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## Wyndham Council says no to night cat patrols

COUNCIL 5 MAY 09 @ 10:30AM BY KELLIE CAMERON

NIGHT-TIME patrols to deal with cats illegally roaming Wyndham after dark are too expensive to introduce, the council says.

Many residents fed up with nuisance moggies out at night criticised [Wyndham Council](#) in letters to the Leader after a report that not a single cat owner had been fined under curfew laws brought in more than nine years ago.

All disagreed with the council's view that the city had no problems with cats out during curfew, and many called for better enforcement.

"I do not blame the cats. It is the owner's fault," one reader wrote.

"They obviously couldn't care less, and why should they when council lets them get away with it?"

The council's [Cat Control Order](#) prohibits cats being outside their owner's property between 10pm and 6am and bans the presence of cats in any public area. The fine is \$100.

Residents who have a problem with cats on private property have to pay a refundable bond to hire a cat trap and catch the cat themselves, and take it to the city's pound.

In an emailed statement, council business services manager Tony Addley last week said patrols by council officers during curfew hours would be a major cost burden, at \$200,000 annually. Most cats caught wandering were strays and had no owner to fine.

Responding to readers who were concerned that the cat traps strained neighbour relations, Mr Addley said trapping could be done "discreetly".

He said the council was checking if it could legally send letters on behalf of complainants to owners who let their cats out during the curfew.

The council was also considering mandatory cat desexing to reduce the high number of strays.

More than 1200 cats from Wyndham were impounded last year alone, with 781 of them destroyed.

Mr Addley did not answer a question about whether the council would consider replacing the bond to hire traps with a requirement to show photo identification to encourage more people to hire them, another suggestion by Leader readers.

He said the bond was introduced to ensure the traps were returned.

Complaints about cats out after curfew should be made to the council on 9742 0777.

The Cat Control Order, made under the Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act, was introduced in 2000.

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