



Urban Animal Management Plan

2012 - 2017



City of
Norwood
Payneham
& St Peter

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 BACKGROUND

In 2002, the State Government commissioned a review of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 ("the Act"). The review was predominantly aimed at promoting responsible dog ownership and encouraging councils to undertake a more proactive role in dealing with animal management issues and in particular, with matters relating to dog control.

As part of the review process, the State Government undertook consultation with the Dog and Cat Management Board ("the Board"), councils, the general community and a number of key stakeholder groups. Following the completion of the consultation program that was undertaken at the time of the review, the State Government made a number of significant changes to the Act, which came into effect on 1 July 2004.

One of the main changes which was made to the Act, was the requirement for councils to develop and implement on-going animal management plans, dealing with all matters relating to dog and cat management issues within their respective areas. It is a requirement of the Act, that the initial Animal Management Plan be a five-year plan and that it be brought into effect by no later than 1 July 2007, being three (3) years from the date on which the changes to the Act came into effect. It is also a requirement of the Act, for all plans to be approved by the Board.

In October 2005, the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters ("the Council") commissioned Harlock Jackson Urban Policy Planners Pty Ltd, to assist it with the preparation of its Urban Animal Management Plan 2007-2012.

The Plan has been developed and was approved by the Council on 1 September 2014, and will come into effect following approval of the Plan by the Dog and Cat Management Board.

The Plan has integrated the expertise in animal management from around Australia with the needs of the community, to develop a strategy which sets out how the Council will approach the management of dogs and cats over the five-year life of the Plan. The Plan is confined to the management of domestic dogs and cats within the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters Local Government Area ("the City").

1.2 STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

The Plan comprises four (4) sections. Section 1 provides an Executive Summary. Section 2 outlines the Goal, Aims and Guiding Values of the Plan.

Section 3 outlines the animal management strategies which have been aligned to eleven (11) **Key Issue Areas** which have been identified as being essential in providing a clear direction to the issue of strategy animal management within the City. Each Key Issue Area has its own objective(s), identified target group(s), a discussion and action plans. Section 4 outlines the proposed implementation and evaluation of the Plan.

The eleven (11) **Key Issue Areas** of the Plan are:

- Prospective and New Pet Owners (*Section 3.1*);
- Registration and Identification (*Section 3.2*);
- Excessive Barking (*Section 3.3*);
- Dog attacks and Bite Avoidance (*Section 3.4*);
- Confinement and Wandering at Large (*Section 3.5*);
- Access to Public Open Space (*Section 3.6*);
- Managing Dog Faeces (*Section 3.7*);
- Cat Management (*Section 3.8*);
- Animal Welfare (*Section 3.9*);
- Public Education (*Section 3.10*); and
- Harnessing the Benefits of Pet Ownership (*Section 3.11*).

1.3 KEY FEATURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Identification of target groups

The Plan identifies target group(s) as in some cases, non-pet owners or the wider community, are the appropriate target groups. For instance, one of the measures that could be used to reduce dog attacks is to educate young school children in bite avoidance.

In order to achieve the desired objectives, the Plan categorises pet owners into three (3) groups:

- existing pet owners;
- new owners; and
- prospective pet owners.

Existing pet owners are the core group of pet owners. For dog owners, they are relatively easy to contact due to the information which is available to the Council in respect to registered dogs.

New pet owners (pets under one (1) year of age) are possibly more open to new information about responsible pet ownership, as new habits are being formed. This group will also have several encounters in the first year, with a range of external stakeholders as they obtain, immunise, identify, register and train their pets and may be on the lookout for information on pet ownership. These encounters highlight the importance of the Council developing closer partnerships with external stakeholders.

Prospective pet owners need to think about appropriate breed selection and the responsibilities of pet ownership before they obtain a pet. However, this is the hardest group to target, as there is no information available regarding their details.

Council By-Laws

The Council's By-Laws enable the Council to distinguish between Dog On-Leash Areas, Dog Free Areas and Dog Exercise Areas. The provisions set out in the Council's By-Laws, align with those which have been set out in this Plan and the Council has determined which of its open space areas within the City are to be assigned to the various categories.

Access to public open space for dog owners

The Plan provides for a mix of dog on-leash and off-leash areas. There are "specific", as well as "general" conditions, which are applicable to dog owners in all open space areas within the City.

In respect to dog off-leash areas, the Council has dedicated eleven (11) parks and reserves as dog off-leash areas, some with "specific" conditions. All other public open space areas within the City, are dedicated as on-leash at all times. The eleven (11) dog off-leash areas and the conditions which are applicable in each of these areas, is summarised in Section 2.6.

Dog faeces management

The Council should not be responsible for providing people with "dog poo bags".

- if dogs are walked from home they are likely to have defecated before they get to the park;
- if the dispensers happen to be empty people can't pick up;
- people are more likely to pick up their dogs' faeces if they have a bag on them than if they have to walk over to a receptacle that may be on the other side of the park;
- the receptacles are prone to vandalism; and
- the cost of providing bags and keeping dispensers replenished is high and diverts scarce resources away from other valuable animal management programs.

The Council will continue to provide "dog poo bags" in off-leash areas, but it will emphasis with dog owners, that these are provided as a backup and that they should provide their own bags.

Pooch pouches will continue to be provided with a review of this service scheduled at the end of Year 3 of the life of this plan. The Council has determined that the issue of removing dog faeces is best resolved through education rather than enforcement. This is because it is difficult to catch a dog in the act of defecating. The first priority (Years 1-2) will be to educate dog owners in the habit of taking a bag with them when they walk their dog.

However, it is hoped that if dog owners have a bag with them, then the majority will pick up their dog's faeces. Council staff could hand out bags to dog owners in the street or parks and enforcement could be used as part of the mix of education approaches which are used. In Years 3-5, the Council will focus on encouraging dog owners to pick up. It is envisaged that amusing media material could be developed with a view to overcoming the distaste factor.

Cat management

It is not proposed to introduce any new requirements or restrictions, in relation to the keeping of cats under the Plan. The main options in respect to cat management involve confinement and desexing and the introduction of cat registration. These measures may be assessed in the future if and when required or if changes to the Act by the State Government are made requiring such measures to be taken at the local level.

Education in responsible pet ownership

Education is now integral to animal management. However, to be successful, education programs need to be carefully designed and targeted.

During the life of the Plan, the Council will focus on the following:

- educating *new pet owners* about responsible pet ownership. It is considered that many unwanted behaviours in animals can be prevented if good habits are formed and basic responsibilities are met within the first year of a pet's life. The Council will consider sponsoring or developing a New Pet Owners Kit, which can be distributed to new pet owners;
- educating the community generally on the new access and leash provisions in public open space. An early and concerted effort is required in relation to public open space access otherwise, the new provisions will languish uncertainly and are likely to fail. Related themes for education that would dovetail with the focus on public open space access are: compliance with leash requirements in streets (which is a standard requirement under the Act and educating people to take a bag with them and pick up their dog's faeces; and
- holding a biennial Dog Day Out event, to focus on positive ways of getting the responsible pet ownership message across.

Partnerships with key external stakeholders

The Council will seek to develop and strengthen partnerships with key external stakeholders. These include the Board, the Animal Welfare League, the South Australian Canine Association and local animal clubs. The Council is of the view that these partnerships will maximise the reach of the responsible pet ownership message, particularly during the first year of a pet's life when a new pet owner is likely to have numerous encounters with external stakeholders as they obtain, identify, vaccinate, register and train their pet. A register of external stakeholders will be developed and a program will be developed for communicating with them and encouraging them to help extend the reach of the responsible pet ownership message.

1.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

The Plan's strategies have been prioritised and scheduled through three (3) phases of implementation over the five-year life of the Plan.

Phase 1: short-term (years 1 and 2);
 Phase 2: medium-term (years 3 and 4);
 Phase 3: long-term (year 5); and
 Ongoing

2. STRATEGIC OUTLINE

2.1 GOAL

The **Goal** of this Plan is to promote and achieve responsible pet ownership of dogs and cats, animal welfare and the benefits of animal companionship for the community of the City.

2.2 AIMS

The **Aims** of this Plan are:

- to ensure that the Council meets its obligations under the Act;
- to investigate and implement best practices in fostering responsible pet ownership;
- to consider ways the Council could harness the benefits of owning pets; and
- to establish priorities for animal management between 2007 and 2012.

