

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

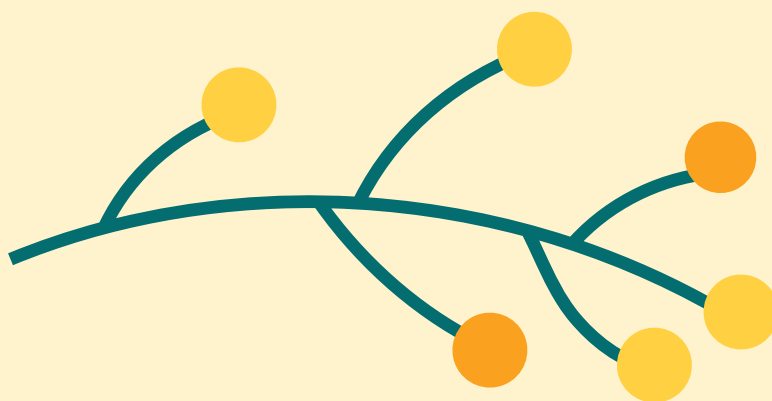
# Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022 - 2025



*South Gippsland*  
Shire Council

## *Acknowledgment of Country*

*We acknowledge the Bunurong and Gunaikurnai people as the Traditional Custodians of South Gippsland and pay respect to their Elders, past, present, and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia.*



# Message from the Mayor

**Councillor Mohya Davies**

Mayor

South Gippsland Shire Council



The Domestic Animal Management Plan provides guidance and sets a clear direction to ensure pets in South Gippsland are valued and treated humanely. It provides an overview of the work that Council is currently doing in the animal welfare and management space, but more importantly, it sets new actions that will align our work to our community's expectations.

To understand what the South Gippsland community wanted in terms of domestic animal management, Council embarked on a significant engagement campaign which generated 583 survey responses, 1,799 website visits and 73 comments via listening posts across our Shire.

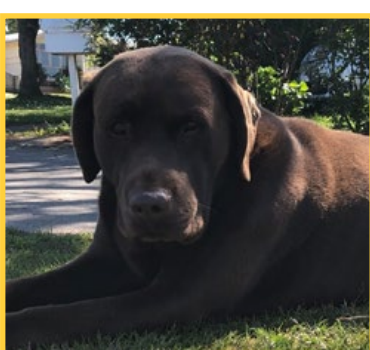
This strong feedback is immensely valuable as it helped to guide the Plan you see today. From the feedback that was provided, we now understand what our community thinks around issues such as cat curfews and dog leash orders and what their biggest concerns are in relation to animal and environmental protection.

It was clear from our consultation that people are devoted to their pets, who are considered not animals but 'family'. And this extended to species other than cats and dogs. As part of this Plan, we are dedicated to supporting and valuing pets in our community by:

- Ensuring pet owners understand they have a responsibility to care for and protect their pets and that they do not adversely impact on other pets, people or the environment;
- Delivering programs that work closely with our community to educate and encourage compliance with Council policy and State Government legislation relating to pets; and
- Delivering services within our community to address issues that relate to our pets.

On the next page, you will see some of the Councillors beloved pets who were also keen to be part of this process.

*Our animals are a vital part of our community.*



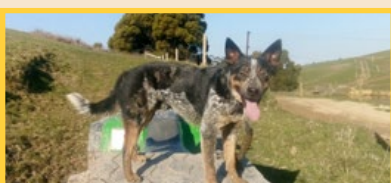
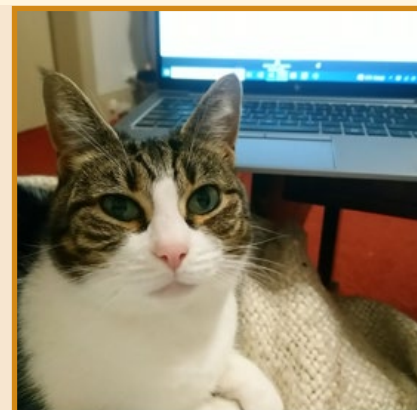
This is Spencer. Best mate of Councillor Clare Williams and an all-round good boy.

Hello there. My name is Daisy, I'm the cat of the house and I agreed to let Councillor Keerie take me home to keep that dog Missy in line.

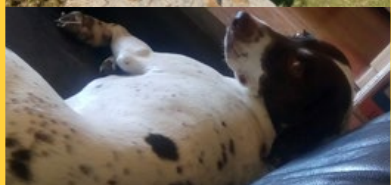
They like to think they rescued me, but I know better, I rescued them.

