



CORANGAMITE
SHIRE



Domestic Animal Management Plan

2021-2025

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land around Corangamite Shire, the Eastern Maar and Wadawurrung people. We pay our respects to all Aboriginal Elders and peoples past, present and emerging.

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	December 2021	DAMP adopted by Council
1.1	December 2022	Inclusion of information about the review of Local Laws Updated with recent statistics
1.2	December 2023	Updated with recent statistics and progress update

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1. Summary

1. Summary

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act) requires Council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years. The Draft Corangamite Shire DAMP 2021-2025 has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

The Corangamite Shire DAMP aims to provide Council with a clear direction on how it will support residents to be responsible pet owners and abide by the domestic animal Local Laws for the benefit of the wider community.

The focus of this Plan is on:

- Educating our community on responsible pet ownership and responsibilities.
- Promoting registration of all domestic animals.
- Ensuring the effective control of dogs in public areas.
- Managing nuisance animals issues such as feral animals.
- Promoting the benefits of microchipping and desexing.
- Encouraging pet owners to clean up after dogs.

The DAMP presents information on registered domestic animal statistics, the Local Laws team, local laws and policies, and current programs and services.

The DAMP outlines the planned programs and initiatives of the Local Laws team including training and development, community education to improve responsible pet ownership, identification and registration of animals, compliance and enforcement of Local Laws associated with pet ownership, domestic animal businesses and declared dogs.



2. Introduction and Context

2. Introduction and Context

2.1. Purpose of the Domestic Animal Management Plan

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the Act) requires Council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan every four years.

The plan must set out a method for evaluating whether the animal management services provided by Council are adequate to give effect to requirements of the Act and the *Domestic Animal Regulations 2015*.

The plan must also outline programs for the training of authorised officers along with programs, services and strategies to:

- Ensure that people comply with the Act, the regulations and any related legislation.
- Minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.
- Address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for domestic dogs and cats.
- Encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats.
- Minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance.
- Effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations.
- Provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district

with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable.

- Provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary.
- Provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the plan.

The Corangamite Shire Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 (the DAMP) aims to provide Council with a clear direction on how it will support residents to be responsible pet owners to abide by the domestic animal Local Laws for the benefit of the wider community.

This will be achieved by:

- providing the community with a clear understanding of Council's expectations for pet owners;
- reinforcing to the community Council's commitment to improving standards associated with pet ownership; and
- clearly describing to the community the role and actions Council will take to improve the level of responsible pet ownership throughout Corangamite Shire.

Key outcomes that will be achieved through the DAMP include:

1. Council officers will have the necessary skills and resources to implement the DAMP.
2. The community will have increased awareness of domestic animal laws and their pet ownership responsibilities.
3. Dog and cat registration levels will increase.
4. Incidences of dogs at large and nuisance behaviour will decrease.
5. Dangerous, restricted breed and menacing dogs will be actively managed.
6. Dog attack incidences will decrease.
7. Issues associated with overpopulation of cats, feral cats and roaming cats will decrease.
8. All suitable animals will be re-homed (not including feral cats and animals with behavioural or health issues).
9. All Domestic Animal Businesses will be managed in accordance with the applicable laws and Codes of Practice.

2.2. Process applied in developing the plan

This DAMP has been developed with extensive consultation from the community and internal Council staff. Council sought community feedback on domestic animal issues and services via a survey in June 2021. Council received 60 responses to this survey. The main issues raised by respondents were:

- Low awareness of on-lead areas for dogs across the Shire.
- Concerns about dogs at large, dogs not being controlled in a public place (accompanied by their owner), aggressive dogs and dog faeces not being picked up.
- Low awareness of the need to contain cats to the owner's property.
- Concerns about roaming cats and feral cats.

- Limited understanding of what registration fees are used for, with many respondents feeling that they do not get value for money for their registration.
- The need for increased enforcement on domestic animal issues.

Community feedback on a draft DAMP was sought over a four-week period during October 2021. Six submissions were received on the draft DAMP covering a range of issues such as barking dog processes, registration and microchipping of impounded animals, desexing, roaming cats and dogs and dog faeces in public areas. This feedback has been incorporated into the development of the final DAMP.

2.3. Demographic and profile of Corangamite Shire

Corangamite Shire is located 190 kilometres south-west of Melbourne on the Great South Coast. The municipality covers 4600 square kilometres stretching from the Great Ocean Road in the south to the pastoral area of Skipton in the north. Corangamite takes its name from the huge inland lake on the Shire's eastern boundary. It is a renowned farming region, producing milk, wool, beef and prime lamb. For residents and visitors alike, Corangamite offers beautiful beaches, rugged coastline, volcanic lakes and craters and pastoral country.

Corangamite Shire is home to an estimated 16,051 people. The median age

of Corangamite Shire residents is 46. Most Corangamite residents speak English only at home, whilst a small percentage of residents speak Dutch and German at home (both 0.2%). Farming and healthcare are the Shire's main employers and the median household weekly income is \$1,388 per week.

Corangamite's communities include Camperdown, Terang, Port Campbell, Cobden, Lismore, Derrinallum, Skipton, Princetown, Simpson, Noorat, Darlington and Timboon. Neighbouring municipalities include Colac-Otway, Golden Plains, Pyrenees, Ararat and Moyne Shires.

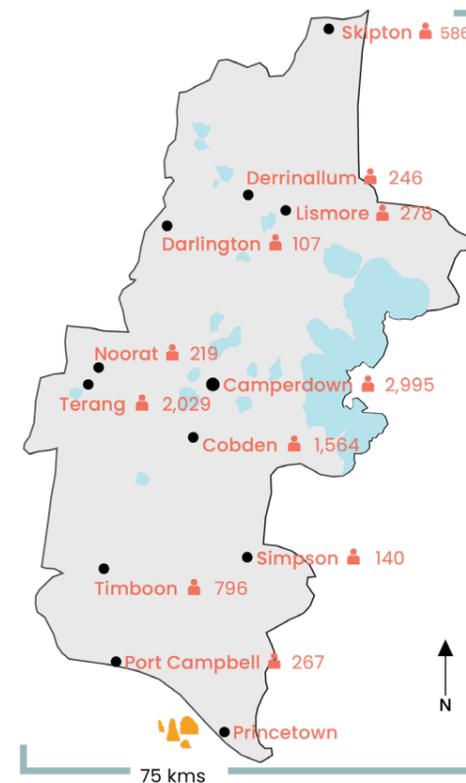


Figure 1: Corangamite Shire Map

2.4. Context and Current Situation

A summary of Council's domestic animal services is outlined in the table below.

Table 1: Summary of Council's current domestic animal services

Program/service	Service level
Identification & Registration	2696 dogs and 982 cats registered
Door knocking campaigns	All year
Domestic animal complaints	Average response time – 1.01 days
Dog Attack reports	Response time - within 2 hours
Routine street patrols	Approx. 5 per week
Pound	Council manages a pound for the impoundment of animals. This facility is not open to the public.
Micro-chipping and/or desexing programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual microchipping week Promotion of the benefits of microchipping and desexing Reduced registration fees for desexed animals
After hours emergency service	On call emergency service available 24/7
Impounded animals reclaimed 2021-2022	46% (excluding feral cats and surrendered animals)
Impounded animals rehomed 2021-2022	71% (excluding feral cats)
Successful Animal Prosecutions (%) 2021-2022	100%
Cost of animal management services per population 2021-2022	\$14.42
Authorised Local Law Officers	Two (2) full time officers

2.4. Domestic Animal Statistics

The following table provides statistics on Council's Domestic Animal services.

