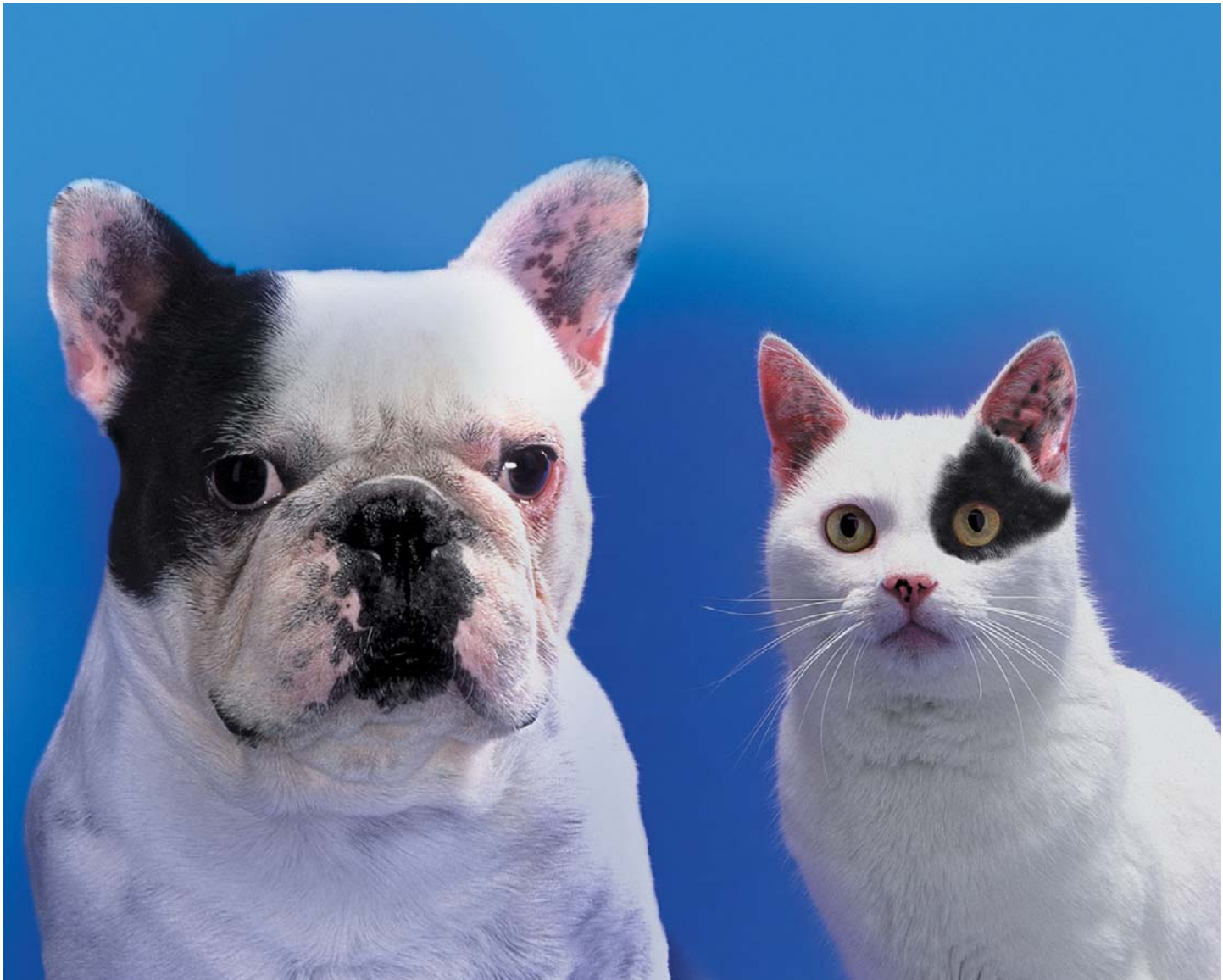




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Domestic Animal Management Plan 2013 – 2017

DRAFT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 places a statutory obligation on Local Government to have a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAM Plan)¹. The objective of this obligation is to increase the relative profile and importance of the domestic animal management function in the local government sector. An indication of the importance of domestic animal management issues in our community is reflected by the sheer number of requests for pet related services received by the Shire from the community each year; with approximately 5 - 10% of all Shire requests for service during 2012 – 2013 having been pet related.

The 2013 – 2017 DAM Plan is the Shire's second such plan and it recognises the importance of achieving a reasonable balance in the way the Shire manages issues affecting both pet owners and non pet owners.

During the period of the Shire's first DAM Plan, some of the key successes achieved included:

- much improved Animal Shelter impound, re-claim, re-home, and euthanising rates;
- tertiary training for Authorised Officers;
- enhancements to the Shire's network of leash free areas; and
- progress in the Shire's community education and enforcement processes.

Feedback from the community indicates the pet related issues of highest concern are:

- aggressive dog incidents;
- reducing the number of unclaimed and surrendered pets being euthanised;
- improving cat management services;
- reducing nuisances associated with barking dogs and dogs at the beach; and
- better access to leash free areas for all residents.

After reviewing community feedback and the Shire's progress during the first DAM Plan, the 2013 – 2017 DAM Plan gives further consideration and support to a number of initiatives, including:

- re-homing unwanted pets;
- minimising nuisance associated with dogs on beaches at inappropriate times;
- community education;
- enhancing cat management services;
- training for Authorised Officers to implant microchips;
- increasing the number of cats being registered;
- reviewing the process for resolving barking dog nuisances;
- improving access to the Shire's network of leash free areas;
- investigate implementation of mandatory de-sexing of pets; and
- implementing a program to identify and follow up back yard breeders that are not registered as domestic animal businesses.

¹ Refer to Appendix 1 for details of the Shire's DAM Plan obligations under Section 68A of the Domestic Animals Act 1994

INTRODUCTION

Research from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Veterinary Association indicates pet owners represent a majority of residents in our municipality. Australia has one of the highest rates of pet ownership in the world, with two out of three Australian households keeping pets. Dog ownership on the Peninsula is higher than the national average and the Shire has responded by introducing diverse opportunities and programs for dog owners.

Research conducted by the Australian Veterinary Association

- 12 million Australians are associated with pets.
- 63% of the 7.5 million households in Australia own pets.
- 91% of pet owners report feeling very close to their pet, reinforcing that pets are an integral member of the family unit.
- Pets were a normal part of childhood for more than 83% of Australians.
- Of the Australians who do not currently own a pet, 53% would like to do so in the future.
- 60% of pet owners were more likely to be actively engaged in community activities.
- Young girls that walked dogs exercised 29 minutes more on average than those who did not.
- Mothers that walked dogs were 70% more likely to meet exercise guidelines than otherwise.
- While only 45% of Australians achieve the sufficient amount of physical activity, 80% of dog owners manage to achieve the recommended levels.
- The pet care industry contributes around \$4.62 billion to the economy annually and employs 44,700 people across Australia.

The Shire supports responsible pet ownership through a range of awareness programs: the provision of leash free areas for dog owners, animal shelter facilities for the owners of 'lost' pets, and a diverse range of Shire Ranger services.

The Shire recognises the importance of pet ownership for providing people with an important positive emotional connection, as well as for the mental and physical health benefits associated with pet ownership, especially to the elderly and those who live alone. In many cases, pets provide an important means of contact for these people with other members of the community who also have, or have had, pets as part of their household. This benefit for people is identified in the Shire's Community Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Health Benefits of Australia's Pet owners/ Compared to Non Pet Owners

- people who own pets typically visit the doctor less often and use less medication
- pet owners, on average, have lower cholesterol and lower blood pressure
- pet owners recover more quickly from illness and surgery
- pet owners deal better with stressful situations
- pet owners are less likely to report feeling lonely

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Consideration of on going Community Consultation and Feedback

In 2008 more than 2,000 submissions from the community were received during the process of establishing a DAM plan for the Mornington Peninsula Shire. The community's submissions enabled Officers to identify key issues and priorities with regard to animal management on the Mornington Peninsula. The Shire's Customer Service, Environment Protection and Community Safety Administration, Community Animal Shelter, and Shire Ranger Teams have all received, and continue to receive, large volumes of community feedback regarding a wide range of domestic animal management issues.

Some of the *hot topics* during the last twelve months include:

- aggressive dog behaviour towards other peoples' dogs;
- dog barking noise nuisance;
- dogs on beaches at wrong times and/ or without being under effective control;
- requests to establish leash free areas for dog owners to be able to use for exercise with their pets within reasonable walking distance of most residential areas;
- requests for Shire Rangers to attend at peoples' homes to collect and impound cats which have been trapped in cages loaned by the Shire in response to cat nuisance complaints (the Shire currently requires people who trap nuisance cats to deliver them to the Community Animal Shelter in Mornington).

In the past, the Shire has also conducted several extensive consultative processes which were specific to matters such as the provision of leash free areas for dog owners and dog prohibited areas, as well as on leash requirements for dog owners, and compulsory de-sexing of pets. All of these various community consultative processes have very clearly identified domestic animal management as an important, and sometimes emotional, issue in our community².

The Mornington Peninsula Shire recognises that there are people who are not pet owners and who prefer not to interact with dogs and cats. It is recognised that the actions of an irresponsible minority of pet owners have the potential for causing a detrimental impact on amenity and the environment. Consequently, it is important to achieve a reasonable balance with regard to how the Shire manages issues affecting both pet owners and non pet owners, to ensure the Shire's animal management services reflect our community's expectations and values.

Statutory Obligation

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 provides a statutory obligation for every municipality in Victoria to produce a Domestic Animal Management Plan. The objective of this statutory obligation is to increase the relative profile and importance of the domestic animal management function in the local government sector. The Shire's initial DAM Plan was implemented in September 2008 and from 2013 the process of reviewing and implementing a new DAM Plan will occur every four years.

Community Health and Wellbeing

The DAM Plan aligns with Council's objectives to foster a safe place to live for all ages and abilities, and supports a socially inclusive and connected community that promotes health and wellbeing through a range of quality services.

² Refer to Appendix 2 for details of Community Consultation and feedback

Domestic Animal Management Plan

	Community Population ³	Estimated Dog Population (18 dogs/100 people)	Maximum Registered Dogs 2011 - 12	Estimated Cat Population (11 cats/100 people)	Maximum Registered Cats 2012 - 13
2011	149,156	26,848	25,968	16,407	5,690
2012	151,104	27,198	25,963	16,621	5,785

The Mornington Peninsula Shire recognises the positive effects of pet ownership and the importance of providing support and services to the approximately 65,500 households that own at least one domestic animal within our Shire. The Shire's support and services local pet owners also programs to involve volunteers, as well to provide free training for dog owners, plus community information and education incentives.

Local Developments and Trends

There have been a number of significant domestic animal management developments in the Mornington Peninsula Shire since first adopting a DAM Plan in 2008.

The number of dogs registered with the Shire in 2012-13, as a proportion of the estimated total number of dogs in the community, has grown by 12.1% since 2006-07. However, the number of cats registered with the Shire has declined by 8.3% during the same period.

