant Community



Executive Summary

The City of Campbelltown is located in Adelaide's north-eastern suburbs, and covers around 15km². It has approximately 53,000 residents, 15,000 residential properties and 5,500 registered dogs.

Council has under its ownership or control approximately 261 hectares of publicly accessible open space.

The Animal Management Plan has been prepared by Council Staff in accordance with section 26A of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*.

This plan provides a sound basis and direction for Council to make future decisions to meet the needs of the Community for the next five years. The focus will be on promoting and facilitating responsible ownership of dogs and cats, animal welfare and the benefits of animal companionship.

The key objectives of the plan are to:

- Increase public safety so people and pets can integrate safely and harmoniously within the Community
- Create an environment that encourages responsible pet ownership
- Recognise that companion animals are part of the Community and contribute towards the overall quality of life
- Reduce public and environmental nuisances from dogs and cats
- Ensure Council delivers effective, efficient dog and cat management services.

This Animal Management Plan is not a stand-alone document. Its objectives and Council's role in relation to them have been created with reference to Council's Strategic Plan.

Dog and cat control and management (including registration of dogs, recovery and management of stray dogs and cats, investigation and management of dog attacks) are services that have a clear relationship to the key theme of 'A Safe and Liveable Community' in the Strategic Plan.

Background

In 2007, Council adopted its first Animal Management Plan (the Plan). The Plan has been reviewed every 5 years since initial adoption; Council is reviewing and updating its current plan in accordance with the requirement for regular review of the Plan. The Plan (2016–2021) covers issues associated with dog and cat management, including:

- Dog registration (including discounts for concession card holders, working dogs, etc.)
- Services available from Council (cattraps, microchip scanning)
- By-Laws
- Partnerships established with Community organisations
- Mandatory microchip identification
- Mandatory desexing
- Responsible dog ownership
- Education of the Community about dog ownership and dog behaviour.

The objectives of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* are:

- a) to encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- b) to reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats
- c) to promote the effective management of dogs and cats.

Purpose

While the Act provides the legal framework for Council's responsibilities and the penalties that can be imposed on dog and cat owners for non-compliance, this Animal Management Plan seeks to implement a balanced approach, incorporating the needs of pet owners and their animals as well as recognising the differing needs of the wider Community, such as non-pet owners and those responsible in other ways for animal management.

The aim of this Animal Management Plan is to assist Council to:

- Create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the local Community
- Recognise that companion animals are part of the Community and contribute towards overall quality of life
- Ensure that the needs of animals and their owners are accommodated while, recognising the differing needs of all members of the Community, such as non-pet owners.

These aims will be achieved by the development and implementation of strategies and actions as detailed later in this Plan.

Statistics

Statistics for animal management at Council over the last two years are as follows:

	2019/2020	2020/2021
Registered dogs	5,397	5,484
Dogs impounded	112	106
Dog Harassments	10	9
Dog Attacks	28	16
Dogs wandering	5	7
Expiation Notices issued	65	30
Cat Complaints	8	10

Popular Breeds in Campbelltown

According to Council records the most popularly owned dogs in the City of Campbelltown are:

1. Maltese
2. Labrador Retriever
3. Cavalier King Charles Spaniel
4. Border Collie
5. Staffordshire Bull Terrier
6. Jack Russell Terrier
7. Australian Kelpie
8. Toy Poodle
9. Standard Poodle
10. Golden Retriever.

Revenue

The Council is currently required to contribute 24 per cent of revenue raised through dog registration fees to the DCMB (Dog and Cat Management Board).

Each financial year Council has reporting requirements under the Dog and Cat Management Act relating to income and expenditure.

Dog Registration

Council sets its dog registration fees each year. The fee structure is available within Council's Fees and Charges Register and is available for viewing on Council's website.

The DCMB requires all Councils to offer two mandatory registration fee categories. Standard (mandatory legislated rebate) applies only to a dog that is both desexed and microchipped. Councils are required to provide a mandatory 50 per cent rebate off the 'non-standard' fee for a 'standard' dog registration.

