

DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

2026-2029

Proudly working
with and for
our community



Victoria Park

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The City of Ballarat acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land we live and work on, the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung People, and recognises their continuing connection to the land and waterways.

We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.





INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THIS DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

All Victorian Local Government Areas (LGA) are required by the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Section 68A, to prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) at four yearly intervals.

The objective is to outline each LGAs plans for animal management and animal services to be delivered and available to the municipality.

Our mission as an Animal Services team is to create a better life for all animals in our community.

The strategic goals for the Animal Services team are:

- **To provide the community with programs and assistance on responsible pet ownership and an enhanced understanding of pet behaviour by breed and environment.**
- **To increase community awareness regarding animal welfare and provide a relatable, proactive local government service to facilitate this.**
- **To set a standard for animal welfare and care throughout the municipality with best practice at our new purpose-built facility**
- **To be leaders in the Local Government space for positive change regarding domestic animals and their value in our community.**

The purposes of this Domestic Animal Management Plan are to:

- Encourage and facilitate interactive programs with the community at the Ballarat Animal Shelter through engagement with schools, disability programs and volunteer programs.
- Desexing program for pets through newly designed council initiative
- Commence a comprehensive consultation and education program with the community regarding a possible change to the existing ‘dusk ‘til dawn’ cat curfew.
- Reduce and assess cat population controls across the municipality.
- Document current processes and practices under the City of Ballarat’s animal management responsibilities.
- Ensure that the Animal Management team have experience and skills in animal management that are regularly assessed and maintained.
- Increase awareness and compliance across the community with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
- Provide consistent prosecution processes in relation to dog attacks and nuisance dogs.



- Increase pet owners' knowledge of the principles of responsible pet ownership that strives to enhance community safety and awareness.
- Maximise the numbers of dogs and cats that are registered in the Ballarat municipality through increased awareness, together with an auditing and targeted media campaign.
- Minimise the harmful effects of domestic pets on the population of native birds, mammals and reptiles.
- To maintain a comprehensive education and consultation program on animal management matters.
- Monitor compliance with relevant provisions of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
- Ensure the City of Ballarat (COB) remains up to date with current legislation.
- Continue to maintain consistent low euthanasia rates for dogs and cats at the Ballarat Animal Shelter.
- Continued to engage and support rescue networks across the municipality.
- Decrease dog attacks in community through immediate response to incidents and ongoing education.
- Increase Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (POCTA) prosecutions and enforcement.
- To advocate and promote for more designated off leash areas throughout the municipality.
- Undertake proactive investigations of Domestic Animal Business' and unauthorised and/or non-compliant breeding establishments.
- Undertake animal welfare and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act proactive enforcement Undertake proactive monitoring across social media and other platforms, for illegal breeding establishments and non-complaint advertising of domestic pet sales.
- To provided ongoing support of community group assistance programs by engaging with community agencies including,- Uniting, Berry Street, Orange Door and the Ballarat Soup bus.
- Continue to provide opportunities for emergency boarding for victims fleeing gender and family-based violence, people experiencing homelessness and/or mental health issues and those impacted by natural emergencies such as bushfire and/or floods.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

City of Ballarat proposes to undertake community consultation regarding this draft of the Domestic Animal Management Plan in August 2025.

This consultation process will include a survey on the City of Ballarat MySay page, pop-up community consultation sessions with members of the Animal Services team, invitation for written submissions and targeted consultation with key stakeholders.

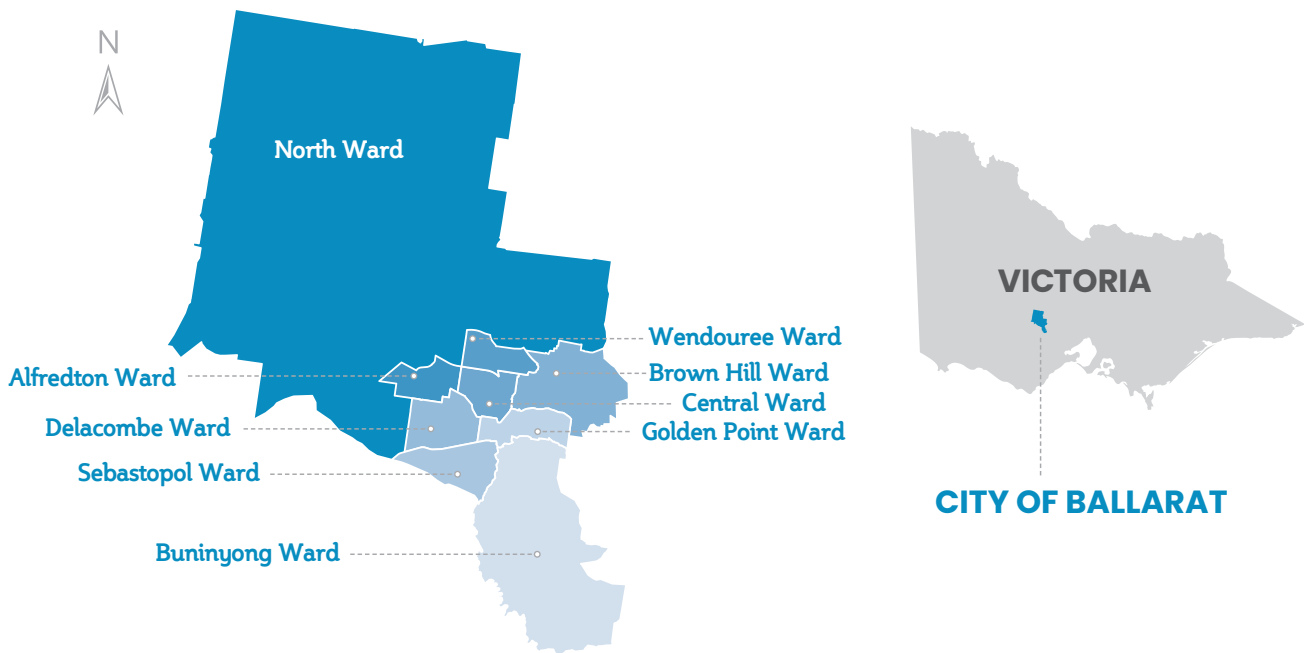
Consultation is open to residents, local veterinarian clinics, rescue and foster groups, pet owners and other key stakeholders.

CITY OF BALLARAT

DEMOGRAPHIC AND COUNCIL PROFILE

Ballarat or Ballaarat (Historical Spelling) 740km² and the 3rd largest City in Victoria

'balla' meaning 'elbow' or 'reclining on the elbow' + 'arat' meaning 'place': from two Aboriginal words signifying a camping or resting place.



The municipal district of the City of Ballarat is part of an area of land under the traditional custodianship of the Wathaurong people. It comprises the regional city of Ballarat, one of Australia's largest inland cities, and third largest city in Victoria, and includes the townships of Learmonth, Buninyong, Miners Rest and Cardigan Village.

The City of Ballarat has an area of 740 square kilometres and an estimated population of 118, 137 in 2023. The city is in Western Victoria, surrounded by the municipalities of the Shires of Hepburn, Pyrenees, Golden Plains and Moorabool. Ballarat is in a key strategic position at the centre of some of Victoria's most important freight, tourist and commuter transport routes.

The four main highways radiating from Ballarat include the Western, the Midland, the Glenelg and the Sunraysia Highways, connecting it to Industrial centres such as Melbourne, Adelaide, Geelong and Portland; regional locations like Bendigo and Mildura; and agricultural areas in the Mallee and Wimmera.

The City of Ballarat lies within a gently undulating section of the midland plains, which stretches from Creswick in the north to Rokewood in the south, and from Lal Lal in the southeast to Pittong in the west.

These plains are made up of alluvial sediment and volcanic flows and contain large areas of rich agricultural soils. Ballarat is approximately 110km north-west of Melbourne. Travel time between Ballarat and Melbourne is around 75minutes

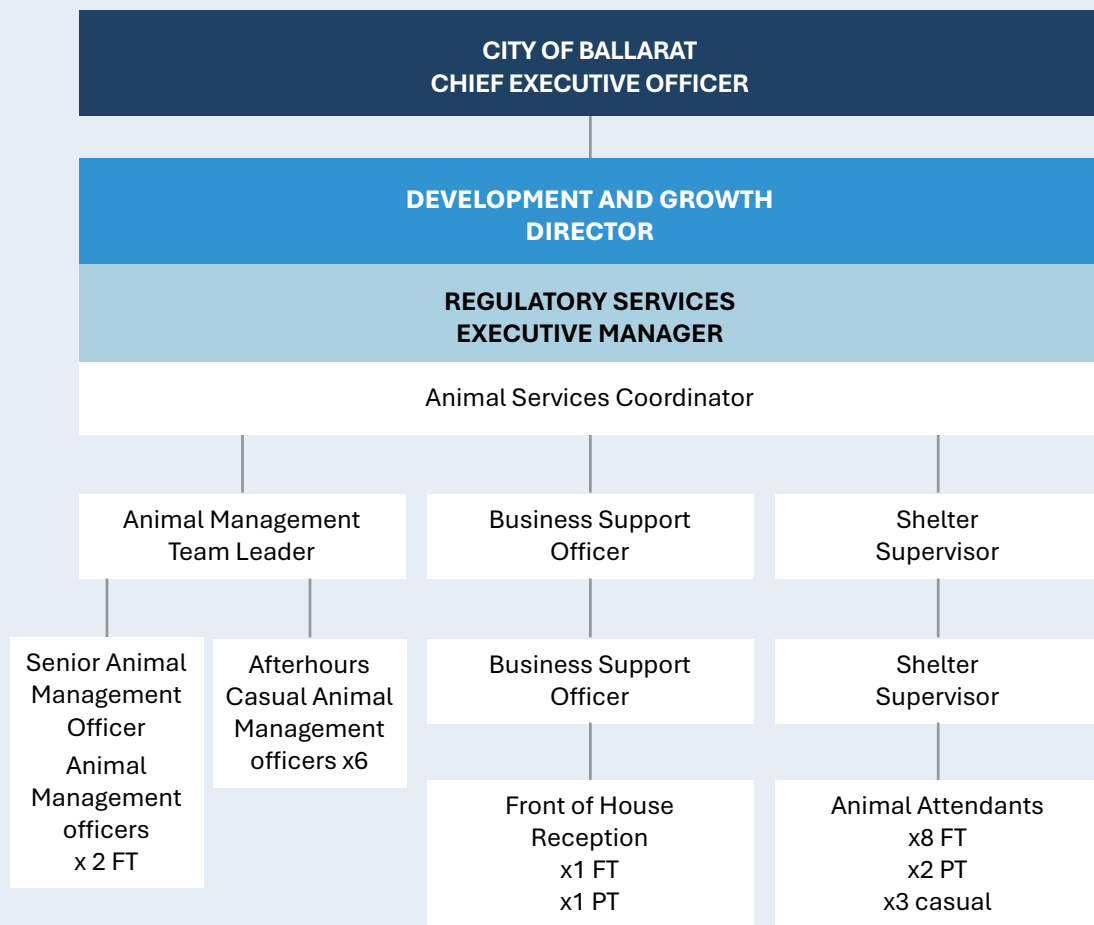
DOMESTIC ANIMAL SERVICES STATISTICS AND DATA SNAPSHOT - CITY OF BALLARAT

DOMESTIC ANIMAL SERVICES STATISTICS BALLARAT					
	2008/2009	2011/2012	2015/2016	2019/2020	2024/2025
Population	88,437	97,810	102, 490	109, 505	118,137
No. of households	36,500	34,852	42,252	44,654	NA
No. of authorised officers	2.5	2.5	2 F/T, x3 Compliance Officers with animal management included in PD	3 F/T, x4 casuals afterhours	5 F/T, x6 casuals afterhours Animal Management Officers
No. of registered dogs	14,615	14,995	13,193	14,753	15,212
No. of registered cats	6,210	5,674	4,831	6,401	6379

POUND AND SHELTER IMPOUND DATA					
	2008/2009	2011/2012	2015/2016	2019/2020	2024/2025
Dogs impounded	1,779	1,783	1,261	1304	1402
Dogs reclaimed from pound	994	1292	1261	807	834
Dogs adopted	597	314	424	266	374
Dogs euthanased	188	177	154	81	58
Cats impounded	1468	1009	1174	1331	1313
Cats reclaimed from pound	74	100	93	121	164
Cats adopted	356	283	699	762	749
Cats euthanased	1038	626	403	314	62
Dogs surrendered to COB	NA	NA	NA	7	317
Cats surrendered to COB	NA	NA	NA	10	314

REGISTERED DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES					
	2008/2009	2011/2012	2015/2016	2019/2020	2024/2025
BREEDING AND REARING	3	3	5	3	3
SHELTERS AND POUNDS	1	1	1	2	1
BOARDING	6	6	7	8	10
TRAINING	0	0	9	8	4
PET SHOPS	2	2	3	6	7

ORGANISTIONAL STRUCTURE



CITY OF BALLARAT DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The City of Ballarat has its own dedicated Animal Services team, that sits under the umbrella of Regulatory Services in the Development and Growth directorate of the City of Ballarat.

This team ensures that animal services operations are able to provide a better care and education system for the animals and owners within the municipality.

The Animal Services team includes:

Coordinator Animal Services

Animal Management Team, comprising:

- Team Leader Animal Management
- Senior Animal Management Officer
- Animal Management Officer x 2
- Casual after hours Animal Management officer x 6

Ballarat Animal Shelter team, comprising:

- Shelter Supervisor
- Business Support Officer
- Receptionist x 1.6
- Animal Handlers x
- Animal Attendants x
- Casual Animal Attendants x

SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY RELATING TO ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

The Animal Services department is responsible for the animal management function, as well as pound and shelter operations within the municipality. Such functions include, but are not limited to:

- Impounding of animals.
- Rescue and assistance of trapped livestock and domestic animals.
- Rehoming of animals through the Ballarat Animal Shelter (BAS).
- Placing animals in rescue or foster care via BAS.