Based on advice provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics regarding average pet ownership levels in Australia, it is estimated that 95.2% of dogs in our community are registered with the Shire. Based on the same advice, it is estimated that only 36% of cats in our community are registered with the Shire. This disappointing trend for cat registrations is a matter to be addressed during the life of this DAM Plan.

Nuisance complaints in the community (usually related to barking, wandering dogs and cats, and excess animals), have declined during the 2011-12 period by an average of 6.2%; which is a pleasing indication of success for our community education programs and in raising community awareness about a range of responsible pet ownership issues.

The Mornington Peninsula Community Dog Club was formed as a partnership between the Shire and a number of local dog enthusiasts, for the purpose of providing a free responsible dog ownership training course for people with untrained adult dogs (often problem dogs) and to provide ongoing fun activities to encourage dog owners to be more actively involved with their pets.

The Shire also responds to community requests to establish leash free areas for dog owners to use and enjoy while exercising together with their off leash pets. Each year, the Shire establishes leash free areas within reasonable distances of residential areas, throughout the Mornington Peninsula.

The purposes of leash free areas include cardio-vascular benefits for dog owners, social connection with other dog owners (especially for the elderly and those who live alone), socialisation of dogs, environmental enrichment for pets and corresponding minimisation of nuisance complaints.

³ Estimated Resident Population, Australian Bureau of Statistics

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The Shire Ranger Team conducts annual audits of Domestic Animal Businesses (Pet Shops, Boarding Kennels, Training Establishments and Breeding and Rearing Establishments) to ensure they comply with minimum standards established under the State Government's (mandatory) Codes of Practice. Shire Rangers also investigate complaints about Domestic Animal Businesses and, when cooperation is not forthcoming, appropriate enforcement action is initiated to achieve compliance.

The number of complaints about dog attacks and dog aggression received by the Shire during the 2011-12 period has declined by 6% while the number of enforcement actions for dog aggression initiated by Shire Rangers has increased by 24%. The reduction in numbers of dog aggression complaints is a pleasing indication of success for the Shire's mix of education and awareness programs, plus enforcement action when appropriate.

Dangerous Dog and Menacing Dog declarations are regularly used by the Shire Ranger Team, in conjunction with prosecutions, to ensure safety measures are implemented to manage known risks to our community. Whenever a dog is registered, which may potentially be a restricted breed (e.g. an American Pitbull Terrier), Shire Rangers conduct an inspection and assessment of the dog to verify whether or not it is a restricted breed dog.

The Shire Ranger Team are now all equipped with I-pads and microchip scanners which facilitate the identification of lost pets and their owners, whilst Shire Rangers are actually in the field. This often allows for these pets to be immediately reunited with their families without the need to impound them at the Community Animal Shelter in Mornington. Since the 2008 DAM Plan was initiated, the Community Animal Shelter Team have developed partnerships with a network of volunteer pet rescue groups, which has resulted in significant improvements to what were, in 2006-07, very good statistics.

Since implementation of the first DAM Plan in 2008, the number of dogs impounded has decreased by 19.4%. The number of dogs being released from the Community Animal Shelter back to their owners has increased from 68.5% of all dogs impounded during 2006-07, to 81.1% for 2012-13. The proportion of dogs being rehomed from the Community Animal Shelter to new owners has improved from 14.8% of all dogs impounded during 2006-07, to 16% of all dogs impounded during 2012-13. The proportion of dogs being euthanised has decreased from 16.7% of all dogs impounded during 2006-07, to only 2.8% of all dogs impounded during 2012-13.

During the 2006-07 to 2012-13 period, numbers of cats being impounded decreased by 25.6%. During the same period the proportion of cats being rehomed to new owners improved from 2% to 64.7% of all cats impounded. Numbers for cats being euthanised during this period declined from 74.5%, to 21% of all cats impounded.

The Shire is justifiably proud of significant successes represented by the reduction in numbers of dogs and cats being impounded; the on going increases in the numbers of unclaimed and surrendered dogs and cats being rehomed; and significant reductions in the number of dogs and cats being euthanised. Community feedback indicates a general awareness of the Shire's pet related services and a good level of use of these services.

SHIRE PROFILE AND DEMOGRAPHIC

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is a 723 square kilometre boot shaped promontory separating two contrasting bays; Port Phillip and Western Port (see Map 1). The Shire is comprised of productive rural areas, scenic landscapes, an extensive coastline, as well as business and residential areas in over 40 townships.

The Peninsula, as it is affectionately known to local residents, is located just over an hour drive south-east of the city of Melbourne; it contains a diversity of scenic landscapes and is almost surrounded by the sea, with coastal boundaries of over 190 kilometres (comprising approximately 10 per cent of Victoria's coastline).

The increasing population of the Mornington Peninsula Shire encompasses a number of cultures, age groups and economic levels. This population diversity makes for broad demographic requirements to which Council policies and strategies must be tailored.

The forecast permanent population for the Shire in 2013 is 152,981⁴. The current rate of population growth is expected to be at approximately 1.21% per annum, with the Mornington Peninsula Shire population projected to have increased to 168,654 by 2021.

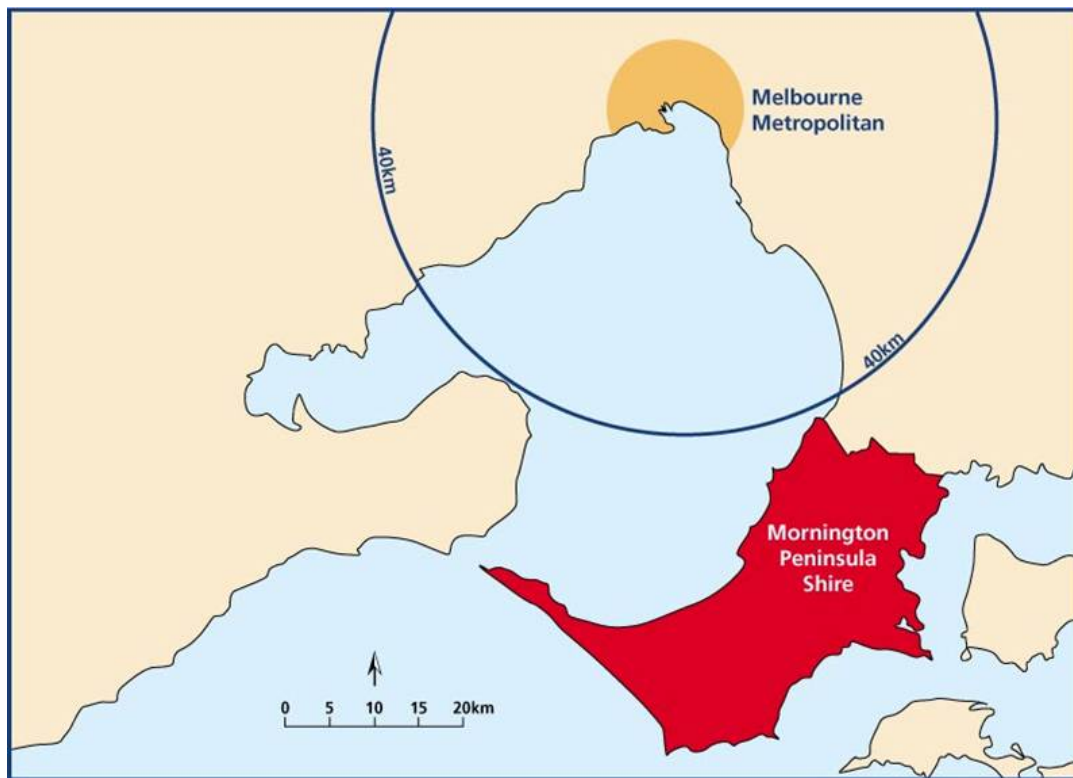
The Mornington Peninsula Tourism Holiday Home Research and Economic Impact Assessment, prepared by Urban Enterprise, and adjusted for PAVE, reports that 29% of dwellings within the Shire are holiday homes, and the population rises to more than 220,000 during the peak summer tourism period. This research also indicates daytrip visitors for the Mornington Peninsula to be 3.6 million, annually.



⁴ Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0). Compiled and presented in profile by *Forecast.id the population experts* (registered trademark of .id consulting Pty Ltd)

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Map 1 – Location of Mornington Peninsula Shire



Estimated Resident Population (ERP)

Mornington Peninsula Shire			
Year (ending June 30)	Number	Change in number	Change in percent
2001	132,387	--	--
2002	135,090	+2,703	+2.04
2003	136,824	+1,734	+1.28
2004	137,820	+996	+0.73
2005	139,135	+1,315	+0.95
2006	140,734	+1,599	+1.15
2007	142,716	+1,982	+1.41
2008	145,113	+2,397	+1.68
2009	147,504	+2,391	+1.65
2010	148,757	+1,253	+0.85
2011	149,156	+399	+0.27

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0). Compiled and presented in profile by *Forecast.id the population experts* (registered trademark of .id consulting Pty Ltd)

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Some other key points from the 2011 ABS Census data about population diversity and people in Mornington Peninsula Shire include:

- 2,193 people in Mornington Peninsula Shire either ride their bike or walk to work.
- In 2011 42,476 in Mornington Peninsula Shire drive their car to work as opposed to 37,645 people in Greater Melbourne.
- The top four countries of birth are Australia (76.3%) United Kingdom (9.5%), New Zealand (1.4%) and Italy (0.7%).
- 6% of people in Mornington Peninsula Shire come from countries where English is not the first language.
- The median age of residents is 43 years as opposed to 36 years in Greater Melbourne.
- 63,628 people living in Mornington Peninsula Shire are employed, of which 57% are working full time and 40% part time.
- 28% of households are made up of couples with children compared with 34% in Greater Melbourne.
- 28.6% of residents are aged 60 or over.



CURRENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES – SERVICE LEVELS

Mornington Peninsula Shire currently has the following generic animal management programs and services:

- response to customer service request/complaints relating to dog attacks, barking dogs, wandering dogs, nuisance cats etc;
- priority response to dog attacks and aggressive animals within 30 minutes;
- providing advice and education to residents on animal management issues;
- promoting responsible pet ownership through support for a community dog club; presentations to community groups; articles in community papers; promotional billboards; provision of 'Pooch Pouches'; and distribution of educational material;
- operation of a community animal shelter/municipal pound;
- community engagement through a community animal shelter volunteer program
- re-homing program for unclaimed and surrendered pets;
- trapping and collection of stray and unwanted dogs, and some cats;
- prosecution of offences under the Domestic Animals Act and Regulations, as well as related Local Laws;
- registration and inspection of pet shops, dog trainers, pet boarding facilities and pet breeding and rearing establishments;
- maintenance of a pet registration register;
- inspections and declarations of Restricted Breed Dogs, Dangerous Dogs, and Menacing Dogs;
- provision of an after hours emergency service;
- proactive patrols of parks, reserves, and foreshores where the Shire is land manager, to ensure dogs are under effective control by their owners;
- identification and management of leash free areas, for dog owners to exercise with their pets;
- ensuring Council fulfils its legislative duties and functions;
- training and development of authorised officers; and
- periodic review of Council Orders made under the Act.