2.3 GUIDING VALUES

The **Guiding Values** considered important by the Council in achieving the Goal are:

- a commitment to achieving the highest levels of responsible pet ownership in the City;
- a commitment to achieving lasting, voluntary changes in human behaviour using best practices and a focus on prevention;
- a commitment to accessing the most up to date information and strategies on animal management;
- a commitment to balancing the needs of pet owners with the needs of other members of the community and the environment;
- adopting a whole of community approach to animal management. The Council will develop and strengthen partnerships with key stakeholders to deliver improved outcomes; and
- a commitment to cost effective use of animal management resources.

3. ANIMAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

3.1 PROSPECTIVE AND NEW PET OWNERS

OBJECTIVES

The objectives in respect to Prospective and New Pet Owners (**Key Issue Area 1**) are to:

- encourage prospective pet owners to consider the responsibilities of pet ownership before obtaining a pet;
- encourage prospective pet owners to select a breed that is appropriate to their lifestyle and home environment;
- encourage prospective pet owners to consider obtaining a pet from an animal shelter;
- ensure new pet owners identify and register their pets;
- ensure new pet owners vaccinate their pet;
- encourage new pet owners to de-sex their pet;
- encourage new pet owners to socialise their pet around other humans and animals;
- encourage new pet owners to provide appropriate obedience training;
- encourage new owners to provide their pet with an enriching home environment;
- ensure new pet owners are able to confine their pet to the home; and
- to encourage new pet owners to exercise their dog in accordance with the Plan.

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- prospective pet owners; and
- new pet owners

DISCUSSION

Prospective and new pet owners could be more receptive to receiving new information and developing good habits when they have had their pet for some time. They are also likely to have more encounters with key stakeholders than at later stages of pet ownership (breeders, trainers, veterinarians) as they obtain, identify, register, train, desex and immunise their pet.

Key external stakeholders can help to pass on the responsible pet ownership “message”. The Council believes this is a crucial period in pet ownership.

Prospective pet owners need to consider the responsibilities of pet ownership and appropriate breed choice to avoid later problems and to reduce the likelihood that they will later relinquish their pet. The Council encourages citizens to obtain a pet from an animal shelter or at least obtain information on appropriate breed choice (Selectapet). Whilst this group is difficult to target, placing general messages in local media could be successful.

New pet owners (pets under one (1) year of age) can reduce a significant portion of the animal management issues if they meet the following responsibilities:

- identify their pet;
- register their pet;
- immunise their pet;
- socialise their dog around other animals;
- undergo basic obedience training with their dog;
- provide an enriching home environment for their pet;
- confine their pet to the property; and
- provide their dog with regular exercise in accordance with the Council’s requirements (comply with leash requirements, maintain effective control and abide by code of conduct in off-leash areas, carry bag to pick up dog faeces and pick up when dog has defecated).

The Council will give consideration to sponsoring or developing a New Pet Owners Kit, which can be distributed by the Council and key external stakeholders to advise pet owners of their responsibilities and provide tips on better managing their pets.

The Council will also develop and strengthen partnerships with key external stakeholders to ensure pet owners adhere to as many of the desired requirements as possible.

Action Plan - Prospective and New Pet Owners

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Ensure puppy pre-school programs are accessible to new pet owners.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Advertisement in Local Messengers annually to promote and encourage pre-school programs 	Communications Unit Budget Allocation
Develop a series of community advertisements that can be rotated to advise new and prospective pet owners of their responsibilities.	3 rd Year of Plan	Marketing Plan developed and implemented	Communications Unit Budget Allocation to implement Plan

Refer also to the Action Plans for all other Key Issue Areas.

3.2 REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

OBJECTIVES

The objectives in respect to Registration and Identification (**Key Issue Area 2**) are to:

- ensure that all dogs situated within the City are registered as required by the Act;
- encourage dog and cat owners to identify their pet by way of a microchip; and
- review the existing structure of registration fees and rebates for dogs, which have been adopted by the Council.

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- new pet owners;
- dog owners; and
- cat owners

DISCUSSION

The registration of dogs is a vital tool which enables the Council to return lost pets to their owners. Dogs are required to be registered under the Act, however cats are not. A high proportion of dogs situated within the City are believed to be registered, although the actual number of unregistered dogs is not known. The Council should constantly seek ways to boost the proportion of dogs which are registered.

The Council has adopted annual dog registration fees and a rebate structure, which came into effect on 1 July 2006. These will remain in place until such time as a review is deemed necessary and the fees amended. Identification by microchip is also highly desirable. However, a By-Law requiring dogs to be microchipped is not proposed to be introduced as part of this Plan.

Registration of cats is optional as it is not a requirement under the Act. It is not proposed to introduce a By-Law as part of the Plan (unless changes are made to the Act requiring such a measure). However, the Council will continue to deal with cat management issues as required by the Act.

Action Plan – Registration and Identification

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Encourage new registrations at the biennial Dog Day Out event.	Ongoing	3 new registrations at the Dog Day Out event	Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit Events Staff Budget Allocation required in 2015-2016 Budget
Prepare a series of community advertisements for rotational release on the importance of registering your dog.	Annually	2 advertisements in Local Messengers annually	Communications Unit Budget Allocation
Hold a biennial micro-chipping day, to encourage responsible pet ownership and point out the rebates available for doing so.	To be conducted as part of the Dog Day Out Event	10% increase in the number of micro-chipped dogs	External organisation engaged to undertake micro-chipping

Refer also to the Action Plans for:

- new and prospective pet owners; and
- cat management.

3.3 EXCESSIVE BARKING

OBJECTIVES

The objectives in respect to Excessive Barking (**Key Issue Area 3**) are to:

- reduce the number of barking dog complaints;
- maximise the number of successfully resolved barking complaints; and
- review, in the long term, the current procedures used by staff in dealing with barking dog complaints.

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- prospective dog owners;
- new dog owners;
- owners of dogs that bark excessively;
- Complainants; and
- new home builders.

DISCUSSION

In excess of 100 barking dog complaints are received by the Council each year. This is an average of approximately two (2) complaints per week.

Each complaint takes on average between three (3) and five (5) hours to resolve. However, this varies widely from case-to-case and some complaints take a much longer time to resolve. Some complaints are ultimately resolved through Court action.

Barking dog complaints have increased significantly over the past 20 years, with the rising incidence of pets being left alone during the day, increases in housing density and the ever declining levels of tolerance generally within the country.

Excessive barking has several causes:

- separation anxiety;
- boredom;
- external stimuli (eg: passers by, other dogs barking, possums, cats etc);
- territorialism (visitors to the property); and
- communication.

Often the owner is not at home to hear or stop excessive barking.

Prevention of barking dog problems should be the starting point for managing excessive barking as once excessive barking is entrenched, it is often hard to resolve.

Some breeds are genetically pre-disposed towards excessive barking. However, excessive barking is often an acquired behaviour which can occur in any breed or sex of dog. Nevertheless, the Council could encourage prospective pet owners to avoid keeping breeds which have a genetic predisposition to bark.

Habitual barking often develops at an early age. New dog owners should be encouraged to teach their puppies that excessive barking is not allowed. Obedience training can also help owners to control their dog's behaviour. The Council encourages owners to exercise their dogs regularly and has provided accessible opportunities for off-leash exercise through the provision of a number of off-leash areas readily located throughout the City.

Providing dogs with an enriching home environment, assists in minimising problem barking providing i.e. (toys, view of the outside world, shade, shelter and comfort). The Council could provide dog owners and prospective dog owners, with tips on environmental enrichment.

Design guidelines exist for pet friendly housing which addresses ways in which housing design can minimise problem barking. The Council could make these guidelines available through its Planning staff.

Complainants should be encouraged to speak to their neighbours before contacting the Council. The Council should encourage people to do this as early as possible - before the excessive barking becomes an-entrenched habit and before complainants are literally at their "wits end" when they make the complaint to the Council. As potential complainants are not able to be targeted, the Council should provide this message through general community advertisements in the local media and on the Council's website. Not all barking dog complaints can be prevented. The objective is to address complaints as quickly and as smoothly as possible.

Given the difficulties which generally arise in ascertaining the level of noise which is caused by the barking of dogs and whether that constitutes an offence under the Act, the Council has taken the view that education and prevention is a more effective way in dealing with these matters than enforcement at least in the first instance.