I have crucial tasks as you can see in this photo. Here I am helping Councillor Keerie review some Council papers. It is an important job that I take very seriously.

I am mostly an inside cat but now that I have been, hmmm... 'fixed up', I love to spend time sleeping in the sun on our back verandah.



Blue Dog and Annie – best mates of Councillor Scott Rae.



My name is Desi and I'm a Red Heeler x Border Collie with a big personality (at least that's what my owner Councillor Sarah Gilligan says). Sarah says I make my family laugh at least once a day and I'm a pleasure to be around.

I can be a little timid around other dogs, but I was all ears hearing what our community thought about dogs being on leads and off-leash areas.



My name is Missy and I love being part of Councillor Jenni Keerie's family. I was a rescue dog. They also found a rescue cat, but we won't talk about that. This photo is the one I used to win the heart of my family, it worked too!

I'm a good girl and really love keeping the chooks in line. Mum doesn't walk me much any more, I think when I dragged her along the footpath, ran her into a street sign and then she tripped on the gutter she wasn't too keen on doing it again – well, not with a broken ankle anyway. Mum usually drives me to safe places and just lets me out to run. I'm so fast and this always makes her smile.

# Introduction

Under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council must develop and implement a new Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) every four years.

South Gippsland Shire Council is committed to maintaining its parks, gardens and streets for the enjoyment of all residents and visitors and promoting responsible pet ownership is part of this commitment.

South Gippsland is a diverse area consisting of lush rolling hills which give way to a scenic coastline. As South Gippsland's population grows, so does the number of pets who inhabit the municipality.

The DAMP is aimed at promoting and encouraging responsible pet ownership. It explains how Council currently manages this, and establishes objectives to improve and grow the ways in which Council delivers domestic animal management programs.

The DAMP's objectives address our duty of care to the health and welfare of animals with consideration to the environment, amenity and all who live in or visit our community.

In order to develop a DAMP that addresses the key priorities of the South Gippsland community, Council conducted a vigorous community consultation program from August to September 2022. This included collecting and collating feedback through 583 survey responses, 24 written submissions, stakeholder workshops, community listening posts and much more.

The key themes were consistent with previous domestic animal management consultations. The key areas of community focus highlighted in the DAMP are:

- Dogs being walked off-lead and not under effective control.
- Wandering dogs.
- Dog waste facilities when walking dogs.
- Dog aggression.
- Cats' impact on native wildlife.
- Wandering cats.
- Cats not being desexed.
- Irresponsible breeding.

## Background



### In This Section:

- Snapshot
- What We Do
- How We Developed this Plan
- What We Heard

44%

support exemptions for cats on farms.



84%

support a night-time cat curfew.

62%

support a 24-hour cat confinement order.

64%

support a dog leash order.

69%

support exemptions for working dogs.



84%

agree that there will be a need for **designated off-leash** areas should a dog leash order be introduced.

85%

of owners are encouraged to pick up after their dog as a result of Council-provided **dog waste bags**.

### The community told us they have concerns with:

64%

Cats' impact on native wildlife

50%

Dogs being walked off lead or not under control

54%

Wandering cats

39%

Wandering dogs

45%

Cats not being desexed

37%

Dog waste

32%

Irresponsible breeding

31%

Facilities when walking dogs

31%

Dog aggression

### Pet Ownership, Registration and Desexing

76%

Own a dog

32%

Own a cat

14%

Do not own a dog or cat

84%

of pet owners stated that their dogs and cats are **desexed**.

### What would make it easier for residents to register pets?

- Registration incentives and discounts.
- SMS / email reminders for renewals.
- Ability to register pets at a vet clinic.



## What We Do

South Gippsland Shire is located a pleasant 90-minute drive through coastal flats and rolling hills to the south east of Melbourne. It stretches from Nyora in the west, to Welshpool in the east, and Mirboo North to the north. The southern boundary is formed by the Bass Strait coastline.

As well as the main towns of Leongatha, Korumburra, Mirboo North and Foster, South Gippsland has over 20 smaller communities that are an integral part of the Shire. Its commercial, social, cultural and environmental qualities make it a wonderful environment to live, work, recreate and invest. The Shire has a population of 30,248 (estimated residential population) and covers 3,300 square kilometres which include some of the nation's most arable farming land.

### Population and Domestic Animal Snapshot

The following table provides a snapshot of dogs and cats across South Gippsland.

