



DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Plan Type	Animal Management
Responsible Department	Works
Responsible Officer	Works Manager
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Version	Version 3
Last reviewed	2022
Next Review date	April 2027

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District Council of Elliston is situated approximately 650km from Adelaide on the western seaboard of South Australia on the Eyre Peninsula.

Within the district Council area, the two largest townships are the communities of Elliston and Lock with six smaller towns being Port Kenny, Venus Bay, Bramfield, Sheringa, Tooligie and Murdinga.

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 26A of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (the Act)* and replaces the current Animal Management Plan 2017-2022.

The purpose of this Plan is to guide the strategic direction of the District Council of Elliston's management of dogs and cats for the next five years (2022-2027).

Mission Statement

"Council commits to maintain a balance between competing interests in the community, and to address animal management while promoting responsible ownership of dogs and cats. Supporting the benefits of animal companionship and focusing on the legitimate needs of pets and their owners while respecting the rights of other members of the community and protecting the environment."

Aims

The Plan aims to establish management guidelines to create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the community. The Plan aims to:

- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- Reduce the public and environmental nuisance caused by cats and dogs
- Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats
- Promote the effective management of dogs and cats, whilst focusing on the need to educate the community in respect of the law relating to dogs and cats
- Harness the benefits of dog and cat ownership and ensuring that the expenditure of registration fees addresses domestic animal issues



2. BACKGROUND

This Plan was developed with input from Elected Members, Council staff and the local community.

Preparation of this Plan included a review of:

- the existing Animal Management Plan and incorporated key initiatives that remain current into this new Plan
- current dog and cat management services
- dog and cat data
- changes to the Act
- current research and industry best practices regarding companion dogs and cats, animal management and welfare

Community consultation was undertaken from 27 June - 15 July 2022. Over this period, the draft Plan was available in the following ways:

- Council website
- hard copy of the plan made available from Council's office

There is now considerable evidence to support our understanding of the benefits of owning pets so 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, coordinate and make future decisions to meet the needs of the community over the next five years.

3. THE LAW AND GUIDELINES

In 2017 - 2018, significant changes were made to the Dog and Cat Management Act, in an effort to reduce the number of unowned dogs and cats being euthanised. These changes included the provisions of mandatory microchipping and desexing of all dogs and cats. In July 2018, a new statewide registration system was introduced by the State Government of South Australia known as Dogs and

Cats Online (**DACO**). This system replaced the previously inconsistent registration system each Council across the State maintained annually. Facilitated by the Dog and Cat Management Board of South Australia, the DACO system holds the details of all dogs and cats registered or microchipped within South Australia. All registration renewals are issued via this system and are no longer undertaken by local Councils. Owners of dogs and cats are required to access the system to:

- renew current registrations
- register a new dog
- update their details should they move, including changing contact numbers
- update the details of their dog or cat including microchip details
- notify if their dog or cat is lost or deceased

Whilst Council encourages dog and cat owners to participate with self-registration and the updating of their pets details on the DACO system, Council assists the process by making Customer Service Officers available for owners wishing to register or update their pet’s details directly with us.

Councils are now responsible for issuing dog and cat registration reminder notices. The Dog and Cat Management Board issue registration discs once only when a dog is first registered.

REQUIREMENT	LEGISLATIVE INSTRUMENT
Mandatory desexing of dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018	<i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
Mandatory microchipping of all cats and dogs	<i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
Registration of all dogs	<i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
New rules for breeders who call sell cats and dogs	<i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
Statewide registration system, Dogs and Cats Online (DACO)	<i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i>
Exercising dogs in public places	<i>Dog and Cat Management Act 1995</i> and Council’s Dog By-law No. 5 2022
Limit of dogs/cats to be kept per property without permission from Council	Council’s Dog By-law No. 5 2022 and Cat By-Law No. 7 2022

Pursuant to the Act, all dogs in the District Council of Elliston must be registered. Owners of dogs and cats in the Elliston District must have their pets microchip numbers registered on the DACO system.

BY-LAWS

The Local Government Act 1999 allows Council to establish By-laws for the good rule and government of the area, and for the convenience, comfort and safety of its community.

The District Council of Elliston has two (2) By-Laws relating to animal management. By-Laws are made under section 90(5) of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*, sections 238 and 246 of the Act. A By-law is legally enforceable.

Dogs By-law No. 5 of 2022 states:

- Number of dogs kept on a property to be one dog in a small dwelling, such as a flat or home unit, or up to two dogs in any other dwelling.

