

The District Council Of Franklin Harbour



Animal Management Plan 2007 - 2012

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
1. Executive Summary	4
2. The Law / Guidelines	5
3. Aims	5
4. Objectives	5
4.1 To promote responsible dog and cat ownership	5
4.2 To provide effective management for the welfare of dogs and cats within the community	5
4.3 To increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats	6
4.4 Provide for the needs of pets and pet owners	6
4.5 Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society	6
4.6 Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats	6
5. Animal Management Strategy	7
5.1 Promote responsible dog and cat ownership	7
5.1.1 Provide publicity and educational material to residents and visitors to the Council area relating to responsible pet ownership	7
5.1.2 Enforce the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995	7
5.2 To provide effective management for the welfare of dogs and cats within the community	7
5.2.1 Ensure that Officers of Council operate with the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995	7
5.2.2 Provide information for dog and cat owners	7
5.2.3 Maximise dog registrations	7
5.2.4 Enforce identification of dogs	8
5.2.5 Minimise dogs wandering at large	8
5.2.6 Encourage the community to report all dog attacks and harassments to Council	8
5.2.7 Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas	8
5.2.8 Maintain adequate local impoundment facilities	9
5.2.9 Maximise the understanding by the community of the roles of Council and the Animal Management Officer	9
5.2.10 Promote de-sexing of dogs and cats	9
5.3 To increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats	9

5.3.1	Barking dogs	9
5.3.2	Wandering dogs	10
5.3.3	Dog attacks / harassment	11
5.3.4	Dog faeces in public places	11
5.3.5	Nuisance caused by cats	11
5.3.6	Dogs on utilities and tray tops	11
5.4	Provide for the needs of pets and pet owners	12
5.4.1	Ensure that impounded dogs are returned to owners as soon as practicable	12
5.4.2	Ensure that all impounded dogs have clean safe facilities whilst impounded	12
5.4.3	Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas Suggested dog parks / non dog areas (<i>Off Leash / On Leash / No Dogs</i>)	13
5.5	Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society	14
5.6	Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats	15
5.6.1	Clearly define areas unsuitable for dog recreation and exercise	15

APPENDIX

1.	Working Dog Guidelines	16
2.	Dog Areas Cowell	

Draft

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The District Council of Franklin Harbour Council area encompasses the main town of Cowell together with the coastal settlements of Lucky Bay and Port Gibbon on Eastern Eyre Peninsula. The population base is approximately 1350 with the majority living in Cowell. During 2005/06 the Council registered 243 dogs and impounded 6 dogs. In addition the Council investigated 2 dog attacks/harassments and 9 noise complaints associated with dogs.

This Animal Management Plan has been prepared in response to the Dog and Cat Management Act which was enacted in 1995 and brought in a new legal framework to South Australia covering both dogs and cats.

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 (with encouragement for de-sexing and identification, through registration and micro-chipping of dogs and cats).

The District Council of Franklin Harbour Animal Management Plan aims to establish guidelines which will improve the management and control of dogs and cats within the community, while respecting the rights of all members of the community and protecting the environment. Council's Strategic Plan aims to "Maintain our high quality living environment" and the Animal Management Plan will provide support for this.

This Plan has been developed in consultation with the community and the Dog and Cat Management Board.

There is growing recognition that enforcement of law will not, on its own, result in lasting, voluntary changes in behaviour. Laws and by-laws need to be supplemented by a range of non-regulatory approaches such as public education and improved signage.

There is now considerable evidence to support our understanding of the benefits of owning pets. In this new environment, it is essential that Council takes a strategic approach to managing domestic pets. This plan will provide Council with a sound basis and direction from which it can plan, co-ordinate and make future decisions to meet the needs of the community over the next five years.

VISION STATEMENT

"To create an environment which encourages responsible pet ownership, where people and pets integrate safely and harmoniously within The District Council of Franklin Harbour area. To recognise that companion animals are part of the community, contributing to quality of life, and to ensure that the needs of animals and their owners are accommodated, while recognising the differing needs of all members of the community such as non pet owners."

2. THE LAW / GUIDELINES

The responsibilities for dog and cat management in South Australia are prescribed in the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995. Under the Act councils are required to administer and enforce the provisions relating to dogs within its area. Prescribed responsibilities include the appointment of a Registrar, maintenance of a Dog Register, the appointment of a dog management officer, and to make arrangements for dogs seized, and other obligations under the Act.