Table 2: Corangamite Shire Council Domestic Animal Data

Year	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Registered dogs	2801	2721	2696
Desexed Dogs	1883	1821	1816
Dogs impounded	79	107	105
• Dogs returned to owner	41	70	46
• Dogs rehoused	30	29	52
• Dogs euthanised	8	8	7
• Dogs surrendered to Council	30	33	52
Declared Dogs	7	5	5
• Dogs declared menacing	4	4	3
• Dogs declared dangerous	2	1	0
• Restricted breed dogs	1	0	0
Registered cats	1026	1019	982
Desexed Cats	1011	992	968
Cats impounded	170	285	217
• Feral cats	60	76	61
• Cats surrendered to Council	24	71	16
• Cats returned to owner	11	16	12
• Cats rehoused	84	182	134
• Cats euthanised*	73	86	71

*includes feral cats not suitable for rehoming

Table 2: Corangamite Shire Council Domestic Animal Data (cont.)

Year	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Dog attacks			
• Reported attacks on dogs	6	4	3
• Reported attacks on person	3	6	10
• Reported attacks on livestock	4	2	2
• Reported attacks on cat/ other attacks	3	2	1
Domestic Animal Complaints & Requests	739	754	716
Domestic Animal Businesses	1	1	1

3. Training of Authorised Officers



3. Training of Authorised Officers

3.1. Context and Current Situation

Council currently employs two full time Local Law Officers. These officers are authorised under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

It is important that all authorised officers have the appropriate training and skills to carry out daily activities safely and effectively. Council's authorised officers

hold or are currently obtaining a Certificate IV Animal Control and Regulation and a Certificate IV in Government. Other training completed by officers include Occupational Health and Safety and microchip implanting training. Authorised officers currently hold firearm licences, construction white cards and traffic control accreditation.

3.2. Our planned training for Authorised Officers

Council develops annual training programs for each staff member to ensure they receive the required and desirable training. The following table outlines the key training requirements for authorised officer over the next four years.

Table 3: Authorised Officer Planned Training 2021-2025

Authorised Officer Training - Basic	Frequency	Planned
Cert IV Animal Control and Regulation	One-off for staff that require training	2021-2023
Cert IV Government	One-off for staff that require training	2021-2023
Refresher training in compliance procedures	Annually	Aug-Sep as part of annual review
Infringement Training	Every 3-4 years	2022
OH&S training-dealing with aggressive customers.	Annually	June
Customer service training-conflict resolution, telephone protocols	Annually	June
Animal Welfare Victoria-training and information days	When offered	

Table 3: Authorised Officer Planned Training 2021-2025 (cont.)

Authorised Officer Training - Additional	Frequency	Planned
Firearm safety	Annually	January
Animal Handling/Control	Every 2-3 years	2021

3.3. Our plan

Objective one

Develop a training plan that identifies minimum training requirements and any additional training needs that should be undertaken by Authorised Officers.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.1	Identify training requirements during Council's annual review system.	Annually	Training requirements identified and relevant training completed.

Objective two

Develop and maintain an annual training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.2	Create a spreadsheet listing each officer's name and their completed training, along with proposed training.	Annually	Register maintained.

Objective three

Ensure all new Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements within 18 months of appointment.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
3.3	Identify minimum training for officers (e.g. OH&S, animal handling) and ensure it is completed.	Within 24 months of appointment.	All new Officers have completed initial training and any refresher training requirements.



4. Responsible Pet Ownership

4. Responsible Pet Ownership

4.1. Context and Current Situation

Pets can bring much joy to people's lives. For the benefit of both the pet and the owner, Council encourages responsible pet ownership. Responsible pet ownership means taking on all responsibilities of owning a pet and ensuring that you are aware of and comply with the relevant laws. It includes registering and microchipping your animal, desexing, containing your pet to your property, and keeping your dog on a lead where required.

Council currently promotes responsible pet ownership through its website and

media articles. Local Law Rangers regularly patrol in townships and rural areas across the Shire, educating on and enforcing Local Laws. In 2022-2023, Council issued 212 infringements and warnings relating to domestic animals.

Council is due to review Local Laws in 2024. This will include a review of Local Laws relating to domestic animals and order made under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

4.2. Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Current Orders:

- Government Gazette - on-lead areas located throughout the municipality

Current Local Laws:

- Local Law regulating the number of animals permitted without a permit.
- Local Law regulating confinement of animals to the owner's property.
- Local Law regulating that dogs need to be under owner's control in public areas.
- Local Law regulating nuisance issues relating to cats and dogs (i.e. barking, roaming cats).
- Local Law regulating the picking up and disposal of dog faeces in public township areas.
- Local Law regulating carrying a bag or scooping device for the removal of dog faeces.

Current policies and procedures:

- Council policy – Enforcement – Infringements and Prosecutions 2017
- Council policy – Animals 2021

