



CITY OF  
**YaRRA**

**PEOPLE AND THEIR PETS**

Domestic Animal Management Strategy





## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This is the City of Yarra's Domestic Animal Management Strategy. It presents Council's strategic position on matters associated with animal management and pets in open space.

Policy directions identified in the Plan will be implemented as resources allow. Directions will be revised on an annual basis, as implementation is tested and confirmed as best practice.

Council generally endorses a strategy of increasing awareness and understanding of the issues, developing responsible pet ownership before issuing penalties.

This document was prepared following a process which included: a review of recent policies and plans, a series of workshops with a staff, a critical review of statistics and services concerning pet registrations, enquiries, permits, impoundments etc. Telephone interviews were also conducted with key external stakeholders and adjacent municipalities. Submissions were called for and a public workshop was held following the circulation of a draft plan.

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- Mark Dornau                      Manager Environment Services
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- Ken Wolfe                      Co-ordinator Community Amenity Unit
- Donna Stergiopoulos                      Animal Management Officer
- Lisa Shaw                      Acting Team Leader Local Laws and Animal Management
- Mark Donnellan                      Parks Officer
- Craig McGrath                      Habitat Management Officer
- Libby Jude                      Ranger in Charge, Yarra Bend Park (Parks Victoria)

Rear 534 Mt Alexander Rd  
ASCOT VALE VIC 3032  
leisure@jeavons.com.au  
[www.atleisure.com.au](http://www.atleisure.com.au)

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Strategy aims

The aims of this strategy are to:

- meet Council’s planning requirements as set out in Part 5A of the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994*
- respond to the requirements of a municipal Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) as specified by the Department of Primary Industries
- support and facilitate the benefits of animal ownership and companionship
- minimise local nuisance by domestic pets and maximise residential amenity
- provide a mechanism for community education regarding pet controls, to minimise conflicts in open space
- respond to the recommendations made in the Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006.

This strategy will guide Council and the community towards the goal of responsible pet ownership and management.

Council seeks to ensure that animal welfare is protected, Council’s powers are understood and respected, and conflicts between people and pets in public spaces are minimized through effective community awareness and enforcement of suitable local laws.

The Strategy applies to any land within the City of Yarra where animals are kept, except where animals are kept for business or commercial purposes where prior town planning approval is required from Council.

## 1.2 Addressing Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) requirements

This Strategy incorporates the DAMP requirements as outlined in Section 68A(2) of the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994*, as follows:

CONTENT	CHAPTER
■ an outline of intended programs, services and strategies to:	
i) promote and encourage responsible pet ownership.....	3, 4, 5, 6
ii) encourage registration and identification of dogs and cats.....	4.7
iii) address over population and high euthanasia rates of pets.....	4.4
iv) minimize potential for nuisance.....	4.6, 4.8
v) identify dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs.....	4.8
vi) minimize the risk of dog attacks.....	4.8
vii) ensure compliance with the Act and regulations.....	
■ annually review all existing orders and consider the need for further orders.....	6.5
■ periodic evaluation of all programs, services and strategies.....	6.5
■ a method for evaluating animal control services.....	6.5
■ a program for training of authorised animal management officers.....	6.5

**Note:** Directions in this strategy will be revised annually, and the strategy will be renewed every three years. Therefore directions and specific actions in this plan are not indefinite. In addition, they will be implemented as time and budget allows.

### 1.3 Council's role in animal management

Council can play a number of roles within the scope of animal management:

- **regulatory / animal control**; management of DAMP requirements. This role is the responsibility of the Local Laws and Animal Management Team situated in the Building and Regulatory Services Branch of the City Development Division.
- **pets in open space**; management of public open space for a range of uses including pet exercise and socialization. This role is the responsibility of the Environment and Leisure Services Branches of the Asset Management Division, however, enforcement of relevant legislation regarding open space areas is the responsibility of the Local Laws and Animal Management Team.
- **keeping pets out of environmental areas**; managing the presence of stray and feral cat populations, and protecting areas of environmental significance (both flora and fauna). This role has not been a focus of Council in the past, however may be undertaken by the Habitat Management Officer, from the Environment Services Branch of the Asset Management Division.
- **pets for leisure**; support and promotion of the leisure benefits of pets as companions of pets as a conduit for social interaction between pet owners, as well as pet services. This has not been a focus for Council in the past, however the Community Development Division could play this role.

## 2. What We Know About People and Their Pets in Yarra

### 2.1 Cat and dog ownership

#### Pet registration

Collecting representative cat and dog ownership figures is a requirement of the DAMP. Pet registration is one indicator of pet ownership.

The resident population and number of households in the City of Yarra have significantly increased since 2004<sup>1</sup>. Table 1 shows the population and number of households in Yarra compared to the number of registered dogs and cats. Registered dogs increased over this time, however the number of registered cats fell.

- Approximately 22% of households in Yarra own a registered pet.
- This is low compared to the Australian average where 53.3% of households own a pet<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 1: Population and registered pets in the City of Yarra since 2004**

	Population	Households	Dogs	Cats
2004	69,611	32,157	3,661	3,372
2006	72,376	35,249	3,850	2,864
2007	73, 501	NA	3,890	2,792

<sup>1</sup> Statistics supplied by Council, and <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/dse/dsenres.nsf/>

<sup>2</sup> Petnet website, accessed June, 2007: <http://www.petnet.com.au/petstatistics.asp>

#### Likely pet ownership

In Victoria it is estimated that only 64% of dogs and 41% of cats are registered with Councils<sup>3</sup>. Using these estimates, there may be as many as 6078 dogs, and 6809 cats in Yarra in 2007.

Lower than national average rates of pet ownership in Yarra may be due to the high proportion of renters, the higher than average residential density and small private open space. It is also plausible that there are a large number of unregistered pets in public housing. Fitzroy, Richmond and Collingwood provide a variety of public housing types totalling approximately 2,890 bedrooms<sup>4</sup>.

With an increase in population and a predicted increase in pet ownership, it is likely that pets will cause an increased pressure on the limited supply of public open space within Yarra.

### 2.2 Complaints to Council about pets

#### Type of complaints

Council records the number and type of enquiries and complaints received about pets.

The key complaints received by Council are about barking dogs, wandering dogs, dog attacks, dogs off-lead in on-lead areas, failure to pick up after dogs, and unregistered animals. Too many animals on a property, and disturbance by noisy roosters also receive complaints.

Council has reported an increase in animal related complaints in recent years.

Wandering dogs, dogs off-lead in an on-lead area, failure to pick up after a dog, and unregistered animals were the main topic of complaints that increased in 2007.

<sup>3</sup> McMurray, R (2004) Benchmarking Victoria, an all-Council view and comparison. *Urban Animal Management Conference Proceedings 2004* (pp 69-74) Australian Veterinary Association Ltd, NSW

<sup>4</sup> Statistics provided by Council



Table 2 shows the nature and number of complaints received during business hours since 2003. In 2007, after hours complaints included: 178 wandering animals and nuisance animals, 6 animal attacks, 23 dead animals and 36 lost animals.

**Table 2: Complaints to Council: business hours, 2003 to 2006**

NATURE OF COMPLAINT	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Barking dog	14	30	43	42	32
Wandering dog	17	25	27	34	25
Dog attack	39	24	27	25	22
Dogs off-lead in on-lead areas	11	13	15	23	15
Failure to pick up after a dog	19	18	18	22	22
Unregistered animal	33	11	13	20	16
Nuisance animal	10	22	11	19	37
Feeding of animals in public	4	10	8	8	9
Animal trespass on private property	11	7	14	7	3
Excess animals	1	4	5	7	14
Noisy rooster	6	3	4	4	2
Failure to comply with relevant Code of Practice	1	0	1	3	2
Cat attack	1	2	0	0	4
Other	10	5	0	8	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>207</b>

*Note: this information should not be interpreted as the extent of the problem in each of these areas. It merely represents the number of formal complaints received by Council during business hours.*

### Addressing complaints

Council currently addresses complaints through education including providing set procedures to follow (such as the barking dog procedure), enforcement process and patrols.

Animal Management Officers conduct regular patrols throughout the municipality. During the months of daylight savings, patrols are conducted outside normal business hours, including weekends and concentrate on problem areas, high use open space areas and shopping strips.

Council has a strong enforcement focus towards such non-compliance as dogs off-lead in on-lead areas, failure to carry a device to clean up after a dog, and failure to clean up after a dog. Forty four animal related fines were issued in 2007.

Council has a process in place for dealing with barking dog complaints. Systematic investigation procedures are applied to all animal management complaints.

## 2.3 Council pet services

Pet services currently provided by Council include:

- Pet registration
- Micro chipping  
Council currently organises two micro chipping days a year
- Animal management patrols  
The Local Laws and Animal Management Team conducts sixty hours of regular patrols per month during daylight hours. These provide a pet management presence in open space. The purpose is to encourage good behaviour and responsible pet ownership, and ultimately reduce complaints.





- Designation of dog off-lead areas and provision of a basic level of infrastructure (e.g. bins, bags and some water bowls) in some areas. It has also monitored the satisfaction of these through the Open Space Strategy.
- Trapping of excess animals on request, on private property.
- Business hours animal collection by Council's Animal Management Officers.
- Collecting and impounding stray cats and dogs. Council's Animal Management Officers collect and impound stray cats and dogs during business hours. After hours collection and 24 hour 7 day week animal pound services are provided by the Lost Dogs Home in North Melbourne, who provides a monthly report detailing the number of animals impounded, euthanised, reclaimed and sold. See Table 3 for Yarra's statistics from 2005 to 2007.
- Providing information about responsible pet ownership and dog exercise and socialisation areas.
- Protecting wildlife from stray and owned pets at large. This is done in conjunction with other public land managers such as the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Parks Victoria.
- Regulation of pet numbers through planning permits and controls.

**Table 3: Lost Dogs Home Report: 2005 to 2007**

YEAR	DOGS				CATS			
	Number impounded	% destroyed	% reclaimed	% sold from LDH*	Number impounded	% destroyed	% reclaimed	% sold from LDH*
2005	137	12	81	7	149	90	7	3
2006	145	16	76	8	137	84	12	4
2007	108	14	84	2	150	86	13	1

### Comparison of services between Councils

The organization of Domestic Animal Management services changes significantly across different Councils. Nine Councils surrounding Yarra were compared, to determine the number of Animal Management Officers employed and hours spent patrolling public space. See Table 4 for the survey results.

All Councils surveyed patrolled public space to some degree. Most Councils patrol for between 10 and 20 hours a week, however Boroondara undertakes the most at approximately 35 hours of patrols a week and Stonnington the least at approximately 4 hours of patrols a week.

Most Councils employ three staff to cover Domestic Animal Management, however in many cases patrols are undertaken by other Officers.

As of January 2008 Yarra increased the number of dedicated full time Animal Management Officers from 1.5 to 2 EFT. The after hours service requests as required, are still contracted out to the Lost Dogs Home.



**Table 4: Animal Management personnel and patrol hours by Council**

<b>COUNCIL</b>	<b>Animal Management personnel</b>	<b>Hours on patrol</b>
Darebin	Separate Animal Management Unit with 3 full time officers, one administration officer	Flexible, aim for 20 hours a week
Boroondara	2 full time Animal Management Officers. All Local Law Officers patrol public space	Committed to patrol 1,800 hours per year (approximately 35 hours a week)
Stonnington	2 Animal Management Officers, and soon to employ a third. All full time positions	No set hour requirements. Patrol approx 4 hours a week
Glen Eira	3 Animal Management Officers	Patrol daily. Approx 15 hours a week
Port Philip	Separate Animal Management Unit with 3 full time officers	At least 10 hours a week
Maribymong	2 full time Animal Management Officers. 6 Local Law Officers also undertake patrols	Approximately 10-15 hrs a week.
Moonee Valley	3 Animal Management Officers	Don't have a set number of hours, mainly patrol on weekends
Moreland	Administration team of 5 people in the Local Laws Unit with. Also 2 rangers who patrol	Patrols based on complaints, no set number of hours
Melbourne	'Health Department' is responsible for law enforcement (with Domestic Animal Management mainly taken up by 1 Officer)	The Lost Dogs Home is contracted to patrol for approx 15 hours a week
Yarra	2 Full time animal management officers.	64 Hours per month (8hr / week / officer)

## 2.4 Pet partners in the City of Yarra

There are a number of pet services based in the City of Yarra. Contact details for known services are provided in Appendix 5. Services include the following:

### *Local veterinary clinics*

There are four veterinary clinics:

- **Clifton Hill** Veterinary Clinic
- **Carlton** Veterinary Surgery
- **Fitzroy** Veterinary Clinic
- **Richmond** Veterinary Clinic

### *Local dog obedience training*

There are two dog obedience clubs / training services:

- Northcote Dog Obedience Club, **Alphington Park**
- Command Dog Training School, **Richmond**

### *Local dog and cat care / boarding*

There several catteries in the City and one dog boarding service (day time boarding only):

- Dog Zone, **Richmond**
- Cat Boarding **Collingwood**
- Cats Cosmopolitan Boarding Cattery, **Collingwood**
- Cats in the City, **North Fitzroy**



### *Local pet shops and food / supply / accessory stores, and grooming*

There are six pet shops, food / supply / accessories stores in the City of Yarra.

- Pets on Brunswick St, **Fitzroy**
- Pets Paradise, **Richmond**
- Zacs Pet Supplies, **Clifton Hill**
- Pet Art, North **Fitzroy**
- Laundry Mutt Dog & Cat Supplies and Dog Wash, **Richmond**
- Going to the Dogs (grooming service), **Richmond**.

### *Walking groups*

There are also dog walking groups in the City of Yarra, and park based dogs groups in large parks close to the City of Yarra's boundaries: ie Royal Park and Princes Park.

### *Peak bodies*

There are a number of peak bodies concerned with dogs and animal welfare that are important stakeholders in Yarra. These groups include the following:

- Canine Association of Victoria; [www.vca.org.au/](http://www.vca.org.au/)
- Agility Dog Association of Australia Ltd; [www.adaa.com.au/](http://www.adaa.com.au/)
- Assistance Dogs Australia; [www.assistedogs.org.au/](http://www.assistedogs.org.au/)
- RSPCA; [www.rspcavic.org/](http://www.rspcavic.org/) RSPCA (Australia) [www.rspca.org.au](http://www.rspca.org.au)
- Guide Dogs Victoria; [www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au/](http://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au/)
- Cat protection Society of Victoria [www.catprotection.com.au](http://www.catprotection.com.au).

## **2.5 Pet use of public space**

### **How many residents walk dogs?**

Thirty-three percent of Yarra residents, who answered the open space survey, walk a dog<sup>5</sup>. Of these, approximately seventy percent walk dogs daily.

This corresponds to a high demand for public space for this activity.

Table 5 shows the percentage of respondents who walk dogs from each suburb.

### **Where Yarra residents walk dogs**

#### Reserves in Yarra<sup>6</sup>:

- Barkly Gardens
- Burnley Park and Oval
- Citizens' Park
- Curtain Square\*
- Darling Gardens\*
- Dights Falls Park
- Edinburgh Gardens\*
- Merri Creek Reserve
- Park Street Reserve
- Quarries Park
- Yarra Bend Park\*

#### Reserves outside the municipality<sup>7</sup>:

- Princes Park, City of Melbourne\*
- Yarra Park / MCG, City of Melbourne
- Royal Park, City of Melbourne
- Royal Botanic Gardens, City of Melbourne
- Darebin Parkland, City of Darebin
- Studley Park, City of Boroondara
- Yarra River Linear Park
- Carlton Gardens, City of Melbourne\*

<sup>5</sup> Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006, household survey

<sup>6</sup> Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006, household survey

<sup>7</sup> Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006, household survey

\* Reserves are also in the list of top ten most visited parks by Yarra residents.

Carlton Gardens is used as open space by nearly 50% of Fitzroy residents who walk dogs, with dog walking listed as a main reason for visiting the reserve. Yarra residents identified that dog off-lead zones are required in this park, however the Carlton Gardens Master Planning process determined that this was not compatible with the park's status as a 'garden'.

**Table 5: Proportion of people who walk dogs, by suburb<sup>8</sup>**

Suburb and postcode	% survey respondents who walk dogs
Abbotsford (3067)	37%
Fairfield and Alphington (3078)	37%
Richmond, Burnley and Cremorne (3121)	35%
Princes Hill and North Carlton (3054)	34%
North Fitzroy and Clifton Hill (3068)	32%
Fitzroy (3065)	27%
Collingwood (3066)	18%
<b>Total City of Yarra</b>	<b>33%</b>

## Designated dog areas and facilities

### *Dog off-lead zones*

Council has ten dog off-lead zones within Yarra, at local, citywide<sup>9</sup> and regional<sup>10</sup> scale reserves.

Anecdotally, there is high demand for dog off-lead areas within close proximity to where residents who own dogs live. However not all residents have public open space within close proximity to their home and not all residents want off-lead dogs in parks.

<sup>8</sup> Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006, household survey

<sup>9</sup> Citywide scale reserves attract visitors primarily from Yarra and adjoining municipalities, for visits of 3-4 hours.

<sup>10</sup> Regional scale reserves attract visitors from Melbourne-wide and adjoining municipalities, and are designed for visitors to stay for half a day to a day.

- **Local off-lead zones**  
Burnley Park, Citizens' Park, Coate Park, Flockhart Reserve and Kevin Bartlett Reserve.
- **Citywide off-lead zones**  
Barkly Gardens, Darling Gardens, Hall Reserve and Quarries Park and Edinburgh Gardens.
- **Regional off-lead zones**  
Parts of Yarra Bend Park: Westfield Reserve, Westfield South, Deep Rock Road, Fairlea Road and Collins Oval (in the City of Boroondara).

