



C I T Y O F
**CHARLES
STURT**

***Strategic Urban
Animal Management
Plan (UAMP)
2004 - 2009***

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background

In 2001 an Urban Animal Management Reference Group was established to develop a 3 Year Strategic Urban Animal Management Plan (UAMP) for the City of Charles Sturt. After a community consultation phase the draft UAMP for 2001-2004 was endorsed by Council. That plan concluded on the 30 June 2004.

As a result of the recent review of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 the importance of urban animal management plans was recognised and it is now mandatory for all South Australian Councils to develop and implement 5 Year Animal Management Plans (UAMP) by 2007.

Council is now preparing this 2004-2009 plan to set the direction for the management of urban animals within our community for the next 5 years as required under the Act.

While some long term planning (5 years) is appropriate and it is not anticipated that there will be any significant changes in the direction that this plan sets out, the plan will be routinely reviewed, to ensure its alignment to Council's strategic directions over the life of the plan.

1.2 Strategic Outline

The Council's management of urban animal issues has an impact on the health, well-being and lives of the whole community and the welfare of animals in the City. The 2004-2009 UAMP is therefore designed for everyone in the City of Charles Sturt, both animal owners and non-owners. The plan has a predominant focus on dogs and cats, however also identifies other animals which are kept within our community. Dogs and cats represent by far the most significant number and type of animals and have the most significant impact on our community, our environment, our health and well being.

As a result of a review of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 several changes have come into effect from 1 July 2004. Details of Council's legislative requirements and a summary of the relevant legislation are outlined in the Plan. The Council is required to administer and enforce the provisions of this Act. The Objectives of the Act are to:

- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- Reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats, and
- Promote the effective management of dogs and cats (including encouragement for the de-sexing of dogs and cats)

The plan's mission is to build on the foundation established through the implementation of the 2001-2004 UAMP and create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the Charles Sturt community.

This plan contains recommendations for a wide range of actions to be undertaken by the Council to achieve these objectives. It provides a sound basis and direction from which it can plan and make future decisions over the next five years, and relates back to the wider Council policy context. It identifies strategies and actions to implement the mission, aims and objectives, including:

- Educating and promoting responsible pet ownership
- Highlighting the importance of desexing of dogs and cats
- Obtaining the right pet and pet friendly housing
- Reducing dog attacks and bite avoidance
- Managing dog faeces in public places
- Developing dog 'off leash' and 'on leash' areas
- Reducing the numbers of dogs wandering at large
- Promoting the importance of dog socialisation and training
- Reducing dog barking and nuisance
- Encouraging responsible cat management
- Reviewing Officer image & staff training
- Meeting our Corporate Responsibilities
 - Risk Management
 - Service Levels
- Identifying Other Urban Animals*
 - Roosters, chickens, birds
 - Sheep, horses, goats, pigs
 - Rabbits, bees
 - Wasps, vermin

*These animals are sometimes considered pests by the community, while for others they form an important part of their lifestyles and culture. This conflict of opinions needs to be managed effectively in accordance with regulations, policies and by-laws.

Education, prevention, encouragement and enforcement

This plan emphasises the proactive combination of **education, prevention, encouragement and enforcement** to achieve Council's objectives. Education and promotion are key priorities in changing attitudes to result in an increase in responsible pet ownership in the future. At the same time Council must be proactive in investigating and implementing preventative measures where possible and by providing encouragement to members of our community to comply with our policies and regulations.

Although it is expected that there will be a progressive decline in complaints and less reliance on enforcement, this will occur over the long term. At the same time there may be a counter balancing effect due to increasing community expectation, increased profile on the Compliance department and its services, encouragement of reporting e.g. all dog attacks and variables such as impacts from proposed legislative amendments to the Act.

2. Mission Statement

To create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within the Charles Sturt community.

3. Aims

1. To provide effective management and a suitable environment for all urban animals within the community.
2. To develop innovative and proactive approaches to urban animal management.
3. To encourage responsible animal ownership focusing predominately on dog and cat ownership.
4. To increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by animals.

4. Objectives

This section outlines the objectives of the UAMP and how these objectives will be implemented.

1. **Provide effective management and a suitable environment for all urban animals within the community.**
 - Operate in accordance with the Dog and Cat Management Act.
 - Continued change of emphasis from only enforcement to a proactive approach, of “education, prevention, encouragement and enforcement”.
 - Effective use of local statistics and demographics where appropriate when making decisions and influencing policy directions.
 - Development of Council’s Open Space strategies in line with proposed amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act. Review policies and by-laws where necessary to ensure adequate and appropriate access to open space areas including off leash areas.
 - Review of Council policies and By-laws concerning all urban animals in our community.
 - Implement new management practices as a result of amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act.
 - Establish, encourage and coordinate relationships with neighbouring Councils and community and environmental stakeholders and be aware of impacts on Charles Sturt.
 - Improve community recognition and understanding of the role of Animal Management Officers.

- Where areas are restricted due to environmentally sensitive issues ensure there are adequate alternative opportunities i.e., fenced dog parks.

2. Develop innovative and proactive approaches to urban animal management.

- Research 'best practice' methodology for dealing with urban animal management issues.
- Gain "in principal" support for the identification and promotion of dog expiation fees to be directed towards specific dog related education and encouragement programs.
- Effective use of statistics when making decisions and influence policy directions.
- Summarise and present our data to other business units for consideration when they are reviewing policies.
- Trial new initiatives and different approaches to animal management.
- Continue where appropriate Council's Animal Management Reference Groups to identify issues and make recommendations for effective animal management.

3. Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership

- Encourage and provide community education concerning pets in the environment in conjunction with other animal agencies.
- Encourage desexing, socialisation, training and microchipping.
- Obtain maximum registration and identification, re-uniting pets to owners where possible.
- Encourage keeping cats inside at night, desexing and identification and increase the awareness of the impacts of cat ownership on the community.
- Encourage selection of the right pet to suit lifestyle and circumstances and appropriate provisions for the keeping of pets eg. Fencing, adequate yard.
- Promote the welfare of dogs and cats in the community.
- Recognise and promote the large percentage of responsible pet owners within our community.

4. Increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.

- Ensure adherence to the new "dogs on leash on streets, roads and footpath" amendments in the Dog and Cat Management Act.
- Manage nuisance caused by barking.
- Reduce the number of dog attacks and harassments through bite avoidance education and encourage the reporting of all dog attacks.
- Reduce the number of dogs wandering at large to minimise public nuisance and increase public safety.

- Encourage dog owners to pick up dog faeces and carry dog waste bags to reduce the amount of dog faeces in the environment.
- Explore ways to address the nuisance/harassment issues of dogs frightening people from inside their properties, particularly in circumstances where a dog may be able to access the public through the fence or where the fence is not secure or effective.

5. The Law/Guidelines

State Government laws and Council By-laws dictate some of the actions within this plan. Those laws include:

South Australia Legislation - Dog & Cat Management Act
 Local Government Act 1999
 Public and Environmental Health Act 1986
 Dog Management Policy
 Cat Management Policy
 Council by-law no. 1 - Permits and Penalties
 Council by-law no. 3 - Local Government Land
 Council by-law no. 4 - Streets and roads
 Council by-law no. 6 - Dogs
 Development Regulations 1993 - Section 3

5.1 Objectives and Aims

The Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (Section 3) reads:

The objectives of this Act are –

- (a) to encourage responsible dog and cat ownership;*
- (b) to reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats;*
- (c) to promote the effective management of dogs and cats (including through encouragement of the desexing of dogs and cats).*

The aim of the Act is to provide a balanced range of options for the management of dogs and cats within Council areas.

Council responsibility for management of dogs:

Section 26 of the Act reads as follows:-

- (1) Each Council is required to administer and enforce the provisions of this Act relating to dogs within its area and for that purpose must*
 - (a) maintain a register of dogs containing the information required by the Board (which may be kept in the form of a computer record) that is to be readily available for public inspection; and*

- (b) *ensure that the Board is provided with information contained in the register as required by the Board from time to time; and*
 - (c) *appoint a suitable person to be Registrar; and*
 - (d) *make satisfactory arrangements for issuing and replacing certificates of registration and registration discs; and*
 - (d) *appoint at least one full time animal management officer or make other arrangements for the exercise of the function and powers of animal management officers; and*
 - (e) *make satisfactory arrangements for the detention of dogs seized under this Act; and*
 - (f) *make satisfactory arrangements for fulfilling other obligations under this Act.*
- (2) *The arrangements made by a Council under this section must be satisfactory to the Board.*
- (3) *Money received by a Council under this Act must be expended in the administration and enforcement of the provisions of this Act relating to dogs.*
- (4) *Each council must keep separate accounts of money received under this Act and of money expended in the administration and enforcement of the provisions of this Act relating to dogs.*
- (5) *A Council must pay into the Fund the percentage fixed by regulation of the dog registration fees received by the Council.*
- (6) *Councils may charge –*
- (a) *fees for the provision of extracts from registers kept under this Act; and*
 - (b) *fees (which may be differential) approved by the Minister –*
 - (i) *for the registration of dogs or businesses under Part 5; and*
 - (ii) *for late payment of registration fees; and*
 - (iii) *for meeting any other requirement imposed on councils under this Act.*
- (7) *Without limiting the matters that may be taken into account when setting fees to be approved by the Minister, council's must provide for a percentage rebate of the fee that would otherwise be charged for the registration of a dog in the following cases:*
- (a) *if the dog is desexed;*
 - (b) *if,*
 - (i) *the dog has been implanted with a microchip for the purposes of identification; and*
 - (ii) *the information contained in the microchip is up-to-date;*
 - (c) *if the dog has passed a specified training program accredited by the Board, (and, if more than one rebate applies in respect of a particular dog, the rebates are to be aggregated and deducted from the registration fee that would otherwise be charged)*

Plans of management relating to dogs and cats

Section 26 of the Act reads as follows:-

- (1) *Each council must, in accordance with this section, prepare a plan relating to the management of dogs and cats within its area.*
- (2) *A plan of management must include provisions for parks where dogs may be exercised off-leash and for parks where dogs must be under effective control by means of physical restraint, and may include provisions for parks where dogs are prohibited.*
- (3) *a plan of management must be prepared and presented to the Board members as follows:*
 - (a) *the first plan must cover a 5 year period and be prepared and presented within 3 years after the commencement of this section;*
 - (b) *subsequent plans must cover subsequent 5 year periods and each plan must be prepared and presented at least 6 months before it is to take effect.*
- (4) *A plan of management must be approved by the Board before it takes effect.*
- (5) *A council may, with the approval of the Board, amend a plan of management at any time during the course of the 5 year period covered by the plan.*

By-laws

Councils have the ability to make By-laws for the control or management of dogs or cats in their area however by-laws must be consistent with the aims and objectives of the Act.

Section 90 (1) of the existing Act reads as follows:-

- (1) *A district or municipal council may make by-laws for the control or management of dogs or cats within its area.*

5.2 Legislative Requirements – Dog and Cat Management Act 1995

In 2001 a review of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 was initiated by the State Government. In 2004 the Amendment Bill was passed by Parliament and changes to legislation came into effect from 1 July 2004.

5.3 Summary of Changes in Brief

Under the Act a council has responsibility for the management of dogs in its area.

Legal age to register a dog.

Dog owners can now lawfully register their dog if the dog owner is 16 years of age. Previously the legal age was 18 years. Every dog three months of age or older must be registered and wear a collar with a registration disc attached. Registration expires on 30 June each year and must be renewed by 31 August in the same year.

Dogs on leads

All dogs must be on leads (no longer than 2 metres in length) in streets, roads and all public places (except parks unless otherwise specified by Council). Further detail is provided under item 6.6 Dog “on leash – off leash”

Increased fines

Fines and maximum penalties for offences have been increased. Where offences continue and are considered by a Magistrate to be of a serious enough nature, Council can seek the removal and disposal of the dog in a manner specified by the court and the recovery of costs and/or compensation.

Animal Management Plans

Council's and communities are now required to introduce 5 Year Animal Management Plans and have 3 years to do so. Refer to Section 26A, page 7 of this document.

Report of dog attacks by Medical Practitioners

The Act now requires the mandatory reporting of certain dog attacks by Medical Practitioners to the Board.