SECTION 1 - TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

CONTEXT

The Mornington Peninsula Shire has a strong commitment to training. Training is delivered at a variety of levels to meet the needs of individuals as well as the organisation.

There are two teams who are responsible for animal management related services; these are the Shire Ranger Team and the Community Animal Shelter Team.

Given the diverse roles and activities undertaken by these teams, it is critical that all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work, and that they have the necessary legislative authorisations and delegations.

CURRENT AND PLANNED TRAINING

There are a number of levels at which training is carried out across both the Shire Ranger Team and the Community Animal Shelter Team, which is based on the current level of skills and responsibilities of each Officer. Annual performance reviews provide opportunities to identify skill gaps and potential opportunities for further development of individual Officers. In addition, Mornington Peninsula Shire is supportive of employees undertaking additional tertiary education which can be funded, on application.

There is also a regular and varied corporate training program for all staff which occurs annually to ensure a range of common corporate skills are developed and maintained.

Shire Ranger Team

The Shire Ranger Team is a multi skilled team, who are responsible for undertaking duties across a broad spectrum of services, not limited to animal management roles.

Given the diverse land use on the Mornington Peninsula, Shire Rangers require a broad set of skills. Accordingly, the training for Shire Rangers needs to address this variety.

Community Animal Shelter Team

The Shire's Community Animal Shelter Team is comprised of one full time Animal Shelter Coordinator and a mix of permanent part time and casual staff, which equates to two full time staff working seven days each week, as well as a dedicated group of community volunteers. The Special Projects Team Leader has responsibility for the Community Animal Shelter and staff and volunteers.

The tradition of volunteering is strong on the Mornington Peninsula and assisting at the Community Animal Shelter not only improves the welfare of animals but also provides volunteers with the opportunity to share their time and expertise with like minded people.

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<u>CURRENT TRAINING</u>		
Induction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate • Local 	Corporate Policies Team Guidelines Standard Procedures	
Systems Training	Corporate Computer Systems (relevant to role)	
Skills Training	Internal Training	External Training
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigning of mentors • On job training / experience • Workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement & Interview taking • Associated Training Consultants (ATC) Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Investigators Course ○ Prosecutors Course • Microchip Implanting Training • Animal Handling Training in both Dogs/Cats and Larger Animals; • Dog Aggression • Customer Service Training including Dealing with Difficult People and Conflict Management • Letter writing • Animal first aid • Carry out pound procedures • Identify and respond to animal behaviour • Environmental Enrichment for impounded cats and dogs
Seminars & Industry Days		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPI and MAV Training and Information Days • Animal Management Conference
Sponsored Tertiary Education		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cert IV & Diploma Courses in Animal Control and Regulation • Cert IV in Government • Cert IV & Adv Diploma in Justice
Specialised Training		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHS Delegate Training

Domestic Animal Management Plan

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1: To ensure all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and expertise to carry out their duties and functions of Council

Activity	Responsible Officer	When	Evaluation
Conduct performance reviews	Team Leader	As required for new staff annually	Ongoing
Maintain a training register for individual officers, identifying proposed and completed training	Team Leader	Annually	Ongoing
Seek funding for training and implement training as identified as part of performance reviews	Team Leader	Annually	Ongoing
Ensure all officers have access to the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DEPI Animal Management Officer internet resource site - Victorian Declared Dog Register 	Senior Shire Ranger	July 2013	All officers have access to site

Objective 2: Train staff to be able to implant microchips

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake microchip implantation courses as identified	As staff acquire prerequisite TAFE qualifications	Ability to comply with legislation



SECTION 2 - REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

CURRENT SITUATION

Current 2013 registration data

	Registered Pet Population	De-sexed	Microchipped	Estimated Pet Population ⁵
Dogs	25,880	21,061	23,148	27,198
Cats	5,827	5,688	4,702	16,621

Comparison with 2008 registration data

	Registered Pet Population	Estimated Pet Population ⁶
Dogs	23,088	25,560
Cats	6,355	15,620

Current impound data (1 January to 28 May 2013)

	Impounded	Registered	Unregistered	Microchipped	Not Microchipped
Dogs	455	168	287	329	126
Cats	291	9	282	23	268

Since implementation of the first DAM Plan in 2008 (which used 2006 – 07 Stats), the number of dogs registered with the Mornington Peninsula Shire increased from 23,088 to 25,880 in 2013; a growth of 12.1%. However, while the overall percentage of dogs in the community being registered with the Shire is steadily increasing, unregistered dogs are significantly over-represented amongst the pets which are being impounded at the Community Animal Shelter. Community Animal Shelter data for the first five months of 2013, indicates that 63.1% of dogs impounded are unregistered and 27.7% are not microchipped.

The estimated total cat population for the Mornington Peninsula in 2008 was 15,620, which has increased to an estimated total cat population of 16,621 in 2013. While the estimated total cat population in our community has risen by 6.4% during the period from 2008 to 2013, the number of cats registered with the Shire in 2008 has reduced from 6,355 to 5,827 in 2013; a decline of 8.3%. In real terms this indicates a significant change with more cat owners failing to comply with legislation and choosing not to register their pets. The situation with regard to cats being registered and microchipped when they are taken into care at the Community Animal Shelter is also disappointing. Community Animal Shelter data for the first five months of 2013, indicates that 96.9% of cats impounded are unregistered and that 92.1% are not microchipped.

⁵ Data based on 2012 estimated population sourced ABS & DPI modelling for estimated animal population

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Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Orders

- Council Order 1997 – Cat Controls (cats to be confined to owner's premises 24 hours)
- Council Order 2007 – Leash free Areas/Dogs Prohibited Areas
- Council Order 2009 – Control of Dogs in Public Places (on leash/off leash)

Local Laws

- Local Law – General Provision 2012
 - o 43. Keeping of Animals
 - Restrictions on numbers of animals in residential areas.
 - o 44. Responsible Breeding of Dogs and Cats
 - Restrictions on selling or giving away dogs that have not been de-sexed
 - Requirement to de-sex cats.

Policies & Procedures

- Handling of aggressive dogs
- Guidelines for the issuing of penalty notices
- Manual handling procedures
- Compliance and Enforcement Protocol 2011

Current Education/Promotion Activities

There are a number of activities occurring annually which create opportunities to not only outline the legislative requirements placed on pet owners but to also allow the positive messaging and explanation of the benefits of responsible pet ownership, specifically registering and microchipping pets.

The Shire has a number of fact files as well as a range of brochures developed by the Shire and by the Department of Environment and Primary Industry, which provide specific information for pet owners.



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Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Pet & Pony Expo	Biennially	Messaging/Information/Micro chip implantation
Community Animal Shelter Visits by Community	As requested	Messaging/Information
School Visits by Shire Rangers	As requested	Messaging/Information
Careers Expo	Annually	Messaging/Information
Media Articles	Ongoing	Messaging through use of good news stories/Information
Community Signage	Permanent/Temporary	Messaging
Community Dog Club	Ongoing	Messaging
Mornington Peninsula Shire on-hold phone-messaging	Ongoing	Messaging
Lost & Found Register hosted on Shire Website	Ongoing	Information
Shire Website – pet information	Ongoing	Messaging/Information
Brochure displays at Veterinary Clinics, Libraries & Customer Service Offices	Ongoing	Messaging/Information
Provision of 'Pooch Pouches' for registered dog owners, to assist people to remove and dispose of dog 'poo'	Ongoing	Messaging/Information

In addition to these activities, the Shire has an agency agreement with RSPCA (Pearcedale) to enable registration of pets being sold which will be kept by people resident in the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Our current Compliance Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Failure to register campaigns - letter writing/door knock program	On going	Specific targeting of unregistered pets through information gathering and sales information
Achieve registration through enforcement action	Ongoing	Where owner fails to register pet, an escalation of enforcement action occurs to achieve registration
Monitoring for sale through classified advertising and conducting follow on sales notifications.	Ongoing	Identification of breeders through monitoring of classified advertising



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Summary

The ratio of unregistered pets to registered pets entering the Community Animal Shelter remains high. This is not unexpected, as many registered and microchipped pets are returned home by Shire Rangers and reunited with their owners, where appropriate.

While it may not be typical of the generally responsible pet owners within the wider Mornington Peninsula community, a snapshot from the Community Animal Shelter during February 2013 gives an indication of the important role this facility plays in encouraging the registration and identification of dogs and cats in this Shire. Of the 87 dogs cared for at the animal shelter during February, 56 were not registered. This means 64% of the dogs were unregistered at the time of impounding. This compares unfavourably with the estimated non registration rate of 4.8% of dogs in the wider community of the Mornington Peninsula. Of the 56 cats cared for at the Community Animal Shelter, 54 cats were not registered. This means 96% of the cats were unregistered at the time of impounding. Fifty-one of these cats were also not microchipped, meaning 91% of cats were not permanently identified. This compares unfavourably with the estimated non registration rate of 64.9% of cats in the wider community of the Mornington Peninsula and it is certainly desirable that the overall cat registration situation improves significantly in the future.

The Shire must ensure that all dogs and cats are microchipped and registered and cats must also be de-sexed as part of the Community Animal Shelter release process (and as part of the process for rehoming unclaimed and surrendered pets to new owners). The Shire's Community Animal Shelter staff can facilitate the microchipping and de-sexing requirements for pet registration at the time of release to their owners.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire views pet registration and identification as a corner stone of its domestic animal management activities; accordingly a number of activities undertaken by the Shire Ranger Team and the Community Animal Shelter Team reinforce these requirements, along with promoting the benefits of pet registration and microchip implantation.

Given the size of the Mornington Peninsula and its diverse community, the methods and messaging used for increasing pet registration numbers needs to be varied and diverse to reach as many pet owners as possible. The Shire's goals are to improve data collection and analysis, to ensure that positive messaging, proactive programs, and enforcement activities are specific and focused to achieve increased rates of pet registration.



Domestic Animal Management Plan

Local Experiences/Case Studies

The importance of microchipping for permanent identification of pets in our community was clearly demonstrated in a very pleasing case that occurred at the Community Animal Shelter during January 2012. Shire Rangers impounded a lost dog found wandering in Hastings and took it into the Shire's care. The dog was microchipped and so Community Animal Shelter staff contacted the owner to arrange for the dog to be reunited with his human family. It was then discovered the dog had been stolen from the owner, who lives in Warburton, about six months previously. The dog's owner had given up all hope of ever seeing his 'best little mate' again. The dog owner then drove down to Mornington from Warburton, to collect the 'prodigal dog'. Both the owners and the dog were 'over the moon' when reunited by the Shire's Community Animal Shelter staff ... proof positive that microchipping really does pay great dividends.

Another demonstration of the value of microchipping occurred during April 2012, when an elderly Jack Russell Terrier was reunited with his owner, even though the little dog had a microchip from Germany. Community Animal Shelter staff did a lot of investigating, searching on the German microchip website and looking back through photo's of dogs that have been 'guests' at the Community Animal Shelter in the past, as they thought this dog may have been in the care of the Shire on a previous occasion. A local German speaker assisted the animal shelter staff to find the dog's microchip number and the owner's name on the German website. Once staff had a name they were able to search the Shire's database and found the owner! The little Jack Russell from Deutschland was then very quickly reunited with his family.