As such, once an initial complaint is made, Council staff will meet with the owner of the dog to discuss the matter. At that time, the owner of the dog is informed of the concerns raised and will be advised of measures which could be utilised to reduce any unnecessary barking including obedience training. Following the meeting with the owner of the dog, the complainant will be asked to monitor the situation. Once a further complaint has been made, the Council needs to decide if an ongoing problem exists. This is not always an easy decision to make.

In order to successfully resolve complaints in the first instance, there is the need for reliable data. The Council issues complainants with diaries to complete in order to ascertain the most appropriate course of action to address the complaint. This practice is used by councils throughout Australia and should be retained. In the last two (2) years, bark counters have been developed. These are attached to a dog's collar (eg for a week) and provide a printout of the time and duration of barking. The Council could purchase one or more of these collars and use them in resolving barking dog complaints. This could provide additional data but should not replace the diary system.

Secondly, there is the question of determining what level of barking is excessive. This is subjective and the Council does not believe it should define excessive barking (eg: a set number of barks per minute or hour). Whilst this data is helpful, nuisance can be felt in other ways for instance it may be particularly loud, it may occur right beside a complainant's bedroom, it may occur every time someone visits the complainant's house. The Council will continue to treat each complaint on a case-by-case basis.

Once established, barking dog problems need to be resolved. Again, this is not easy. There are no right solutions. For instance, getting a second dog will help the problem in some cases but aggravate the problem in others. The Council assists dog owners with suggestions to help with problem barking. The Council will continue to upgrade staff skills in relation to the understanding and diagnosis of excessive barking and the solutions which are available. At times, the behaviour is so ingrained that professional advice is required. In these cases, advice from a veterinarian or referral to a qualified animal behaviour expert, should be required. The Council could have a panel of behaviourists to whom problem barkers can be referred.

The Council has procedures for dealing with barking dog complaints including a checklist and flow chart of procedures to follow and forms officers use to complete the investigations. It is considered that the procedures operate effectively now and can be formally adopted by the Council as part of this Plan.

Action Plan - Excessive Barking

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Continue to provide information on how to avoid barking dog problems in the New Pet Owners Kit. Emphasise that attention in the early stages can prevent later problems.	Ongoing	25% decrease in the number of barking dog complaints annually	Regulatory Services Staff
Distribute guidelines for pet-friendly housing to The Council's Development Assessment Unit.	Ongoing	50% decrease in the number of barking dog complaints annually	Regulatory Services Staff
Continue to focus on resolving barking dog complaints informally.	Ongoing	50% reduction in the time taken to resolve complaints	Regulatory Services Staff
Encourage potential complainants to speak to their neighbour as early as possible to help avoid the barking from becoming entrenched. (including through the general local media)	Ongoing	50% Increase in the number of complaints resolved at the first stage	Regulatory Services Staff
Continue to issue complainants with diaries in which to record incidences of excessive barking if problem persists.	Ongoing	50% reduction in the time taken to resolve complaints 50% decrease in the number of escalated complaints	Regulatory Services Staff
Continually review procedures used by staff for dealing with barking dog complaints.	Annually		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services
Ensure new staff receive early training in diagnosis and treatment of barking dog complaints and ongoing training sessions are provided to staff.	As required		LGA Dog & Cat Management Board

Refer also to the Action Plans for:

- prospective and new pet owners; and
- public education.

3.4 DOG ATTACK AND BITE AVOIDANCE

OBJECTIVES

The objectives in respect to Dog Attack and Bite Avoidance (*Key Issue Area 4*) are to:

- to reduce the incidence and severity of dog attacks and bite incidents within the City; and
- review existing procedures used by Council staff to investigate reported incidents.

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- prospective dog owners;
- new dog owners;
- existing dog owners;
- children; and
- all members of the community.

DISCUSSION

Whilst the number of reported dog attacks is not considered to be high within the City, managing them is a critical animal management role. It is generally thought that dog attacks occur predominantly in and around the family home with family members, visitors and passers by being the primary victims. The Council encourages all dog owners to take their dog to a recognised puppy pre-school. This introduces basic training, assists the owner to understand his or her responsibilities and importantly helps with early socialisation of the dog that will help to minimise aggressive tendencies later on. The Council also encourages all dog owners to have their dog de-sexed, as this will reduce aggressive tendencies.

All dog owners should attend obedience training with their dog. This will provide continuing socialisation and assist owners to manage and/or reduce potentially aggressive tendencies in their dog. The Council also believes regular exercise including exercise in off-leash areas within the City is important for reducing the incidence of aggression in dogs. Regular outings also assist to socialise dogs around other people and dogs. All dogs should be properly confined to their property. This is a requirement under the Act and will assist in reducing attacks from dogs which are outside their property or "wandering at large". The Council will continue to place importance on the need for dogs to be effectively contained and will continue to enforce breaches under the Act for dogs wandering at large.

Every dog has the capacity to bite and the community should be educated on how to behave around dogs. Children should be supervised around dogs at all times.

The Plan recommends that all younger school children within the City, should receive instruction in bite avoidance. This is particularly important for children who do not have any experience with dogs. The Council will develop a three-year rotational plan to visit each Primary School within the City and provide all five (5) to eight (8) year old children, with instruction in bite avoidance. This will include partnerships with other groups such as the *Living Safely with Pets* primary school education program which is free of charge and available to all primary schools across South Australia.

Breed specific restrictions are the cause of much debate. Whilst, some people are of the opinion that particular breeds should be banned, others are of the opinion that we should blame the deed not the breed. Whatever the case, the Council is of the view it cannot introduce breed specific restrictions in isolation of other councils. The Council believes that if breed bans are deemed appropriate, then it needs to be legislated at a state-wide level and through the relevant changes to the Act. Nevertheless, the Council encourages its citizens to select a breed of dog which they believe they can manage. It should also be noted that several breeds of dog are already considered to be "prescribed breeds" under the Act.

The Council has developed a detailed procedure for dealing with reported dog attacks and harassment complaints. The procedure operates effectively and will be retained.

Action Plan - Dog Attack and Bite Avoidance

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Develop a partnership with local primary schools to provide the Living Safely with Pets education program.	Ongoing	100% of Primary Schools visited over the life of the Plan	Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit
Develop a series of community advertisements on bite avoidance for rotational inclusion in local media.	Bi-Annually	1 advertisement in Local Messengers	Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit Budget Allocation
Continually review current procedures used by Council staff for dealing with dog attacks/harassment complaints .	Ongoing		

Refer also to the Action Plan for:

- prospective and new pet owners;
- confinement and Wandering at Large;
- access to Public Open Space; and
- public education.

3.5 CONFINEMENT AND WANDERING AT LARGE

OBJECTIVES

The objectives in respect to Confinement and Wandering at Large (**Key Issue Area 5**) are to:

- ensure dog owners confine their dog to their property;
- encourage cat owners confine their cat to their property; and
- review current procedures for dealing with impounded dogs.

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- existing pet owners;
- new pet owners; and
- prospective pet owners.

DISCUSSION

Dogs which are wandering at large, contribute to a significant proportion of dog management problems especially as there is mounting evidence to suggest that the majority of dog attacks are the result of inadequate confinement. Cats which wander are a danger to wildlife and a potential nuisance. Animals which wander also contribute to the pool of unwanted litters. The Council has developed procedures for dealing with complaints relating to dogs wandering at large and impounded dogs.

The current procedures will be reviewed including the suitability of the location of the Council's "holding pen" which is located at the Council's Depot. At present, the Council holds impounded dogs in its "holding pen" for two (2) days. Many of the impounded dogs, are able to be returned to their owners within that time. After two (2) days, impounded dogs not returned to their owners, are taken to the Animal Welfare League Shelter at Wingfield.

Prospective dog owners are encouraged to choose a breed which is less likely to wander and can be contained behind a secure fence (some breeds can scale a fence easily). Desexed animals are also less likely to wander and the Council encourages dog owners to have their pet desexed. Where applicable, design guidelines for pet-friendly housing will be promoted by the Council to promote confinement.

