
Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021

Review of Year 1 Actions

Background

The Bass Coast Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021, which was adopted in September 2017.

The following objectives have been identified to provide strategic focus for domestic animal management for the next four years. Each objective has actions attached to achieve the outcomes of the Plan. The Plan is reviewed annually and Council will publish an evaluation of its implementation in its annual report. The review will describe our level of success/progress in meeting the objective, identify if an activity was not done or is now not planned to be done, and why. The review will also include any new actions/initiatives that have been identified that will support the objective in the Plan. If amendments are required, Council will provide the Department of Primary Industries' Secretary with a copy of the Plan and any amendments.

Training of Authorised Officers

Objective 1: Review officer training and develop ongoing plans for each officer

Bass Coast Shire Council's animal management activities are managed by the Community Safety Team. The Community Safety team is situated within the Community Health and Wellbeing Department.

The team are responsible for meeting Council's responsibilities under the Act, ensuring appropriate regulation of dog and cat ownership and the reduction of the impact of domestic animals on community amenity.

The team do not work full time on animal management and are required to perform a variety of tasks relating to Local Law and parking enforcement, fire prevention inspections, litter investigation, footpath trading inspections and responding to stock issues.

Registration and Identification

Objective 1: Increase the number of registered dogs and cats in Bass Coast each year

Objective 2: Increase the percentage of desexed animals in Council's database each year

Objective 3: Improve the opportunities for animals to be registered with Council

Pet registration is a legal requirement under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and pet owners can receive an infringement notice for not complying. Every dog or cat three months of age and over must be registered with the local council. Existing registrations must be renewed by 10 April each year.

Registration fees help fund our animal management and a responsible pet ownership campaign and other education programs run by the State Government.

Nuisance

Objective 1: Increase off leash areas on beaches and on the mainland

Objective 2: Identify inland off leash areas and consider requirements for fencing

Objective 3: Improve understanding in the community of sunset to sunrise cat curfew and investigate the pros and cons of 24 hour cat containment and present a report to Councillors for decision

Objective 4: Improve community understanding of nuisance provisions relating to animals in Domestic Animals Act and Council Local Law

We hope to encourage 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 for nuisance or harm to others. The regulations for managing dog and cat nuisance, relating to noise, trespassing and wandering at large are contained within the Act and are enforced by Council.

Dog Attacks

Objective 1: Increased community awareness in relation to what is a dog attack and how to report them

Objective 2: Review Council processes in relation to investigation and follow up of dog attacks and rushes

A dog of any size or breed can become aggressive when defending its territory. Even a friendly dog may guard the area on or around his/her property, especially when owners are not present. Most dog attacks in public places occur on the footpath or road bordering the attacking dog's property. For this reason, it is important to make sure all dogs are securely contained.

Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs

Objective 1: Increased community awareness in relation to what a dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dog is

Objective 2: Review Council procedures in relation to dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs

Council endeavours to minimise the risk to the community from menacing, dangerous or restricted breed dogs. Officers are using Dangerous and Menacing declarations as a way of protecting the community from dogs that have been involved in serious dog attacks and numerous dog rushes.

Overpopulation and High Euthanasia

Objective 1: Increase numbers of desexed cats registered with Council and reduce the number of unwanted cats surrendered to Council's Shelter

Objective 2: Identify ways to improve support to 84Y (registered rescue group) agreement holders

Council believes that having more animals registered and identified will reduce the euthanasia rates in Bass Coast. Registered dogs and cats are almost always reunited with their owners and Council staff try very hard to return registered and identified animals to their rightful owners. Council currently works with 84Y groups to rehome as many animals as possible.

Domestic Animal Businesses

Objective 1: All domestic animal businesses in municipality will be identified and registered

Objective 2: All registered businesses are compliant with current legislation and relevant code of practice

Bass Coast Shire has a small number of registered Domestic Animal Businesses. These businesses operate under approved Codes of Practice and are subject to regular audit.

All domestic animal businesses must be registered annually with Council and comply with the appropriate mandatory Code of Practice. Bass Coast Shire Council may request an inspection of the facilities prior to registration each year. Council Officers complete annual inspection of domestic animal businesses in Bass Coast for compliance and have developed procedures regarding domestic animal businesses for issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution.

