

**Yorke Peninsula Council**



*Agriculturally rich-Naturally beautiful*

**Animal Management Plan**



**Approved by Dog and Cat Management Board  
25<sup>th</sup> June 2012 - 2017**

## Executive Summary

In 2005 the Yorke Peninsula Council introduced the first Council Animal Management Plan. The plan was well received by community groups and Council staff and has proven to be a valuable tool for Rangers involved in animal management.

The Yorke Peninsula Council covers an area of 5,834 kilometres, has a distance of approximately 175 kilometres between its northern and southern boundaries and being a Peninsula, has a varying width east to west averaging approximately 30 kilometres. The Council is unique in comparison to other Local Government Authorities in that it is bordered by sea on three sides and as such has 435 kilometres of coastline.

The Council shares its northern boundary with the District Council of Copper Coast, District Council of Barunga West and the Wakefield Regional Council.

The Council's population is estimated to be approximately 11,600, which is less than 1% of the total population of South Australia. During holiday period the population grows considerably. The area contains 12 larger towns and 33 smaller townships and holiday settlement zones, the latter being predominantly along the coastline.

The Yorke Peninsula Council is situated approximately 108km from the Adelaide CBD. The major income sources for the area are agriculture and Tourism. The Council has approximately 2500 dogs registered each year and is relatively stable in the areas of enforcement and complaints.

This Animal Management Plan has been prepared by the Yorke Peninsula Council (the Council) in response to the Council adopting a planned approach to undertake its responsibilities under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995, and will guide domestic animal management by the Council over the next 5 years. (2011 to 2016)

The Plan identifies strategies and actions to implement the mission, aims and objectives for domestic animals management, and relates these back to the wider policy context. The Strategy has been prepared by Council staff, drawing information from a broad range of stakeholders, with the community asked to comment on the draft prior to its adoption by the Council.

This Plan contains actions for a wide range of activities to be undertaken by the Council's Rangers. These actions will enable Council to maintain a balance between competing interests and to reposition domestic animals management to accommodate new requirements.

The Plan's Mission is to promote and facilitate responsible ownership of dogs and cats, animal welfare and the benefits of animal companionship focusing on the legitimate needs of pets and their owners while respecting the rights of other members of the community and protecting the environment.

The Plan aims to:

- promote responsible dog and cat ownership;
- provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats;
- ensure public safety and enhance the amenity and environment;

- harness the benefits of dog and cat ownership; and
- ensure that the expenditure of registration fees addresses domestic animal issues.

Council's Corporate / Strategic Plan requires Council to provide services that maximize the social, economic, residential & environmental benefits to residents and visitors to the Council area, but does not directly address animal management issues apart from a broad commitment to provide appropriate controls for dog and cat management. (Part 4, Community Services, Health & Social Services.)

The Dog and Cat Management Act was enacted in 1995 and brought in a new legal framework to South Australia covering both dogs and cats.

The objectives of the Act are to:

- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- Reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats, and
- To promote the effective management of dogs and cats (including through the encouragement of de-sexing of dogs and cats)

Animal management has widened into a greater array of context following the introduction of the Act. Knowledge of both animal and human behaviour is now a requirement of working in the field. Now more than ever Rangers are required to be professional people dealing with an increasing amount of social issues.

There is growing recognition that enforcement of laws will not, on its own, result in lasting, voluntary changes in behaviour. It needs to be supplemented by a range of non-regulatory approaches such as public education and improved signage.

There is now considerable evidence to support our understanding of the benefits of owning pets. This implies a potentially new role for Council in harnessing the benefits of pet ownership or at least maintaining the ability of the community to continue to own dogs and cats. In this environment, it is essential that Council take a strategic approach to managing domestic pets. This strategy will provide Council with a sound basis and direction from which it can plan, co-ordinate and make future decisions to meet the needs of the community over the next five years.

### **The Law and Guidelines**

The responsibilities for dog and cat management in South Australia are prescribed in the Dog and cat Management Act 1995. Under the Act Councils are required to administer and enforce the provisions relating to dogs within its area. Prescribed responsibilities include the appointment of a Registrar, maintenance of a Dog Register, the appointment of a dog management officer (Ranger) and to make arrangements for dogs seized, and its other obligations under the Act. A Council is also able to make By-Laws relating to the management of dogs and cats within its area.

The Act also provides for the appointment of the Dog and Cat Management Board, which has responsibilities to plan, promote, and advise on effective management of dogs and cats in the State, to monitor Councils management of their responsibilities, to issue Guidelines for Councils, to advise and assist Councils to undertake their

responsibilities. The Board also has a role to provide advice to the Minister, to keep the Act under review, to undertake research into companion animal management and to provide education programs for dog management officers and community awareness information.

The Act also provides that a Council may appoint a cat management officer for its area of responsibility. Council is aware that the community expects cats to be controlled and over the period of this plan Council will investigate the need for a by-law to control cats.

While these provisions provide the legal framework for the Council's responsibilities and the penalties that can be imposed on dog owners for non-compliance, this Plan seeks to implement a balanced approach that caters to everyone's needs that will not only benefit dogs and cats and their owners as a group with legitimate needs but also the wider community as well as those charged with the responsibility of animal management.

### **Mission Statement**

“To create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the Yorke Peninsula Council community. To recognize that companion animals are part of the community, contributing to its quality of life, and to ensure that the needs of animals and their owners are accommodated while recognising the differing needs of all members of the community such as non-pet owners”.