- Dogs must not remain in any area which has been designated as a Dog Free Area.
- Dogs must be held on a lead no longer than 2 metres in any area which has been designated as an On Lead Area.
- In all other areas, dogs must remain under effective control either by means of physical restraint or command and remain within close proximity of the person, and in sight of the person at all times.

Cats By-Law No. 7 of 2022 states:

- Number of cats kept on a property must not exceed two (2) on any premise.
- Cats are not allowed to cause nuisance
- No unsanitary conditions may exist or is likely to arise on the premise as a result of keeping cats
- Cats must be registered

By-Laws were published in the South Australian Government Gazette on 27 October 2022 and will commence operation on 27 February 2023.

A copy of the By-Laws can be found on at [Council's website](#).

LEGISLATION AND REFORM

The objectives of the Act are to:

- encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats
- promote the effective management of dogs and cats

COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT

The responsibilities delegated to Councils under s26 of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* that are relevant to the preparation of this Plan include:

- maintain a register of dogs (26(1)(a))
- appoint a suitable person to be the Registrar (26b)
- appoint at least one full-time authorised person or make other satisfactory arrangements for the exercise of the functions and powers of authorised persons (26d)
- make satisfactory arrangements for the detention of dogs seized under this Act; (and may make such arrangements for cats seized under this Act) (26e)
- make satisfactory arrangements for fulfilling other obligations under this Act (26f).

COUNCILS MANAGEMENT OF DOGS

Council implements the following measures to manage dogs within the district:

- annual dog registration
- wandering at large dogs are detained and housed at council's holding facility
- a by-law that promotes and regulates the control and management of dogs within the Council area
- relationships are maintained with adjoining Councils to provide support and effective sharing of information and past experiences
- the provision of 'on-leash' and 'off-leash' areas within the District
- providing and encouraging the use of dog poo bags in public areas

COUNCILS MANAGEMENT OF CATS

Council implements the following measures to manage cats within the District:

- promote the microchipping of all cats (and dogs) which is compulsory and the recording the details in DACO
- all cats (and dogs) born from 1 July 2018 to be desexed (exemptions apply)
- a by-law which promotes and regulates the control and management of cats within the Council area
- relationships maintained with Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board for partnership in the management of cats
- education provided to the community of cat ownership/cat behaviour
- promote cats being kept indoors and at night
- promote free registration of all cats

NATIONAL DESEXING NETWORK PROGRAM (NDN)

District Council of Elliston has partnered with the [Dog and Cat Management Board \(DCMB\)](#), [National Desexing Network \(NDN\)](#) and participating vet clinics to offer residents in need a subsidised desexing program to help prevent unwanted cats and dogs. Elliston Council residents on pensions or low income or with too many cats or dogs, who can't afford to desex their animals will pay a minimum subsidised rate towards the procedure. This initiative helps the whole community as it reduces Council costs to collect, hold and rehome unwanted litters and helps reduce cat nuisance issues and predation on native wildlife.

OTHER CHANGES TO DOG AND CAT LAWS FROM 2018

The *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* had significant changes take effect from 1 July 2018. Changes that impacted on Council, dog and cat owners and dog and cat breeders and sellers included:

ALL DOGS AND CATS MUST BE MICROCHIPPED

Owners must microchip their dogs and cats by 12 weeks of age or at the point of sale, whichever occurs first. Microchipping details must be entered onto the state-wide register at dogsandcatsonline.com.au.

Council actively promotes microchipping and will continue to remind dog and cat owners to comply with the legislation. Council staff have equipment to scan for microchips, so we can re-unite owners with lost pets as quickly as possible. The microchip number is the link to the owner's contact details which are held on the statewide database, DACO, and owners are reminded to review and update their contact details regularly.

DESEXING OF DOGS AND CATS

All dogs and cats born after 1 July 2018 must be de-sexed by a registered veterinary surgeon:

- before six (6) months of age; or
- within twenty eight (28) days after the owner takes possession of the dog or cat

EXEMPTIONS

The Act and Regulations do provide some exemptions to mandatory desexing for the following:

- registered working dogs

- breeding dogs registered with Dogs SA members
- breeding cats belonging to a FASA or Cat Fancy of SA members
- Greyhounds currently registered to Greyhound Racing SA (retired greyhounds are not exempt).

Any exemption is to be recorded directly into Dogs and Cats Online on the animal's record. Veterinary Surgeons may also exempt a dog or cat from microchipping or desexing if satisfied the procedure would:

- pose an undue risk to the health of the dog or cat
- adversely affect the growth, development or wellbeing of the dog or cat

In every case where an exemption is provided by a Veterinary Surgeon, a certificate of exemption must be provided to the pet owner, and proof provided to Council and recorded on DACO.

