



Sunshine Coast Council
Management Plan for
Domestic Animals (Cats and Dogs)
2021- 2030

SNAPSHOT



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Effective animal management is vital to ensure the harmonious co-existence between people, pets and places. With this in mind, Sunshine Coast Council has developed the Management Plan for Domestic Animals (Cats and Dogs) for the next 10 years. Our aim is to address all aspects of responsible pet ownership in our region by exploring their relationship to *people*, their value and impact as *pets* and the ability to create *places* for all to enjoy.

Council recognises that for many people, pets are more than just a pet – they offer companionship and are a part of the family. However, some people don't like animals and prefer to enjoy places that are pet free. While others who may not have a pet of their own still enjoy being around pets in shared open spaces such as dog parks and dog off-leash areas.

In August 2020 and February 2021, Council engaged with residents to hear their views regarding responsible pet ownership. We asked for feedback through a variety of communication methods to better understand residents' views on responsible pet ownership. This feedback helped shape the new Management Plan for Domestic Animals (Cats and Dogs) 2021–2030.

Through the consultation, we heard how the community values responsible pet ownership, whether you owned a pet or not. We listened to concerns about:

- Management of animals in public spaces
- Creating a safe space for pet owners and non-pet owners
- Protecting our environment by disposing of dog waste responsibly
- The impacts roaming pets have on wildlife, in particular cat management.

The community feedback has helped us to identify our objectives and to prioritise what is important.

Council developed three themes to guide the new plan, with a goal of creating a harmonious co-existence between people, pets and places: Informed Educated People, Happy Healthy Pets and Safe and Inclusive Places.

These objectives will assist Council to be responsive to the evolving needs and expectations of our community.





Outcome One Informed Educated People

We recognise that our community is made up of people who have differing relationships and experiences with pets and animals. We believe that the diverse needs and preferences of the community are to be valued and respected.

What our community told us

“Expand responsible pet ownership program to reach more of the community coastal and hinterland,” survey respondent.

We heard that the areas of greatest concern are:

- Knowledge of regulations
- Pet owner and non-pet owner co-existence
- Accountability for the actions of the animal
- The responsibilities of owning a pet

Objectives

- People are informed of their rights, responsibilities and resources available to them
- Enhanced accessibility to information and services through utilisation of smart technology and creative innovations
- Ensure access to resources for all people through the removal of any barriers such as multilingual fact sheets, internet and computer resources through library services

Our commitment

Council provides education and information to inform and enable the community to:

- Be responsible pet owners
- Safely interact with pets
- Engage and partner with Council or other stakeholders in relation to any issues
- regarding animal or community safety and wellbeing

Council will explore options for development and utilisation of smart technology and innovation, creative solutions for improved customer service and ease of access.

How we'll track our progress

ACTION	MEASURE
Explore and utilise smart technology solutions and systems to improve online access and engagement	Increase in the community's access to online resources
	Continue to explore new ideas and technologies in relation to animal management
	Investigate pathways to remove barriers to online access
Continue to deliver a 12-month animal management education program	Maintaining a high satisfaction level on education sessions and interactions with Council
	Reduction in the number of nuisances reported
Embed sustainable approaches and practises into our animal management services	Increase access to online information, services and apps Reduce use of paper services
Continue to undertake proactive officer patrols in public places to educate and enforce responsible pet ownership behaviours	Reduction in the number of reported dog attacks / menacing dogs on beaches and foreshores
	Number of patrols conducted
	Reduction in the number of complaints regarding dog waste disposal

Outcome Two Happy Healthy Pets



Happy healthy pets are safe pets. When the needs of a pet are met, the wellbeing of the pet and the community around it is protected. Happy healthy pets are less likely to cause a nuisance or put others safety at risk.

What our community told us

“Information and awareness on responsible cat ownership, keeping cats indoors or building enclosures,” survey respondent.

We heard that the areas of greatest concern are:

- Registration, microchipping and control of cats
- Barking dogs in residential areas, including apartment blocks
- Managing dog behaviour on the beaches and footpaths
- Dog waste being left behind

We heard that the areas to focus on are:

- Management of dogs in public
- Responsible cat ownership
- Education information sessions
- Initiatives with pet partners focusing on de-sexing and pet rehoming

Objectives

- Build strong partnerships to support animal welfare advocacy
- Actively seek new ways to facilitate the safe integration of pets into shared spaces
- Enhance education and awareness of responsible pet ownership and its benefits

Our commitment

- Community safety is a priority for Council. Council will work with pet owners to ensure the safety and amenity of the broader community is maintained.
- Collaborative, proactive and enduring partnerships with community and other government agencies to support responsible animal management.

How we'll track our progress

ACTION	MEASURE
Implement regular and effective marketing campaigns	Plan is shared through marketing campaigns and partnership networks
	Number of education pop ups
	Reduction in number of cat and dog nuisances reported
Educate community about responsible cat ownership	Decrease in the number of complaints received, incidences of attacks, and roaming animals
Continue to partner with local animal shelters to promote reduced fee desexing initiatives	Successful rehoming of all suitable animals with rehoming partners
Advocate and partner with key rehoming partners to promote the message 'adopt not shop'	Increase in number of pets reunited with owners



Outcome Three Safe Inclusive Places

The relationship people have with pets is changing. For many people, they are not just a pet to enjoy at home, they have become friend and family. They participate in everyday activities within the community – walks on the beach, enjoying a visit to a local café, play dates in the park, festivals and events.

What our community told us

“Everyone has the right to feel safe when visiting shared public spaces, eg beaches, parks,” survey respondent.

We heard that the areas of greatest concern are:

- Dog waste not being collected by owners on walkways and beaches
- The effective and safe management of pets in public spaces
- Roaming pets and their potential impact on the ecosystem
- Safe communities

We heard that the areas to focus on are:

- Responsible pet ownership in public spaces
- Balancing the community need for public spaces that are available for animal exercise and spaces that are pet free
- Education information sessions
- Beach patrol and monitoring programs
- Ensuring public spaces are accessible, safe and environmentally protected

Objectives

- Safe and harmonious integration of pets into the community
- Infrastructure supports the needs of a growing community
- Natural environment and wildlife are respected and protected

Our commitment

Council’s role is to support the community, ensuring safety and enforcing regulation where necessary. We are committed to supporting open public places that:

- are safe and accessible with clear signage to ensure harmonious usage where appropriate
- inclusive of community needs
- protect the natural environment and wildlife
- is responsive to changes in the local community needs

How we’ll track our progress

ACTION	MEASURE
Work with Parks & Gardens to ensure access to safe and inclusive places proportionate to population	Number of safe and inclusive places remains proportionate to the population and level of pet ownership.
	Reduction in dog attacks in open spaces
Collaborate and partner with relevant stakeholders to coordinate efforts to educate the community about responsible cat ownership	Decrease in roaming complaints and requests for cat traps
	Increase in cat registration, desexing and microchipping
Continue to undertake proactive officer patrols in public places to educate and enforce responsible pet ownership behaviours	Reduction in the number of complaints regarding dog waste disposal

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Sunshine Coast Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the region, the Kabi Kabi and Jinibara people. Council is committed to working in partnership with the Traditional Owners to support self-determination through economic and community development opportunities.



Our region.
Healthy. Smart. Creative.

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