### *No dog areas*

Dogs are currently prohibited from all fenced playgrounds within Yarra, and the following reserves:

- Batman Reserve, North Fitzroy
- Cairns Reserve, Richmond
- Edwardes Place, North Fitzroy
- Gary Owen Park, Fitzroy
- McNamara Reserve, Collingwood
- Urban Arts Square, Richmond
- Whitlam Place, Fitzroy
- Yarra Bend Golf Course
- Parts of Yarra Bend Park: Galatea Point and the Studley Park Golf Course (both in the City of Boroondara)



### *Dog facilities*

Dog drinking taps and waste bag dispensers are provided in some parks. Council spends approximately \$30,000 annually on plastic bag supplies.

- 6.3% of residents<sup>11</sup> believed improvements to existing facilities or additional facilities were needed
- 5.9% of respondents were satisfied with dog facilities
- 3% of respondents were unsatisfied with dog facilities.

### **Public areas where cats are prohibited**

Council has not designated any public areas where cats are prohibited. Cats however can be destroyed by authorized officers if found in a conservation area. Council may under the Act require cats to be confined at night and issue penalties for cats being found a large.

### **Yarra Bend Park**

Yarra Bend Park sits within the boundaries of the Cities of Yarra, and Boroondara. The Park is managed by Parks Victoria on behalf of the Yarra Bend Park Trust (formed under the provisions of the *Kew and Heidelberg Lands Act 1993*), the Trust reports to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change).

The draft *Yarra Bend Park Regulations 2007*, provides for the use of services and facilities, safety of visitors, and the protection and management of Yarra Bend Park.

To accommodate a variety of Park users and help maintain the conservation values of the area, Yarra Bend Park has designated dog off-lead, prohibited and on-lead areas.

These are as follows:

- **Off-lead areas:** Westfield Reserve, Westfield South, Deep Rock Road ovals, Fairlea Road ovals, Collins Oval
- **Prohibited areas:** Galatea Point, Studley Park Golf Course, Yarra Bend Golf Course
- **On-lead areas:** all remaining areas of Yarra Bend Park.

Dogs must be kept on-lead while on or within five metres of asphalt shared use trails, and at playgrounds and picnic areas.

Dogs are able to access the Yarra River at designated ramps.

Dog owners must pick up after their dog and dispose of the waste in park bins. Park bins are provided near public toilets and picnic areas.

### *Animals other than dogs, at Yarra Bend Park*

Dogs are the only domestic pets permitted in Yarra Bend Park.

Fox populations are known to exist within the park, and annual fox trapping programs are in place to control numbers.

Yarra Bend Park has established and maintains a rabbit free status, which is a major strength of the Park. Domestic rabbits are not permitted in the Park as they can damage flora and burrowing can affect habitat values, and cause erosion.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that pet owners have taken pet rabbits and miniature horses onto the Park for grazing. These types of animals may have a serious impact on flora and fauna. Kangaroos have also been sighted in the Park – perhaps as a result of the drought. Kangaroos are welcomed and protected within the Park, and in particular are attracted to the golf courses.

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<sup>11</sup> Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006, household survey

Scent left by dogs and other animals is a natural deterrent to wildlife, and as such it is vital that dog owners comply with Park regulations regarding dog on-lead, off-lead and prohibited areas to protect the movement of wildlife.

### *Enforcement*

Parks Victoria Rangers regularly patrol Yarra Bend Park to provide information and education on appropriate dog behaviour.

In addition, Animal Management Officers from the City of Yarra can patrol areas of Yarra Bend Park that cover City of Yarra land.

### **Action Required**

**1. Communicate the following information about pets to residents (using a range of electronic and hard copy information) and open dialogue with pet owners and stakeholders:**

- ← Council's role in pet management and the responsibilities of stakeholders
- ← Possible options to address requests (if the complainant feels comfortable) before going to Council, and what process to follow
- ← Provide information on pet related services in the City and other partners who may assist

**2. Continue to collect information about pet ownership, to provide more representative cat and dog ownership figures as per the DAMP requirements. This may be in the form of annual door knocks, telephone interviews and registration databases**

**3. Review opportunities and methods for evaluating animal management services**

**4. Continually review Council's current role in animal management, and increase the focus on prevention of conflict, through information and education**

**5. Enhance management of pet use in public open space because of increasing demand and space constraints by:**

- ← Monitoring provision and management of dog on-lead, dog off-lead, and cat and dog prohibited areas over time
- ← Encouraging pet peak bodies and organizations participation in promoting responsible pet ownership.

**6. Work closely with adjacent municipalities, pet services in Yarra and peak bodies, as well as Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment to promote responsible pet ownership and minimise conflict between people and pets in Yarra, and between pets and the environment.**

### 3. The Benefits of Pets

There is a wide range of benefits to owning a pet. Council has the opportunity of promoting these benefits in addition to addressing compliance issues and managing conflicts. The key benefits of pet ownership relate to health, responsibility and companionship.

Pets may:<sup>12</sup>

- motivate people to exercise regularly
- create opportunities to meet people and make new friends
- teach responsibility, as pets require ongoing care
- provide companionship and prevent loneliness.

Pets are increasingly kept for companionship both in families and sole person households. Companion animals are proving so beneficial that projects (such as 'Petlink') have been established to assist older and frail adults remain as pet owners by organising volunteers to walk, bath and take pets to veterinary check-ups etc. This may also benefit the volunteers, who cannot or choose not to own a pet themselves<sup>13</sup>.

**Those who own pets reportedly: visit the doctor less often, use less medication, recover quicker from illness and surgery, and deal with stressful situations better<sup>14</sup>.**

#### Pets can benefit more than the owners

As not all residents can own a pet, there are ways to benefit from pets without being an owner. These include:

- exercise a friend's or neighbour's pet
- meet other dog owners in the local park to talk / exercise together
- register to look after guide dog puppies before they start school
- participate in a pet related volunteer program (e.g. Petlink).

#### Working dogs

Many animals are employed for work:

- *Seeing Eye or Guide Dogs* for people with a vision impairment
- *Quarantine Dogs*: used to detect food and/or other substances
- *Hearing Dogs*: trained to work with people with a hearing impairment.
- *Assistance Dogs* trained to assist people with a disability
- *Therapy Dogs* for people with restricted movement or confined to indoors, often used in retirement homes and hospitals
- *Police Dogs* used to track offenders and detect explosives or drugs.
- *Working or cattle dogs* for farm work
- *Guard dogs* to watch and protect property.

<sup>12</sup> McCallum Research, Mackay H. (1992) What Australians Feel About Their Pets; and Headey B. (1999) "Do Pet Owners Enjoy Better Health? Results from the German Socio-Economic Panel" Animal, Community Health and Public Policy Symposium, Sydney 1999

<sup>13</sup> Petlinks: a new service for home and community care, [www.petnet.com.au/uam/eidelson96.html](http://www.petnet.com.au/uam/eidelson96.html)

<sup>14</sup> Pet Statistics from PerNet: <http://www.petnet.com.au/petstatistics.asp>

### *Responding to the needs of working dogs*

Many people are not familiar with working dogs and don't know how to respond to the needs of working dogs or their owners. This may lead to discrimination or embarrassment.

Generally speaking, if a dog is in harness or wearing a coat it is working and should not be patted, played with or distracted.

Working dogs do not require registration with Council and are permitted to travel on public transport.

The *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994* and *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* override the *Health Act*, (which for example prohibits dogs from entering food premises).

In Victoria, police dogs and their handlers can enter any public property, but require a warrant to enter private premises. Section 12A of the *Australian Federal Police and other Legislation Amendment Act 2003* provides immunity from state and territory laws for police dogs, including explosive detection canines (EDC) when on a premise with their police dog handlers.

### **Action Required**

- 1. Promote the benefits of responsible pet ownership**
- 2. Assist residents to maximise the benefits of pet ownership by providing access to available information that enables good decisions in;**
  - choosing the right breed of dog to suit interest and lifestyle
  - how owning a dog can motivate you to exercise
- 3. Provide information to residents and businesses about supporting working dogs in their role**
- 4. Provide information about how pet owners can help others who cannot own a pet**
- 5. Promote opportunities to walk and socialise dogs**
- 6. Continue to identify partners who can promote and facilitate the benefits of pet ownership**
- 7. Encourage retention of sufficient open space in new dwellings to accommodate pets.**



## 4. Responsible Pet Ownership

In order to facilitate the benefits of pet ownership, minimise conflict with others, and reduce the need for Council intervention, there is a need for one united voice across Council on pet issues and protocols. Good marketing, education, communication between stakeholders, and the development of incentives to do the right thing are also required.

A key principle in Council's approach is to provide the necessary leadership information and encouragement to prevent conflict, minimise the number of pets that are unwanted, and enhance responsible pet ownership.

Some key areas where the greatest advantage can be gained are:

- increasing the proportion of pets registered
- providing information about acceptable pet behaviour, especially in public
- maintaining a suitable number of pets, and in suitable conditions
- encouraging residents to choose the right pet for their lifestyle and dwelling type.

### 4.1 Choosing the right pet

Some pets are abandoned as they don't suit the owner's lifestyle, or because of lack of knowledge about (and subsequent disapproval of) the pet's behaviour<sup>15</sup>.

There are many sources of easily available information about how to choose the right pet. Websites listed in the 'Pet Partners' chapter of this document, under 'peak bodies' and 'other useful websites' is a good place to start. The PetNet website has a simple 'select-a-pet' survey that identifies suitable breeds for prospective owners.

As there is a high proportion of people renting in Yarra, there is value in ensuring that people can find the right type of accommodation to suit their pet's needs. It should be noted that a high rate of transience exists in Yarra, resulting in some pets not living in Yarra long and some pets being left behind when owners leave Yarra.

Here are some helpful tips for people seeking pet-friendly rental accommodation<sup>16</sup>:

- Prepare a pet résumé including all medical records, obedience school certificates and written references from past landlords, neighbours, obedience schools and veterinarians
- Offer to jointly develop a pet agreement to clearly define behaviour appropriate to the rental premises, and actions to be taken if issues arise
- Pets are not permitted to be kept in many Strata Title properties because of specific Body Corporate By-laws Department of Human Services (public housing) prohibits some types and number of animals.

<sup>15</sup> Marston, Bennett and Toukhatsi "Cat stats: tracking cat admission to shelters in Melbourne" Animal Welfare Science Centre, Monash University. Urban Animal Management Conference Proceedings (2005)

<sup>16</sup> PetNet: [www.petnet.com.au](http://www.petnet.com.au)



## Action Required

- 1. Direct residents to information sources about choosing the right pet**
- 2. Promote the importance of choosing pets that complement the owners' lifestyle and type of residence**
- 3. Promote ways for pet owners to find the right type of accommodation that will suit them, and ways renters can responsibly keep pets**
- 4. Promote a contact in Council to provide information about responsible pet ownership.**

## 4.2 Suitable conditions and number of pets

Wandering dogs and nuisance cats are major issues for Council.

Yarra has a high proportion of small dwellings with limited private space, increasing population density and a high proportion of dwellings without public open space within 400metres.

Anecdotally, smaller dwellings without private space tend to be less able to accommodate multiple pets without affecting their welfare and others' lifestyles.

For these reasons, Council via the local law specifies the number and type of pets that residents are allowed to keep in houses and flats/units (without a planning permit). For example, in a flat or unit, only one dog over six months old can be kept (compared to 2 in other dwelling types).

Council can also, through planning conditions, encourage good design and retention of sufficient open space in new dwellings and those being renovated, to accommodate pets.

### Permits

To keep additional pets to those outlined in Appendix 4, residents must apply for a planning permit or local law permit.

Council, to date, has issued a total of 4 excess animal permits.

### *Suitable conditions for pets*

Council's Local Laws set out a number of requirements for pet owners about the conditions in which pets must be kept, regarding:

- land requirements
- animal shelter requirements (cleanliness and location)
- storage of pet food.

## Action Required

- 1. Continue to limit the number of pets allowed on properties (without a permit) including houses and flats / units**
- 2. Advertise when, what and how many pets a permit is required for, and how to apply for additional pets**
- 3. Encourage good design and retention of sufficient open space in new dwellings and those being renovated, to accommodate pets**

### 4.3 Pet vaccination and physical health

#### *Vaccination*

Vaccinating both cats and dogs is important for their well being.

- Cats can be vaccinated (primarily against Feline Enteritis) from six to eight weeks of age and require booster vaccinations by a veterinary surgeon
- Dogs can be vaccinated against Canine Distemper, Kennel Cough, Viral Hepatitis and Parvo Virus. Puppies can receive their first vaccination between six to eight weeks of age, their second at 12 to 16 weeks old and then a booster vaccination every 12 months<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Victorian Canine Association- [www.vca.org.au](http://www.vca.org.au)

*Non-vaccinated dogs taken to dog off-leash areas and unvaccinated wandering strays can cause the spread of disease. Overweight pets*

Studies suggest that well over half of Melbourne's pets are now in the overweight range, with many double their ideal weight<sup>18</sup>.

Overweight pets are more likely to develop diseases, including joint disease (arthritis), breathing difficulties, heart disease, diabetes, reduced liver function, decreased heat tolerance, skin disease, increased risk of developing cancer and reduced quality of life in general.

Pets need regular exercise and socialisation. Most dogs need daily walks, though some breeds may require more.

## Action Required

- 1. Promote and where possible subsidise pet vaccination**
- 2. Provide information to encourage pet owners to keep their pets active, socialised and healthy**
- 3. Encourage dogs taken to off-lead areas must have their vaccinations up to date**

<sup>18</sup> Edwards, Lorna 'Pets make pigs of themselves' The Age newspaper article, 2/5/2007

## 4.4 Over-population and animal euthanasia

Consultation with Council staff and pet services in the City of Yarra indicated that there is a significant over-population of domestic animals, (in particular cats) in Yarra, and the number is likely to be well beyond the capacity of the community to provide good homes.

Controlling populations of unwanted cats (strays, semi-owned and feral) is central to controlling the over-population problem.

If more pets were prevented from getting lost, impounded, and fewer were unwanted and abandoned, there would be less unintentional breeding, unwanted litters, feral animals or euthanasia, and a greater potential to control disease amongst pets.

Unfortunately there is no accurate source of statistics on pet population numbers, and of those available, details are limited. However, estimates suggest that in Victoria, approximately 32.5% of impounded dogs, and 70% of impounded cats, are euthanized each year<sup>19</sup>.

In Yarra, statistics collected by the Lost Dogs Home indicate the percentage of impounded dogs that are euthanized is lower than the Victorian average, at 14% in 2007.

The percentage of impounded cats that are euthanized in Yarra is significantly higher than the Victorian average, at 90% in 2005, 84% in 2006 and 86% in 2007.

### Lost and unwanted dogs and cats

More than one hundred (108) dogs and cats (150) were impounded in Yarra, in 2007; 84% of dogs and 12% of cats were reclaimed<sup>20</sup>. This is an average

reclaim rate for dogs; however, Yarra has a particularly high reclaim rate for cats, compared to Victoria wide statistics at 5%<sup>21</sup>.

The most effective way to reunite lost pets with their owners is through micro chipping and registration. Micro chipping is now a legal requirement for new cat and dog registrations, for animals over 3 months of age.

The best way to overcome abandonment, or people giving up their pets, is to provide prospective pet owners with good information to help them choose the right pet, and then assisting with information about responsible pet ownership and training tools to overcome potential obedience issues.

### Unintended cat litters

Nearly three-quarters of cat admissions to Melbourne shelters are multiple-cat admissions (either cat colonies, or kittens with or without their mother). 63.8% of kitten only admissions were strays, with 32.6% surrendered by owners<sup>22</sup>.

This identifies unintended litters, both from owned and stray cats, as a major burden to Domestic Animal Management services throughout Melbourne.

There are a number of measures that can minimise the likelihood of unintended litters:

- education of residents
- pet de-sexing
- reporting stray and feral animals to Council, rather than harbouring them
- keeping pets inside, especially at night
- trapping to catch stray and feral animals.

<sup>19</sup> Pawsey, Cathy "Where do pets come from? Victorian Pet Acquisition Survey" Bureau of Animal Welfare, Urban Animal Management Conference Proceedings (2005)

\* LDH refers to Lost Dogs Home

<sup>20</sup> Statistics provided by the Lost Dogs Home

<sup>21</sup> Marston, Bennett and Toukhatsi "Cat stats: tracking cat admission to shelters in Melbourne" Animal Welfare Science Centre, Monash University. Urban Animal Management Conference Proceedings (2005)

<sup>22</sup> Marston, Bennett and Toukhatsi "Cat admission to Melbourne shelters- a report to the Bureau of Animal Welfare" Animal Welfare Science Centre, Monash University (2006)

### Trapping feral and unwanted dogs and cats

A trapping program undertaken by Council's Animal Management Officers occurs at the request of residents on private property in Yarra and by land managers in conservation areas.

Trapping feral and unwanted animals is becoming increasingly important as an effective method of controlling over population and reducing pressure on native flora and fauna.

### Feeding stray and feral animals and birds

Feeding stray animals has potential to increase their population. Residents are encouraged to report stray and feral cats to Council's Local Law and Animal Management Team, rather than feeding them.

Feeding birds in public, especially pigeons, is an offence against Yarra's Local Law. Birds can create hazardous amounts of bird waste, cause damage to buildings, and negatively impact on public amenity<sup>23</sup>.

### Pet de-sexing

There are many reasons for and benefits to pet de-sexing<sup>24</sup>. Desexing:

- reduces territorial aggression in male dogs and cats
- reduces the incidence of infections, cancers and other diseases of the reproductive systems
- prevents the inconvenience of a dog or cat coming into season
- reduces spraying (cats) or marking territory with urine (dogs)
- increases the life expectancy of cats and dogs and they are less likely to wander far from their home
- removes the possibility of having unwanted litters
- results generally in happier, healthier animals that make better family pets.