Two additional concessions for dog registration

Two new registration concessions now apply – microchipping and accredited trained. Refer Section 26 (7), page 6 of this document.

Dogs on utes and tray tops

Dogs travelling in the back of utilities, trucks or similar vehicles are required to be harnessed so that any part of the dog cannot extend itself beyond the tray. Working dogs will be exempt under certain conditions.

Prescribed breed

Presa canario has been added to the list of prescribed breeds. While not banned from ownership, as with other prescribed breeds special conditions apply to keep this breed.

Attack trained, guard dogs and patrol dogs

New provisions relating to attack trained dogs, guard dogs and patrol dogs including micro chipping and branding are contained in Section 45D of the Act. These provisions will come into effect on a date to be determined by the Board and published in the Government Gazette. Until that time, no identification (micro chip and branding) will be required for these categories of dogs. Council's will be advised of Board determinations on these matters before they are published or come into effect

Menacing Dog Order

New powers for Council's regarding menacing dogs *"a threat of such a nature and extent that the mind of an ordinary person of normal stability and courage might be influenced or made apprehensive so as to accede unwilling to the demand. Although the test is objective, evidence of the alleged victims' reaction may be admissible. A menace need not necessarily be of violence, injury or accusation"*

Greyhounds

Greyhounds must remain muzzled and controlled on a leash when being exercised in a public place. In addition the Dog and Cat Management Board have determined that all GAP (Greyhound Adoption Program) accredited and trained dogs are exempt from wearing muzzles and will be required to wear a GAP collar only which is black material collar with the wording GAP in the weaving.

Guide Dogs and Hearing Dogs

Any application received for guide dog and hearing dog status will require proof to Council in the first instance. In the event that Council is not satisfied with such proof the dog owner is to be referred to the Dog and Cat Management Board for assessment and accreditation eligibility.

Disability dogs

A dog will be eligible for free dog registration as a disability dog subject to meeting conditions set down by the Board and receiving appropriate accreditation prior to endorsement by Council's Registrar of Dogs.

Unchanged provisions

Under general offences, dogs are not allowed to:

- Wander at large.
- Attack or harass persons or owned animals, whether or not actual injury is caused
- Cause injury to a person lawfully entering premises.
- Enter the grounds of a school, kindergarten, child care or pre-school centre, except with the permission of the person in charge.
- Enter any shop unless it is a pet shop, grooming parlour or premises associated with a registered veterinary surgery.
- Rush at or chase vehicles in public places.
- Enter places where food or drink is prepared or sold.
- Cause nuisance, in particular barking nuisance.

Seizure of dog

- Council's Animal Management Officers have powers to seize and detain dogs under the following circumstances:
- Wandering at large in private or public places.
- To prevent a dog attacking, harassing or chasing a person or an owned animal or bird.
- To carry out an Order.
- Where urgent action is required.

Council's Animal Management Officers have the power to subdue a dog by any means necessary, which cannot be seized or detained because of its savagery or other sufficient cause.

Orders

Councils may issue Destruction and Control Orders in certain circumstances whether on the Council's own initiative or on complaint. *(In addition Council may now also issue menacing dog orders).*

Cat Management

At present the Act relates only to unidentified cats. No amendments have been made as a result of the review of the Act however it is the intention of this plan to identify, research and prepare recommendations for consideration by Council to address cat issues within our community.

6 Animal Management Strategies

There are a series of fundamental principals which underline all our animal management strategies:

1. We believe our strategies should encourage the Charles Sturt community to take ownership of issues and we should where ever possible facilitate self help strategies for the community.
2. We acknowledge the potential to build significant social capital within our community by implementing our strategies and will take every opportunity to maximise this.
3. We recognise the importance of community consultation and will seek feedback were ever possible. We also realise the benefits of educating the younger members of the community and engaging them in our campaign towards willing compliance.
4. We need to continually seek out innovations and technological advancements that will assist us to achieve our aims and objectives.
5. We will look for opportunities to work collaboratively with our neighbouring Councils and state bodies to maximise the effectiveness of our strategies.

6.1 Education and Promotion of responsible pet ownership

A strategy to encourage and provide community education concerning pets in our environment.

A combination of education, encouragement and enforcement is seen to be the most successful method of animal management. The Dog and Cat Management Board promotes this method and has developed many educational initiatives and regular media advertising campaigns which promote key issues. A singular method of enforcement can not provide a full solution to dog owner and dog problems.

Proposed Activity:

6.1.1 Educate our community and promote the following issues:

1. Responsible pet ownership, costs and benefits.
2. Desexing, registration and identification of dogs.
3. Selecting an appropriate pet to suit lifestyle and circumstances and appropriate fencing and housing.
4. Dog attack, bite avoidance and reporting of all dog attacks in public places and private property.
5. Dogs on foreshore and faeces management, environmental and social effects.

6. Dogs 'off leash' and 'on leash' provisions.
7. Dogs wandering at large & effective control.
8. Socialising and training.
9. Dog barking and nuisance.
10. Cat management
11. Officer image
12. Amendment to legislations, policies, bylaws, on lead/off lead provisions.

6.1.2. Address issues using education and promotion using the following methods:

- a. Council's corporate brochures, website, pet information kits, Council's newsletter 'City to Sea' Messenger newspaper, Customer Service Centres, Community Centres, promotional banners, magnets, and mobile library van using mascots.
- b. Distribution of educational material at Veterinary Clinics, Pet Shops, Council libraries and community centres.
- c. Contribution to stakeholder newsletters such as Charles Sturt Dog Owners Association and the Woodville Dog Obedience club and participation in open day events.
- d. Review educational and promotional publications, including Dog & Cat Management Board material.
- e. Links on Council's website to other appropriate websites, including the Dog and Cat Management Board, Pet care, Animal Welfare League, Select a pet and newsletters from Dog Association and Obedience Clubs.
- f. Further consideration of free 'Responsible Pet Ownership' education sessions.
- g. Review and continual development of Council's portable display specifically for animal management education/promotion.
- h. Review and monitor resource material available at Council Libraries.
- i. Talk to Service Clubs and community groups.
- j. Target Shopping Centres, Career Expo's, LGA Raise the Roof etc to promote responsible pet ownership including dog registration, dog obedience, bite avoidance etc.
- k. Work across divisions of Council and neighbouring Council's to jointly address animal management issues and participate in a variety of field days i.e., careers day, youth events, LGA Raise the Roof, Athol Park Community Consultation.
- l. Active involvement in school education with the State-wide 'Delta Dog Safe' program initiated by the Dog and Cat Management Board and other opportunities with animal related organisations such as Animal Welfare League's "Responsible Pet Ownership" program.
- m. Active involvement in engaging school students in our campaigns to promote responsible pet ownership.
- n. All staff to take ownership of an education and promotion approach to their day to day interactions with the community.