Issue	Objective	Activity	When	Evaluation	Update
Training of Authorised Officers	Review Officer training and develop ongoing plans for each officer	Develop a matrix of current and required skills of each Officer	2017/18	Matrix developed and then reviewed on an annual basis	Completed - Matrix developed and process for review on an annual basis
Training of Authorised Officers	Review Officer training and develop ongoing plans for each officer	Develop a training and induction program for new Officers/Rangers	2017/18	Training program content identified and initial training rolled out	Completed - Training program content identified and initial training rolled out
Training of Authorised Officers	Review Officer training and develop ongoing plans for each officer	Develop Annual refresher training of s72A officers at Phillip Island Nature Parks	2017/18	Training program content identified and initial training rolled out	Completed - Session rolled out to PINP.
Registration and Identification	Increase the number of registered dogs and cats in Bass Coast each year	Develop and implement a process for providing free registration for the first year for adopted animals through recognised rescue groups.	2017/18	Process developed and rolled out	Completed - Process rolled out ED18/65820
Registration and Identification	Increase the number of registered dogs and cats in Bass Coast each year	Conduct door knocks to identify unregistered cats and dogs in Bass Coast. Door knock a minimum of 250 random houses each year to check for unregistered animals.	2017/18	Door knocks completed Additional animals registered through door knocks	Completed - Door Knocks completed during August 2018 (300+)
Registration and Identification	Increase the percentage of desexed animals in Council's database each year	Develop documented process for refund for dogs desexed within six months of their registration.	2017/18	Documented process developed and promoted to local vets	Completed - Process rolled out ED18/65884

Issue	Objective	Activity	When	Evaluation	Update
Registration and Identification	Improve the opportunities for animals to be registered with Council	Gather email addresses for registered animal owners to improve communication opportunities in relation to registration/identification and responsible pet ownership	2017/18	Number of email addresses collected and information sent to registered pet owners.	Completed/Ongoing - Customer Service gather as many emails as possible. New Core System will be used to implement communications in coming years.
Nuisance	Increase off leash areas on beaches and on the mainland	Develop a checklist for appropriate beach areas with which to make assessment of potential off leash beach areas (use current areas as benchmark)	2017/18	Checklist completed	Completed - Used to identify potential sites in San Remo and Phillip Island.
Nuisance	Increase off leash areas on beaches and on the mainland	Provide an online 'where can I walk my dog' page on Council's website and complete associated communications and promotion	2017/18	Online map available on Council's website	Completed - ED18/65937 Website Updated
Nuisance	Increase off leash areas on beaches and on the mainland	Review of all current Orders relating to off leash, on leash and dogs prohibited areas in Bass Coast Shire	2017 to 2019	Complete a desktop review of the current Orders to ensure they are still relevant If required present a report to Council	Ongoing - Inverloch Screw Creek Order updated

Nuisance	Identify inland off leash areas and consider requirements for fencing	Develop pre-requisite requirements for inland off leash areas on Council land with relevant Council departments	2017/18	Checklist completed	Completed - Checklist developed
Issue	Objective	Activity	When	Evaluation	Update
Nuisance	Identify inland off leash areas and consider requirements for fencing	Identify potential off leash areas on Council owned or managed land and consult with users and implement a fenced off leash area on Blue Gum Reserve in Cowes	2017/18	Discussions with relevant stakeholders/land managers Fenced Off Leash Area on Blue Gum Reserve	Completed - Initial potential areas identified. Blue Gum consultation included as part of Active Bass Coast consultation 2018/19
Nuisance	Improve understanding in the community of sunrise to sunset cat curfew and investigate the pros and cons of 24 hour cat containment and present a report to Councillors for decision	Review current Order and communications regarding cats at large outside or not securely confined to the owner's premises to strengthen Order to assist residents dealing with cat trespass/nuisance problems.	2017/18	Current Order reviewed and recommendations provided to Council Improved communications provided to the community in relation to Order. Information is included in Council report in to 24hr cat containment	Completed - Order reviewed will form part of Pros and Cons update in year 2.