Snapshot Data	2021-22
Population	30,248
Geographic area of municipality	3,296 square kilometres
Registered dogs	5,710
Registered cats	1,584
Dog and cat related requests	854
Registered declared dogs (dangerous, menacing or restricted breed)	3
Dog attack or rush	37
Number of registered Domestic Animal Businesses	7
Keeping of animals / excess animal permits issued	15
Number of infringements	123
Number of successful prosecutions	6
Dogs impounded	124
Dogs euthanised	9
Cats impounded	110
Cats euthanised	14
Cat cage requests	133



## Current Domestic Animal Services and Programs

South Gippsland Shire Council currently provides the following Domestic Animal Management services and programs to residents:

- Ongoing maintenance of a dog and cat registration database.
- Response to customer complaints relating to animal management issues such as barking dogs, dog attacks, dogs at large, nuisance cats.
- Provision of an after-hours emergency service.
- Provision of dog litter bins and 'animal welfare' bag dispensers at 15 locations throughout the Shire.
- Cat trapping program – supply of cat traps for trapping of feral and/or nuisance cats.
- Collection of stray or wandering dogs and cats, including surrendered animals.
- Provision of advice and information to residents relating to animal management issues.
- Promotion of responsible pet ownership through distribution of education material for all new animal registrations.
- Regular inspections of Domestic Animal Businesses to ensure compliance with the Act and relevant Codes of Practice.
- Regular inspections of restricted breeds, dangerous and menacing dog premises to ensure compliance with the Act and relevant Codes of Practice.
- Provision of animal management training opportunities for Local Laws Officers.
- Provision of pound services through a contractual agreement.
- Quick responsiveness to dog attack complaints.
- Prosecution of offences under the Act and other regulations including Council's *General Local Law 2014*.

# How We Developed the Domestic Animal Management Plan

South Gippsland Shire Council's previous DAMP expired in 2021 and an interim one-year action plan was put in place until a further three-year plan could be developed with input from our newly elected Council.

Development of Council's new DAMP was driven by Council's Local Laws team who really wanted to get input from our community, stakeholders and undertake independent research.

## Engagement Approach

Council used a number of consultation tools as part of our engagement activities. These included:

- An online survey via Council's online portal 'Your Say South Gippsland' from 17 August to 11 September 2022 (promoted through media releases, social media posts, published on Council's website and Councillor Bulletin) to allow our community to provide feedback on dogs and cats.
- Written submissions could be uploaded on the website or via email and post.
- In-person and online community listening posts. The in-person sessions were held at Korumburra, Foster, Mirboo North and Leongatha.
- Councillor workshop.
- Hard copy surveys were also available at various locations throughout the Shire and upon request.
- Corflute signs with a QR code to the survey were placed in popular dog walking areas and along the rail trail.
- Key external stakeholders were directly emailed to participate in the engagement process. This included vets, shelters, animal groups, domestic animal businesses, environmental organisations, committees of management, sporting clubs, business groups etc.
- Internal Council stakeholders were contacted directly to participate.
- 4,237 owners of registered dogs or cats were sent an SMS or email invitation with a link to the survey.
- 71 customers who had made a dog or cat related enquiry in the last six months were sent an SMS or email invitation with a link to the survey.

## What We Heard

### Key Issues

- Dogs off lead / not under owner control / wandering dogs.
- Dog waste.
- Dog aggression.
- Facilities when walking dogs.
- Dogs barking.
- Cats and dogs impact on native wildlife.
- Wandering cats.
- Cats and dogs not being desexed / irresponsible breeding.

### Suggestions

- Introduce and enforce a dog leash order in public places, consider working dogs (droving livestock) exemptions.
- Provide designated fenced off-leash areas with appropriate facilities in townships across South Gippsland, including at ovals, parks, reserves and beaches.
- Provide solutions to address dog waste including bags and bins on trails, parks, reserves, beach entry points, town centres.
- Confine cats to owners' property, either night-time or 24/7.
- Make it easier to register pets including incentives and discounts, and investigate whether pets could be registered at vet clinics.
- Education and communication to promote responsible pet ownership, regular messaging using multiple accessible channels.

# Activities

## In This Section:

- Training of Authorised Officers.
- Registration and Identification.
- Nuisance.
- Dog Attacks.
- Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs.
- Overpopulation and High Euthanasia.
- Domestic Animal Businesses.
- Pound Provision and Management.
- Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reports.

