DRAFT

SUMMARY
ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN
2026-2030

What is the summary of the Animal Management Plan (AMP)?

This summary provides a brief overview of the core themes and actions highlighted within the Animal Management Plan 2026-2030. However, the complete AMP should be read for a deeper understanding of the full scope of the planned initiatives and actions within.

What is an Animal Management Plan (AMP)?

The AMP is a comprehensive legislative document outlining the dog and cat management priorities for the City of Charles Sturt Council. It is a legislative requirement under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 (the Act) and is renewed every 5 years. It exists to support pet owners, promote responsible pet ownership and safe, respectful use of shared public spaces.

The Animal Management Plan 2026-2030 is informed by Council's Community Vision and strategic themes relating to Education, Encouragement and Enforcement, and is reviewed annually to ensure it remains current.

What does the Draft Plan include?

The Plan includes a number of initiatives and actions that have been carried over from (or are similar to those in) the previous plan due to legislative obligation and/or to meet continued need. However, Council has also identified some emerging trends in animal management, including: increasing concern from community regarding cat management, respectful use of our shared public spaces, and enhancing community safety through the reduction of dog attacks and harassments.

As such, this Animal Management Plan encompasses priorities that meet legislative obligation under the Dog and Cat Management Act 1995 and also aims to improve compliance and address these community concerns. These priorities are categorised by a commitment to investigating, improving and promoting:

- Responsible pet ownership (increasing awareness and understanding of legislative requirements)
- Dog management and safety
- Cat management and safety
- Health and community
- Priorities for environment
- Animal management policy and process (to enhance service provision and delivery)

The Plan aligns with our Community Vision and strategic themes of education, encouragement and enforcement.

Who is this draft Plan relevant to?

The City of Charles Sturt Council has over 16,000 dogs and over 5,500 cats registered, making our City one of the larger metropolitan councils when it comes to animal management. The draft plan prioritises responsible pet ownership and initiatives that can aid pet owners, but also encompasses strategies to enhance safe interactions in shared public spaces and reduce nuisance.

The City of Charles Sturt has 8 fenced off lead areas, 457 reserves, 11kmg of coastline and several popular hubs like Henley Square and Plant 4, Bowden. Aspects of the draft Plan focus on dog and cat management strategies to improve safe and respectful use of these spaces for everyone's benefit.

Animal Management Plan Actions (as depicted in the full plan)

Legend

Community Vision		**Strategic Theme**	
Local Neighbourhoods		Education	
Valuing Nature		Encouragement	
Vibrant Places		Enforcement	
Connecting and Belonging			
Our Transforming City			

6.1. Priorities for improving responsible pet ownership by increasing awareness and understanding of legislative requirements

Action	Measures of Success	Relevant themes
6.1.1. Investigate innovative avenues for community engagement and education	Creation of new educational resources	
6.1.2. Investigate opportunities to improve proactive animal management processes to facilitate a culture of responsible pet ownership	Review of relevant standard processes that prioritise proactive animal management practice	
6.1.3. Increase awareness of the requirements for keeping excess cats and dogs	Promotion of the requirement of excess dog and cat permits	
6.1.4. Research best practice approaches to animal management and trial new initiatives for community education and engagement with animal management	Implementation of new initiatives	
6.1.5. Continue to promote the requirements of leash laws on the foreshore through the Beach Education program.	Continuation of the Beach Education Program	
6.1.6. Promote and collaborate with internal and external stakeholders relating to animal management strategies and community events	Promotion of stakeholders (where relevant) and animal management strategies Collaboration with stakeholders for community events	
6.1.7. Increase awareness of responsibilities of pet ownership, including registration, microchipping, desexing, and effective control requirements	Promotion of pet owner responsibilities	
6.1.8. Investigate opportunities to improve dog attack reporting	Review existing process and information available to public	
6.1.9. Continue to promote and facilitate desexing and microchipping for pet owners through an	Promotion of pet desexing and microchipping programs	