Nuisance	Improve understanding in the community of sunrise to sunset cat curfew and investigate the pros and cons of 24 hour cat containment and present a report to Councillors for decision	Support Phillip Island Nature Parks cat tracking program and request for information gained to be shared with Council	2017/2018	Support provided to the program and confirmation provided by Council Officer of exemptions for cats/owners participating in the trial. Information from trial is included in Council report in to 24hr cat containment	Completed – Support provided to program. Initial Information provided from PINP
Issue	Objective	Activity	When	Evaluation	Update
Nuisance	Improve community understanding of nuisance provisions relating to animals in Domestic Animals Act and Council Local Law	Reduce the number of animal excrement complaints received by Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and enforcement in relation to the law requiring the carrying of dog waste disposal bags • Provide pooch pouches with new registrations and to visitors at Customer Service and Visitor Information Centres (including bags) • Pop ups used to provide pooch pouches (including bags) in high use tourism areas • Identify pet friendly accommodation and trial the provision of pooch pouches (including bags) with providers 	2017/18	Number of complaints reduces after potential initial increase. Infringements/warnings in relation to not carrying bags. Pooch pouches provided to visitors and new registrations. Pooch pouches provided as part of pop up sessions. Pooch pouches provided to pet friendly accommodation premises and feedback	Completed - Over 500 interactions in relation to Poo Bags with over 500 rolls of bags provided to visitors and members of the community. 1 Accommodation Provider accepted bags for their clients ED18/60402

Dangerous, Menacing and Restricted Breed Dogs	Review Council procedures in relation to dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs	Write up case study of Bass Coast Shire Council dangerous dog declarations and ensure easy to follow step by step process is documented including procedure to provide details of dangerous dogs on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry	2017/18	Case study written up and shared with neighbouring Councils	Completed - Case study written up and will be shared with other Councils
Overpopulation and High Euthanasia	Increase numbers of desexed cats registered with Council and reduce the number of unwanted cats surrendered to Council's Shelter	Investigate reduced fee microchipping opportunities	2017/18	Opportunities investigated and rolled out if feasible	Completed - Desexing event held in 2018, further training of Officers to be able to complete more in-house microchipping.
Issue	Objective	Activity	When	Evaluation	Update
Overpopulation and High Euthanasia	Increase numbers of desexed cats registered with Council and reduce the number of unwanted cats surrendered to Council's Shelter	Raise awareness about semi-owned cat population and implement 'Who's for cats?' education campaign in local area.	2017/18	Education campaign rolled out with relevant partners	Completed - Promotion linked to desexing van and responsible cat ownership information
Overpopulation and High Euthanasia	Increase numbers of desexed cats registered with Council and reduce the number of unwanted cats surrendered to Council's Shelter	Investigate discount cat desexing days/weeks in conjunction with Phillip Island Nature Parks and RSPCA and ensure adequate budget provision	2017/18	Investigation in to costs and potential locations for desexing weeks in Bass Coast Shire for cats. Budget identified and requested.	Completed - Desexing event held in 2018 with Lost Dogs Home and PINP

Overpopulation and High Euthanasia	Identify ways to improve support to 84y (registered rescue group) agreement holders	Promote Council community grants program to section 84Y agreement holders	2017/18	Discussion with Grants Officer and information provided to section 84Y agreement holders.	Completed - Information sent to applicable organisations
Overpopulation and High Euthanasia	Identify ways to improve support to 84y (registered rescue group) agreement holders	Promote good news stories on rehoused animals through section 84Y agreement holders and the benefits of adoption, rather than buying animals, using Social media (Facebook, Twitter)	2017/18	Number of news stories promoted	Completed – Regular Facebook updates on pound animals. Press release around benefits adopting pets
Overpopulation and High Euthanasia	Identify ways to improve support to 84y (registered rescue group) agreement holders	Investigate arrangements in relation to microchipping, vaccinations and subsidised desexing for animals being rehoused through Council's section 84Y agreement holders	2017/18	Costs associated with microchipping, vaccinations and desexing reviewed and proposal for budget allocation considered	Completed - Investigation completed, microchip training of officers completed
Issue	Objective	Activity	When	Evaluation	Update
Domestic Animal Business	All registered businesses are compliant with current legislation and relevant code of practice	Develop procedure for issuing notices to comply, infringement notices and filing charges for prosecution regarding domestic animal businesses	2017/18	Procedures developed	Completed - Procedure developed