BREEDING, BUYING AND SELLING

As of 1 July 2018, breeders and sellers who breed dogs and cats for sale must:

- register as a breeder at Dogs and Cats Online and pay the registration fee any person who breeds or trades companion animals must also abide by the [South Australian Standards and Guidelines for Breeding and Trading Companion Animals](#) which took effect from August 2017.
- adhere to advertising rules
- microchip dogs and cats before sale
- provide in writing to the purchaser the following information
 - names, phone numbers and DACO breeder numbers of everyone involved in the breeding and sale of the animal.
 - vaccination details, known illnesses or medical conditions.
 - if desexed, the name and address of the vet and date of procedure.
 - the animal's microchip number, date of procedure, any national registries the microchip information is stored on and name and address of the microchip planter.
 - For dogs, any control order on the dog.
 - Any vet exemptions from microchipping or desexing.

DOG REGISTRATION CATEGORIES

As of 1 July 2017, the dog registration categories in South Australia were simplified to two categories:

- standard dog (a dog that is both microchipped and desexed)
- non-standard dog (all other dogs).

District Council of Elliston continues to offer concession rates for dog registrations to eligible persons at 50% of the required fee. Cat registrations are free for all cat owners.

4. REVENUE AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Section 26(3) of the Act requires all revenue to be expended on the management of dogs and cats within the District area.

Section 26(6) enables Council to set dog registration fees. Council reviews dog registration fees each year, including any discounts offered to the community. The fee structure is available within Council's Fees and Charges Register and is updated and available on Council's website annually.

Dog registration income received by Council is spent on dog and cat management and Council complies with annual reporting and auditing requirements of the Act. The Dog and Cat Management Board, via the DACO system, retains 12% of the registration fees applicable to Council for administration purposes.

5. KEEPING CATS IN THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ELLISTON

Legislation clearly identifies that all cats must be microchipped and desexed (at the appropriate age). Research shows that when cats are allowed to roam they have a detrimental effect on the environment, particularly our native mammals, reptiles and birds. Council is proactive in advising residents the benefits of keeping their cat indoors or confined to their property, for their good health and to reduce the chance of their pet becoming a nuisance, injured or killed by cars, dogs or other cats.

6. CAT TRAPS

Council has developed a procedure and hire agreement for the hiring of cat traps to assist in reducing the number of unowned and nuisance cat complaints and to address the impact they cause to the community and the environment. A bond is payable upon collection of the cage which is refunded in full if the cage is returned by the hirer in a clean and undamaged condition.

The cat traps will not be issued for the purpose of capturing nuisance or neighboring cats. The traps will only be loaned out for the genuine removal of a feral or unowned cat.

Trapped cats identified with a collar, microchip or any form of identification must be released immediately. Penalties apply for failure to release an identified cat (The Act).

Any person who seizes an unidentified cat must contact local EP Landscape Board staff for microchip scanning and disposal.

7. DOGS IN PUBLIC SPACES

A key consideration in taking dogs out into public places is for dogs to be under effective control and not cause a nuisance to other people and animals. It is important that dogs are trained in how to cope with everyday experiences such as walking down a street or while out exercising.

Dog training that teaches real-life skills is fundamental if dogs are to be taken out and about with their owners in public places. Basic social etiquette and respect for all users sharing a space (i.e. people, dogs and wildlife) is an important part of being a responsible dog owner.

ON-LEASH AND OFF-LEASH AREAS

Council provides a range of public open spaces for dogs and their owners.

.A 'public place' means a place to which the public has access (whether an admission fee is charged or not) and includes streets, roads, footpaths, car parks, ovals, sporting arenas, foreshore and coastal camping areas where dogs must be effectively controlled. All members of the community must have the ability to use the amenities without fear of harassment by uncontrolled dogs.

Dogs in "off leash" areas must still remain under effective control (by voice command and by being close enough to the person that they can see the dog at all times)

Many of our coastal beaches are nesting areas to protected bird species like the Hooded Plover. By

keeping dogs 'on leash' in these areas helps to minimise the disturbance to the species that inhabit our District.