There is some debate about when a pet should be desexed. Concern has been expressed that desexing too early (before 5 months of age) may compromise the health of the animal, and that requiring desexing and registration together at three months, may provide a significant financial impost as well as compromise the pet's health. Council could require that registered pets are desexed prior to renewing their first registration.

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<sup>23</sup> Update on Pigeon Management- Report by the City of Melbourne, 2004

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<sup>24</sup> <http://www.effect.net.au/>, and The Cat Protection Society <http://www.catprotection.com.au/>

## Action Required

- 1. Disseminate relevant information to residents, about the impact of unwanted animals and how these can be controlled by providing links to animal advocacy groups such as the Cat Protection Society of Victoria, the RSPCA, and the Lost Dogs Home**

**(Refer also to the 'pet partners' section of this document)**

- 2. Introduce mandatory cat de-sexing and promote the benefits of pet de-sexing at a timely and safe age**
- 3. Encourage confinement of cats overnight**
- 4. Increase trapping of feral and stray animals in Yarra in conjunction with other land managers**
- 6. Promote a 'No Cost Surrender Program' throughout the municipality (through estate agents and landlords) to reduce the incidence of animals being abandoned**
- 7. Encourage residents not to feed birds, and explain why**
- 8. Monitor the pigeon population (e.g. near food premises) and intervene as required**
- 9. Encourage residents to report stray and feral animals to the Local Laws and Animal Management Team.10.**
- 10. Continue ongoing trapping program of feral & unwanted animals.**

## 4.5 Impact of pet's behaviour on others

Ensuring that pets do not disturb other people and other animals is an important and serious pet owner responsibility.

### Wandering and feral cats

Cats must not become a nuisance by wandering onto private property without permission from the owner / occupier. Cats and dogs can be impounded if they are off their owner's premises and if they return to another person's private property.

Cats are commonly known to be a major threat to wildlife in the bush however less recognised is that the same applies to cats in towns and cities<sup>25</sup>.

There are many reasons why cats should not be left outside over night:

- Cats can roam a long way, making them vulnerable to attack by other animals and exposing other wildlife to attack from them
- Cats are most active at night, and especially at dusk and dawn. This coincides with the activity periods of much of our Australian wildlife, placing native animals at risk
- Even well fed and apparently contented pets will instinctively hunt and kill living creatures. A pet cat kills on average an estimated 32 wildlife a year. A stray cat in cities kills on average five wildlife a week<sup>26</sup>
- Domestic cats mixing with feral or stray cats at night makes them susceptible to feline AIDS, and the blood protozoan disease Toxoplasmosis (both carried by cats). These can affect wildlife, sheep and humans
- Cats at large at night are easily attracted by food and are stolen.

<sup>25</sup> Platt, S (1999) Land for Wildlife Notes "Cats and wildlife- how you can protect both" DNRE

<sup>26</sup> Platt, S (1999) Land for Wildlife Notes "Cats and wildlife- how you can protect both" DNRE

- An authorised officer is able to destroy a dog or cat found at large in certain areas (eg a conservation area)
- Cats tend to do most of their hunting at night. Protection of wildlife is a priority in Yarra, and allowing cats to roam overnight conflicts with this
- Cats are more likely to be hit by a car, or injured in a fight, at night, and 94% of car accidents or fights involving cats, occurred at night<sup>27</sup>
- Confining a cat at night is not an animal welfare issue; there are no ill effects when a cat is home-based. In fact, cats may live up to three times longer if home-based overnight.<sup>28</sup>

By confining our cats we can help to separate the owned and stray cat populations. This helps to reduce unwanted breeding, and protects the safety of loved pets as well as the safety of native animals.

Cat trapping is an effective and safe way to manage cat behaviour at night. It is also an effective way to reduce the feral cat population. Council will maintain its trapping program. Any registered cat that is trapped will be identified through its registration tag and returned to its owner, who may be issued with a Nuisance Notice under the Act and subject to prosecution should the cat be trapped again.

Council can, as other Councils have done (eg The City of Greater Bendigo, Frankston City and the Shire of Yarra Ranger) make an Order under the Act requiring the mandatory confinement of cats at night.

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<sup>27</sup> A three-week study conducted by the Cat Protection Society  
<sup>28</sup> Department of Primary Industries – Cat Management Manual

## Wandering dogs

Wandering dogs (usually within the vicinity of the owner's home) is one of Council's main animal management (health and safety) issues.

Uncared-for dogs are likely to be a disease risk, and scavenging dogs are likely to result in a litter nuisance. In general, uncontrolled dogs can be an issue for responsible pet owners as wandering animals can disturb dogs on-lead, which may result in injury or worse<sup>29</sup>.

## Barking dogs

Dogs bark for a reason and the problems are easier to rectify if addressed as soon as they eventuate. Common reasons for barking are:

- lack of exercise
- boredom, loneliness and frustration
- feeling under threat / fear (e.g. of thunder, fireworks)
- poor living conditions (e.g. no shelter or impinging flood lights)
- ill-health.

Dogs that bark usually benefit from more exercise, socialisation or a more interesting environment. Dogs barking at passers-by may need to have their access to views obstructed (e.g. solid fencing or a hedge). If the problem persists, dogs may benefit from attending obedience clubs.

### *Recommended barking dog procedure*

Residents concerned by a barking dog should they be so inclined may politely approach the dog owners to notify them of the issue or contact Council, as outlined below.

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<sup>29</sup> McArthur, G (2006) "Meet and Greet: an etiquette guide for off-leash dog park behaviour" Gwen McArthur, QLD, Australia





On receipt of a barking dog complaint, Council will contact the dog owner to advise that a complaint has been made, and offer advice on how to rectify the problem. An information sheet will be left at the owner's premises with a request to contact Council. The complainant will be provided with a noise log to complete when the dog barks. After seven days, Council will contact the complainant to determine if the problem has been rectified. If the problem persists, the dog owner will be advised of the further complaint and enforcement action that may be taken. If excessive barking continues after the dog has been declared a nuisance, the owner may be prosecuted.

## Action Required

### 1. Promote to residents:

- **the need to (and benefits of) keep cats and dogs under effective control when away from home**
- **that owners of cats and dogs found at large and on others' private property on repeat occasions can face penalties**
- **that cats and dogs found in conservation areas may be trapped and fines imposed**
- **the value of keeping cats indoors at night for their safety, to protect wildlife and to prevent them becoming a nuisance**
- **the reasons *why* dogs bark, and ways to prevent them barking**
- **a process for residents to follow when they are concerned about a barking dog**

2. **Work with Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment to promote capture and control of stray cats and dogs to minimise their impact on wildlife.**

## 4.6 Pet registration and identification

Cats and dogs over three months old must be registered annually. The registration fee helps Council to provide the infrastructure needed for animal management, including tags. Part of the fee is returned to the State government to fund pet education and support programs.

The benefits of pet registration are:

- it provides Council with statistics to inform planning and management
- it allows lost or found animals and their owners to be reunited
- when responding to calls about wandering, vicious, or nuisance pets, Council can contact the owner swiftly
- owners who register and identify their pets are more likely to be responsible pet owners hence minimising stray animals, feral animals and over population.

If an animal is unregistered and / or not wearing its identification tag when off its owner's premises, a fine may be issued to the owner.

### Pet complaints in public housing

Most public housing pet concerns are dealt with by the Housing Officers, however Council is contacted for assistance when:

- a person has been attacked by an animal
- neglect of an animal is causing sanitation or health problems
- an animal is repeatedly wandering at large beyond the owner's land into neighbour's premises
- a Domestic Animals Business (breeder) is operating
- when excess animals are on the property.

An animal welfare agency such as the RSPCA is contacted when:

- an animal appears to have been abandoned
- an animal appears to have been maltreated, harmed or neglected.

### Micro chipping

New legal requirements came into effect in Victoria on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2007 regarding micro chipping. Regulations now require all new pets being registered with Council for the first time to be micro chipped before registration will be processed. This includes cats and dogs that move into Yarra from another municipality.

Part 4A of the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act* contains provisions for permanent identification systems for cats and dogs. This includes the sale and distribution of micro chips and scanners, the implantation of micro chips, and the operation of registries.



## Action Required

- 1. Promote registration of pets and its benefits to residents and provide incentives to register**
- 2. No fine will be issued to the owner of a registered animal found wandering on the first occasion**
- 3. Unregistered animals found wandering must be registered before being returned to their owner. The owner may be issued with a fine for failing to register and allowing the animal to wander (total 2 fines may be issued per occasion)**
- 4. Continue to promote the legal requirement to microchip pets and hold micro chipping days**
- 5. Monitor pet registration statistics**
- 6. Survey a sample of past pet owners who have not renewed their pet's registration, to find out why.**

## 4.7 Nuisance, menacing and dangerous animals

### Nuisance animals

Under Clause 37.1 of Local Law No.3, Council may direct any resident to permanently remove any rooster or other animal from their place of residence, considered in the opinion of Council to be detrimental to the general amenity of the neighbourhood.

### Menacing dogs

Under the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994*, dogs can be listed as menacing or dangerous if the following criteria are proved:

- they have rushed at or chased a person
- they have been declared menacing by another Council.

Owners of a menacing dog:

- must notify Council if it has rushed at, or chased a person, has gone missing, or has a new owner
- are required to muzzle the dog whenever it is off private premises
- may be required to leave the dog on-lead in off-lead areas.<sup>30</sup>

### Dangerous dogs

Dogs can be declared dangerous if they have:

- caused *serious* injury to a person/animal by biting or attacking
- been a menacing dog and the owner has been fined twice for not muzzling or leashing the dog when required
- been declared dangerous by another Council
- have / are being used as a guard dog on a non-residential premise.

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<sup>30</sup> A full list of these requirements is provided in Part 3 of the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994*.

Owners of a dangerous dog must:

- notify Council if it has gone missing or has a new owner
- muzzle the dog and keep it on-lead whenever it is off private premises
- construct an enclosure on the premises
- display a dangerous dog sign at all entrances to the premise
- place a red and yellow striped collar on the dog when off private premises.

### Penalties for menacing or dangerous dogs

Upon conviction in a Magistrates Court and upon direction of a Magistrate, dog owners are responsible for any damage caused by:

- a dog bite
- their dog rushing and knocking over a person
- the trauma caused by being chased by a dog.

Penalties for not abiding by the menacing or dangerous dog laws include:

- prosecution from Council or the Police
- \$500 fine for not complying with muzzling, leashing and display of warning sign requirements, for a first offence (current 2007)
- \$1,000 fine for second and subsequent offences (current 2007).

### Dog attacks

Injuries recorded in the Victorian Emergency Minimum Dataset<sup>31</sup> suggest there were 10,333 dog bite injuries (and 934 cat bite injuries) presented to emergency departments of hospitals in Victoria between 1998-2004.

The reported occurrence of dog attacks within Yarra has remained steady over recent years, however it remains a cause of concern, particularly as many are likely to be unreported (because of penalties to owners).

Children aged up to nine are the most common victims of serious dog attacks, with most attacks occurring in the home<sup>32</sup>. Most injuries are to the face or head, usually caused by children putting their face close to a dog's mouth or hugging the dog tightly around its neck.

The Australian Companion Animal Council<sup>33</sup> suggests dog bites are often a human problem associated with the inappropriate selection of dogs, ignorance of dog care and management and inappropriate behaviour around dogs. An education campaign by Council, about these issues may be more effective than punitive measures targeting dangerous dogs.

Teaching children about how to approach an unfamiliar dog, interact safely with pets, and importantly, how to read the body language of dogs and cats, in conjunction with training and socialising and supervision of children around dogs, may reduce incidents and severity of injuries. The Safe Pets Out There (SPOT) program in New South Wales, and the Blue Dog project<sup>34</sup> in the UK are examples of projects working across private not for profit and government sectors, addressing this issue through child education. The Victorian State Government has a Responsible Pet Ownership Program for Schools. It provides a team of pet

<sup>31</sup> Data from the VEMD (1998–2004). Victorian Injury Surveillance Unit, Monash University Accident Research Centre. Cited in Animal and Human Bite Injuries in Victoria, 1998–2004. Catherine E MacBean, David McD Taylor and Karen Ashby.

<sup>32</sup> Media Release from the Minister for Agriculture "Education is the key to reducing dog attacks" May 18, 2006

<sup>33</sup> Australian Companion Animal Council. Dogs in Society Position Paper Undated.

<sup>34</sup> [www.thebluedog.org](http://www.thebluedog.org)



educators and their pets to visit schools promote responsible pet ownership and educate children about dealing with dogs.<sup>35</sup>

Council could support and promote such programs through its animal management services area, as well as through maternal health and child services, and primary schools.

### Restricted dog breeds

There are a number of dog breeds that have restrictions, as pets in Victoria. The restricted breeds are:

- Dogo Argentina
- Japanese Tosa
- Fila Brasileiro
- American Pit Bull Terrier, and the Pit Bull Terrier.

Restricted dog breeds:

- are prohibited from being imported into Australia<sup>36</sup>
- cannot be re-registered unless the dog was first registered in Victoria prior to 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2005<sup>37</sup>
- must be declared as a restricted breed dog at registration
- are controlled by additional requirements in the Act.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> See [www.petsinfo.vic.gov.au](http://www.petsinfo.vic.gov.au)

<sup>36</sup> By the *Commonwealth Customs (Prohibited Imports) Regulations 1956*.

<sup>37</sup> Department of Primary Industries- [www.dpi.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au)

<sup>38</sup> The *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994* sets out a number of requirements for keeping restricted breeds

### Action Required

- 1. Prepare and promote information for residents (especially new parents) about: breed selection, restricted breeds, the need for training and socialising dogs, supervision around children, how to read the behaviour of cats and dogs and how to approach an unfamiliar dog, in order to reduce attacks and the severity of injuries**
- 2. Promote the ‘Dob in a Restricted Breed Dog’ program**
- 3. Manage dogs of restricted breed in accordance with the *Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994***
- 4. Maintain a register of restricted & dangerous breeds within Yarra.**
- 5. Annually inspect the premises of registered restricted and declared dangerous animals.**

## 5. Pets other than Cats & Dogs

### Keeping reptiles In Yarra

The keeping of some reptiles may cause concern to neighbours, although small tortoises, frogs and lizards may not be problematic if well looked after. As these animals only need limited exercise and space, they may be ideal pets for residents of flats and units.

Various snakes and reptiles are protected and as such, keeping of these animals must be in accordance with all relevant Acts and regulations.

The Department of Primary Industries has a *Code of practice for the welfare of animals- Private keeping of reptiles (Victoria), 2003*, which residents wishing to keep reptiles must comply with.

Most native animals are protected and require a permit from the Department of Sustainability and Environment to be kept as pets.

### Keeping ferrets, guinea pigs, rabbits and mice

As these animals also only need limited exercise and space, they may be ideal pets for residents of flats and units.

The breeding habits of rodents and rabbits can create excessive numbers and an increased likelihood of escape. While keeping up to two ferrets, guineapigs, rabbits or mice is permitted, residents are encouraged to own same-sex rodents.

De-sexing of male rabbits and ferrets is often undertaken for the benefit of reducing aggression in the animal. De-sexing will also greatly reduce odour in male ferrets.

Female ferrets not used for breeding should be de-sexed, to prevent anemia.

### Keeping cold water and tropical fish

There are few issues in relation to keeping cold water and tropical fish. Outdoor fishponds however, need to comply with relevant pool safety requirements.

A person must not release fish into any public waterways or water bodies.

### Keeping poultry in Yarra

Owning up to five poultry birds is permitted (subject to proper siting of enclosures), unless residents live in a flat or unit in which case, the keeping of poultry is prohibited.

Residents wishing to keep poultry must comply with the regulations set out in the *Victorian Code of Accepted Farming Practice for the Welfare of Poultry, 2003*. This Code is intended as a set of guidelines to provide detailed minimum standards of care required to meet owner obligations under Victorian laws.

Requests have been registered with Council regarding noisy roosters. In accordance with Clause 37 of Local Law No 3, Council may direct the owner to permanently remove the rooster (or any other animal) if, in the opinion of Council, it is detrimental to the general amenity of the surrounding neighbourhood.

### Keeping bees in Yarra

Provided that requirements of the *Apiary Code of Practice 1997* and the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* are met, bee keeping is permitted by Yarra residents.

The *Apiary Code of Practice 1997* addresses types of apiculture, definitions of practices, management requirements and statutory requirements. Of note is the limitation on the number of hives allowed to be kept, depending on the size of the property.

The *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* requires beekeepers with one or more hives to be registered with the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) as a beekeeper. Registration enables DPI to conduct disease prevention and control



programs for the benefit of beekeepers. This includes the mailing of useful information.

### **Keeping birds in Yarra**

The Department of Primary Industries has a *Code of practice for the housing of caged birds 2001*, with which residents keeping birds must comply. Some protected species require their owners to be licensed.

### **Animal Shelters**

Residents must also comply with Council's Environment Local Law No 3, clause 36, in relation to animal shelters.

### **Action Required**

- 1. Provide information and relevant Acts and regulations to residents about keeping pets other than cats and dogs**
- 2. Allow residents in flats and units to keep up to two: rodents, reptiles and birds without a permit (as well as one dog above six months and one cat above three months of age)**
- 3. Encourage good design and retention of sufficient open space in new dwellings and those being renovated, to accommodate pets.**



## 6. Minimising conflict between people and pets in open space

Due to increasing residential densities, busy lifestyle commitments and restrictions on pets in public space, formal pet exercise and socialisation in public space is becoming more important and in greater demand<sup>39</sup>. However, the *Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006* identified a number of conflicts between dogs and other park users. The major conflicts and issues identified were:

- the presence of dog excrement in open space
- the lack of dog waste facilities
- dogs off-lead in designated on-lead areas, and upsetting other park users and wildlife
- lack of designated dog off-lead areas
- conflicts between dogs and cyclists
- lack of drinking taps for dogs.