### **Aims**

Provide effective management and a suitable environment for dogs and cats within the community.

Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership.

Increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.

Provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats.

Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.

Encourage the enjoyment of and benefits from dogs and cats by people.

Ensure public safety and amenity in relation to dogs and cats.

Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats.

Ensure the expenditure of registration fees addresses the needs of pet owners as well as domestic animal management issues.

### **Objectives**

#### **1. Provide effective management and a suitable environment for dogs and cats within the community.**

- Ensure that Officers of Council operate within the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.
- Ensure that Officers operate within predetermined guidelines in accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.
- Encourage education of dog and cat owners.
- Maximise dog registration.

- Minimise dogs wandering at large.
- Enforce identification of dogs.
- Encourage the community to report all dog attacks and harassments to Council.
- Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas.
- Maximise the public's understanding of the Rangers and the Council's role in the community.
- Limit the number of dogs and cats per dwelling.
- Introduce data collection to better understand dog and cat management issues.

**2. Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership.**

- Provide Education material to residents and visitors to the Council area.
- Enforce the provision of the Dog and Cat Management Act.

**3. Increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.**

- Reduce the following detrimental impacts of dogs and cats;
  - Barking dogs
  - Dog attacks/harassment
  - Dog faeces in public places
  - Nuisance caused by cats
  - Wandering dogs
  - Dog and Cat abandonment

**4. Provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats.**

- Ensure that impounded dogs are returned to owners as soon as practical.
- Ensure that all impounded dogs and cats have clean safe facilities while impounded.
- Identify and ensure that off leash areas are suitable for dogs to be exercised.

**5. Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.**

- Provide residents and visitors with up to date information regarding the benefits of responsible dog and cat ownership.

**6. Encourage the enjoyment of and benefits from dogs and cats by people.**

- Liaise with community groups that provide training, enjoyment and encouragement of responsible dog and cat ownership throughout the area.

**7. Ensure public safety and amenity in relation to dogs and cats.**

- Conduct regular patrols to ensure compliance with Legislative requirements.

- Invite regular input regarding dog and cat management issues from interest groups throughout the community.
- Provide monthly reports to Council via the Development and Community Services Committee of Council.

#### **8. Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats.**

- Clearly define areas unsuitable for dog and cat recreation and exercise.
- Liaise with National Parks to ensure suitability of dog friendly areas close to parks.

#### **9. Ensure the expenditure of registration fees addresses the needs of pet owners as well as domestic animal management issues.**

- Conduct regular reviews of income and expenditure to ensure that Council is using best practice with available funds.

### **Strategies**

#### **Provide effective management and a suitable environment for dogs and cats within the community.**

*Ensure that Officers of Council operate within the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.*

The strategies to ensure that Officers of Council operate within the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act are to create a set of guidelines for use by Staff and to ensure that regular training and development of skills are provided on an ongoing basis. Consistency of advice is critical and must be a high priority.

#### **Action**

That Council review Staff training and development to ensure that all staff has a clear understanding of animal management issues and State wide trends in animal management.

That Council introduce performance reviews for all Staff involved in animal management.

*Ensure that Officers operate within predetermined guidelines in accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.*

Council Staff cannot operate consistently without clear direction and guidelines, as individuals will often interpret Legislation in differing ways. The Dog and Cat Management Act is the primary Legislation, Regulations and by-laws introduced by Council are subordinate Legislation and Procedures are the mechanism to implement the Act, Regulations and by-laws.

**Action**

That Council update procedural guidelines for all Staff to follow. Appendix one

*Encourage Education of dog and cat owners.*

Generally speaking most dog and cat owners want to do the right thing. Registration of dogs and general compliance with the Act is relatively high throughout the community. Council must do everything in its power to ensure that residents and visitors understand their obligations to act responsibly with their pets.

**Action**

That Council introduce a brochure for all residents and visitors to the Yorke Peninsula. The brochure should be distributed through as many outlets as possible including Council Buildings, Progress Associations and Caravan parks.

That signage throughout the district be maintained and regularly changed to reflect animal management issues.

*Maximise dog registration.*

Legislation in SA requires all dogs of or over 3 months of age must be registered. Councils cannot expect to obtain an acceptable level of dog management without obtaining maximum registration. This can therefore be seen to be the most important issue at hand and is the key factor controlling all other effective and successful dog management strategies. Dog registration ensures that:

- Owners are registered as well as their dogs.
- Maximum funding is available for Councils to carry out responsibilities under the Act.
- Responsible dog owners and the rest of the community do not have to financially support irresponsible and unthinking dog owners.

**Action**

That Council conducts a tri-annual district survey for unregistered dogs.

That Council introduces a reward programme for first registration (eg. Puppy Pack, Pooch Pouch or similar).

That Council provides registration information with rates notices.

That council conducts a check of registration status of dogs such as working dogs to ensure correct registration identification.

*Minimise dogs wandering at large.*



Adequate fencing is a necessity for responsible dog ownership.

A dog wandering at large can be a threat to live stock and members of the public, particularly children and older people and Council is aware that serious attacks can arise in these circumstances. Council will therefore implement strategies to minimize its occurrence in the community.

Under the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act it is an offence to allow a dog to wander at large. A dog will be taken to be wandering at Large if it is in a public place, other than a park, or a private place without the consent of the occupier and no person is exercising effective control by way of a physical restraint.