Other remarkable examples of the value of microchipping pets occurred during May 2012. One of these relates to a brindle Staffordshire Bull Terrier which came into the Shire's care with a collar and looking pretty well fed. Luckily the dog was microchipped. The staff at the Shire's Community Animal Shelter found contact numbers for the microchipped owner and initiated efforts to contact him. After a few days, a man contacted the Shire and said a message had been left on his sister's answering machine that the Shire had his dog. He said he was ringing to ask if it was a joke. He then explained he had adopted the dog from the Geelong animal shelter in early November 2011 and had gone shopping with the dog in late November, leaving the dog tied up outside a shop. When he came out two minutes later his dog was gone, and he had not seen the dog from that day onwards. He told Community Animal Shelter staff he had been everywhere looking for the dog, putting up posters, searching his neighbourhood and beyond. The Community Animal Shelter Team were delighted to be able to reunite him with his long lost pet. Also during May 2012, a beautiful grey Chinchilla cat came into the Shire's care. Once again, microchip records helped staff at the Community Animal Shelter to identify the rightful owner. When contacted, the owner advised their cat had been missing for seven years – it strayed off their property just after it had been registered, microchipped and de-sexed. The owner was amazed, and was very happy to be reunited with their pet.

An annual event that usually causes significant challenges for Shire Rangers and the Community Animal Shelter Team is New Year's Eve and the associated illegal fireworks which are experienced throughout the Mornington Peninsula at this time. This annual event usually results in large numbers of terrified pets escaping from their homes and ending up in the care of the Shire. The 2012 – 13 New Year's Eve/ Day was a difficult time for Shire staff and many distressed pet owners within the Mornington Peninsula. Nonetheless Shire Rangers, working in close cooperation with the Community Animal Shelter Team, managed to get most lost pets back to their homes. Only six dogs ended up being impounded and in the care of the Shire this significant achievement was made possible because nearly all of the pets involved were microchipped and registered.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1: Increase number of pet registrations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore establishing additional agreements with other agencies who sell or rehome dogs and cats, to register on behalf of Council.	2014	Collect data to demonstrate increase in pet registrations.
Explore possibility of free initial registration for dogs and cats that are de-sexed and microchipped and under the age of six months.	2014	Implementation of free initial pet-registrations.
Explore use of social media to promote benefits of pet registration.	2014	Increase in number of pet registrations.
Explore use of on-line pet registration process.	2014	Increase in number of pet registrations.
Develop procedures to better follow up on sale of pet notifications.	2014	Increase in number of pet registrations.
Use of Variable Messaging Board.	2013	Key Messaging - pet registration.
Explore possibility of having community volunteers place fliers, with photographs etc, of cats being cared for by the Shire, on public notice boards in local areas where the cats were found.	2014	Increase in number of cats being released to owners, and increase in pet registrations at time of release.

Objective 2: Improve registered pet ownership data

Activity	When	Evaluation
Audit pet registration data and source and include E-mail and mobile phone data on registration application to enable alternative messaging.	2014	Improved data – improved ability to contact and message pet owners

Objective 3: Improve data collection

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review current corporate systems (Merit/CI) to identify opportunities to improve data collection for surveys and Key Performance Indicators.	2014	Improved data – greater ability to respond to surveys and Key Performance Indicators.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

SECTION 3 – NUISANCE COMPLAINTS

CURRENT SITUATION

Current Data

	2011	2012
Number of barking dog complaints	490	449
Number of dog at large complaints	3,253	2,976
Number of cats at large / cages hired	243 cat cages hired 570 cat at large – contained 460 cat at large - not contained	267 cat cages hired 603 cat at large – contained 494 cat at large - not contained
Number of excess animal complaints.	138	150
Number of dog at large caution infringement notices	766	669
Number of dog at large penalty infringement notices	456	410
Number of cat at large caution infringement notices	49	43
Number of cat at large penalty infringement notices	26	19
Number of prosecutions for dog at large	39	46
Number of requests for patrols regarding nuisance dogs on beaches	Data not collected prior to Dec 2012	27



Domestic Animal Management Plan

Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Orders

- Council Order 1997 – Cat Controls (cats to be confined to owners' premises 24 hours)
- Council Order 2007 – Leash free Areas/Dogs Prohibited Areas
- Council Order 2009 – Control of Dogs in Public Places (on-leash/ off-leash)

Local Laws

- Local Law – General Provision 2012
 - o 43. Keeping of Animals
 - Restrictions on numbers of animals in residential areas.
 - o 44. Responsible Breeding of Dogs and Cats
 - Restrictions on selling or giving away dogs that have not been de-sexed
 - Requirement to de-sex cats.
 - o 45. Keeping Animals
 - Requirements that deal with amenity impacts
 - o 46. Animal Excrement
 - Requirements associated with collection of animal excrement

Foreshore Regulations

- Foreshore Regulations take their power from the Crown Lands (Reserves) Act 1978, and provide for establishing time restrictions on access for dog owners to exercise with pets at those foreshores where Mornington Peninsula Shire is committee of management

Policies & Procedures

- Handling of aggressive dogs
- Guidelines for the issuing of penalty notices.
- Manual handling procedures
- Investigation procedure for barking dogs
- Compliance and Enforcement Protocol 2011

Current Education/Promotion/Support Activities

There are a number of annual programs undertaken by the Shire which create opportunities to undertake positive messaging about responsible pet ownership; including a range of issues such as exercising effective control of pets, socialisation of dogs and animal welfare. All of which contribute to the overall reduction in nuisance behaviour by pets in our community.

The Shire has produced a number of fact files, as well as a range of brochures developed by the Shire and by the Department of Environment and Primary Industry, which provide specific information for pet owners.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Pet & Pony Expo	Biennially	Messaging/Information/Microchip implantation
Visits to Community Animal Shelter	As requested	Messaging/Information
School Visits by Shire Rangers	As requested	Messaging/Information
Careers Expo	Annually	Messaging/Information
Media Articles	As need identified	Messaging through use of good news stories/Information
Community Signage	Permanent/Temporary	Messaging
Community Dog Club	Ongoing	Messaging
Mornington Peninsula Shire on hold phone messaging	Ongoing	Messaging
Lost & Found Register hosted on Shire Website	Ongoing	Information
Shire Website	Ongoing	Messaging/Information
Brochure display at Veterinary Clinics, Libraries & Customer Service Offices	Ongoing	Messaging/Information
Provision of 'Pooch Pouches'	Ongoing	Messaging
Provision of off leash dog exercise areas	Ongoing	Positive stimulation and socialisation of dogs contributes to minimization of nuisance and aggressive behaviour

Community feedback identified a number of concerns related to people exercising with dogs at the Shire's off leash parks.



Domestic Animal Management Plan

Current Compliance Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Attend foreshores and leash free parks to promote appropriate behaviour by dog owners	Ongoing	Information/presence/messaging
Erection of permanent and temporary signage targeted to specific areas and issues	Ongoing	More informed community
Investigate breaches of Domestic Animals Act & Local Law, and take appropriate compliance action	Ongoing	Achieve behavioural change of pet owners
Provision of cat and dog traps for the trapping of dogs and cats at large	On going	Achieve behavioural change of pet owners
Respond to planning referrals from Statutory Planning Unit in relation to animal-related planning applications	Ongoing	Reduce potential for nuisance which may result from the approval of a planning permit for the use or development of any animal related activity.
Provision of a limited after hours service which provides for Shire Rangers to respond to specific issues where public safety is at risk	Ongoing	Reduced risk to community

Summary

Changing Environment

With an ever increasing permanent population within the Mornington Peninsula and a shift in development to higher density living, combined with significant pet ownership levels in our community, nuisance issues associated with animals become more apparent.

With an ever increasing number of residents and visitors accessing public open space, the Shire receives a large number of requests for assistance from the community regarding a wide range of pet related concerns. These concerns range from nuisance barking to roaming dogs, as well as incidents occurring at leash free areas where dog owners go to exercise with their pets and at beaches.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Responding to Change

Recognising these challenges, the Mornington Peninsula Shire has introduced a number of Orders, made under The Act, as well as implementing the Shire's Local Law, which assists in raising awareness and educating the community in regard to their responsibilities and how they and their pets may impact on others. These legislative controls include confinement and leash Orders, through to property management and animal ownership restrictions. These provisions have been implemented to provide officers with tools to protect amenity in our community.

In addition, the Mornington Peninsula Shire has a number of proactive programs as well as a range of messaging which combines to educate the community in regard to their obligations as responsible pet owners.

Positive messaging focuses on the benefits of de-sexing pets and on their socialisation with other animals, as well as the desirability of all members of the community being tolerant and responsible when sharing resources and infrastructure in public open space.

The Mornington Peninsula Community Dog Club was formed as a partnership between the Shire and a number of local dog enthusiasts, for the purpose of providing a free responsible dog ownership training course for people with untrained adult dogs (often problem dogs), and to provide ongoing fun activities to encourage dog owners to be more actively involved with their pets. The Shire's Responsible Dog Ownership programme, conducted by the Mornington Peninsula Community Dog Club with the assistance and support from Council officers, is available at no cost to dog owners residing in all parts of the Mornington Peninsula Shire, and is attended by people and their dogs from many of our Peninsula townships and villages. These continuing eight week programs provide basic dog obedience training and socialisation, introduction to fun activities for dogs and their owners, basic pet health care information (provided by a local Vet), and information on dog related legislation (provided by Shire Rangers). This volunteer program is an integral part of the Shire's effort to highlight the importance of training and exercise as key issues for responsible pet ownership within the community.

The Shire supports the provision of these activities as such programs help to reduce 'nuisance' issues associated with bored and non socialised pets in our community, as well as providing activities with positive cardiovascular benefits for dog owners and their dogs. The club is now celebrating its 10th birthday and the Shire continues to support this club in its good work.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire conducts ongoing reviews to identify the source of nuisance issues, and continues to look for opportunities to obtain new resources, or to put in place other proactive programs, to reduce the number of nuisance based concerns raised by the community.