- Engaging in 84y agreements to house long term seized dogs from other Victorian shires, providing better care and enrichment processes while awaiting an outcome from a prosecutorial investigation.
- Managing of complaints relating to animal nuisances, welfare concerns, excess animal keeping, unregistered breeding and dog behaviour off lead.
- Promoting responsible pet ownership and education.
- Investigating dog attacks, including prosecution of serious attacks and seeking banning orders under Section 84 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
- Ensuring compliance of legislation and Codes of Practice relevant to pets and livestock.
- Animal registration process.
- Regular foot patrols around highly used public areas.
- Prompt investigation and response to animal welfare issues and concerns.
- Management of Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs).
- Providing advice to pet owners and the community.
- After hours animal managements services.
- Providing work placement and experience for students and future animal care givers with the Ballarat Animal Shelter.
- Providing local high school programs in the Shelter environment.
- Emergency boarding for family and gender-based violence cases.
- Emergency boarding and attendance at evacuation centres for natural disasters, i.e. bushfire, flood etc.
- Wildlife assistance and rescue.

BALLARAT ANIMAL SHELTER



Since 2017, the City of Ballarat has operated the Ballarat Animal Shelter and facilitated both pound and shelter requirements in accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and the Code of Practice for the Management of Dogs and Cats in Shelters and Pounds.

Since resuming control of the Ballarat Animal Shelter, the facility has seen a reduction in dog and cat euthanasia, an increase in reclaims (charts 2 & 3), an increase in dog and cat surrenders (chart 1) and an overwhelming request for support for food and bedding from members of the community and outreach programs, for example the Soup Bus and Uniting.

The Ballarat Animal Shelter works alongside and supports Orange Door, Berry Street and Uniting by offering emergency boarding of pets for victims of Family and Gender Based Violence and has assisted over 180 pets since 2020, when the program was implemented.

Through support from a dedicated team and strong network of rescue relationships, the Ballarat Animal Shelter has been able to place approximately 10% of dogs and 17% of cats into rescue groups, giving them the second chance they need outside of the shelter environment.

Through collaboration with the animal management team and actions discussed further in this plan, the shelter has reduced repeat impounded dogs and cats by using education, follow up plans with the owners and responsible pet ownership guidelines.

CHART 1 - PERCENTAGE OF DOGS AND CATS SURRENDERED TO CITY OF BALLARAT THAT HAVE BEEN SURRENDERED

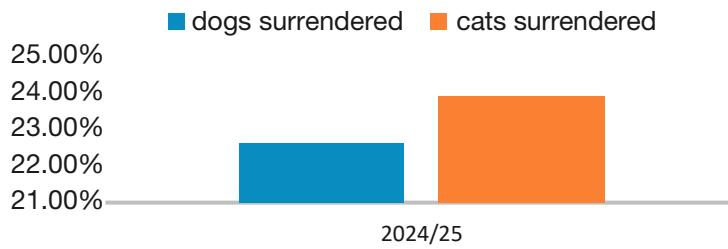


**CHART 2 - DOG IMPOUND AND RELEASE DATA 2017-2025
- ANIMAL SHELTER (DOG AND CAT SHELTER DATA)**

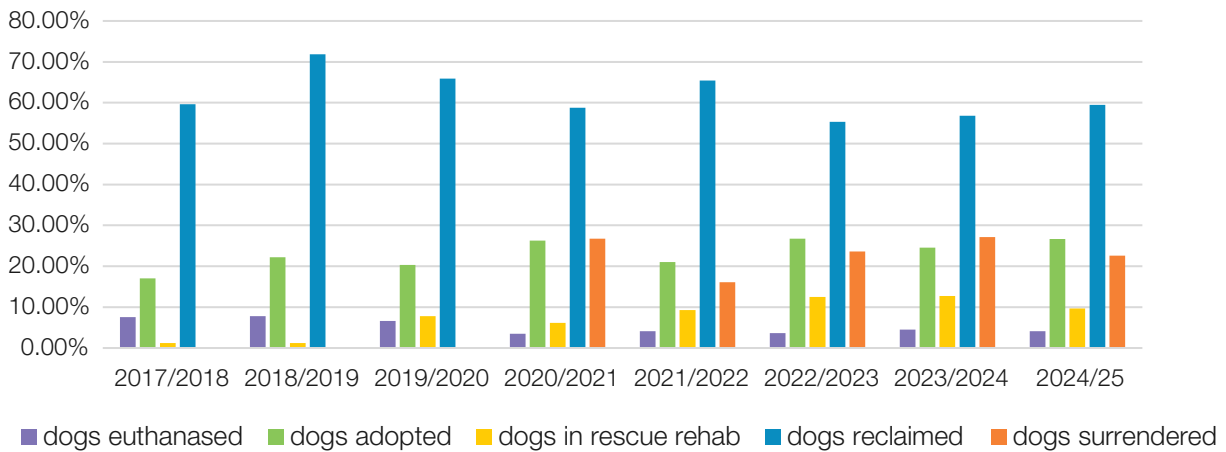
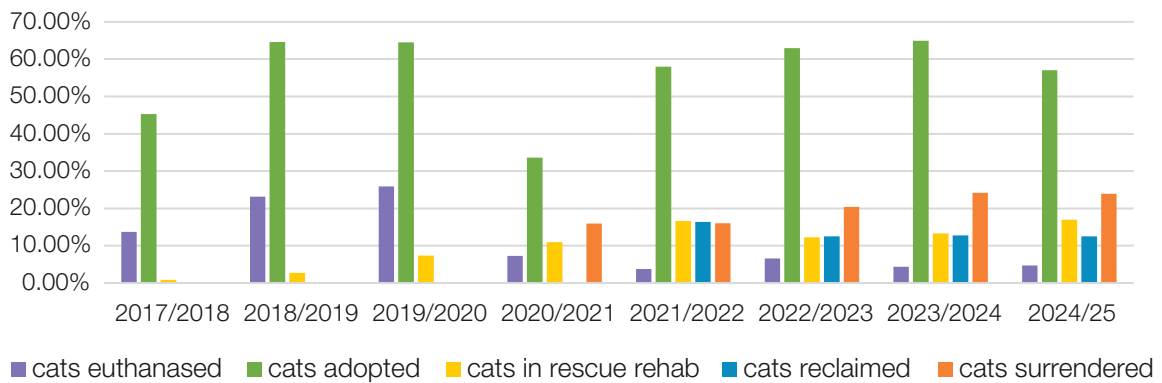


**CHART 3 - CAT IMPOUND AND RELEASE DATA 2017-2025
BALLARAT ANIMAL SHELTER**





TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS

Domestic Animals Act 1994 68(A)(2)(b)

Outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council’s municipal district.

CURRENT AND PLANNED TRAINING

Ongoing training is offered and provided for all authorised officers, training options are annually reviewed to ensure relevance to the legislation and understanding of the role.

The animal management team now comprises a Team Leader, Senior Animal Management Officer and two Animal Management Officers, along with a number of casual After Hours Animal Management Officers and is better resourced and able to undertake more field-based operative work and liaise closely with the community by providing a strong presence at dog parks, off leash areas and highly used green spaces.

Recruitment within the Animal Management team consists of staff with trained animal behaviour experience and strong community engagement ethos.

Further training and professional development opportunities include:

- Secondment opportunities across the broader Animal Services team.
- Cross over days between shelter and animal management staff.
- Animal handling refresher courses and training sessions.
- In house training days.
- Mentoring from senior staff through a buddy system
- Investigation and Statement refresher courses.
- Prosecution shadowing.
- Information technology courses.
- Industry related seminars, conferences and briefings from Animal Welfare Victoria and the Australian Institute of Animal Management.
- Ensuring all Animal Management Officers have been offered and/or have completed:
Cert IV in Government Investigations.
Cert IV in Control and Regulations

OUR PLANS

Objective 1: Recruit Animal Management Officers experienced in animal behaviour and handling for increased community engagement and assistance

Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Maintain and review training plan for all Animal Management staff to ensure training requirements are met and planned for	By May 2026	Each August Set up feedback analysis from each staff member to understand their strengths and weaknesses and requirements for further development
Staff attendance at industry related seminars and training, such as: • Annual AIAM Conference • Animal Welfare Vic Seminars • Dog bite Prevention Other options: • Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation course • Animal and Livestock handling (training) • Carry Out Pound Procedures • Aggressive dog handling techniques	As offered, and through mentoring program with senior staff	Annual review of attendance with training register by Animal Services Leadership team

Authorised Officer Training	Current	Planned	Measured
OH&S • Dealing with aggressive customers • Conflict Negotiation Training	Completed 2024	Annual refresher	Attendance mandated and feedback required to clarify understanding post training
Industry Training • Animal handling and catching • Prosecutions, • Statement taking • Evidence gathering	Completed June 2024	Annual refresher with senior staff	Attendance mandated and feedback required to clarify understanding post training
Australian Institute of Animal Management annual conference	TBC - via webinar	Annual refresher	2025 attendance for Animal Services leadership team Attendance in person if applicable
Aggressive dog training and handling	Completed 2024	Annual refresher	Mandatory attendance required

Authorised Officer Training	Current	Planned	Measured
Animal behaviour and assessment	Completed 2024	Annual refresher	Mandatory attendance required
How to promote responsible pet ownership and educate	In house mentoring program with Animal Services leadership team	Ongoing	Attendance mandated and feedback required to clarify understanding
<i>Domestic Animals Act 1994</i> , Impounding of Livestock Act and Local Laws refresher training	Completed June 2024	Ongoing	Mandatory attendance required

Objective 2:

Develop existing authorised officers from the Afterhours Animal Emergency staff to ensure adequate backfilling or additional staffing is possible throughout animal shelter and management when required.

Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Provide opportunities to staff interested in career development and animal welfare	Ongoing- staff to be competent and confident in: • Animal behaviour • Working with community and achieving best outcomes • Attendance of community engagement programs- Drug court, dog obedience	Six-month time frame from commencement to train, review and sign off induction
Ensure current afterhours staff are included in monthly team meetings and in-house training sessions	Monthly	Ensure that each shift crossover has up to date knowledge on current jobs/concerns etc Attendance

REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION

Domestic Animals Act 1994 68A(2)(c)(v)

Outline programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION*

All dogs and cats over the age of three months must be registered with the City of Ballarat as per state legislation, Section 10, *Domestic Animals Act 1994*. Registrations cannot be accepted without a microchip identification chip implanted.

New animal registrations for cats and dogs can be made in person at Council offices as follows:

- The Phoenix, 25 Armstrong St South Ballarat Central between 8.15am to 5pm, Monday to Friday or, at
- Ballarat Animal Shelter, 5a Gillingham Place, Alfredton 3350 between 9am-4pm, Monday to Friday or, by
- by mail with the appropriate payment and copies of relevant proof required to:
City of Ballarat
PO BOX 655 Ballarat VIC 3353.
- Online via councils ESERVICES option
<https://eservices.ballarat.vic.gov.au/ePathway/Production/Web/default.aspx>
- Renewals can be paid via BPAY, eService's or in person with options included on the renewal form sent annually, see below excerpt.

In accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, animal registration periods expire on 10 April each year. Animal renewal notices are sent out in March, allowing pet owners to renew their pet's registration via the internet or in person. A yellow lifetime tag and number is issued, and this is easily replaced at COB offices if lost or, removed and unable to be used.

Animals that are found unsecured or 'at large' from their property, can be identified by means of an allocated registration tag, and have a higher chance of being reunited with their owners once collected. The Animal Management team's priority is always to attempt to return the dog home first before impounding at the Animal Shelter, and current registration assists with this.

When dogs and cats are outside of the owner's premises, COB identification tags must be worn as outlined in Section 20 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, see below.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS ACT 1994 - SECT 20
Registered dog or cat to have identification marker outside premises

PAYMENT OPTIONS					
ONLINE	 POST OFFICE	 MAIL	 BPAY	 IN PERSON	
 Payments can be made online at Council's website: http://eservices.ballarat.vic.gov.au All major credit cards accepted (NO Diners or American Express)	In person at any post office. Simply present this notice intact with your payment. EFTPOS and major credit cards accepted. By phone on 13 18 16 for the cost of a local call (Mobiles excepted) you can pay over the phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Simply quote the Billpay Code and reference number. Pay from your credit card. Pay online at: postbillpay.com.au	Detach the payment slip and mail with your cheque to: City of Ballarat, PO Box 655, BALLARAT VIC 3353 The top portion of this notice should be retained for your record. A receipt will not be issued if you use this method of payment.	Telephone & Internet Banking - BPAY @ Contact your bank or financial institution to make this payment from your cheque, savings, debit, credit card or transaction account. More info: www.bpay.com.au @Registered to BPAY Pty Ltd ABN 69 079 137 518 Quote the Biller Code and reference number.	Present this notice intact to the Cashier at The Phoenix, 25 Armstrong Street South, BALLARAT CENTRAL VIC 3350 Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:30a.m. to 5:00p.m. (closed public holidays) EFTPOS facilities available, major credit cards accepted (NO Diners or American Express)	



The registration of animals within the municipality provides the Animal Services team with an understanding of pet ownership within the community and this helps the City of Ballarat plan for services, information and programs associated with pets in particular areas of the community.

The Animal Services team operations include:

- Investigation of reported dog attacks.
- Seizure of dogs involved in alleged serious dog attacks.
- Assistance with aggressive dogs within the home.
- Investigation of all animal cruelty and welfare complaints including horses, and other livestock.
- Assistance with animal nuisance concerns.
- Emergency boarding for pets for families in need; facing housing crisis, domestic violence, medical or emergency assistance.

In 2025 an audit of the five national microchipping databases across Australia indicates a high number of unregistered dogs and cats that are microchipped to a City of Ballarat address.

A comparison of the data of microchipped dogs and cats as compared to registered dogs and cats will assist in the development of an initiative to target a greater uptake of animal registration, including:

1. More education around the difference between microchipping and registration.
2. Audit of breeding of unregistered dogs and cats within the municipality.
3. Suburb specific audits.