Action Plan - Confinement and Wandering at Large

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Make available information on breeds of dogs that are less likely to wander and can be confined behind secure fencing.	Ongoing	20% reduction in the number of dogs seized	Regulatory Services Staff Animal Welfare League
Encourage pet owners to have their pet desexed and provide relevant helpful information in the New Pet Owners Kit.	Annually	20% increase number of dogs desexed	Communications Unit Budget Allocation
Provide cat owners with tips on confining their cat in the New Pet Owners Kit.	Ongoing	50% reduction in number of complaints	Communications Unit Budget Allocation
Distribute the pet-friendly housing guidelines to the Council's Development Assessment Unit.	Ongoing		Regulatory Services Staff
Continue to treat incidences of dogs wandering at large as an issue warranting priority attention.	Ongoing		Regulatory Services Staff
Continually review current procedures for dealing with impounded dogs	Annually		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services

Refer also to the Action Plans for:

- prospective and new pet owners;
- cat management;
- animal welfare; and
- public education.

3.6 ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE AREAS

OBJECTIVE

The objectives in respect to Access to Open Space Areas (*Key Issue Area 6*) are to:

- provide a balance in meeting the needs of dog owners and other members of the community when providing access to dog owners to public open space areas;
- achieve compliance with leash requirements; and
- maximise the success of designated off-leash areas.

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- dog owners; and
- all park users.

DISCUSSION

Section 26A(2) of the Act requires that the Council include, as part of the Plan, provisions for parks where dogs may be exercised off-leash, for parks where dogs must be under effective control by means of physical restraint and may include provisions for parks where dogs are prohibited altogether.

There is a strong case for the Council to provide for off-leash exercise areas, notwithstanding the requirement of the Act, on the basis that:

- dogs need to be socialised around other dogs and humans, as this assists in reducing aggressive tendencies;
- regular exercise can alleviate “pent-up” energy associated with many unwanted behaviours by dogs at home, such as excessive barking and destructive behaviour such as digging;
- whilst dogs can be exercised on-leash, many dogs also benefit from regular “free running” off-leash exercise;
- dog owners are a significant group of park users and for many people, a dog is their main form of recreation and exercise. Recent research has shown strong social dynamics amongst dog owners who have met other dog owners in the park.

However, it should also be noted that:

- un-leashed dogs can be a problem in environmentally sensitive areas, particularly where native fauna is present or is being encouraged;
- dog attacks are more likely to occur where dogs are unleashed. However, dogs may be more aggressive defending their home territory than they are in neutral territory;
- unruly dogs can annoy park users and detract from their recreational experience. Some people are frightened of dogs and/or don't wish to encounter unleashed dogs in parks; and
- there are certain places where unleashed dogs are unsuitable. For instance, in the immediate vicinity of children's playgrounds, public picnic and barbecue areas and in the vicinity of bicycle/shared paths.

The Council therefore believes that within the City, there should be a mix of on-leash and off-leash parks. There is also a case to ban dogs altogether from being in certain places. The Council has determined that dogs should be prohibited from the immediate area in the vicinity of public playgrounds, public picnic and barbecues areas. The meaning of “vicinity” will be defined as the area within fifteen (15) metres. This is a generic requirement and appropriate signage will be provided throughout the Council's open space areas to inform park users (dog owners and non-dog owners) of this requirement.

Off-Leash

In the development of the Plan and ascertaining which areas would be suitable as off-leash, all public open space areas within the City were assessed. In total, eleven (11) parks and reserves have been dedicated as off-leash areas.

The selection of these parks and reserves, was based on a selection criteria which is set out in (Appendix A) of the Plan. All other parks and reserves located within the City, have been designated as on-leash at all times. Off-leash areas will be appropriately signposted.

The eleven (11) off-leash parks and reserves and the specific condition(s) which apply in each of these areas are listed below:

Borthwick Park - Thornton Street, Kensington.

- *Between 6.00pm and 10.00am, on any day.*

Buik Crescent Reserve - Buik Crescent, Marden.

- *No specific conditions.*

Drage Reserve - Riverside Drive, Felixstow.

- *Only on the section at the reserve which is located south of the car park and east of the creek.*
- *Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)*
– *Every day between 7.00pm and 10.00am.*
- *Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)*
– *Every day between 5.00pm and 10.00am.*

Felixstow Reserve - Langman Grove, Felixstow.

- *Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)*
– *Every day between the hours of 7.00pm and 10.00am.*
- *Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)*
– *Every day between the hours of 5.00pm and 10.00am.*

Hannaford Reserve - Corner Winchester Street and Seventh Avenue, St Peters.

- *No specific conditions.*

Hutchinson Park - Corner Bond Street and Free Street, Norwood.

- *Between 6.00pm and 10.00am on any day.*

LG Perriam Memorial Oval (St Peters River Park) - Within the River Torrens Linear Park.

- *Except during organised activities (eg. training and sporting events).*

Linde Reserve - Between Nelson Street and Stepney Street, Stepney.

- *Only within the area located west of the creek.*

Otto Park - Corner Second Avenue and St Peters Street, St Peters.

- *No specific conditions.*

Richards Park - Corner Osmond Terrace and Magill Road, Norwood.

- *Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)*
– *Weekdays (Monday to Friday) between 8.00pm and 9.00am.*
- *Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)*
– *Weekends (Saturday and Sunday) between 8.00pm and 9.00am.*
- *Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)*
– *Weekdays (Monday to Friday) between 6.00pm and 9.00am.*
- *Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)*
– *Weekends (Saturday and Sunday) between 6.00pm and 9.00am.*

St Morris Reserve - Corner Green Street and Seventh Avenue, St Morris.

- *Between 6.00pm and 8.00am on any day.*

A map illustrating the location and conditions applicable to the eleven (11) off-leash areas is attached (Appendix B).

Playground equipment is located on five (5) of the dedicated off-leash areas, namely: Hutchinson Park, Richards Park, Borthwick Park, St Morris Reserve and Hannaford Reserve. The play equipment in St Morris Reserve is fully fenced. However, it is not recommended that the play equipment located in the other four (4) off-leash areas be fenced and that the fifteen (15) metre exclusion zone is considered to be adequate in terms of children safety. These areas have been selected either because the park is large enough for dogs and children to be well separated, or because the play equipment is located to one side of the park thus allowing for separation.

In addition, three (3) of these parks, namely: St Morris Reserve, Hutchison Park and Richards Park, have “timeshare” restrictions due to the presence of dogs off-leash and children in the park is unlikely to overlap. The Council’s Playground Strategy, which was adopted by the Council in 2006, does not recommend that play equipment in off-leash areas be fenced.

In addition to the eleven (11) parks and reserves which the Council has dedicated as off-leash within the City, the Council has also made a formal request to the City of Burnside to consider the possibility of designating Tusmore Park as an off-leash area. This park is located within the City of Norwood Payneham and St Peters but is actually land which is owned by the City of Burnside.

The Council has determined that the total number of designated off-leash parks throughout the City to be appropriate. A smaller number of off-leash parks would have been inequitable and would have meant that they become defacto “dog parks”. The Council believes that it can expect a higher standard of compliance with leash requirements in other parks, if there is a generous number of off-leash areas to use as alternatives. The Council will develop and promote a Code of Conduct for appropriate behaviour in off-leash areas.

The Council will seek to maximise the success of off-leash areas by:

- publicising their location and use;
- installing appropriate signage;
- installing dog poo bags and bins;
- preparing an education strategy to increase awareness of leashed requirements and achieve compliance over the life of the Plan. It will include written and face to face communication in accordance with the discussion included in *Key Issue Area 13*. The strategy will be prepared in conjunction with the education strategy for getting people to pick up their dog’s faeces. It will identify stakeholders who can assist with disseminating the message;
- developing and publicising a Code of Conduct for both dog owners and other park users in off-leash areas (for other park users this may include awareness that this is an off-leash area and that it is not necessarily an appropriate place for a picnic); and
- reviewing each off-leash park to determine if retrofitting or additional facilities are required and where they should be located (eg: water fountain, dog poo bags/bin, shade, seating etc). This would involve consultation with regular users of the park.

At this stage, the Council does not propose to build an adventure playground for dogs or what or commonly referred to as a “dog park”. The Council prefers to focus, on promoting successful off-leash areas.

On-Leash

Other than the eleven (11) parks and reserves which have been dedicated as off-leash, all other open space areas have been dedicated on-leash at all times. On-leash areas will not be signposted as the Council has taken a **“no sign - dog on-leash”** default approach in considering which open space areas are considered appropriate as off-leash and which are not.