Dog walking is commonly incorporated with a number of other informal activities in parks and reserves, and therefore needs to be accommodated in the same way as those (such as informal ball sports, Frisbee, picnics and kite flying).

It is recognised however, that there are some places where it is not appropriate to have dogs. These include: sites of environmental significance, very small sites, sites with a civic function and within playgrounds.

<sup>39</sup> McArthur, G (2006) *Meet and Greet: an etiquette guide for off-leash dog park behaviour* Gwen McArthur, QLD, Australia

### 6.1 Dog on-lead policy

A Yarra Council Order was made in 1998 under section 26 of the *Domestic (Feral & Nuisance) Act 1994*, to classify all public land in Yarra as on-lead, with designated off-lead and dog-prohibited areas. In broad terms, any dog that leaves its owner's property must be on a lead<sup>40</sup>. Thus, dogs must be on-lead:

- in all streets, roads, nature strips and public car parks
- in public open space, except where specifically designated otherwise.

This on-lead policy has considerable merit, however to minimise the conflicts identified in the *Yarra Open Space Strategy 2006*, additional controls are recommended associated with shared pathways and other recreation facilities.

To reinforce this policy, it will be advisable for Council to promote that if there is no sign saying the area is an off-lead (or dog prohibited) area, then the area is on-lead.

#### *Shared pathways*

Yarra has five main shared pathways along the Merri Creek, the Yarra River, Linear Reserve, the Railway Reserve and throughout Yarra Bend Park. Of these, Council manages Linear Reserve and the Railway Reserve only. Currently it is required that dogs must be on a lead on any footpath or shared path, at all times.

Due to the unpredictable nature of dogs, opportunities for distraction on a path, the speed at which a cyclist may be travelling, limited sightlines on some paths and the possibilities of a dog not being seen until too late, it is suggested that off-lead dogs are best kept away from shared paths, and dogs are kept on-lead when the owner is on the path.

Note

<sup>40</sup> A lead is specified as a chain, chord or leash not exceeding two metres in length (Council Order, July 1998)



The consultation for this project found a number of dog walkers concerned at the speed and behaviour of cyclists on shared paths and that some paths cut through off lead areas. These issues should be pursued in future plans for shared trails or a new bike plan for the City.

### *Playground, picnic and skate facilities*

The Council Order made under section 27 of the *Domestic (Feral & Nuisance) Animals Act 1994* requires dogs to be kept on-lead within 30 metres of all unfenced playground areas, BBQ and picnic facilities.

Dogs are prohibited from fenced playgrounds. Due to the vulnerability of children the principle of separating playgrounds and dogs is quite reasonable. However, fencing all playgrounds is not practical or effective means of controlling dogs and children. In an ideal world there would be a range of play spaces that are both fenced and unfenced, and some where dogs may be acceptable. However, a limited range of play spaces and availability of open space generally prohibits such flexibility.

As some Council reserves where playgrounds are very small, the specified distance (30m) may be unreasonable in many cases, especially when a family may wish to visit the park while walking a family pet. Therefore, it is recommended that on-lead reserves that contain a playground establish a 5 metre buffer surrounding the mulch area of the play equipment to be prohibited to dogs. Space outside this 5 metre buffer is dog on-lead. For playgrounds in off-lead reserves, a five metre buffer surrounding the mulch area of the play equipment should be prohibited to dogs, and an additional 15 metre buffer from the prohibited area remain as dog on-lead. Space outside this second buffer area can be dog off-lead.

If a playground is fenced, no prohibited or on-lead buffer is necessary. Dogs are required to be kept outside the fence, however they should not be left tethered. Dogs tethered in a public place may become threatened, aggressive, or vulnerable to attack, and create a nuisance by barking.

Yarra has two skate facilities: in Edinburgh Gardens and Quarries Park. These are located in on-lead areas. Should further skate and BMX facilities be

developed, it would be reasonable to establish a ten metre on-lead buffer around the facility as dogs may stray into the path of a rider and cause an accident.

Note

The community consultation for this project identified some concern about cats and dogs fouling in sand pits. Cats and dogs will not be attracted any more to sand than other loose materials such as mulch. By prohibiting dogs and cats from playgrounds, fouling can be minimised. However stray animals can foul sand and mulch. Council can minimise health concerns about fouling by ensuring sand is raked, cleaned with a sodium hypochlorite solution and replaced on a regular basis.

### *Waterway corridors*

The Yarra River and Merri Creek provide important environmental corridors throughout the municipality. They provide snake habitat, pockets of remnant vegetation and flora of state significance, as well as sites of state and regional geological and geomorphologic significance<sup>41</sup>.

These corridors are popular spots to walk, swim and socialise dogs.

Snake bite is a realistic concern in these corridors.

The practice of swimming dogs has been a concern in some areas due to bank degradation. Parks Victoria now provides several river access ramps into the Yarra at Yarra Bend Park which may be used by dogs.

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<sup>41</sup> Yarra Open Space Strategy

There are eleven on-lead waterway corridor reserves in Yarra. These are:

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| ■ Annette's Place / River Street        | ■ Loys Paddock           |
| ■ Batson Reserve (also Rushall Reserve) | ■ Ramsden Street Reserve |
| ■ Coulson Reserve                       | ■ Rudder Grange Park     |
| ■ Collingwood Children's Farm           | ■ Thomas Kidney Reserve  |
| ■ Dights Falls                          | ■ Walker Street Reserve  |
| ■ Fairfield Park                        |                          |

There are another nine reserves associated with waterway corridors. Seven of these are currently designated as either multi-zone or off-lead reserves (see Table 6 on page 37).

Alphington Park could possibly become a dog off-lead area, however, an on-lead buffer from the wetland and water's edge would be required.

Knotts Reserve is a waterway corridor reserve with a synthetic athletics facility on it. Due to the risk to athletes and the nature of the surface, this site would not be suitable as an off-lead area. Knotts Reserve would be better as a dog prohibited area.

### *Sporting grounds*

There are nineteen sites with sporting grounds (AFL, cricket or soccer / football) in Yarra. While there is no established grading system to reflect the standard of grounds, there are a number of characteristics that indicate quality.

Generally speaking, sand based ovals and turf wickets represent higher quality grounds, and require greater maintenance at substantially higher cost. These grounds are often enclosed by wire mesh fencing. Dogs can dig up and damage sand based ovals exacerbating risk of ankle and other injuries for athletes. The issue of dog waste is problematic for users of all sporting grounds.

Council recognises these constraints; however there is limited opportunity for dog off-lead exercise in the municipality. At this time, Council permits dog off-lead use on all *unfenced* sporting grounds in the City, when not in use for games, club

or school training or competition, or other event. Dogs are prohibited from fenced sporting grounds<sup>42</sup>.

Should Council provide artificial grass sports surfaces in future, it is recommended that dogs be prohibited from these grounds as they are costly to maintain and it is difficult to remove dog waste.

To adequately maintain ground surfaces and minimise potential conflicts between dog owners and sporting clubs, it is recommended that Council (in conjunction with relevant sporting clubs) monitor dog use of ovals. Ongoing education aimed at dog owners and sporting club members will be beneficial to ensure mutual understanding, respect and responsibility between users.

It is also recommended that lease agreements with sporting clubs include requirements to pick up all dog waste and check for holes in the playing surface, prior to club use of the grounds.

Dogs must be under effective control by means of a lead whenever a sporting ground is in use for games, club or school training or competition, or other event, as per Council's Order.

Additional management may be required at sporting grounds to minimise conflicts between dogs and users. This may include:

- signage to ensure owners know when and where dogs are permitted off-lead
- periodic patrols by authorised Council Officers to notify pet owners of their responsibilities and to monitor potential conflicts between dogs and sport
- provision of bins to facilitate disposal of dog waste.

<sup>42</sup> A fenced sporting ground is enclosed by a wire mesh fence, such as Peterson Oval in Edinburgh Gardens, for example.

## **Action Required**

- 1. Retain the on-lead policy for dogs in public spaces, unless an area/ reserve is signposted otherwise**
- 2. Promote that if there is no sign saying the area is off-lead or prohibited, then the area is on-lead**
- 3. Promote the fact that dogs can be exercised and socialized on-lead**
- 4. Ensure sufficient signage is strategically placed so that all dog walkers and other users are well informed about the status of the area they are entering**
- 5. Amend the Council Order to ensure dogs on shared paths and five metres either side are on-lead at all times, even if pathways run through off-lead areas**
- 6. Encourage people riding or running with dogs to keep dogs on-lead or well off shared paths**
- 7. Allow dogs to be off-lead on unfenced sporting grounds, when not in use**
- 8. Prohibit dogs from fenced sporting grounds at all times**
- 9. Ensure leasing arrangements with sporting clubs include requirements to pick up all dog waste, and they check for holes prior to use of the ground**
- 8. Continue regular inspections of sports grounds, and monitor potential conflicts between dogs and sport**
- 9. Discourage residents from tethering a dog in public**
- 10. Stencil and / or signpost shared paths to advertise the on-lead policy and the preferred code of conduct**
- 11. Introduce a local law restricting off-lead dogs from being within ten metres from any skate park and BMX facility**
- 12. Change the distance a dog on-lead can be from a playground to 5 metres**
- 13. Change the distance a dog off-lead can be from a playground to 20 metres**
- 14. Prohibit cats from all dog on-lead parks in the waterway corridors and all sites of environmental significance.**

## 6.2 Areas where cats and dogs are prohibited

Currently dogs are prohibited from seven reserves in Yarra:

- McNamara Reserve, Batman Reserve, Edwardes Place, Garry Owen Park and Whitlam Place. (Dog use is excluded at these sites as the **reserves are too small**)
- Urban Arts Square (corner Punt and Bridge Road) (Dog use is excluded, because of the site's **civic function**)
- Cairns Reserve (Dog use is excluded because of **habitat value**)

### *Civic and Habitat reserves*

Cairns Reserve and Urban Arts Square are best changed to on-lead, in line with the municipal wide on-lead policy. Having a dog on-lead in these areas is not considered detrimental to their primary function.

### *Small reserves*

Dog off-lead exercise in small reserves can cause conflict with other park users, and may prevent some potential users from visiting the reserve (i.e. older adults or children who may be fearful of dogs)<sup>43</sup>. For this reason, dogs should be on-lead in small reserves as a general rule, where 'small' refers to any park classified as local or small local in the Yarra Open Space Strategy.

<sup>43</sup> McArthur, G (2006) "Meet and Greet- an etiquette guide for off leash dog park behaviour" Gwen McArthur, Australia

### *Environmentally significant areas*

Yarra has a number of sites of environmental significance<sup>44</sup>. However cats and dogs were previously not excluded from these areas.

Cats and dogs can damage environmentally significant areas by traumatising, injuring or killing small birds and animals; trampling flora; and disturbing or causing erosion on the edges of water courses. Hence pets should be formally excluded from these areas. Reasons and associated benefits for restricting pets from these areas should be promoted.

Sections 25a, 26a and 42a of the *Domestic (Feral & Nuisance) Animals Act 1994* outline Council's options regarding cat restrictions, including:

- restricting the hours which a cat may be off its owner's property
- prohibiting cats from entering specified public areas in the City
- prohibiting or restricting cat ownership in areas of the municipality where threatened native fauna are at risk of attack
- Authorised officers can destroy an animal in a conservation area, set aside as such in the planning scheme.

*The Wildlife Act 1975*- section 48 also addresses issues of cats and dogs in environmentally significant areas and wildlife.

Whilst cats are not often walked, it would be beneficial to restrict cats wandering into significant areas, and enable Council to have cats (domestic and stray / feral) removed from them.

Trapping of cats in environmentally significant areas, either during the day or overnight can occur via the Habitat Management Officer at Council, in conjunction with other land managers such as the Department. of Sustainability and Environment and Parks Victoria.

Council could also promote and interpret wildlife and indigenous flora in parks that may encourage pet owners to take more care and protect the wildlife.

<sup>44</sup> Yarra Open Space Strategy

## Action Required

- 1. Ensure dogs are on-lead in all reserves classified as local and small local**
- 2. Prohibit dogs and cats (and other pets) from environmentally significant areas**
- 3. Undertake cat trapping (domestic and stray / feral) in areas of environmental significance, in conjunction with Parks Victoria and the Department. of Sustainability and Environment**
- 4. Enforce the *Wildlife Act 1975* section 48**
- 5. Provide signage and information about flora and fauna in parks that encourages pet owners to take more care in these areas.**

## 6.3 Dog off-lead areas

There are a number of issues related to off-lead areas, including the number and distribution of how these are provided, the suitability of waterway corridors as off-lead areas, and the nature and design of off-lead areas.

### Number and distribution of off-lead areas

There are twelve existing dog off-lead reserves, or off lead areas within reserves (multi-zone sites).

Equitable distribution of off-lead areas in Yarra is problematic. Most off-lead areas are in the north-east and south of the municipality. There is a lack of off-lead areas (and public open space generally) throughout the centre of the municipality in the suburbs of Fitzroy, Collingwood and Carlton, to meet current demand. There are several large off-lead areas in larger parks (eg. Princes Park close the City of Yarra's boundary).

Many residents do not have a dog off-lead area within 400m of their home, and it will not be possible to create these as there is not public open space available within 400m of all households.

In the absence of sufficient off-lead spaces, there are several options to provide for dog off-lead exercise. These include: designated off-lead zones within on-lead parks, off-lead time scheduled in parks, and off-lead reserves.

### Types of off-lead areas

Anecdotal evidence suggests that with increased dog restrictions in public space, there is an increasing tendency for people to run dogs off-lead in on-lead areas. There is also demand for areas for small dogs to run off lead (more protected environments) and for pets who may not be well socialised, or that are seen as a threat to other people or dogs, or need some containment<sup>45</sup>.

**Multi-zone parks** (i.e. where a park may have a designated off-lead area and the rest is on-lead) are a common solution to the demand for more off-lead space in municipalities across Victoria, in larger parks that can accommodate both uses. For Yarra, reserves classified in the Open Space Strategy as *City-wide* reserves are suitable for multi-zone functions.

Council officers in Yarra have observed that owners are more compliant in reserves that have both on and off-lead zones, compared to on-lead only reserves<sup>46</sup>.

Issues raised with respect to these parks include the relationship of the off-lead area to facilities such as a playground, picnic facilities and shared paths (ie being too close) and signing and clearly delineating the boundary between off-lead and on-lead areas.

**Time scheduled off-lead dog areas** (i.e. where a park or beach may be off-lead at certain hours) is common for beaches, and overseas, for example: Central Park, New York. However it is not common in Victorian parks. Due to the lack of space and other demands on open space in Yarra, time scheduling will be necessary to accommodate dog off-lead exercise in smaller reserves, without inhibiting other park functions from occurring. Reserves classified in the Open Space Strategy as *neighbourhood parks* are in most instances suitable for time scheduled off-lead areas.

Time scheduled off-lead parks should be trialled to allow dog off-lead exercise before 9am and after 5pm, year round. The consultation for this project identified many people found after 6pm too late because of darkness. Consideration could be given to review these times in daylight saving periods, based on evaluation and feedback by all park users.

A strategy for easily identifying what area (or when an area) is off-lead will be crucial in determining the success or otherwise of these strategies. Council will need to reinforce the policy: **if there is no sign it is on-lead.**

Clear delineation of multi-zone parks is absolutely paramount, along with appropriate and adequate signage to inform off-lead regulations and time scheduling.

To improve the distribution of off-lead areas, it is considered beneficial to provide three types of off-lead opportunities:

- **off-lead reserves:** no restrictions, some regional and city-wide reserves will be suitable
- **multi-zone reserves:** designated off-lead areas within on-lead reserves, some city-wide reserves will be suitable
- **time scheduled off-lead reserves:** off-lead exercise is permitted before 9am and after 5pm, all other times the reserve is on lead; Some neighbourhood reserves will be suitable for time scheduling.

All reserves classified in the Yarra Open Space Strategy as *local* or *small local* are considered too small for off-lead exercise due to the potential impact on other reserve users, especially preschool children and older adults.

These are to remain as on-lead areas at all times unless signposted as prohibited due to other issues, such as environmental significance.

Flockhart Reserve is an exception to this rule; while classified as local, it is to remain an off-lead reserve with no restrictions as this is how the reserve has been used previously and consultation supports this classification.

The additional off-lead areas proposed in this strategy have been based on internal stakeholder consultation, reserve characteristics, and location, size and proximity to existing off-lead sites.

<sup>45</sup> McArthur, G (2006) *Meet and Greet: an etiquette guide for off-leash dog park behaviour* Gwen McArthur, QLD, Australia

<sup>46</sup> Council's Community Amenity Quarterly Report, February 2007





### *The nature and design of off-lead areas*

Apart from being off-lead, there is likely to be a demand for different types of dog parks. These might range from simply an area designated as off-lead but with no facilities, to those with minimal facilities such as a drinking bowl and bins for dog waste, to those with fences, dog waste bags, specialised bins, and doggy play equipment or cafés as now found in some places.

It is desirable to provide a diversity of types of off-lead areas, that include a combination of fenced and unfenced areas, large and small spaces, areas of rough vegetation and manicured spaces for running with the dog, those that are incidentally lit (by street or sports lighting) and unlit reserves, in each precinct.