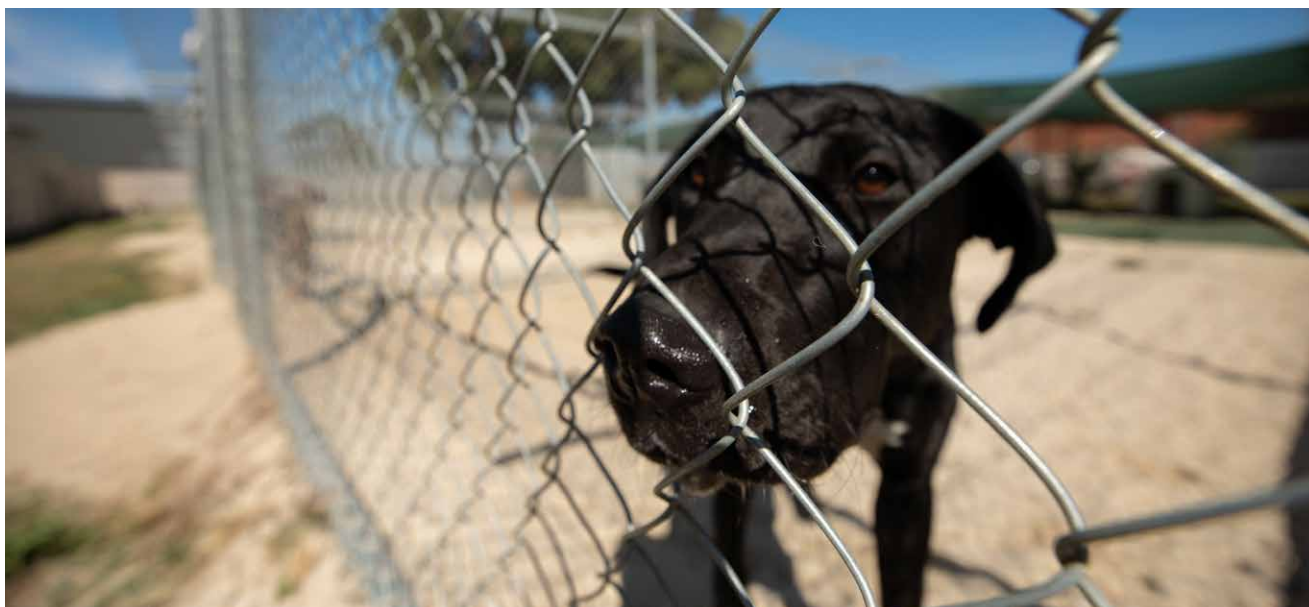
The Animal Management team audits the process every year to ensure that registrations are renewed and is currently undertaking a microchip database audit and review. This review will provide a collated data collection from both COB and microchipping databases, and will reveal residences presenting non-compliance, through clear microchip registry and no COB registration.

This audit will be part of the City of Ballarat's targeted response to ongoing breeding concerns and increased litter surrenders to the Ballarat Animal Shelter. The intention is to educate owners on the benefits of registration, desexing, and responsible pet ownership which will result in a decrease in unwanted litters within a five-year period across the City of Ballarat.

CURRENT EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The City of Ballarat Animal Services team currently provide education and promotion of registration and identification, including:

- Publicising the requirement to register pets over the age of three months in local news correspondence.
- Animal registration renewal notices are mailed out in March each year to currently registered animals.
- Puppy registration fee- in alignment with current veterinary guidelines, dogs should not be desexed until minimum 12 months. Owners can pay a reduced fee for the first year while waiting for their puppy to be desexed.



- Registration included in all purchased/adopted dogs and cats from Ballarat Animal Shelter.
- A promotion of education and why registration is important for all reclaimed animals from the Ballarat Animal Shelter.
- Facebook posts regarding Registration and benefits.
- Education on returned home animals to owners.
- Providing training ideas to owners with repeat escapees from experienced Animal Management officers.
- Media campaign from Ballarat Animal Shelter page using behavioural design to encourage registration.
- Initiatives for registration with new Ballarat Regional Animal Facility, i.e. dog training programs, cat behaviour programs.
- Requiring impounded and unregistered animals to be micro-chipped and registered prior to their release.
- Issuing Official warnings with educational advice, replacing immediate infringements for animals found unregistered.
- Prosecuting owners of unregistered animals where infringements remain unpaid and animals remain unregistered.
- Investigating Domestic Animal Business notifications of animals being sold or given away to residents in the municipality.
- Monitoring advertisements relating to animals for sale to ensure microchip numbers are provided and are currently registered.
- Proactive and reactive park and street patrols to follow up registration and ensure identification is being worn.

CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

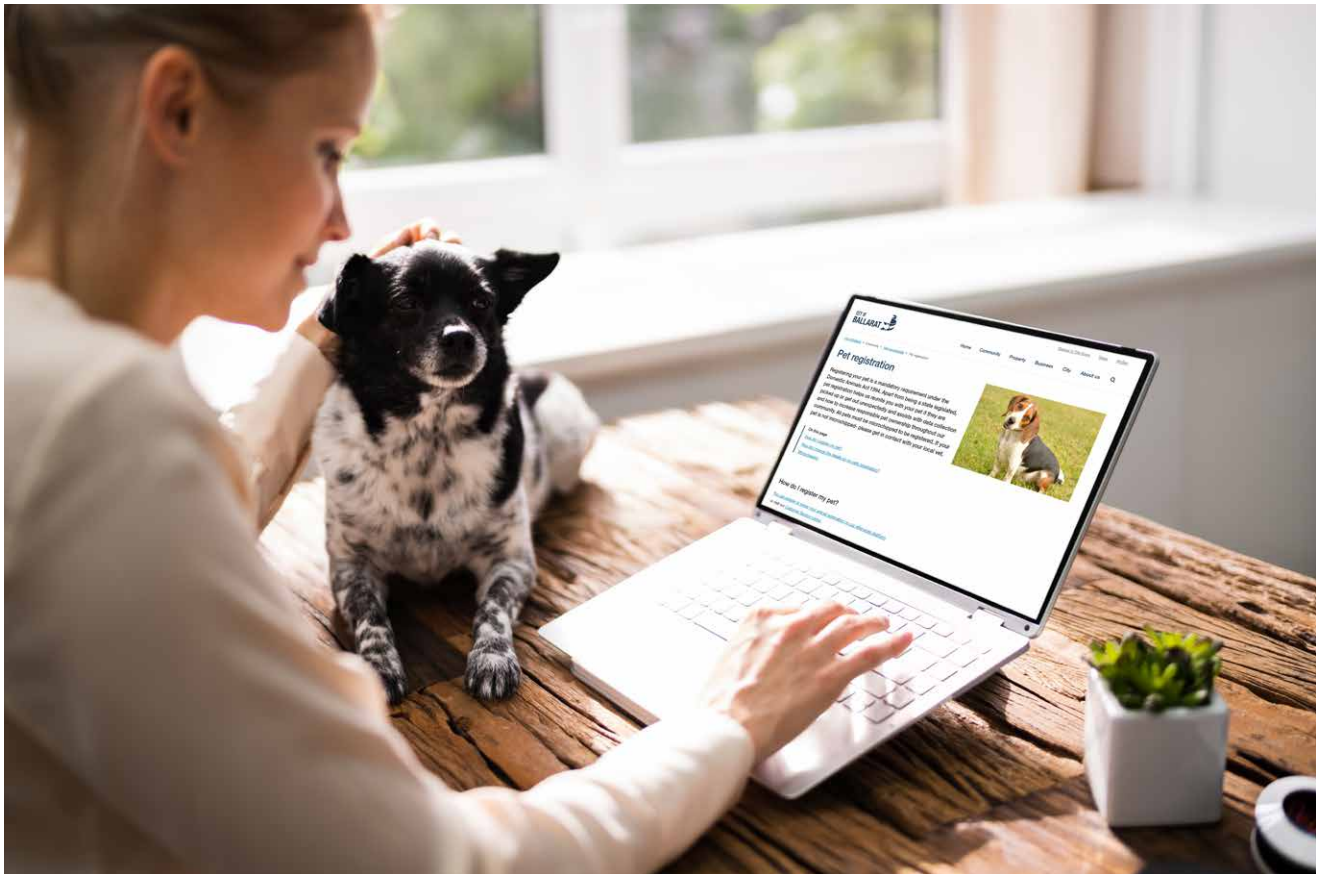
Current compliance activities for registration and identification include:

- Educational follow ups to repeat unregistered animals.
- Working with other organisations within Ballarat to increase awareness and benefits of registration, including DHHS, Uniting, and Aboriginal Housing Victori.
- Collating data from microchipping companies and comparing to City of Ballarat Animal Registration data.

SUMMARY

The number of unregistered animals that enter the City of Ballarat's pound facility remains high, which suggests many unregistered animals exist within the municipality. This highlights the need for active education in the community, to enhance compliance and community awareness of being able to seek advice and support to get their animals registered.

Objective 3: Increase animal registration and responsible pet ownership awareness in community		
Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Review all current registration classes to determine if they fit the City of Ballarat values model. i.e. removal of current breeding registration fee addition of reduced fee for dogs and cats over the age of 10 years old.	Late 2026 - to be implemented by 2027	Increase in standard registration fees.
Educate residents of the animal registration renewal period by means of Advertising / media releases and mailing of renewal notices.	March-May Yearly	Review media release types available each year to determine most effective advertising by surveys
Invite and host community and school groups into the Ballarat Animal Shelter to explain what happens to unidentified animals	Monthly	Positive review and feedback form groups to be collected post tour
Social media posts to create awareness from the Ballarat Animal Shelter page	Quarterly	Reaches a broader audience and promotes a positive side to registration Measure - social media positive engagement i.e. likes, followers etc engagement
Ensure animal registrations have been renewed	Sept – Oct Yearly	Follow up door knock and audit of suburbs with renewals not paid Focus on target areas- least amount of renewals, high percentage of microchips registered on national databases
Attend Dog Obedience and Puppy training centres	3 monthly	Feedback from information sessions Provide positive relationship between Animal Management officers and local organisations
Repeated non registrations matters to be withdrawn as Infringements and re-issued as charges at the Magistrate's court	Month after date	Provide media releases to send the strong message for responsible pet ownership and compliance Successfully prosecutions in Magistrate's court
Primary school education programs - AMO presentation explain why registration is important and how it can help your pet	Annually	Feedback post information session
High school education programs	Each term	Students from local high schools spend time volunteering at the Ballarat Animal Shelter. Educate and explain pound and shelter life Survey feedback post information session



Objective 4: Increase quantity of dog and cat registrations

Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Ensure all seized and impounded animals are registered to their owner prior to release.	Prior to every release.	Current process ensures compliance.
Offer responsible pet ownership rewards to pet owners found doing the right thing.	Yearly	Reward system to encourage registration
Host a Pet Expo/Micro-chipping Day	February and September	Turn out at Ballarat Animal Shelter and new registration log

NUISANCE

Domestic Animals Act 1994 68A(2)(c)(vi)

Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

CUSTOMER SERVICE REQUESTS RAISED WITH THE CITY OF BALLARAT						
	Barking dog requests received	Roaming an at large dog and cat requests received	Excess animal request raised	Animal Nuisance requests received	Livestock on road requests received	Afterhours Animal requests
2011/2012	257	544	15	41	40	No data recorded
2012/2013	251	576	59	129	93	No data recorded
2013/2014	278	587	55	215	91	8
2014/2015	278	531	34	216	85	144
2015/2016	314	562	71	203	114	442
2016/2017	282	1082	67	227	69	711
2017/2018	310	999	79	174	75	681
2018/2019	298	1169	104	160	72	749
2019/2020	278	1278	97	200	81	579
2020/2021	261	863	101	237	38	457
2021/2022	278	998	84	187	42	540
2022/2023	283	966	87	189	70	619
2023/2024	270	917	69	276	69	597
2024/2025	244	962	63	390	65	560

CHART 4 - ANIMAL REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE RECEIVED

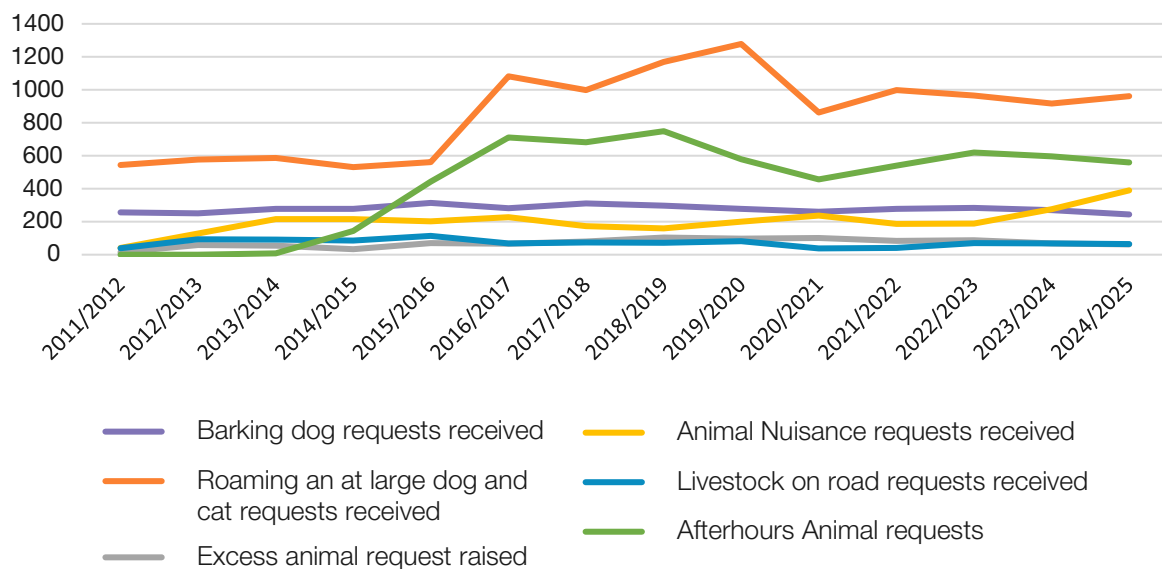


Chart A demonstrates a drop in requests after 2021; this aligns with post Covid implementations and new processes on managing animal requests. The information shows a reduction in customer service requests which demonstrate that the processes are working and reducing repeat enquiries.

The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* provides clear guidance through legislation on mediating matters of nuisances for both dogs and cats relating to noise, trespassing and wandering animals.

The City of Ballarat has also introduced the below orders and Community Local Laws to help minimise and prevent nuisances within the municipality.

CAT CURFEW:

In April 2009, the City of Ballarat introduced an order under Section 26 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* in relation to a cat curfew. Cat owners must ensure that their pets do not leave their premises at any time between sunset and sunrise for the safety of cats, the protection of wildlife and to eliminate related nuisance complaints such as noise and trespassing.