6.2 Desexing, registration and identification of dogs

A strategy to increase identification of dogs through an increase in dog registration, (so more pets will be reunited with owners and less dogs placed in shelters) and promotion of the benefits of desexing of both dogs and cats.

Desexing

Dog and cat owners should be encouraged to have their pets desexed, irrespective of whether it is a male or female animal. Desexing animals has the following benefits:

- Reduction of excessive, unnecessary and unplanned breeding.
- Reduction of the likelihood of aggressive behaviour, predominantly in male undesexed dogs.
- Reduction of dogs wandering at large.
- Improved temperament and significant reduction of life threatening diseases in both male and female dogs.

Statistics indicate that in the City of Charles Sturt only 50% of registered dogs are desexed. Council should aim to increase this percentage. The City of Charles Sturt currently provides a 40% concession on registration fees for desexed dogs. This incentive has not had sufficient impact on the number of desexed dogs (50% only). Consideration over the course of this plan needs to be given to increasing the differential to provide a greater incentive and reward for desexing of dogs, the greater the differential, the greater incentive. This method has proven to be effective in other states. In the meantime, other incentives need to be examined.

Proposed Activity:

1. Seek opportunities where possible to assist with low price desexing and microchipping of dogs and cats through selected vets.
2. Promote year round low price desexing of cats through opportunities such as C.A.T.S Inc. (Cats Assistance to Sterilise) or alternative organisations.
3. Consideration for continued strategies and negotiations with C.A.T.S. (Cats Assistance to Sterilise) or alternative organisations regarding desexing community cats.
4. Review current free cat cage hire policy and education program.
5. Encourage all Veterinary Surgeries in the Council area to promote the benefits of pet desexing.
6. Seek further consultation with the State Government, the Dog and Cat Management Board and residents of the City of Charles Sturt regarding amendments to legislation relating to cat control.
7. Promote a united campaign by all dog & cat stakeholders to consider the possibility of offering low price desexing to the general public.
8. Gain “in principal” support for the identification and promotion of dog expiation fees to be directed towards specific dog related education and encouragement programs.

9. Establish and deliver a “pensioner assistance program” to assist pensioners to maximise opportunities to enable them to receive concessions on their dog registrations. These may include concession for microchipping, desexing, dog obedience and companion dogs.

Registration

Legislation in SA requires all dogs over 3 months of age to be registered.

Council’s Dog Management Policy states:

“Registration of all dogs within the City will be pursued as one element of responsible dog ownership. To this end registration reminder notices will be prepared and sent each year to dog owners. Regular dog registration doorknocks are conducted to encourage maximum registration of dogs and accuracy of information”.

Council cannot expect to sustain an acceptable level of animal management services without obtaining maximum dog registrations as the registration fees received pays for the service provided by Council. This can therefore be a very important issue and is a key factor controlling all other effective and successful animal management strategies.

Dog registration ensures that:

- Owners are registered as well as their dogs.
- Adequate funding is available for Council to carry out responsibilities under the Act.
- Responsible dog owners and the rest of the community do not have to financially support irresponsible and unthinking dog owners.

The Background Paper to the 2001-2004 Plan indicated that there may be more than 7000 unregistered dogs in the City of Charles Sturt.

One of the positive outcomes of implementing actions from the 2002-2004 Plan was a 12% increase in the number of dogs registered during the 2002-2004 period.

Note: Fee increases in dog registration due to amendments to the Dog and Cat Management Act Regulations may result in some dog owners failing to register their dogs. It is therefore reasonable to anticipate possible impact on council’s dog registration doorknock programs while also impacting on the maximisation of dog registrations.

Proposed Activity:

1. Continue dog registration doorknock programs to maximise dog registration and assist with maintaining accurate data.
2. Promote Council’s on line payment option as a convenient way to complete this transaction .

3. Consider the introduction of free 'Responsible Pet Owner' information sessions, to cover issues like prevention versus cure. These sessions should be conducted in partnership where appropriate with other animal related stakeholders.
4. Reward responsible dog owners with incentives/rewards for pets.
5. Consider rewarding mature dogs (eg over 8 years) who have no infringements or offence history with life time registration.
6. Pursue an active involvement with the Dog and Cat Management Board particularly relating to the setting of Registration Fees.
7. Lobby the Dog and Cat Management Board to advocate for a review of annual dog registrations with consideration of three or five year registrations terms and an increased differential to provide a greater incentive for dog owners to desex their dogs.
8. Encourage Animal Management Officers to continue to use their professional discretion and issue cautionary expiations where appropriate. No monetary fee would apply in this situation however it allows Council to record the information against the dog and its owner for future reference.

Dog and Cat Identification

Legislation in South Australia requires dogs to be identified by means of a collar and registration disc. The Dog and Cat Management Board endorses the micro chipping of dogs and cats as a support identification method to the collar and disc. Identification tags are also regarded as a support method of identification.

Identification results in:

- Significant likelihood of pets being re-united with their owners.
- Dog owner being contacted in the event of the dog being involved in an accident which may result in veterinary treatment.
- Reduced likelihood of dog being re-homed at an animal shelter if not claimed.

Proposed Activity:

1. Maximise registration of dogs through the renewal process and dog registration doorknock programs.
2. Ensure regular use of microchip scanner at point of dog pick up where possible and attempt to identify and return dog to its owner.
3. Promote Identification tags for dogs and cats, supplementary to registration discs.
4. Promote microchipping of dogs and cats and consider microchipping days and/or incentives.
5. Promote information on Council's policy and legislative requirements concerning dog registration to the community.