A dog will also be considered to wandering at large if in a park and no person is either exercising physical restraint.

The strategies are in two parts; the first to encourage owners to have adequate fencing and control over their dog and the second is the actions of the Council to the dogs 'wandering at-large'.



All dogs must be restrained on street and roads.

**Action**

That owners be made aware of their responsibilities to;  
 register their dog,  
 adequately fence their property to control their dog,  
 train their dog so as to not leave their premises,  
 to keep their dog under effective control when in a public place,  
 that Rangers conduct random (day of the week, and times of day) patrols of all public areas and detain dogs wandering at large.

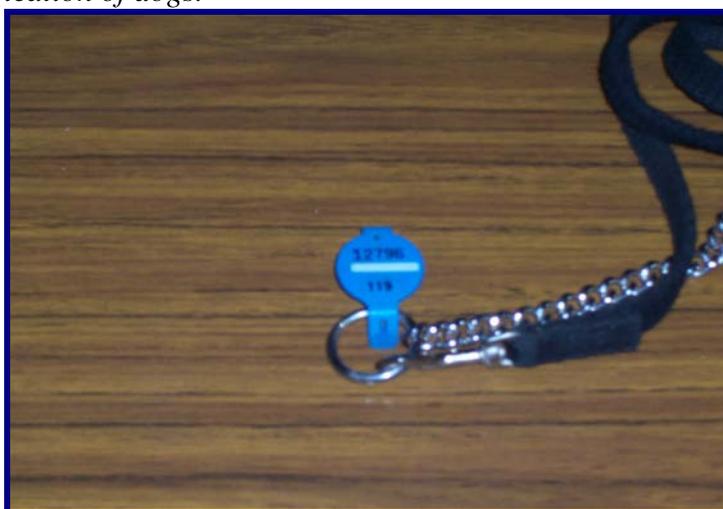
Council respond to calls from the general public of a dog wandering at large. The priority of the Council will be to return the dog to the owner. Un-identified dogs will be impounded in accordance with the Act.

Council will endeavour to liaise with suitable agencies to relocate suitable dogs if unclaimed by owners.

Council will not directly re-home dogs as it is considered inappropriate to act as a re-homing facility.

Unclaimed dogs which are unsuitable as pets will be euthenased.

To encourage compliance, Rangers are encouraged to reinforce complying behaviour, particularly in children, to give warnings to first offences that are of a minor nature where no harm to a person or property has occurred. Penalties prescribed by the Act will be applied for re-offenders.

*Enforce identification of dogs.*

Identification of dogs is imperative to provide sound animal management practices. Residents and visitors to the area must identify their dogs at all times. Generally speaking pet owners do not allow their pets to wander at large. Accidental escape accounts for approximately 90% of dogs wandering at large. Often these dogs are not identified and therefore cannot be returned to the owner. The costs associated with impounding unidentified dogs and cats and the stresses place on the animal and their owners can be avoided.

**Action**

That Council Staff enforce identification of dogs.

That Council educate the public regarding the correct identification of dogs and cats.

That Council encourages microchipping days throughout the year to promote identification of pets.

*Encourage the community to report all dog attacks and harassments to Council.*

Knowledge is the Councils best tool to reduce the number of dog attacks that occur in the community. Due to the high number of visitors to the area it is difficult for Council to implement a strategy to reduce dog attacks and harassment. The collection of data will enable Council to understand the situations that lead to such attacks and therefore the community must be encouraged to provide information regarding all attacks regardless of there severity.

**Action**

That Council implement an education programme that targets the reporting of all dog attacks/harassments throughout the community.

That Council provide dog attack/harassment forms throughout the community in places such as Progress Associations, Caravan Parks and Council buildings for the public to use.

That Council provides dog attack form for Medical centres to encourage the reporting of dogs attacks.

*Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas.*



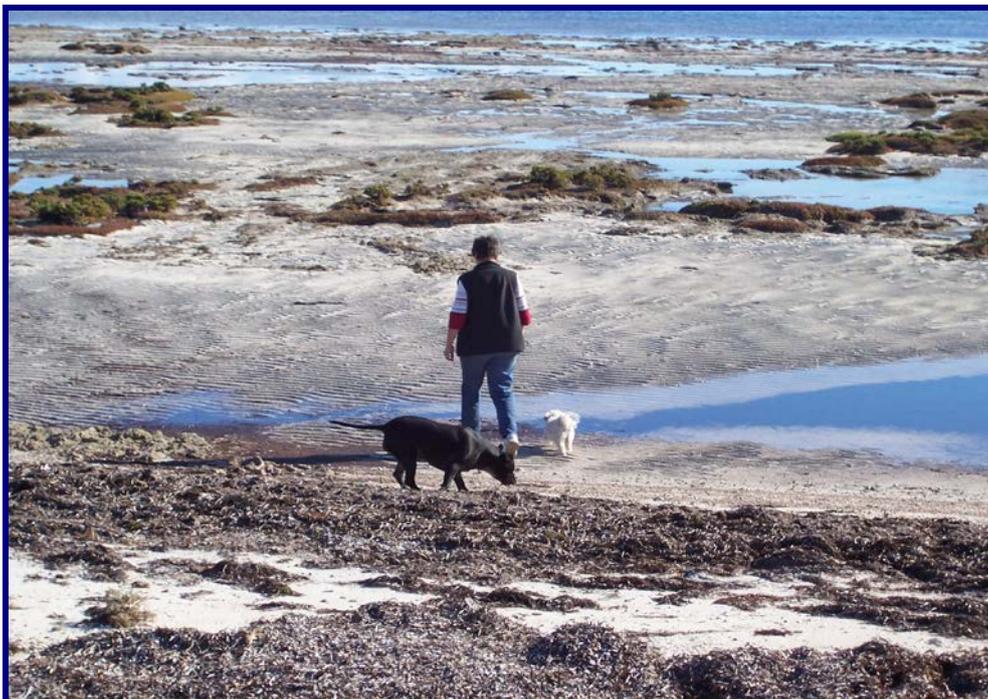
Providing suitable on and off leash activity areas is vital to the success of animal management in the area.