Each cat that is adopted from the Ballarat Animal Shelter, will come with education on the cat curfew in the adoption pack.

This plan intends to commence consultation and education development with community regarding a change to the existing dusk 'til dawn cat curfew.

The City of Ballarat offers a cat trapping program that is managed by the Animal Management team. Cat traps can be collected from the Ballarat Animal Shelter and instructions on how to humanely and safely trap a roaming cat are provided as well as demonstrations on how to successfully use the trap are given.



Cat trapping is the most effective method to reduce the number of stray and nuisance cats in your neighbourhood. Should you wish to enquire about the hire of cat traps, please call the Ballarat Animal Shelter on (03) 5334-2075 during business hours.

See **Appendix A** for current City of Ballarat Cat Curfew.

DOGS IN PUBLIC PLACES:

On 2 September 2022 City of Ballarat ('Council') updated the existing order from 2015 in accordance with section 26(2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (the 'Act') in relation to designated off leash spaces. This Order became effective from this date, 2nd September 2022.

The City of Ballarat provides eleven (11) off leash dog spaces, including three fully fenced parks. These have been spread out through the Ballarat Municipality to ensure that all suburbs can access an area for their pets to be off lead while under effective control.

The City of Ballarat has incorporated its future design of designated off leash spaces to work in conjunction with its Open Space Strategy to ensure consistency and safety components throughout the shire.

Designated Off Leash Gazetted Order, see **Appendix B** and Dog off leash area Map **Appendix C**.

LOCAL LAWS RELATING TO NUISANCE:

The *City of Ballarat Community Local Law 2017*, **Appendix D** includes the current Locals Laws Excerpt.

Section 2 of the City of Ballarat Community Local Law 2017, limit the number of dogs and cats on a residential property to 2 (two) without a permit.

Owners seeking permission from Council to keep more than the prescribed number requires neighbours' consent and authorised Officer approval. Where a permit has been issued and a proven nuisance complaint founded, a permit can be revoked, and owners may be made to remove the additional animal/s. A recent audit conducted by the Animal Management team showed 119 active Excess Animal Permits, all demonstrating annual registration renewal and consistency with requirements for excess animals living at the property.

The City of Ballarat Local Law Number 2017 Section 25 requires owners of dogs to always carry litter devices when outside of their premises to ensure that such animal litter be collected and disposed of accordingly.

CITY OF BALLARAT PROCEDURE FOR NUISANCE COMPLAINTS:

Barking Dogs

The City of Ballarat has developed and implemented a process which efficiently deals with barking dog nuisances, and this is reflected in the reduction of complaints listed above in the table (**Table 3**).

The City of Ballarat has a standard operating procedure for barking dog complaints to ensure all complaints received, are handled in the same consistent manner by all Authorised Officers. The procedure steps out the required processes involved to investigate the complaint, liaise with the dog owner and surrounding neighbours.

Where nuisances are found to be proven pursuant to section 32 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, the City of Ballarat can issue notices to the dog owner to abate the nuisance, issue infringements and/or have the matter heard in the Magistrate's Court to seek an order from the Court for the owner to abate the nuisance.

Most reported dog nuisances relating to barking can take up to six months to resolve with the following variables taken into consideration:

1. Actions taken by owner
2. History of dog/s
3. Evidence supplied by complainant
4. Welfare of dog/s
5. Cooperation with Animal management team

Cases will be prosecuted in the Ballarat Magistrates court for ongoing noncompliance, and this can only proceed with full engagement from the complainant.

See **Appendix E** (nuisance information sheet)

Roaming Dogs

The animal management officers deal with approximately 1000 calls per year of roaming or wandering dogs. This does not include aggressive or attacking dogs.

In 2019, an education assessment was implemented and has offered in consistent resolutions of repeated cases.

Rather than immediate enforcement action i.e. the issue of an automatic animal Infringement, education, an open line of communication is created with the dog owner to determine the following:

- *How did the dog get out?*
- *Does it have a history of escaping?*
- *Is further training required?*
- *How can council assist?*

This allows the Animal Management Officers to create a rapport with the dog owner and assist in a solution to prevent it occurring again. Engagement with the community is always the first point of action to build trust in the organisation and enable assistance where required.

In circumstances where repeat offenders (more than one offence) for roaming/trespassing cats/dogs are found and the education and alternate methods have not encouraged the pet owner to adequately secure the cat or dog to its property, the Animal Management team will then initiate enforcement and may pursue the matter in the Magistrates' Court.

This may involve seeking an order under Section 84W of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, from the Court, requiring the owner to carry out works to ensure the animal is not able to escape from the owner's premises.

This current method preferences education over enforcement, which has been successful and the City of Ballarat has seen a reduction in repeat offending.

CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES RELATING TO NUISANCE ANIMALS:

- Providing barking dog information kits
- Providing information relating to building cat enclosures
- Information provided on Council's website ballarat.vic.gov.au/community/pets-and-animals
- Providing information brochures from the state regulator, Animal Welfare Victoria to the public.
- Articles in our Ballarat, The Courier, Ballarat Animal Shelter Facebook page.
- Assisting Ballarat Dog Obedience Club by supporting its dog training program through the provision of educational materials and attending 'question and answer' sessions.
- Encouraging the de-sexing of cats and dogs to reduce wandering.
- Participating in the National Desexing program.

- Encouraging dog owners to seek advice from professional dog trainers and trial barking dog citronella collars.
- Encourage 'doggie daycams' to be set up in home to see what is initiating the nuisance behaviour.
- Promoting Doggie Daycare facilities, to owners and encouraging involvement as an alternative to being at home.
- Encourage veterinary visits, crate training and awareness around separation anxiety in animals.

CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES RELATING TO NUISANCE ANIMALS

- Investigating nuisance complaints and ensuring minimal timeframes, while understanding that sometimes the process can be drawn out due to varying factors.
- Sending out barking dog formal complaint statements and barking dog logs with recording devices.
- Reporting outcomes of all prosecutions regarding each area of nuisance to local media to raise awareness in the community of the benefits of preventing dog and cat nuisance.
- Issuing notices to comply, notices of objection, infringements where necessary.
- Providing Cat Trapping program and advice to residents.
- Letter box drop on roaming cats' information.
- Patrolling parks and streets to ensure dog owners are carrying litter devices to remove such animal litter.
- Daily patrolling off popular designated off lead areas, combined with regular patrols of off lead activity in on designated lead areas.
- Monitor social media websites for backyard breeding.
- Prosecution of unresolved ongoing nuisance complaints.

SUMMARY

To reduce animal nuisance problems in the community, the City of Ballarat will continue promoting and providing education and compliance activities while striving to improve the activities and identify/trial new initiatives.

OUR PLANS

Objective 5: Control of dogs in public places in accordance with Section 26 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Collaborate with internal stakeholders on Open Space Strategy criteria	2025	Review public feedback and comments from Open Space Strategy Review current Draft Designated Off Leash Policy
Educate dog owners relating to 2015 Designated Off-Leash Order. Daily patrols and community engagement	Ongoing	Record feedback from community and animal rangers. Measure feedback by structured analysis
Audit and review of Designated Off leash Dog area signage	2026	Feedback from regular users via survey Data reduction in dog attacks at fenced off leash areas. Measure feedback by structured analysis
Continue to enforce Gazetted Order to ensure compliance, roster Officer/s to patrol streets & parks.	Ongoing	Decreased number of animal litter and dog off lead complaints received over allocated time frame

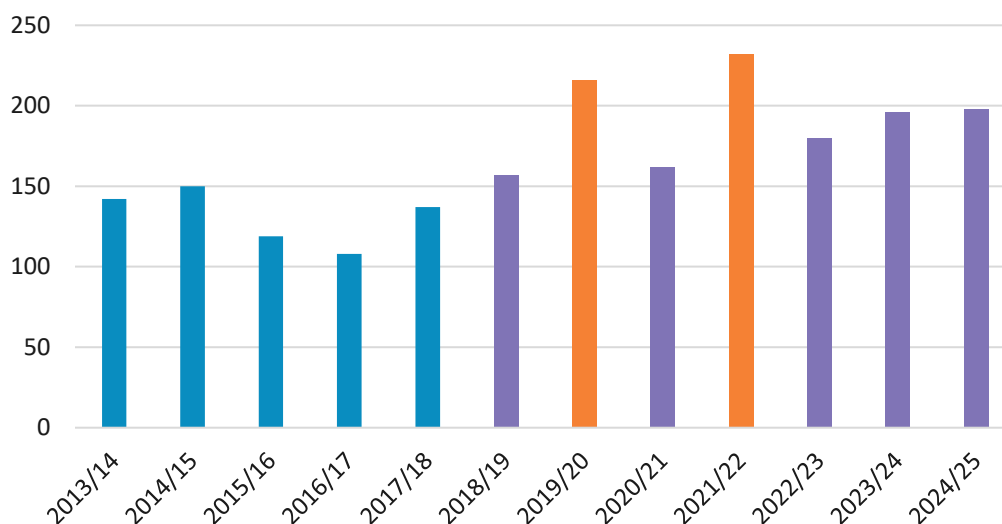


DOG ATTACKS

Domestic Animals Act 1994 68A(2)(c)(iii)

Outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

CHART 5 - CITY OF BALLARAT NUMBER OF DOG ATTACKS INVESTIGATED



The City of Ballarat's Authorised Officers investigate dog attack reports thoroughly. Evidence pertaining to the incident is collated to formulate a brief. This includes taking statements from all parties involved, vet/medical reports, photographs and providing a summary with recommendations.

The brief is then reviewed by an internal Prosecution panel, comprising representatives from various regulatory teams who provide an unbiased and impartial view, as well as representing a community perspective. This panel creates an escalation point to reinforce outcomes and provides a stable conclusion for the accused.

Potential outcomes for a dog attack investigation:

- Infringements (where non-serious injuries sustained).
- Notices to contain your pet to its property.
- Menacing/Dangerous Dog Proposal and Declaration.
- Prosecution in Magistrates' Court.
- Seek destruction/compensation orders by the Magistrate.

- Banning orders under Section 84xa of the DAA.
- Seek mediation between parties.
- Further education and dog training.

Where injuries have occurred to a person or another animal by a dog that is of a serious injury (as defined by the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*), the City of Ballarat's Authorised Officers will seize the accused animal pending outcome. If the animal/s is not considered secure to its property and/or has a recorded history with council.

The Team Leader of Animal Management currently prosecutes dog attack matters in the Magistrates' Court with successful results and outcomes. This information is provided to State government. Media releases of such results are also used to educate the community and promote responsible pet ownership.

Since 2020, the City of Ballarat has prosecuted over 50 serious dog attack matters in the Ballarat Magistrates' Court, all with a successful outcome. In 2019, The Animal Services team sought Banning Orders under Section 84xa of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, for certain cases where a high risk to the community was clearly apparent.

Banning orders can be sought for the accused for a period of up to ten years for matters of serious injury, see below excerpt from the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

“serious injury” means -

(a) an injury requiring medical or veterinary attention in the nature of -

(i) a broken bone; or

(ii) a laceration; or

(iii) a partial or total loss of sensation or function in a part of the body; or

(b) an injury requiring cosmetic surgery;

Sect 3- DAA 1994

CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

- Promote responsible pet ownership by keeping the current designated off leash fenced parks to three within the shire. There has been an increase in dog attack incidents since the introduction of fenced off leash dog parks. While the unfenced off leash areas have minimal dog attack concerns reported, there is a high correlation of dog fights and attacks within fenced parks.
- New signage has been developed and installed as well as meet and greet training session offered for owners. See **Appendix F** for off leash dog spaces. The City of Ballarat will always support off leash areas, especially larger green spaces for dog owners and their pets to enjoy.
- Educational push and media release for residents to report aggressive dogs in the community for follow up by Animal Management team. There is still a wide component of residents who are unaware that council investigates dog attacks, and these will still report directly to police. And then referred onto COB for investigation.
- Reporting outcomes of all dog attack prosecutions to local media to raise awareness in the community of the need to report dog attacks and City of Ballarat’s action in relation to attacks to promote responsible pet ownership.
- Media releases relating to livestock attacks.
- Providing new residents with animal registration information.
- Promoting the effective confinement and control of dogs.

- Meeting with Ballarat Dog Obedience Training Club.
- Promoting puppy socialisation and ongoing adult dog obedience training.

CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

- Investigating dog attacks thoroughly and providing consistency to community.
- Seizing and holding high risk attacking dogs pending investigation/prosecution outcome.
- Providing an afterhours service to respond to reports of aggressive or attacking dogs.
- Prosecuting matters pursuant to the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
- Follow up education to owners for wandering dogs to curb any future incidents.
- Issuing education as well as infringements for minor attacks where non-serious injury sustained.
- Seeking Destruction Orders from Magistrates’ Court in certain matter of high severity or repeated noncompliance.
- Seeking Banning Orders for up to 10 years in Serious matters.
- Seeking Confinement Orders from Magistrates’ Court for dogs continually found wandering and not confined to property.
- Proactive patrols of parks and streets for wandering dogs.
- Proactive patrols for guard dogs on non-residential premises.
- Recording data of reported dog attacks in the municipality.
- Seizing impounded dogs in circumstances where owner’s properties are believed to be insecure, ensure dog can be secured prior release of the dog back to the owner.

SUMMARY

City of Ballarat will continue administering the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and ensure compliance is met where any breach is detected.

OUR PLANS

Objective 6: To minimise the incidence of dog attacks in the community		
Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Providing proactive Education/ Compliance Activities.	Ongoing	Compare number of reported dog attack incidents annually.
Educating key dog attack prevention messages (e.g. confinement of dogs to property, leash laws) through media articles, mail outs, website information. Actively patrol areas for roaming, unsecure and/or unregistered dogs.	Ongoing	Looking for a reduction in repeat offenders
Inform the community of outcomes of dog attacks prosecuted in Court	Ongoing	Review of data and feedback from community post reporting
Set key performance indicators for Officers to complete dog attack investigations within a 4-week timeframe where possible	2026	Review complaints annually to evaluate percentage completed within timeframe.

The Ballarat Animal Shelter currently provides long term seized dog accommodation for Victorian Shires that are unable to provide housing for the following reasons:

- Lack of space
- Lack in unsuitable housing
- Unable to provide enrichment
- Inexperienced handlers
- Inability to one or more of the five main care components of long-term housing
- Freedom to express normal behaviours
- Freedom from fear and distress

In the 2021 to 2025 period, the Ballarat Animal Shelter has housed multiple high risk, seized dogs awaiting court cases from surrounding shires. These cases were pending a court outcome, and the timeframe held was a period of nearly two years. At the Ballarat Animal Shelter, the facility can offer the following for long term seized dogs:

1. Large outdoor secure runs
2. Extensive trust building and Muzzle training
3. Supervised off leash with muzzle outdoor exercise
4. Enrichment
5. Socialisation

Each case is different, and the Ballarat Animal Shelter staff will assess each case upon arrival and will make a process designed specifically to that animal.

DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

Domestic Animals Act 1994 68A(2)(c)(vii)

Outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations-- also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

CITY OF BALLARAT HAS THE FOLLOWING DECLARED DOGS CURRENTLY REGISTERED WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY					
	2008/2009	2011/2012	2015/2016	2019/2020	2024/2025
Registered restricted breed dogs	7	1	0	0	0
Registered guard dogs	15	16	12	4	2
Registered declared dangerous dogs	1	1	1	7	6
Registered declared menacing dogs	1	2	19	46	41

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 defines restricted breed dogs as any one of the following breeds:

- Japanese Tosa
- Fila Brasileiro
- Dogo Argentino
- Perro de Prasa Canario (or Presa Canario)
- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier)

City of Ballarat has no restricted breed dogs registered at this stage.

Owners of restricted breed dogs are required abide by specific regulations, in particular; secure enclosures, warning signs on premises, having the dog muzzled in public and on lead at all times, as defined by the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and the *Domestic Animals Regulations 2005*.

Section 34A (a) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* states:

A dog is a dangerous dog if -

The dog is kept as a guard dog for the purpose of guarding non-residential premises

Sect 3 - DAA 1994

The City of Ballarat currently has 2 declared guard dogs, which are therefore deemed Dangerous under the Act. Owners of guard dogs must abide by specific regulations in particular; secure enclosures when not guarding, secure perimeter fencing when guarding, warning signs on premises, having the dog muzzled in public and on lead at all times, dog must wear the prescribed dangerous dog collar. These dogs are audited annually by the Animal Management team.

**Section 34(1) of the
Domestic Animals Act 1994 states:**

A Council may declare a dog to be a dangerous dog -

If the dog has caused the death of or serious injury to a person or animal by biting or attacking that person or animal;

or (b) if the dog is a menacing dog and its owner has received at least 2 infringement notices in respect of the offence in section 41E;

The City of Ballarat currently has six (6) declared dangerous dogs currently residing in the municipality. These six dogs have been declared post investigation into a Serious dog attack. Each owner can appeal a Dangerous Dog Declaration, however, must meet criteria to demonstrate why the dog should not be declared.

“serious injury” means -

(a) an injury requiring medical or veterinary attention in the nature of -

(i) a broken bone; or

(ii) a laceration (see below definition); or

(iii) a partial or total loss of sensation or function in a part of the body; or

(b) an injury requiring cosmetic surgery;

Laceration means a wound caused by— (a) the tearing of body tissue; or (b) multiple punctures caused by more than one bite from a dog;

Serious injury is defined under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* act as the following:

**Section 41A (1) of the
Domestic Animals Act 1994 states:**

41A Declaration that a dog is a menacing dog

(1) A Council may declare a dog to be a menacing dog if -

(a) the dog has rushed at or chased a person; or

(ab) the dog bites any person or animal causing injury to that person or animal that is not in the nature of a serious injury; or

(b) the dog has been declared a menacing dog under a law of another State or a Territory of the Commonwealth that corresponds with this Division.

The City of Ballarat currently has 41 declared menacing dogs within the municipality. Owners of menacing dogs must abide by conditions specified by Council namely, when the dog is outside the

premises of its owner it must be muzzled and leashed at all times. Extensive training with the owners and dog is required before a Menacing Declaration can be removed, and the Animal Management team offers assistance and education should the owners want the declaration removed.

The City of Ballarat must register all dangerous/menacing/restricted breed dogs with the Victorian Declared Dog Register (VDDR). This database records all declared dogs for authorised parties to view and have access to. Any dangerous and restricted breed dog entered on the VDDR is declared for the life of the animal and cannot be revoked by the declaring LGA. Application can be made by the owner to VCAT (Victorian Civil and Administration Tribunal) to remove the Declaration.

CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

- Media releases relating to legislation/changes/updates
- Media releases relating to differences between Restricted Breed Dogs and Dangerous Dogs
- Media release on the difference between a Dangerous Dog and an aggressive dog
- Providing information relating to Declared dogs
- Increased education about escalating behaviours in dogs- ensuring owners are aware of potential
- Providing information on what it means to own a restricted breed/Dangerous and or/Menacing dog.

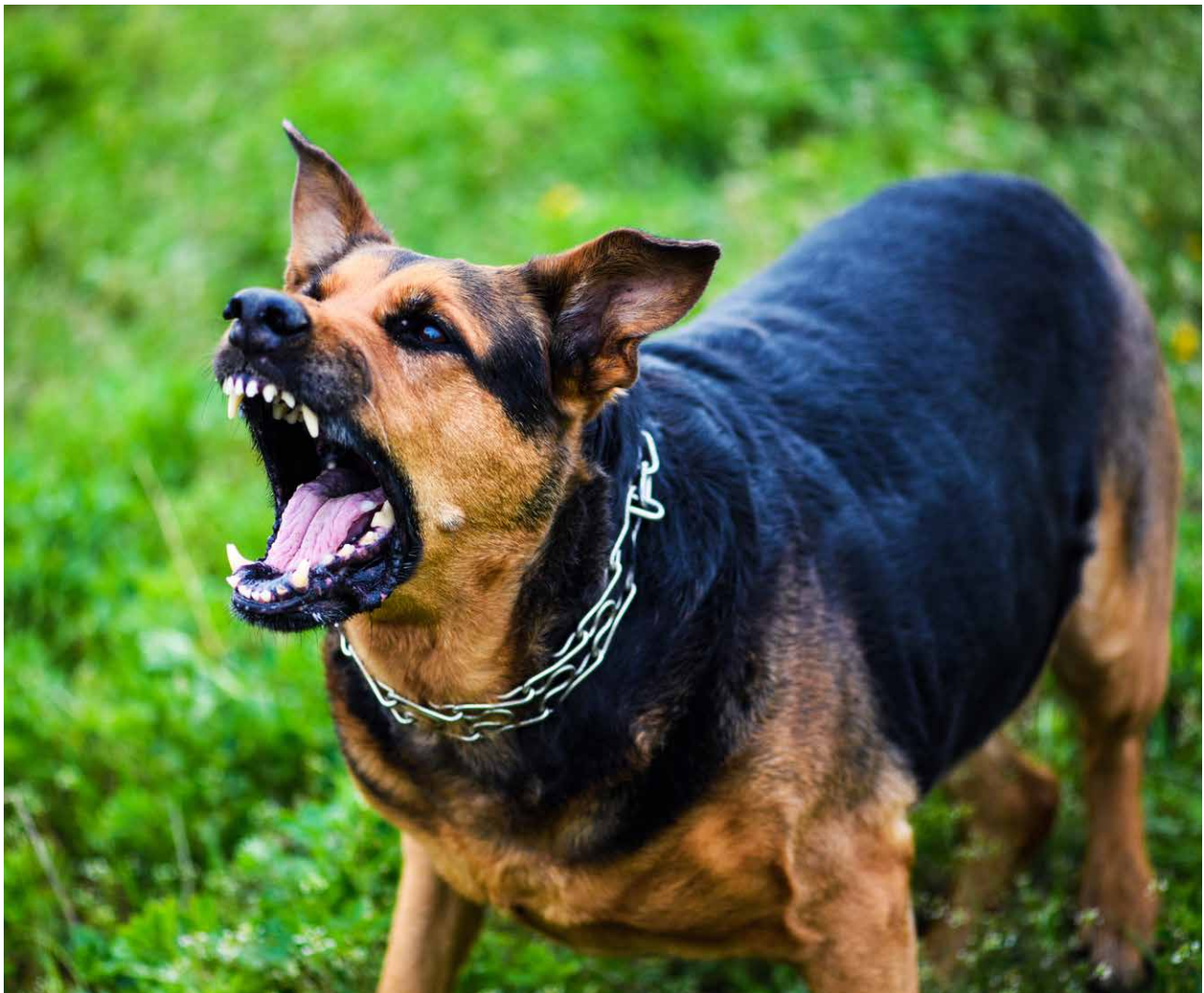
CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

- Ensuring all declared dogs are registered on the VDDR
- Ensuring that any dogs leaving the municipality are reported to VDDR
- Regularly conducting inspections on premises housing declared dogs to ensure compliance
- Proactive patrols during afterhours for unregistered guard dogs
- Seizing dogs suspected of being Restricted Breed Dogs
- Dog declarations made where applicable
- Prosecution/Infringements issued for any determined breach
- Assessing suspected restricted breed dogs via the gazetted standard
- Flagging certain breeds from registration database for assessment

OUR PLANS

Objective 7: Ensure declared dogs are compliant to relevant legislation and regulations

Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Random property inspections of declared dogs to ensure compliance	Annually	Checklists / supporting documentation Data collation Compliance
Prosecute repeat offenders or serious breaches detected	As required	Analysis of audit review
After hours patrols for unregistered guard dogs in industrial areas	Delegated patrols	As occurs
Educate the community about what is a declared dog, what it means to own one	Annual	Analysis of audit review, seek feedback from Declared dog owners to understand where further education is required



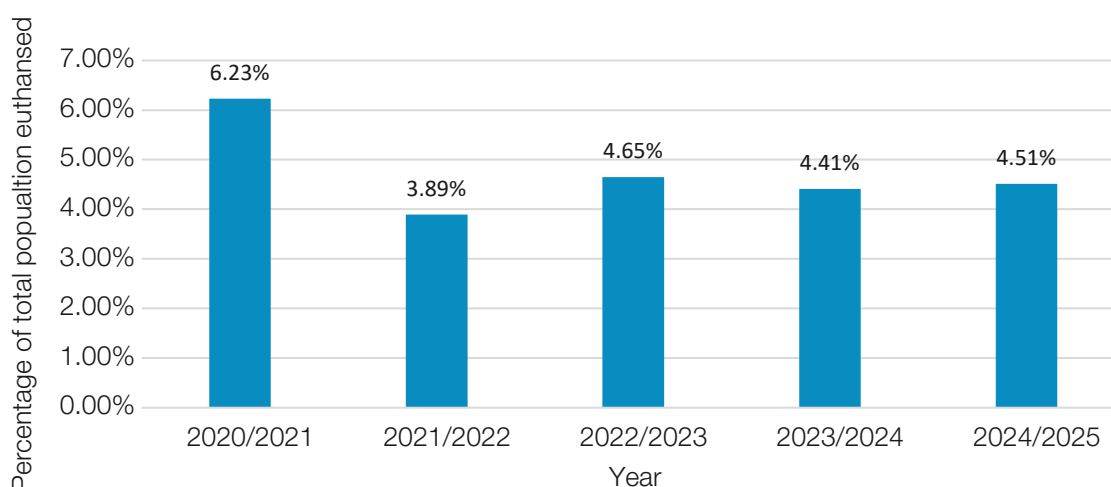
OVERPOPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA

Domestic Animals Act 1994 68A(2)(c)(iv)

Outline programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

Since assuming operations in 2017, City of Ballarat has seen a stabilisation in euthanasia rates.

CHART 6 - STATISTICS 2020-2025 BALLARAT ANIAML SHELTER



While cat euthanasia rates are reducing considerably due to rescue groups and foster care networks now available, the percentage of cats who are unable to be rehomed is always higher due to the number of stray and/or feral cat population within the municipality.

Some proactive measures that the City of Ballarat Animal Service team are exploring and endeavour to have implemented are:

1. \$10,000 contribution to the National Desexing Program (NDN)- see Other matters for further information .
2. Foster and Rescue network developed by the Ballarat Animal Shelter Team.
3. Reduced reclaim rates to make it easier for owners to collect their cats- first day is free.
4. Training of staff to recognise fear as opposed to feral behaviours in shelter cats.

5. Cat education and trapping program through Animal Management Team

Dog euthanasia rates are low due to high rates of dogs being returned to owners and successful rehoming rates, as well as the rehabilitation program where staff work one on one with behavioural dogs.

In the 2024/25 period, 70% of dogs were returned to their owners

The Ballarat Animal Shelter has a successful re-homing program with cats and dogs, which City of Ballarat supports by including the initial registration fee in the adoption price.

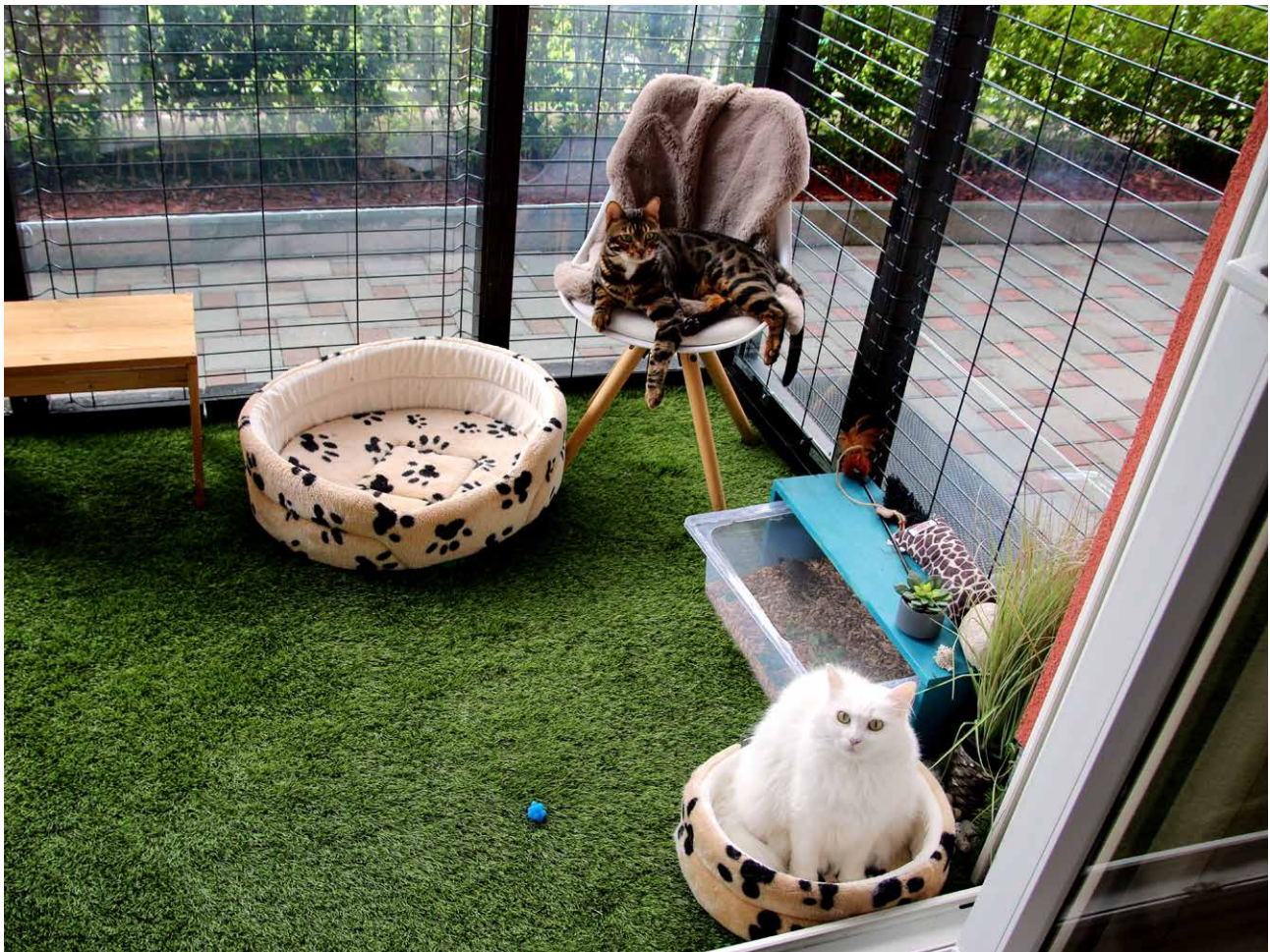
Since the Ballarat Shelter has opened, the euthanasia average has dropped to approximately **4.1% for dogs and 4.7% for cat** per year. Reclaims, adoptions and rescue and foster care programs amount to the remaining 95%.

CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

- Supporting adoption of animals by including initial registration.
- Readoption of pets through BAS once impounded, allows pet to be returned home, desexed, vaccinated and microchipped.
- Encouraging de-sexing of animals by offering reduced registration fees and free initial registration for animals de-sexed and micro-chipped under 6-months of age.
- Promoting benefits of de-sexing.
- National Desexing Program.
- Promoting appropriate pet selection- meet and greets at the BAS by appointment only. This has shown a successful increase in not returns for poor fit adoptions. It allows for the Shelter Staff to listen to what the potential adoptees are looking for and match them with the right temperament and breed.
- Promoting cat enclosures and build your own cat enclosures.

OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

- Cat trapping program.
- Enforcement of cat curfew.
- Investigating unregistered breeding establishments.
- Micro-chipping all unregistered impounded animals prior release to owner.
- Enforcing the Local Law relating to prescribed number of animals on a property.
- Assessing excess animal applications.



OUR PLANS

Objective 8: Continue encouraging de-sexing of animals		
Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Puppy initial registration for dogs that are both micro-chipped and waiting to be desexed	Ongoing	Number of new animals registered in category yearly
Free initial registration for cats and dogs adopted from an applicable organisation	Ongoing	Number of new animals registered in category yearly
National Desexing program roll out	Ongoing	Increase numbers of cats and dogs desexed
Education information sessions on why desexing Benefits your animal better	Bi-annually	Reduction in surrenders to Ballarat Animal Shelter
Educate and promote Pet Exchange Register on Social Media	Quarterly	Reduction in surrenders

Objective 9: Identify non-compliant operated Breeding Establishments in the municipality and ensure compliance in welfare and DAA and/or cease of operation		
Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Investigate advertisements of pets for sale	Weekly mandatory audits	Reduction in Pet Exchange Registry breeders, and microchip databases information
Media campaigns to raise awareness of DAB definition and code of practices that must be adhered too.	As needed	Evaluate number of complaints received and properties inspected. Reduction in Pet Exchange Registry breeders, and microchip databases information
Media campaign to give full information about how to recognise an unregistered breeder	Christmas period	Evaluate response from public to determine whether it is effective by way of general feedback
Audit DAB randomly to ensure compliance	Annually	Number of audits compared to number of follow ups required
Work closely with State Gov. to promote and ensure that PER legislation is followed	Ongoing	Community engagement and follow up Area Animal Management Officers auditing areas to provide detailed data on operations and recreational breeders

DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES

Domestic Animals Act 1994 68A(2)(c)(ii)

Outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f)

CURRENT SITUATION

REGISTERED DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES					
	2008/09	2011/12	2015/16	2020/2021	2024/25
Breeding and rearing	3	3	5	3	3
Shelters and pounds	1	1	1	2	1
Boarding	6	6	7	8	10
Training	0	0	9	8	5
Pet shops	2	2	3	6	7

Domestic Animal Businesses are defined by the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* as:

Domestic animal business means -

- (a) an animal shelter, Council pound or pet shop; or
- (b) an enterprise which carries out the breeding of dogs (other than GRV greyhounds) to sell, if the enterprise has 3 or more fertile female dogs and the proprietor is not a recreational breeder; and is not a member of an applicable organisation, or
- (c) an enterprise which carries out the breeding of cats to sell, if the enterprise has 3 or more fertile female cats and the proprietor is not a recreational breeder; and is not a member of an applicable organisation, or
- (d) an enterprise which trains or boards dogs (other than GRV greyhounds) or cats for the purpose of profit; or
- (e) an enterprise which rears or keeps dogs (other than GRV greyhounds) or cats-
 - (i) for the purpose of profit or sale; or (ii) for a fee or for exchange of services;



There are 26 registered Domestic Animal Businesses within the City of Ballarat, and that includes the Ballarat Animal Shelter operating as COBs currently animal pound and shelter facility.

Registered domestic animal businesses are audited both randomly, annually and on receipt of complaints.

The City of Ballarat actively investigates the presence of animal businesses to ensure compliance with the relevant codes of practice and legislation.

CURRENT EDUCATION/PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

- Providing information to registered Domestic Animal Businesses.
- Promoting Animal Welfare Victoria information.
- Advertising new legislation amendments and ensuring that all DAB's within the City of Ballarat are aware of them.
- Providing an open line of communication with all Domestic Animal Business' to ensure that the Animal. Management team can assist with any queries or concerns, including emergency management and evacuation plans.

CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

- Assisting in emergency evacuation plans.
- Providing positive and constructive feedback post annual audit.
- Annual audits.
- Random audits during peak seasons for businesses.
- Investigating reports.
- Monitoring advertising sites.
- Renewal / Registration process.
- Inspecting suspected unregistered domestic animal businesses.
- Liaising with planning department to ensure planning conditions are adhered too.
- Monitoring media and social outlets for sale of litters without identification.

OUR PLANS

Objective 10: Ensure domestic animal businesses are compliant with relevant legislation and codes of practice

Action	Timeframe	Evaluation
Monitor council, Microchip and PER database' for owners with more than 3 fertile females or excess litters	Ongoing	Compliance with local laws and related legislation
Encourage de-sexing of animals by reducing registration fees or free initial registration for de-sexed and micro-chipped animals	Ongoing	Relevant registration accepted
Conduct searches for unregistered domestic animal businesses via internet selling sites/social media postings/reports of puppies and kittens for sale	Ongoing	Reduction on Gumtree/Facebook/trading post advertisements

OTHER MATTERS

Domestic Animals Act 1994 68A(2)(e)

Provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary

CITY OF BALLARAT NEW ANIMAL POUND FACILITY PROJECT

In 2022, the City of Ballarat received \$11.5 million dollars from the Victoria Government to build a new purpose-built regional animal facility. With a contribution of \$3 million from the City of Ballarat. This facility aims to provide safe housing for animals with high level infection control, elevated enrichment design and a strong community hub where responsible pet ownership, education and awareness and animal welfare are the priority.

The City of Ballarat Animal Services team is a leader in animal management across the industry, and places a strong emphasis on animal welfare and education, resulting in the reduction of euthanasia, high rate of reclaims, strong rehabilitation behaviour programs and a large rescue group network to provide the best second chance for all the animals that arrive at the shelter.

The new facility will provide an environment that is purpose built for animal welfare and will maintain a high focus on animal enrichment, which in turn, aims to increase awareness on responsible pet ownership and create a hub for the entire community to engage and network.

The new facility has been designed with functionality at the forefront and construction will commence in early 2026.

BALLARAT ANIMAL MANAGEMENT EMERGENCY PLAN

The City of Ballarat's current emergency management plan provides guidelines to accommodate and assist owners with their pets and animals during the bushfire season and other natural disasters and was put into action during the 2024 bushfire season.

The plan requires the Animal Services team to be present at evacuation relief centres, providing temporary onsite containment options, as well as availability to house animals at the Ballarat Animal

Shelter and other stock holding facilities. This provides owners' options to ensure that they have somewhere to bring their pets if they are required to evacuate their property.

The new Ballarat Regional Animal Facility incorporates housing for both short-term and long-term stock including horses, cows, sheep and other livestock, which are required to be evacuated or have lost their current housing due to a natural disaster. This will provide security for Ballarat's homeowners to ensure a safe place for their pets to be housed during these emergencies.

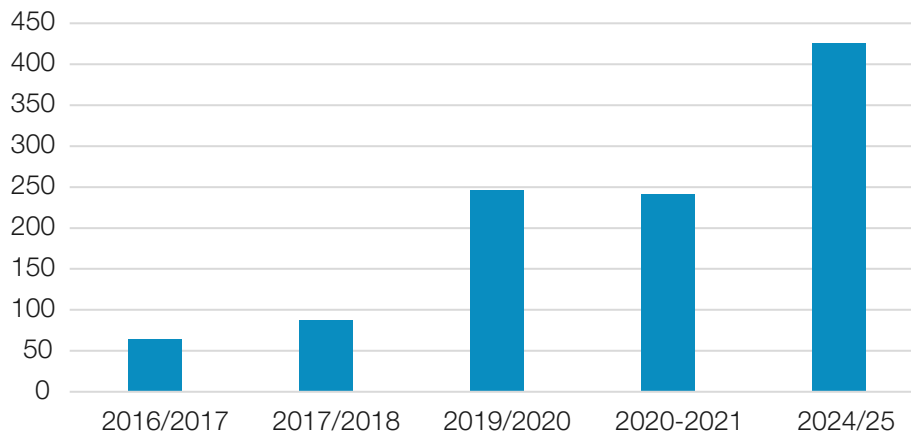
INVESTIGATION INTO ANIMAL WELFARE AND CRUELTY COMPLAINTS

The city of Ballarat has five (5) authorised POCTA (Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act) inspectors and has seen a large increase in reported animal welfare concerns. In 2021, the City of Ballarat commenced in-house prosecution of matters of cruelty, successfully prosecuting 100% of cases brought to the Ballarat Magistrates Court.

Outcomes of these cases may involve Banning orders, ensuring the accused found guilty of cruelty charges, cannot be in the care and control of animals.

ANIMAL WELFARE CONCERNS REPORTED TO CITY OF BALLARAT	
2016/17	64
2017/18	87
2019/20	246
2020/21	241
2024/25	426

CHART 7 - ANIMAL WELFARE REPORTS TO CITY OF BALLARAT 2016-2025



Through media coverage of prosecuted cases, social media and general education provided to the community from the Animals Services team, residents are more confident in reporting these matters to the City of Ballarat to get an immediate response locally.

Concerns that are raised to the Animal Services team include:

- Cruelty to animals i.e. beating.
- Neglect i.e. no food or water or veterinary attention.
- Aggravated cruelty- intentional harm to an animal.
- Emergencies i.e. dogs caught up in chains, livestock stuck in fencing, dams.
- Abandonment i.e. animal left at premises, with no one allocated to provide care.
- Dog fighting.
- Puppy farms and illegal breeding practices.



NATIONAL DESEXING NETWORK INITIATIVE

Since commencement in 2022, the City of Ballarat has assisted in desexing over 150 cats within the City of Ballarat, offering discounted desexing vouchers through our partnership with the National Desexing Network.

	Male cats desexed	Female cats desexed
2022	22	43
2023	10	32
2024	11	28
2025	5	11
TOTAL	49	114

With a further budget commitment from the City of Ballarat, the Animal Services team is currently reviewing the process to ensure the funding is reaching the community members most in need from the scheme.

Current criteria to be eligible for the NDN are as follows:

- Vulnerable / disadvantaged
- Veteran cardholders
- Pension / health care cardholders
- Adopting an adult stray (semi-owned)

All cats must be adults, over the age of 12 months.

APPENDICES

- Appendix A. Current Cat curfew
- Appendix B. Current dogs off leash gazette
- Appendix C. Designated of off leash area
- Appendix D. Local laws excerpt
- Appendix E. Barking dog nuisance sheet
- Appendix F. Designated off leash area signage
- Appendix G. Historical dog and cat impound data table A and B

Appendix A: Current Cat Curfew (since 2009)



Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994

Notice is hereby given that Ballarat City Council at its meeting on 24 September 2008 resolved:

That in accordance with the provisions of section 25 of the **Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994**, cats must be securely confined to owner's premises at night between sunset and sunrise each day, effective from 10 April 2009.

Enquiries should be directed to Andrew Bellingham, Manager Regulatory Services, on 5320 5570.

ANTHONY SCHINCK
Chief Executive Officer

Appendix B:

Current dogs off leash gazette

Victoria Government Gazette

G 36 8 September 2022 3753



NOTICE UNDER DOMESTIC ANIMALS ACT 1994

On 2 September 2022 City of Ballarat ('Council') made an Order under section 26(2) of the **Domestic Animals Act 1994** (the 'Act'). This Order is effective from the date of this notice.

For the purpose of this Order:

'Designated Off Leash Area', means any place or part of an area declared by a resolution of Council included in this Order.

'Public Place' has the same meaning as in section 3 of the **Summary Offences Act 1966**.

'Effective Control' means that whilst on or off lead, the person in apparent control of a dog does not allow the dog to worry, cause a nuisance or threaten any person or animal.

1. **Revocation of previous orders**

All previous Orders made by Council under section 26(2) of the Act are revoked.

2. **Dogs must be on leash**

The person in apparent control of a dog must keep the dog under their effective control at all times, by way of having the dog attached to an appropriate lead or control apparatus, such as a body and/or head harness, which is held by the person at any and all times when the dog is in any Public Place in Council's municipal district (other than those in private ownership) unless the dog is in a **Designated Off Leash Area**.

The following areas are declared **Designated Off Leash Areas**:

- Charles Edward Brown Reserve (North West corner opposite Netball Centre) at 238 Dowling Street, Wendouree;
- Pioneer Park at 5 McKenzie Drive, Wendouree;
- Cuthberts Road Reserve at 164A Cuthberts Road, Alfredton;
- Victoria Park at Russell Street, Newington;
- Gregory St Reserve, 514 and 520 Gregory Street, Soldiers Hill;
- Chisholm Reserve at CA 13A Chisholm Street, Black Hill;
- Birdwood Park at CA 72A Midland Highway, Buninyong;
- M R Power Reserve at 182–198 Grant Street, Sebastopol;
- Canadian Lakes Reserve at 815 Geelong Road, Canadian (off Canadian Lakes Boulevard);
- Pennyweight Park Dog Park at Otway Street South, Canadian; and
- James Reserve Dog Park at 1 Union Jack Lane, Buninyong, Victoria 3357 (off Geelong Road).

3. Make an Order pursuant to section 26(2) of the **Domestic Animals Act 1994** that the following conditions apply to a dog in a Designated Off Leash Area:

3.1.1 Subject to Clause 3.2 and 3.3 of this Order, a dog may be exercised off an appropriate leash, chord or control apparatus such as a harness in a Designated Off Leash Area if the person in apparent control of the dog:

- a) carries an appropriate lead or control apparatus such as a head and/or body harness sufficient to bring the dog under Effective Control;
- b) remains in effective voice or hand control of the dog and within constant sight of the dog at all times; and
- c) does not allow the dog to worry, cause a nuisance or threaten any person or animal.

Appendix B:

Current dogs off leash gazette

3754 G 36 8 September 2022

Victoria Government Gazette

3.1.2 If a dog is off lead in a Designated Off-Leash Area, it must be brought under Effective Control by means of a an appropriate lead or control apparatus such as a head and/or body harness, if the dog is within 50 metres of:

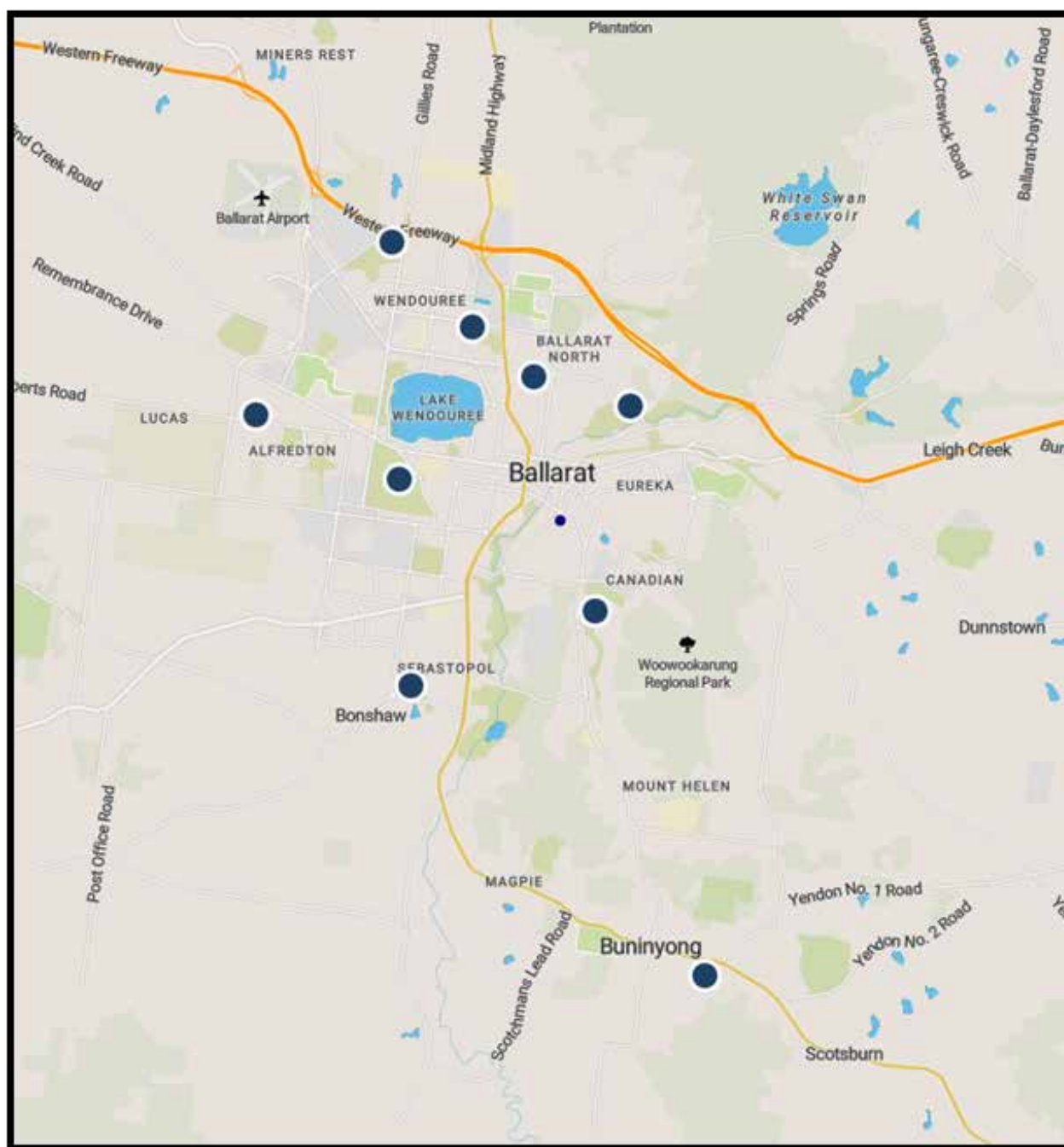
- a) the arena or ground of an organised sporting or practice event;
- b) a children's play equipment area;
- c) the principal location of an organised public meeting or event; and
- d) a permanent barbecue or picnic area.

3.1.3 If a dog is off lead in a Designated Off Leash Area it must be brought under Effective Control by an appropriate lead or control apparatus such as a head and/or body harness if the dog is within 10 metres of any shared path, walking track or waterway.

The Order will come into operation from the date of this notice.

BRENDA CAREY
Executive Manager Regulatory Services

Appendix C: Designated of off leash area



Appendix D: Local Laws Excerpt

ANIMALS 22.

KEEPING ANIMALS

22.1. An owner or occupier of any land must not, without a Permit:

22.1.1. keep or allow to be kept more than 6 different types of any Animal on any one parcel of land of 2 hectares or less at any time; and

22.1.2. must not keep or allow to be kept any more in number, for each type of Animal, than is set out in the Table of Animal Types and Numbers in this Clause

Penalty: 10 Penalty Units

	ANIMAL TYPE	URBAN RESIDENTIAL	RURAL RESIDENTIAL	RURAL
(a)	Dogs	2	2	5 (other than dogs kept for working stock /primary production)
(b)	Cats	2	2	2
(c)	Fowls (excluding roosters)	5	20	No Local Law permit required
(d)	Roosters	0	1	No Local Law permit required
(e)	Pheasants	4	20	No Local Law permit required
(f)	Squabs	20	40	No Local Law permit required
(g)	Other poultry (including ducks, geese, turkey, guinea fowl or similar)	0	10	No Local Law permit required
(h)	Ostriches / emus / peacocks	0	0	No Local Law permit required
(i)	Cockatoos / galahs (caged)	0	2	No Local Law permit required
(j)	Sheep	0	Apply the DSE calculation per ha	No Local Law permit required
(k)	Goats	0	5	No Local Law permit required
(l)	Horses	0	1	No Local Law permit required
(m)	Pigs	0	0	No Local Law permit required
(n)	Cows	0	Apply the DSE calculation per ha	No Local Law permit required
(o)	Other primary production animals	0	0	No Local Law permit required

22.2. For the purposes of the table in clause 22.1:

22.2.1. 'Urban Residential' means land within the General Residential Zone, Commercial 1 Zone, Commercial 2 Zone, Neighbourhood Residential Zone, Residential Growth Zone, Mixed Use Zone or Township Zone;

22.2.2. 'Rural Residential' means land within the Low Density Residential Zone or Rural Living Zone; and

Appendix D: Local Laws Excerpt

22.2.3. 'Rural' means land within the Farming Zone, Rural Conservation Zone, Industrial 1 Zone; Industrial 2 Zone or Industrial 3 Zone.

22.3. Unless contrary to other State or Commonwealth legislation, a Permit is also required to keep or allow to be kept any exotic, wild, dangerous, or large Animal not listed in Subclause 22.1.

22.4. For the purpose of calculating the numbers of any Animal kept under Sub-clause 22.1, the progeny of any Animal lawfully kept will be counted from 12 weeks after its birth.

22.5. Where at the date immediately prior to the day of the commencement of this Local Law any owner or occupier of land lawfully keeps a number of Animals in excess of the new maximum number or type of Animals given in the Table of Animal Types and Numbers in Sub-clause 22.1, and those Animals, where required, are registered with the Council:

22.5.1. that maximum number will be increased for that owner or occupier to include those previously lawful Animals, but only until that time when those individual Animals in excess of the new maximum die or are otherwise disposed of; and

22.5.2. for roosters the time period referred to in Sub-clause 22.5.1 cannot exceed two years from the commencement date of this Local Law; and

22.5.3. those excess Animals may not be replaced, unless by Permit.

22.6. Any person keeping Honey Bees must comply with the Victorian Apiary Code of Practice (2011) as prepared and amended from time to time by the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.

22.7. Any owner or occupier of the land must destroy any English or European wasps nesting on the land.

23. ANIMAL ACCOMMODATION

23.1. An owner or occupier of land must ensure that any Animals (excluding only dogs or cats) and birds kept on that land are:

23.1.1. kept in a secure shelter, structure or enclosure; and

23.1.2. confined to the land unless they are under the effective control of a Person.
Penalty: 10 Penalty Units

23.2. An owner or occupier of land in an Urban Residential or Rural Residential area, must ensure that any animal shelters, structures or enclosures on that land are maintained to the satisfaction of an Authorised Officer or Delegated Officer. Penalty: 10 Penalty Units
Note that confinement and control of dogs and cats are regulated under the Domestic Animal Act 1994 and may include additional Council Orders made pursuant to that Act.

24. NOISE AND SMELL FROM ANIMALS An occupier of any land on which any Animal is kept must not allow any noise, smell or discharge to emanate from the Animal or animal

Appendix D: Local Laws Excerpt

accommodation which is offensive to persons who occupy adjacent or nearby land.

Penalty: 10 Penalty Units

25. ANIMAL EXCREMENT

25.1. A Person in charge of any Animal must not allow any part of the excrement of the Animal to remain on any Road or Council Land. Penalty: 10 Penalty Units

25.2. A Person in charge of any Animal on any Road or Council Land must carry a Litter Device suitable to clean up any excrement left by his or her Animal and must produce such Litter Device upon request of any Authorised Officer or Delegated Officer.

Penalty: 10 Penalty Units 25.3.

Exemption: Livestock outside a Built Up Area is exempt from Sub-clauses 25.1 and 25.2, except that, in the case of Livestock road crossings, Sub-clause 25.1 will apply if the Animal excrement left on a Road is sufficient to cause a genuine risk to public road safety, including but not limited to, being a contributory factor in any road accident.

26. ADEQUATE FENCING

26.1. Where any Animal, including any Livestock, is kept on any land, the owner or the occupier of the land must ensure that the land is secured or fenced in a way that will prevent the Animal from escaping from the land. Penalty for first offence: 10 Penalty Units Penalty for second and subsequent offence: 15 Penalty Units

26.2. Where the Animals kept on any land are sheep, cattle, horses or other large Animals, the owner or occupier of the land must ensure by adequate Fencing that no Animal escapes onto, or remains unattended, on a public Road. Penalty: 20 Penalty Units

26.3. No offence is committed under Sub-clause 26.2 where it can be shown that extreme or unusual circumstances beyond the control of the owner or the occupier, such as wildfire, flood or dog attack, directly resulted in the escape of the Animal through otherwise adequate Fencing.

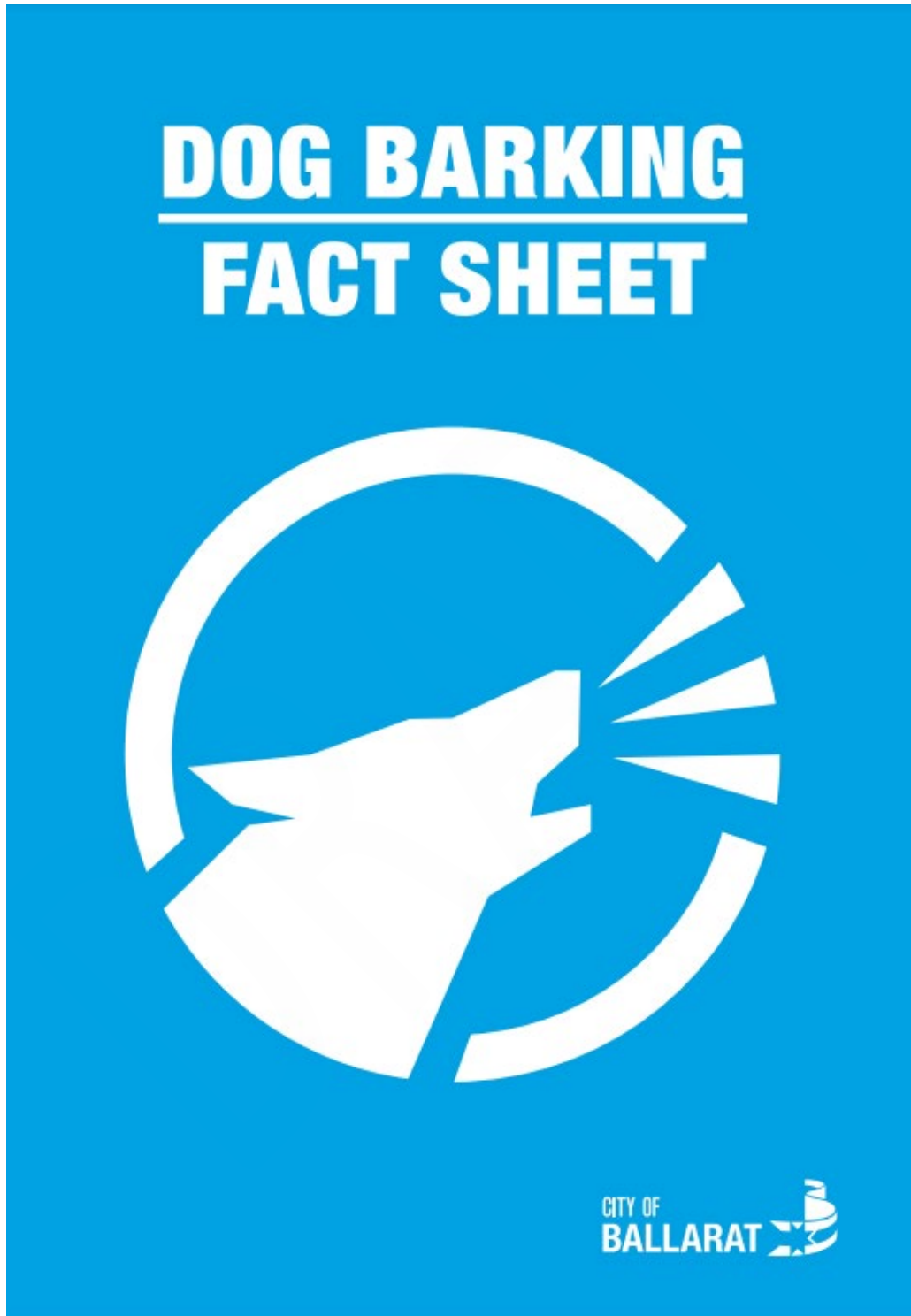
26.4. If an Authorised Officer or Delegated Officer is of the opinion that land used for the grazing or keeping of livestock is not adequately fenced then, in addition to any penalty that may be imposed, the Authorised Officer or Delegated Officer may issue a Notice to Comply directing the owner or occupier of the land to do any or all of the following:

26.4.1. install, repair, replace or modify fences and gates;

26.4.2. remove any livestock from the land; or

26.4.3. direct that the land may not be used for the grazing and keeping of livestock until required works have been completed.

Appendix E:
Barking Dog nuisance fact sheet
Available at ballarat.vic.gov.au/nuisance-pets



Appendix E:

Barking Dog nuisance fact sheet

Available at ballarat.vic.gov.au/nuisance-pets

Problem barking can create difficult neighbourhood disputes. The intermittent and piercing nature of a dog's bark can be very disruptive for close neighbours. A dog's bark can reach 90 decibels.

You may not be aware that your dog is barking when you are not home. It's important to make sure your dog has enough toys and space so they can occupy themselves when you aren't home.

How can I make sure my dog is not annoying the neighbours?



Basic health and welfare

Make sure there is adequate food, water, shelter, yard space, exercise, and companionship for the dog.



Keep things interesting

Have plenty of chew toys for your dog to play with. Raw bones, toys, chew ropes provide good mental stimulation.



Daily exercise

Dogs need daily exercise. A walk each day is essential for good health and good behaviour. A ten-minute walk twice a day will help as a walk past two or three houses gives a great variety of new smells to look forward to.

Larger dogs such as cattle dogs, border collies, and kelpies need more exercise than other dogs. Vigorous runs at an off-leash area help reduce problem barking.



Daily training

Training can be done easily at home. Teaching the dog to come, sit, and stay will help give good boundaries for your pet. You can also contact dog obedience clubs for more formal and intense training.

Appendix E:

Barking Dog nuisance fact sheet

Available at ballarat.vic.gov.au/nuisance-pets



My dog is barking how can I help?

Possible causes of barking

When you listen carefully to a dog barking you will hear a variety of pitch, volume, frequency and type. Each of these means something different.

Boredom bark

Dogs are social animals and need companionship. Eight hours is a long time to be home alone when everyone is at work. A bored dog's bark might sound like: "bark...bark...bark..."

Lonely or attention seeking bark

'The family is inside but no one is playing with me' attention seeking bark might sound like: "yap, yap...yap, yap..."

Warning or alarm barking

'There is someone on my property' bark might sound like: "grrr...ruff, ruff...grrr"

Ill health, pain or cruelty bark

Please don't ignore this bark. An 'ouch that hurts' bark might sound like: "yow, yip, yow, yow, yip"

Separation anxiety bark

These barks are usually most intense within half an hour of the owners departing and might sound like: "bark, bark, bark, yip, yip, yip, arrooo..."

Howl

These noises are partly in response to ambulance sirens, may be breed related (Alaskan Malamute, Siberian Husky), or a male chasing a female dog.

Appendix E:

Barking Dog nuisance fact sheet

Available at ballarat.vic.gov.au/nuisance-pets



Identify barking triggers

Once you've found the barking triggers, they can be reduced or removed. Try using a video or sound recording to see if roaming cats or strange noises are annoying your dog.

Sight barriers

Providing a barrier to a busy street can sometimes remove the dog's need to try to control the situation. Sometimes a doggy door for the dog to retreat inside solves the problem.

Pet minding service

Ask a neighbour to check on your dog through the day or employ someone to walk or play with them.

Aboistop (anti-barking citronella collars)

These work by distracting or discouraging the dog from barking. They are not a permanent solution and can induce fearful behaviour in some dogs.

Pet behaviour counsellor

Someone outside the situation can offer workable solutions. Your local vet can recommend a counsellor.

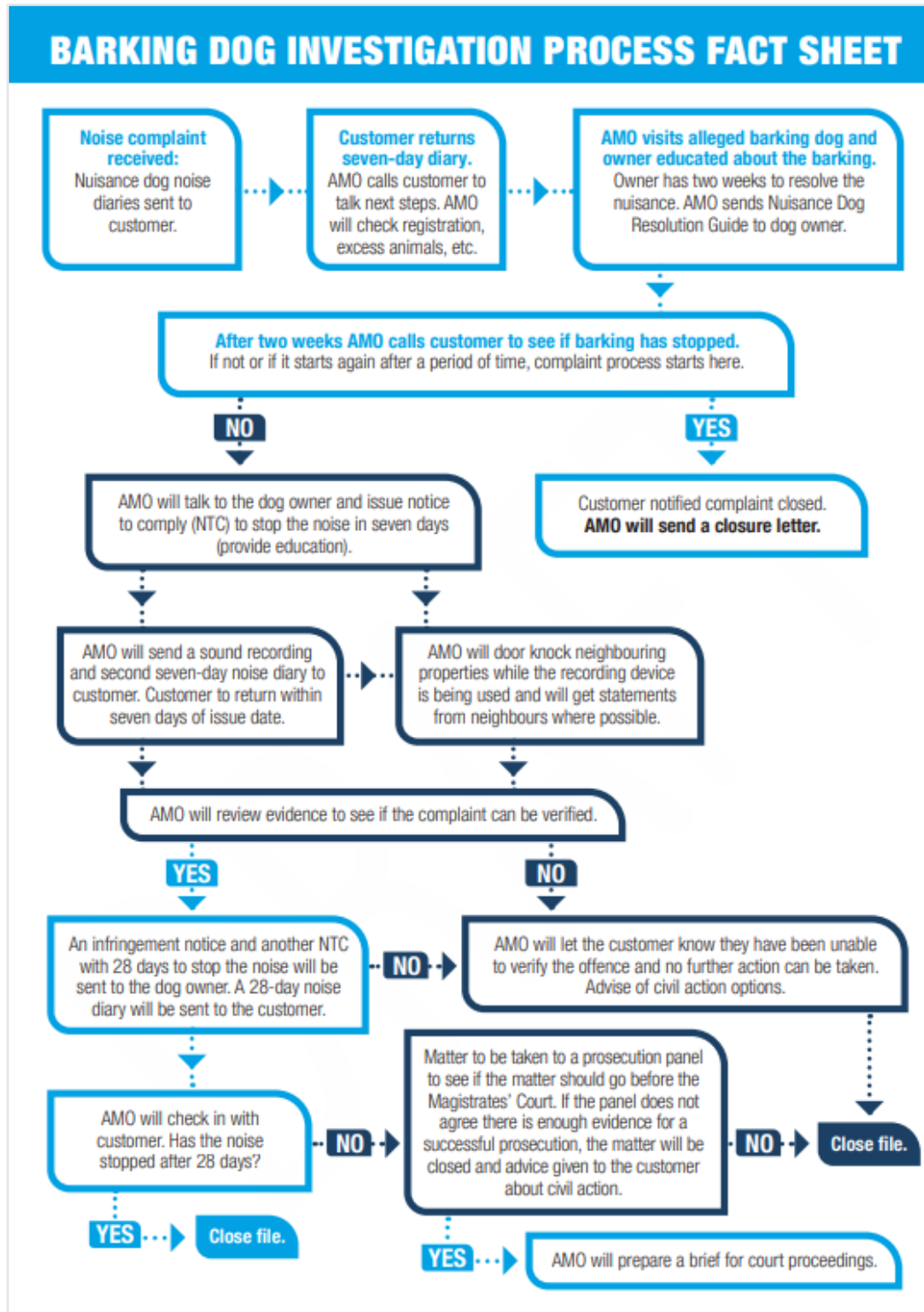
Avoid getting a companion dog

Until you have controlled the first dog's problem, a second dog will often add to the problem e.g. two barking dogs.

Appendix E:

Barking Dog nuisance fact sheet

Available at ballarat.vic.gov.au/nuisance-pets



Appendix F: Designated off leash areas signage



Appendix G:

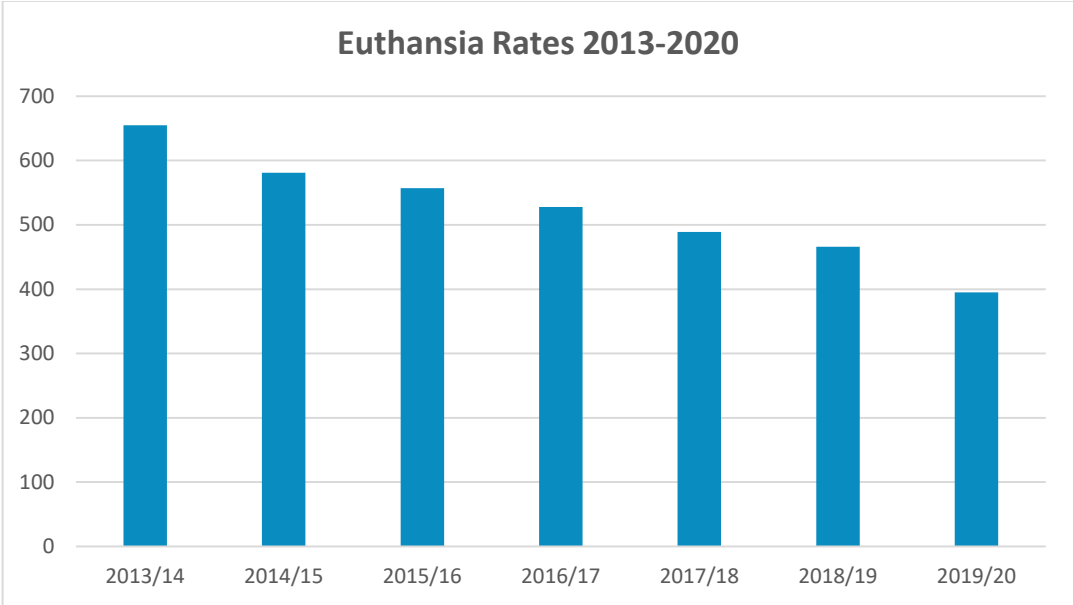
Historical impound dog and cat 2008–2020 data

Table A.

	RSPCA							BALLARAT ANIMAL SHELTER		
	2008/ 2009	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020
No. of dogs brought in by Council and public	n/a	n/a	1067	1139	1008	731	848	668	1653	1304
No. of dogs reclaimed by owner	994	1292	1114	1153	921	761	828	1001	1162	807
No. of dogs adopted	597	314	318	372	481	429	335	964	375	266
No. of dogs euthanased	188	177	297	160	152	154	137	294	138	81
No. of cats brought in by Council and public	n/a	n/a	105	141	183	183	199	124	1421	1331
No. of cats reclaimed by owner	74	100	90	96	109	93	78	144	197	121
No. of cats adopted	356	283	271	409	570	699	584	651	934	762
No. of cats euthanased	1,038	626	568	495	429	403	391	195	328	314

Appendix G:
Historical impound dog and cat 2008–2020 data

Table B.



ACTION PLAN

ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

As per 68A(3) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council will review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually to assess whether any amendments are necessary in order to ensure the plan is relevant and can be completed within the required timeframes.

In the final year of the plan, Council will undertake a major review and prepare drafting the next domestic animal management plan for the 2025-2029 period.

REVIEW CYCLE FOR DAMP

The Domestic Animal Management Plan will be reviewed each year as part of service delivery planning by Council's Animal service's Team. Should there be any issues arising from the DAMP, they will be reported immediately to the Executive Manager of Regulatory service's for further action.

Ballarat City Council will continue to monitor the progress of the DAMP and will conduct a full review every four years.





Customer Service

Monday to Friday, 8.30am–5pm

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AUGUST 2025