Non-standard (full fee) applies to all other kinds of dogs, even if they are exempt from the requirement to desex or microchip (such as dogs belonging to registered breeders, working livestock dogs, etc.).

Council offers additional discretionary registration fee rebates that are not mandated by the Act: for example concession card holders, working livestock dogs, microchipped only, desexed only, trained dogs or racing greyhounds.

Expiation fees apply for the keeping of unregistered dogs, so it is important that dog owners renew their registrations before 31 August annually. A late fee is applied to dogs re-registered after 31 August.

Council also collects fees under section 26 of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, for meeting any other requirement imposed on Councils under the Act.

Council receives other revenue from:

- Expiations issued
- Late payment of dog registration fees
- Impounding fees
- Dangerous dog collars and signs.

The DCMB monitors Council's administration of the Act to ensure that all money received under the Act is expended in administration or enforcement activities related to the management of dogs and cats.

Management of Dogs

Responsible Animal Management

The benefits and importance of pet ownership are significant and widely recognised. Council needs to balance these benefits with the requirement for pet owners to be responsible in their ownership, care and management of pets and this is achieved through an appropriate mix of education, incentives and enforcement for responsible animal management.

In delivering animal management services to the Community, Council will continue to build and work in partnership with external agencies and organisations.

Dog Registration and Identification

Council is dependent on revenue raised from dog registration to deliver dog management services across the City.

Dog registration and identification ensures that:

- Council can identify dogs and their owners, for example so that lost dogs can be returned to owners
- Revenue raised is used for dog management.

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 requires all dogs in South Australia that are over three months of age to be registered.

Annual dog registration expires at the end of each financial year with registrations due for payment between 1 July and 31 August each year. Proof of desexing, microchipping and training is required to qualify for rebates.

Planning for Pets

Successful pet ownership involves a long-term commitment in time and money. Before purchasing a dog potential owners should consider breed (ie size, temperament and susceptibility to health issues) and the home environment (ie children, enclosed yard, exercise area) where the dog will be kept. Council can provide assistance to potential pet owners to ensure selection of a pet that will best suit the home, lifestyle and circumstances of the owner.

Desexing

Desexing of dogs is mandatory for animals born after 1 July 2018. The benefits of desexing dogs extend to the pet, owners and the Community. Desexed pets tend to live longer, healthier lives as the incidence of health problems are reduced. They are generally more affectionate, and less likely to show aggression or run away.

The control of unwanted or stray animals is a cost to the Community that can be reduced by prevention of irresponsible breeding. Pressures on animal shelters and native birds and wildlife from stray animals are also lessened through pet desexing.

Microchipping

It is a requirement of the Act that dog owners microchip their dog. All dogs being sold must be microchipped before they reach 12 weeks of age or within 28 days of the owner taking possession of the dog. It is an expiable offence for dogs not to be microchipped and Authorised Officers will require microchipping to be undertaken within an agreed timeframe where they discover that a dog owner is not complying with this requirement.

Dog Welfare and Safety

Pets have requirements that need to be met to ensure their health, welfare and safety. Advice and guidance on these issues is available from Council.

Pet owners are ultimately responsible for the welfare of their pets including ensuring pets are registered, vaccinated and have adequate food, water, shelter and exercise.

Council has specific requirements to ensure the welfare of dogs collected and temporarily detained in holding facilities meets legislative standards.

Barking Dogs

Nuisance dog barking is perhaps the greatest source of irritation amongst the Community arising from animal management. It is also one of the most difficult and time consuming areas of Council responsibility. Barking dog complaints are subjective depending on an individual's tolerance for dog noise. Council works with complainants and pet owners to investigate, substantiate and resolve barking dog complaints.

Dogs Wandering at Large

When a dog is found wandering at large and is seized, our Authorised Officers make every effort to identify owners by checking the dog for a microchip or any other visible identification. If the owner can be identified they will be contacted and reunited with their pet as soon as possible. If the owner cannot be located immediately, a photo of the dog will be uploaded to our website and details added to the impounded dog register. If an owner cannot be found, the dog will be held at the pound for a period of up to 5 days, after which time the dog will be surrendered to the Animal Welfare League.