The Act provides for the appointment of the Dog and Cat Management Board, which has responsibilities to plan, promote, and advise on effective management of dogs and cats in the State, to monitor councils' management of their responsibilities, to issue guidelines for councils, to advise and assist councils to undertake their responsibilities. The Board has a role to provide advice to the Minister to keep the Act under review, to undertake research into companion animal management and to provide education programs for dog management officers and community awareness information. The Act provides that a Council may appoint a cat management officer for its area of responsibility.

In addition, a Council is also able to make by-laws and to adopt policies for the control and management of dogs and cats within its area. The District Council of Franklin Harbour Council has not adopted any Animal Management By-laws.

Whilst these provisions provide the legal framework for the Council's responsibilities and the penalties that can be imposed on dog owners for non compliance, this Plan seeks to implement a balanced approach that caters to everyone's needs. It will not only benefit dogs and their owners as a group with legitimate needs, but also the wider community as well as those charged with the responsibility of animal management by-laws.

3. AIMS

- 3.1** To promote responsible dog and cat ownership.
- 3.2** To provide effective management for the welfare of dogs and cats within the community.
- 3.3** To increase public safety through reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats.
- 3.4** Provide for the needs of pets and pet owners.
- 3.5** Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society.
- 3.6** Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats.

4. OBJECTIVES

4.1 To promote responsible dog and cat ownership

- 4.1.1** Provide publicity and educational material to residents and visitors to the Council area relating to responsible pet ownership.
- 4.1.2** Enforce the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 .

4.2 To provide effective management for the welfare of dogs and cats within the community

- 4.2.1 Ensure that the Officers of Council operate within the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995.
- 4.2.2 Provide information for dog and cat owners.
- 4.2.3 Maximise dog registrations.
- 4.2.4 Enforce identification of dogs.
- 4.2.5 Minimise dogs wandering at large.
- 4.2.6 Encourage the community to report all dog attacks and harassments to Council.
- 4.2.7 Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas.
- 4.2.8 Maintain adequate local impoundment facilities.
- 4.2.9 Maximise the community understanding of the roles of Council and the Authorised Animal Management Officer.
- 4.2.10 Promote de-sexing of dogs and cats.

4.3 *To increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats*

- 4.3.1 Barking dogs
- 4.3.2 Wandering dogs
- 4.3.3 Dog attacks/harassment
- 4.3.4 Dog faeces in public places
- 4.3.5 Nuisance caused by cats
- 4.3.6 Dogs on ute and tray tops

4.4 *Provide for the needs of pets and pet owners.*

- 4.4.1 Ensure that impounded dogs are returned to owners as soon as practical.
- 4.4.2 Ensure that all impounded dogs have clean, safe facilities while impounded.
- 4.4.3 Provide suitable on and off leash activities.

4.5 *Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society*

Provide residents and visitors with up to date information regarding the benefits of responsible dog and cat ownership.

4.6 *Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats*

- 4.6.1 Clearly define areas unsuitable for dog recreation and exercise.
- 4.6.2 Council supplies cat traps free of charge (with refundable bond) and disposes of any unidentified cats that have been caught

5. ANIMAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

5.1 Promote Responsible dog and cat ownership:

5.1.1 Provide publicity and educational material to residents and visitors to the Council area relating to responsible pet ownership

Recommendations:

- That Council introduce a brochure for all residents and visitors to The District Council of Franklin Harbour Council giving information for owners of pets and non pet owners. The brochure will be widely distributed in the community.
- There will be regular information relating to dogs provided in the council newsletter and the local community newspapers.

5.1.2 Enforce the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act.

Consistent enforcement of the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act is an important factor in educating the public to act responsibly with their pets. Responsible pet owners expect irresponsible pet owners to be dealt with through the provisions of the Act.

Recommendation:

- That Council implements a standard operating procedure for the investigation of complaints.

5.2 To provide effective management for the welfare of dogs and cats within the community.

5.2.1 Ensure that Officers of Council operate within the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995

Recommendations:

- A Procedures Manual to be developed for use by Staff.
- Ensure regular training and development of skills is provided on an ongoing basis.

5.2.2 Provide information for dog and cat owners

Recommendation:

- Regular items and promotion in the council newsletter and the local community newspapers.