The leash requirements do not apply to dogs participating in Council approved obedience training classes or puppy pre-schools. For the purposes of the Plan and being exempt from adhering to leashing requirements, "Council approved" classes strictly refers to classes which the Council has approved (in writing) and includes "one-off" as well as "regular" classes. The holders of such classes, will need to apply to the Council (in writing) and receive subsequent approval (in writing), prior to holding any such classes.

An early focus of the Plan will be promoting awareness, acceptance and compliance with the leash requirements. In Year 1, the Council will focus on education and then move into education and enforcement in Years 2 to 5. The education activities would consist of written material (mail outs, brochures, press coverage, signage) and face to face contact (handing out leads in on-leash areas, talking to children in schools).

The River Torrens Linear Park

The Council has determined that in the sections of the River Torrens Linear Park which are under its care, control and management, dogs should be on-leash at all times. This is due to the Park's regional function, the number and variety of users it attracts and the environmental values being promoted. Whilst a number of users of the Linear Park will consider this to be excessive, it should be noted that three (3) of the off-leash areas are adjacent to the Linear Park, where it is envisaged that dogs could be exercised off-leash in these areas in conjunction with a longer leashed walk in the Linear Park. These parks are: Felixstow Reserve, Drage Reserve and the LG Perriam Memorial Oval, which is commonly referred to as the St Peters River Park Oval.

By-Law No 5

The Council's By-Law No. 5, provides for the Council to distinguish between Dog On-Leash Areas, Dog Free Areas and Dog Exercise Areas. The By-Law has been developed to reflect all of the provisions of the Plan and in particular regarding access to open space areas. A copy of the Council's By-Law No 5 is attached (Appendix C).

Action Plan – Access to Open Space Areas

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Hold information sessions to brief key staff and external stakeholders on the new access and off-leash requirements .	Short Term	2 Information Sessions held- all relevant personnel informed of requirements	Regulatory Services Staff
Implement any immediate works that can be carried out to make Otto Reserve available for use by dog owners.	Short Term	All works completed by the end of the first year of the Plan	City Services Unit
Develop a Code of Practice for successful operation of off-leash areas.	Short Term		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services Communications Unit
Consider including the off-leash areas in the Adelaide Street Directory	Medium Term		Regulatory Services Staff
Review each off-leash park to determine if new facilities are required or if existing facilities should be modified or relocated.	Annually	20% of parks reviewed annually	Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services

Refer also to the Action Plans for:

- prospective and new pet owners;
- dog faeces; and
- public education.

3.7 MANAGING DOG FAECES

OBJECTIVE

The objective in respect to Managing Dog Faeces (*Key Issue Area 7*) is to ensure dog owners pick up their dog faeces when outside the home.

TARGET GROUP

The Target Group is dog owners.

DISCUSSION

The management of dog faeces is an important environmental and health issue. Tonnes of dog faeces pollute our waterways and public places every year and it is an issue on which the community has strong feelings.

The Act requires dog owners to remove their dog's faeces. However, compliance with this requirement depends on:

- having a bag or other receptacle to pick up the faeces;
- overcoming the distaste factor;
- seeing the dog defecate (less likely perhaps in off-leash areas); and
- having somewhere to dispose of the bag conveniently.

The Council's By-Law No. 5, requires dog owners to carry a bag or container for removing their dog's faeces. The Council provide bags in parks for use by dog owners. This is a useful reminder to dog owners that picking up after their dog is expected.

However, the Council does not believe it should be responsible for providing dog owners with bags. This is because:

- if dogs are walked from home they are likely to have defecated before they get to the park;
- if the dispensers happen to be empty people can't pick up;
- people are more likely to pick up their dogs' faeces if they have a bag on them than if they have to walk over to a receptacle that may be on the other side of the park;
- the receptacles are prone to vandalism; and
- the cost of providing bags and keeping dispensers replenished is high and diverts scarce resources away from other valuable animal management programs.

The Council will continue to provide "dog poo" bags at the eleven (11) designated off-leash areas. However, all communication with dog owners will make it clear that the bags are provided as a back-up and as a reminder to dog owners that picking up dog faeces is now expected.

The Council has for several years distributed "pooch pouches" with registrations. These are brightly coloured pouches in which "dog poo" bags can be stored and which are attached to a dog's collar. This is another useful reminder that picking up dog faeces is now expected. It is proposed that this practice be continued with a review undertaken within the first three (3) years of the life of the Plan.

The Council believes that the issue of picking-up dog's faeces is best dealt with through education rather than just enforcement. This is because it is difficult for an officer to catch a dog in the act of defecating. However, the Council will undertake enforcement as required.

The Council will continue to educate citizens in the habit of taking a bag with them when they walk the dog. People would be encouraged to accept that it is not the Council's responsibility to provide them with bags and to think about storing bags conveniently (eg in the car or in the same place as the lead), using a pooch pouch and looking at it as an acceptable way to reuse plastic bags. Picking up dog faeces will not be ignored in Years 1-2.

However, it is hoped that if people have a bag with them then the majority will pick up their dog's faeces. Council staff will hand out bags to people in the street or parks but enforcement could be used as part of the mix of education approaches used.

Action Plan - Managing Dog Faeces

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Provide external stakeholders (eg, veterinarians) with pooch pouches to distribute to clients.	Short Term	25% of external stakeholders provided with pooch pouches each year over the life of the Plan	Regulatory Services Staff
Develop an education strategy that focuses on getting people to take a bag with them in Years 1 to 3 and getting them to pick up in Years 4 to 5.	Medium Term	90% reduction in number of complaints	Communications Unit
Ensure dog poo bags are provided at appropriate locations in each of the eleven (11) off-leash parks.	Ongoing	100% distribution of bags	City Services Unit
Ensure the dog poo bag dispensers are replenished as required.	Ongoing	100% of dispensers replenished	City Services Unit
Determine other areas where it may be appropriate to provide dog poo bags (eg: in the vicinity of children's playgrounds).	Medium Term	25% of locations reviewed annually – based on hierarchy of use	Regulatory Services Staff
Provide pooch pouches in the New Pet Owners Kits and distribute to dog owners with the annual registration renewal notices.	Annually		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services
Train Council staff in approaching people in the public realm to discuss picking up dog faeces.	Medium Term	All Relevant Staff trained including City Services Staff	Regulatory Services Staff City Services Unit
Evaluate the provision of dog poo bag dispensers (including the appropriateness of their location in each park) in Year 3.	Medium Term	All locations reviewed and assessed.	Regulatory Services Staff
Review the pooch pouch program in Year 3.	Medium Term		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services

Refer also to the Action Plans for:

- prospective and new pet owners;
- access to public open space; and
- public education.

3.8 CAT MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE

The objectives in respect to Cat Management (*Key Issue Area 8*) are to:

- encourage cat owners to confine their cats at night and where possible during the day; and
- continue in with the current relationship the Council has developed with Cats Assistance To Sterilise (C.A.T.S).

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- cat owners;
- prospective cat owners;
- prospective home builders; and
- designers and builders

DISCUSSION

Some councils require partial or permanent confinement of cats to control their effects on wildlife. At this stage, confinement is not considered to be a major issue throughout the City, as the Council does not experience significant problems with cats. Introducing such requirements would divert scarce resources from other animal management priorities and would be considered unnecessary at this stage. Nevertheless, the Council will continue to encourage owners to confine their cats indoors or to their property. Pet friendly housing design guidelines that which assist owners to confine their cats, will also be promoted. The Council will also make available the brochure on dealing with cat complaints, which is supplied by the Board.

The Council has a partnership with Cats Assistance To Sterilise (C.A.T.S), to assist with the management of certain cat management issues and provides the organisation with an annual grant. It is proposed that this partnership be retained and continued throughout the life of the Plan.

Councils can make by-laws which make provision for registration of cats. It is not proposed to introduce such a scheme at this stage. However, this may need to be reviewed if changes are made to the Act that would require the registration of cats.

Action Plan - Cat Management

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Include tips on the confinement of cats in the New Pet Owners Kit.	Ongoing	50% reduction in number of complaints	Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit
Distribute the Pet Friendly Housing Design Guidelines.	As required	50% reduction in number of complaints	Regulatory Services Staff
Continue to make available the Board's <i>Information Sheet 13: Un-invited Cats</i> to complainants.	Ongoing	50% reduction in time to resolve issues	Regulatory Services Staff
Prepare a new information sheet specifically for residents on responsible cat ownership.	Ongoing	100% reduction in number of complaints	Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit
Continue to provide an annual grant to C.A.T.S to assist the Council with the management of certain cat management issues.	Medium Term	20% increase in the number of cats desexed	\$3000 per annum

Refer also to the Action Plans for:

- prospective and new pet owners;
- confinement and wandering at large; and
- public education.