		Relevant themes
educate, encourage and enforce approach, including prioritising opportunities for low cost service provision	Continuation of the Dog Registration Survey Program	[theme icons]
6.1.10. Continue to optimise pet registration and microchipping numbers to maximise ability to return to owner, and optimise accurate reporting of pet numbers within Charles Sturt to better inform future decisions	Promotion of microchipping days and registration renewal period. Continuation of Dog Registration Survey Program	[theme icons]
6.1.11. Continue Dog Registration Survey Program	Continuation of Dog Registration Survey Program	[theme icons]
6.1.12. Continue to provide the pensioner assistance program to improve registration, desexing and microchipping compliance	Continuation of Financial Hardship Assistance Fund	[theme icons]
6.1.13. Investigate and implement strategies to increase people picking up after their dogs	Implementation of new strategy/strategies	[theme icons]
6.1.14. Review opportunities to incentivise the timely renewal of pet registrations each year	Report on opportunities to improve accessibility for registration payments	[theme icons]
6.1.15. Investigate and implement strategies to improve dog owner understanding of 'effective control' in shared on and off lead spaces	Implementation of new strategy/strategies to facilitate understanding of 'effective control'	[theme icons]

6.2. Priorities for dog management and safety

Action	Measures of Success	Relevant themes
6.2.1. Investigate innovative opportunities to develop, design or promote dog friendly spaces within the community beyond traditional (fenced off lead) dog parks and in line with Community Vision and Organisational Plan	Implementation of new strategy/ strategies	[theme icons]
6.2.2. Identify and implement strategies to aid in the reduction of dog attack, harassment and wandering concerns raised by community	Implementation of new strategy/ strategies	[theme icons]
6.2.3. Identify innovative opportunities to improve safe interactions between children and dogs	Implementation of new strategy/ strategies	[theme icons]
6.2.4. Provide free dog registration for the first year for all dogs obtained from authorised charity organisations	Continue to provide free registration for the first year for all dogs obtained from authorised charity organisations	[theme icons]
6.2.5. Promote 'Force Free' training methods as recommended by the RSPCA SA, and identify opportunities to support professionals using 'Force Free' training methods	Promotion of 'Force Free' training methods as recommended by RSPCA SA	[theme icons]
6.2.6. Promote responsible, safe, respectful use of shared public spaces to ensure everyone (whether	Promotion of respectful use of shared public spaces	[theme icons]

Action	Measures of Success	Relevant themes
they own a dog or not) can enjoy the space and feel safe		
6.2.7. Review existing dog-related signage in community spaces and fenced off leash areas to encourage reporting of dog attack and harassment concerns that occur, to improve evidence-based decision making and ensure Council receives an accurate indication of how these spaces are being used	Increase in dog attack reporting	
6.2.8. Investigate opportunities to increase awareness for the impact of climate change on dog management and safety	Promotion of dog management and safety relating to impacts of climate change	
6.2.9. Identify opportunities to improve education and engagement relating to pet ownership practices in various housing (e.g. apartments, rentals) to better address animal needs, and reduce/ prevent instances of possible nuisance	Education and engagement initiatives relating to meeting animal needs to reduce nuisance	

6.3. Priorities for cat management and safety

Action	Measures of Success	Relevant themes
6.3.1. Investigate opportunities to work with community and external stakeholders (e.g. RSPCA SA and AWL SA) to facilitate improved cat management strategies and practices	Evidence of collaboration with stakeholders	
6.3.2. Increase awareness of what to do when a roaming cat is causing a nuisance	Promotion of steps to follow in the event of roaming cats	
6.3.3. Encourage keeping cats inside (especially at night), including education on meeting cats' needs through appropriate indoor exercise and enrichment	Promotion of strategies to optimise life for indoor cats	
6.3.4. Encourage responsible cat ownership practices through innovative engagement and education opportunities	Implementation of strategy/strategies focused on responsible cat ownership	
6.3.5. Continue to encourage and promote cat runs as an effective means for containing cats within private property	Promotion of the use of cat runs for cat containment	
6.3.6. Continue to advocate for a consistent statewide approach to cat containment through lobbying the Dog and Cat Management Board	Evidence of continued advocacy toward consistent cat containment laws	
6.3.7. Continue to contribute to the development of a statewide cat management strategy as facilitated by the Dog and Cat Management Board	Continued participation in development of statewide cat management strategy	