5.2.3 Maximise dog registrations

Legislation in SA requires that all dogs of 3 months of age or more must be registered. Councils cannot expect to obtain an acceptable level of dog management without obtaining maximum registrations. This

can therefore be seen to be the most important issue at hand and is the key factor to controlling all other effective and successful dog management strategies. The purpose of registration includes the following:

- To allow lost pets to be reunited with their owners;
- Maximum funding is available for Councils to carry out responsibilities under the Act, and to fund animal management programs;
- To provide proof of ownership; and
- To encourage responsible animal management through discounted registration fees.

Recommendations:

- Enforce legal requirements such as identification and registration.
- Regular promotion in community papers.
- Undertake a registration drive by conducting random surveys.

5.2.4 *Enforce Identification of dogs*

Identification of dogs and cats is imperative to the provision of sound animal management practices. Residents and visitors to the area must identify their dogs at all times. Generally speaking pet owners do not allow their pets to roam.

Accidental escape accounts for approximately 90% of dogs wandering at large. Often these dogs are not identified and therefore cannot be returned to the owner. The costs associated with impounding unidentified dogs and cats and the stresses placed on the animal and their owners can be avoided.

Recommendations:

- That Council Staff enforce identification of dogs.
- That Council educate the public regarding the correct identification of dogs and cats.
- That Council encourages pet microchipping for better identification of pets.

5.2.5 *Minimise dogs wandering at large*
This item is covered under 5.3

5.2.6 *Encourage the community to report all dog attacks and harassments to Council*

Knowledge is the Council's best tool to reduce the number of dog attacks that occur in the community.

Recommendations:

- That Council implements an education programme that targets the reporting of all dog attacks/harassments throughout the council area.

5.2.7 *Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas*

Providing suitable on and off leash activity areas is vital to the success of animal management in the area. Dog owners must have suitable areas to exercise their dogs safely.

Equally, other members of the community must have the ability to use the amenities without fear of harassment by uncontrolled dogs. In areas such as streets, roads, and places the public congregate such as shopping areas, dogs must be restrained effectively. In parks assessed by Council for their suitability, dog owners should be able to exercise their dogs without restraint providing the owner

exercises effective control.

Recommendations:

- That Council does not restrict off-leash activities in parks and reserves unless it is deemed unsuitable for these activities.
- On and off lead areas will be designated by signage.

5.2.8 Maintain adequate local impoundment facilities

That impounded dogs are returned to owners as soon as practicable and all impounded dogs have clean safe facilities whilst impounded.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that Council operates its dog holding facilities in accordance with the “Code of Conduct for Pounds and Shelters” as set down by the Dog and Cat Management Board.
- A regular compliance review should be conducted.

5.2.9 Maximise the understanding by the community of the roles of Council and the Animal Management Officer

Many people have little or no understanding of the role performed by Animal Management Officers and Council in the community. This can lead to mistrust and in the worst cases a total lack of respect for the Officers and the Council. Officers must be able to provide information regarding the very important role they perform in the community on behalf of Council.

Recommendation:

- Regular promotion to inform the public of Council’s role, and current animal management issues.

5.2.10 Promote de-sexing of dogs and cats.

Encouragement of dog and cat owners to have their pets de-sexed, irrespective of whether male or female animal/s, as de-sexing of animals has the following benefits:

- Reduction of excessive, unnecessary and unplanned breeding.
- Reduction of the likelihood of aggressive behaviour, predominantly male, in un-desexed dogs.
- Reduction of dogs wandering at large.
- Significant reduction of life threatening diseases in both male and female dogs when de-sexed at an early age.

Recommendation:

- Regular promotion of the benefits of pet de-sexing.

5.3 To increase public safety through the reduction of public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats

Reduce the following detrimental impacts of dogs and cats.

5.3.1 Barking Dogs:

Barking dog complaints are one of the most difficult and time consuming areas of Council responsibility. Barking dog complaints are subjective depending on an individual's tolerance for dog noise. However, Council must investigate all written complaints. In order for Council to resolve the complaint, full co-operation from the complainant is required to collect meaningful evidence suitable to a Court of law. In order to do this Council has developed a standard operating procedure for all dog noise nuisance complaints.

The complainant must follow these standard operating procedures, as failure to do so will result in the matter being set aside by Council. On receipt of a complaint Council will provide information to the dog owner and diaries to the complainant. If and when the diaries are returned, an investigation will follow. Upon substantiation the Council will take the appropriate course of action.

Recommendations:

That Council follows a standard operating procedure for the investigation of noise nuisance complaints.

That Council provide an education brochure for dog owners to be sent out in the event of a complaint regarding dog noise nuisance.