Dog Attacks and Harassment

Dog attack and harassment is unacceptable behavior and can be traumatic for the victim whether it is another dog or a Community member. Authorised Officers will investigate all complaints of this nature and where evidence can be obtained will address the issues in accordance with Council Dog Attack and Harassment Policy.

Management of Cats

Effective management of cat-related issues is dependent on positively identifying the nuisance cat and the associated reasons for the issue(s), followed by determining the ownership of the cat. Cat owners should ensure that their cat(s) can be identified, in order to reduce the impact that nuisance cats have on the Community and to assist in keeping the animals safe.

Council will:

- Assess all complaints received about cats (except anonymous complaints) and respond accordingly
- Scan unidentified trapped cats for microchip identification
- Provide cat management services during Council business hours only.

A range of options exist for the management of nuisance cats, which are set out in various acts. These options will be considered by Authorised Persons when considering cat management requests.

Council provides cat cages for hire (deposit required and subject to availability).

If a person traps a cat that has identification or a microchip that can be read, the cat will be deemed as identified. An Authorised Person will be available during office hours to scan the cat for microchip identification. When a person traps an identified cat, they should release it immediately, unharmed, near the location where it was captured or return it to the owner. It is a condition of the hire of cat cages and a requirement for Council to take action, that if complainants know the owner or origin of a trapped cat, they must share this information with Council.

Where a person traps (ie seizes) an unidentified cat, under section 64(e2) of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* the person should within 12 hours deliver the cat to a Vet or a specified facility for the care of cats, the AWL (Animal Welfare League) or the RSPCA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).

Microchipping

It is a requirement of the Act that cat owners microchip their cat. All cats being sold must be microchipped before they reach 12 weeks of age or within 28 days of the owner taking possession of the cat. The Act requires cats to be desexed before they reach six months of age or within 28 days of the owner taking possession of the cat, and that cats must be desexed by a registered veterinary surgeon. Owners will not be required to desex cats born before 1 July 2018; however, Council will encourage this to be undertaken.

Objectives Strategies Measures

Dog and Cat Management		
Microchipping		
Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
Educate residents about the mandatory microchipping requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Council website and social media to post information about mandatory microchipping. Place articles in local newspapers about the microchipping requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of times educational information distributed. Number of different formats used to distribute information.
Increase numbers of microchipped dogs and cats in the local Council area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold microchipping days for the Community. Provide information to local stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of dogs/cats microchipped at a discount microchipping day. Percentage increase of microchipped dogs and cats in the Council area over time.
Enforce compliance with the mandatory microchipping requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up non microchipped animals following registration period. Work with local vets to promote the mandatory microchipping requirement for all dogs and cats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage reduction in the number of dogs and cats found to be non-microchipped, over time. Percentage reduction in numbers of non-microchipped dogs and cats arriving in the pound/shelter used by Council, over time.
Desexing		
Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
Educate residents about mandatory desexing requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Council website and social media to post information about mandatory desexing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of times educational information distributed. Number of different formats used to distribute information.

Increase numbers of desexed dogs and cats in the local Council area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop partnerships with local vets to offer discounted desexing (eg for low income earners, pensioners, other concession card holders). Include information about the National Desexing Network on Council's website. Promote the NDN (National Desexing Network's) 'National Desexing Month' in July. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in the numbers of dogs and cats that are desexed in Council area, over time. High proportion / percentage of all dogs and cats (born after 1 July 2018) are desexed. Reduction in the number of dogs or cats registered in the 'non-standard' registration category.
Monitor compliance with the mandatory desexing requirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor the 'Standard dog/cat' registration rebate by requiring proof of desexing for the rebate. Work with dog clubs and local vets to promote the mandatory desexing requirement for all new dogs and cats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the number of expiations issued for non-compliance with mandatory desexing requirements, over time. Percentage reduction in numbers of non-microchipped dogs and cats arriving in the pound/shelter used by Council, over time.