6.3 Selecting an appropriate pet and planning for pet friendly housing.

Encourage responsible attitudes towards pet ownership and selection of a suitable pet to suit lifestyle and circumstances while encouraging an appropriate environment and housing.

The decision to acquire a pet is a very important one for the owners, animals and the community in general. All too frequently unwanted dogs and cats become statistics, being given away, turned loose or relinquished to animal shelters. Other types of pets may be a better option for some people within our community.

Statistics from the Animal Welfare League for 2002 show that :

- The percentage of dogs which came in to the AWL which were not desexed was 91%.
- The percentage of cats which came into the AWL which were not desexed was 93%.

Council currently provides a service (fee applies) to residents who chose to relinquish a dog to council. Council officers then transport the dog to the Animal Welfare League where the decision as to the suitability for re homing is at the discretion of AWL.

Proposed Activity:

1. Promotion of 'Select a Pet' website to assist in selecting an appropriate breed
2. Encourage/promote residents to use resources (books/videos) available at libraries and to promote appropriate arrangements are made for pets while owners are on holidays.
3. Promote the benefits and costs of pet ownership.
4. Promotion of other appropriate pets, the keeping of, desexing etc.
5. Encourage Pet Shop Code of Conduct promoting appropriate selection of pet to suit lifestyle and circumstances.
6. Encourage pet shops to provide registration form and information kits.
7. Lobby the Dog and Cat Management Board to develop regulations relating to back yard breeding.

Planning For Pet Friendly Housing

1. Many pet behavioural problems can be attributed to inappropriate housing and inappropriate pet/breed selection. This strategy is designed to create a safer and happier environment for pets. Recommendation: Provide advice on appropriate design for the keeping of pets taking into account the following principles:
 - Maximise space available to pets
 - Environment enrichment
 - View of the outside world

- Confinement
 - Acoustic separation
 - A safe and comfortable environment
 - Amount of time available to spend with pet
2. Incorporate appropriate design principles for pets, based on (1) above, into the Development Plan.

6.4 Dog Attack and Bite Avoidance

A strategy to reduce the number of dog attacks and harassments and encourage the reporting of all dog attacks and harassments.

The issue of dog attacks and harassment is of great concern to the general community, particularly in relation to children and the elderly. Also of great concern is the number of unreported attacks and the fact that the majority of attacks (in order of 70%) occur on private property.

While a minority of dogs are involved in attacks and harassment, all dogs have the potential to bite, regardless of size, age, breed or temperament, particularly in situations where they are frightened, dominant, protective or possessive.

Proposed Activity:

1. Promote information on Council's policy and legislative requirements concerning dog attacks to the community.
2. Continue to lobby, support and assist in facilitation of the Dog and Cat Management Board's 'Delta Dog Safe' Program through South Australia schools.
3. Collate statistics and examine the types and breeds of dog registered in the City of Charles Sturt to determine any trends applicable to the Council area. (Caution must be given with correct proportional assessment. i.e., there are greater numbers of particular breeds than others.)
4. Promote and encourage the reporting of all dog attacks whether in public places or on private property.
5. Review current education material and methods on bite avoidance, and seek opportunities to emphasise the importance of adult supervision of children at all times.
6. Promote the level of risk relating to litigation and public safety.
7. Seek opportunities to refer persons involved in dog attacks to qualified dog behavioural specialists and psychologists.

6.5 Faeces Management

A strategy to encourage dog owners to pick up dog faeces from public places in order to reduce the amount of dog faeces harming our environment and spoiling the enjoyment of others.

Faeces Management

The management of dog faeces is an important environmental and community issue. Tonnes of dog faeces pollute our waterways and public places each year and degrade our waterways and land based ecosystems while also posing a risk for animals.

While the City Of Charles Sturt provides some dog waste dispensers, installation and ongoing maintenance are significant and the duty of refilling and supplying courtesy bags, an ongoing demand. Signage in accordance with Bylaw No. 6 – Dogs is currently displayed on foreshore areas and this covers faeces pick up requirements and on/off leash times.

Proposed Activity:

1. Harness community volunteers to encourage compliance.
2. Provide assistance and continued support to Animal Management Volunteers with refilling dog waste dispensers along foreshore.
3. Criteria guidelines to be referred to when considering installation of additional dispensers and dog tidy bags in reserves and on foreshores and in particular off leash areas.
4. Continue to promote individual packs of degradable dog waste bags and 'pooch pouches' for sale to the public and promote owner responsibility.
5. Consider providing dog 'pooch pouches' at time of registration as incentive to pick up after your dog.
6. Consider dog waste dispensers in 'dogs in open space' policy
7. Educate dog owners on the impact of dog waste on the environment

6.6 Dog 'On Leash' - 'Off Leash'

A strategy to address the human/dog relationship to ensure coexistence and safety.

Dogs on leads - streets, roads and footpaths

As a result of the changes to the Act which came into effect 1 July 2004, all dogs must to be on a leash when in a public place "*means a place to which the public has access*". This means places such as streets, roads, footpaths, shopping centre car parks etc but does not include parks and reserves.

South Australian Councils have 3 years to determine what is appropriate use and provisions for dogs on lead/off lead in other open spaces such as parks, reserves and gardens in their own Council area.

Parks and Reserves within the City Of Charles Sturt

There is some concern from dog owners about providing adequate open space for dogs to be exercised off leash. Charles Sturt Council reserves and parks remain off leash areas until community consultation has been undertaken on the issue. Dog owners are encouraged to provide their dogs with off leash exercise while demonstrating effective control at all times.

In 2003 the City Of Charles Sturt established a Dog Management Reference Group to identify issues relating to dogs and open space planning. This group has developed recommendations which will go before Council and out for community consultation. The objectives of these meetings was *“to prepare recommendations for consideration by Council once the Dog and Cat Management (Miscellaneous) Amendment Bill 2003 is passed, specifically regarding dogs on leashes and open space planning”*.

Proposed Activity:

1. Dog Management Reference Group to identify issues and make recommendations relating to ‘dogs and open space planning’ in line with amendments to current legislation.
2. Develop criteria/guidelines to select “Dog on Leash” areas including playgrounds.
3. Conduct further community consultation where appropriate.
4. Urban Animal Management Plan considerations to be built into the Community Land Management Plan and Master Plan required under the Local Government Act 1999.

