

## Provide feedback on the Draft South Gippsland Domestic Animal Management Plan

At Wednesday's Council meeting, the Draft South Gippsland Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) was endorsed for community consultation.

The Plan outlines how Council will manage dogs and cats within its municipal boundaries, and sets a strategic approach toward the promotion of responsible pet ownership.

To develop the DAMP an extensive engagement process was undertaken that generated 583 survey responses and over 3,000 comments. Findings from the engagement showed that our local community were concerned with:

- the impact of cats on native wildlife (64 per cent)
- wandering cats (54 per cent)
- dogs being walked off lead or not under control (50 per cent)
- cats not being desexed (45 per cent)
- wandering dogs (39 per cent)
- dog waste (37 per cent)
- irresponsible breeding (32 per cent).

Eighty-four per cent of respondents supported a night time cat curfew, and sixty-two per cent a 24hour cat curfew. Sixty-four per cent of respondents said they would like to see a dog leash order introduced.

As a result of the feedback, the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan commits Council to investigating the introduction of a dog leash order in public places, and a cat curfew to reduce the incidence of attacks on native fauna, cats causing nuisance and unwanted cat litters. Designated off leash dog parks will also be considered if the dog leash order is introduced.

Feedback on the Draft DAMP is encouraged to help to ensure it reflects both the comments made during the engagement period, and the needs of the South Gippsland community.

To view the engagement results and the Plan, or to provide feedback, please visit:

**Quote attributable to South Gippsland Shire Council Mayor, Mohya Davies**

*“It is important that we have measures in place to balance the needs of pet owners and non-pet owners in our community. Domestic animals provide us with love and companionship, so it is important to do what we can to ensure that they are cared for responsibly. However, it is also important that we identify and address any issues that are present in our community. To develop this Plan, extensive feedback was undertaken so we now have a good idea of the issues, but we now need your feedback to know if the proposed actions are appropriate to address these concerns. I would encourage everyone to have a read of the Plan and to let us know your thoughts.”*

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