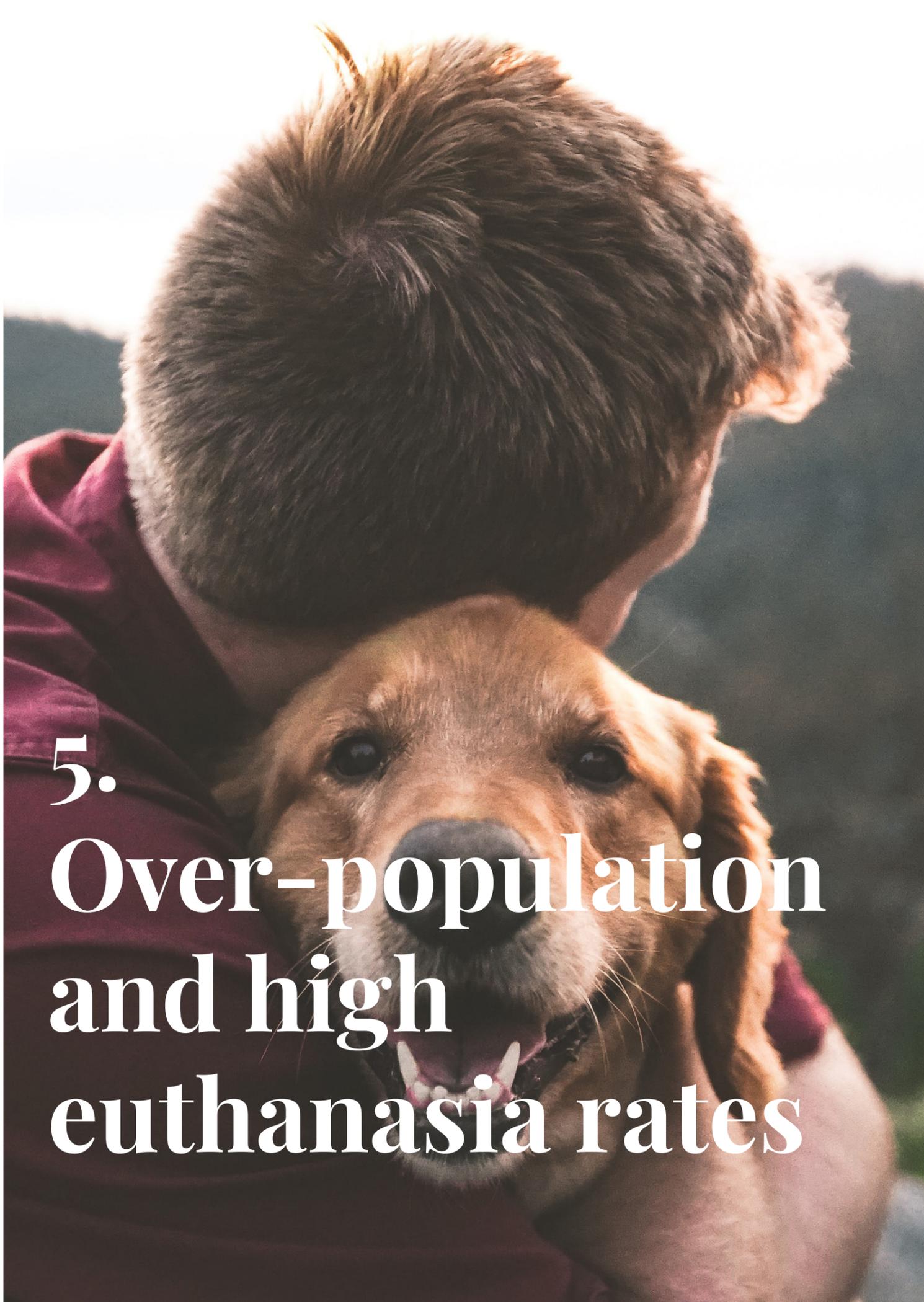
4.3. Our plan

Objective one

Pet owners are aware of their responsible pet ownership responsibilities

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
4.1*	Promote responsible pet ownership through website, media, and provide responsible pet owner kits to pet owners and new registrations which contain information on local laws, pet owner responsibilities, and pet poo bags/dispensers.	Ongoing Kit developed by June 2023	No. of infringements No. media articles/posts per year Kits provided with new registrations and renewals
4.2*	Provide information on Council's website about domestic animal Local Laws and legislative requirements.	June 2022	Website updated

**indicates new action.*



5. Over-population and high euthanasia rates

5. Over-population and high euthanasia rates

5.1. Context and Current Situation

Over-population of cats within the Corangamite Shire continues to be an issue. In 2022-2023, Council impounded 217 cats. Of these, only 5% were returned to their owner. This low rate is due to most impounded cats not being registered or identifiable (i.e. microchipped) and many of them being feral cats or semi-feral cats. Often these cats are being fed by people who are not accepting responsibility for their care and ownership. Due to the rural nature of Corangamite Shire, many of the feral cat issues are associated with farming and rural properties.

In 2022-2023, Council impounded 105 dogs with 44% of these dogs returned to their owner. The majority of the impounded dogs who were not returned to their owner had been surrendered to Council. Most of these were able to be rehomed.

Currently Council has an agreement with the RSPCA for the rehoming of cats and dogs. This includes animals who have been surrendered or impounded animals who have not been claimed by an owner.

Surrenders of cats and dogs has increased ten-fold over the past year due to more people utilising Council's service because it is currently free and allows animals to be rehomed where possible. Unfortunately, not all animals are suitable for rehoming such as feral cats and animals with health or behavioural issues. These animals are humanely euthanised by a qualified vet.

Through its agreement with the RSPCA, Council has significantly reduced its euthanasia rate in recent years. In 2022-2023, Council euthanised 32% of impounded cats with most of these cats being feral. In the same year, Council euthanised 7% of impounded dogs. These were all dogs who had been voluntarily surrendered by the owner and were unsuitable for rehoming due to behavioural or health issues.

The euthanasia rate for cats could be further reduced by addressing the feral cat issue.

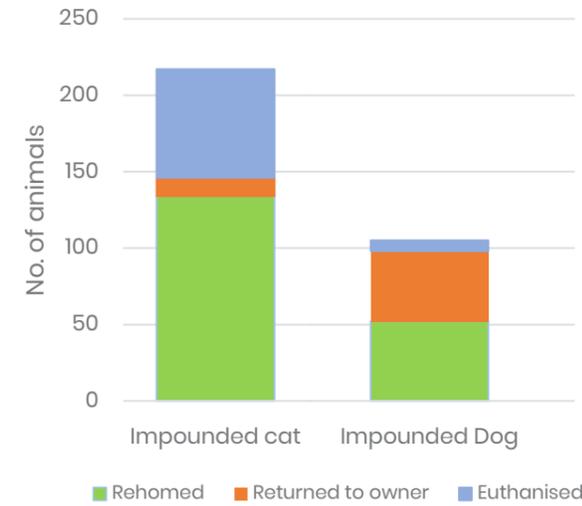


Figure 2: Fate of impounded animals 2022-2023

Council is currently addressing over-population and euthanasia issues through the following initiatives:

- Enforcing Council's Local Law on the number of animals permitted by residents without a permit. Currently Council's Local Laws allow residents to have two cats and two dogs if they live in a township and five cats and five dogs if they live in a rural area. Residents can apply to Council for an excess animal permit if they want to have additional animals. This Local Law assists to minimise nuisance issues arising from excess domestic animals and helps to control animal hoarding issues. At the time of writing Council had issued 31 current excess animal permits.
- Offering a discounted registration rate for desexed animals to encourage desexing.
- Providing residents with free hire of cat traps to safely and humanely catch roaming and feral cats. In 2020, Council hired cat traps to residents on 142 occasions.

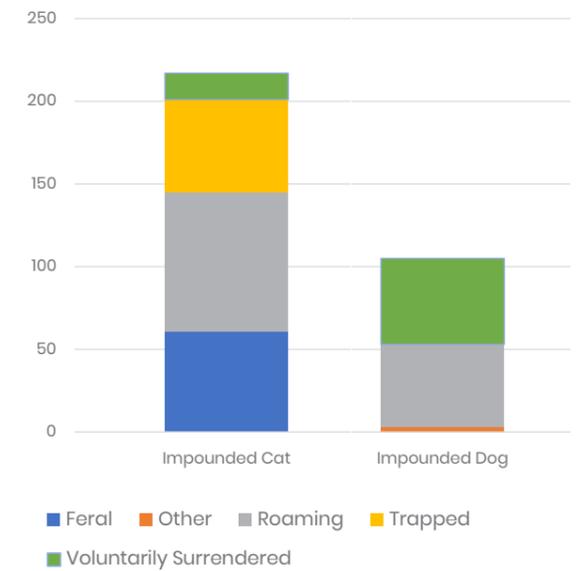


Figure 3: Reason for impoundment 2022-2023

- Promoting registration and microchipping to ensure that animals can be reunited with owners, including running an annual microchipping week in partnership with local veterinary clinics.
- Posting pictures of impounded animals on Council's Facebook page to reunite them with their owners.
- Returning registered impounded animals to owners with a warning only for a first offence if no issues have been caused by the animal.
- Requiring that all impounded animals are microchipped prior to release and registered within seven days of release. Fines may apply if dogs are not registered after this time.
- Operating a pound for the receipt and care of impounded animals prior to being reunited with their owner or rehomed. This facility is nearing the end of its operational life and a new facility is required to meet current standards.