There is no quantitative information about demand for fenced dog parks in Yarra although fenced dog parks have proven popular in other Victorian municipalities. Three fenced areas are proposed: Edinburgh Gardens, Linear Reserve and Yarra Bend Park.

There may be other incidental open space areas, for example in association with roadways, that can be assessed for their suitability to run dogs off-lead.

### **Dog off-lead park hierarchy**

A hierarchy of off-lead dog parks that is consistent with the catchment of the park (ie local, neighbourhood, City-wide) will facilitate a diversity of types of dog parks and assist Council to provide facilities, equitably and cost effectively across the municipality, and in line with community expectations.

The top tier of the hierarchy proposed is Primary Off-lead Park; this is a park with the highest degree of accessibility, catering for users that may travel further than a short walk, and where they may expect to find a social atmosphere, meet other dogs, and have some level of support facilities, such as a fence and public toilets etc. This park typically will have a higher level of maintenance than other lower level dog parks.

The second tier is Secondary Off-lead Parks, which are likely to be smaller and have fewer facilities, while the lowest tier is Local Off-lead Parks that are not likely to have any dog specific facilities. Characteristics of each park in the proposed hierarchy are provided in Appendix 3.

Council should aim to provide two or three Primary Off-lead Parks in the municipality. Yarra Bend Park can be promoted as a Primary Off-lead Park due to its status as a Parks Victoria reserve and high level of accessibility and existing facilities. Council should also aim to provide at least one Secondary Off-lead Park in each precinct of the municipality.



Regardless of the hierarchy of the park there are some characteristics that should be the same in all off lead areas/ parks. These are:

- A hardy grass surface that can recover quickly after wear
- Preferably a site than can be watered to dilute the affects of urine on grass
- A large enough space to be away from a road that carries high volume of traffic, or an escarpment
- Away from vegetation known to be harmful or poisonous to dogs (eg wandering jew)
- Away from unfenced playgrounds with large areas of mulch or sand
- Away from sites of environmental significance or habitat
- Preferably a site that does not have a shared path popular with cyclists through it
- A site that can be relatively easily delineated from an adjacent on-lead area.

### Off-lead areas in waterway corridor reserves

Seven of the twelve existing off-lead areas are in waterway corridors. Table 6 shows the existing dog off-lead or multi-zone sites that are in waterway corridors.

**Table 6: Dog off-lead or multi-zone sites that are in waterway corridors**

Off-lead waterway corridor reserves	Multi-zone waterway corridor reserves
Burnley Park and Circus Site	Halls Reserve
Coate Park	Quarries Park
Flockhart Reserve	Yarra Bend Park <sup>47</sup>
Kevin Bartlett Reserve	

Some off-lead areas in waterway corridors are appropriate due to the size of the space available and the demand for walking dogs in these areas. Where shared paths dissect these areas it is proposed they be on-lead. Wetland areas and riverbanks are proposed generally to be on-lead.

Pet owners should be made aware that in these waterways corridors they may be in snake habitat.

Where there are habitat values or the likelihood of viewing wildlife, these could be interpreted so that pet owners may take more care.

<sup>47</sup> Yarra Bend Park is managed by Parks Victoria and currently has delineated on-lead, off-lead and dog prohibited areas, which should be retained



## Action Required

- 1. Promote that all parks and open space in Yarra are on lead unless sign indicates other wise**
- 2. Implement the hierarchy of off-lead areas across the municipality**
- 3. Where off lead reserves are in waterway corridors, introduce a 30m on lead buffer from wetlands and the water edge**
- 4. Provide signage, where appropriate, to inform the public of the opportunity to view wild life and vegetation of significance and encourage responsible pet ownership**
- 5. Make pets owners aware that in waterway corridors they may be in snake habitat**
- 6. Implement allocation of additional off-lead areas so as to provide a more equitable distribution of off-lead areas by precinct as follows:**

### *Precinct 1: North Carlton*

Residents in this precinct will continue to use off-lead areas in Princes Park, and Royal Park outside Yarra in the Melbourne City Council (there are dog user groups at these sites), and Edinburgh Gardens.

- Add the provision of an exclusive off lead section in the area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner of Canning and Curtain Streets.

### *Precinct 2: North Fitzroy / Clifton Hill*

- Develop a fenced off-lead area at the 'Old Silo Site' in Linear Reserve
- Change Quarries Park and Hall Reserve from multi-zone reserves to off-lead reserves
- Retain multi-zone areas in Edinburgh Gardens, and Darling Gardens (relocate off-lead zone away from the playground)
- Continue to prohibit dogs from Peterson Oval in Edinburgh Gardens.

### *Precinct 3: Alphington / Fairfield*

Retain existing off-lead areas at Coate Park and areas in Yarra Bend Park (Westfield Reserve, Westfield South, Deep Rock Road, Fairlea Road and Collins Oval).

- Add Alphington Park as a time scheduled off-lead reserve
- Prohibit dogs from the Alphington Park wetland
- Add Fairfield Reserve as a dog off-lead reserve

#### *Precinct 4: Fitzroy*

There are no existing off-lead areas in this precinct, and few options to provide such space.

- Use Atherton Reserve as an off-lead area when the oval is not in use for sport or social games.

#### *Precinct 5: Abbotsford / Collingwood*

Retain the one existing off-lead area in this precinct: Flockhart Reserve. Some residents will continue to use the off-lead areas within Yarra Bend Park.

- Add Gahans Reserve as a time scheduled off-lead reserve
- Add Johnston Street Reserve as an off-lead park (a fence will be required at this site)
- Nominate Victoria Park as an off-lead reserve when not in use for sport or other community activities.

#### *Precinct 6: Richmond*

Retain the two existing off-lead areas in this precinct: Citizens' Park and Burnley Park & Circus Site. Alternative reserves in the precinct are too small for off-lead.

Some residents will continue to use off-lead areas in Yarra Park and around Richmond Cricket Oval, outside the municipality.

#### *Precinct 7: Burnley*

Retain the one existing multi-zone park (Barkly Gardens), and one off-lead area at Kevin Bartlett Reserve.

- Change Kevin Bartlett Reserve from off-lead to multi-zone in recognition of existing sporting facilities and habitat values
- Add McConchie Reserve as a time scheduled reserve
- Adding Loys Paddock as an off-lead reserve.

## Action Required

1. **Promote the municipality-wide on-lead policy: if there is no sign, the park on-lead**
2. **Provide a hierarchy of off-lead areas across the municipality, ensuring these meet the basic criteria identified**
3. **Where off-lead reserves are in waterway corridors, introduce a 30m on-lead buffer from wetlands and the water's edge**
4. **Identify (through interpret signage) opportunities to view wild life or vegetation of significance and encourage pet owners to take more care**
5. **Make pet owners aware that in waterway corridors they may be in snake habitat**
6. **Consider allocating additional off-lead areas so as to provide a relatively equitable distribution of spaces by precinct as follows:**
7. **Allow dogs off-lead on unfenced sporting grounds when not in use for games, club or school training or competition, or other event**
8. **Undertake additional management measures at sporting grounds to articulate dog off-lead regulations and manage ground surfaces**
9. **Maintain a diversity of different types and hierarchy of dog friendly parks in the City**
10. **Trial time scheduled off lead areas (before 9am and after 5pm) in identified parks and patrol after introduction, to enforce and monitor compliance**
11. **Monitor demand for fenced dog off-lead areas, and introduce the two fenced enclosures as proposed**
12. **Trial a fenced off-lead area in the south of the municipality, if demand arises**
13. **Review existing delineations at multi-zone parks**
14. **Prepare a map of off-lead parks and zones for publishing on Council's web site and distribute to all dog services in the City**
15. **Classify dog off-lead parks according to the proposed hierarchy and promote what users may expect to find at each**
16. **Ensure features and facilities at off-lead areas are incrementally brought in line with the proposed hierarchy and suitable features of dog off-lead parks.**

## 6.4 Dog waste

The presence of dog waste in public places is one of the primary causes of complaints to Council. Dog (and cat) waste is a serious environmental and health issue, it is a concern for sports ground and park users and it is a major source of contamination.



Droppings may contain harmful bacteria that can transmit diseases to humans.

To overcome waste management issues, all dog owners should carry more than one plastic bag when off private property, to clean up after their dog. Fines can be issued for not having a bag.

Bag dispensers are provided in selected parks and reserves in Yarra. Council currently spends in the order of \$30,000 annually on bag provision.

The demand for bags appears to be increasing, with community consultation identifying that the number of bag dispensers and the frequency of plastic bag restocking is not sufficient<sup>48</sup>.

As it is the responsibility of dog owners to pick up after their pets, continuing to provide bags in public spaces is likely to create an increased reliance on bags being provided, rather than improved responsibility for owners to carry multiple bags. As a first step, it is desirable that Council provides bags off-site (available from the Council offices or sent out at registration) and does not provide additional bag dispensers in parks.

In the long term, it may be beneficial to phase out the bag dispensers in line with other Councils.

In the annual mail out of animal registration, Council has included an information sheet informing the owners of the availability of bags at the three town halls on presentation of the leaflet.

Education, incentives and communication can establish local ownership and policing of 'pick-up' requirements at off-lead reserves, at relatively small cost.

Due to the high transient population of Yarra, it will be important to maintain patrols and education programs.

Some Councils provide specific dog waste bins in conjunction with dispensers. The City of Yarra will shortly introduce recycling bins into parks. It is desirable that park users learn to deposit their dog waste bags in the general waste bins, not recycling bins and these are labelled accordingly.

Any specific dog waste bins should be replaced by general waste bins and these should be appropriately located in off-lead parks so that they are convenient to dog users.

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<sup>48</sup> Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006

## Action Required

- 1. Promote the requirement for owners to “pick up” after their dogs, and dispose of waste appropriately in the general waste bin (where provided) or take it home**
- 2. Do not provide specific bins just for dog waste.**
- 3. Remind dog walkers to carry a sufficient supply of plastic bags with them, and to pick up and dispose of dog waste**
- 4. Provide a supply of plastic bags to registered owners, from the town halls and other Council buildings, to encourage owners to take responsibility for carrying dog waste bags and pick up after their dog.**
- 5. Ensure general waste bins are placed in all off-lead parks**
- 6. Fine dog owners who do not pick up after their dogs**
- 7. Where possible, provide taps for owners to wash their hands.**

## 6.5 Monitoring and evaluation

### Monitoring compliance

Continue cyclical education programs to promote responsible pet ownership and take appropriate enforcement action when required to ensure compliance

#### *Park Patrols*

Council undertakes periodic patrols to observe the behaviour of dog owners in public spaces, and encourage dialogue with people and their pets. Extra patrols are undertaken outside of work hours, during which officers have found that in general:<sup>49</sup>

- owners carry pick-up devices, however do not always use them
- owners are generally compliant in reserves that have both on and off-lead zones
- dogs off-lead are often sighted in reserves that only permit on-lead exercise.

An ongoing education program has been undertaken by Council and will continue, Council should now enforce the legislation by providing ‘swift and decisive’ enforcement action where appropriate.

#### *Registration and renewal follow-ups*

Annual surveys are one method of gauging accurate rates of cat and dog ownership. The survey could target rental accommodation and public housing where registration may be less likely.

An annual door knock should continue in June/July throughout the municipality for the purpose of identifying unregistered dogs and cats and animals whose registration has not been renewed.

<sup>49</sup> Council’s Community Amenity Quarterly Report, February 2007



Rewards for having a registered dog may be issued. Warnings and incentives may be provided to register other pets.

Telephone interviews may also be useful to target residents who have not renewed their pet's registration, to determine why.

### **Information gained throughout these processes can provide useful benchmarking information to inform Council of the extent and nature of education programs required**

### **Fines**

Council currently has authority under State legislation and local laws to issue fines and notices.

Existing animal related Local Laws as outlined in *Roads and Council Land Local Law, No.2 of 2002*, and *Environmental Local Law, No. 3 of 2002* are satisfactory. At this stage it is believed current penalty units per offence are a sufficient deterrent to obtain compliance. This can be revisited at the annual review of the Animal Management Plan.

### **Evaluation of animal services**

Performance indicators are required to monitor Council's role regarding animal management, both in terms of the DAMP requirements as set out by the Department of Primary Industries, and resident perceptions regarding animal facilities and maintenance in the municipality.

#### *DAMP requirements*

Performance indicators required to monitor Council's role in facilitating Domestic Animal Management include:

- Rates of cat and dog registration
- Number and type of animal requests received

- Number of dog attacks causing injury per 1,000 population
- Total percentage of cats and dogs impounded each year, and the outcome (percentage reclaimed, re-housed and destroyed)
- Total percentage of cats trapped each year, and the outcome (percentage reclaimed, re-housed and destroyed)
- Declared dog compliance rates
- Rates of compliance during patrols.

Council should seek to prepare a realistic target (considering the high transient population) for each item above and compare these targets to actual results each year. Services contracted to other providers should request any necessary statistics and information in any service agreement with the providers. Services currently provided by the Lost Dogs Home include provision of this necessary information.

Performance indicators should be collected annually and results reviewed. Details of the performance indicators and targets used to monitor the DAMP requirements are outlined in Attachment 1- Key performance indicators.

#### *Resident perceptions*

It is highly desirable that Council monitor the demand for pet services and facilities. This can be achieved through distribution of a household survey on a biennial basis. The survey should seek to monitor resident satisfaction with Council's animal management services and processes for dealing with animal related issues.

The survey should include questions about:

- satisfaction with Council's procedure for addressing animal complaints and queries
- the perceived presence of stray and feral animals in the neighbourhood
- satisfaction with Council's provision of dog facilities
- satisfaction with Council's maintenance of dog facilities
- where residents go to walk dogs
- where residents would like to go to walk dogs, but can't, and why





- conflicts experienced with other park users

#### *other comments. Training and development*

Council continues to provide annual training days for staff on animal handling and behaviour through appropriate service providers, as well as appropriate staff undertaking Certificate IV in Control and Regulations in conjunction with the RSPCA and Swinburne.

Council has continued to increase efficiencies and protect occupational health and safety of staff by purchasing new and additional equipment. This includes micro chip scanners, catching poles, cat traps and gloves. Full animal cages have been installed in the rear of the two dedicated animal management vehicles to collect and convey animals safely.

Council has restructured the Community Amenity Unit to provide increased capacity as well as to lift the profile of animal management both internally and externally.

Council contract pound service provider requires all rangers and staff be appropriately qualified to undertake such work. The requirement for Lost Dogs Home staff to be appropriately qualified is contained in Council's Animal Pound and Related Services Contract No. C681.

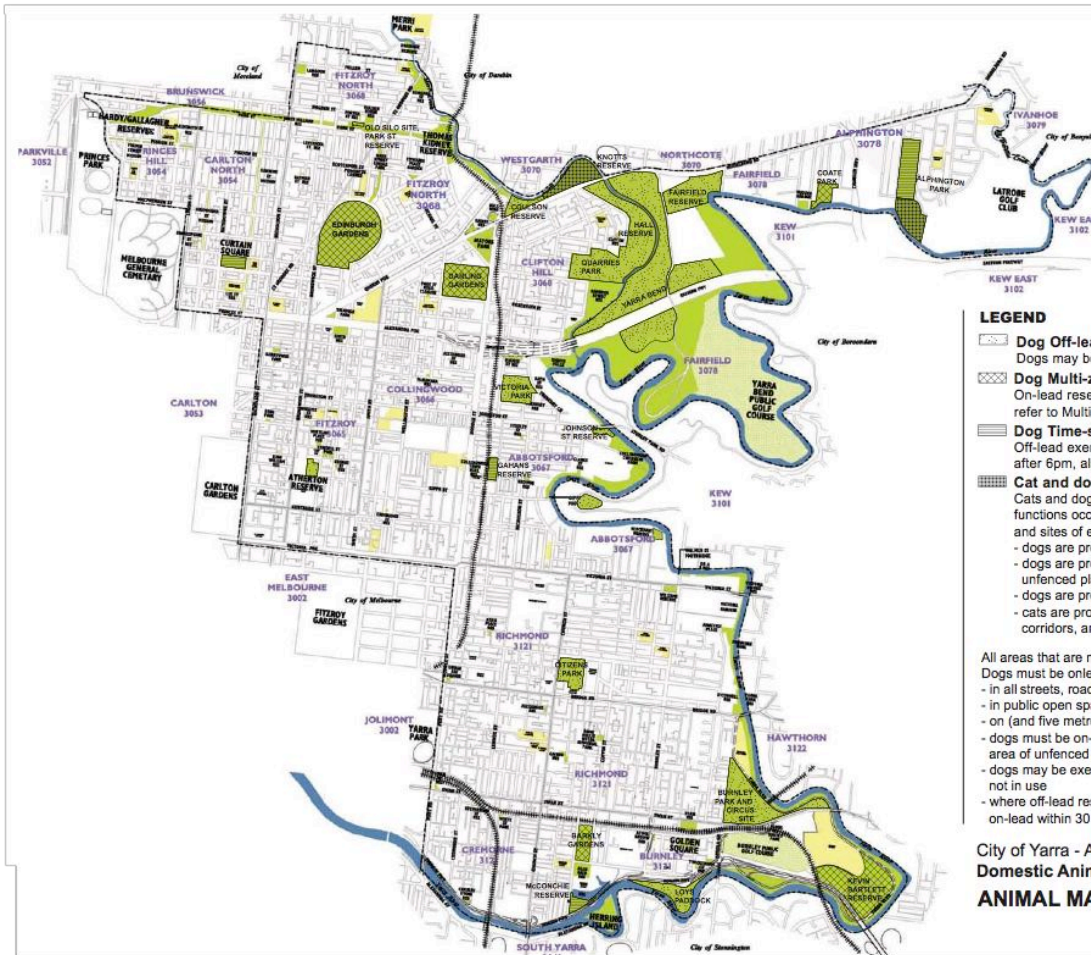
### **Action Required**

- 1. Undertake cyclical education and awareness campaigns about animal management regulations**
- 2. Continue to provide patrols in public spaces**
- 3. Seek to monitor pet registration rates through the annual door knock**
- 4. Continue to gauge residents' attitudes and preferences to pet issues, Council's animal management services and dog off and on lead areas through biennial surveys**
- 5. Include 'monitoring of performance' in any animal management contracts, where services are contracted to external providers**
- 6. Maintain a staff training and development program to include:**
  - attending relevant industry workshops in animal handling and behaviour**
  - animal management staff to complete certificate courses in animal management, regulation and control**
  - continue to provide and maintain appropriate equipment for staff to be able to provide the services required.**