Dogs on Foreshores

Council’s existing foreshore by-law No. 6 is working well and no change to this by-law is anticipated for some time. This by-law offers flexibility and creates uniformity along the foreshore with seaside Councils being aware of the importance of consistency. Councils have worked cooperatively to achieve a significant improvement.

It is recognised that while the majority of dog owners (both residents and visitors) who visit our foreshore are responsible a continued combination of encouragement, education and enforcement is required for continued compliance. It is also recognised that on regular occasions that Council officers experience difficulties with non-compliance and aggressive persons. It is recommended that continued proactive approaches be considered and implemented to address this issue.

A proactive approach and visibility of Council Officers encourages a safer environment and provides the opportunity to educate and encourage dog owners picking up after their dogs. Where necessary expiations may be issued.

Council By-Law No.6 came into effect December 2001 and states:

“Dogs on Leash 10am to 8pm during daylight saving and under effective control at all other times”.

Effective control of dog by means of physical restraint means:

- Controlled on a chain, cord or leash not exceeding 2m in length.
- Responsive to command and in close proximity to the person with the person able to see the dog at all times.
- Placed in a cage, vehicle or other object or structure.
- By tethering to a fixed object by means of a chain, cord or leash not exceeding 2m in length.

Proposed Activity:

1. Maintain and review the times and level of patrols in line with service standards.
2. Distribute educational material, complimentary dog waste bags and maintain balance of education, encouragement and enforcement.
3. Maintain proactive, approachable image of vehicle with pro-friendly signage.
4. Reward responsible pet owners.
5. Issue cautions and expiations where appropriate.
6. Consider alternative methods of patrolling along the foreshore

6.7 Dogs Wandering At Large

A strategy to reduce the number of dogs wandering at large to reduce public nuisance and increase public safety.

In 2002/2003, Council impounded 720 dogs which were wandering at large. Dogs wandering at large can be a threat not only to the dog but importantly to the community.

During fireworks and intense storm conditions dog owners should be encouraged to securely confine their pets. Council should continue to address policies that support this objective eg Fireworks Policy. A combination of education, encouragement and enforcement and by maximising dog registration and identification will ensure more impounded dogs are returned to owners with less risk to the animal and to the community.

Proposed Activity:

1. Encourage pet owners to confine their pets during fireworks events and thunderstorm warnings.
2. Ensure officers have access to dog registration details to enable return of the dog to the owner.
3. Establish and promote Council’s Lost & Found web site with links to other similar sites.

4. Promote lawful requirement of identification.
5. Build into Animal Management Officer's work procedures all possible options for attempting to return wandering dogs back to their owners before they are impounded.
6. Promote the consequences of dogs wandering at large.

6.8 Dog Socialisation and Training

A strategy to encourage dog owners to socialise and train their dogs to an acceptable level within the community.

Dog socialisation and training has the potential to overcome most behavioural problems and should be promoted as a part of responsible ownership along with education. In conjunction with training the dog, the handler is also an important part of continued re-inforcement and training. Dog owners in the City of Charles Sturt can acquire training for their dogs through:

- Puppy pre-school through participating Veterinary Clinics.
- Local dog obedience clubs.
- Animal behaviour and training organisations.

Proposed Activity:

1. Promote Puppy Pre-School programs and Canine Good Citizens Course.
2. Support and promote initiatives of Obedience Clubs and Vets.
3. Examine the possibility of a percentage of funds raised by dog expiations and dog registrations to be re-allocated back into responsible pet ownership initiatives such as concessions for dog obedience.
4. Encourage uptake of reference material available in Charles Sturt libraries.
5. Continue to work proactively with the Woodville Dog Obedience Club and other partnerships to further their capacity to deliver services to the residents of Charles Sturt eg Doggie Day Care options, behavioural advice etc
6. Establish and deliver a "pensioner assistance program" to assist pensioners to maximise opportunities to enable them to receive concessions their dog registrations for dog obedience and companion dogs.

6.9 Dog Barking Nuisance

A strategy to manage nuisance caused by barking.

Barking complaints make up a significant percentage of complaints received by council's compliance department and are often complex and very difficult to deal with effectively.

Proposed Activity:

1. Review Dog Barking Procedures and investigate methods to monitor barking nuisance.
2. Investigate options that allow neighbours to attempt to resolve this issue before Council is involved.
3. In situations where specialist expertise is required, Council provide information and possible subsidy regarding different options including animal behaviourists and trainers who can assist dog owners with solving problems.
4. Promote the keeping of cats inside at night to assist in reducing barking nuisance.

6.10 Management of Cats

A strategy to encourage responsible cat ownership and support the desexing of cats as a means of cat control.

The Council receives relatively few complaints regarding cat problems. The initial Urban Animal Management Plan Survey (2001-2004) did indicate a significant interest in furthering Council involvement in cat "issues". This has the potential to have serious resource implications for Council and requires further research.

Council's current involvement in cat management at this point in time (as outlined in our Cat Management Policy) is as follows:

- free hire of cat cages (refundable deposit applies);
- referral to C.A.T.S. (Cats Assistance to Sterilise).
- a 'user pays' collection service for unidentified trapped cats;
- provision of education/promotional information on responsible cat ownership;

Under the current provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 if a member of the public finds an unidentified cat (no collar with identification tag with contact details to determine the owner of the cat, or no microchip tattoo in the inside of the cat's ear) then they may trap this cat only if it is found on their property. A person is not authorised to enter another person's property without the consent of the occupier or owner (in the case of Council or Crown land). If the cat is identified then it must be released. Where it is alleged that insanitary conditions result from excessive cats on a property council's Environmental Health Officers may investigate and take the necessary steps to have the owner or occupier of the property address the insanitary conditions.

In 2002 the State Government consulted Councils on their views regarding cats in the community with a survey distributed to all South Australian Councils. It was indicated that legislation relating to dogs would be completed before the issue of cats is seriously considered. Before a

direction is proposed a more detailed consultation process will be instigated by the Government on the issue of effective cat management.

Resources, costs, staffing and enforcement to provide additional cat management services will need to be considered seriously and consultation with the Charles Sturt community is anticipated to be initiated.