Dog owners must have suitable areas to exercise their dogs safely. Equally, other members of the community must have the ability to use the amenities without fear of harassment by uncontrolled dogs. In areas such as streets, roads, and places the public congregate such as shopping areas, dogs must be restrained effectively. In parks assessed by Council for their suitability, dog owners should be able to exercise their dogs without restraint providing the owner exercises effective control.



General Stores such as this are unsuitable for off-leash activities.

On beaches and foreshores many Councils have considered restricting dog activities to on leash only. This approach has not been successful due to the high costs associated with enforcement and the public dislike of such laws. There are several high activity foreshore areas throughout the district where dogs should be restricted or banned altogether. In all other foreshore areas designated times for off leash activities should be considered during daylight saving and unrestricted off leash activities allowed during the rest of the year.



Hardwicke Bay Foreshore

**Action**

That after conducting an audit of all Council controlled parks and reserves the Council does not consider it necessary to restrict off-leash activities in any of its parks and reserves. Dog owners will be expected to exercise effective control at all times.

Council will conduct a review of the policy in July each year to ensure suitability of the parks and reserves within its control.

Council implement foreshore restrictions on dog owners during daylight saving. It is suggested that dog owners should be allowed to exercise their dog's off-leash during non-daylight saving times. During daylight saving times dogs can be exercised off leash between sunrise and 10.00am on all beaches. At all other daylight saving times dogs must be on leash on all foreshore beaches.

*Maximise the publics understanding of the Council Rangers and the Councils role in the community.*

Many people have little or no understanding of the role performed by Council Rangers and the Council in general throughout the Community. This can lead to mistrust and in the worst cases a total lack of respect for the Officers and the Council. Officers must become better at providing information regarding the very important role they perform in the Community on behalf of Council.

**Action**

Council Rangers are to undertake regular public information sessions at Progress Associations to inform the public of their role and current animal management issues.

*Limit the number of dogs and cats per dwelling.*

Council has for some time now placed limits on the number of dogs per dwelling. Under the provisions of the Councils By-Law the limit on the number of dogs in a township is one, in a small dwelling and on premises other than a small dwelling the limit is two.

Outside a township working dogs used for the purpose of tending stock and established kennel operations will not be considered in the by-law provisions. In all other cases the limit is three dogs. It is possible under certain circumstances to obtain permission to keep more than the prescribed number of dogs with the written consent of Council. This by-law is working particularly well and should be continued.

At this point in time Council does not have a limit on the number of cats being kept on a property. This matter is currently under review, as there is strong evidence that placing limitations on the number of cats will have a positive impact on nuisance complaints. Council Staff currently provide assistance for cat nuisance complaints and in some cases remove stray unowned cats. This is done under the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act and the nuisance animal provisions of the Local Government Act.

**Action**

Council staff monitors the actions of other Councils in relation to By-laws with the intention of the implementation of a by-law for cats in the future.

*Data collection to better understand dog and cat management issues.*

Council must have accurate information in order to fully understand animal management issues. Currently there is a reliance on the Officers knowledge of issues and complaints received.

Customer Service Requests are generated for complaints with the outcomes recorded. Until the implementation of the first Animal Management plan this information was only used for reference should further complaints be received. This information is now being analysed to better understand animal management issues.

**Action**

That Council continue to analyse all Customer Service Requests received to better understand any trends regarding animal management issues.

**Point Pearce**

Point Pearce continues to experienced a particularly high number of dog management issues. Wandering dogs, dog attacks/harassments and a considerably high rate of unregistered dogs. These issues are of particular concern to the community. Conventional animal management strategies have had an impact on the problem in recent years and Council Rangers are to be commended for their efforts.

**Action**

That Council Rangers continue to monitor dog management issues in the Point Pearce area while working with the local community to resolve any issue of concern.

**Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership.**

*Provide Education material to residents and visitors to the Council area.*

There are three factors that contribute to successful pet ownership. They are:

The *Owner*, who needs to be aware of responsibilities of pet ownership, ensure that the dog is registered, immunized, and desexed. The owner is also responsible to ensure that the dog is trained, and to be aware of the dogs behaviour at all times, including when away from the home such as at work. The owner is also responsible to ensure that the dog has adequate food, water and shelter and that the dog is regularly exercised.

The *Breed* determines the size, and often the temperament of the dog and its susceptibility to genetic defects.

When selecting a pet it is important to seek appropriate advice on the soundness of animals being considered and their suitability to the home / yard that the dog will be kept in and the family that the dog will be joining, particularly if small children are involved.

The *Home environment* is made up of the part of the home that the dog will have access to. In most cases this will include an enclosed yard and possibly part of the

house. Important factors are the adequacy of the fencing, whether the dog can see out of the yard through a gate, adequacy of shelter, food / water and whether there are children, closeness of neighbours and other dogs and access to on leash and off leash exercise areas are all important factors.