3.9 ANIMAL WELFARE**OBJECTIVE**

The objectives in respect to Animal Welfare (**Key Issue Area 9**) are to:

- reduce the number of unwanted litters, lost and/or relinquished animal;
- increase the number of returned or re-homed animals; and
- encourage pet owners to attend to the needs of their pets and improve the environment in which they live.

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- pet owners; and
- prospective pet owners.

DISCUSSION

Approximately 150 dogs are impounded by the Council annually and approximately two-thirds of these dogs are returned to their owners. Whilst not strictly its responsibility, the Council believes it has a role to play (through education and awareness), in minimising the number of dogs which are impounded.

The number of dogs which are impounded, is a function of unwanted litters, lost animals and relinquished animals. The likelihood of a pet being relinquished or unclaimed, is reduced if people do not make rash decisions about getting a pet, choose a breed that is appropriate to their lifestyle, undertake basic obedience training with their animal to reduce unwanted behaviours and are able to confine their pet to their property.

Key strategies to reduce the number of animals in animal shelters is to increase the rates of:

- desexing;
- identification and registration;
- confinement;
- obedience training; and
- encouraging people to obtain a pet from a shelter.

Action Plan – Animal Welfare

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Encourage prospective pet owners to consider obtaining a pet from an animal shelter.	Ongoing		Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit
Develop a series of community advertisements for rotational release on the reasons animals end up in animal welfare shelter, what happens to them and what pet owners and the community can do to minimise the problem.	Ongoing	3 advertisements over the life of the Plan	Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit

Refer also to the Action Plans for:

- prospective and new dog owners;
- excessive barking;
- confinement and wandering at large;
- cat management; and
- public education.

3.10 PUBLIC EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE

The objective in respect to Public Education (**Key Issue Area 10**) is to plan and implement appropriate public education programs in accordance with priorities identified in the Plan

TARGET GROUPS

The Target Groups are:

- pet owners;
- prospective pet owners; and
- the wider community.

DISCUSSION

An ongoing debate relates to the relative merits of education versus enforcement. Laws will probably always be the “backbone” of animal control. The advantages of taking a legal approach should not blind us to its shortcomings. A legal approach is inherently inefficient as it focus’s on means rather than ends and because it can consume significant resources in maintenance of an enforcement presence for benefits that can’t be assured (a Council Officer cannot control what happens five (5) minutes after he or she leaves).

By contrast, voluntary compliance, if it can be achieved, will consistently provide more meaningful, lasting, voluntary changes in behaviour. Volunteering compliance relies more on overcoming ignorance and incompetence than prescribing concrete forms of acceptable behaviour. However, education changes behaviour slowly. It can be expensive and difficult to evaluate. The Council does not have unlimited resources to spend on education.

The Board operates education programs and activities on a statewide basis. However, the Council will seek to undertake its own education activities that reflect local priorities and are targeted to its community.

The main options relating to education are listed below. This list is not necessarily complete, however it can be used as a basis to generate more options. The options are divided into antecedence strategies (those which occur *prior* to the behaviour) and consequence strategies (those which occur *after* the behaviour). The strategies can be further classified into written or documentary programs and face to face contact.

Education Options

Antecedence Strategies		Consequence Strategies	
Written or documentary	Face to face contact	Written or documentary	Face to face contact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brochures • Mailouts • Press coverage • Signage • Videos on responsible pet ownership • Information on the Internet • Code of conduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking to pet owners about responsible pet ownership • Talking to children about responsible pet ownership & appropriate behaviour around dogs • Dog Day Out Events • Microchipping days • Demonstration (how to pick up dog faeces) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awards (dog owner of the year/month accompanied by letters of congratulation and press coverage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rewards for responsible behaviour. • Sanctions (fines, warnings).

Face-to-face contact is generally regarded as a better option and the Council will seek this option wherever possible. However, this option has a narrower reach and its success depends on the skills of the educator.

The “written word” approach by contrast can reach more people and its message lasts longer (a sign for example a sign is seen every time someone visits a park).

The Council will therefore seek to:

- deliver its messages so that people feel the message applies to them (people will not think the message about socialising their dog applies to them if they have an old dog);
- convey clear and specific messages for example (not just “*pick up your dog’s faeces*” but “*take a bag with you, pick up as soon as your dog defecates and dispose of it in any garbage bin*”); and
- convey positive messages (provide a list of places where people *can* take their dog off-leash as opposed to a list of places where people *can’t* take their dog off-leash).

Each **Key Issue Area** includes target groups to assist in designing successful education programs. The Plan also classifies pet owners into prospective pet owners, new pet owners and existing pet owners for better targeting of the responsible pet ownership message.

Finally, partnerships with key stakeholders (veterinarians, clubs, welfare organizations) are important for the purposes of maximising the success of education programs and the Council will seek to develop and strengthen these partnerships.

The Council's focus during the life of the Plan will be on:

- encouraging new and prospective pet owners to be responsible pet owners;
- compliance with the new access and leash requirements in public open space areas; and
- holding an annual Dog Day Out Festival as a positive way to get across the responsible pet ownership message. Dovetailing with: would be an emphasis on taking a bag with you and picking up dog faeces and keeping dogs leashed in public streets (which are requirements under the Act).

Action Plan – Public Education

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Provide on the Council's website information on animal management and responsible pet ownership and provide links to education material available from the Board's website.	Ongoing	Number of visits to the website pages	Website Officer
Develop a series of community advertisements for rotational release on the reasons animals end up in animal welfare shelter, what happens to them and what pet owners and the community can do to minimise the problem.	Medium Term	3 advertisements over the life of the Plan	Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit
Plan and hold a biennial Dog Day Out event for dog owners. Involve key external stakeholders.	Medium Term	20% attendance increase – based on 2013 attendance rates	Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit Events Unit
Conduct an evaluation and review of the Dog Day Out event			Regulatory Services Staff Communications Unit Events Unit

Refer also to Action Plans for:

- prospective and new pet owners;
- registration and identification;
- excessive barking;
- dog attacks and bite avoidance;
- confinement and wandering at large;
- access to public open space;
- managing dog faeces;
- cat management;
- animal welfare; and
- harnessing the benefits of pet ownership.

3.11 HARNESSING THE BENEFITS OF PET OWNERSHIP

OBJECTIVE

The objective in respect to Harnessing the Benefits of Pet Ownership (*Key Issue Area 11*) is to investigate and develop a role for the Council in harnessing the benefits of owning pets.

TARGET GROUP

The Target Group is pet owners.

DISCUSSION

There is a wealth of scientific evidence to support the health and social benefits of owning pets, although pet ownership is a very complex, individual relationship and to this end, not all human animal interactions are positive.

Most of the studies suggest, pet ownership is associated with a reduction in cardiovascular disease (heart attacks and stroke) associated with increased exercise. However, a growing body of research indicates that there is an association between pet ownership/attachment and psycho-social wellbeing.

The psycho-social benefits of pet ownership include, facilitating normal child development, ameliorating loneliness and depression and facilitating social support and interaction with other humans. It has been demonstrated that dogs are a social lubricant - having a dog with you stimulates conversations and in some cases friendships with other dog owners. This is generally seen as making a positive contribution to social capital.

Local government has a potential new role to play in harnessing the benefits of owning companion animals. There are programs in other parts of Australia (eg Pet Links in Victoria) which match frail elderly pet owners with volunteers that might walk, bath or take their pet to the vet.

Pets are often taken to nursing homes and hospitals to visit patients/residents. The Council will consider being involved in facilitating such programs.

The Dog Day Out event will serve as a great tool to educate the community in responsible pet ownership and could also be used as a way to generate social capital within the City.

Action Plan - Harnessing the Benefits of Pet Ownership

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Investigate the merits of sponsoring a pet links type program.	Long Term		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services
Determine if there is scope to sponsor a dog visitation program in local hospitals and nursing homes.	Long Term		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services

Refer also to the Action Plans for public education.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

4.1 APPROVAL OF THE PLAN

The development of the Plan has been undertaken in two (2) stages.