5.2. Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Current Local Laws:

- Local Law regulating the number of animals permitted without a permit

Current policies and procedures:

- Provide cat cages to local residents for trapping nuisance cats trespassing on their property
- 84Y agreement with the RSPCA for rehoming of animals.
- 84Y agreement with local veterinary clinic for services, including euthanasia.
- Council policy – Animals 2021

5.2. Our Plan

Objective one

Minimise overpopulation of domestic animals

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
5.1	Educate residents on the importance of registering all cats, including the discounted registration for desexed cats.	March to May each year	Increase the number of registered cats
5.2	Provide a cat trap hire service for residents with cat trespass issues, including providing information on trapping cats humanely and ensuring the cat's welfare and promotion of the trap service to farms with feral cat issues.	Ongoing	<p>Keep records on the number of traps hired out.</p> <p>Keep updated records of the number of cats impounded.</p> <p>Maintain a record of cat trap usage and numbers caught.</p> <p>Information included on Council website.</p>

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
5.3*	Investigate funding options for discounted desexing of cats and dogs for residents	June 2023	Investigation of discounted desexing program
5.4	Educate residents on domestic animal limits and advise on excess animal permits using the website and information with new registrations.	Ongoing	<p>Information with registrations</p> <p>Information on website.</p>
5.5*	Educate residents (with a focus on farms) that they are responsible for the care and ownership of any feral or stray cat that they feed.	Ongoing	Information on website and social media.
5.6*	Educate residents on the pet ownership responsibilities, costs and considerations prior to buying a pet.	Ongoing	Information on website and social media.
5.7*	Raise awareness that domestic animals can be surrendered to Council for re-homing if they are suitable.	Ongoing	Information on website and social media.
5.8*	Investigate introducing a cost-recovery fee for service for the surrender of animals to Council.	December 2024	Decision made by council
5.9*	Investigate the development of a new pound facility to meet current standards.	December 2022	Investigation and planning for new pound facility for Council to consider
5.10*	Educate residents who are selling animals on recreational and microbreeder requirements and the need to supply source and microchipping numbers.	June 2025	Fact sheet produced/supplied to residents advertising sale of animals

Objective two

Reduce euthanasia rates of impounded animals by 5% (excluding feral cats)

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
5.11	Maintain and renew 84Y agreements with the RSPCA for the rehoming of all suitable animals and with local veterinary clinic.	Ongoing. Renewal due November 2021 and January 2022	Reduced no. of euthanised animals
5.12	Continue to utilise social media to reunite animals with owners.	Ongoing	Impounded animals which are unregistered and not microchipped are posted on social media to locate the owners.



6. Registration and Identification

6. Registration and Identification

6.1. Context and Current Situation

All dogs and cats over the age of 3 months must be registered with Council as per the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*. Newly registered animals must be microchipped before registration can be accepted.

Registration and microchipping helps Council to reunite animals with their owners should they be found unsecured or wandering outside of their property, reducing the likelihood that they will be impounded. Council encourages pet owners to ensure that their pet is wearing their registration tags to assist the Local Laws rangers to reunite pets with their owners quicker. Registration also provides

Council with an understanding of the level of pet ownership in the community and helps Council to plan for services, information and programs associated with pets.

Registration numbers of both dogs and cats in the Corangamite Shire have continued to decline slightly in recent years. Whilst there has been a slight decline in Corangamite Shire's population over this time, unregistered animals are still detected on a regular basis and are therefore considered an issue for the community.

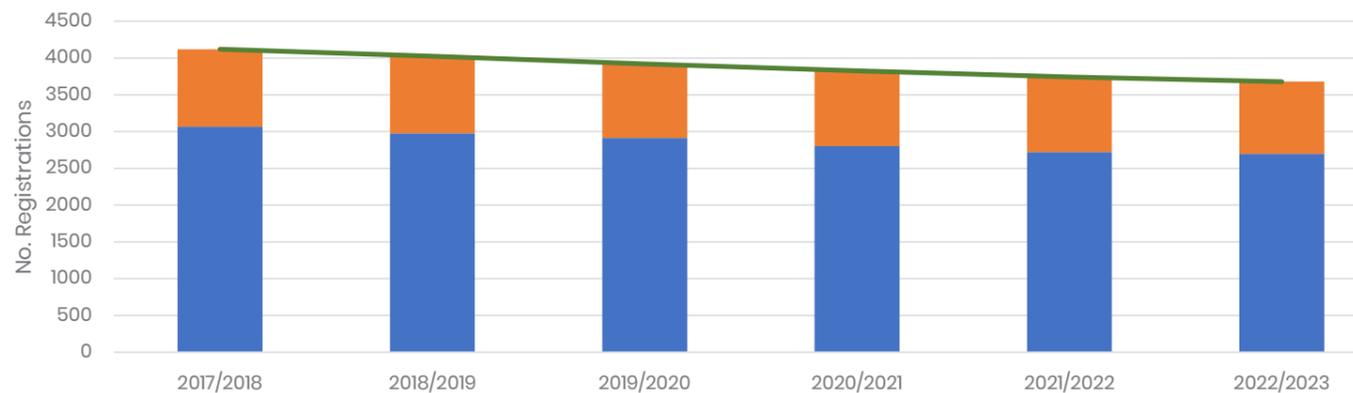


Figure 4: Annual Animal Registrations 2018-2023

Current program and initiatives to support registration and microchipping include:

- Providing easy access to registration forms on Council's website and at Council's Civic Centre.
- Maintaining low registration fees, including discounted fees for desexed animals.
- Auditing the annual registration renewals to follow-up and enforce lapsed registrations.
- Utilising a lifetime tag system where each registered animal is issued a registration tag number when first registered which is retained for the life of the animal. Council can replace any lost tags.
- Organising an annual micro-chipping week, with discounted micro-chipping fees offered through participating veterinary clinics and registration forms provided to participants.
- Promoting registration and micro-chipping through local media and Council's newsletter, social media and website.
- Using Council's social media to reunite pets with owners.
- Identifying and enforcing unregistered animals through patrolling, door knocking and responding to complaints.
- Requiring that all impounded animals are microchipped prior to release and registered within seven days of release.