Domestic Animal Management Plan

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1: Improve data collection

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review current corporate systems (Merit/CI) to identify opportunities to improve data collection for surveys and Key Performance Indicators.	2014	Improved data

Objective 2: Notification of registered animal owners

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore opportunities for electronic notification of all registered pet owners of impending events, including fireworks and storm activity.	2014	Reduction in the number of registered pets at large following fire work and storm events
Use of Variable Messaging Board.	2013	Key Messaging

Objective 3: Improved outcomes and investigation time frames for barking dog complaints

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review current procedures relating to barking dogs.	2013	Reduction of duplicate complaints relating to barking dogs
Identify training to improve knowledge of Shire Rangers relating to animal behaviour.	2013	Better informed Shire Rangers

Objective 4: Trapped Cats Collection and Transport Service

Activity	When	Evaluation
Investigate and prepare budget bid to enable Shire Rangers to provide a collection service when impounding cats, to provide equity for cat owners and better customer service.	2014	Budget approval

Objective 5: respond to community requests to establish leash free areas within reasonable walking distance of residential areas in all parts of the Mornington Peninsula

Activity	When	Evaluation
Investigate and prepare budget bid for establishing leash free areas in those areas of the Shire where residents do not have reasonable access to these facilities.	Ongoing	Budget approval

SECTION 4 - DOG ATTACKS & DOG CONFINEMENT

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

	2011	2012
Number of dog at large requests	3253	2976
Number of dogs Impounded	1192	1076
Number of dog attack / rush requests	414	389
Number of enforcement actions relating to Section 29 offences	37	46

Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Orders

- Council Order 1997 – Cat Controls (cats to be confined to owners' premises 24 hours)
- Council Order 2007 – Leash free Areas/Dogs Prohibited Areas
- Council Order 2009 – Control of Dogs in Public Places (on leash/ off leash)

Local Laws

- Local Law – General Provision 2012
 - o 43. Keeping of Animals
 - Restrictions on numbers of animals in residential areas.
 - o 44. Responsible Breeding of Dogs and Cats
 - Restrictions on selling or giving away dogs that have not been de-sexed
 - Requirement to de-sex cats.
 - o 45. Keeping Animals
 - Requirements that deal with amenity impacts
 - o 46. Animal Excrement
 - Requirements associated with collection of animal excrement
- Time restrictions on access to, and use of, foreshores for exercise by dog owners where Mornington Peninsula Shire is Committee of Management

Policies & Procedures

- Compliance and Enforcement Protocol 2011

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Current Education/Promotion Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Promotion of Responsible Pet Ownership through messaging via <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pet & Pony Expo - Visits to Community Animal Shelter - School Visits by Shire Rangers - Careers Expo - Media Articles / Community Signage - Community Dog Club - Brochure display at Veterinary Clinics, Libraries & Customer Service Offices - Shire Website 	Biennially As requested As requested Annually As need identified Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	Improved knowledge of animal owners responsibilities and benefits of the following key messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - De-sexing - Effective confinement - Socialisation of animals - Obedience training
Text Messaging Animal Owners – regarding events where fire works will occur.	Ongoing	To decrease incident of dog escape & potential incidents of attack.
Provide advice and equipment to internal departments in relation to entering of properties where dogs will be present.	Ongoing	To decrease incident of dog attack on Mornington Peninsula Shire staff.

Current Compliance Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Complaint investigation	Priority response	Thorough and rapid investigation
Seizure of identified dog (where appropriate)	Priority response (use of warrants as required)	Removal of threat/risk to community during investigation
Enforcement proceedings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Court - Declaration - Destruction 	Priority response (aim to issue summons within four week period from date of offence)	Treatment of threat / risk to community in shortest time possible.
Targeted patrols – proactive/reactive	As required	Random presence promoting compliance
After Hours response regarding aggressive dog complaints/offences under Section 29 of The Act	Priority response	Thorough and rapid investigation

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Summary

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is committed to reducing the impact and injuries associated with dog attacks in our community. We do this by means of a range of proactive messaging and education, thorough investigation and firm, but fair, enforcement action against offending dog owners, plus the use of Dangerous Dog and Menacing Dog declarations, and other measures, to reduce the incidence of dog attack in our community.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire's aim is to address incidents of dog attack and other aggressive dog behaviour as quickly and efficiently as possible. The intent is to utilise the 'tools' provided within the Domestic Animals Act to address and remove on going risks to the community.

The Shire ensures it is a high priority for all Shire Rangers to have the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively carry out the tasks associated with the investigation of dog attacks and aggressive dog incidents, as well as the safe handling of aggressive dogs.

It is a priority for Shire Rangers to quickly investigate reported incidents of aggression and, where appropriate, to have such matters presented before the courts within a short timeframe. This provides some confidence for the victim, as well as treating the alleged offender with respect and fairness.

Examples of Notable Local Cases

Case one

3 November 2011, at about 11.50am the Shire received a complaint that two Staffordshire Bull Terrier dogs were wandering at large. A Shire Ranger attended and impounded both dogs, which were not registered at the time.

11 April 2012, at about 9.30am the Shire received another complaint that these same dogs were again at large, this time on the Sorrento foreshore. A Shire Ranger attended and impounded both dogs. The following day the dog owner attended at the Shire's Community Animal Shelter in Mornington to collect his dogs. Later the same day, **12 April 2012**, some hours after the owner had collected the dogs from the animal shelter, the Shire received another complaint that both dogs were again at large. A Shire Ranger attended and once more impounded both dogs. The registration for these dogs had expired.

11 May 2012, at about 1.30pm the Shire received a complaint that one of these Staffordshire Bull Terriers was at large. A Shire Ranger attended and impounded the dog.

19 May 2012, at about 3.20pm the Shire received a complaint that one of these Staffordshire Bull Terriers was again at large. A Shire Ranger attended and impounded the dog.

8 July 2012, at about 8.10am the Shire received a complaint from a woman who had been walking with a friend and her two Maltese Terrier dogs along a beach. The same two Staffordshire Bull Terriers were once more at large and roaming on the same stretch of beach. The two Staffordshire Bull Terriers were involved in a dog attack. The incident caused significant fear and trauma to the two women. The owner of the two Staffordshire Terriers was unable to provide an explanation for the dogs' behaviour. The Shire prosecuted the owner of the two Staffordshire Terriers. A fine of \$2,200 plus costs totalling \$7,264.40 were awarded against the owner. This case clearly shows the link between dogs left to roam linked to dog attacks and it is why the Shire takes dog at large issues seriously.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Case 2

Saturday 2 June 2012, at about 12.45pm, a 46 year old male was riding his bicycle along a rural road in the southern Peninsula when he noticed a Pointer type dog running down a long driveway towards the road. He watched the dog run out of the open driveway and onto the roadway in front of him, and he had to brake heavily in an attempt to avoid hitting the dog. Nonetheless, the dog collided with the victim throwing him from his bicycle and causing him to fall heavily onto the roadway. He was treated and assessed at Frankston Hospital before being transported to the Alfred Hospital Trauma Emergency Ward that evening. He was discharged after six days of treatment at the Alfred Hospital.

The victim had a prolonged period off work. The value of the bicycle and other riding equipment damaged and destroyed by the collision was approx \$12,500. In this case the Court awarded penalties to both owners of the dog totalling \$1,600, plus costs totalling \$214. This matter is now the subject of a County Court civil proceeding against the owners of the dog. Again this case highlights the harm dogs at large can do.

Minimising risk to staff

The Shire also recognises the Community Animal Shelter Team are exposed to ongoing risk of dog attack, specifically as a result of those aggressive dogs seized and impounded by Shire Rangers during the course of their investigations. Accordingly, operational procedures and directions, as well as safety equipment have been put in place at the Community Animal Shelter to minimise the risk of dog attack on staff. Community Animal Shelter staff have also undertaken Identify and Respond to Animal Behaviour training to minimise the risk of dog attack.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1: Reduce incident and raise awareness of dog attack

Activity	When	Evaluation
Use social media to highlight key messages.	2014	Reduction in incidents of dog aggression

Objective 2: Achieve consistency with other enforcement agencies in relation to enforcement of dog attack offences

Activity	When	Evaluation
Enter into discussions with Victoria Police locally in relation to the investigation and actions associated with offences under Section 29 of The Act	2014	Greater consistency in outcomes

Objective 3: Ensure all staff has skills and knowledge to investigate incidents of dog attack

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review skill base of all Shire Rangers and identify gaps.	2013	Implementation of targeted training program
Coordinate relevant training for all staff involved in the administration of the Domestic Animals Act in relation to dog aggression, via internal and external training.	2014	Improved safety and outcomes.

Objective 4: Improved reporting and analysis in relation to risk management

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review corporate systems and identify opportunities for improved reporting	2014	Improved data analysis



Domestic Animal Management Plan

The network of off leash parks (also known as Leash Free Areas) being established throughout the Shire for use by dog owners to exercise with their pets, has obvious health benefits for the dog owners, as well as dog nuisance minimisation benefits for the wider community.

Design for new advisory signs for temporary/ rotating display at the Shire's network of off leash parks.



SECTION 5 - DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

CURRENT SITUATION

Our current data

The Mornington Peninsula Shire utilise the declarations as part of normal enforcement action.

Type	Number at 2013
Restricted Breed Dogs	6
Declared Dangerous Dogs (Designated)	17 (4)
Declared Menacing Dogs	16

Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Orders

- Council Order 1997 – Cat Controls (cats to be confined to owners' premises 24 hours)
- Council Order 2007 – Leash free Areas/Dogs Prohibited Areas
- Council Order 2009 – Control of Dogs in Public Places (on leash/off leash)

Local Laws

- Local Law – General Provision 2012
 - o 43. Keeping of Animals
 - Restrictions on numbers of animals in residential areas.
 - o 44. Responsible Breeding of Dogs and Cats
 - Restrictions on selling or giving away dogs that have not been de-sexed
 - Requirement to de-sex cats.
 - o 45. Keeping Animals
 - Requirements that deal with amenity impacts
 - o 46. Animal Excrement
 - Requirements associated with collection of animal excrement

Policies & Procedures

- Immediate after hours response to dogs reported to be of a restricted breed.
- Immediate after hours response to declared dogs at large or acting aggressively.
- Procedure for inspection and assessment of restricted breeds.
- Compliance and Enforcement Protocol 2011.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Current Education/Promotion Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Messaging	Ongoing	Improve community knowledge
Provision of literature and pamphlets regarding keeping of dangerous dogs	Ongoing	Improve knowledge of owners of declared dogs
Promotion of Dangerous Dog Hotline	Ongoing	Messaging
Media releases	As required	Messaging

Current Compliance Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Annual inspection program	Annually	Ensure compliance with regulations
Flagging of certain breeds and follow up of new animal registrations for assessment	Annually	Ensure compliance with regulations
Maintenance of Victorian Declared Dog Registry	Ongoing	Up to date data
Seizure of dogs suspected of being restricted breeds dogs	Ongoing	Ensure compliance with regulations
Assessment of suspected restricted breed dogs via gazetted standard	Ongoing	Ensure compliance with regulations
Investigation of any alleged restricted or declared dogs in non compliance with regulations	Ongoing	Ensure compliance with regulations



Domestic Animal Management Plan

Summary

Management of known risks regarding declared Restricted Breed Dogs, Dangerous Dogs and Menacing Dogs within our community is deemed to be a high priority for the Shire, and action to ensure compliance occurs via annual proactive inspections. Where non compliance is identified, enforcement action is initiated on par with the level of non compliance and risk.

Dangerous Dog and Menacing Dog declarations are regularly used in conjunction with prosecutions, to ensure measures are put in place to manage known risks to our community.

Whenever a dog is registered, which may potentially be a restricted breed, Shire Rangers conduct an inspection and assessment of the dog to verify whether or not it is a Restricted Breed Dog.