The first stage involved the development of a Draft Plan for the purposes of undertaking community consultation. This stage was completed in June 2006.

The second stage involved the undertaking of community consultation on the Draft Plan which had been developed in 2006, adoption by the Council of the Final Plan and seeking the endorsement of the Plan by the Board, as required by the Act. The second stage was completed in June 2007.

The Plan was reviewed by the Council in 2012.

4.2 PRIORITISING ACTION PLANS

The strategies categorised in the Plan, have been prioritised and scheduled through three (3) phases of implementation over the five-year life of the Plan.

Phase 1: short-term (Years 1 and 2);
Phase 2: medium-term (Years 3 and 4); and
Phase 3: long-term (Year 5).

4.3 DEVELOPING A SOUND BASIS FOR RECORDING DATA

The Council's existing procedures for recording data related to animal management, will be screened and upgraded to provide an accurate and comprehensive basis to assess the Council's performance in respect to animal management.

4.4 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Although the Plan sets out detailed recommendations, an Annual Work Plan will be developed to guide the implementation the various Actions contained in the Plan and allow the recommendations to be matched with appropriate budget allocations.

Evaluating the progress of the Plan on an annual basis, is the cornerstone of the implementation and evaluation strategy.

An Annual Progress Report will be prepared for the Council's consideration, outlining the progress made towards achieving the objectives of the Plan, difficulties encountered in the process and any changes to the Plan which are considered necessary due to new circumstances or new information being available. Amendments or changes to the Plan, will need to be endorsed by the Council and subsequently approved by the Board, prior to coming into effect.

4.5 PARTNERSHIPS WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

The Council will consider developing and strengthening partnerships with key external stakeholders such to extend the reach of the responsible pet ownership message.

This includes, but is not limited to veterinarians, pet shops, breeders, trainers and animal behaviourists. The Council will seek to develop a register of key external stakeholders and communicate with them on a regular basis.

4.6 STAFF TRAINING

It is likely that there will soon be accredited animal management courses available for staff working in animal control. The Council will encourage, where possible, its animal management officers to complete such accredited courses. In considering applications for new animal control officers, preference will be given to applicants who have completed an accredited course.

4.7 FUNDING

It is a requirement of the Act for fees which are collected from dog registrations to be used on dog management. Alternative funding sources will be sought for cat management issues. The Council will take advantage of any other funding sources as they become available, including State Government grants and public or private sector partnerships.

The Council will also explore alternative funding sources and opportunities from Federal and State Governments and the private sector, to assist with the implementation of the Plan.

Action Plan

Action	Priority	Key Performance Indicator	Resources
Encourage Animal Management Officers to completed accredited animal management course when available.	Long Term	All staff accredited Animal Management Officers	Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services
In considering applications for new Animal Management Officers, preference will be given to applicants who have completed an accredited Animal Management Course.	Ongoing	All staff accredited Animal Management Officers	Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services
Generate a list of key external stakeholders and develop a strategy for communicating with these stakeholders regularly.	Short Term		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services Communications Unit
Prepare an Annual Progress Report for the Council's consideration.	Annually		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services
Consider alternative funding sources, such as State Government funding, to assist with the implementation of the strategies of the Plan.	Ongoing		Team Leader, Customer & Regulatory Services

APPENDIX A

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR OFF-LEASH AREAS

1. THE RELEVANT ISSUES

The criteria which was used for selecting off-leash parks is set out below. It is important to recognise that the dedicated off-leash areas have not been selected simply because they met each criteria but that there was inevitably some balancing required.

- **Number of off-leash parks:** achieve as many off-leash parks as practicable. Maximising the number of off-leash parks, enhances accessibility for all dog owners and avoids individual parks becoming defacto “dog parks”.
- **Distribution:** where possible, achieve an even distribution across the City.
- **Existing users:** where possible, the Council will take into account existing patterns of use by dog owners.
- **Other users:** avoid areas of high human activity, minimise conflicts with other user groups. Seek areas that are not intensively used. Where possible, keep well separated from play equipment, picnic and barbecue areas and bicycle paths.
- **The whole of the park should be off-leash:** where possible, the entire park area should be designated for off-leash activity.

However, where only part of a park is to be declared off-leash, the different areas should be well separated from sensitive uses and where possible, the boundary should be distinguishable on the ground to avoid the need for fencing and excessive signage. Look for existing and/or natural barriers such as creek lines.

- **Context:** large parks are best and open areas for dogs to run are ideal.
- **Facilities:** the availability of off-street car parking is ideal, but not an essential requirement.
- **Accessibility:** where possible, seek multiple points of access and provision for off-street parking.
- **Boundaries:** parks which are enclosed by other properties, are considered the safest (although enclosure can in some instances reduce accessibility).
- **Fencing:** perimeter fencing is generally not required and should be avoided due to cost of installation and the barrier which it creates. Fencing along a street may be required where the park is very small or adjacent to a busy road.

However, these parks are often not suitable as off-leash parks. Chain mesh or low timber fencing will not contain dogs, however, the installation of such fencing may act as a deterrent or slowing down mechanism. Where they exist, natural barriers are preferred to the erection of fencing.

- **Simplicity:** where possible, the parks should be available for off-leash activity 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (however, given that Norwood Payneham and St Peters is an inner-metropolitan Local Government Area, it is inevitable that some timeshare will be likely). Where timeshare is required, the times will be selected on the basis of ensuring minimum confusion.

2. THE OFF-LEASH AREAS

Borthwick Park - Thornton Street, Kensington

- *Between 6.00pm and 10.00am on any day.*

This park has been selected as it is:

- of a reasonable size;
- accessible from all directions; and
- a park which contains some play equipment, however it is at a level and a location which provides an acceptable context.

Buik Crescent Reserve - Buik Crescent, Marden

- *No specific conditions.*

This reserve has been selected as it is:

- of a good size;
- highly accessible from all directions;
- a park which contains no play equipment or barbecues; and
- is not fenced but is located adjacent to local streets.

Drage Reserve - Riverside Drive, Felixstow

Only the section which is located south of the car park and east of the creek has been an off-leash area during the following times:

- *Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)
– Every day between 7.00pm and 10.00am.*
- *Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)
– Every day between 5.00pm and 10.00am.*

Only the section of the reserve which is located south of the car park and east of the creek has been selected as it is:

- of a good size;
- has plenty of off-street car parking available;
- accessible by foot;
- an area of the reserve which would service a significant number of residents to the south;
- an area of the reserve which is removed from the main bicycle/walking path;
- a park which could be used in conjunction with a longer leashed walk in the River Torrens Linear Park; and
- a location where whilst neighbouring dwellings are immediately adjacent, any impact from its use as an off-leash area, is judged to be acceptable.

Felixstow Reserve - Langman Grove, Felixstow

- *Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)
– Every day between the hours of 7.00pm and 10.00am.*
- *Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)
– Every day between the hours of 5.00pm and 10.00am.*

This reserve has been selected as it is:

- a very large open park;
- has plenty of off-street car parking available;
- highly accessible by foot;
- well separated from neighbouring dwellings;
- a park which could be used in conjunction with a longer leashed walk in the River Torrens Linear Park; and
- is not fenced along the street frontage, however the focus of off-leash activity is likely to be in the vicinity of the car park and away from the road.

Hannaford Reserve - Corner Winchester Street and Seventh Avenue, St Peters

- *No specific conditions.*

This reserve has been selected as it is:

- of a good size;
- a large open area which is ideal for dogs;
- highly accessible from all directions; and
- adjacent to three (3) roads, however the existing boundary fence would act as a slowing mechanism for dogs.

This reserve contains play equipment which is located to one side of the reserve and as such, is considered to be in an acceptable context.

Hutchinson Park - Corner Bond Street and Free Street, Norwood

- *Between 6.00pm and 10.00am on any day.*

This park has been selected as it is:

- already highly valued by dog owners as a recreation resource;
- a park with limited but reasonable exposure to local roads; and
- accessible by foot from several directions.

This reserve contains play equipment which is located to one side of the reserve and as such is considered to be in an acceptable context.

LG Perriam Memorial Oval (St Peters River Park) – River Torrens Linear Park

- *Except during organised activities (eg. training and sporting events).*

This Oval has been selected as it is:

- of a good size;
- already highly valued by dog owners as a recreation resource; and
- only used for active sport during times which must be approved by the Council.