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1: City of Yarra Animal Management Zones

### APPENDIX 1: City of Yarra - Animal Management Zones




**LEGEND**

-  **Dog Off-lead area**  
Dogs may be exercised off-lead in these reserves
-  **Dog Multi-zone reserve**  
On-lead reserves with areas sign-posted for off-lead exercise, refer to Multi-zone Reserve maps for further details
-  **Dog Time-share reserve**  
Off-lead exercise is permitted in these reserves before 8am and after 6pm, all other times the reserve is on-lead
-  **Cat and dog prohibited area**  
Cats and dogs are prohibited from a number of areas, due to other functions occurring in that area or for conservation of flora and fauna and sites of environmental significance
  - dogs are prohibited from fenced playgrounds
  - dogs are prohibited within five metres of the mulch area of unfenced playgrounds
  - dogs are prohibited from fenced and synthetic sports grounds
  - cats are prohibited from all dog on-lead parks in the waterway corridors, and all sites of environmental significance


All areas that are not marked as one of the above are dog on-lead. Dogs must be on-lead:

- in all streets, roads, nature strips and public car parks
- in public open space, except where specifically sign-posted otherwise
- on (and five metres either side of) any footpath or shared path
- dogs must be on-lead between five and twenty metres from the mulch area of unfenced playgrounds
- dogs may be exercised off-lead on any unfenced sports ground, when not in use
- where off-lead reserves are in waterway corridors, dogs must be on-lead within 30 metres of wetlands and the water's edge

City of Yarra - Animal Management Zones  
Domestic Animal Management Strategy  
**ANIMAL MANAGEMENT ZONES**



Drawn by: SB  
Date: May 2008



## APPENDIX 2a: Multi-zone Reserve, Coate Park

### City of Yarra - Animal Management Zones



**LEGEND**  
 Dog off-lead zone

City of Yarra - Animal Management Zones  
 Domestic Animal Management Strategy  
 Multi-zone Reserve  
**APPENDIX 2A: COATE PARK**





Drawn by: SB  
 Date: March 2008  
 Scale 1:2000 @ A3



## APPENDIX 2b: Multi-zone Reserve, Darling Gardens

### City of Yarra - Animal Management Zones



**LEGEND**  
 Dog off-lead zone  
 Dog prohibited zone

City of Yarra - Animal Management Zones  
 Domestic Animal Management Strategy  
 Multi-zone Reserve

**APPENDIX 2B: DARLING GARDENS**



0 50 m



Drawn by: SB  
 Date: March 2008  
 Scale 1:2000 @ A3



## APPENDIX 2c: Multi-zone Reserve, Edinburgh Gardens

### City of Yarra - Animal Management Zones





## APPENDIX 2d: Multi-zone Reserve, Kevin Bartlett Reserve

### City of Yarra - Animal Management Zones



## APPENDIX 3: Dog off-lead park hierarchy

The following table illustrates the nature of dog off-lead facilities and associated characteristics, which Council will work towards and residents can expect to find (in time) at each level of the hierarchy.

Hierarchy:	Characteristics
Primary	Fence to fully enclose the area enabling dogs to roam freely
	Double gate entrance to the park (effectively creating an interim holding pen) to keep dogs from escaping whilst facilitating wheelchair access
	Prominent and accessible location
	Frequent maintenance
	Large open area for running
	An area and outdoor furniture that is accessible for people with a disability
	Likely co-location with other social/ family recreation facilities such as BBQ, Picnic, sport or play areas
	Potential co-location with dog obedience club, dog agility equipment and café
	Signs at all entrances outlining that it is an off-lead area, and the park rules
	General waste bins next to recycle park bins in close proximity to the entrance for the correct disposal of dog droppings
	Drinking fountains with fitted dog bowls at its base in close proximity to the entrance
	A public toilet or tap in close proximity to support hand washing
	Off-street car parking should be in close proximity
Secondary	Seating and shade
	Future access by shared pathway
	Signs at all entrances outlining that it is an off-lead area and relevant times, and the park rules
	Frequent maintenance
	Large open area for running
	Dedicated animal waste bins next to existing park bins in close proximity to the entrance and off lead areas for the correct disposal of dog droppings
Local	Drinking fountains with fitted dog bowls at its base in close proximity to the entrance
	Seating and shade
	Signs at all entrances outlining that it is an off-lead area and relevant times, and the park rules
	Park bins in close proximity to the entrance for the correct disposal of dog droppings



## APPENDIX 4: Numbers of pets allowed to be kept without a permit

Maximum number of animals permitted (without a permit) in flats and units, by type of animal

Type of animal	Maximum allowed
Dogs- over six months old	1
Dogs- under six months old	3
Cats- over three months old	1
Cats- under three months old	3
Birds	2
Cold water and tropical gold fish	Unlimited
Rodents	2
Any other animal species	Allowed, subject to permit

Maximum number of animals permitted (without a permit) in dwellings other than flats and units, by type of animal

Type of animal	Maximum allowed
Dogs- over six months old	2
Dogs- under six months old	4
Cats- over three months old	2
Cats- under three months old	4
Birds	5
Poultry	5
Reptiles	2
Rodents/Ferrets, guineapigs, rabbits or mice	2
Cold water and tropical gold fish	Unlimited
Any other animal species	Allowed, subject to permit

## APPENDIX 5: Pet Partners Details and Information Sources

### *Local veterinary clinics*

- Clifton Hill Veterinary Clinic ph: 9489 4055
- Carlton Veterinary Surgery ph: 9347 1988
- Fitzroy Veterinary Clinic ph: 9489 2195
- Richmond Veterinary Clinic ph: 9428 2220

### *Local dog obedience training*

- Northcote Dog Obedience Club, Alphington Park, Alphington ph: 9459 3390
- Command Dog Training School, Richmond ph: 1300 655 364

### *Local dog and cat care / boarding*

- Dog Zone, Richmond ph: 9427 9888
- Cat Boarding Collingwood, Collingwood ph: 9486 9807
- Cats Cosmopolitan Boarding Cattery, Collingwood ph: 9415 1281
- Cats in the City, North Fitzroy ph: 9489 2195

### *Local pet shops and food / supply / accessory stores, and grooming*

- Pets on Brunswick St, Fitzroy ph: 9417 1400
- Pets Paradise, Richmond ph: 9421 6174
- Zacs Pet Supplies, Clifton Hill ph: 9486 8445
- Pet Art, North Fitzroy ph: 9489 2557

- Laundry Mutt Dog & Cat Supplies and Dog Wash, Richmond ph: 9421 4950
- Going to the Dogs (grooming service), Richmond ph: 9427 7434

### *Peak Bodies and sources of information*

- Agility Dog Association of Australia Ltd; <http://www.adaa.com.au/>
- Assistance Dogs Australia; <http://www.assistedogs.org.au/>
- RSPCA; <http://www.rspcavic.org/>
- Guide Dogs Victoria; <http://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au/>
- The Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act <http://www.dms.dpc.vic.gov.au/>
- Responsible pet ownership: <http://www.pets.info.vic.gov.au/>
- The Lost Dogs Home: <http://www.dogshome.com>
- Cat Protection Society, Victoria: <http://www.catprotection.com.au>
- Petnet: <http://www.petnet.com.au/>
- The Victorian Canine Association: [www.vca.org.au](http://www.vca.org.au).
- Guide Dogs: [www.guidedogs.asn.au](http://www.guidedogs.asn.au)
- Hearing Dogs: [www.hearingdogs.asn.au](http://www.hearingdogs.asn.au)
- Quarantine Dogs: [www.aqis.gov.au/schools](http://www.aqis.gov.au/schools)
- Police Dogs: [www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au)
- Customs Detector Dogs: [www.customs.gov.au](http://www.customs.gov.au)



## **APPENDIX 6: Consultation Comments City of Yarra Open Space Study 2006**

Resident comments and general comments regarding specific parks, as noted in the *Yarra Open Space Strategy, 2006*, are listed below.

### *Alphington Park:*

- Off-lead zone required

### *Barkly Gardens:*

- Needs improved dog off-lead policy
- Dog access arrangements work well- perhaps consider this in other open spaces

### *Burnley Park and Oval:*

- Has been invaded by off-lead dogs

### *Carlton Gardens:*

- Dog off lead area required
- Cyclists should be permitted
- Recent discussions between City of Melbourne and the City of Yarra have identified that the City of Melbourne is looking for alternative locations for dog walking outside Carlton Gardens, and sought the views of the City of Yarra on other reserves where dog walking may be possible for residents of both neighbourhoods.

Open space in Fitzroy is extremely limited and the only location in which this may be possible to provide, would be in Atherton Reserve; however, this use would need to be compatible with the other uses proposed in a Neighbourhood park. These discussions are a good example of constructive liaison between municipalities on balancing open space needs for residents within the existing network.

### *Citizen's Park:*

- Dog waste not picked up, and is an issue

### *Curtain Square:*

- Don't visit this reserve because there is no off-lead area

### *Dame Nellie Melba Park:*

- Has lots of dog waste at times

### *Darling Gardens:*

- Don't visit because of dogs in the reserve
- Don't visit because of dog waste in the reserve
- Dogs near the playground are a problem
- Needs designated dog off-lead area



### *Edinburgh Gardens:*

- Stray dogs a problem
- Don't visit because of dangerous stray dogs
- Don't visit because the reserve is too busy
- Edinburgh Gardens should have dog off-lead areas
- Continuation of the off-lead area recommended
- Dog-free zones required
- Edinburgh Gardens should be dog on-lead for the safety of other open space users
- More dog waste facilities required
- Appreciate the dog drinking facilities
- Dog waste on ovals is an issue for kids playing there

### *Gipps St Park:*

- Don't visit because dogs are off-lead and I feel unsafe

### *Merri Creek Reserve:*

- Don't visit with dogs because of dangerous cyclists

### *Princess Park:*

- Has well behaved dogs and owners
- Needs improved dog facilities

### *Quarries Park:*

- Playground area should be free of dogs

### *Shakespeare St Park:*

- Lots of dog waste is not picked up

### *Yarra Bend Park:*

- Don't visit because there are no off-lead areas

### *Yarra River Linear Park:*

- Dog waste facilities are required all along the Yarra
- Dog river access points are required to prevent erosion
- Dogs off-lead cause hazard for cyclists

## **APPENDIX 7: Notes from Community Draft Plan Workshop**

Community Meeting Notes Monday 21st April, 2008

### **1. Introduction /Aim of the Strategy**

#### **Comments**

- Aim says animal's welfare is paramount. More A People issue; Reconsider strategy aims to reflect human safety, and rephrase 'paramount' concerns

### **2. What we know about people and their pets in Yarra**

#### **Comments**

- Need statistics: especially by area. When using statistics, identify how these impact/influence strategy recommendations
- Seem to be few complaints reported to council - no need to make a big issue out of something that only attracts a few complaints
- No.s of complaints etc very small

### **3. Responsible pet ownership**

#### **Comments**

- Is it going to be mandatory that cats are kept indoors overnight
- Strategy doesn't deal with cats- who is going keep them indoors?
- Heavy emphasis on dogs- what can cat owners do to prevent their cats wandering into cat restricted areas?

### **Nuisance, menacing and dangerous dogs**

- How are dogs deemed 'dangerous'? A standard process with several steps, initiated by a reported attack to Council

#### **Comments...**

- Less dogs complaints if had more off-lead areas. Need an off-lead area in walking distance from all residences
- Issue surrounding feeding native animals ( bad food) in public parks
- May need more information surrounding Council's Local Laws, and what the current regulations are
- People are here to have their say, don't want to have popular items at the end of the agenda!!
- This document must have validity, must make comments specific to Yarra

### **4. Pets other than cats and dogs**

#### **No comments...**

### **5. Minimising conflict in open space**

#### **Waste management**

#### **Comments**

- Recommend double the amount of bins provided
- Retain bins and bags
- Waste: can Council please increase bin collection at key dog parks



- Support council for continuing to provide dog poo bags
- Issue is: irresponsible management of the pet. Is a minority issue however the majority is affected by the recommended changes
- Human behaviour within shared parks and pathways is an issue, cleanliness of people and public BBQ areas. Idea to construct low-fence around public BBQ and playground areas to contain people and their filth, and separate children and families from dogs
- Is a human not an animal issue.
- Need additional patrolling to police these new regulations
- Haven't seen a large increase in complaints over recent years. Council could employ more officers for patrols
- Issue is compliance and the number of officers who can enforce it
- Equity must address social issues as well as spatial
- Fencing
- Comments
- Fencing: more physically practical than buffer zones around facilities

### **On-lead policy**

- No comment**

### **Playgrounds**

- Move Darling Gardens off-lead away from playground
- Need more fences

### **Skate and BMX facilities**

- No comment**

### **Shared paths (and 5m either side)**

- Concern about speeding bicycles, and paths being in the wrong place

### **Off-lead reserve**

- Dogs should be on-lead in small reserves

### **Multi-zone reserve**

- designated off-lead areas within on-lead reserve

### **Time share reserve**

- Concern that policy seems to be for time share and less off-lead.
- Time share rules are an introduction of more restrictions, rather than actually addressing the issue and enforcing compliance
- Time share times will introduce a number of other issues (I.e. picking up in the dark, safety at night etc). People tend to live/rent near off lead areas is need to exercise their dogs
- Suggest removal of time share park recommendations
- The after 6pm time share recommendation would be hazardous to possums and women
- Need to define what 'multi zone' means, to reduce conflict in shared spaces

### **Waterway corridors:**

- Comments**

- Conflict of policy re: waterway buffers and off-lead areas (Loys Paddock)
- Report neglects the issue of native wildlife in public parkland (not just river corridors). Need to address open space as habitat.

### **Sports grounds:**

- In many years haven't seen a ranger in the local park, and always pick up after dogs
- Concerning fitness groups using off lead areas when should use sports grounds.

### **Cat and dog prohibited areas:**

- No comments**

### **Existing off-lead parks and options for change:**

#### **Precinct 1: North Carlton**

- No existing off-lead areas
- Consider Curtain Square as a time share park or provide an exclusive dog off leash section adjacent to the park.
- It is assumed residents will continue to use dog off-lead areas in Princes Park, outside the municipality

#### **Comments**

- Curtain Square is very well used, especially in summer. Patrolling officers seen there frequently. Number of local residents who can't make it to surrounding off-lead areas.
- Idea: fence off part of the reserve for dog off-lead
- 6pm switch over for time share will be difficult in Curtain Square
- Some dog owners target possums- need to protect wildlife from dogs in urban parks

#### **Precinct 2: North Fitzroy / Clifton Hill**

#### **Comments**

- Concern over alignment of new shared path. Need signage here
- Idea: fence around the basketball court, need facilities to encourage good dog behaviour. Would like 'dog playgrounds' with jumps etc
- Can't blame the pet, train the owners and the cyclists, the people
- Darling Gardens: Signs in the wrong place: needed as you enter the park. Issues around having children or dogs close to the road. Idea to fence the off-lead area





- The off lead area needs to be reversed; south & east -not north east so away a from the playground.
- Cyclists need to slow down on shared paths

### **Precinct 3: Alphington / Fairfield**

- No comments**

### **Precinct 4: Fitzroy**

- No comments**

### **Precinct 5: Abbotsford / Collingwood**

- No comments**

### **Precinct 6: Richmond**

- Comments**

- Fence the playground (x2) and along the train line at Burnley Park
- Circus site, currently under utilised, possibly a good site to fence for dogs off-lead?
- Suggestion: Council to revisit the Precinct boundaries in the Open Space Strategy- Barkly Gardens is in Richmond.

### **Precinct 7: Burnley**

- Comments**

- Also need to educate families with children, not just dog owners
- Issue between time share and watering hours in Burnley

- Time share not supported (especially at Barkly Gardens- is very social as it is, don't want to 'change the fabric of the neighbourhood')
- People live there because of the off lead park – don't go fiddling with them
- Have community values at Barkly, put peer group pressure on people who don't pick up
- Issue surrounding 'shared' paths and cyclists thinking they are bike paths
- Issue with cyclists cutting off the path at Loys Paddock
- Loys Paddock: known cycling commuter track, and river bank revegetation
- Barkly Gardens - no wish to change it from the existing conditions
- Council has done a great job providing facilities at Barkly Gardens
- McConchie: fencing may be a solution here
- Barkly Gardens: recently had commercial uses here
- Can Council replace the bag dispenser at Golden Square

- Other comments**

- Dog complaints have dropped over the last 5 years - so why change things?
- Dog walkers would like BBQ areas too
- Would like advisory regulations be introduced to keep cyclists to paths
- Would like to see 'less dirty' provision of water for dogs, i.e. channel overflow water to thirsty plants
- Small parks: don't have time to get to other parks: need a level of common sense, discuss having your dog off lead with other park users first – then let off lead

## APPENDIX 8: Summary of Submissions on Draft Strategy

The following table outlines a summary of submissions: what was supported, not supported and other suggestions. It also indicated changes made to the draft strategy as a response.