Proposed Activity:

1. Consider public consultation/focus groups to determine level of problem.
2. Investigate a by-law limiting the number of cats which can be kept on a property to 2 cats.
3. Develop a permit system process for those residents who wish to keep more than 2 cats on their property.
4. Provide donation to C.A.T.S. (Cats Assistance to Sterilise) or alternative organisation and refer residents who are inconvenienced by cats, residents who require assistance with low price desexing of cats and assistance with desexing of 'colony' cats.
5. Monitor free cat cage hire and ensure adequate cages are available to residents.
6. Research options pending results of survey and focus groups if required. Evaluate the impact of the by-law limiting the number of cats per household to determine if successful before considering additional methods of cat management.
7. Amend Council Cat Management Policy and By-Law as required.
8. Educate and encourage responsible cat ownership through various methods.
9. Encourage cat enclosures.
10. Examine the success or failures/problems of the other Councils including interstate models who have attempted to implement cat By-Laws for consideration by Charles Sturt.

6.11 Animal Management Officer Image & Staff Training

A strategy to improve community recognition and understanding of the role and services provided by Animal Management Officers while providing all Council staff connected with animal management adequate training to respond to all aspects of pet management in the community.

In the past an unfavourable public perception of Animal Management Officers existed which saw them as a "dog catcher" or "dog destroyer". Since the inception of Council's initial Urban Animal Management Plan (2001-2004) with an increased emphasis on education, encouragement and enforcement this has resulted in an improved professionalism and approachability of officers while at the same time providing the opportunity for educational, promotional and proactive initiatives. This has resulted in improved relationships with stakeholders, the community and other areas within Council.

Proposed Activity:

1. Animal Management Officers to attend Community, Council and Conference events where possible.
2. Increase involvement with network relationships.
3. Target approachability and friendliness.
4. Appropriate professional and approachable uniforms and image for Animal Management Officers.
5. Dog vans to have a “people and pet friendly” image - i.e. a new message, including appropriate symbolic artwork.
6. Promotion of Animal Management Officers and their role.

Staff Training

Proposed Activity:

1. Customer Service Staff training on procedures, standard responses and educational material, recognition of opportunities to reach dog and cat owners and dispensing accurate basic information.
2. Identify training needs through staff personal development programs.
3. Registrar of Dogs to receive necessary training, guidance and assistance to carry out obligations under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.
4. Attendance at Urban Animal Management conferences by Animal Management Officers on a rotating basis to keep updated with the latest trends in urban animal management.
5. Participation from Animal Management Officers taking partial ownership and involvement in the implementation and monitoring of initiatives and recommendations in the plan.
6. Develop standard operating procedures for our work processes.
7. Continue to focus on customer service training for all AMOs.
8. Encourage mediation skill development for all Officers.

6.12 Corporate Responsibilities

6.12.1 Risk Management

A strategy to maintain a risk management plan about animal management in the community.

Risk management is an intrinsic factor in Council operations and has also been identified by the Dog and Cat Management Board as an important issue.

Proposed Activity:

1. Obtain legal advice where necessary for example in relation to dog on/off leash provisions.

2. Undertake risk management analysis where appropriate and address highest risks.
3. Continual development and training of Officers to ensure appropriate investigation and action is facilitated.

6.12.2 Service Levels

A strategy to ensure appropriate levels of service for the management of pets to meet the needs of the community.

The City of Charles Sturt covers an area of 57.98 square kilometres, with a residential population of 101,000 and 43,943 dwellings. There were approximately 17,000 dogs registered in the City in 2003/2004 financial year, and it is estimated that the number of unregistered dogs was approximately 7,000.

Council's Animal Management area is part of the Compliance department of the Public Health & Safety Business Unit within the City Services Division of Charles Sturt. The Council's Customer Service Centre handles general enquiries during office hours and our after hours service provider manages all other out of office enquiries, Current staffing levels include:

Manager of Public Health and Safety
 Team Leader
 3 fulltime Animal Management Officers
 1 Administration Officer
 2 fulltime equivalents outsourced after hours officers

On road coverage is as follows:

Monday – Thursday all year round -	7.00 am to 12 midnight
Weekends – (inc. fri/sat night)-	8.00 am to midnight
Sundays and public holidays-	8.00 am to 9pm

Two officers work on late shift to provide adequate coverage of the City and response to emergency matters. An authorised officer is available 24 hours for dog emergencies.

Proposed Activity:

1. Adjust service levels where necessary in line with adopted recommendations of the Strategic Urban Animal Management Plan.
2. Review service levels of foreshore patrol, Linear Park (River Torrens) and any other area subject to 'on lead' provisions.
3. Investigate options to address communication difficulties brought about because of the significant culture diversity present in our community.

6.13 Other urban animals

While this plan mostly incorporates animal management relating to dogs and cats animals such as horses, sheep, goats, cattle, pigs, roosters, chickens, birds, and bees impact on the community and therefore have been incorporated into the plan as supplementary items to reflect current legislation, policies and/or by-laws along with the relevant service provisions.

6.13.1 Roosters, chickens, birds, bees and other animals

Animal owners are required to keep animals in such a way as not to cause a nuisance or a hazard. Section 254 of the Local Government Act 1999 gives Councils the power to issue orders to require animal owners to abate a nuisance or hazard caused by animals. Examples of some circumstances include:

- Keeping an excessive number of insects, birds or other animals.
- Keeping bees in close proximity to another property.
- Keeping animals so as to generate excessive noise, dust or odours, or to attract pests or vermin.
- Failing to deal with a European wasp nest.

Owners who keep animals also have responsibilities under the Public and Environmental Health Act 1986 to ensure the property is kept in a clean and sanitary condition. Council can issue Notices where the keeping of animals is causing an insanitary condition to occur. Examples of insanitary conditions include:

- Offensive odours caused by an accumulation of animal faeces on the property.
- Infestation of rodents as a result of failing to construct and maintain an adequate poultry enclosure.