The off-leash provisions apply strictly to the Oval area only. This Oval is used regularly for organised sports activities, which have been approved by the Council. As such, during these particular times, dogs will be required to be on-leash.

Linde Reserve - Between Nelson Street and Stepney Street, Stepney

- *Only within the area located west of the creek.*

Only the section of the reserve which is located west of the creek has been selected as it is:

- of a good size;
- highly accessible by foot from all directions;
- an area which is separated by a creek from the sensitive part of the park;
- neighbouring dwellings are located immediately adjacent, however, impact is judged to be acceptable; and
- not presently used by other interests.

Otto Park - Corner Second Avenue and St Peters Street, St Peters

- *No specific conditions.*

This reserve has been selected as it is:

- of a reasonable size and could be improved if redeveloped;
- fenced; and
- not presently used for other interests.

Richards Park - Corner Osmond Terrace and Magill Road, Norwood

- *Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)*
 - *Weekdays (Monday to Friday) between 8.00pm and 9.00am.*
- *Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)*
 - *Weekends (Saturday and Sunday) between 8.00pm and 9.00am.*
- *Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)*
 - *Weekdays (Monday to Friday) between 6.00pm and 9.00am.*
- *Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)*
 - *Weekends (Saturday and Sunday) between 6.00pm and 9.00am.*

This park has been selected as it is already highly valued by dog owners as a recreation resource. This park contains play equipment which is located to one side of the reserve and as such, is considered to be in an acceptable context.

Notwithstanding the above, this park is also relatively small, intensively used by various users and is adjacent to the Margaret Ives Childcare Centre and Kindergarten. To this end, the off-leash provisions will only apply during the times and hours specified above.

St Morris Reserve - Corner Green Street and Seventh Avenue, St Morris

- *Between 6.00pm and 8.00am on any day.*

This reserve has been selected as it is:

- of a good size;
- fenced;
- accessible from all directions;
- a park which contains some play equipment which is fenced; and
- whilst the elderly persons accommodation is located adjacent to the reserve, it is considered to be an acceptable context.

This reserve is adjacent to the St Morris Childcare Centre. As such, the off-leash provisions will only apply during the hours specified above in order to avoid any potential conflicts.

APPENDIX B

MAP OF OFF-LEASH AREAS

The eleven (11) off-leash areas are:



City of
Norwood
Payneham
& St Peters



- 1 FELIXSTOW RESERVE - Langman Grove, Felixstow**
Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)
 – Every day between the hours of 7pm and 10am.
Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)
 – Every day between the hours of 5pm and 10am.
- 2 DRAGE RESERVE - Riverside Drive, Felixstow**
Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)
 – Every day between 7pm and 10am.
Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)
 – Every day between 5pm and 10am.
- 3 BAIK CRESCENT RESERVE - Baik Crescent, Marden**
 No specific conditions
- 4 HANNAFORD RESERVE - Corner Winchester Street and Seventh Avenue, St Peters**
 No specific conditions
- 5 OTTO PARK - Corner Second Avenue and St Peters Street, St Peters**
 No specific conditions
- 6 LINDE RESERVE - Between Nelson Street and Stepney Street, Stepney**
 Only within the area located west of the creek
- 7 ST MORRIS RESERVE - Corner Green Street and Seventh Avenue, St Morris**
 Between 6.00pm and 8.00am on any day.
- 8 HUTCHINSON PARK - Corner Bond Street and Free Street, Norwood**
 Between 6pm and 10am on any day
- 9 BORTHWICK PARK - Thornton Street, Kensington**
 Between 6pm and 10am on any day
- 10 LG PERRIAM MEMORIAL OVAL (ST PETERS RIVER PARK) - Within the River Torrens Linear Park**
 Except during organised activities (eg. training and sporting events).
- 11 RICHARDS PARK - Corner Osmond Terrace and Magill Road, Norwood**
Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)
 – Weekdays (Monday to Friday) between 8pm and 9am.
Summer (from the commencement of daylight saving to the conclusion of daylight saving)
 – Weekends (Saturday and Sunday) between 8pm and 9am.
Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)
 – Weekdays (Monday to Friday) between 6pm and 9am.
Winter (from the conclusion of daylight saving to the commencement of daylight saving)
 – Weekends (Saturday and Sunday) between 6pm and 9am.

APPENDIX C

COUNCIL BY-LAW No 5 (DOGS)

THE CITY OF NORWOOD PAYNEHAM & ST PETERS

By-law made under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 and

the Local Government Act 1999

BY-LAW NO 5 – DOGS

for the management of dogs within the City and to limit the number of dogs kept in premises.

Definitions

1. In this By-law:

- (1) **'dog'** means an animal of the species *canis familiaris* but does not include a dingo or cross of a dingo;
- (2) **'small dwelling'** means a flat, a service flat, home unit or a suite of rooms which is wholly occupied, or designed or intended or adapted to be occupied, as a separate dwelling, but does not include a detached, semi-detached or row dwelling house;
- (3) **'approved kennel establishment'** means a building, structure or area approved by the relevant authority, pursuant to the Development Act 1993 for the keeping of dogs on a temporary or permanent basis;
- (4) A person is exercising **'effective control of a dog by means of physical restraint'** if:
 - (a) the person is exercising effective control of the dog by means of a chain, cord or leash that does not exceed two (2) metres in length restraining the dog; or
 - (b) the person has effectively secured the dog –
 - (i) by placing it in a cage, vehicle or other object or structure; or
 - (ii) by tethering it to a fixed object by means of a chain, cord or leash that does not exceed two (2) metres in length.
- (5) A person is exercising **'effective control of a dog by means of command'** if the dog is in close proximity to the person and the person is able to see the dog at all times;
- (6) **'Council approved activities'** means activities that the Council has approved in writing and will include 'one off' as well as regular activities.

Limit on Dog Numbers

2. (1) The limit on the number of dogs kept, which are of the age of three (3) months or older, will be:
 - (a) in a small dwelling, one (1) dog; and
 - (b) in premises other than a small dwelling, two (2) dogs;
- (2) No person will, without obtaining the written permission of the Council, keep any dog on any premises where the number of dogs on those premises exceeds the limit unless the premises are approved as a kennel establishment.

Dog Free Areas

3. No person will in the following locations cause, suffer or permit any dog under that person's control, charge or authority (except a Guide Dog) to be in, or remain in that place:
 - (1) Any area within fifteen (15) metres of public play equipment, unless the public play equipment is fenced, in which case, within such fenced area;
 - (2) Any area within fifteen (15) metres of public picnic or barbeque areas;
 - (3) Any other area stipulated in the Council's Urban Animal Management Plan, as amended from time to time.

Dogs On-Leash Areas

4. No person will on any land that is not a dog free area or a dog exercise area cause, suffer or permit any dog under that person's control, charge or authority to be or remain in that place unless that person is exercising effective control of such dog by means of physical restraint and preventing it from being a nuisance or a danger to other persons or animals.

Dog Exercise Areas

5. (1) Any person may enter any area which has been dedicated by the Council a dog exercise (off-leash) area in the Council's Urban Animal Management Plan, as amended from time to time, for the purpose of exercising a dog under that person's control in accordance with any conditions contained in the Council's Urban Animal Management Plan.
 - (2) Where a person enters upon such part of Council land for that purpose, that person will ensure that the dog or dogs under their control remains under effective control:
 - (a) when Council approved activities are being undertaken, by means of physical restraint;
 - (b) at other times during which the land is available for use as an off-leash park, by means of physical restraint or command.

Exemptions

6. The physical restraint restrictions in this by-law do not apply to a person participating in a dog obedience training class, the holding of which has been approved by the Council, provided that person is ensuring that the dog or dogs under their control remains under effective control by means of command.

Dog Obedience Classes

7. No person will without prior permission conduct dog obedience training classes on Council land.

Dog Faeces

8. No person will cause, suffer or permit a dog under that person's control, charge or authority to be on or to remain on Council land unless that person has in their possession a bag or other suitable container on their person for the collection of any faeces from that dog for the purpose of complying with the obligation in Section 45A(6) of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.

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The foregoing by-law was duly made and passed at a meeting of the City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters held on the 5th May 2008 by an absolute majority of the members for the time being constituting the Council, there being at least two thirds of the members present.

Mario Barone
Chief Executive Officer