Successful pet ownership has both financial and time commitments and it is therefore important that people contemplating pet ownership endeavour to match their choice of pet for their particular home and family circumstances.

**Action**

That people contemplating obtaining a dog or a cat be encouraged to consider the factors affecting the suitability of successful pet ownership in their particular circumstances.

That sources of this information include: Advice being available from the Council Rangers.

Advice that Online information regarding breeds and assistance in pet selection is available on: Petcare Information and Advisory Service [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au)  
The Dog and Cat Management Board of SA [www.dogsncats.asn.au](http://www.dogsncats.asn.au)

To discourage people from obtaining dogs or a cat from other than registered breeders, and to ensure that the dog or cat is sound from defects, immunized and de-sexed. That people contemplating obtaining a dog or a cat be encouraged to become familiar with the responsibilities of dog or cat ownership prior to obtaining a dog or a cat.

That people who obtain a new dog ensure that it is trained.

*Enforce the provision of the Dog and Cat Management Act.*

Consistent enforcement of the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act is an important factor in educating the public to act responsibly with their pets. Responsible pet owners expect irresponsible pet owners to be dealt with through the provisions of the Act. Effectively there cannot be an incentive to act responsibly with our pets unless there is a disincentive for those who are not responsible.

**Increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.**

*Reduce the following detrimental impacts of dogs and cats;*

*Barking dogs*

Barking dog complaints are one of the most difficult and time consuming areas of Council responsibility. Barking dog complaints are subjective depending on an individual's tolerance for dog noise. Having said that, Council must investigate and resolve this type of complaint.

In order for Council to resolve the complaint they require full cooperation from the complainant to collect meaningful evidence suitable to a Court of law. In order to do

this Council has set up a standard operating procedure for all dog noise nuisance complaints.

The complainant must follow these standard operating procedures, as failure to do so will result in the matter being set aside by Council. On receipt of a complaint Council will provide information to the dog owner and diaries to the complainant. If and when the diaries are returned, an investigation will follow. Upon substantiation the Council will take the appropriate course of action.

**Action**

That Council continues to use Standard Operating Procedure for the investigation of noise nuisance complaints.

That Council implements an education brochure for dog owners to be sent out in the event of a complaint regarding dog noise nuisances. (appendix one)

*Dog attacks/harassment*

As previously stated all dog attacks/harassment must be recorded and investigated. In order to reduce the incidence of dog attacks Council must educate the public to act responsibly. The issue of dog attacks and harassment is of great concern to the general community, particularly in relation to children and the elderly. Also of great concern is the number of unreported attacks and the fact that the majority of attacks (85%) occur on private property.

While a minority of dogs have been involved in attacks and harassment, all dogs have the potential to bite, regardless of size, age, breed or temperament, particularly in situations where they are frightened, dominant, protective or possessive. How to avoid being bitten or how to read a dog's body language are important issues on which to educate the public.

**Action**

That Council collates statistics related to dog attacks. Examine the types and breeds of dog registered in the Council area to determine any trends applicable.

That Council promote the level of risk relating to litigation and public safety. Invite guest speakers on this topic to information sessions at Progress Associations and Council events.

*Dog faeces in public places*

The management of dog faeces is an important environmental and health issue. Anecdotally, large amounts of dog faeces pollute our waterways and public places each year and it is an issue on which the community has strong feelings. In addition, The Yorke Peninsula relies heavily on tourism and faeces littering our public places have a detrimental effect on visitors. Although the responsibility lies with dog owners, an increasing number of Councils are providing leadership in this area by providing dog tidy bags to promote the picking up of dog faeces.

It is widely acknowledged that Councils that provide faeces removal dispenses dramatically reduce the incidence of discarded faeces in the community. Problems

associated with vandalism have been overcome by placing the dispensers in areas of high visibility such as Caravan parks, Progress Associations and Council buildings.

**Action**

That Council continues with the strategically placement of signs to encourage responsible dog ownership in the area of faeces removal.

That Council continues to provide dog faeces removal bags to the community.

That free Pooch Packs be handed out to dog owners.

*Nuisance caused by cats*

Under the provision of the Dog and Cat Management Act an un-owned cat can be trapped when found wandering on private property. If an occupier traps a cat and it is identifiable the cat must be released unless the cat is more than one kilometer from a genuine place of residence. Under the provisions of the Act a cat must be identified by way of a collar with ownership details or by way of a microchip. The Council currently has 10 cat traps available for loan to residents. Liability for the correct use of the traps is with the resident. Residents must dispose of un-owned cats in accordance with the Act.

The Council is aware of the need to address cat issues in the community. Of concern is the lack of resources and available funding to implement any such program. The introduction of a by-law to further control cats must be measured and implemented to ensure success. This will not happen if Council takes a reactive approach to the problem. With this in mind Council intends to monitor other Councils to measure the success or otherwise of by-laws before introducing a by-law suitable to the needs of the community.