6.4. Priorities for health and community

Action	Measures of Success	Relevant themes
6.4.1. Continue responsible pet owner information sessions and events, including a focus on factors parallel to responsible pet ownership including health, welfare and behaviour	Delivery of responsible pet owner information sessions	
6.4.2. Investigate opportunities to welcome new pet owning residents to the Charles Sturt community	Review of process for new residents and pet owners in CCS	
6.4.3. Investigate opportunities to improve safety for workers when accessing the front door of properties	Review of existing SOPs for entering properties Promotion of the importance of safety for workers entering properties	
6.4.4. Continue to promote and collaborate with local businesses as part of events	Continued promotion and collaboration with local businesses	
6.4.5. Continue to foster an environment whereby pet owners are comfortable in approaching Community Safety Officer's for education and general advice	Promotion of CSO role and inclusion of CSOs in relevant community events	
6.4.6. Actively promote the benefits and necessity of addressing the 5 Domains of Animal Welfare* for pet owners	Promotion of pet needs	
6.4.7. Continue to increase awareness of fireworks and thunderstorm events to pet owners and encourage pets to be confined inside during these events	Promotion of fireworks and thunderstorm events	
6.4.8. Continue to deliver the City of Charles Sturt's annual Doggy Day events to further promote responsible and ethical dog ownership, including the provision of free dog training and behaviour advice and workshops	Continued delivery of Doggy Day events	
6.4.9. Continue to collaborate with Community Connections to facilitate the Companion Animal Project which provides senior members of our community the option of volunteer assistance with their pets.	Continued collaboration with Community Connection for the Companion Animal Project	
6.4.10. Continue to recognise and promote the large proportion of responsible pet owners in our community	Continued promotion and recognition of responsible pet owners through various initiatives	
6.4.11. Continue to aid and support Animal Management Volunteers with refilling dog waste dispensers, and promote their role in community	Continued collaboration with Animal management volunteers	
6.4.12. Investigate innovative strategies to increase awareness of the impact of roaming cats on the community	Promotion of the benefits of containing cats, and impacts of roaming cats	

Action	Measures of Success	Relevant themes
6.4.13. Investigate innovative strategies to increase awareness of respectful and responsible dog walking etiquette	Promotion of respectful and responsible dog walking etiquette	
6.4.15. Identify opportunities to promote the benefits of pet ownership	Promotion of benefits of pet ownership	
6.4.15. Identify opportunities to promote important welfare-centric, responsible pet ownership practices for other pets including rabbits, rats, mice, birds and fish	Promotion of responsible, welfare-centric ownership practices for other common pets	

* [What are the Five Domains of Animal Welfare? – RSPCA Knowledgebase](#)

6.5. Priorities for environment

Action	Measures of Success	Relevant themes
6.5.1. Investigate opportunities to promote compostable dog waste bags and use of green bins	Promotion of compostable dog waste bags and appropriate waste disposal	
6.5.2. Continue to increase awareness of beach nesting birds in line with legislative responsibilities and available council resources	Promotion of vulnerable beach nesting birds	
6.5.3. Continue to increase awareness of the impact of off lead dogs on plovers and other wildlife in sensitive coastal and wetland environments and other biodiversity corridors	Promotion of impact of off lead dogs on local wildlife Targeted patrols at beach nesting bird breeding sites	
6.5.4. Continue to educate dog owners on the impact of dog waste on the environment	Implementation of educational strategy relating to dog waste	
6.5.5. Investigate innovative ways to increase awareness of the impact of roaming cats on the environment	Promotion of the impact of roaming cats on environment	
6.5.6. Investigate opportunities to promote the impact of off lead dogs in protected vegetation areas	Promotion of the impact of off lead dogs in protected vegetation	
6.5.7. Where possible, review dog friendly spaces with a view to enhance green infrastructure in a way that promotes community wellbeing and biodiversity	Consideration of green infrastructure and biodiversity through internal stakeholder collaboration	