# Training of Authorised Officers

Council's animal management services are delivered through the Local Laws team. The team regularly work with key partners and stakeholders, and aim to build relationships with these partners and the community by providing advice, support and regulatory services.

In addition to animal management, our Local Laws team respond to numerous other issues and community needs to assist with public safety, the environment and amenity.

## Current and Planned Training

New staff are required to complete specific training including a Council induction on policies and procedures and an introduction to Council's animal management procedures and programs. Regular team training and refresher courses, and ongoing on-the-job training and coaching is provided.

Staff are encouraged to represent the Shire on industry bodies and committees where appropriate. Internal procedures and processes are regularly reviewed and updated.

The team maintain a training register, detailing all the qualifications and training courses completed by each team member. Performance reviews and professional development plans are also undertaken annually.

## Our Plans

- Continue to develop and maintain a training register for individual officers.
- Ensure officers attend at least one training or networking session each year.
- Ensure all officers have access and use the Bureau of Animal Welfare internet site.
- Maximise learning and development opportunities to attract and maintain quality staff and performance.
- Identify and seek additional training and development opportunities as they arise.

# Registration and Identification

## Current Situation – Our Current Data (2021)

Healthy and happy pets can bring life and vibrancy to a family, and community. They provide companionship and improve wellbeing through supporting physical exercise and mental wellness. These benefits rely on responsible pet ownership. Socialisation of animals is considered an important part of pet ownership. Supervised and responsible socialisation supports dog behaviour so that they are able to cope with unfamiliar situations (e.g. interacting with other animals or people) by teaching them to not react fearfully to new experiences and being more comfortable when encountering something new.

Council promotes and encourages responsible ownership of dogs and cats through a range of communication and education initiatives.

We understand the increasing demand for Council services to be delivered online, and for engagement through social media and other digital means. However, we also acknowledge the power behind face-to-face interactions and that successful education and communication campaigns require a multi-channelled approach.

Community consultation outcomes identified responsible pet ownership as an important factor including animals being trained and exercised, microchipped, desexed and registered with owners complying with regulations and signage. Communication and education campaigns with clear and simple messaging were suggested to support responsible pet ownership as well as increasing awareness of the impacts and implications of pets near conservation areas.

Registration fees currently set for the 2022/2023 financial year are as follows:

<b>Reduced Fee</b>	\$55.85	<b>Pension Concession</b>	\$27.40
<b>Microchipped Only</b>	\$164.45	<b>Pension Concession</b>	\$82.20
<b>Restricted breed / dangerous / menacing dog</b>	\$317.70		

- Pro-rata fees commence 11 October each year.
- Provision of free transfer of registration to animal owners who relocate to the South Gippsland Shire.
- Letter and registration application forms are sent to all new pet owners identified through Section 13 notifications received from pounds, shelters and pet shops. The Local Laws Administration Support Officer and Local Laws Officers undertake processes to ensure animals are registered as required by the Act.
- Issue registration renewal notices on an annual basis with reminder notices, final notice, and text messages to ensure animals are registered.
- Ensure each Officer has a microchip scanner to determine if an animal found wandering or contained is currently registered along with the owner's details.

### Our Current Education / Promotion Activities

Council's current identification and registration activities include:

- Issuing of 'lifetime' registration identification tags.
- Door-knocking various townships and rural areas in relation to registration requirements and compliance checking.
- Advertising of relevant information on Council's website, in local newspapers, social media and information boards.
- Encouraging the desexing of dogs and cats in an effort to reduce wandering animal issues.

### Our Plans

- Continue to conduct registration compliance campaigns across the municipal district targeting townships and rural areas each year.
- Introduce an online animal registration application system for new registrations.
- Continue to distribute animal information articles on Council's website, social media, telephone on-hold messages and in the local newspapers to promote the benefits of registration, microchipping and legislative compliance.
- Continue compliance and enforcement activities to achieve greater compliance with all aspects of the Act.

# Nuisance

A nuisance animal is defined or exists if the keeping or behaviour of an animal causes a condition, state or activity that constitutes:

- Damage to property owned by a person other than the keeper.
- Excessive disturbance to a person, other than the keeper, because of noise.
- Danger to the health of an animal or person other than the keeper.

Council encourages people to manage their pets in a way that protects the health and welfare of the animal, maximises the companion benefits of their pet, and minimises potential nuisance or harm to others.