**Action**

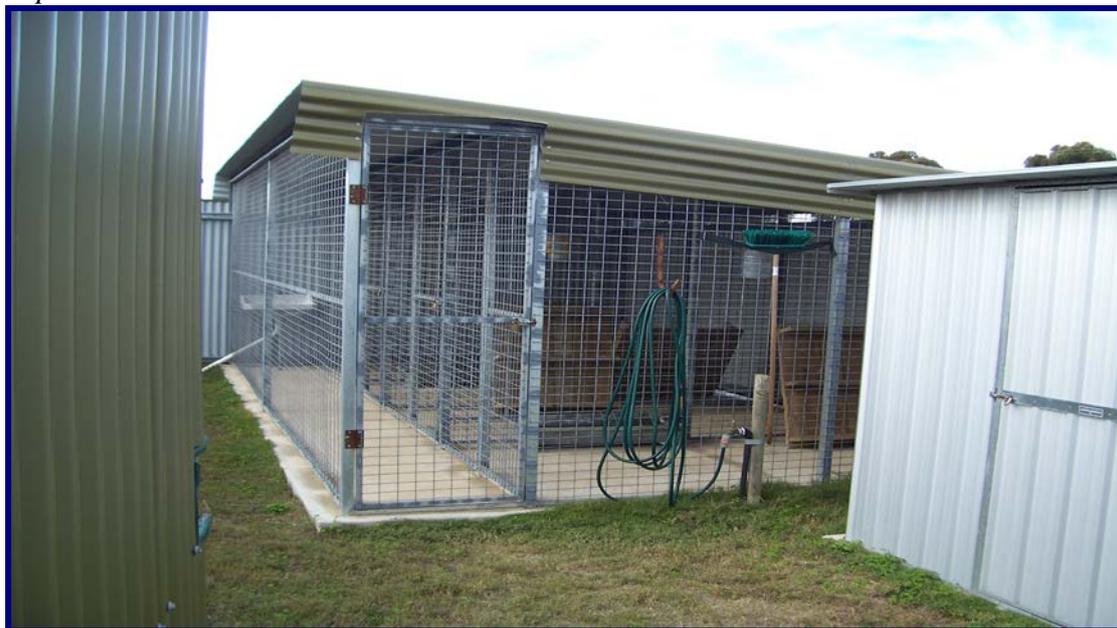
Council continues to provide cat traps to residents experiencing problems with cats.

Council implements the procedure and contract agreement for the loan of cat traps as set out in appendix one.

Council monitors other Council by-laws over the next twelve months before commencing the process of introducing a suitable by-law for the control of cats.

**Provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats.**

*Ensure that impounded dogs are returned to owners as soon as practical and that all impounded dogs and cats have clean safe facilities while impounded.*



Council Pound Yorke Peninsula

Councils dog holding facilities are of a particularly good standard.

To ensure that this continues the Council operates its dog holding facilities in accordance with the “Code of Conduct for Pounds and Shelters” as set down by the Dog and Cat Management Board. (Appendix two)

**Action**

Council continue the above practice and conducts regular reviews of pounds and shelters for compliance.

**Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.**

*Provide residents and visitors with up to date information regarding the benefits of responsible dog and cat ownership.*

There is a wealth of scientific evidence to support the benefits of owning pets and their use in therapy. However, until recently this evidence has not been considered by Local Government, which has focused instead on the negative aspects alone.

Evidence of a link between pet ownership and better health has been demonstrated by a range of different studies. More work needs to be done to determine whether this link is causal or merely correlational (ie, do pet owners share some other factor which yields health benefits?), and not all studies demonstrate a link between pet ownership and better health outcomes. However, as the evidence mounts, the public health profession is starting to take note, eg:

- The National Health and Medical Research Council’s Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Overweight and Obesity is considering dog walking as one key to getting overweight and obese people moving.

- A public health symposium was hosted by the National Centre for Health Promotion in Sydney in 1998 to generate a research agenda for dog ownership and public health.

Dogs encourage people to enjoy the outdoors. They have been shown to stimulate conversation between strangers in public places and they improve people's sense of security - both in the home and with their owner in public places. Pets are also wonderful companions. In some cases helping combat loneliness and social alienation. These benefits are as important for the elderly and single person households as they are for households with children.

Part of the challenge involves removing barriers to owning pets.

Local government has a role to play in harnessing these benefits - not to encourage people to buy a pet but to even up the balance in the consideration of domestic animals issues and by removing unnecessary barriers to pet ownership

**Action**

Promote the benefits to the community of responsible pet ownership with the Dog and Cat Management Boards publication "You and Your Dog" and "You and Your Cat".

**Encourage the enjoyment of and benefits from dogs and cats by people.**

*Facilitate dog and cat activity days for dog and cat owners.*

With due regard for the benefits of pet ownership, there is an opportunity for Council to facilitate a day for dog and cat owners to get together and celebrate their best friend, be it a dog or a cat. By doing so, there is an opportunity for Council and the public to interact and exchange information. Similar events in Adelaide have proved very beneficial.

**Action**

Council implement a day out for dog and cat owners with invited guests and interest groups.

**Ensure public safety and amenity in relation to dogs and cats.**

*Conduct regular patrols to ensure compliance with Legislative requirements. Invite regular input regarding dog and cat management issues from interest groups throughout the community.*

Council has two Rangers and several Administration Support Staff. These Staff are trained in all areas of animal management and are the public face of animal management in the area. The Rangers educate, mediate and enforce the provision of the Act and have a good understanding of the issues effecting public safety and amenities in relation to dogs and cats. Council is providing adequate patrols for non-compliance with the Act.

Members of the public can lodge complaints or concerns with the Council regarding animal management but it would appear that a more open approach via Progress Associations is needed.

**Action**

That Council Rangers continue regular patrols of the area to ensure compliance with the Act.