6.13.2 Horses, sheep, cattle, pigs, goats or other livestock

Under Schedule 3 of the Development Regulations 1993, the keeping of domestic animals is not considered as development. However the keeping of domestic animals for commercial purposes and the keeping of non-domestic animals i.e.; horses, sheep, cattle, pigs, goats or other livestock, requires a development application to Council. Public consultation may be sought, taking into consideration any impacts which the proposed development may have beyond the boundaries of a property. Consideration is given to representations received under the public consultation process in determining the appropriateness of the application by Council prior to making a decision.

During the application process consultation may be required with other Council departments such as Animal Management or Environmental Health

to identify issues and recommend conditions that may be applied in relation to the keeping of the animal or animals. Approval of the application may as a result be subject to conditions determined by Council, under the development process.

Where an application is not approved by Council the applicant has the right of appeal to the Environment, Resources and Development Court.

It should be noted that Council is generally reluctant to grant approval for the keeping of non-domestic animals and commercial breeders within metropolitan residential areas.

In the event of concerns relating to insanitary conditions Council's Environmental Health department may investigate and take appropriate action under the Public and Environmental Health Act 1987.

Horse stables within the City Of Charles Sturt maintain their existing use rights, however the following applies:

Council By-Law No.3 – Local Government Land

No persons shall without permission on any local government land –

(7) ride, lead or drive any horse, cattle or sheep, except on any street, road or car park or where the Council has set aside a track or other area for the use by or in connection with the animal of that kind.

Horses on the foreshore policy:

Permits

Council may issue permits to owners and trainers of horses to use the foreshore within the City of Charles Sturt on the following conditions:

1. Permits horses to be on the foreshore from 4am to 8am all year round.
2. Horses are only permitted on the sections of the foreshore south of the line 100 metres south of the Henley jetty and north of a line 100 metres north of the Grange jetty. Access to these sections of the foreshore is restricted to the Henley Sailing Club ramp off Burbridge Road and the boat launching ramp, Point Malcolm Reserve, Military Road, Semaphore Park respectively.
3. When on the foreshore horses are not to be ridden or driven in a manner which endangers the safety of any person in the area, or unduly interferes with the peace, comfort and convenience of residents.

4. The person responsible for each horse is responsible for collecting all litter including horse manure from the foreshore and access ramps and adjacent loading/unloading areas (expiation fee: \$315)

6.13.3 Vermin

The City of Charles Sturt provides a number of services to assist residents with vermin control. Residents are able to discuss vermin control with one of Council's Environmental Health Officers who can advise on basic measures for rat control. Part of this information provision may be a recommendation to seek professional pest control services.

Information sheets on rat control are also available and these can be posted out to residents or viewed on the Council's website. Where residents have concerns about insanitary conditions Council's Environmental Health Officers investigate these concerns under the Public and Environmental Health Act and provide feedback to residents. To complement these services, small quantities of bait are available from the Woodville Civic Centre.

Bait is provided as assistance only, recognising that residents are responsible for vermin control on their own properties. The quantities provided are controlled and are sufficient for minor problems only. Residents experiencing ongoing or complex problems are advised to seek professional pest control services.

6.13.4 European wasps

Where a resident is experiencing an infestation of European wasps Council Officers obtain details from the resident and provide the details to a wasp eradication contractor who then deals with the resident directly. Council pays for this service in the first instance and has applies for a funding contribution through the State Governments Equalisation Scheme. The provision of funding is not guaranteed for each year and is reviewed at such a time accordingly.

7. Community Consultation

The general content and direction of this UAMP has not altered significantly from the 2001-2004 UAMP maintaining a mix of 'education, encouragement and enforcement'. Given this position opportunities were provided for Elected Members, stakeholders, members of the original Reference Group, the current reference group, local residents and staff to provide feedback on the draft plan which has been feed into this final UAMP 2004-2009.

8. Policy Content & Strategic Drivers

This Strategic Urban Animal Management Plan is in line with Council's Strategic Drivers and Corporate Plan. In line with Council's Strategic Drivers it is about creating and maintaining a community which is socially, environmentally and economically sustainable in the long term by focussing on responsible animal ownership. The plan clearly outlines the direction to be pursued by Council as well as more specific goals and key actions.

The development and implementation of the Strategic Urban Animal Management Plan is included in the Public Health and Safety Business Plan *"the Public Health and Safety Team is focused on ensuring the safety of the community through encouragement, education and enforcement"*. The team's key role in this is to ensure compliance with the Dog and Cat Management Act and to encourage and educate pet owners to be responsible, setting a new direction for the management of pets in our society with increased emphasis on responsible ownership.

Other Council Policies which impact on the area of animal management are:

- **Dog Management Policy** (Appendix 2)
- **Cat Management Policy** (Appendix 3)
- **Expiation Notice Review Policy** (Appendix 4)
- **By-Law No. 6 – Dogs** (Appendix 5)
- **Open Space Policy** (Appendix 6)
- **Council's Public Consultation Policy**(Appendix 7)

These policies should be read in conjunction with this UAMP 2004-2009.

9. Implementation Strategies

9.1 Reporting Structure

Performance on achievement of the Strategies and Key Performance Indicators set in this Plan will be reported quarterly to Council via the Business Unit Report and at the completion of the plan.

9.2 Action Plan

An award Action Plan based on Council's strategies to achieve our objectives forms part of the Public Health & Safety Business Plan.

9.3 Resources

The funding of this Plan will be in accordance with the Annual Budget of the Council.

Section 26 (3) of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 requires that *“money received by a Council under this Act must be expended in the administration or enforcement of the provisions of this Act relating to dogs”*.

Council's income from the administration and enforcement of the Act is presently derived from four principal sources, i.e. general rate revenue, dog registration, expiation fees and fines for breaches of the Act. Dog registration fees and expiation fees are applied by Regulations under the Act, whilst fines are applied as a result of court action.

9.4 Partnerships

To achieve optimum outcomes, partnerships with existing stakeholders within the community will be pursued.

Stakeholder groups can make a significant contribution to the success of Council's aims and objectives within this plan and we should continue to work with and assist them to grow and develop.

10. Appendices

- Appendix 2 Council's Dog Management Policy
 - Appendix 3 Council's Cat Management Policy
 - Appendix 4 Council's Expiation Notice Review Policy
 - Appendix 5 Council's By-Law No. 6 - Dogs
 - Appendix 6 Council's Open Space Policy
 - Appendix 7 Council's Public Consultation Policy
-