Domestic Animal Management Plan

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1: Identify Restricted Breed Dogs within the community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Ensure all officers are trained in the identification of restricted breed dogs	2014	Effective responses
Ensure the 'BARK' Application is loaded onto Shire Rangers iPads	2013	Improve breed identification

Objective 2: Identification of Dangerous Dogs

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake after hours patrols of industrial estates.	2013	Identify dogs being used for guarding and ensure legislative compliance

Objective 3: Improved procedures

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review of procedures associated with restricted breed assessment	2013	Effective procedures
Review of procedures associated with declaration processes	2013	Effective procedures

SECTION 6 - OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

CURRENT SITUATION

Current data

Comparison of Community Animal Shelter data

	2006 - 07	2011 - 12	2012 – 13 ⁷
Dogs Impounded	1,269	1,069	1,023
Dogs Released	869	869	830
Dogs Re-Homed	188	177	164
Dogs Euthanised	212	23	29
Cats Impounded	659	475	490
Cats Released	155	66	70
Cats Re-Homed	13	257	317
Cats Euthanised	491	152	103

2013 registration data

	Registered Pet Population	De-sexed	Micro chipped	Estimated Pet Population ⁸
Dogs	25,880	21,061	23,148	27,198
Cats	5,827	5,688	4,702	16,621

Comparison with 2008 registration data

	Registered Pet Population	Estimated Pet Population
Dogs	23,088	25,560
Cats	6,355	15,620

⁷ 2012 – 13 is a qualified estimate, based on confirmed statistics for 11 months (1 June to 31 May)

⁸ Data based on 2012 estimated population sourced ABS & DPI modelling for estimated animal population

Domestic Animal Management Plan



Recent Developments

Declining Numbers of Dogs Impounded

Since implementation of the first DAM Plan in 2008, the number of dogs impounded at Community Animal Shelter has decreased from 1,269 dogs during 2006-07 to 1,069 dogs during 2011-12; which was a reduction 15.8%. The number of dogs impounded during 2012-13 decreased further, to 1,023 dogs; being a reduction of 19.4% on the original situation in 2006-07.

During the same period (2006-07 to 2012-13), the total number of dogs registered increased by 12.1%.

This means the numbers of dogs, in real terms, being impounded has decreased significantly.

Increasing Numbers of Dogs Reunited with Owners

During the same period, the number of dogs being released from the Community Animal Shelter to owners has increased from 68.5% of all dogs impounded during 2006-07, to 81.1% of all dogs impounded during 2011-12, and has remained at 81.1% of all dogs impounded during 2012-13.

In addition to the number of impounded dogs being released to their owners at the Community Animal Shelter, Shire Rangers also return an increasing number of dogs direct to their owners' properties, in preference to impounding them.

The significant decrease, in real terms, of dogs being impounded, together with the significant increase, in real terms, in dogs being reunited with their owners, is a very clear indication of the Shire's success in (i) raising awareness in our community about keeping dogs securely confined, and (ii) also strongly demonstrates the benefits and impact of microchipping and pet registration, as well as (iii) the 'customer-focus' of the staff of the Community Animal Shelter Team and the Shire Ranger Team in getting peoples' dogs back to them.

Increasing Numbers of Unclaimed Dogs Re-Homed

Since implementation of the first DAM Plan in 2008 (which used 2006 – 07 Stats), the proportion of dogs being re-homed from the Community Animal Shelter to new owners has improved from 14.8% of all dogs impounded during 2006-07 (188 re-homed from a total of 1,269 dogs impounded), to 16.6% of all dogs impounded during 2011-12 (177 re-homed from a total of 1,069 dogs impounded), and this has remained at a similar level of 16% of all dogs impounded during 2012-13 (177 re-homed from a total of 1,069 dogs impounded).

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Decreasing Numbers of Unclaimed Dogs Euthanised

Since implementation of the first DAM Plan in 2008 the proportion of dogs from the Community Animal Shelter being euthanised has decreased from 16.7% of all dogs impounded during 2006-07 to 2.2% of all dogs impounded during 2011-12. This has remained at a similar level (2.8%) of all dogs impounded during 2012-13.

Declining Numbers of Cats Impounded

Statistics for cats, since implementation of the first DAM Plan in 2008 show the number of cats impounded at the Community Animal Shelter has decreased from 659 cats during 2006-07 to 475 cats during 2011-12; a reduction of 27.9%. The number of cats impounded during 2012-13 increased slightly, to 490 cats; still being a significant reduction of 25.6% on the original situation in 2006-07. The significant decrease, in real terms, of cats being impounded is a very clear indication of the Shire's success in raising awareness in our community about (i) Council's Order for keeping cats securely confined to their owner's property at all times, and (ii) Council's Local Law requiring all cats over three months of age to be de-sexed to minimise the number of unwanted kittens in our community.

Declining Numbers of Cats Registered

During the same period, the total number of cats registered with the Mornington Peninsula Shire decreased from 6,355 in 2008 to 5,827 in 2013; a decline of 8.3%.

Declining Numbers of Cats Reunited with Owners

The number of cats being released from the Community Animal Shelter back to their owners has also decreased, from 23.5% of all cats impounded during 2006-07 to 14.3% of all cats impounded during 2012-13. Both of these trends are of concern with regard to the long term focus on minimising over population and high euthanasia rates for cats and officers are investigating opportunities to address these worrying trends.

Increasing Numbers of Unclaimed Cats Rehomed

During the same period, the proportion of cats being rehomed from the Community Animal Shelter has improved from 2% of all cats impounded during 2006-07 to 54.1% of all cats impounded during 2011-12, and the rehoming rate has improved again to 64.7% of all cats impounded during 2012-13.

Decreasing Numbers of Unclaimed Cats Euthanised

During the same period, the proportion of cats from the Community Animal Shelter being euthanised has decreased from 74.5% of all cats impounded during 2006-07 to 32% of all cats impounded during 2011-12. This has further improved to 21% of all cats impounded during 2012-13.

Local Developments and Trends

Current data indicates the Shire's programs, supported by the mandatory microchipping requirement, are having a positive impact on reducing over population and high rates of euthanasia. It is encouraging to see there has been a significant improvement in reducing the number of cats being euthanised. In the last three years nearly all cats being euthanised have been either badly injured or diseased and are unowned or feral animals.

Domestic Animal Management Plan



Local Initiatives

In 2005 the Shire introduced mandatory de-sexing of cats. This provides leadership to the community with regard to the desirability of cats being de-sexed and will also mean that all cats being impounded at the Community Animal Shelter must be de-sexed prior to being released to their owners (or to new owners re-homing an unclaimed cat).

The Shire's website www.mornpen.vic.gov.au provides an online link to the Animal Shelter allowing residents and visitors to find lost pets simply by logging on and viewing photographs of lost pets being cared for by the Shire. This information is updated at least every 24 hours.

Improved community access to the Shire's Community Animal Shelter has been achieved by conducting pet releases, by appointment, seven days per week:

- Monday to Friday - 08.30am to 1pm, and 2pm to 5pm
- Weekends & public holidays - 10.00am to 1pm, and 2pm to 5pm

Dogs and cats (and livestock) are impounded by the Shire Ranger Team. Pets taken into care by the Shire are scanned for microchips and checked for other forms of ID and every attempt is made by the Community Animal Shelter Team to reunite lost pets with their owners.

The Shire's Community Animal Shelter also accepts surrendered cats and dogs. With the aid of dedicated volunteers, the Team makes every attempt to rehome all unwanted pets which are assessed as being suitable.

The Team arranges de-sexing and microchipping of pets prior to release, whenever it is required.

The Community Animal Shelter also provides work experience opportunities to local students undertaking tertiary animal studies at University and TAFE.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Local Experience

Even with photos of impounded pets being displayed on the Shire's website, some cat owners seem to be unaware the Shire cares for lost cats at the Community Animal Shelter in Mornington. It does not occur to some cat owners to contact the Shire when their cat is missing. Many people seem to believe the cat may just be wandering for a day or two and will turn up at home later. A new initiative being considered for future implementation, is for community volunteers to place fliers, with photographs and other details, regarding impounded cats being cared for by the Shire on public notice boards in areas where these cats were found.

The main factors contributing to the improvements detailed above include: changes in legislation to make microchipping mandatory for pet registration; publishing photographs of impounded dogs and cats on the Shire's website and developing written agreements under Section 84Y of The Act with a network of volunteer pet rescue groups and Vet Clinics.

Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Orders

- Council Order 1997 – Cat Controls (cats to be confined to owner's premises 24 hours)
- Council Order 2007 – Leash Free Areas/Dogs Prohibited Areas
- Council Order 2009 – Control of Dogs in Public Places (on leash/off leash)

Local Laws

- Local Law – General Provision 2012
 - o 43. Keeping of Animals
 - Restrictions on numbers of animals in residential areas.
 - o 44. Responsible Breeding of Dogs and Cats
 - Restrictions on selling or giving away dogs that have not been de-sexed
 - Requirement to de-sex cats.
 - o 45. Keeping Animals
 - Requirements that deal with amenity impacts

Policies & Procedures

- Compliance and Enforcement Protocol 2011
- Standard Operating Procedures for Impounding and Release of Pets

Current Education/ Promotion Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Brochures (i.e. 'Who's for Cats', microchipping, registration, excess animals) are available at all Shire Civic Centres, Libraries, and most Vet clinics; plus pet information on the Shire Website	Ongoing	Literature and other educational material available
Displays and activities at local festivals and events	Ongoing	Literature and other educational material available

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Current Compliance Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Free use of cat traps for residents	Ongoing	Compliance with Council Order. Minimise cat nuisance complaints; address environmental issues associated with feral and unowned and semi-owned cats.
Cat trapping programs in public areas	Annually	Compliance with Council Order. Minimise cat nuisance complaints; address environmental issues associated with feral and unowned and semi-owned cats.
Cat trapping programs for residents who are unable to do it themselves i.e. elderly/disabled	As required	Compliance with Council Order. Minimise cat nuisance complaints; address environmental issues associated with feral and unowned and semi-owned cats.



Summary

The Mornington Peninsula Shire operates a Community Animal Shelter/Municipal Animal Pound. The aim of the Shelter is to provide care and accommodation for people's lost pets, to maximise the number of lost pets reunited with their owners and to help facilitate rehoming of unclaimed pets. The Shire's Community Animal Shelter needs to be user friendly, customer focused, as positive as possible an environment for the pets and run in accordance with the State Government's Code of Practice for Pounds and Animal Shelters.

Ongoing community education by Mornington Peninsula Shire is raising awareness and promoting the benefits of pet de-sexing, as well as the compulsory de-sexing requirements for cats at three months and for dogs being sold or given away under provisions of the Mornington Peninsula Shire's General Purposes Local Law. This process of ongoing community education, together with enforcement in regard to those who decline to cooperate, is expected to produce a long term positive impact for the overall reduction of unwanted litters in our community. Wherever possible, the Community Animal Shelter Team rehomes healthy unclaimed and surrendered pets.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Shire Rangers also investigate complaints about properties with excess numbers of domestic animals. Using a process of education and enforcement, Shire Rangers work towards gaining cooperation and compliance. Shire Rangers review applications for the granting of Local Laws Permits in relation to keeping excess animals. They also provide advice to Statutory Planners regarding applications for planning permits to keep excess pets. This approvals process provides a mechanism for ensuring the responsible breeding of pets and compliance with the applicable Codes of Practice as well as minimum standards specified under the Local Law.