6.1. Context and Current Situation

Current Local Laws:

- Local Law regulating the number of animals permitted without a permit
- Local Law regulating confinement of animals to the owner's property

Current policies and procedures:

- Council policy – Enforcement – Infringements and Prosecutions 2017
- Council policy – Animals 2021

6.3. Our Plan

Objective two

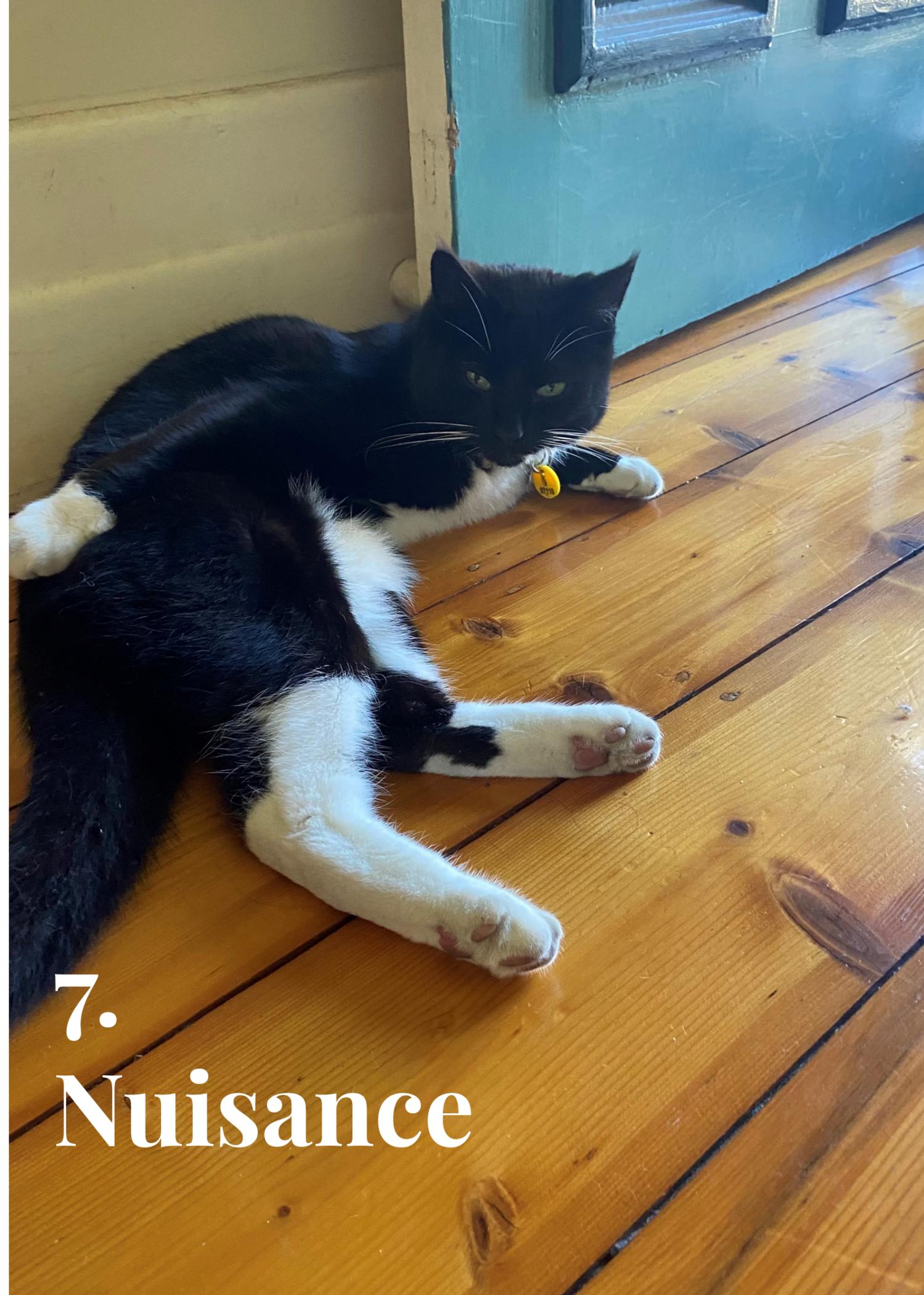
Increase the relative number of dog and cat registration numbers each year.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
6.1	Promote registration and microchipping through a Shire-wide education campaign. Promote the benefits of wearing identification tags and that replacement tags are available from Council.	Annually	No. media releases per annum
6.2*	Improve the accessibility of registration through the development of online registration forms and payment options on Council's website.	June 2022	Online forms available on website
6.3	Organise and promote an annual microchipping week in partnership with local veterinary clinics	Annually April	No. of event participants.
6.4	Provide registration and microchipping information in new resident packs.	Ongoing	Information provided in new resident packs.
6.5*	Investigate providing registration and microchipping information to veterinary clinics, domestic animal businesses and dog trainers.	June 2023	Engagement with businesses completed.
6.6*	Communicate to the community on what registration fees are used for and promote Council's animal management services.	Annually	Media article and social media posts completed.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
6.7	Improve the accuracy of Council's pet registration database by contacting Central Animal Records and obtaining details of all pets microchipped in the municipality. Check that all animals are listed on Council's pet registration database and follow up non-compliance.	Annually July-August	Council's pet registration database can be accurately cross referenced with Central Animal Records and other provider data. Increase in the accuracy of the numbers of pet registrations following micro-chipping data analysis.
6.8	Ensure all seized and impounded animals are microchipped and registered to their owner prior to release.	Prior to release for seized and 7 days for impounded pets. Microchipping must be booked in prior to release.	Review registration numbers annually. Review the numbers of dogs and cats being seized and impounded that are not registered to an owner.
6.9*	Develop a microchipping policy and offer microchipping services for impounded animals (fee for service).	Jan 2022	Policy developed. No. microchipping completed by Council
6.10*	Targeted door knocking and regular patrolling to check for unregistered and un-identified dogs and cats.	Ongoing	Review and record annual registration numbers. Review the number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded that are not registered to an owner.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
6.11	Ensure animal registration is checked as part of any pet related complaint or compliance process.	Ongoing	Review the number of dogs and cats being seized and impounded that are not registered to an owner.
6.12	Undertake enforcement on residents identified as owning unregistered pets or identified as not renewing their annual registration.	Ongoing	No. notices to comply issued. Unpaid fines referred to court.
6.13*	Check for a microchip on deceased animals removed from roads by Council and notify the owner.	Ongoing	Owners notified where microchipped
6.14*	Promote registration and microchipping of farm dogs/cats through media campaign.	June 2024	Review and record annual registration numbers.

*indicates new action.



7. Nuisance

7. Nuisance

7.1. Context and Current Situation

Council receives and responds to complaints about domestic animals providing a nuisance including dog droppings, barking dogs, dogs at large, and roaming cats.

Dog Droppings

The failure of some dog owners to pick up after their dog is an issue that is regularly being raised with Council. Dog droppings are not only unsightly, but they can potentially spread diseases that are harmful to humans and other pets.

Council's Local Laws require that owners carry a bag to clean up after their dogs at all times when in public.

Currently Council undertakes regular patrols and where pet owners are found not complying, officers will speak with the owner to educate them on responsible pet ownership.

Barking Dogs

Excessive dog barking can be a source of irritation for neighbours.

As a first step, Council encourages residents to politely talk with the dog owner to let them know about the problem. In many cases, the dog owner may not be aware that the dog is barking or being a nuisance to neighbours. Where residents are not comfortable talking with the dog owner or if communication with the dog owner fails to rectify the issue, residents can lodge a complaint with Council.

Council provides complainants with a barking dog kit which includes an anonymous letter to provide to their neighbour (optional for the complainant to send) and a diary to record how often the dog is barking over two weeks. Local Law rangers will then contact the dog owner to provide them with an information booklet and discuss potential reasons why the dog may be barking and potential strategies to manage it. A second barking dog diary is then sent to the complainant to determine if there has been any improvement in the barking behaviour once the owner has introduced strategies to manage it. The barking dog diary helps Council to work with the dog owner to identify the triggers for barking. If this approach fails to rectify the issue, Council may issue a warning to the dog's owner or a Notice to Comply to stop the barking.