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
1	<b>Suggestions:</b> Too many dogs eg footpath cafes/ markets. Few people pick up after their dogs. Council could make money from fines.		Richmond	Noted	Nil
2	<b>Supported:</b> Off lead areas important for socialisations (pets and people). Dog is catalyst for conversation etc. Agree Alphington Park south to river good place for off lead. Currently contradiction as obedient club can have their dogs off lead. May be conflicts if others off lead when classes are on.	Alphington Park	Alphington	Benefits already identified in report. All dogs need to be under effective control.	Nil  Nil
3	<b>Supported:</b> I found the document to be a well reasoned and sensible. Designating specific areas (such as playgrounds) as prohibited to dogs. Allowing off-lead access for dogs to parts of Alphington Park. Improved facilities for disposing of dog litter and hand washing. Longer access to playing fields when not being used. <b>Didn't support:</b> The prohibition of dogs from the Alphington wetlands area. This will stop access to the path that runs along the river past the Amcor site, deny access to the river at the old Alphington pool site, and prevent walking a circuit around two large open spaces for exercise. The proposed hours are too restrictive. Suggest before 9 and after 5. Maintenance of the dog litterbin and bag supply in Alphington Park is erratic. Bags often not replaced.	Alphington Park	Alphington	Dogs and wildlife create major conflicts. Dogs' owners should not rely on bags- as must carry and pick up by law.	No change to dogs prohibited from wetland. Suggest before 9 and after 5pm may be better received.
4.	<b>Same as above</b>	"	"	As Above	"As Above
5	<b>Didn't support:</b> changing off lead status to timeshared. Gets too dark and cold after 6pm during winter to walk dog (safety and poop scooping issues). Unrealistic to have people drive to Burnley just to cater for off leash activities.	Barkly Gardens	Burnley	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
6	<b>Supported:</b> Supports time share because it solves the concern that some people don't obey the on-lead provisions of the southern section. Not enough current signage. <b>Didn't support:</b> too dark and cold in proposed after hours. Is the only off leash area in immediate vicinity. <b>Suggestions:</b> Leave old system but with more signage and education of zones.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
7	<b>Didn't Support:</b> time share (after six pm) too dangerous for woman (who are the predominant dog walkers in the park). If people won't walk their dogs, dogs grow unhealthy and unhappy. Dogs are family in this day and age!	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
8	<b>Didn't support:</b> it is an over-regulation; already restricted this is too much of a limitation. Keep the Northern side 'Off lead'. Need more dog poo bags too.	Barkly Gardens		Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away. Residents required to be responsible for bags. Providing bags creates a disincentive to be responsible.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
9	<b>Didn't Support:</b> selling point of Park is the off lead zone. Wouldn't walk after dark because it's too dangerous. Would ruin friendships with other dog owners.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
10	<b>Supported:</b> the zoning idea keeping the kids and park users in mind. <b>Didn't Support:</b> no justification on why changing rules	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Changes suggested to get a greater equity across the City.	Shared zone reinstated
11	<b>Supported:</b> exercise groups and others should keep clear of current off-lead areas, as these are designated areas. <b>Didn't Support:</b> too restrictive, especially for us woman owners. Discrimination against woman. Time share not the answer, more signs and zoning is better to our needs.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Private fitness users are not licensed users of this space. Any one applying for casual use would be offered hire at Burnley Park.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
12	<b>Didn't Support:</b> timeshare, times not suitable. Sense of community will be lost. Should be all-inclusive, not exclusive.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
13	<b>Didn't Support:</b> loose the social atmosphere. Timeshare not the answer, if the social clubs could move off our allocated off-lead area then they would have no issue, they have the whole other side of the park.	Barkly Garden		Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
14	<b>Supported:</b> most all of the other points to the strategy. <b>Didn't support;</b> Timeshare as it's the only park close by, too dark in winter, lighting not good enough to make me feel safe walking the dog at night.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
15	<b>Didn't support:</b> timeshare. Not willing to get up at 6am to walk dog as after it will be dark and too unsafe.	Barkly Gardens		Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
16	<b>Suggestion:</b> Mostly concerned about situation where new facilities (BBQ, play area) are only 'On-leash' areas not allowing users of facilities to unleash dogs.		Richmond	All dogs need to be under effective control. Can't supervise children and BBQ with unleashed dog.	

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
17	<b>Supported:</b> Both Parks need encouragement to clean up dog waste that would also deter complaints concerning off-leash issues. <b>Didn't support:</b> Timeshare. Traditional social outings with other community residents at risk. Timing not ideal due to winter and safety issues for elderly and female walkers.	Barkly Gardens & Burnley Park		Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
18	<b>Didn't support:</b> Timeshare, as it wasn't addressing the issue entirely. Fencing, bicycle restrictions should be addressed instead to solve issue and solve the problem of dogs straying.	Burnley Park	Bendigo St area, Richmond	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away. Additional fencing not recommended. Code of conduct for bike paths and issues – but not for this plan.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
19	<b>Supported:</b> current off-lead areas and multi-zoning <b>Didn't support:</b> time share restrictions. Doesn't cater to dogs' needs of having to be walked 3-4 times daily. During day Park is uninhabited by kids unless on play equipment which is on the other side anyway.	Burnley and Mary St Parks	Richmond	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
20	<b>Didn't support:</b> timeshare; reduced hours for off-lead walking. If it must happen, then making current on-leash areas off-leash at times would reduce the impact.		Richmond	Strong opposition to change, seen as taking rights away.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
21	<b>Suggestion:</b> Park needs fencing and adequate poo cleaning bags. Sand pit health and safety, not being covered at night allowing cats to use as toilet	Burnley Park	Richmond	Additional fencing not recommended. Residents required to be responsible for bags. Providing bags creates a disincentive to be responsible.. Sand can be cleaned in sand pit regularly .	Free bags to be given to registered dog owners to take with them.
22	Suggests: more doggy bags and bins be available, and zones be clearer for people through better signage.	Burnley Park	Richmond	Residents required to be responsible for bags. Providing bags creates a disincentive to be responsible.	Free bags to be given to registered dog owners to take with them.

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
				Siting of bins will be reassessed.	
23	<b>Suggestions:</b> Dogs on leads urinating on sandpit needs to be addressed.	Burnley Park	Richmond	Nil: Strategy doesn't address specific maintenance regimes.	Nil: Strategy doesn't address maintenance regime.
24	<b>Supported:</b> current zoning system but needs to be enforced further. Suggests: Dogs in playground area are mostly owned by people using BBQ and play area so no further restrictions need be applied.	Burnley Park	Richmond	Enforcement addressed.	Nil
25	<b>Suggestions:</b> a fence that runs North-South between basketball court South to playground be extended with provisions for off-lead at all times east of new fence.	Curtain Square	Carlton North	There are few parks and no other for social/ family recreation parks in Carlton or North Carlton. Fencing will limit opportunities for children to run and play. Parks is also important possum habitat. Fenced area outside the current perimeter fence provides exclusive dog off lead zone of approximately 1,000sq metres and sustains current status for Curtain Square as dog on lead at all times.	Provide exclusive off lead section in the area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner of Canning and Curtain Streets.
26	As above				
27	<b>Supported:</b> Current zoning system but better delineation of mid-line between off-lead and on lead, for dog recognition. Physical barriers needed to stop dogs from entering within a close distance to play area. <b>Didn't support:</b> time share: prevents off lead access to closest park during most of the day.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Will review the issue	Suggestions re delineation of boundaries
28	Duplicate As Previous (#17)				
29	<b>Supported:</b> time share, especially at Curtain Square, and silo site at Linear Park. Happy with 8am, but weary of after 6pm with winter in mind.	Curtain Square, and silo site at Linear Park.	Carlton North	Will review the issue	Provide exclusive off lead section in the area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
					of Canning and Curtain Streets.
30	<b>Didn't Support:</b> time share due to Insufficient light in park to pick up droppings early or late at night. Suggestion: fenced water pool for dogs, in order to keep them all centralized.	Darling Gardens	Gold St. Clifton Hill	Time increased from 5pm. Accessed to water only provided in Yarra Bend Park	Time increased to before 9am and after 5pm.
31	<b>Supported:</b> zoning and off lead area for dogs. Suggestions: More signage needs to be put up warning of off-lead areas to patrons. <b>Suggestions:</b> dog colour coordinating system (where owners would classify and highlight aggressive dogs though different coloured collars) indicating to public danger of dog. Provide dog agility equipment in Edinburgh Gardens (tunnel, seesaw, tree jumps etc) targeting working dogs, which seem to dominate use.	All Yarra Parks & Edinburgh Garden	Fitzroy North	Dog agility equipment cannot be safely provided in a public area and made suitable to dogs of all types sizes etc. Use needs to be supervised by dog trainers. Dog clubs with expertise best provides such equipment, for members.	Suggestions re signage
32	<b>Didn't support:</b> zoning plans and in particular the reduced off-leash areas and times. <b>Suggestions:</b> more poo bag dispenses and bins. <b>Suggestions:</b> Implement speed humps for bicycles as they speed through paths only narrowly missing dogs, cars and children.	Edinburgh Gardens	Fitzroy North	Will review the issue	Suggestions re bikes.
33	<b>Suggestion:</b> more general seating for public	Kevin Bartlett Reserve	Burnley	Will review the issue	Nil
34	<b>Supported:</b> strategy and restrictions. <b>Suggestions:</b> Issue with straying dogs on footpath and droppings on his doorstep. Further educating and enforcement would help.		Richmond	Strategies to address dog waste and strays provided in Strategy	Nil
35	<b>Supported:</b> likes strategy but needs to include cats too. Felines invade her garden, ruin her flower bed, as well as disturb sleep and pollute garden.		North Carlton	Strategy addresses cats. Council can encourage confinement, trap and fine for cats in others property for repeat offenders.	More detail provided about cats at large.
36	<b>Didn't support:</b> Multi zone parks like Darling and Edinburgh Gardens are unclear regarding different zoning, more signage in and around parks needed regarding on/off leash areas and times. <b>Suggestions:</b> consult with neighbouring Darebin City Council, which are also at similar animal management planning stages including shared areas.	Darling Gardens Edinburgh Gardens		City of Darebin consulted.	Suggestions about more signage made.

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
37	<b>Didn't Support:</b> Timeshare as, many elderly people will not use before 8am and after 6pm due to cold and darkness. Times don't accommodate shift workers. Park empty during the day anyway. Winter season will be too dark to walk dog, cant find dog, ball, droppings etc.. Parks should be dealt on individual merit and not all under one proposal.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Each park has been considered on individual merit. Will review the issue.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
38	<b>Didn't support:</b> Time share suggests unreasonable times (cold and dark), loss of social relationship with other dog owners and there pets, lack of security measures offered to compensate (lighting, supervision)	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Will review the issue	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
39	<b>Supported:</b> Support time share for micro parks were kids play area and dog walking area are close together. <b>Didn't support:</b> Timeshare, native animals are active during night and early morning. Collection of dog waste difficult in dark.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Will review the issue	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
40, 41	Multiple copies of submissions previously analysed.				
42	<b>Supported:</b> Introducing de-sexing. <b>Suggestions:</b> voucher as an incentive to de-sex the cats in the municipality. <b>Didn't support:</b> timing and mandatory de-sexing with registration as most cats come into season at 5 months rather than at three months when the registration occurs. <b>Suggestion:</b> a trapping system to be promoted and practised.	None specific		The industry is divided on this issue of when to desex. If Council were to separate first registration and desexing, and require before anniversary of first or at discretion of vet, most stakeholders would agree.  Trapping important in addition to more desexed and registered.	More detail provided in strategy. Changed to: "and promote the benefits of pet de-sexing at a timely and safe age." Additional info on trapping provided.
43	<b>Supported:</b> Kevin Bartlett Reserve multi zone areas, as long as they're clearly marked. <b>Didn't support:</b> timeshare; elderly tend to sleep morning and early evening and times close their opportunity to exercise their pets. <b>Suggestions:</b> Draft Document in black and white and maps not clear. Notices to remind cyclists that it is a shared path	Kevin Bartlett Reserve	Richmond	Time share only offered where no off lead is provided and where very limited space . It provides some off-lead access.	Time share provides some off-lead access. Trial before 9am and after 5pm.
44	<b>Didn't support:</b> Elderly citizens inconvenienced by time-share.			Time share only offered where no off lead is provided and where very limited space . It provides some off-lead access.	Trial before 9am and after 5pm.



Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
45	As above <b>Suggestions:</b> keep in mind any changes that there are no bad dogs, just bad owners.			Not all dogs are well behaved, and under effective control.	Nil
46	<b>Didn't support:</b> Elderly will be too tired to walk their dogs late at night. Too much restrictive exercise will lead to dogs that are more aggressive. <b>Suggestions:</b> park is the busiest with dog owners at 8-9 am & 4-5pm	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Will review the issue	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share.
47	<b>Supported:</b> less off-lead dogs will help improve the sometimes dust bowl of reserve.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Noted	Nil
48	<b>Supported:</b> owners cleaning up after dogs. <b>Didn't Support:</b> Timeshare takes away the opportunity for mothers and kids to take the dog for walk. It disadvantages young families.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Will review the issue	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
49	<b>Didn't support::</b> time-share and restricted off leash times. Urge off leash area in south eastern corner.	Curtain Square	Carlton North	There are few parks and no other for social/ family recreation parks in Carlton or North Carlton. Fencing will limit opportunities for children to run and play. Parks is also is important possum habitat. Time share provides some off-lead access. Time increased from 5pm.	Provide exclusive off lead section in the area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner of Canning and Curtain Streets.
50	<b>Didn't support:</b> time-share, too hard for retired people, ruin social network of council. Suggestions: need public toilet and taps there	Barkly Gardens		Will review the issue	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
51	<b>Didn't support:</b> dogs need the entire off leash space as they need to run. Suggestions: limit on number of pets. Look at City of Boroondara's poo bag park dispenser system, really good example.			Dogs can be exercised by being walked in the street. Large off-lead areas are provided in large parks such as Yarra Bend Park.	Nil
52	<b>Didn't support:</b> times are unsafe, and overpopulated with other users. If the weather isn't favouring during our time, we need a larger/more flexible window of opportunity.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Will review the issue	Shared zone reinstated.
53	<b>Didn't support:</b> Time-share system due to its unreasonable to play fetch whilst you are being dragged on a lead. Off-lead areas available 24 hours per day allow for flexibility by dog owners to walk their dogs with respect to their work commitments.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	In sufficient space for all activities	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
54	<b>Didn't support:</b> time share is too restrictive. <b>Suggestions:</b> fining owners who don't pick up after their dogs should be more the issue in keeping the Park clean. <b>Suggestions:</b> more signs in parks and notice boards keeping the park users up to date with zoning changes and boundaries	Darling Gardens	Clifton Hill	Noted	Suggestions re signs.
55	As above	"	"		
56	<b>Supported:</b> Restriction of cats (certain number per owner) and strict curfew for their pets at	Darling Gardens		Noted	Nil

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
	night. <b>Didn't Support:</b> Time-share in any way. The prohibition of dogs near paths from 5m to 20ish, way too long. <b>Suggestions:</b> move the play area closer to BBQ and other facilities in order to keep distance.				
57	<b>Supported:</b> mandatory picking up of droppings. <b>Suggestion:</b> distribute more off lead space, as the proposed changes whittle away at this vital space for dogs to play. More time spent educating dog owners, through programs and process from council. Speeding cyclist issue, more signs		Clifton Hill	This supports what is in the plan	Nil
58	<b>Didn't supported</b> time-share shrinking of off leash areas. Princess Park example shows more open space can result in happier and less violent dogs. Dog owners penalised because of council's inability to properly plan play area with adequate fencing.	Darling Gardens	Clifton hill	No off leash areas have been shrunk. Fencing is not a solution to increasing the number and range of uses.	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
59	<b>Supported:</b> On-lead areas and proposes the western corner of gardens. On-lead areas to surround play ground and fencing areas. <b>Didn't support:</b> strategy did not address animal control around shopping and café areas.	Darling Gardens		Off-lead area changed at residents suggestion to south east; away from playground	Off-lead area changed to south east
60	<b>Suggestions:</b> exclusion buffer zone around playground should be 10 to 20 metres. On-lead areas should be around the play area. Increase patrols and supervision of park area.	Darling Gardens	Clifton Hill	Off-lead area changed at residents suggestion to south east; away from playground	Off-lead area changed to south east
61	<b>Supports:</b> Timesharing, although 6pm maybe a little late during winter. Should be reviewed.	Curtain Square	North Carlton	Strategy will be reviewed annually.	Provide exclusive off lead section in the area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner of Canning and Curtain Streets.
62	<b>Supports:</b> mandatory desexing for cats. Animal Welfare should also include cats, and a plan for non desexed cats. Cheaper to desex cat than to address problem later. Night curfew will help stop nuisance and protect cat's welfare.			Supports recommendations in the Strategy	Nil
63	<b>Supported:</b> A well researched and backed up response. Compulsory desexing ending over population of cats. Cat problem is bigger than dog problem as cats can influence habitat. Supports euthanasia for cats as well as search and locate feral, stray cats. Fining cat owners for stray cats also strongly argued.			Supports recommendations in the Strategy	Nil
64	<b>Supported:</b> less off-lead, uncontrollable dogs and irresponsible owners. More patrols so Council can see how many unleashed dogs there are. Support timeshare as there are no risk	Curtain Square	Carlton North	Supports recommendations in the Strategy	Provide exclusive off lead section in the