A number of councils across Victoria have already introduced mandatory de-sexing for dogs and cats. The Mornington Peninsula Shire introduced mandatory de-sexing for cats in 2005. In reviewing the DAM Plan, the Shire has considered the introduction of mandatory de-sexing of dogs as a means of further reducing over population. Enquiries with neighbouring municipalities provided significant anecdotal information on outcomes from the introduction of mandatory de-sexing of dogs, as well as cats. Those councils spoken to indicate they believe de-sexing is having a positive impact.

In 2012, the state government amended the Domestic Animals Act to remove registration fee discounts for microchipped pets. This means some pet owners will face increased registration fees in future years. De-sexed animals will however continue to attract a reduced fee. In Mornington Peninsula Shire 97.6% of registered cats and 79.5% of registered dogs are currently de-sexed.

Given the financial incentive for de-sexing created by the legislative change and the anecdotal information coming from other municipalities, it is seen that there may be merit in the Shire requiring mandatory de-sexing for dogs in the future. A key activity for this plan will therefore be to give further consideration to the possibility of mandatory de-sexing for dogs within the life of this plan.

Community consultation has identified the following concerns in our community:

- the desirability of de-sexing all dogs and cats not being using in responsible breeding programs;
- it is unacceptable to euthanise unwanted and unclaimed healthy pets that are suitable for re-homing;
- increased publicity should be undertaken to increase the level of reunification and re-homing of pets;
- financial assistance should be provided to those pet owners who are experiencing genuine hardship circumstances to ensure they are reunited with their pets. This should be without imposing an unreasonable burden on rate-payers;
- cat owners need to be more aware of their responsibility to keep cats confined to their property;
- de-sexing and permanent identification of dogs and cats, are important long term strategies;
- penalties alone won't solve the problem;
- brochures and information on cat enclosures need to be freely available; and
- the disparity between the requirement for animal shelters to de-sex pets being sold but not pet shops, is contributing to the problem of over population and high euthanasia rates.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1: Reduce % of registered dogs and cats that are currently entire and not part of a Domestic Animal Business (DAB) each year.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake research project and provide report to Council on mandatory de-sexing for both cats and dogs.	2017	Report to Council
Increase focus on promoting the benefits of de-sexing.	Ongoing	Literature and other educational material available
Brochures (i.e. 'Who's for Cats', microchipping, registration, excess animals) to be available at all local schools.	Ongoing	Literature and other educational material available

Objective 2: Raise awareness about semi-owned cat population

Activity	When	Evaluation
Implement Department of Environment and Primary Industry's "Who's for cats?" education campaign. Utilise following resources (available from DEPI): "Are you feeding a bigger problem?" (Who's for Cats? campaign fact sheet) - distribution throughout the municipality and on website; use recording of DEPI radio ad (for Council on hold phone messages); Media releases to local newspapers and Peninsula-Wide Shire publication; TV commercial file - could be used on Shire website and in Customer Service Centres; and promotions to encourage people to take full ownership of cats (ie free products, discount de-sex/ microchip/ vaccination offers).	Annually	Measure number and type of education materials distributed. Record number of campaign queries received by the Shire. Record number of semi-owned cats handed into Community Animal Shelter. Number of media stories published. Measure uptake on any promotions to encourage people to take ownership of cats.
Investigate opportunities for establishing additional Section 84Y written agreements with community volunteer pet-rescue groups.	Ongoing	Increase 'partnerships' with community volunteer pet rescue groups and increased numbers of pets rehomed

Objective 3: Identify and close down all illegally operating Domestic Animal Breeding establishments

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake education campaign to promote awareness about definition of breeding DABs, and Code of Practice requirements for businesses; website information; follow up people advertising pets for sale (ie local papers or on local noticeboards), and determine if they are a DAB and if they are registered with the Shire.	Annually	Compare number of Shire registered breeding establishments before and after campaign.
Audit every DAB each year for compliance. Enforce compliance with minimum requirements.	Annually	Number of audits conducted and summary of outcomes (including any DABs closed due to non-compliance).

Objective 4: Increase the number of impounded cats being returned to their owners

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore possibility of having community volunteers place fliers, with photographs etc, of cats being cared for by the Shire on public notice boards in areas where the cats were found.	2014 - ongoing	Increase in number of cats being released to owners, and increase in pet registrations, microchipping and de-sexing at time of release.

SECTION 7 - DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

CURRENT SITUATION

Current Data

Type of Domestic Animal Business Registration	2013	2012	2011	2010
Pet Shop	5	6	7	8
Boarding Kennel	10	11	12	12
Training Establishment	1	2	2	2

Current Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Orders

- Council Order 1997 – Cat Controls (cats to be confined to owners' premises 24 hours)
- Council Order 2007 – Leash free Areas/Dogs Prohibited Areas
- Council Order 2009 – Control of Dogs in Public Places (on leash/off leash)

Local Laws

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 - Requirement to de-sex cats.
 - o 45. Keeping Animals
 - Requirements that deal with amenity impacts

Policies & Procedures

- Procedure for completing audit and managing non compliance
- Compliance and Enforcement Protocol 2011

Current Education/Promotion Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Provision of information associated with domestic animal businesses via messaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pet & Pony Expo - Careers Expo - Media Articles / Community Signage - Brochure display at Veterinary Clinics, Libraries and Customer Service Offices - Shire Website 	Ongoing	Compliance with regulations

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Current Compliance Activities

Activity	Timeframe	Outcome
Annual inspections	Annually	Compliance with regulations
Inspection at time of registration	As required	Compliance with regulations
Follow up investigation into any complaints associated with domestic animal businesses and non-compliance of regulations	As required	Compliance with regulations
Appropriate enforcement action where non-compliance is identified.	As required	Compliance with regulations
Assessment of planning permit referrals for new animal related uses.	As required	Compliance with regulations

Summary

Whilst there are only nineteen registered Domestic Animal Businesses within the Mornington Peninsula, there are a significant number of breeders, many of whom are members of applicable organisations⁹ (including the Australian National Cat Inc; Cats Victoria; Dogs Victoria; Feline Control Council of Victoria Inc; Greyhound Racing Victoria; and the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy Australia and Victoria). A recent audit was conducted of any property which had multiple animals registered to ensure breeding was occurring in compliance with current regulations. The nineteen registered Domestic Animal Businesses include:

- ten overnight boarding establishments;
- one daytime boarding establishment (day care);
- one training establishment; and
- seven pet shops.

There are also a number of puppy schools operating in conjunction with several Mornington Peninsula Vet Clinics and officers are communicating with Vet Clinics regarding future registration as Domestic Animal Businesses (training establishments).

The Mornington Peninsula Shire investigates complaints about Domestic Animal Businesses and has, where necessary, undertaken appropriate enforcement action to achieve compliance. This has included proceedings in both the Magistrates Court as well as the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal.

⁹ The Minister for Agriculture may declare certain organisations to be applicable organisations. Such organisations produce an annual report and have a code of ethics that requires responsible pet ownership in compliance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and its related codes of practice. It is expected that the organisation will take disciplinary action against members who do not comply with the organisation's code. This recognition also means that they are an organisation with high standards of responsible pet ownership to whom the community can look to when buying a pet or when seeking advice on care of a pet. Members of 'Applicable Organisations' are not classified as Domestic Animal Businesses if they have less than ten fertile female breeding dogs or cats, however they must comply with Planning Scheme and Local Law provisions applying to the keeping of animals on land within the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1: Identification of unregistered breeders & Domestic Animal Businesses

Activity	When	Evaluation
Formulate a plan to monitor classifieds to identify breeders and non registered businesses (e.g. puppy schools being conducted by Vet Clinics).	2014	Increase in number of domestic animal businesses.

Objective 2: Improve available information associated with Domestic Animal Businesses

Activity	When	Evaluation
Undertake information sessions with the Statutory Planning Unit.	2014	Ensure planning permits issued compliment requirements of the Domestic Animals Act Regulations.
Review information on website associated with Domestic Animal Businesses.	2014	Improve access to relevant information.

Objective 3: Improved procedures

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review and document procedures associated with management of Domestic Animal Businesses.	2014	Improved process



SECTION 9 - ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

The Mornington Peninsula Shire develops both long and short term business plans. This includes annual business plans for each Team and Unit of the Shire. Business plans are routinely reviewed throughout each financial year. Key activities and indicators are included in the Shire's Annual Report.

Each year, the relevant activities set out in the Shire's DAM Plan will be incorporated into the Environment Protection and Community Safety Unit's Annual Business Plan. Actions taken and outcomes achieved are routinely reviewed on an ongoing basis. The EPaCS Business Plan will include an annual review of the DAM Plan.

At the end of each business planning cycle (financial year) the EPaCS Manager will produce a summary report outlining progress of the plan's targets and objectives. The summary report will include any recommendations for amendment of the DAM Plan, as required by Section 68A (3) (a) of the Act. The summary report will also be included in the Shire's Annual Report. The Secretary will also be advised and provided a copy of any amendments to the DAM Plan which may arise from the annual review process. In accordance with the legislation, a full review of the DAM Plan will be conducted every four years. The Secretary of the Department of Environment and Primary Industry will be provided with a copy of the new DAM Plan.