In 2022-2023, Council received 60 complaints about barking dogs

Dogs at large and uncontrolled dogs

Dog owners are required to securely confine their dog to the property. This prevents dogs from wandering and becoming lost, keeps them safe from hazards such as traffic and other animals and minimises the potential for dog attacks.

In 2022-2023, Council received 96 complaints about roaming dogs and impounded 105 dogs. A total of 19 warnings and 4 infringements were issued for roaming dogs.

Council's 2021 domestic animal survey identified roaming dogs as an issue for many respondents. Likewise, there was concerns raised about off lead dogs that were accompanied but not controlled by their owner, such as dogs rushing or chasing.

Council has several designated on-lead areas which are located in the CBD areas of townships. Outside of these areas, dogs can be off lead but they must be under the control of their owner at all times. Currently there are no designated dog parks within the Corangamite Shire.

Cats trespassing

Trespassing cats are a common issue within the Corangamite Shire. The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* requires that cats are securely confined to their owner's property at all times. Council's 2021 domestic animal survey identified roaming and feral cats as an issue for many residents.

Residents that are experiencing problems with cat trespass are encouraged to talk with the cat owner (if known) to rectify the issue. Council can provide complainants with an anonymous letter to provide to their neighbours about the issue. If the cat owner is unknown or the issue is not resolved after speaking with the cat owner, residents can talk with Council to help identify strategies. Education on responsible pet ownership is often the first step to addressing the issue. Council offers free hire of traps to safely and humanely catch roaming and feral cats. Council may also issue compliance notices and infringements to those who allow their cat to be at large.

7.2. Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Current Orders:

- Government Gazette - on-lead areas located throughout the municipality

Current Local Laws:

- Local Law regulating confinement of animals to the owner's property.
- Local Law regulating that dogs need to be under owner's control in public areas.

- Local Law regulating nuisance issues relating to cats and dogs (i.e. barking, roaming cats).
- Local Law regulating the picking up and disposal of dog faeces in public township areas.
- Local Law regulating carrying a bag or scooping device for the removal of dog faeces.

Current policies and procedures:

- Council policy – Enforcement – Infringements and Prosecutions 2017
- Council policy – Animals 2021

7.3. Context and Current Situation

Objective one

Reduce cat nuisance complaints per year by 2%.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
7.1*	Educate cat owners about responsible pet ownership, containment of cats to properties and nuisance issues.	Ongoing	Information supplied with new registrations Information included on Council website.
7.2	Assist residents and community groups to deal with cat trespass/ nuisance issues by advising that Council has cat traps available for hire	Ongoing	No. of traps hired out No. of cats impounded
7.3*	Provide information to residents on what they do if they have a feral cat issue.	Ongoing	No of complaints Information included on Council website.

**indicates new action.*

Objective two

Reduce dog nuisance complaints each year by 2%.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
7.4	Educate dog owners about responsible pet ownership, containment of dogs to properties, picking up your dog's waste, control of dogs in public areas and on-lead areas.	Ongoing	Information supplied with new registrations Information included on Council website
7.5	Enforce local laws for dogs at large.	Ongoing	Number of dogs impounded Number of complaints about dogs at large
7.6	Review dog on-lead signage throughout the shire.	December each year	Location and condition of signs reviewed and maintained as necessary
7.7*	Investigate the establishment of designated off leash areas within the Shire.	December 2023	Results of the investigation identify if this could be established within the Shire
7.8*	Investigate options to require all dogs to be on a lead in public areas within a township unless in a designated off leash area.	December 2023	Investigation completed
7.9	Enforce local laws regarding picking up and disposing of your dog's waste.	Ongoing	Continue to advertise and monitor known trouble areas
7.10*	Investigate opportunities for the provision of dog poo bags, such as community managed dispensers in public areas and/or compostable bags for sale in the Civic Centre.	June 2025	Investigation for the provision of dog poo bags completed

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
7.11*	Raise awareness about what to do for barking dog issues, provide barking dog diaries and investigate complaints.	Ongoing	Council will continue to provide information to all parties Website updated
7.12	Communicate with dog owners during patrols to educate them on the requirements to control dogs in public places	Ongoing	No. of infringements reduced
7.13*	Undertake patrolling on weekends and outside of business hours to identify ongoing dog issues (i.e. dogs at large, uncontrolled dogs, dog poo bags not being carried).	Ongoing	No. of patrols undertaken outside of business hours.

*indicates new action.



8. Dog Attacks

8. Dog Attacks

8.1. Context and Current Situation

Council treats dog attacks very seriously. Dog attacks can cause serious and even fatal harm to people and other animals.

Currently very few dog attacks are reported to Council. In 2022–2023, Council received 16 dog attack reports. There may be a low level of reporting due to the minor nature of some attacks or because the victim is known to the animal owner. It is however important for all attacks to be reported to Council regardless of the level of injury to ensure further, more serious attacks do not occur in the future.

Council has a 24/7 on-call ranger service and will provide an urgent response to dog attack reports. When a report is received, Council will investigate and take appropriate action which may include seizing a dog if it is deemed dangerous and potential infringement or prosecution of the dog owner.

Most dog attacks occur when dogs are wandering outside of their owner’s property. To prevent the incidence of dog attacks Council currently:

- Undertake regular patrols and response to wandering dog complaints.
- Impound wandering dogs and issue an infringement where required.
- Enforce the requirements for menacing, dangerous and restricted breed dogs.
- Promote media articles confining dogs to the owners property.
- Maintain signed on-lead areas in township CBDs.

8.2. Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Current Orders:

- Government Gazette - on-lead areas located throughout the municipality

Current Local Laws:

- Local Law regulating confinement of animals to the owner’s property
- Local Law regulating that dogs need to be under owner’s control in public areas

Current policies and procedures:

- Council policy – Enforcement – Infringements and Prosecutions 2017

8.3. Our Plan

Objective one

Improve reporting of dog attacks

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
8.1*	Educate residents on dog attacks and encourage reporting of attacks as soon as it occurs.	Ongoing	Website Updated No. of reported dog attacks
8.2	Engage with local vet clinics to encourage reporting of dog attacks.	Ongoing	No. of reported dog attacks

**indicates new action.*

Objective two

Decrease the incidence of dog attacks

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
8.3	Promote prevention of dog attacks (i.e. confinement of dogs to property, keeping dogs on-lead) through media articles, website updates, social media, targeted patrols and other engagement methods.	Peak times Nov-April	Compare the number of reported dog attack incidents pre and post campaign
8.4*	Engage with farmers to raise awareness about the responsibilities of owning working dogs.	Ongoing	No. media articles
8.5*	Review and update Council processes for investigating and responding to dog attacks.	June 2022	Dog attack processes reviewed and documented
8.6*	Review and update Council’s procedure for seizure of dogs.	June 2023	Procedure updated

**indicates new action.*



9. Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

9. Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

9.1. Context and Current Situation

Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs are controlled by the Domestic Animal Act 1994.

At the time of writing, there is two declared dangerous dogs, four menacing dogs and no restricted breed dogs within the Corangamite Shire. These animals are required to be housed in a way that reduces the risk to the community and must be easily identified (i.e. dangerous dog collar), muzzled and on a lead at all times if being walked in a public place. Council officers work with the owners to ensure that these requirements are met, including annual inspection of properties to confirm that they are compliant with the

conditions and door knocking.

All dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs are reported to the Dangerous Dog Register.