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
	to children at the times indicated.				area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner of Canning and Curtain Streets.
65	<b>Suggestions:</b> Bikes and dogs are a conflict point, particularly old people. Generally, dogs in park are great for all people and only those who misuse the parks are problems	Edinburgh Gardens	Nth Fitzroy	Use of shared paths will need further management.	Nil
66	<b>Didn't support:</b> time-shared off lead in Curtain Square. Informal use of the park for this purpose isn't a problem, but encouraging it would cause problems	Curtain Square	Nth Carlton	Time share provides some off lead access. In a busy park with multiple demands	Provide exclusive off lead section in the area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner of Canning and Curtain Streets.
67	<b>Didn't support:</b> time share proposal for Barkly Gardens Need flexible hours for all people and after dark is not practical	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Will review the issue	Shared zone reinstated rather than time share
68	<b>Suggestions:</b> Multiple pet ownership permits need to be reviewed annually			Plan will be reviewed regularly	Nil
69	<b>Supported:</b> Strongly support time share for dog off lead parks, in particular the proposals for Curtain Square and Linear Reserve	Curtain Square, Linear Reserve	Nth Carlton	Noted	Provide exclusive off lead section in the area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner of Canning and Curtain Streets.
70	<b>Supported:</b> Strongly supports on-lead unless specified. All shared pathways be dog on-lead. Enforce on-lead areas. Ban dogs in Fairfield Park and at Dights Falls. Ban people in parks with more than two dogs under their control. Do not reduce distances around playgrounds. Dogs should be excluded from the wildlife corridors.	Dights Falls Fairfield Park	Not specified	Reinforces many directions of the Strategy	Nil

Sub. No.	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location	Response	Recommended change to Strategy
71	<b>Supported:</b> Cats should be confined overnight. <b>Didn't support:</b> Rules affecting shared pathways are in favour of cyclists. Barkly Gardens behaviour is very good. Rewarding people for picking up after their dogs is unworkable. Dogs should be allowed to be tethered in public.	Barkly Gardens	Richmond	Cyclists and dog walkers need to look out for each other. Strategy does not favour either. No peak body endorses tethering in a public place.	Multi zone reinstated.
72	<b>Suggestions:</b> Burnley Park playground needs a fence if the park is to remain off-lead	Burnley Park	Richmond	Fencing is not recommended	
73	<b>Suggestions:</b> Dog owners need convenient access to off-lead areas. Council receives revenue from pet registrations but complains about the cost of supplying plastic bags. Edinburgh Gardens needs additional off lead areas.	Edinburgh Gardens	Not specified	Noted	Nil
74	<b>Supported:</b> compulsory de-sexing of cats. Should not have to apply for special permit to have more than 2 cats.	None	Nth Fitzroy	There is an over population of cats.	Nil
75	<b>Supported:</b> Whole strategy is supported. <b>Suggestions:</b> Need greater presence of animal enforcement officers in the parks – particularly Darling Gardens	Darling Gardens	Clifton Hill	Council has increased its animal management resources since Jan 08.	Nil
77	As above	"	"		

## APPENDIX 9: Summary of 27 written and 2 telephone submissions received on Draft Strategy

No. of Responses	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location		
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Off lead park in all area at all times</li> <li>• Proposed timed off lead areas are too restrictive</li> <li>• Off lead parks to “parts” of park will not work</li> <li>• Dogs should not be prohibited in playgrounds</li> <li>• Improved facilities for dog litter and hand washing</li> </ul>	Alphington Park	Alphington	.	
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timed “off lead areas: too restrictive – all 11 responses were against time restrictions</li> <li>• Should not be expected to go to Burnley Park – too far</li> <li>• Dog owners do not obey “on lead” signs</li> <li>• Has any study been done about the usage of the park – in particular female dog owners?</li> <li>• More regular supply of dog bags</li> <li>• Planting of park is going well</li> <li>• Park functions well at the moment</li> </ul>	Barkly Gardens	Richmond		
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health concerns regarding sandpit – because it is not covered a night</li> <li>• People without dogs leaving mess at bbqs and playground</li> <li>• Dog owners not picking up after dogs</li> <li>• Extra bins and supply of dog bags</li> <li>• Inadequate notice of meeting to be held</li> <li>• Dogs owners not able to utilise bbqs because it is in the playground and dogs are prohibited</li> <li>• Leave park as off lead</li> <li>• Fence playground</li> <li>• Enclose oval with cyclone wire to prevent dogs going onto oval</li> <li>• Too many dogs off lead * urinating in sandpit</li> <li>• Regulations not policed or enforced</li> <li>• Dog owners with children allow/tie dogs in playground</li> </ul>	Burnley Park	Burnley		

No. of Responses	Key Issues	Specific Park	Location		
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waiting 12 months for decision on “off lead” provision for park</li> <li>Fence the southern section of the park for dogs off lead</li> <li>Support form time sharing off lead areas – before 8am is ok but after 6pm is too late</li> </ul>	Curtain Square	North Carlton		
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase lighting in park</li> <li>People dog picking up after their dog</li> <li>Install a pool for dogs to swim in</li> <li>Bike users are not responsible when riding through park – this needs to be policed</li> </ul>	Darling Gardens	Clifton Hill		
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should follow Sydney and have all parks and public areas “off lead”</li> <li>Run workshops for people afraid of dogs</li> <li>Encourage dog owners to attend regular obedience classes</li> <li>Install a dog playground</li> <li>Keep dog water bowls clean</li> <li>Stop wasting water – dog owners have to wash their dogs more regularly because the park is too muddy</li> <li>More dog poos bags and bins</li> <li>Bike speed humps required</li> <li>Do not make park totally “on lead”</li> </ul>	Edinburgh Gardens	North Fitzroy		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wandering Jew plant in undergrowth – dog is allergic to this plant</li> </ul>	Flockart Reserve	Abbotsford		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install a seat in playground</li> </ul>	Kevin Bartlett	Burnley		
	<b>Other Comments</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nuisance cats not covered in draft</li> <li>Cats out of a night enforcement required</li> <li>Dogs defecating on pavements</li> </ul>				

## **APPENDIX 10: Implementation Plan**

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### **ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT**

This is the City of Yarra's Domestic Animal Management Plan: Implementation Plan.

This document addresses the key actions that apply to the City of Yarra as set out in the Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994 as well the department and timeframe associated with that action.

This plan is supported by two other documents: People and Their Pets: Domestic Animal Management Strategy, and the Domestic Animal Management Plan.

The plan was prepared following a process which included: a review of recent policies and plans, a series of workshops with a staff, a critical review of statistics and services concerning pet registrations, enquiries, permits, impoundments etc. Telephone interviews were conducted with key external stakeholders and adjacent Councils. Submissions were called for and a public workshop was held following the circulation of a draft plan.

### **IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

The following table lists actions recommended in the strategy, the department that would take a Lead Role in its implementation and the year in which it is to be undertaken. Lead role responsibilities are divided between four parts of Council: City Development Division (City DD), Asset Management Division (AMD), the Habitat Management aspect of the Asset Management Division (HM), and the Community Development Division (Comm DD). The timeframe is indicated in years with ongoing representing a policy direction or an action to be undertaken after year two.

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeline (Year)
	<b>Pet Partners and Council's Role</b>		
1	Provide pet owners, services and stakeholders with information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council's role in pet management and who does what</li> <li>• Options to address pet related requests and complaints</li> <li>• Details of who to contact in Council</li> </ul>	City DD	1
2	Collect information to provide more representative cat and dog ownership figures, as per the DAMP requirements, including in public housing. This may be in the form of annual door knocks, telephone interviews and registration databases.	City DD	Ongoing
3	Monitor and review current role in animal management (may need to modify management processes due to increasing demand on public open space)	All	Ongoing
4	Enhance management of pet use in public open space because of increasing demand and space constraints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor provision and management of dog on-lead, dog off-lead, and cat and dog prohibited areas over time</li> </ul>	City DD	2
5	Pet peak bodies and organizations to organize pet competitions and sports, and the provision of equipment required for these.	Recreation	Ongoing
6.	Work closely with adjacent municipalities, schools, pet services in Yarra and peak bodies including Parks Victoria and Dept. of Sustainability and Environment to promote responsible pet ownership and minimise conflict between people and pets in Yarra, and between pets and the environment.	All	Ongoing
	<b>Benefits of Pets</b>		
1	Promote the benefits of (responsible) pet ownership, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- opportunities to walk and socialise dogs and with owners</li> <li>- how pet owners can help others who cannot own a pet</li> <li>- how to support working dogs in their role, to residents and businesses</li> <li>- information about choosing the right pet</li> <li>- other pet services and partners who may help owners</li> </ul>	City DD	2
2	Continue to identify pet partners; and foster partnerships with animal businesses operating in Yarra	City DD	Ongoing
3	Encourage good design and retention of sufficient open space in new dwellings to accommodate pets	City DD	2
	<b>Responsible Pet Ownership</b>		
1	Make available and promote information about all aspects of responsible pet ownership in a range of forms (hard copy and electronic), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how to choose the right pet</li> <li>- pet registration and vaccination</li> <li>- how to find the right type of accommodation, and ways renters can responsibly keep pets</li> <li>- what pets can be kept, and how many pets a permits required for, and how to apply for additional pets</li> <li>- why not to feed stray and feral animals and birds</li> <li>- to report stray and feral animals to Council</li> <li>- the benefits of pet de-sexing</li> </ul>	City DD	On going



No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeline (Year)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the benefits of cats being kept inside over night, and feral animals being trapped</li> <li>- the need to keep cats and dogs under effective control when outside their owners property</li> <li>- the need to “pick up” after dogs, and to carry plastic bags</li> <li>- why dogs bark and ways to prevent barking, and how to keep pets active, socialised and healthy</li> <li>- unwanted animals and how these can be controlled</li> <li>- ways in which people should approach unfamiliar dogs and learning to read dog and cat behaviour</li> <li>- dogs of restricted breed</li> <li>- promote a “No Cost Surrender” program</li> </ul>		
2	Continue to regulate the number of pets allowed in flats or units (without a permit)	City DD	Ongoing
3	Encourage residents not to feed birds. Monitor the pigeon population and intervene as required.	City DD	Ongoing
4	Introduce mandatory cat de-sexing promote the benefits of pet desexing at a timely and safe age.	City DD	1
5	Encourage residents to confine their cats at night, and prevent them from wandering. Promote: the value of keeping cats indoors and impact of cats on wildlife, and inform residents that pets found wandering may be trapped and fines issued if found in a conservation area.	Comm & City DD	1
6	Encourage residents to report stray and feral animals, and request traps to capture them on private property.	City DD	Ongoing
7	Provide incentives to encourage owners to register their pets, e.g. free pooper scoopers, promotion of government or stakeholder registration incentive schemes etc	Comm & City DD	Ongoing
8	Continue to promote the need to micro chip pets; and organise and promote annual microchipping days	City DD	Ongoing
9	Promote and consider subsidise pet vaccination. Promote off lead areas as being for vaccinated pets	City DD	Ongoing
10	Survey a sample of past pet owners who haven’t renewed their pet’s registration	City DD	2
11	Manage dogs of restricted breed in accordance with the Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994	City DD	Ongoing
12	Promote the “Dob in a Restricted Breed Dog” Program	City. DD	Ongoing
13	Undertake annual audits of the premises of declared dogs, to check for security and housing compliance	City DD	Ongoing
14	Regulate residents in a flat or unit to keep one dog over six months (compared to 2 in other dwelling types).	City DD	Ongoing
15	Monitor and regulate residents in dwellings other than flats: to keep up to five poultry birds (no rooster), bees <sup>50</sup> unlimited fish, as well as two ferrets, guineapigs, rabbits or mice, (residents are encouraged to own same-sex and desexed rodents) without a permit. Allow residents in flats/units to keep two bird, two reptiles, two ferrets, guineapigs, rabbits or mice without a permit (as well as one registered dog and cat)	City DD	Ongoing

<sup>50</sup> As long as requirements of the *Apiary Code of Practice 1997* and the *Livestock Disease Control Act 1994* are met.

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeline (Year)
	<b>Minimising Conflict between People and Pets</b>		
1	Promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the municipal wide on-lead policy: that if there is no sign saying the area is off-lead, then the area is on-lead</li> <li>- the fact that dogs can be exercised and socialised on-lead</li> <li>- if running or riding on a shared path, to keep the dog on-lead or well away from the path</li> <li>- not to tether dogs in public</li> </ul>	Comm.D	1
2	Clearly signpost dog off-lead and dog prohibited areas /regulations at all entry points to relevant sites	AMD	1
3	Create a map showing cat and dog zones and animal related businesses and services throughout the municipality. Publish on the Council website, and distribute to animal stakeholder groups in the City	AMD	1
4	Update the Council Order and introduce new Local Laws to reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- proposed dog on and off-lead areas; and cat and dog prohibited areas (including 30m on-lead buffer from wetlands and water's edge)</li> <li>- dogs on shared paths and 5 metres either side are on-lead at all times, even if the pathway runs through an off-lead area;</li> <li>- prohibiting dogs from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within five metres from a playground</li> <li>- fenced sport grounds at all times</li> </ul> </li> <li>- restricting off-lead dogs from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within 20m of a playground (15m outside the dog prohibited area)</li> <li>- within ten metres of picnic, skate, and BMX facilities</li> </ul> </li> <li>- allow dogs off-lead on all other sport grounds when not in use for games, club or school training or competition, or other event</li> <li>- prohibit cats from all waterway corridors and sites of environmental significance</li> </ul>	City DD / AMD	1
6	Install signage at sporting grounds to identify when and where dogs are permitted off-lead	AMD	1
7	Undertake additional management measures at sporting grounds where dog off-lead exercise is permitted	City DD	2
8	Stencil and or sign shared paths to advertise the on-lead policy and preferred code of conduct	AMD	2
9	Maintain a diversity of different types, and a hierarchy of dog friendly parks in the City as per this plan	AMD	On going
10	Classify dog off-lead parks according to the proposed hierarchy, and promote what users may expect to find at each: Ensure features and facilities are incrementally brought in line with the hierarchy of dog off-lead parks	AMD	2
	<b>Off and on lead areas</b>		
11	Update the Council Order and reassign reserves to reflect changes to the off-lead areas as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gahans Reserve, McConchie Reserve and Alphington Park as a <u>time share</u> off-lead reserve</li> <li>- The Old Silo site in Linear Reserve as a fenced off-lead area</li> <li>- Quarries Park, Fairfield Reserve, Johnson Street Reserve and Hall Reserve as off-lead reserves</li> </ul>	AMD	1

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeline (Year)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prohibit dogs and cats from Alphington Park wetlands, designated areas within Yarra Bend Park</li> <li>- Kevin Bartlett Reserve (previously an off lead area) as a multi zone reserve</li> <li>- Curtain Square (previously on lead) to exclusive off lead section in the area outside the fences in Curtain Square, in the park reserve, on the corner of Canning and Curtain Streets.</li> </ul>		
12	Update existing delineations at multi-zone parks as per the maps in the strategy, and monitor the success of each off-lead and time share area, and fencing	AMD	1
13	Monitor demand for fenced dog off-lead areas and consider trialling a fenced dog off-lead area in the South of the City		Ongoing
14	Update the "Dogs in Public- your rights and responsibilities" brochure with current information, and widely disseminate to residents, animal related businesses and other relevant animal stakeholder groups	AMD	1
	<b>Pets and the environment</b>		
1	Make pet owners aware that in waterway corridors they may be in snake habitat, and that there is a 30m on-lead buffer from the waterway	Comm DD	1
2	Undertake cat trapping (domestic and stray/feral) as a priority; in environmentally significant areas, and in conjunction with other land owners	HM	1
3	Provide interpretative information about flora and fauna in reserves to encourage pet owners to take care		2
4	Enforce the provisions outlined in the Wildlife Act 1975- Section 48	HM/City DD	Ongoing
	<b>Dog waste</b>		
1	Provide dog waste bags to owners of registered pets – but no additional dog waste bag dispensers in parks. Ensure there are general waste bins for dog waste adjacent to all off-lead areas Where possible provide taps for drinking water and for owners to wash their hands		2
2	Utilise available information resources on dog waste management (eg. kits, tips, mock fines) from advisory and peak bodies such as the RSPCA and Victorian Litter Association Alliance	City DD	Ongoing
3	Fine owners who do not pick up after their dogs and cats		Ongoing
	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>		
1	Run community education campaigns about animal related policies and their benefits as required (such as keeping cats indoors overnight and reporting stray animals to Council, carrying enough plastic bags etc),	Comm. DD / City DD	Ongoing
2	Undertake a biennial household survey to evaluate animal services and resident satisfaction. The survey is to monitor perceived importance and performance of Council's animal management services	City DD	2
3	Undertake an annual door knock and telephone calls to gauge rates of pet registration	City DD	2

No.	Action	Responsibility	Timeline (Year)
4	Continue to undertake regular patrols to monitor park use and owner compliance and issue rewards for good owner behaviour	City DD	On going
5	Include 'monitoring of performance' in any animal management contracts, where services are contracted to external providers	City DD	Ongoing
6	Maintain a staff training and development program to include: - annual training in animal handling and behaviour (with an appropriate service provider) - opportunities for staff to complete certificate courses in animal management, regulation and control.	City DD	Ongoing
7	Report to Council via the Community Amenity Quarterly Report to ensure the animal control services provided by Council are adequate to give effect to the Act and regulations.	City DD	Ongoing
8	Continue to receive feedback from residents via the Household Panel Survey and Building and Regulatory Services in house survey to ensure the animal services provided by Council are meeting their needs.	City DD	Ongoing
9	Revise any actions of this strategy in line with feedback annually or as required	AMD	1
10	Review Council's Local Laws in relation to animal management	City DD	1
11	As per the legal requirement conduct an annual review of the Domestic Animal Management Plan	City DD	1
12	As per the legal requirement prepare a new Domestic Animal Management Plan every three (3) years	City DD	3