That Council invite members of the public to an input into animal management via their local Progress Association or to Council direct via Customer Service Requests.

**Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats.**

*Clearly define areas unsuitable for dog and cat recreation and exercise.*

The Yorke Peninsula Council has several National Parks where dogs and cats are not permitted. Rangers of the National parks are responsible for the control of all animals in the park. Council Rangers support their activities by providing assistance as required. Clearly there is a good working relationship between the agencies and the strategy does not require changing.

**Ensure the expenditure of registration fees addresses the needs of pet owners as well as domestic animal management issues.**

*Conduct regular reviews of income and expenditure to ensure that Council is using best practice with available funds.*

Under the provisions of the Act Council must utilize money generated from dog management in the area of dog management. The implementation of this plan is a clear demonstration of Council's desire to fulfil this obligation. In addition Council's Finance Manager is responsible to ensure that an independent ledger of funds is kept and is available for scrutiny by the Dog and Cat Management Board.

**Detailed Methodology to prepare and implement an Animal Management Plan****Phase One – Information and Data Collection prepare a draft Animal Management Plan**

Stage	Description	Outcomes
1	Collect information and available data relevant to the Animal Management Plan.	•
2	Prepare a Draft Animal Management Plan for consultation for the period 2011 to 2016.	•
3	Provide a copy of the draft Animal Management Plan for Council to approve in principal prior to public consultation.	•

**Phase Two – Public Consultation**

4	Establish Council Project Reference Group.	•
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5	Establish the community consultation model to be applied for the consultation and approval process for the Council Animal Management Plan.	•
6	Council reference group consider written submission regarding the plan.	•
7	Amend the draft Animal Management Plans.	•

### **Phase Three – Adoption of the Animal Management Plan By Council**

8	Submit the draft Animal Management Plan to Council for approval.	•
9	Present the final Animal Management Plan to the Dog and Cat Management Board for approval.	•

### **Phase Four – Implementation of the Plan**

10	Implementation of the Plan	•
11	Review of the plan after six months.	•

### Key Performance Indicators

Objective	Actions	KPI's
Provide effective management and a suitable environment for dogs and cats within the community.	<p>Ensure that Officer of Council operate within the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.</p> <p>Ensure that Officers operate within predetermined guidelines in accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.</p> <p>Encourage Education of dog and cat owners.</p> <p>Maximise dog registration.</p> <p>Minimise dogs wandering at large.</p> <p>Enforce identification of dogs.</p> <p>Encourage the community to report all dog attacks and harassments to Council.</p> <p>Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas.</p> <p>Maximise the publics understanding of the Dog Management Officers and the Councils role in the community.</p> <p>Limit the number of dogs and cats per dwelling.</p> <p>Introduce data collection to better understand dog and cat management issues.</p>	<p>Management Conduct Staff reviews.</p> <p>Regular audits of the Animal Management Plan.</p> <p>Compare registration compliance with previous years.</p> <p>Collect data regarding dogs impounded by Council without current registration.</p> <p>Compare dog attack/harassment reports with previous years.</p> <p>Review public meetings conducted during the year.</p> <p>Review by-law compliance.</p> <p>Review data collect.</p>
Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership.	<p>Provide education material to residents and visitors to the Council area.</p> <p>Enforce the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act.</p>	<p>Collate information regarding education material distributed to residents and visitors.</p> <p>Data collect of expiations issued compared with previous years.</p>
Increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.	<p>Reduce the following detrimental impacts of dogs and cats;</p> <p>Barking dogs</p> <p>Dog attacks/harassment</p> <p>Dog faeces in public places</p> <p>Nuisance caused by cats</p>	<p>Data Collection and analysis.</p>
Provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats.	<p>Ensure that impounded dogs are returned to owners as soon</p>	<p>Data Collection and analysis of expiations issued compared</p>

	<p>as practical.          Ensure that all impounded dogs and cats have clean safe facilities while impounded.          Ensure that off leash areas are suitable for dogs to be exercised.</p>	<p>with previous years.          Review pound procedures.          Conduct risk analysis of off leash areas.</p>
Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.	Provide residents and visitors with up to date information regarding the benefits of responsible dog and cat ownership.	Review information provided to residents and visitors to the Council area.
Encourage the enjoyment of and the benefits from dogs and cats by people.	Facilitate dog and cat activity days for dog and cat owners.	Data Collection and analysis.
Ensure public Safety and amenities in relation to dogs and cats.	<p>Conduct regular patrols of to ensure compliance with Legislative requirements.          Invite regular input regarding dog and cat management issues from interest groups throughout the community.</p>	<p>Data Collection and analysis of warnings and expiations compared with previous years.          Review input from interest groups.</p>
Protect native fauna and flora from the impacts of dogs and cats.	Clearly define areas unsuitable for dog and cat recreation and exercise.	Conduct risk analysis of areas unsuitable for dog and cat activities.
Ensure the expenditure of registration fees addresses the needs of pet owners as well as domestic animal management.	Conduct regular reviews of income and expenditure to ensure that Council is using best practice with available funds.	Audit conducted by the Dog and Cat Management Board annually.

**Action to be undertaken as a result of the Animal Management Plan**

- 1 Council Management is to review Staff training and development to ensure that all staff has a clear understanding of animal management issues and state wide trends in animal management.
- 2 Council is to maintain performance reviews for all Staff involved in animal management.
- 3 Council is to update procedural guidelines for all Staff to follow. Appendix one.
- 4 Council is to introduce a brochure for all residents and visitors to the Yorke Peninsula. The brochure should be distributed through as many outlets as possible including Council Buildings, Progress Associations and Caravan parks.
- 5 Council to ensure that signage throughout the district be maintained and regularly changed to reflect animal management issues.
- 6 Council Rangers are to conduct a tri-annual district survey for unregistered dogs.
- 7 Council to introduce a reward programme for first registration (eg. Puppy Pack, Pooch Pouch or similar).
- 8 Council staff are required to provide registration information with rates notices.
- 9 Council staff are to conduct a check of registration status of dogs such as working dogs to ensure correct registration identification.
- 10 Council Rangers are to ensure that owners are made aware of their responsibilities to;  
register their dog, adequately fence their property to control their dog, train their dog so as to not leave their premises, to keep their dog under effective control when in a public place.
- 11 Council Rangers are to ensure that they conduct random (day of the week, and times of day) patrols of all public areas and detain dogs wandering at large.
- 12 Council to respond to calls from the general public of a dog wandering at large. The priority of the Council will be to return the dog to the owner. Un-identified dogs will be impounded in accordance with the Act. Council will endeavour to liaise with suitable agencies to relocate suitable dogs if unclaimed by owners.
- 13 Council Rangers are to ensure that staff do not directly re-home dogs as it is considered inappropriate to act as a re-homing facility.

- 14 Council Rangers to ensure that unclaimed dogs which are unsuitable as pets will be euthenased.
- 15 To encourage compliance, Council Rangers are encouraged to reinforce complying behavior, particularly in children, to give warnings to first offences that are of a minor nature where no harm to a person or property has occurred. Penalties prescribed by the Act will be applied for re-offenders.
- 16 Council Rangers to enforce identification of dogs.
- 17 Council to educate the public regarding the correct identification of dogs and cats.
- 18 Council to encourages microchipping days throughout the year to promote identification of pets.
- 19 Council to implement and education programme that targets the reporting of all dog attacks/harassments throughout the community.
- 20 Council to provide dog attack/harassment forms throughout the community in places such as Progress Associations, Caravan Parks and Council buildings for the public to use.
- 21 Council to provide dog attack form for Medical centres to encourage the reporting of dogs attacks.
- 22 Council to conduct an audit of all Council controlled parks and reserves
- 23 Council to conduct a review of the Animal Management Plan in July each year to ensure suitability of the parks and reserves within its control.
- 24 Council to implement foreshore restrictions on dog owners during daylight saving.
- 25 Council Staff to undertake regular public information sessions at Progress associations to inform the public of their role and current animal management issues.
- 26 Council staff to monitors the actions of other Councils in relation to By-laws with the intention of the implementation of a by-law for cats in the future.
- 27 Council to continue to analyse all Customer Service Requests received to better understand any trends regarding animal management issues.
- 28 Council Rangers to continue to monitor dog management issues in the Point Pearce area while working with the local community to resolve any issue of concern.
- 29 Council to ensure that that people contemplating obtaining a dog or a cat be encouraged to consider the factors affecting the suitability of successful pet ownership in their particular circumstances.

- 30 Council to ensure that sources of this information include advice being available from the Council Rangers.
- 31 Council to ensure that advice that Online information regarding breeds and assistance in pet selection is available on: \_  
Petcare Information and Advisory Service [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au) and The Dog and Cat Management Board of SA [www.dogsncats.asn.au](http://www.dogsncats.asn.au)
- 32 Council to ensure that to discourage people from obtaining dogs or a cat from other than registered breeders, and to ensure that the dog or cat is sound from defects, immunized and de-sexed. That people contemplating obtaining a dog or a cat be encouraged to become familiar with the responsibilities of dog or cat ownership prior to obtaining a dog or a cat.
- 33 Council to ensure that people who obtain a new dog ensure that it is trained.
- 34 Council to continue to use Standard Operating Procedure for the investigation of noise nuisance complaints.
- 35 Council to implement an education brochure for dog owners to be sent out in the event of a complaint regarding dog noise nuisances. (appendix one)
- 36 Council to collate statistics related to dog attacks. Examine the types and breeds of dog registered in the Council area to determine any trends applicable.
- 37 Council to promote the level of risk relating to litigation and public safety. Invite guest speakers on this topic to information sessions at Progress Associations and Council events.
- 38 Council to continue with the strategically placement of signs to encourage responsible dog ownership in the area of faeces removal.
- 39 Council to continue to provide dog faeces removal bags to the community.
- 40 Council to ensure that free Pooch Packs be handed out to dog owners.
- 41 Council continues to provide cat traps to residents experiencing problems with cats.
- 42 Council to implement the procedure and contract agreement for the loan of cat traps as set out in appendix one.
- 43 Council to monitor other Council by-laws over the next twelve months before commencing the process of introducing a suitable by-law for the control of cats.
- 44 Council to continue the practice and conducts regular reviews of pounds and shelters for compliance.

- 45 Council Rangers to ensure that they promote the benefits to the community of responsible pet ownership with the Dog and Cat Management Boards publication “You and Your Dog” and “You and Your Cat”.
- 46 Council to implement a day out for dog and cat owners with invited guests and interest groups.
- 47 Council Rangers to ensure that they continue regular patrols of the area to ensure compliance with the Act.
- 48 Council to invite members of the public to an input into animal management via their local Progress Association.