Council undertakes regular patrolling and responds to all complaints relating to dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dog issues. Infringements and prosecutions are issued for offences to Local Laws and the Act. Council currently provides information to residents on dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs through the annual microchipping week and social media.

9.2. Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs are regulated through the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Current policies and procedures:

- Council policy – Enforcement – Infringements and Prosecutions 2017

8.3. Our Plan

Objective one

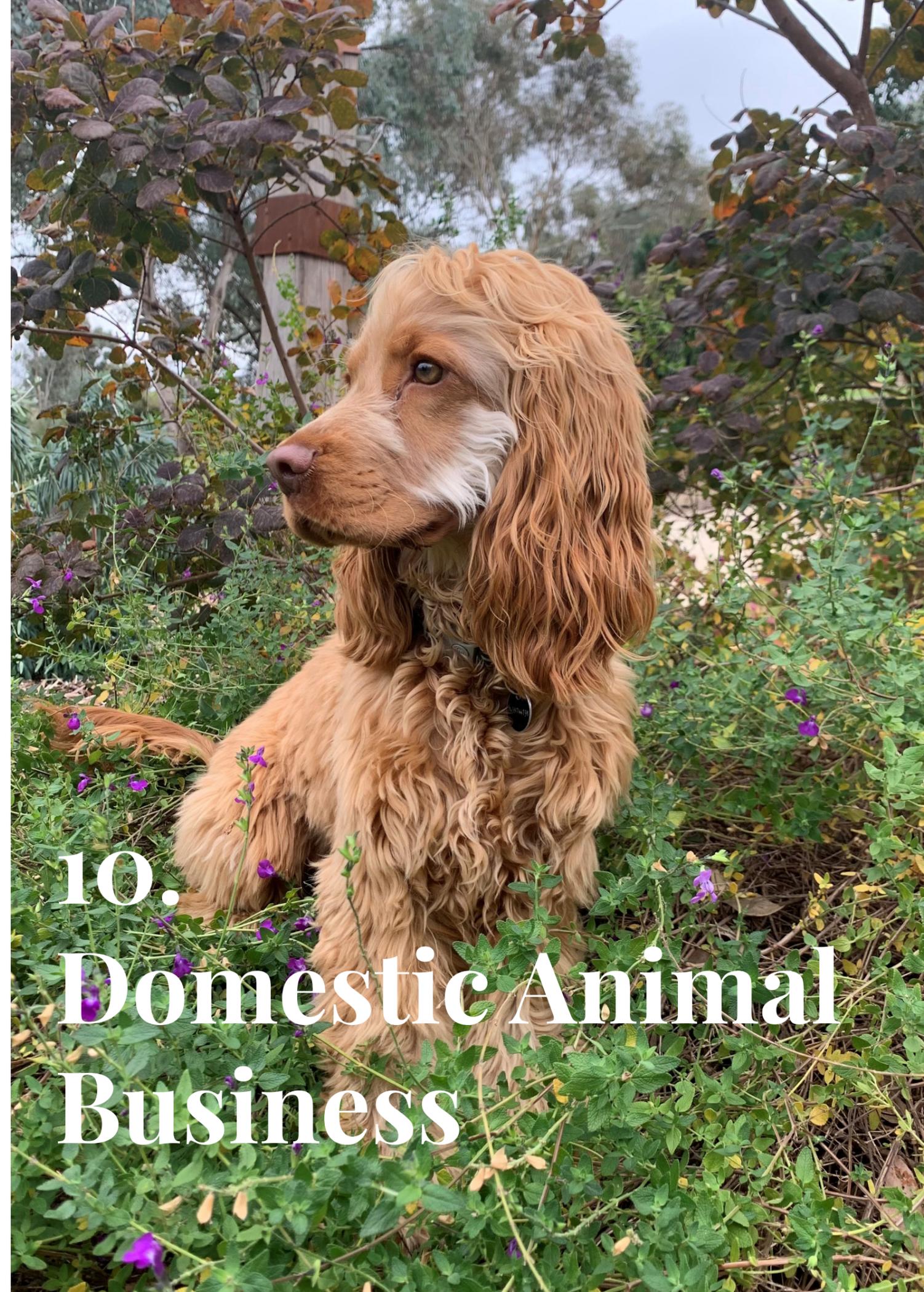
Identify and register all Declared Dogs in the municipality.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
9.1	Utilise the declared dog flow chart to determine when to declare a dog.	Ongoing	No. declared dogs
9.2	Identify declared dogs through patrolling and complaint response.	Ongoing	No. declared dogs
9.3	Educate the community about declared dogs.	Ongoing	Website updated regarding dog attacks and the need to report.

Objective two

Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are following requirements.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
9.4	Inspect and audit declared dog premises annually to ensure compliance with legislation.	Annually	100% declared dog premises inspected



10. Domestic Animal Business

10. Domestic Animal Businesses

10.1. Context and Current Situation

Domestic Animal Businesses (DAB) include animal breeding and rearing establishments, boarding establishments, shelters/pounds and pet shops. DABs are controlled by the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and must be registered with Council. There are approved Codes of Practice for the operation of these businesses. Council provides information and guidance to DABs on their legislative requirements and undertakes annual auditing to ensure that each establishment complies with the relevant Code of Practice. Any non-

compliance issues must be addressed by the operator immediately. Currently there is one DAB registered in the municipality. Council gives advice to DABs on the need to register and requirements of the Act. Council investigates all reports of domestic animal breeding businesses operating without the required registration. This includes door knocks and property inspections when alerted to suspected unregistered DABs.

10.2. Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

DABs are regulated through the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Current Local Laws:

- Local Law regulating the number of animals allowed at a premise without a permit

Current policies and procedures:

- Council policy – Enforcement – Infringements and Prosecutions 2017
- Council policy – Animals 2021

10.3. Our Plan

Objective one

Annually inspect and audit all registered domestic animal businesses.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
10.1	Audit all operating DABs at least annually to ensure they comply with the relevant Code of Practice.	Annually prior to re-registration.	100% DABs audited for compliance and detailed records maintained
10.2*	Develop a template for the consistent assessment of DABs.	Dec 2023	Template developed and utilised

**indicates new action.*

Objective two

Identify and work with unregistered and non-compliant Domestic Animal Breeding establishments (DAB) in the municipality to ensure they achieve compliance.

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
10.3*	Work with Animal Welfare Victoria and monitor pet advertisements to identify unregistered DABs.	Ongoing	No. registered DABs
10.4*	Raise awareness about the registration and compliance requirements for DABs via Council's website	Ongoing	Website updated
10.5	Check all operating and proposed DABs have necessary planning, building and other permits in place.	Ongoing	All DABs checked with planning and building department for permit compliance.

**indicates new action.*



9. Other Matters- Animals in Emergencies

11. Other Matters- Animals in Emergencies

11.1. Context and Current Situation

Emergencies such as flood and fires can have a significant impact on domestic animals. During an emergency it is important to consider and plan for:

- Identification of affected animals
- Management of evacuated animals at Emergency Relief Centres
- Management of stray, roaming and displaced animals
- Animal welfare assessment
- Veterinary treatment and triage
- Provision of emergency pet food
- Coordination of donations and offers of assistance

Council currently has a Municipal Emergency Animal Welfare Plan and procedures in place for the management of domestic animals at Emergency Relief Centres.