FUTURE PLANS

Objective 1: Review Domestic Animal Management Plan

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review proposed DAM Plan actions	Annually	Draft review for presentation to Shire's Executive Team

Objective 2: Draft Review Report

Activity	When	Evaluation
Draft review and present to Shire's Executive Team for inclusion in Shire's Annual Report to the Community	Annually	Published in Shire's Annual Report

BIBLIOGRAPHY/REFERENCES

A number of academic/professional papers and research documents have been identified as being of interest to the Mornington Peninsula Shire in regard to a range of issues associated with domestic animal management matters affecting Shire Officers, residents, and visitors of the Mornington Peninsula. These documents include the following:

- People Pets Planning Symposium Proceedings – Deakin University 2007
- Making Sure there is Room for Pets in Our Society - Virginia Jackson, Harlock Jackson Pty Ltd
- Oh Behave! Understanding the Causes of Companion Animal Behaviour
- Problems in our Community - Dr. Joanne Righetti
- Compliance Theory – Virginia Jackson, Harlock Jackson Pty Ltd
- Triple Bottom Line and Urban Animal Management – Ian Henderson, City of Port Phillip
- Meeting in the Park - Virginia Jackson, Harlock Jackson Pty Ltd
- Turning Research into Reality: Managing Pets in the Community – N. Van de Kuyt,
- Department of Primary Industry/ Bureau of Animal Welfare
- A dangerous Occupation: Dealing with Dogs, an OH&S Issue – Dr. Joanne Righetti
- Cat Crisis Coalition Fact Sheet and Launch information – Dr. Carole Webb, Cat Protection Society
- Shared Community Solutions for Life & Death Matters – Joy Verrinder, Animal Welfare League Queensland
- Community Attitudes towards Semi-Owned Cats – Dr. Samia Toukhsati, Monash University
- Shelter Shakeup – Dr. Linda Marston, Monash University
- Perpetration Induced Traumatic Stress – Vanessa Rohlf, Monash University
- Compassion/ Enthusiasm Fatigue – John Snyder, American Humane Society
- Lost & Found in Melbourne – Dr. Linda Marston, Monash University
- Barking Problems Solved – Dr. Joanne Righetti,
- Bark Counter: Seeking Objectivity in Bark Nuisance Assessment – Dr. Dick Murray
- The Barking Dog Owner – Paul Frisby, Rockhampton City Council
- Barked Enough! – Peter Chandler, City of Palmerson
- Shut that Bloody Dog Up !!! – Chris Button, City of Onkaparinga
- A Quick Fix? Solutions for Animal Behaviour Problems – Dr. Joanne Righetti
- The Right Person for the Job: Reduce Risk, Turnover and expense through
- Selective Recruitment – Tania Small, Business Development Manager ARIC
- Educating for Today: Taking Care of Tomorrow – Virginia Soderstrom, Department of Primary Industry/Bureau of Animal Welfare

APPENDIX 1 - Extract of Domestic Animal Act 1994

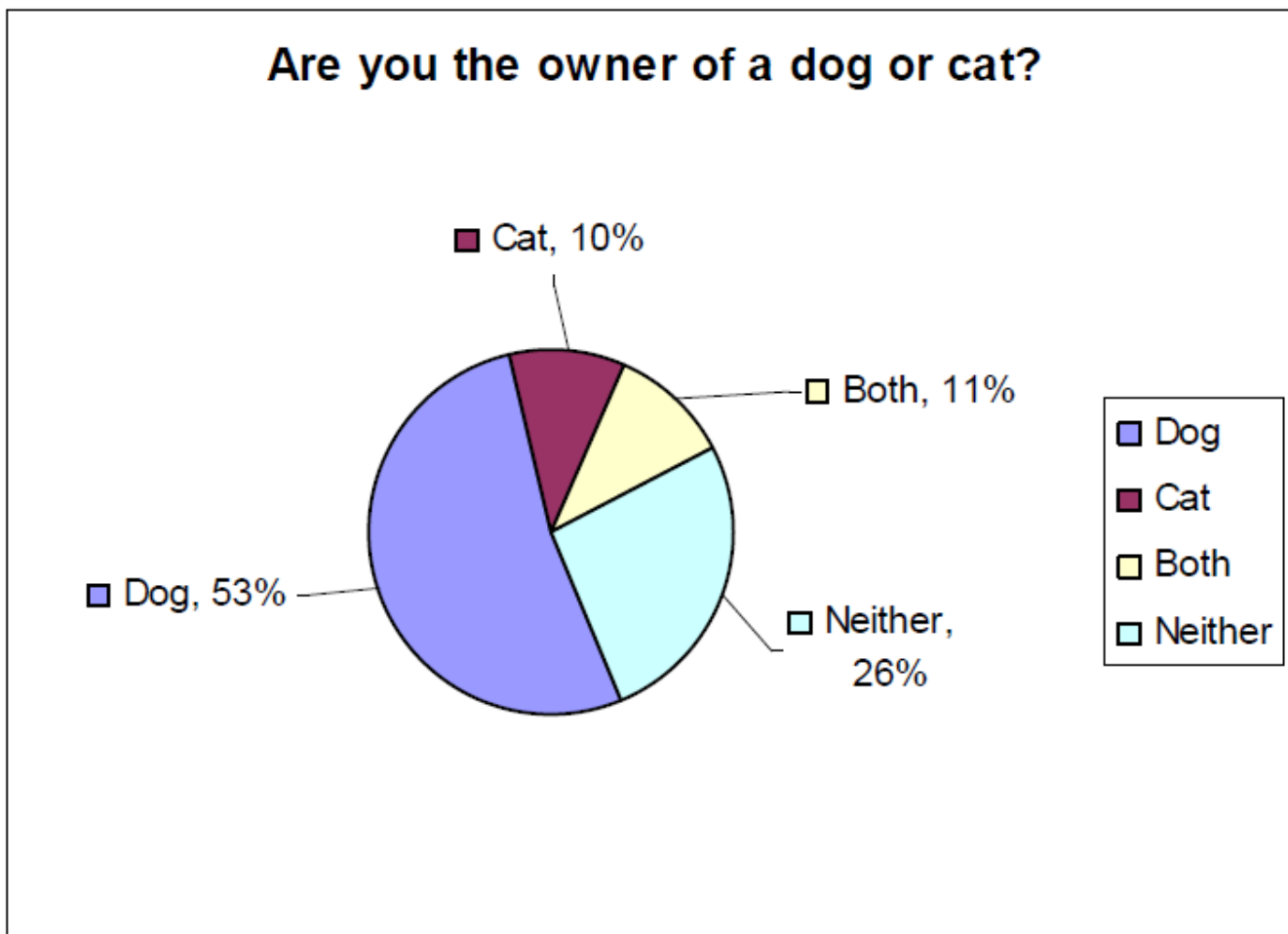
Section 68A of The Act requires Council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan, as follows:

68A *Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans*

- (1) *Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary (of the Department of Primary Industries), prepare at 4 year intervals a Domestic Animal Management Plan.*
- (2) *A Domestic Animal Management Plan prepared by a Council must—*
 - (a) *set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and*
 - (b) *outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and*
 - (c) *outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district—*
 - (i) *to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and*
 - (ii) *to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and*
 - (iii) *to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and*
 - (iv) *to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and*
 - (v) *to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and*
 - (vi) *to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and*
 - (vii) *to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and*
 - (d) *provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and*
 - (e) *provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and*
 - (f) *provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the Plan.*
- (3) *Every Council must—*
 - (a) *review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the Plan; and*
 - (b) *provide the Secretary with a copy of the Plan and any amendments to the Plan; and*
 - (c) *publish an evaluation of its implementation of the Plan in its annual report.*

APPENDIX 2 - Community Consultation and Feedback (DAM Plan 2008)

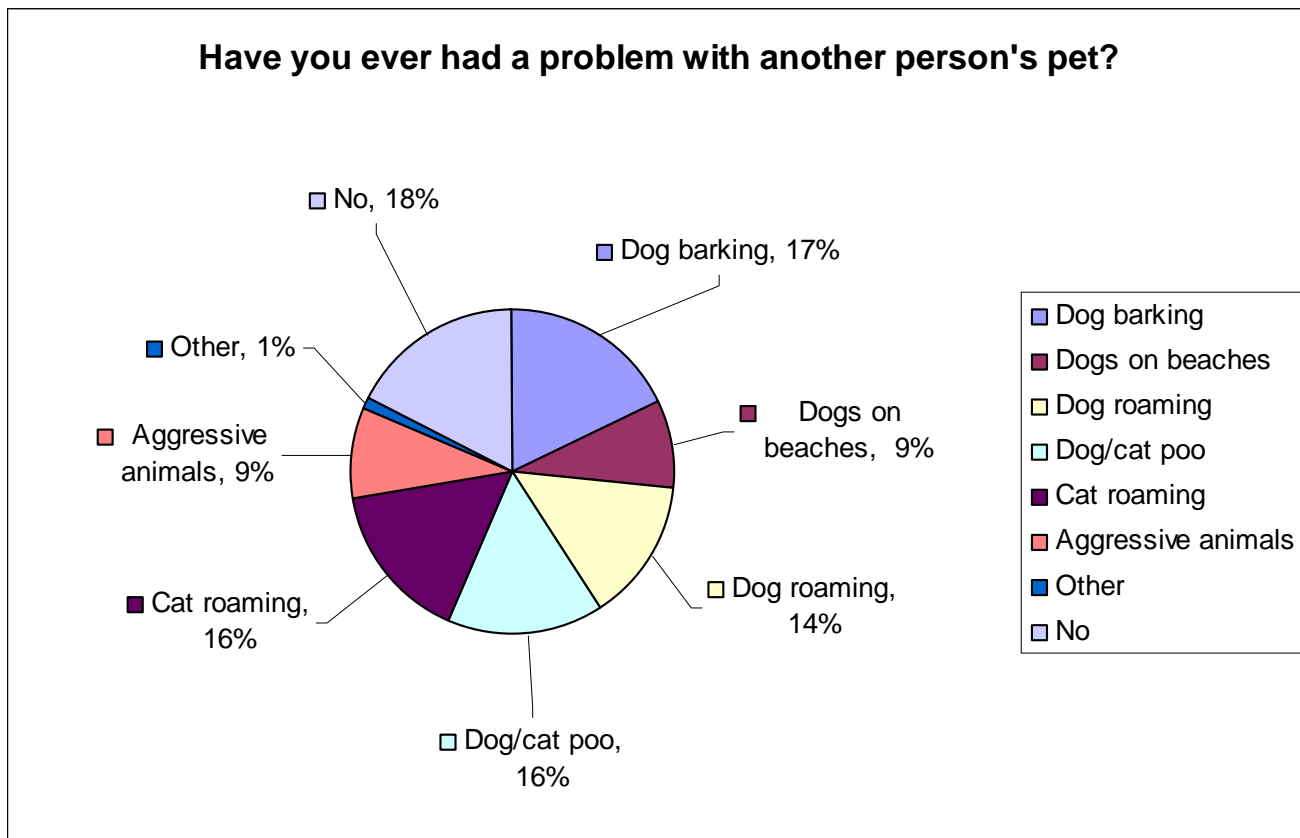
More than 2,000 submissions from the community were received during the process of establishing the first DAM plan in 2008 for the Mornington Peninsula Shire. The community's submissions enabled officers to identify key issues and priorities with regard to animal management with the Mornington Peninsula. Of the submissions received, 865 people owned one pet, 1,012 people owned two pets and 549 people owned three or more pets.



Community feedback identified a number of matters that are of concern, including the following issues:

- 17% barking dogs
- 28% dogs on beaches
- 14% wandering dogs
- 16% dog/cat waste in public places
- 45% wandering cats
- 9% aggressive dogs/cats
- 18% leash free areas were too far away from where people are living
- 25% dog behaviour at leash free areas
- 22% lack of fencing at some leash free areas
- 10% lack of signage at leash free areas
- 10% lack of facilities at leash free areas (water, poo-bins, exercise equipment)

APPENDIX 2 cont'd



The Shire receives ongoing feedback each year from a number of sources including:

- Animal welfare groups;
- Mornington Peninsula community via personal and telephone contact with Shire Rangers;
- Community Animal Shelter staff and EPaCS Admin staff;
- 6,868 merit/service request animal complaint cases in the past twelve months; and
- Large volumes of correspondence.

Mornington Peninsula Shire has also conducted several consultative processes, particularly with regard to matters such as:

- provision of leash free areas and dogs prohibited areas;
- on leash requirements for dog owners; and
- compulsory de-sexing of pets.

These consultative processes have identified that animal management is an important issue in our community.