Cat Management

Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
Educate residents about benefits of cat registration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the benefits of cat registration on Councils website / social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased levels of cat registration.
Nuisance Cats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire out cat traps to the Community so that residents may capture unidentified wandering cats and deliver them to an appropriate facility. Assist residents where practical in the management of nuisance cats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increased number of customer requests are dealt with in relation to cat management issues.

Responsible Dog and Cat Ownership

Objective	Strategies	Key Performance Indicators
Increase Community knowledge of dog and cat ownership laws.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Periodically conduct a dog and cat owner survey to test resident's knowledge of dog and cat laws and to identify areas of potential non-compliance to focus on. Display information about dog and cat laws on Council websites. Use social media for monthly posts on different dog/cat laws (eg topics such as 'Did you know that all dogs must be kept on leash...?', 'All dogs and cats must be microchipped'). Display links to the Board's websites from Council's website and social media. Share relevant posts from Board's social media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over time, a higher percentage of dog and cat owners giving accurate answers to questions on the survey. Reduction in the percentage of certain expiations over time (eg off-leash expiations, public defecation expiations etc.). Number of times educational information distributed. Number of different formats used to distribute information.
Educate Community about responsible dog and cat ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and run an educational program for schools in the Council area to develop a greater understanding of responsible dog and cat ownership understanding Provide information on Council's website and links to other websites about responsible dog and cat ownership Promote this information using Council's social media platforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of dog and cat management issues dealt with by Council
Increase the number of obedience trained dogs in the Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with dog trainers/clubs to provide educational seminars to dog owners. Partner with local dog trainers/dog obedience clubs to provide a free training session for new puppy registrations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the number of complaints related to dog behavioural issues and irresponsible ownership (eg wandering at large, barking).

Promote awareness/benefits of cat confinement in the Community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display information about cat confinement in Council premises Council website/social media. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of different locations where information about cat confinement distributed. • Reduction in the number of complaints about wandering/nuisance cats.
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By Laws

Council most recently endorsed the Dogs By-Law in 2016. By-Law 5 gives the Council the ability to manage and control dogs and their access to open space under its ownership or control within its Council area.

Council continues to pursue a By-Law to improve and clarify the management of cats and is hoping to have one in place by the end of 2022.

Limit on dog numbers

The limit on the number of dogs kept on properties is specified in the By-Law. In a small property the limit is one dog and in premises other than a small property, the limit is two dogs. Permission is required to keep any dog on any premises if the number of dogs on the premises exceeds the limit.

Use of open space areas for dogs

Dog owners are responsible to have their animals under adequate control at all times in public areas. This is achieved in most circumstances by having dogs 'on leash' however in most larger parks and reserves it is permitted to exercise dogs 'off leash' provided they remain under effective control and do not interfere with other users of those spaces.

Off-leash areas

Council has a designated dog park (Four Paws Park) which has been allocated for exercising dogs 'off-leash'. Council will continue to explore whether the establishment of a second dog park is required.

On-leash areas

The following parks and reserves are designated on leash areas at all times:

- Wadmore Park / Pulyonna Wirra in Athelstone; this is an important biodiversity park adjacent the Black Hill Conservation Park (the Wadmore Park Management Plan requires that this measure be reviewed two years following the endorsement of that Plan).
- Denis Morrissey Park (with the exception of Four Paws Dog Park)

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- The Gums Reserve (southern side)
 - Unity Park
 - River Torrens Linear Park
 - Third, Fourth and Fifth Creek Walking Trails.

Dogs are allowed off leash on Gurners Reserve between 6.00 am and 10.00 am and 5.00 pm and 8.00 pm daily, at all other times dogs must be leashed.

Dog-prohibited areas

Council has limited the number of areas to which dogs are prohibited to the following locations:

- Thorndon Park
- Lochiel Park at Geoff Heath Par 3 Golf Course (except in the immediate vicinity of the clubrooms).
- Soft fall areas of playgrounds including fenced playgrounds.