6.6. Priorities for continuous improvement in animal management policy and process

Action	Measures of Success	Relevant themes
6.6.1. Develop guidelines and policy position for dog park requests and design in line with the Organisational Plan, collaborate with internal stakeholders regarding appropriate dog friendly community spaces to promote safe interactions and responsible, respectful shared use	Development of decision-making guidelines for fenced off lead areas	
6.6.2. Review dog friendly spaces and services across all socio-economic areas to identify opportunities for evidence based development,	Review of dog friendly locations and services in line with	

education and engagement relating to animal management	Community Vision and Organisational Plan	
6.6.3. Review barking dog procedures & investigate relevant tech and educational opportunities	Review of barking procedures	(icons)
6.6.4. Develop regular internal reports for community concerns/ requests to contribute to evidence-based decision making and identify emerging themes in animal management	Development of consistent internal report process	(icons)
6.6.5. Community Safety staff to take ownership of an education, encouragement and enforcement approach in their daily interactions with community, and actively participate in the actions within this plan	CSOs to promote a 3Es approach and actively participation in resolving actions within this plan	(icons)
6.6.6. Prioritise professional development and professional networks for Community Safety staff where possible for improved efficiencies and engagement with contemporary and innovative strategies in animal management	CSOs to attend relevant professional development opportunities	(icons)
6.6.7. Review skills analyses for Community Safety Officers and identify training needs through individual staff training plans	Review of skills analyses and training needs for CSOs	(icons)
6.6.8. Continue to facilitate training for internal stakeholders (e.g. Customer Contact and Libraries) on procedures, standard responses and educational and support opportunities	Review existing training available for internal stakeholders relating to animal management processes	(icons)
6.6.9. Continue to develop an Emergency Management Protocol for animal management cases	Development of an Emergency Management Protocol	(icons)
6.6.10. Investigate process for residents in need of emergency, short term animal management solutions and collaborate with external stakeholders to connect residents with appropriate service providers (e.g. Safe Pets Safe Families)	Development of guidelines for CSO and Council response in these situations	(icons)
6.6.11. Continuously review Council policies and procedures concerning domestic and companion animals in community, ensuring they are accurate and remain current given emerging trends	Review Council relevant policies and procedures as required	(icons)
6.6.12. Continue to review and improve educational resources for responsible pet ownership	Review existing educational resources for responsible pet ownership	(icons)
6.6.13. Identify opportunities to integrate animal management messages into Council's broader sustainability and climate education efforts	Evidence of collaboration with relevant internal stakeholders	(icons)
6.6.14. Review internal process relating to the approval of fireworks at Council run and permitted events with view to reduce instances of fireworks within the City	Review internal process for approving fireworks	(icons)

6.6.15. Review opportunities for integration with AI tools to better highlight animal management related items for residents and visitors to access	Review opportunities for integration with AI	
6.6.16. Investigate opportunities to monitor dog management and responsible pet owner practices in shared public spaces to better aid in policy and decision making	Review opportunities for monitoring shared public spaces	

Dog leash requirements in Charles Sturt

Dogs must be on lead:
- On any public footpath
- On the foreshore between 10am and 8pm during daylight savings time
- On any reserve where organised sport is being played
- Within 5m of a children's playground
- Within 100m of a Hooded or Red Capped Plover nesting site (usually on the foreshore)

Dogs must also be on lead in our on lead reserves, listed in the link below.

Otherwise, dogs can be off lead in our reserves *if* they are under effective control (within sight, in close proximity and able to be called away from other people and dogs). It's important that everyone in our community can visit our public spaces feeling safe. Dog owners need to keep their dog(s) away from others (unless expressly invited), and on lead if they do not have effective control.

A list of on lead, and fenced off lead, reserves in Charles Sturt can be found here (or QR Code): Dog Parks and On/Off Lead Areas | City of Charles Sturt.