## Our Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Council's *General Local Law 2014* provisions relating to domestic animals are as follows:

Clause 46(1) – *“An owner or occupier of a property must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept any more in number for each kind of animal than as set out in the following table: [2 dogs and/or 2 cats]”; and*

- Clause 48(1) – *“A person in charge of an animal must not allow any part of the animal's excrement to remain on or in a public place within a built-up area”; and*
- Clause 48(2) – *“A person in charge of an animal which litters in a public place must immediately collect and dispose of the litter in such a manner so as not to cause a nuisance to any other person.”*

Council has a number of policies and procedures that relate to the administration and enforcement of the Act. These include a Barking Dog 'step-by-step' process, Wandering Dog Process, Compliance and Enforcement Policy, and Infringement Matrix.

There are also well developed processes for officers to follow and access to guidance that will assist them in their decision making.



## Our Current Education / Promotion Activities

- Provide Bureau of Animal Welfare responsible pet ownership brochures and other literature to owners of newly registered animals.
- Provide advice and assistance to customers in relation to animal management issues.
- Encourage desexing of dogs and cats to minimise wandering issues and issues around unwanted litters.
- Provide a cat trapping program to residents for trapping trespassing cats in an effort to reduce the number of feral/stray cats within South Gippsland.
- Provide information and advice about the requirements of trapping cats.
- Provision of dog litter bins and 'animal waste' bags in the 15 parks and reserves across the Shire as follows:
  - » Baromi Park – Ridgway, Mirboo North.
  - » Mossvale Park – Berry's Creek.
  - » Poowong Recreation Reserve – Drouin Road, Poowong.
  - » Coleman Park – Queen Street, Korumburra.
  - » McIndoe Park – Corner Hassett Street and Turner Street, Leongatha.
  - » Tania Park – Brown Street, Leongatha.
  - » Horticultural Park – Corner Young Street and Bazley Street, Leongatha.
  - » Foster Recreation Reserve – Station Road, Foster.
  - » Pearl Park – Main Street, Foster.
  - » Sagassar Park – Station Street, Foster.
  - » Lewis Street, Port Welshpool.
  - » Gale Street, Waratah Bay.
  - » Sunnyside Park – Speight Street, Loch.
  - » R N Scott Reserve – Wonthaggi Korumburra Road, Kongwak.
  - » T P Taylor Reserve – Beach Parade, Sandy Point.

## Our Current Compliance Activities

- Ensure nuisance complaints are logged on Council's Customer Request System and linked to the animal registration record to allow for resolution tracking and patterns of behaviour with individual animals and owners.
- Ensure that all notices to comply and infringements are issued in line with Council guidelines, the Act and any relevant Codes of Practice.
- Investigate nuisance animal complaints to ensure effective resolution is achieved.

## Our Plans

- Continue to distribute animal information articles on Council's website, social media, telephone on-hold messages and in the local newspapers to promote the issues relating to nuisance dogs and cats.
- Consider community consultation feedback to investigate the introduction of a 'Leash Order' to reduce the incidence of wandering/unrestrained dogs in public places and number of dogs causing nuisance.
- Consider and investigate the need for designated 'Dog Off-Leash' parks if a leash order is introduced.
- Consider community consultation feedback to investigate the introduction of a 'Cat Curfew Order' to reduce the incidence of cats causing nuisance, attacks on native fauna and unwanted cat litters.

# Dog Attacks

Dog attacks are a public safety risk and are dealt with as a matter of urgency. Council acknowledges that dog attacks can be traumatic for all parties and takes all attacks seriously ensuring that all reported incidents are investigated.

Any breed or size of dog can become aggressive when protecting its territory. Attacks are not always from dangerous or aggressive breeds and can be from unexpected breeds not generally associated with aggression.

All reported dog attacks are recorded on Council's Customer Request System and assigned to our Locals Laws team. Upon completion of a dog attack investigation, the matter may be dealt with via an infringement process, by way of court prosecution or in another appropriate manner in consultation with the Local Laws Coordinator.

An emergency 24-hour telephone service operates via Council's main telephone number and an on-call rostered Local Laws Officer will respond to all serious dog attacks and other urgent requests.

## Our Current Education / Promotion Activities

- Promote responsible pet ownership through the use of local media and Council's website.
- Provide educational material to owners of newly registered dogs.
- Provide information and advice to owners of an attacking dog on the implications which can arise from a dog attack on a person or animal.

## Our Current Compliance Activities

- Investigate complaints ensuring all relevant evidence is gathered and considered.
- Conduct regular patrols throughout the municipality.
- Issue infringement notices for non-compliance with legislation.
- Prosecute offenders for non-compliance with legislation.

## Our Plans

Council endeavours to minimise the risk of dog attacks on people and animals through a program of education and enforcement initiatives.

- Continue to educate the community regarding the broader implications of dog attacks to the community, the victim, the offending animal and the owner of that animal.
- Continue to distribute animal information articles on Council's website, social media, telephone on-hold messages and in the local newspapers to increase awareness of the incidence of dog attacks and their implications to all parties.
- Issue infringements and prosecute offenders for non-compliance with the Act in accordance with our normal practices.
- Provide residents with information on how to report dog attacks and promote and encourage the reporting of all aggressive dog incidents.

# Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

Council strives to minimise the risk to the community from menacing, dangerous or restricted breed dogs. In 2022, South Gippsland Shire has three declared dogs.

A dangerous dog is one that a council has declared dangerous because it has bitten a person or animal, causing serious injury or death.

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* allows Councils to declare a dog to be dangerous if:

- The dog has caused serious injury or death to a person or animal;
- The dog is a menacing dog and its owner has received at least two infringement notices for failing to comply with restraint requirements;
- The dog has been declared dangerous under corresponding legislation in another state or territory; or
- For any other reason prescribed.

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* also allows Council to declare a dog menacing if:

- The dog has caused a non-serious bite to a person or animal; or
- The dog has rushed at or chased a person.

Owners are required to declare if their dog is a restricted breed, has been declared menacing or dangerous.

## Current Situation – Our Current Data (2021)

Declared Menacing Dogs	Declared Dangerous Dogs	Declared Restricted Breed
0	3	0

## Our Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Ensure that all declared dogs are listed on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry.
- Use of breed standard for identifying a restricted breed dog.
- Victorian Breed Assistance Resource Kit (Vic BARK) Smart Device application.

## Our Current Education / Promotion Activities

- Provide a range of educational brochures for the community.
- Ensure that owners of declared dogs are aware of their obligations under the Act.

## Our Current Compliance Activities

- Animal registration renewal notices are issued annually.
- Annual compliance inspections and spot-check inspections are conducted at all premises where declared dogs are kept to ensure compliance with requirements of the Act.
- Monitor non-residential areas for use of guard dogs.
- Ensure that all declared dogs are listed on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and all details are updated as soon as possible.
- Review all new dog registrations for potential restricted breeds.

## Our Plans

Our aim is to minimise the risks of dog attack to the community and animals from menacing, dangerous and restricted breed dogs.

- Proactively enforce menacing, restricted breed and dangerous dog legislation.
- Ensure that the standards to identify restricted breed dogs are applied.
- Conduct annual inspections of premises where declared restricted breeds of dogs are housed.
- Conduct annual inspections of premises where declared dangerous and menacing dogs are housed.
- Promote the Department of Primary Industries' "Dangerous Dogs Hotline".
- Provide advice and guidance to dog owners regarding restricted breeds and dangerous dogs.

## Overpopulation and High Euthanasia

Council's priority is to achieve positive community and animal welfare outcomes wherever possible.

Council's Pound facility is currently run by a third-party provider, South Gippsland Animal Shelter. Council's Pound is a safe environment where animals found wandering can be housed.

The Pound is audited regularly and cleaned daily, including on weekends. Officers have 24/7 access to the facility and the South Gippsland Animal Shelter are able to attend to animals in care seven days per week.

Animal adoptions are currently managed by the South Gippsland Animal Shelter, who work closely with other groups to rehome as many animals as possible.

### Current Situation – Our Current Data (2021)

<b>Impounded</b>	234
<b>Returned to Owner</b>	135
<b>Euthanised</b>	23
<b>Rehomed</b>	117
<b>Surrendered</b>	63
<b>Euthanised – Feral cat</b>	49

### Our Current Education / Promotion Activities

- Promotion of the State-wide initiative Responsible Cat Ownership program on Council's website and in local newspapers to raise awareness within the community.
- Conduct cat-specific education programs through Council's Communication Plan including promoting identification, registration and desexing.
- Conduct annual 'cat audits' within the community to ascertain the level of 'owned' cats. This is carried out in conjunction with the door-to-door registration compliance checks.

## Our Current Compliance Activities

- Promotion of the Responsible Cat Ownership program.
- Provision of cat traps to assist in the trapping of trespassing and problem cats.
- Implement targeted cat trapping programs.
- Implement requirements for registration of cats.
- Conduct annual 'cat audits' within the community to ascertain the level of 'owned' cats.

## Our Plans

- Advertise lost and/or found dogs and cats on Council's website and in local papers based on information provided by Council's Pound Service.
- Ensure that notices advertising animals for sale within South Gippsland contain a microchip number for each animal being sold.
- Expand Council's cat trapping program to reduce feral and stray cat numbers.
- Work with Council's Communications team to investigate the extended use of social media to facilitate the return of lost or impounded animals to their owners.



# Domestic Animal Businesses

Domestic Animal Businesses include:

- Breeding businesses (cats and/or dogs).
- Training facilities for dogs.
- Pet shops.
- Animal (welfare) shelters.
- Dog or cat rearing premises.
- Animal pounds either run by Council or a Council contractor.
- An establishment boarding dogs or cats – overnight, doggy day care and in-home care.

Under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, all of these businesses must be registered with the relevant Council where they operate.

## Current Situation – Our Current Data (2021)

Business Type	Number Registered
Breeding	0
Boarding	4
Pet Shop	0
Training Establishment	2
Pounds and Shelters	1

## Our Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

- Send out annual Domestic Animal Business (DAB) registration renewal notices.
- Inspect all Domestic Animal Businesses annually and as required throughout the year.
- Use of Bureau of Animal Welfare Audit inspection checklists when inspecting these businesses.

## Our Current Education / Promotion Activities

- Supply and distribution of information regarding Domestic Animal Businesses and relevant Codes of Practice.
- Provide advice and guidance as required by the Domestic Animal Business owner/s.

## Our Current Compliance Activities

- Inspect all Domestic Animal Businesses annually and as required throughout the year.
- Investigate all complaints relating to a Domestic Animal Business.
- Follow up on any non-compliance issues or breaches of the Code of Practice or Act.
- Take any enforcement action necessary.
- Ensure that Domestic Animal Businesses forward Section 13 documents to the relevant Council following the sale of an animal.
- Ensure that notices advertising animals for sale within South Gippsland contain the Domestic Animal Business' Council registration number and comply with relevant Codes of Practice and the Act.
- Liaise with other departments within Council to provide advice when an application for a Domestic Animal Business is received to ensure compliance with regulations and requirements under the Act and relevant Codes of Practice.

## Our Plans

- Undertake assessment of Council's registration database to proactively identify unregistered Domestic Animal Businesses.
- Provide Domestic Animal Businesses with education material to ensure they are kept informed of all new developments and changes to legislation that may affect the operation of their business.
- Develop a procedure that will allow for all audit inspection documentation to be stored electronically against the license.

# Pound Provision and Management

The South Gippsland Shire domestic animal pound services are provided and managed under a contractual agreement with the Korumburra Veterinary Clinic. This service has been provided by the Korumburra Veterinary Clinic since 1996. Following a comprehensive process, the contract was renewed on 1 July 2018 for a five-year period until 30 June 2023. A review of the pound service is required to determine the direction of Council's pound service post 30 June 2023.

## Our Plans

- Undertake a review of the pound service to determine the direction of Council's Pound Service post 30 June 2023.

# Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reports

## Our Plans

- Provide the Department of Primary Industries Secretary with a copy of the Domestic Animal Management Plan and any amendments.
- Publish an evaluation of the implementation of the Domestic Animal Management Plan in Council's Annual Report.
- Review the Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and if appropriate, make amendments.



# Action Plan



This Action Plan assists us in accomplishing the goals and objectives in the Domestic Animal Management Plan. It takes into consideration the regulatory responsibilities, community input from an extensive consultation process, Council’s commitment to all who live and visit our municipality, and demonstrates our focus on the amenity and natural environment of South Gippsland.

Activity	Who	When
<b>Training of Authorised Officers</b>		
Ensure all officers have access to the Bureau of Animal Welfare website.	Local Laws Administration Officer	Ongoing
Maintain a training register for individual officers.	Local Laws Coordinator	Annually
Ensure officers attend at least one training / networking session each year.	Local Laws Coordinator	As per training register
Maximise learning and development opportunities to attract and maintain quality staff and performance.	Local Laws Coordinator	As per training opportunities
Identify additional training and development opportunities as they arise.	Local Laws Coordinator	As per training opportunities
<b>Registration and Identification</b>		
Continue to conduct registration compliance campaigns across the municipal district targeting townships and rural areas each year.	Local Laws Coordinator	Ongoing
Introduce an online animal registration application system for new registrations.	Local Laws Administration Officer	Ongoing
Continue to distribute animal information articles on Council’s website, social media, telephone on-hold messages and in local newspapers to promote the benefits of registration, microchipping and legislative compliance.	Local Laws Administration Officer Communications Officer	Ongoing
Continue compliance and enforcement activities to achieve greater compliance with all aspects of the Act.	Local Laws Coordinator	Ongoing

Activity	Who	When
<b>Nuisance</b>		
Continue to distribute animal information articles on Council's website, social media, telephone on-hold messages and in local newspapers to promote the issues relating to nuisance dogs and cats.	Local Laws Administration Officer Communications Officer	Ongoing
Investigate the introduction of a 'Leash Order' to reduce the incidence of wandering/unrestrained dogs in public places and number of dogs causing a nuisance.	Local Laws Coordinator	Future Plan
Investigate the introduction of a 'Cat Curfew Order' to reduce the incidence of cats causing a nuisance, attacks on native fauna and unwanted cat litters.	Local Laws Coordinator	Future Plan
<b>Dog Attacks</b>		
Issue infringements and prosecute offenders for non-compliance with the Act in accordance with our normal practices.	Local Laws Coordinator Local Laws Administration Officer	Ongoing
Continue to educate the public regarding the broader implications of dog attacks to the community, the victim, the offending animal and the owner of that animal.	Local Laws Coordinator	Ongoing
Continue to distribute animal information articles on Council's website, social media, telephone on-hold messages and in local newspapers to promote issues relating to dog attacks.	Local Laws Administration Officer Communications Officer	Ongoing
Provide residents with information on how to report dog attacks and promote and encourage the reporting of any dog attack.	Local Laws Administration Officer Communications Officer	Ongoing

Activity	Who	When
<b>Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs</b>		
Promote the Department of Primary Industries “Dangerous Dogs Hotline”	Local Laws Administration Officer	Ongoing
Provide advice and guidance to dog owners regarding restricted breeds and dangerous dogs.	Local Laws Coordinator Local Laws Administration Officer	Ongoing
Conduct annual inspections of premises where declared restricted breeds of dogs are housed.	Local Laws Officers	Annually in April
Conduct annual inspections of premises where declared dangerous and menacing dogs are housed.	Local Laws Officers	Annually in April
Proactively enforce menacing, restricted breed and dangerous dog legislation.	Local Laws Coordinator Local Laws Officers	When required
Ensure that the standards to identify restricted breed dogs are applied.	Local Laws Coordinator Local Laws Officers	When required
<b>Overpopulation and High Euthanasia</b>		
Expand Council’s cat trapping program.	Local Laws Officers	2023
Through Council’s pound service, advertise lost and/or found dogs and cats on Council’s website and in local papers.	Pound Service Provider	Ongoing
Ensure that notices advertising animals for sale within South Gippsland contain the microchip number for each animal being sold.	Local Laws Administration Officer Local Laws Officers	Ongoing
Investigate the extended use of social media to increase the return of lost or impounded animals to their owners.	Local Laws Administration Officer Local Laws Coordinator Local Laws Officers	Ongoing



Activity	Who	When
<b>Domestic Animal Businesses</b>		
Develop a procedure that will allow for all audit inspection documentation to be stored electronically against the license.	Local Laws Administration Officer Local Laws Officers	2023
Assessment of Council's registration database, to proactively identify unregistered Domestic Animal Businesses.	Local Laws Administration Officer Local Laws Officers	Ongoing
Provide Domestic Animal Businesses with educative material to ensure they are kept informed of all new developments and changes to legislation that may affect the operation of their business.	Local Laws Officers	Annually in April or as required
<b>Other Matters</b>		
Undertake a review of pound service in 30 June 2023. Management would seek approval from the Chief Executive Officer for a contract extension for an additional year recurring up to five times applicable to 30 June 2028.	Manager Community Safety	30 June 2023
<b>Annual Review of Plan and Annual Reporting</b>		
Provide the Department of Primary Industries Secretary with a copy of the Domestic Animal Management Plan and any amendments.	Local Laws Coordinator	Upon adoption by Council
Publish an evaluation of the implementation of the Domestic Animal Management Plan in Council's Annual Report.	Manager Regulatory Services Communications Officer	Annually
Review the Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and if appropriate, make any amendments to the Plan.	Local Laws Coordinator Local Laws Officers	Annually

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