5.3.2 Wandering Dogs

Under the provisions of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 it is an offence to allow a dog to wander at large. A dog will be taken to be "Wandering at Large" if it is in a public place, and no person is exercising effective control by way of physical restraint. A dog will also be considered "Wandering at Large" if in a park, and no person is either exercising physical restraint or command. Dogs off lead in parks must be in close proximity to the handler who must be able to see the dog at all times. The owner, or person who is responsible for the dog wandering at large, has committed an offence and is responsible for the prescribed penalties under the act.

A dog wandering at large can be a threat to live stock and members of the public, particularly children and older people, and Council is aware that serious attacks can arise in these circumstances. Council will therefore implement strategies to minimise dog wandering in the community.

Accidental escape accounts for approximately 90% of dogs wandering at large. Often these dogs are not identified and therefore cannot be returned to the owner. The costs associated with impounding unidentified dogs and the stresses placed on the animals and their owners can be avoided.

Recommendations:

That owners be made aware of their responsibilities to:

- Register their dog and wear their ID tag at all times;
- Promote microchipping;
- Adequately fence their property to control their dog or provide an enclosure within their property boundaries;
- To keep their dog under effective control when in a public place;
- Council's priority for dogs found to be wandering will be to return the dog to the owner;
- Unidentified dogs will be impounded in accordance with the Act; and
- Unclaimed dogs will be euthanized.

5.3.3 Dog attacks/harassment

All dog attacks/harassment must be recorded and investigated. In order to reduce the incidence of dog attacks Council must educate the public to act responsibly. 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 (85%) occur on private property.

Whilst 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. How to avoid being bitten or how to read a dog's body language are important issues on which to educate the public.

Recommendations:

- That Council collates statistics related to dog attacks.
- Encourage the community to report all dog attacks and harassments to Council.
- Promote the level of risk relating to litigation and public safety.

5.3.4 Dog faeces in public places

The management of dog faeces is an important environmental and health issue. Although the responsibility lies with dog owners, an increasing number of Councils are providing leadership in this area by providing dog tidy bags to promote the picking up of dog faeces. It is widely acknowledged that Councils providing faeces removal dispensers dramatically reduce the incidence of discarded faeces in the community. Problems associated with vandalism have been overcome by placing the dispensers in areas of high visibility such as Council buildings and parks.

Recommendation:

- That Council provides dispensers and dog tidy bags in suitable public areas with signs to encourage responsible dog ownership about faeces removal.

5.3.5 Nuisance caused by cats

Under the provision of the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 an unowned cat can be trapped when found wandering on private property. If an occupier traps a cat and it is identifiable the cat must be released to the owner unless the cat is more than one kilometre from a genuine place of residence. Under the provisions of the Act a cat must be identified by way of a collar with ownership details or by way of a microchip.

Recommendation:

- That Council continues to provide cat traps to residents experiencing problems with cats. The user to pay a bond and to sign an agreement for use of the cat trap.

5.3.6 Dogs on utilities and tray tops

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

in situations where they are involved in the movement of stock.

Recommendations:

- Regular promotion of requirements in Council newsletters and community newspapers.
- Information flier to accompany annual dog registration notices

5.4 *Provide for the needs of pets and pet owners*

5.4.1 *Ensure that impounded dogs are returned to owners as soon as practicable*

For wandering animals to be returned to their owners they must be identified.

Recommendations:

- Continuing promotion for all dogs to be registered and to wear their registration tags.
- Ongoing promotion for microchipping dogs and cats.

5.4.2 *Ensure that all impounded dogs have clean safe facilities whilst impounded* (Covered in Section 5.2.8)

5.4.3 *Provide suitable on and off leash activity areas*

Providing suitable on and off leash activity areas is vital to the success of animal management in the area. Dog owners must have suitable areas to exercise their dogs safely. Equally, other members of the community must have the ability to use the amenities without fear of harassment by uncontrolled dogs. In areas such as streets, roads, and places the public congregate such as shopping areas, dogs must be restrained effectively.

In parks assessed by Council for their suitability, dog owners should be able to exercise their dogs without restraint providing the owner exercises effective control by way of physical restraint or by command.

Recommendation:

- The District Council of Franklin Harbour will provide dog exercise areas with suitable signage as follows:

SUGGESTED DOG PARKS / NON DOG AREAS

OFF LEASH AREA

SHADED GREEN ON MAP



COWELL

- South Parklands (Sections 266 & 267 Hd of Playford).
- Old Rifle Range (Block L Hd Playford)

LUCKY BAY

- Beachfront 500m west of the Ferry Terminal and 500m east of the Shack No 125

PORT GIBBON

- Beach front 500m from each end of shacks.