11.2. Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Current policies and procedures:

- Municipal Emergency Animal Welfare Plan 2017

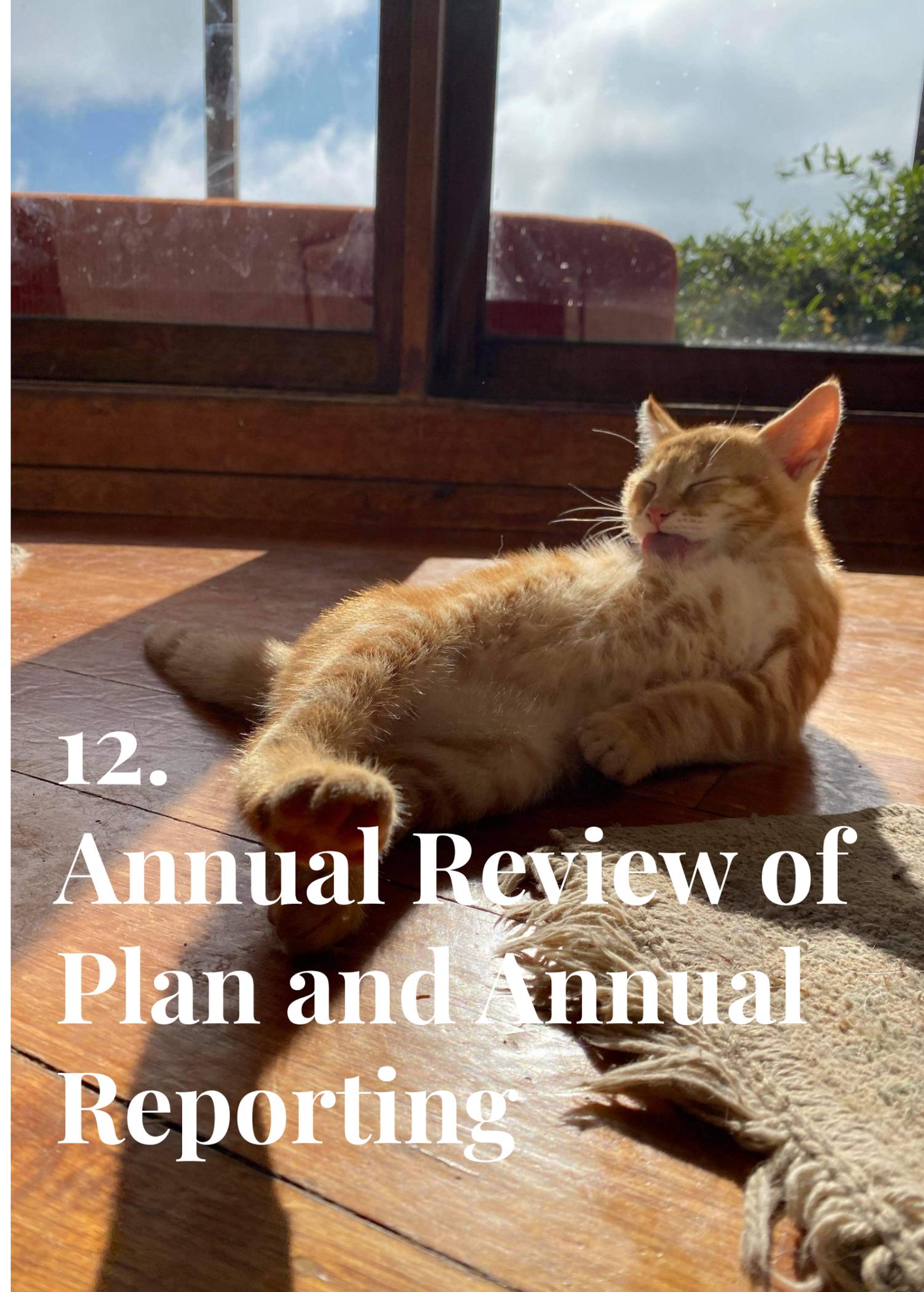
11.3. Our Plan

Objective one

Ensure Domestic Animals are considered during emergencies

No.	Activity	When	Evaluation
11.1	Review and Update the Municipality Emergency Animal Management Plan.	June 2022	Plan updated
11.2	Ensure Council Relief Centres have procedures and the capacity to cater for domestic animals.	Ongoing	Procedures updated and tested
11.3*	Provide residents with access to a 'pets in emergencies' information kits.	Ongoing	Kit available on council website

**indicates new action.*



12. Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reporting

12. Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reporting

12.1. Evaluation of Implementation of the Domestic Animal Management Plan

Performance in domestic animal management should be a regular focus for Council. Appropriate performance statistics will be completed and reported annually to Council's Executive Management Team. A review of performance under the DAMP is required to be included in Council's Annual Report (section 68A (3) (c) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*) and the DAMP will be reviewed and updated annually.

The annual review will focus on measures that relate to activities and targets listed in this plan and will include educational programs, registrations of domestic animals, numbers of animals at large, dog attacks, compliance activities and levels of community satisfaction.

Objective	Targets
Develop a training plan that identifies minimum training requirements and any additional training needs that should be undertaken by Authorised Officers.	Training Plan Developed Annually.
Develop and maintain an annual training register for individual officers detailing completed and proposed training.	Training Register Maintained.
Ensure all new Authorised Officers have completed their minimum training requirements within 24 months of appointment.	All new Officers have completed initial training and any refresher training requirements.
Pet owners are aware of their responsible pet ownership responsibilities.	Decrease in compliance actions relative to compliance effort
Minimise overpopulation of domestic animals	Increase in no. animals registered comparative to Corangamite population. Desexing rates increase by 5% by 2025.
Reduce euthanasia rates of impounded animals by 5% excluding feral cats	Euthanasia rates of impounded animals decreases by 5% annually excluding feral cats

Objective	Targets
Increase the relative number of dog and cat registration numbers each year.	Increase in no. animals registered comparative to Corangamite population
Reduce cat nuisance complaints per year by 2%.	Numbers of cat complaints decreases by 2% annually.
Reduce dog nuisance complaints each year by 2%.	Numbers of dog complaints decreases by 2% annually.
Improve reporting of dog attacks.	100% of reported dog attacks investigated and actioned.
Decrease the incidence of dog attacks	100% of reported dog attacks investigated and actioned.
Identify and register all Declared Dogs in the municipality.	100% of declared dogs identified and registered.
Improve the accuracy of Council's Registration database.	Animals collected and identified match the owner's details in the registration and microchipping database.
Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annual to ensure they are following requirements.	100% declared dog premises inspected annually.
Annually inspect and audit all registered domestic animal businesses.	100% DABs audited for compliance annually.
Ensure Domestic Animals are considered during emergencies	Specific Domestic Animal plans developed and maintained for emergency management

The following table provides a proposed template for evaluating the success of this plan.

Complete for each activity

Was each activity completed? Yes/No

Describe any changes you will make if you do that activity again.

Was an activity not done or is now not planned to be done? If so, why?

If an activity was unsuccessful and you don't plan to do it again, outline insights you have into why it didn't work.

Complete for each objective

Did you meet your objective by carrying out the planned activities? Yes/No

Describe your level of success/progress in meeting the objective.



Want to find out more?

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