ON LEASH PARKS AND AREAS	COMMENTS
All coastal camping areas, public parks and foreshore areas, except those shown below as Off Leash Parks and Areas	Including Sheringa Beach and Walker's Rock Camping Areas, Millikans Beach, Talia Beach and Elliston Wetlands.
OFF LEASH PARKS AND AREAS	
ELLISTON	
Waterloo Bay recreational beach	Elliston boat ramp to jetty
Clifftop Drive	
Little Bay beach	
SHERINGA	
Sheringa recreational beach area	
VENUS BAY	
South Head Walking Trail	
PORT KENNY	
Western town parklands	
LOCK	
Council land	Between North Terrace and Hitchcock Street

8. OBJECTIVES / STRATEGIES / MEASURES (KPI)

8.1 COUNCIL OPERATIONS			
a) Council authorised officers have capacity to administer and enforce the Dog and Cat Management Act			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Appropriately Trained Employees acting under the Act.	Staff undertakes training, as required, relating to new legislative provisions under the Act and dog handling. Yearly reviews of staff training which would benefit employees and Council. Up to date SOP in place.	Type and number of training sessions attended.
b) Education of the community			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Greater knowledge of the dog and cat legislative provisions.	Promotion of the need for breeders who sell animals to be registered with the Dog and Cat Management Board.	Number of promotional activities undertaken.
ii.		Promotion of legislation requiring all new generations of dogs and cats over 6 months of age to be desexed.	Number and types of promotional activities undertaken. Number of new generation dogs and cats desexed annually.
iii.		Promotion of legislation requiring all dog and cats three months of age or older to be microchipped.	Number and types of promotional activities undertaken. Number of dogs and cats three months of age or older microchipped annually. Annual reduction in dogs and cats found not microchipped or desexed.
iv.	Proactive education of pet owners to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.	Implement various campaigns, such as microchipping, desexing, keeping cats inside promotion. Advocating the benefits of identification. Highlight various issues relating to responsible pet ownership.	Number and type of campaigns undertaken annually. Annual reduction in dog and cats wandering at large. Annual reduction in dogs and cats found not microchipped or desexed.
v.		Promote positive dog and cat ownership and behaviour of pets and their owners.	Number of dog and cat complaints reduced.
vi.		Provide educational material for display and circulation. Providing updates in local newsletters and social media.	Number of pamphlets/brochures circulated. Feedback from the community.
vii.	Ensure up to date promotional materials are available.	Regularly review and update promotional material to ensure it is accurate. Use DCMB promotional material.	Types and promotional material provided.

c) Effective Reporting and Management Structures			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Maintain appropriate mechanisms for all requirements under the Act to ensure timely reporting to the Board.	Ensure Council's Dog Incident Reports are uploaded to the DCMB system required by the Board.	Meeting compliance reporting obligations.
d) Community awareness of pet ownership benefits and responsibilities			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Encourage National Desexing Network Program to eligible persons in the community.	Promote NDN Program throughout the District.	Number of persons accessing program Increase in non-compliant animals desexed.
ii.	Provide links on Council's Website to other appropriate websites for easy access to relevant services.	Provide links on Council's Website to other appropriate websites about dogs and cats to facilitate access to relevant services and information.	Number of links listed on Council Website and names of Groups/Services.
iii.	Community adequately informed of Dogs Off-Leash areas.	Review and update the Dogs Off-leash areas.	Schedule of Off-Leash areas reviewed and attached to Animal Management Plan and advertised on Council's Website.
e) Visitor Information/Facilities			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Provide relevant information to various services within District Council of Elliston to ensure visitors are aware of dog and cat management services that are available.	Supply dog off leash areas brochures to tourist facilities within the Council area.	Number of facilities provided with brochures. Positive feedback from visitors and tourist facilities.
8.2 DOGMANAGEMENT			
a) Dog Registration			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	High level of dog registrations achieved.	Promote dog registrations annually.	Annual increase for dog registrations.
ii.	Increased knowledge of legislative provisions around registration by community.	Undertake door knocks to identify and ensure any unregistered dog is registered.	Number of door knocks undertaken and number of dogs identified and registered as a result.
b) Mandatory Microchip Identification			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Promote incentives to the community to assist in microchipping programs.	Promote Chipblitz days in nearby locations. Promote NDN Program to the community.	Annual reduction in the number of dogs not microchipped.

ii.	Educate residents about the mandatory microchipping requirements.	Mail out information about mandatory microchipping with dog renewals. Use council website and social media to post information.	Number of times educational information is distributed. Number of different formats used to distribute the information. Feedback from community.
c) Mandatory Desexing			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Provide incentives to the community to assist in desexing programs.	Promote NDN Program to community.	Annual reduction in the number of dogs and cats found not to be desexed.
ii.	Increase public awareness to the community of the benefits of desexing. Monitor compliance with the mandatory desexing requirements.	Distribution of information on the benefits of desexing through newsletter and social media. Provide education material at Customer Service Centre and other locations promoting desexing. Enforce the Standard dog registration rebate by requiring proof of both desexing and microchipping for the rebate.	Promotional material provided by Council. Reduction in numbers of dogs not desexed in the district.
d) Wandering At Large			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Reduced number of dogs wandering at large.	Respond to complaints regarding wandering dogs to ensure safety of the public.	Number of reports followed up regarding wandering.
ii.	Return of registered or identified dogs found wandering at large to their owners. Unregistered dogs to be registered before being released.	Use all avenues available to identify and return dogs wandering at large to owners.	Number of dogs returned to owners.
iii.	Advertise events where fireworks, or weather could impact on number of dogs wandering at large.	Proactively promote events and other activities as a reminder to pet owners to secure their pets, as necessary.	Reduction of dogs found wandering at large.
e) Faeces Management			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Dog owners remove all faeces from public places. Educate owners of the potential of diseases being spread.	Provide and promote facilities (dogpoo bag dispensers) to ensure collection of faeces in public spaces by dogs owners. Carry out random inspections of Council areas. Install signs reminding users of their responsibilities.	Types of facilities provided and how well used. Reduction of faeces in public areas.

f) BarkingDogs			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Reduction in the number of complaints regarding barkingdogs.	Provide information to owners of dogs where a complaint has been received regarding their pet barking and highlight various methods to control barking. Educational information provided through Council newsletter and social media in relation to the reasons why dogs bark and how to address the issue.	Number of complaints received and resolved. Identify number of reoffending complaints. Number of Articles published.
g) Attacks and harassments reporting			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Decrease in dog attacks.	Promote the consequences of dog attacks and prevention strategies.	Number of dog attack reports. Types of prevention strategies
ii.	Dog attacks and harassment as reported and acted upon	Promote and encourage the reporting of all dog attacks and harassment whether in a public place or on private property. All reported dog incidents recorded in DACO system.	Number of attacks reported.
h) Exercise and Enrichment of Dogs			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Provide effective management and suitable environments for dogs within the community.	Education of the community of the importance of exercise and enrichment and things they can do for their pets.	Positive feedback from the dog owners in relation to dog areas.
i) DogBy-law			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Dog by-law outlines a number of provisions for the control and management of dogs.	Review Council's dogby-law.	By-law review completed.

8.3 CATMANAGEMENT			
a) Mandatory Microchip Identification			
	Objective	Strategies	
i.	Promote incentives to the community to assist in microchipping programs.	Promote Chipblitz days in nearby locations Promote NDN Program to the community	Reduction in the number of cats not microchipped.
b) Mandatory Desexing			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Promote incentives to the community to assist in desexing programs.	Promote NDN Program to community.	Reduction in the number of cats found not to be desexed.
ii.	Increase awareness of benefits of desexing.	Distributing information on the benefits of desexing through newsletter and social media. Provide education material at Council office and other locations promoting desexing.	Promotional material provided by Council. Reduction in numbers of non desexed cats in the district.
c) Owner responsibility			
	Objective	Strategies	Measures
i.	Increased awareness of owner responsibility and promotion of types of enclosures available to reduce wandering cats	Information available to owners of cats on the benefits of keeping cats indoors or the use of cat enclosures. Promoted through Council newsletter, social media and publications at Customer Service Centre. Educating community of the effects cats have on the environment.	Community feedback.

Version Control

Version No.	Dog and Cat Management Board Approval	Date Adopted by Council	Synergy	Prepared By
1	16 August 2017			Customer Service/Records Management Officer
2	4 August 2022	20 September 2022		Customer Service/Records Management Officer
3				Customer Service/Records Management Officer

9. REFERENCES

South Australian Standards and Guidelines for Breeding and Trading Companion Animals, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources Government of South Australia 2017

Government of South Australia (1995) Dog and Cat Management Act (1995) and Regulations 2017

Animal Welfare Act (1985)

Animal Welfare Regulations (2012)

Government of South Australia Dog and Cat Management Board Good Cats Play at Home (2021)

Government of South Australia Dog and Cat Management Board online references

District Council of Elliston Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

District Council of Elliston Animal Management Plan 2017 – 2022

District Council of Elliston Dog By-Law No 5 of 2022

District Council of Elliston Cat By-Law No 7b of 2022