NO DOGS

SHADED PINK ON MAP



COWELL

- Foreshore Playground
- Cowell Oval and Sports Complex grounds (excluding the fenced area of the Mobile Home Park)

Draft

All dogs in public areas must be on a cord or leash (no longer than two metres), unless in an off-lead park area and near enough to hear commands from the owner or controller that will be obeyed.

If a dog is in a public or private place without the consent of the occupier and no person is exercising effective control over the dog, it is considered to be “wandering at large” (an offence under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995).

5.5 Acknowledge the importance of dogs and cats in society

There are three factors that contribute to successful pet ownership. They are:

- **The Owner**, who needs to be aware of the responsibilities of pet ownership: -Ensures that the pet is registered, (identified in the case of cats), immunized, and de-sexed;
- The owner is responsible to ensure that the pet is trained, and to be aware of the pets' behaviour at all times, including when the owner is away from the home.
- The owner is responsible for ensuring that the pet has adequate food, water and shelter, and that the pet is regularly exercised and needs to be aware that these needs may vary, e.g. during heat wave conditions.

The Breed determines the size, and often the temperament of the dog/cat and its susceptibility to genetic defects. When selecting a pet it is important to seek appropriate advice on the soundness of animals being considered, and their suitability to the home/yard that the pet will be kept in and the family that the pet will be joining, particularly if small children are involved.

The Home environment is made up of the part of the home that the pet will have access to. In most cases this will include an enclosed yard and possibly part of the house. Important factors are the adequacy of fencing, whether the pet can see out of the yard through a gate, adequacy of shelter, food/water and whether there are children, closeness of neighbours, their pets, and access to exercise areas are important factors.

Successful pet ownership has both financial and time commitments and it is therefore important that people contemplating pet ownership endeavour to match their choice of pet for their particular home and family circumstances.

Recommendations:

-Regular advertising in the community, and a leaflet to be produced and distributed widely in the community, aimed at people contemplating obtaining a dog or cat with encouragement to consider the factors affecting the suitability of successful pet ownership in their particular circumstances.

- That sources of this information include the following:

1. Advice being available from the Council Dog and Cat Management Officer to pet owners about animal welfare issues;
2. Advice that Online information regarding breeds and assistance in pet selection is available on:
 - Petcare Information and Advisory Service www.petnet.com.au*
 - The Dog and Cat Management Board of SA www.dogsncats.asn.au*
3. Promotion to pet owners of the benefits of immunization and de-sexing;
4. Regular promotion in the Council newsletter and community newspapers, aimed at people contemplating obtaining a pet. Recommending:
 - Encouragement to become familiar with the responsibilities of pet ownership prior to obtaining a pet*
 - Be aware of the time that they may need to spend with their pet*
 - That people who obtain a new pet ensure that it is trained.*

5.6 *Protect native fauna and flora from the impact of dogs and cats*

5.6.1 *Clearly define areas unsuitable for dog recreation and exercise*

The District Council of Franklin Harbour has areas of natural significance which are managed by other agencies (e.g. National Parks and Wildlife). Some of these areas are open to the public as tourist and recreational areas and have signage indicating whether pets are permitted.

Regular promotion of responsible pet ownership will also lend support to the management of these fragile areas.

DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT WORKING DOG GUIDELINES

Appendix 1

A WORKING DOG IS:

A dog used principally for the droving and tending of stock.
(Stock includes sheep, goats and cattle)

If requested, applicants are required to demonstrate their dog/s ability to drove and tend stock, to the satisfaction of the Dog and Cat Management Officer.

Demonstrated ability would include:

- Dog being controlled by commands
- Dog coming on command
- Sending the dog around stock
- Dog holding the stock
- Dog droving stock to handler

Or

In case of a yard or truck dog demonstrating the dog's ability at handling stock, eg loading and unloading stock.

Or

Other: (please give reasons for request)

draft

All dogs must be registered after the age of 3 months. Young dogs under training (eg Kelpie and similar breeds for working stock) will be eligible to be registered as working dogs. Their working dog status must be reviewed at the time of the next year's registration.

Applicants Name.....

Applicants Signature

Address.....

Contact Number

Office Use

Registration No:

Approved by:

Position

Demonstration Date: