Shire of Broome

Animal Management Plan

July 2024 to June 2028



Shire of Broome
A future, for everyone

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Abby Murray Photography - 3, 5, 12, 14, 24, 31, 34
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Introduction

The Shire of Broome's Animal Management Plan has been prepared to facilitate responsible animal management.

It supports achievement of the following outcome, objective and action in the Shire of Broome's Corporate Business Plan 2023-2027:

Objective 1: A safe community
Objective 1.4: Encourage responsible animal management
Action 1.4.3: Facilitate development of an Animal Management Plan that responds to the State Government's statutory review of the *Cat Act 2011* and the *Dog Amendment Act 2013* and addresses dog exercise areas, strays and feral animal management, off-leash pets, dog attacks, de-sexing and animal welfare.

This plan focuses on pet ownership of dogs and cats in Broome, with consideration for interactions with people, camels, horses, and wildlife. It seeks to achieve seven objectives: This plan describes:

1. Raise awareness and understanding of responsible and caring behaviour toward animals.
2. Increase adoption of responsible pet owner behaviours, related to registrations, microchipping, desexing, obedience training, excessive barking, and animal excreta.
3. Review animal access on local beaches to improve community safety and animal welfare.
4. Review dog access in local reserves, parks, playgrounds and outdoor sports facilities.
5. Improve the management of lost, stray and feral dogs and cats.
6. Minimise domestic animal impact on local wildlife.
7. Strengthen governance and enforcement.

The Shire would like to thank community members for their support and assistance to create this plan:

- Expert interviews were facilitated with representatives from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), SAFE Broome, Broome Veterinary Hospital, Broome Turf Club, Broome Horse Riders Club Inc., Red Sun Camels, Broome Camel Safaris, Cable Beach Camels, Paws and Effect Dog Training, and Broome Bird Observatory.
- 1,020 community members completed a 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard
- 1,002 community members completed the 2024 Animal Management Survey
- 40 community members attended a community workshop
- 10 submissions during the Public Comment period



Animal ownership in Broome

Dog and cat ownership

There are around 8,399 pet dogs and 2,106 pet cats in the Shire of Broome, based on estimated calculations from the ABS Census, Shire of Broome's Animal Management Survey and 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard.

Dog estimates are based on 62% of community members having a dog in the 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard and reported dog ownership in the Shire of Broome's Animal Management Survey where 61% of dog owners have 1 dog, 34% have 2 dogs, 4% have 3 dogs and 1% have 4 or more dogs. Cat estimates are based on 14% of community members having a cat in the 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard and reported cat ownership in the Animal Management Survey where 63% of cat owners have 1 cat, 22% have 2 cats, 6% have 3 cats and 9% have 4 or more cats.

Nationally, the RSPCA estimates that 48% of households have a dog and 33% have a cat. While dog ownership in Broome is higher than the national average, cat ownership is lower. Contributing factors for lower levels of cat ownership may relate to the climate, higher numbers of stray and feral animals and the associated risks for cat safety and welfare, and a growing understanding that cats can be detrimental to wildlife. In the Animal Management Survey, only 18% of cat owners reported that they allow their cats to roam freely outdoors.

Shire statistics	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Dog registrations per year	203	215	204	330	359
Cat registrations per year	28	30	23	26	21
Applications for a horse to be walked, led, ridden on Local Government Property per year	20	6	87	30	7
Applications for a camel to be walked, led, ridden on Local Government Property per year	54	54	54	54	54

Horse ownership

People own horses or visit Broome with horses for various reasons, including recreation, farming, horseracing, and major events. Polo matches were a popular annual event prior to COVID-19 and are expected to return in 2025. It is estimated that there could be around 93 horses in Broome, based on 1% of survey respondents reporting horse ownership in the Shire of Broome's Animal Management Survey. Around 4% of respondents reported riding a horse over the past 12 months. During the horse-racing season from June to August, the horse population is thought to double with around 100 thoroughbred racehorses visiting Broome. To ride on public land, horse owners must submit an *Application to Walk, Lead, Ride, Drive or Herd a Large Animal on Local Government Property*. In 2023, the Shire of Broome received an application for 7 horses. Collectively, over the past five years, the Shire has received applications for 150 horses.

Camel ownership

There are three camel tour operators in Broome. Each operator is permitted to have a maximum of 18 camels on Cable Beach at any time, unless otherwise approved by the Shire for extraordinary circumstances. Operators may have additional camels on their farms.



Legal requirements of animal ownership

Administration of animal management within Western Australia is set out in legislation, predominantly the *Dog Act 1976* and the *Cat Act 2011*. This legislation authorises the Shire to enforce compliance and respond to or act on animal complaints and incidents, in a manner that is consistent with its powers as granted in legislation. This legislation also directs Council to collect revenue through fee-based services such as animal registration and impounding.

Animal welfare is also a key concern for the community. In WA, animal welfare is legislated by the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* and administered by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) through its Inspectors.

Responsible cat ownership

Cat owners are required to comply with the *Cat Act 2011*

To meet legislative requirements, cat owners must:

- Ensure their cat has a current registration from six months of age.
- Ensure their cat wears a collar with a registration tag at all times.
- Ensure their cat is microchipped from six months of age (some exemptions apply).
- Ensure their cat is sterilised from six months of age (some exemptions apply).
- Apply for a permit from their local council (Shire of Broome) if they wish to become a breeder.
- Ensure all cats from six months are microchipped and sterilised prior to being sold, gifted or transferred to a new owner.
- Ensure kittens under six months are microchipped prior to being sold, gifted or transferred to a new owner. If a kitten cannot be sterilised due to its young age, the original owner must provide a prepaid sterilisation voucher to the new owner.

To be a responsible cat owner, it is recommended that cat owners:

- Avoid their cat being a nuisance in the community by keeping their cat indoors or exercising outdoors responsibly in a cat enclosure or on a leash.
- Put a bell on their cat's collar.
- Contact their local council to find out if a local law has been introduced to limit the numbers of cats that can be owned.





Responsible dog ownership

Dog owners are required to comply with the *Dog Act 1976*.

To meet legislative requirements, dog owners must:

- Ensure their dog has a current registration from three months of age.
- Not keep more than two dogs on their property (unless approved).
- Ensure their dog wears a collar with a registration tag at all times.
- Ensure their dog has a microchip.
- Observe special conditions for owning a greyhound or declared dangerous and restricted breed dog.
- Ensure their dog is securely confined within their property.
- Keep their dog under effective control at all times when in a public place.
- Keep their dog on-leash at all times in public places, unless posted signs indicate otherwise.
- Pick up and correctly dispose of all animal waste.

To be a responsible dog owner, it is recommended that dog owners:

- Keep vaccinations and treatments for parasites, fleas, ticks etc up to date.
- Take their dog to puppy school or dog obedience training.
- Socialise their dog with positive and varied experiences, including different sights, sounds, surfaces, smells and skills, from an early age.
- Manage excessive barking to reduce noise impacts on neighbours.



If the *Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Bill 2021* is passed, there will be a requirement for:

- Dog owners to ensure their dog is desexed by the age of two years, with limited exemptions, to prevent unplanned breeding or over breeding.
- Information on dogs to be held in a centralised registration system to allow information to be shared across the State.
- People who wish to breed their dog to get approval to breed, enabling breeders to be traced.
- Pet shops that sell dogs to transition to become adoption centres for unwanted dogs.

Dog owners are asked to follow regulations and responsible practices when using off-leash dog exercise areas:

- Have your dog on a leash when travelling to or from a dog off-leash exercise area
- Have your dog under effective control (hand or voice command) at ALL times
- Have your leash ready so you can react quickly if there is a problem
- Follow any direction from an authorised Council officer regarding your dog
- Pick up dog waste and dispose of it responsibly

Dogs that have been declared dangerous or menacing are not allowed in dog exercise areas.

Dogs are not permitted in national parks, with exceptions for assistance animals.

Responsible horse ownership

The State Government, through the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), is responsible for the governance of horse registrations. Identification of livestock in Western Australia is required under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Identification and Movement of Stock and Apiaries) Regulations 2013* [BAM (IMSA) regulations].

Horse owners and riders must adhere to the following State Government regulations:

- All horses must have a registered identifier (brand) or an approved identifier (e.g. microchip) or breed society identifier. This assists the State Government to trace horses during disease outbreaks and assists in the recovery of animals in cases of theft.
- In accordance with the *Road Traffic Code 2000*, horse riders and carriage drivers are permitted to travel on roads, unless a Road Access Sign says otherwise, or if the road is a designated freeway. Animals and animal drawn vehicles, including horses, are treated in the same way as other vehicles, which means that almost all road rules that apply to cars or bicycles will also apply to horse riders and carriage drivers. People riding animals are also permitted to use footpaths and nature strips provided they give way to pedestrians.

Horse owners must adhere to the following Local Government regulations:

- All horse owners in Broome must submit an *Application for Approval to Keep a Large Animal Within the Townsite*, in accordance with the *Health Local Law 2006, Part 5, Division 3.*

The Shire governs responsible horse ownership through the *Horses on Cable Beach Council Policy*. Horses are permitted in two areas along the coast:

- Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area and Horse Swimming Area
- Cable Beach foreshore north of the rocks from Cable Beach Reserve to Coconut Wells

To access designated horse areas at Gantheaume Point, Cable Beach, Coconut Wells and other public places, horse owners and riders must complete an *Application for Approval to Walk, Lead, Ride, Herd or Drive a Large Animal on Local Government Property and on Public Places* issued pursuant to *Local Government Property and Public Places Local Law 2016 Clause 3.2(g)*. Any persons who may be authorised to be in control of the animal must be named in this application, and they must adhere to the conditions in this form. Please refer to the application form for a full list of compliance requirements.

Safety tips for horse riders

- Always wear a helmet when riding.
- Ride on the nature strip as a first option. While you can legally ride on the road or road shoulder, the nature strip is safest if there is one available, and in turn, road shoulders are safer than riding on the road.
- Listen and pay attention to your animal. Don't ride in public places if your horse is unsettled.
- If you see a camel while riding, keep your horse at a safe distance from the camel and never pass a camel from behind.
- Do not walk or ride your horse above the high tide mark on Cable Beach during the turtle nesting and hatching season.
- Wear light coloured clothing during the day, or reflective clothing at night, to help make you visible to other road users.
- Avoid riding at night, if possible, but if the need arises, wear a reflective vest and attach reflective bands such as leg bands to your animal.

Responsible camel ownership

Camels are prescribed stock under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Identification and Movement of Stock and Apiaries) Regulations 2013 [BAM (IMSA) regulations]*. Camel owners must be registered as owners of stock and have a current property identification code (PIC) for the property/s where their animals are kept. There is no prescribed identification for camels. It is up to the individual to identify their animals if they wish to claim ownership or distinguish them from feral populations or camels owned by another party.

RSPCA Policy

Section C of the RSPCA Policy covers Animals in Sport, Entertainment, Performance, Recreation and Work. The following sections address responsible ownership and care for camels:

- C01 Animals in sport, entertainment, performance, recreation and work – general principles
- C02 Performing Animals
- C07 Training behaviour modification and invasive procedure

Local Government Policy

Camel owners must complete an *Application for Approval to Walk, Lead, Ride, Herd or Drive a Large Animal on Local Government Property and on Public Places* issued pursuant to *Local Government Property and Public Places Local Law 2016* Clause 3.2(g). Any persons who may be authorised to be in control of the animal must be named in this application, and they must adhere to the conditions in this form. Please refer to the application form for a full list of compliance requirements.



Responsible ownership of other animals

The Shire of Broome's *Health Local Laws 2006* outlines additional requirements for people who wish to keep animals within the townsite, including:

- Horses
- Camels
- Cows
- Pigs
- Sheep
- Goats
- Deer
- Rabbits
- Ferrets
- Birds, including pigeons and doves
- Poultry
- Roosters
- Geese
- Turkeys
- Peafowl's
- Gamebirds, including emus and ostriches
- Bees

Please refer to the Shire of Broome's *Health Local Laws 2006 and Local Government Property and Public Places Local Law 2016* for further information.

Current performance

Overall Performance

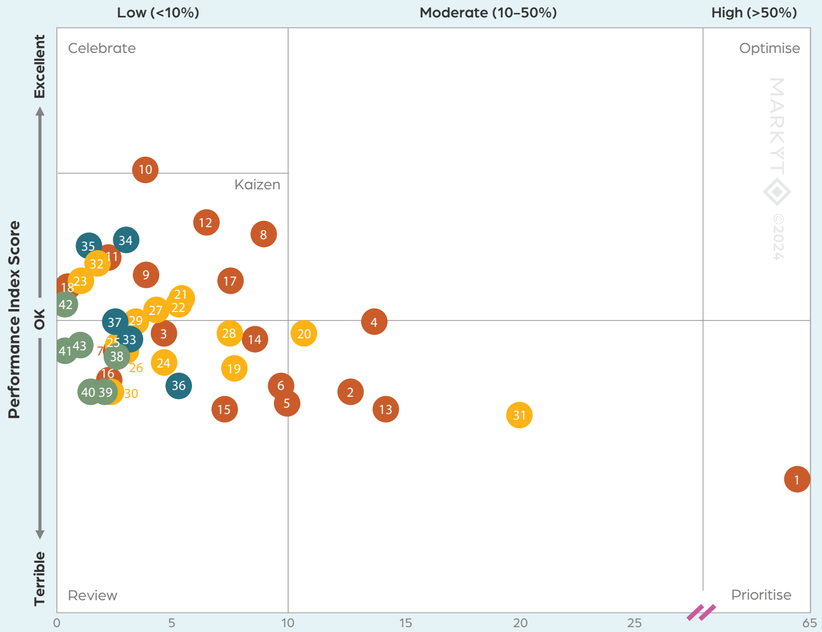
Between 2020 and 2024, the Shire of Broome participated in the MARKYT® Benchmarking Excellence Program on a two-yearly basis to evaluate and report on service levels. In 2024, animal management received a performance score of 39 points out of 100, with an average rating below okay. While performance increased by 2 points between 2020 and 2022, between 2022 and 2024, performance fell 7 points and is now 14 points below the industry average.

Community members positioned animal management as an area to REVIEW/PRIORITISE in the MARKYT® Community Priorities chart with performance sitting below an average rating of okay and around 10% of respondents selecting animal management as one of the top three areas for Council to address. This has been a key driver in the Council's decision to develop an Animal Management Plan.



MARKYT Community Priorities

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES (% of respondents)



People
1 Safety and crime prevention
2 Lighting
3 Wellbeing programs / education
4 Health and community services
5 Housing
6 Animal management
7 Community buildings
8 Sport and recreation
9 Playgrounds, parks and reserves
10 Library
11 History and heritage
12 Festivals, events, art and culture
13 Youth services
14 Family and children services
15 Seniors services
16 Disability access and inclusion
17 Respect for Aboriginal peoples/heritage
18 Volunteer support and recognition

Place
19 Sustainable practices
20 Conservation and environment
21 Beaches and foreshores
22 Waste management
23 Natural disaster management
24 Mosquito control
25 Ranger services
26 Planning and building approvals
27 Streetscapes
28 Footpaths, cycleways and trails
29 Local roads
30 Public and on-demand transport
31 Marine facilities
32 Airport facilities and services

Prosperity
33 Economic development
34 Tourism and destination marketing
35 Town centre development/activation
36 Telecommunications/internet services
37 Education, training, life-long learning

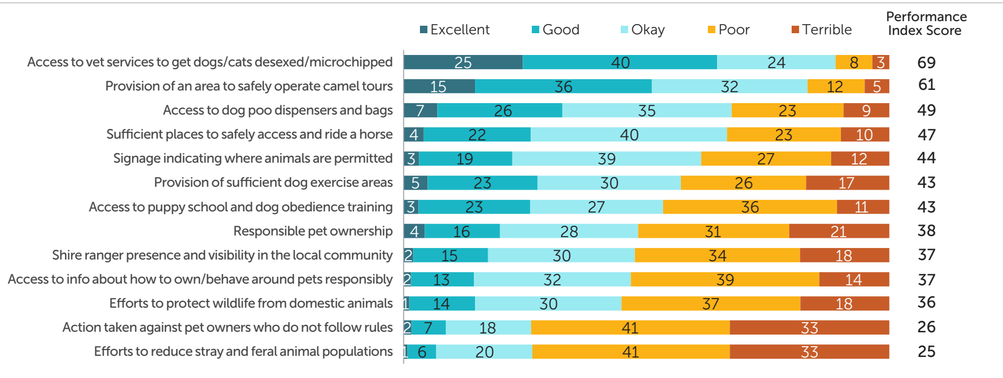
Performance
38 Council's leadership
39 Advocacy and lobbying
40 Consultation
41 Communication
42 Customer service
43 Innovation and technology

Community perceptions of animal management

In the 2024 Animal Management Survey, the Council invited community members to rate factors that contribute to overall ratings of animal management. The results show that community members are happiest with the ease of accessing vet services to get dogs and cats desexed or microchipped (89% positive rating and a performance index score of 69 out of 100) and providing a safe area to operate camel tours (83% positive rating and a performance index score of 61 out of 100).

They are most concerned with efforts to reduce stray and feral animal populations and actions taken against pet owners who do not follow rules and regulations, with both receiving a negative rating from 74% of respondents and a performance index score of 25 and 26 points, respectively.

Responsible animal management performance levels % of survey respondents



Performance ratings vary across the community. Key variances include:

- People with disability rate performance lower across most areas.
- Non-dog owners rate performance lower than dog owners across most measures.
- Recreational horse owners and riders provide lower ratings for having sufficient places to safely access and ride a horse.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are more concerned with access to dog exercise areas and protecting wildlife from domestic animals.
- Key stakeholders and conservation volunteers express higher levels of concern about protecting wildlife from domestic animals.

In relation to responsible pet ownership, the community was mostly concerned with:

- Ensuring dogs are securely confined in their property (selected by 63% of respondents)
- Keeping dogs under effective control when off-leash (62%)

Other concerns were keeping dogs on-leash in public places (selected by 49% of respondents), nuisance cats (42%), taking responsibility for animal excreta in public places (37%), keeping vaccinations and worming treatments up to date (25%) and managing excessive barking (23%).

Generally, non-dog owners were more concerned with dog related matters, and non-cat owners were more concerned with cat related matters.

Shire statistics

In 2023, the Shire of Broome received 168 complaints about dog attacks and 111 complaints about excessive barking, it conducted 15 investigations and provided 80 referrals to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA). In Western Australia, animal welfare is legislated by the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* and administered by the RSPCA through its inspectors.

In 2023, 297 dogs and 366 cats were found or collected by rangers or volunteered to the pound. Among these animals, rangers were able to locate and return 46% of dogs but just 1% of cats to their owners. Working together, local rangers, vets, SAFE Broome and a team of dedicated volunteers and foster carers were able to care for and rehome 45% of dogs and 51% of cats, with some of these animals transferred to animal shelters to be rehomed. Despite best efforts, 22 dogs and 165 cats had to be euthanised. Many cats euthanised were feral cats.

Complaints and investigations	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Dog attack complaints	170	175	124	140	148
Barking complaints	82	81	90	148	111
Shire of Broome investigations	13	13	11	7	15
RSPCA referrals	49	51	44	61	80



Pound statistics: Dogs	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Dogs found or volunteered (lost, wandering, strays, feral)	400	245	270	301	297
Dogs returned to owners	119	81	128	126	137
Dogs rehomed or given to animal rescue shelter	247	132	125	142	133
Dogs euthanised	29	26	13	24	22

Pound statistics: Cats	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Cats found or volunteered (lost, wandering, strays, feral)	298	367	452	493	366
Cats returned to owners	4	2	5	8	3
Cats rehomed or given to animal rescue shelter	201	203	277	307	188
Cats euthanised	92	158	165	171	165

Current behaviours and concerns

Dog and cat registrations

All dogs and cats must be registered with the Shire of Broome to comply with the *Dog Act 1976 and Cat Act 2011*.

The dog and cat registration year runs from November 1 to October 31 and is transferable between local Governments within WA at no cost.

Registration fees for dogs and cats are set and regulated by the State Government as per the schedule of fees shown to the right. Pet owners may register their dog or cat for 1 year, 3 years or the lifetime of the pet. A one-year registration paid after May 31, until October 31 that year, is half price. Discounts apply for pensioners.

2,786 dogs have been registered with the Shire of Broome over the past 12 years, and 324 cats have been registered over the past 10 years. Based on estimated pet dog and cat populations, this represents around 33% of dogs and 15% of cats, assuming all registered dogs and cats are still alive and residing in the Shire of Broome.

A difficulty in counting dog and cat registrations cumulatively over the years, is that dog and cat owners may apply for a 1-year, 3-year or lifetime registration with the Shire of Broome but once registered, they may not report a transfer in ownership or death of a pet dog or cat to the Shire of Broome.



Pet registration fees	1 year	3 years	Lifetime
Unsterilised dog	$50	$120	$250
Sterilised dog	$20	$42.50	$100
Sterilised cat	$20	$42.50	$100

Pet registrations	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Dog registration per year	203	215	204	330	359
Cat registration per year	28	30	23	26	21

Another challenge is that Shire records of dog and cat registrations do not align with community reported registrations. In the Animal Management Survey, 88% of dog owners reported that all their dogs were registered with the Shire of Broome. A further 3% of dog owners said that some of their dogs had a current registration. 64% of cat owners reported that all their cats were registered with the Shire of Broome. A further 2% of cat owners said that some of their cats had a current registration. There may be some confusion among pet owners as dogs and cats are registered when they are microchipped, but this registration is not with the Shire of Broome and does not cover a pet owners' legal responsibility for their dog or cat to be registered with their local council.

There is an urgent need to improve dog and cat registration compliance in the Shire of Broome.

Sterilisation and population management

All cats must be sterilised in the Shire of Broome. Dog sterilisation is optional, with mandatory desexing being considered through the Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Bill 2021).

Pensioners can access discounts to have their pet sterilised. Pet owners who are economically or otherwise disadvantaged may also apply for financial assistance when the Shire has been successful in obtaining grants. Recently, the Shire of Broome was successful in obtaining a grant through the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's Animal Welfare Grant Program to provide free or low-cost veterinary services to have pet dogs and cats sterilised. Conditions apply. Please contact the Shire of Broome for further details.

While 83% of dog owners and 93% of cat owners in the Animal Management Survey reported that all their dogs or cats are sterilised, this may reflect sterilisation rates among companion pets and may be positively skewed towards responsible pet owners. A local animal expert who cares for companion dogs, as well as dogs that are lost, stray or abandoned estimates that only 40% of dogs are desexed in Broome.

To manage population growth and unwanted dogs, an animal expert suggested the sterilisation rate needs to be at least 70% across the total population. The community could move towards this target with greater awareness and understanding about the benefits of sterilisation, improved awareness and ease of applying for discounts and subsidies, and with improved transport options to get pets to and from the vet.

Stakeholders suggested an intensive 4-week dog sterilisation program in partnership with other key stakeholders (such as Murdoch University Australian Army, SAFE Broome, local vets and NGOs) to strive for at least 70% of dogs in Broome to be desexed.



With cats, it is more difficult to estimate actual cat sterilisation rates. Three types of cats were described in Broome:

- **Pet cats** are privately owned companion animals that are socialised to people. They are attached to one permanent dwelling or family and tend to be kept indoors. These cats are more likely to be registered.
- **Urban, community or stray cats** are unowned cats that mainly live outdoors. Their care may be shared by people in one or more dwellings. These cats have been socialised to people, but have left or lost their permanent home, or may have been abandoned. Urban and community cats may be registered to a previous owner; however, it is likely that many urban and community cats do not have a current registration.
- **Feral cats** are unowned cats that are not socialised to people. They live independently. Very few, if any, feral cats will have a current registration.

Animal experts discussed how wandering and stray cats may not be reported or volunteered to rangers for fear these cats will be euthanised. Instead, they may feed and care for them on a shared or temporary basis, contributing to the number of cats that are free roaming on the streets. Animal experts are concerned that this presents an animal welfare issue for the cat, contributes to a growing population of feral cats, and poses greater risks for wildlife. As cats are territorial, it was questioned if it is better to catch, desex and release stray cats so they continue to control their area, rather than euthanise them.

Vaccinations

An important part of being a responsible pet owner is to have dogs or cats vaccinated against preventable diseases by a qualified veterinarian. This is a simple and effective way to keep pets protected against certain serious diseases.

In Broome, animal experts are mainly concerned with parvo, short for canine parvovirus. This is a highly contagious and deadly disease that primarily affects puppies. It doesn't take much for the virus to spread. It can be carried into backyards by stray dogs, on shoes, or even by flies, and once in the environment, the virus can survive for years. Parvo causes severe gastrointestinal distress, leading to dehydration, vomiting, and devastating diarrhoea.

There are concerns that many puppies and dogs are not being vaccinated in Broome, especially stray dogs that may have litters with 8 or 9 unhealthy puppies affected by parvo and ticks. To increase vaccinations, animal experts suggest more communication and financial support is needed.

Dog training

In the Animal Management Survey, around 55% of dog owners said they have taken their dog or dogs to puppy school or dog obedience training.

Access to training appears to be a significant barrier, with the community giving ease of accessing puppy school and dog obedience training a performance score of 43 points out of 100, with an average rating below okay, in the Animal Management Survey.

Dog experts say the best time to commence puppy training is for dogs between the ages of 8-12 weeks. As puppies are not fully vaccinated by this age, trainers require an undercover location, with a 20m x 20m concrete square that is easy to disinfect before each use. Local dog trainers have experienced difficulties securing suitable space in Broome. If more suitable space was available, more classes could be provided.

Dog attacks

In 2023, the Shire of Broome received 168 dog attack complaints.

In a study by Briotti, Cransberg, Chidambaram and Nasim (2024)[1], looking at dog bite presentations at Broome Regional Hospital emergency department from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023, they found that on average, 4 dog-bite injuries presented to Broome Regional Hospital emergency department each week. The median age of patients was 32 years.

75% of patients were bitten by their own dog or a dog familiar to them, while 25% were bitten by a dog that was not known to them. The most common injuries were to the lower limb below the knee (42%), followed by the distal upper limb (31%) and then face (13%). The researchers queried if a higher rate of bites to the lower limb from unknown dogs may be associated with a significant number of stray dogs in Broome.

Around 22% of dog bite victims were non-residents in the Kimberley region, likely to be visiting the area for work, to visit family or friends, or as tourists.

83% of patients were discharged on the day of presentation, 23% of patients required repair in the emergency department or operating theatre, 16% of patients were admitted to Broome Regional Hospital and 3% of patients (around six patients) were required to transfer for subspecialty tertiary level care. The researchers reported that nationally, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the prevalence of dog bites that present at a hospital and require admission is 20 per 100,000 while in Broome the incidence is seven times higher at 142 bites per 100,000.

Briotti, Cransberg, Chidambaram and Nasim (2024) concluded that the large number of dog bites in Broome and the need for hospital admission, and in severe cases hospital transfer, highlighted a challenge that regional hospitals are facing. They recommended *"more education, engineering, and enforcement to prevent dog bite injuries, and improve the management of a significant and preventable public health issue"*.

[1] Joshua Briotti , Jamie Cransberg , Rama Chidambaram , Sana Nasim , A two-year retrospective cohort study investigating the occurrence and short-term outcomes of dog-bite injures in regional Western Australia , Injury (2024), doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.injury.2024.111588

Roaming cats

Stray and wandering cats are a significant concern in the local community. 74% of respondents who participated in the Animal Management Survey rated management of stray and feral animals as poor or terrible.

Community suggestions include a requirement for *"all cats to be indoors, as per many other local authorities"*. It's felt that *"there are far too many domestic cats roaming, especially at night"*.

In the Animal Management Survey, only 18% of cat owners answered that they allow their cat to roam freely outdoors.

A majority of cat owners reported that they behave responsibly by keeping their cat contained. This may be for the health and safety of their cat or to protect wildlife. 75% of cat owners keep their cat contained indoors, 25% use an outdoor catio or cat enclosure, and 6% walk their cat on a leash outdoors.

Another 4% of cat owners do none of these, maybe allowing their cat to exercise freely outdoors within the confines of their private property.



RSPCA's position on roaming cats

The RSPCA encourages the containment of cats within the boundaries of the owner's property in a way that safeguards cat welfare and reduces associated risks with cats that have uncontrolled outdoor access. Associated risks include:

- Increased risk to cats of infectious disease, parasite infestation, trauma, predation, fighting and poisoning.
- Increased risk that cats will become lost, trapped, or impounded by the local council.
- The risk of transmitting diseases to other domestic animals, wildlife, and humans.
- Detrimental effects on wildlife numbers and welfare through predation and other mechanisms such as disturbance, fear, competition.
- The potential for negative community impacts such as digging, defecation and urination on private property, excessive vocalisations, and fighting.
- Adding to unowned and semi-owned cat populations, through breeding or becoming lost (or leaving their home), or not returning home.

http://www.rspcapetinsurance.org.au/pet-care/cat-care/why-keep-your-cat-indoors

Source: RSPCA Cat Containment Policy PPA08

Management of lost pets, strays and animal rescue

In 2023, there were 297 dogs and 366 cats found or volunteered in the Shire of Broome. This included lost, wandering, stray and feral animals.

The Shire of Broome has an arrangement with the Broome Veterinary Hospital to hold and care for pets that have been taken into the Shire's care. While every attempt is made to locate their owners. Unidentified dogs and cats impounded for more than 72 hours may be re-homed or euthanised.

The Shire works closely with SAFE Broome, a volunteer-run organisation that exists to save companion animals from unnecessary euthanasia through community education, fostering, de-sexing and placing them in suitable homes. There is a keen interest in rescuing and caring for animals in Broome. 19% of survey respondents said they had provided foster-care for a domestic animal in 2023.

In 2023[2], SAFE Broome received 463 animals: 262 dogs and 201 cats. Most of these animals were collected by Shire rangers. Remaining animals were relinquished by private owners, strays, part of the desexing program, or born to pregnant animals in care. SAFE Broome was able to rehome 189 dogs (73% of all dogs received) and 62 cats (31% of all cats received). 47 dogs and 130 cats were transferred to animal rescues with capacity to care for these animals or returned to Shire rangers.

Most pet owners have had their dog or cat microchipped, which has helped in returning lost or wandering pets to their owners. In the Animal Management Survey, around 95% of dog owners and 90% of cat owners reported that their pet had been microchipped.

Key challenges SAFE Broome experienced when trying to rehome dogs and cats in 2023 were:

- Qantas started enforcing its animal transport rules more strictly, where the airline is unable to transport animals when the temperature exceeds 35 degrees. According to the Bureau of Meteorology[3], Broome has 85 days per year with temperatures of 35 degrees or higher[4]. Stronger rule enforcement directly impacts SAFE Broome's ability to fly rescue animals out of Broome.
- Western Australia's largest animal rescue shelters have been inundated with surrendered pets due to the housing crisis and a shortage of affordable rental properties that accept one or multiple pets.

To improve management of lost, stray and abandoned animals, key stakeholders would like the Shire of Broome to review, document and formally endorse a new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The MOU would provide:

- Clear roles and responsibilities for the Shire of Broome, Broome Veterinary Hospital and SAFE Broome.
- Systems mapping and process documentation of new and improved systems and processes (for example, stakeholders would like flexibility for SAFE Broome to inspect animals and take photos when the animal is first brought into the holding facility, and for Broome Veterinary Hospital to be allowed to receive an animal on behalf of SAFE Broome).
- A commitment by the Shire of Broome to build and operate its own, independent pound facility.
- An agreed budget and funding model.

Stakeholders would like better communication on what happens to lost, stray and abandoned animals with a) an improved website and social media presence to promote lost pets, and b) reliable, public reporting on performance, including the number of animals volunteered, microchipped, desexed, treated for health issues, rehomed, transferred, and euthanised.

There is also a need to encourage dog and cat owners to comply with the requirement for pets to wear a collar with a registration tag. Only 69% of dog owners and 34% of cat owners report full compliance in the Animal Management Survey.

[2] From 1 January to 17 December 2023
[3] www.bom.gov.au/climate/averages/tables/cw_003003_All.shtml
[4] Based on records between 1991 and 2020



Missing pets	Lost and stray animals	Animal rescue
If your pet is lost or missing, please contact Shire rangers. They run the Shire pound and pick up animals that have been found wandering or receive animals that have been found by community members and handed in.	If you have found a lost or stray animal, please report or hand it over to a Shire ranger who will check for a microchip and hold onto the animal until it can be returned to an owner.	Saving Animals from Euthanasia Inc, known as SAFE Broome, works closely with local rangers, vets and other rescue groups throughout the state to help care for and rehome homeless, neglected and unwanted animals.
To report missing, lost or stray animals, contact: **Shire of Broome Rangers** **Phone: 08 9191 3456**		To volunteer, foster or provide an adoptive home, contact: **SAFE Broome** **Email: broome@safe.org.au**

Exercising horses on public land

Horse riders may ride a horse on public land on roads, paths, trails and nature strips, unless otherwise signed.

There are two designated horse exercise areas on public land in Broome:

- Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area and Horse Swimming Area.
- Cable Beach foreshore, north of the rocks from Cable Beach Reserve to Coconut Wells.

Please refer to the *Horses on Cable Beach Council Policy* for full details on beach access.

In the Animal Management Survey, the most popular places to ride a horse for recreational purposes were Cable Beach (54% of respondents), followed by Coconut Wells (25%) and Gantheaume Point (20%).

Community members generally feel that recreational horse riders behave responsibly, however, there is some concern with compliance among younger or inexperienced riders. Concerns include:

- Wearing a helmet while riding. According to the *Western Australian Road Traffic Code 2000* it is not compulsory for riders of horses to wear helmets, although it is advisable to do so.
- Getting Council permission to access designated horse exercise areas on Cable Beach by completing an *Application for Approval to Walk, Lead, Ride, Herd or Drive a Large Animal on Local Government Property and on Public Places*.
- Accessing and using Cable Beach responsibly, including using approved beach entry and exit points. If access to Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area is restricted to racehorses, this needs to be clearly specified. It was also mentioned that Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area is the only horse exercise area on Cable Beach that can be accessed with a horse float making it an attractive location for recreational riders.
- The requirement to collect horse excreta when on rides in public places.
- Keeping a safe distance from camels and not approaching camels from behind. Advice from a camel expert is that horses should not come within 50 metres of camels, and horses should never approach a camel at a gallop. Camels have the flight response when they hear galloping horses. Even when walking, the noise and smell of a horse can unsettle a camel. Advice from a horse expert is that horses should not be anywhere near camels. While some horses can tolerate camels, many horses are unsettled by the presence of a camel.

When dogs are exercised off-leash around horses, this can present a significant risk for rider safety and animal welfare. Around 32% of respondents in the Animal Management Survey were unaware that dogs are required to be on-leash in the Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area between 5.30am and 10am. While 90% of dog owners say they put their dog on-leash if they see a horse, 9% of dog owners leave their dog off-leash and another 1% were unsure what they would do.

Community suggestions to improve animal welfare and safety around horses include:

- Educate dog owners about the requirement to put dogs on leash around horses.
- Develop communications to improve rider awareness and adoption of responsible behaviours.
- Provide a dedicated page on the Shire of Broome's website that discusses horse ownership and responsible behaviours, with links to key documents (legislation, council policies, etc.).
- Introduce and enforce a permit system for horse-riders to access Cable Beach.
- Enforce speed limits for vehicles driving on Cable Beach to improve safety for horses and their riders.

Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area and Horse Swimming Area is a desirable place to take thoroughbred racehorses and other horses to wade in the water to cool off and exercise. The growing number of beach users and conflicting uses poses increasing health and safety risks for horses, trainers and riders. Risks include the growing presence of people, cars, boats, and jet skis, plus dog owners who do not keep their dogs on-leash in the horse exercise area between 5.30am and 10am in the horseracing season.

There are requests for the Shire of Broome to review and improve beach safety for horses and riders. Suggestions include:

- Clarify permitted uses in the Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area and Horse Swimming Area. Currently, it is unclear if the Horse Exercise Area is reserved for the exclusive use of racehorses between 5.30am and 10am, or if recreational horse riders may access this area at all times of day.
- Better signage to raise awareness about where and when horses may be exercised.
- More education to improve understanding about why it is important to keep dogs on-leash around horses, along with the risks and consequences of non-compliance.
- Increase ranger presence at Gantheaume Point and north of the rocks on Cable Beach for improved public education and enforcement.
- Define the area where jet skis are permitted and prohibit their use in the Gantheaume Point Horse Swimming Area.
- Address safety concerns with the Horses Only Access Track between the Broome Turf Club stables and Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area[5].



[5] Talyor Burrell Barnett, Broome Turf Club Masterplan Report, June 2023

Preferred dog access in Broome township

At the time of preparing this plan, dogs were permitted on-leash in public places across Broome, unless posted signs indicate otherwise. There were no designated dog exercise areas in parks or reserves across the Broome township.

In the Animal management Survey, dog owners and non-dog owners expressed a preference for:

- Sporting reserves and ovals to be dog exercise areas when not in use for organised sport and on-leash when in use for organised sport.
- Outdoor sporting facilities, including the skate park, pump track and courts, to be dog on-leash.
- Dogs to be permitted to exercise off-leash in selected parks.

In the Animal Management Survey, there was net support for all parks that were evaluated to become dog exercise areas. Support for providing a dog exercise area in these parks was greater among dog owners than non-dog owners.

Support for changing selected parks to dog exercise areas (% of respondents)		All respondents[6]			Dog owners			Non-dog owners		
		Support	Unsure/ no opinion	Oppose	Support	Unsure/ no opinion	Oppose	Support	Unsure/ no opinion	Oppose
Bilingurr	Tanami Park	47%	41%	12%	57%	37%	6%	31%	46%	22%
Broome	Pelcan Gardens Park	49%	40%	11%	60%	35%	5%	31%	48%	21%
Cable beach	Manggala Park	49%	38%	13%	59%	35%	6%	32%	42%	25%
	Sibosado Park	50%	39%	12%	58%	37%	5%	36%	41%	23%
	Solway Reserve	56%	32%	12%	69%	26%	5%	35%	40%	25%
Djugun	Cygnet Park	49%	35%	16%	62%	30%	7%	27%	42%	31%
	Sugar Glider Park	49%	37%	14%	61%	33%	6%	29%	43%	28%
Sunset Park	Maritana Park	50%	37%	13%	61%	35%	4%	32%	41%	27%

In response to overall support for dog exercise parks, the Shire of Broome has considered trialling dog exercise areas in five more parks: Tolentino Park, Hin Park, Tomarito Park, Sunset Park and Kapang Park.

[6] Overall responses were weighted by dog ownership as reported in the Shire of Broome's 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard.

The main concerns with introducing dog exercise areas in local parks were:

- Irresponsible owners, including concerns with poorly trained dogs, a lack of supervision, control or recall, and nuisance dogs.
- Increased risk of dog attacks on people.
- A need to keep dogs separate from children and playgrounds.
- Lack of fencing in these parks.
- Poor hygiene, with concerns that owners do not collect dog waste.

While many councils rely on clear signage and responsible dog ownership to manage risk, it is becoming best practice in local government areas to separate dogs from children's playgrounds, sometimes by fencing playgrounds or with fenced dog exercise areas. In Broome, community views on separating dogs from children's playgrounds were mixed. While a majority of dog owners wanted dogs to be permitted on-leash in children's playgrounds, non-dog owners wanted dogs to be prohibited in children's playgrounds.

Preferred dog access in parks and reserves (% of respondents)			All respondents[7]	Dog owners	Non-dog owners
	Sporting reserves and ovals when **NOT** in use by organised sport, including training, games and events.	Dog exercise area	62%	72%	46%
		Dog on-leash	23%	20%	29%
		No dogs allowed	10%	5%	19%
	Sporting reserves and ovals when used for organised sport, including training, games and events.	Dog on-leash	72%	81%	56%
		No dogs allowed	24%	14%	40%
	Outdoor sporting facilities, such as the skate park, pump track and courts.	Dog on-leash	66%	75%	52%
		No dogs allowed	29%	20%	44%
	Children's playgrounds.	Dog on-leash	58%	66%	45%
		No dogs allowed	37%	28%	52%

[7] Overall responses were weighted by dog ownership as reported in the Shire of Broome's 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard.

Preferred dog access on local beaches

At the time of preparing this plan, the following special conditions applied for local beaches:

Dog exercise areas	Dog prohibited areas
• Cable Beach north from 1km north of the rocks to Coconut Wells • Cable Beach south from 200m south of the Broome Surf Life Saving Club to Gantheaume Point (except in the Horse Exercise Area from 1 May to 31 August, 5.30am-10am when thoroughbred racehorses are permitted to gallop, and dogs must be on-leash) • Town Beach on the small strip of beach • Reddell Beach • Entrance Point • Simpsons Beach • Demco Beach	• Cable Beach between the Surf Club and 1km north of the rocks • Cable Beach Reserve **Please note:** these dog exercise and dog prohibted areas were reviewed and updated as part of this study. Please refer to the Shire of Broome website and current signage to see where dogs are now permitted.

In the Animal Management Survey, dog owners indicated a preference to exercise dogs at the beach (82% of survey respondents).

The most popular beach to visit with a dog is Gantheaume Point, followed by Entrance Point / Simpson Beach, Cable Beach North, Reddell Beach, Cable Beach South, then Town Beach.

The next most popular place to exercise dogs is to walk around the neighbourhood or to local destinations, mentioned by 59% of dog owners. Other places where dogs are being exercised in Broome include local parks (37%), walking trails in nature or along the coast (26%), school ovals (12%), and sports reserves (11%). Around 11% of dog owners say they only exercise their dog at home or in their garden or yard.

Dog owners prefer to exercise dogs off-leash. 7% of survey respondents only exercise their dog off-leash, 25% mainly exercise their dog off-leash, and 50% will exercise their dog with a mix of on- or off-leash. Around 9% of dog owners will only exercise their dog on-leash and another 9% mainly exercise their dog on-leash.

Community concerns

Concerns with current dog exercise areas included:

- Uncertainty about where dogs are permitted to be on-lead and off-lead. Signage and geographical markers are unclear.
- Lack of owner control over their dogs.
- Risks from dogs being around increasing numbers of vehicles and boats on local beaches.
- Dogs being permitted to access the Cable Beach South dog exercise area via the Surf Club access ramp, a high-traffic area with many children, and owners not following the rules to keep their dog on a leash.
- Irresponsible drivers, including drivers who speed or consume alcohol and drive on local beaches.
- Campfires, and dogs getting their paws burned.
- Limited access to dog prohibited areas along the coast for people who have a dog phobia or fear, health issues (i.e. dog allergies) or a personal preference to be in a dog-free area.

In response, the community requested that that Shire review permitted beach uses and improve signage and community education.

Dog exercise area preferences

While dog access must be reviewed across the entirety of the Shire of Broome, this section discusses dog access in higher priority areas based on areas being raised and discussed with greater frequency by the community with consideration for interactions with people, horses, camels, turtles, vehicles and boats.

Preferred dog access at Gantheaume Point

Dogs are currently permitted to exercise off-leash at Gantheaume Point but must be on-leash in the Horse Exercise Area between 5.30am and 10am during the horseracing season. Most dog owners do the right thing around horses with 90% reporting that they put their dog on-leash if they see a horse while with their dog. Unfortunately, 9% of dog owners leave their dog off-leash and another 1% were unsure what they would do.

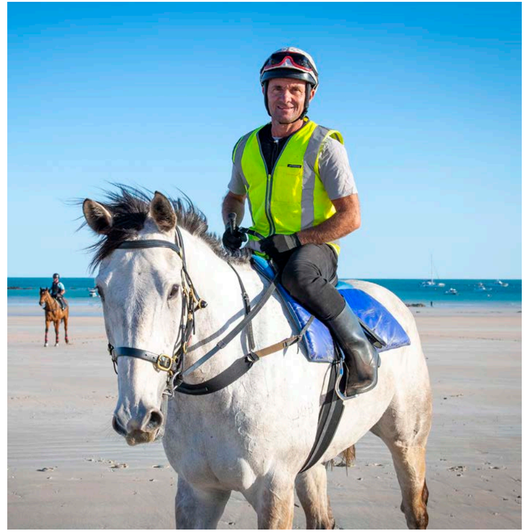
On balance, the preference is for Gantheaume Point to meet mixed user needs, with the Vehicle Access Area becoming a dog on-leash area for improved community safety and animal welfare around vehicles and boats, and the area beyond the Vehicle Access Area to remain a dog exercise area with a stricter requirement for dogs to be on-leash in the Horse Exercise Area when being used by horses.

In the Animal Management Survey, when results were weighted by dog ownership to provide a representative result for the overall community, 27% of community members wanted the Gantheaume Point Vehicle Access Area to be a dog on-leash area, 23% of community members wanted it to be a dog exercise area, and another 25% of community members wanted this area split into a dog exercise section and a dog on-leash section.

As shown in the tables to follows, 31% of dog owners wanted the Gantheaume Point Vehicle Access Area to be a dog exercise area, 24% of dog owners wanted it to be a dog on-leash area, and another 28% of dog owners wanted this area split into a dog exercise section and a dog on-leash section.

Views differed among non-dog owners where 33% of non-dog owners wanted the Gantheaume Point Vehicle Access Area to be a dog on-leash area, and 19% of non-dog owners wanted this area split into a dog exercise section and a dog on-leash section.

Dog owners and non-dog owners had similar preferences for the 2km stretch of beach beyond the Vehicle Access Area with both groups expressing a preference for dogs to be on-leash around horses, and allowed to exercise off-leash when horses are not present. It is noted that these preferences were higher among dog owners.



Preferred dog access (% of respondents)		All respondents[8]	Dog owners	Non-dog owners
Gantheaume Point Vehicle Access Area	No dogs allowed	8%	2%	17%
	Dog on-leash	27%	24%	33%
	Dog exercise area (off-leash)	23%	31%	10%
	Two sections: no dogs allowed + dog on-leash	8%	6%	11%
	Two sections: no dogs allowed + dog exercise area	6%	6%	7%
	Two sections: dog on-leash + dog exercise area	25%	28%	19%
Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area (during horse racing season, 5.30am - 10am)	Dog on-leash	70%	80%	54%
	No dogs allowed	25%	15%	42%
2km beyond Gantheaume Vehicle Access Area (outside of horse racing season)	No dogs allowed for 2km	5%	1%	11%
	Dog on-leash for 2km	19%	16%	25%
	Dog exercise area (off-leash) for 2km	53%	64%	36%
	Two sections: no dogs allowed + dog on-leash	3%	2%	5%
	Two sections: no dogs allowed + dog exercise area	2%	1%	3%
	Two sections: dog on-leash + dog exercise area	13%	13%	12%

[8] Overall responses were weighted by dog ownership as reported in the Shire of Broome's 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard.

Preferred dog access on Cable Beach north of the rocks

At the time of preparing this plan:

- Dogs were not permitted from the vehicle access ramp for the first 1km north of the rocks, unless they are secured in a vehicle.
- Dogs were permitted to exercise off-leash on Cable Beach beyond 1km north of the rocks.
- Camel tours were permitted on Cable Beach from the vehicle access ramp to 2km north of the rocks, before 10am and after 2.30pm.

Cable Beach camel rides are an iconic experience, drawing visitors from around the world. Camels are generally friendly and gentle but may bite, kick in all directions, or throw a rider if they are spooked by sudden movements or loud noises or feel threatened by other animals. Camel operators are responsible for risk mitigation to manage camel welfare and rider safety.

In the Animal Management Survey, community members expressed a preference for the Camel Zone, from the vehicle access ramp to 2km north of the rocks, to become a dog on-leash area.

Preferred dog access (% of respondents)		All respondents[8]	Dog owners	Non-dog owners
	Dog exercise area (off-leash)	15%	18%	9%
	Dog on-leash	58%	63%	49%
	No dogs allowed	23%	15%	37%

Most dog owners do the right thing around camels with 89% of survey respondents saying they put their dog on-leash if they see a camel. Unfortunately, 10% of dog owners would leave their dog off-leash and another 1% were unsure. Sadly, camel riders and camels have sustained severe injuries when off-leash dogs or on-leash dogs that were not restrained have charged camels in Broome. The risk and consequence of dogs charging camels is deemed to be high.

To improve community safety and animal welfare, suggestions include:

- Improved communications to help people to understand how to behave responsibly around camels, including supervising children and restraining dogs at all times when around a camel.
- An extension of the dog prohibited zone to 2km north of the rocks to cover the full camel zone.
- Clearer signage about dog access in the camel zone.
- Improved signage along the camel route and the camel zone to prevent vehicles parking in this space.
- Greater ranger presence north of the rocks in the camel zone.
- Advocacy for greater Police presence and stricter enforcement to govern illegal drinking and speeding on the beach.
- Consideration of an alternative camel route going south of the surf club.

[9] Overall responses were weighted by dog ownership as reported in the Shire of Broome's 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard.

Preferred dog access in the Turtle Nesting Zone

Flatback turtles are native to Broome. They are a threatened and vulnerable species and are legally protected. Cable Beach is a popular nesting area from October to March, with most nesting tending to occur from 2km south of the rocks to 4km north of the rocks. The designated Turtle Nesting Zone is the section of Cable Beach that is regularly monitored by volunteers as it is reported to have the highest density of nesting turtles. However, turtles may nest in other areas along the Kimberley coastline, including the coastline from Gantheaume Point to Coconut Wells, Reddell Beach and Roebuck Bay.

The Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions' Turtle Watching Code of Conduct specifies "no dogs on turtle nesting beaches". While dogs are not permitted between the Surf Club and 1km north of the rocks, dogs are permitted to exercise off-leash beyond the 1km marker north of the rocks. This is currently in conflict with the Code of Conduct.

Experts recommend taking a long-term and balanced focus where wildlife conservation efforts are balanced with preserving and celebrating Broome's unique lifestyle. In place of bans and restrictions on dog access, it is hoped that the Shire can make better use of public education to raise awareness and adoption of responsible behaviors where people and animals, including dogs, horses and camels, avoid being in proximity to nesting turtles and hatchlings.

Most dog owners do the right thing around turtles with 87% putting their dog on-leash if they saw a turtle while with their dog. Unfortunately, 9% of dog owners would leave their dog off-leash and another 4% were unsure.



In the Animal Management Survey, community members expressed mixed views about dog access in the Turtle Zone. While 50% of non-dog owners prefer dogs to be prohibited in the Turtle Zone, 44% of dog owners and 40% of non-dog owners expressed a preference for this area to be on-leash. They feel it is acceptable to have dogs on-leash as owners tend walk dogs along the water's edge away from the high-tide mark and soft sandy areas where turtles nest. There is also concern that the Shire has insufficient resources to enforce compliance with 'dogs prohibited' or 'dogs on-leash' requirements.

Overall, stakeholders applaud turtle conservation groups for doing an excellent job in marking nests and applaud the Shire of Broome for closing the beach to vehicles during nesting season.

Preferred dog access (% of respondents)		**All respondents**[10]	**Dog owners**	**Non-dog owners**
Turtle zone, from the vehicle access ramp to 4km north of the rocks (during nesting season)	Dog exercise area (off-leash)	18%	28%	7%
	Dog on-leash	42%	44%	40%
	No dogs allowed	36%	23%	50%

[10] Overall responses were weighted by dog ownership as reported in the Shire of Broome's 2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard.

Preferred dog access in Yawuru Nagulagun Marine Park to help conserve bird life

Yawuru Nagulagun Marine Park supports at least 122 waterbird species including 14 resident shorebird species, 38 migratory shorebird species, 11 species of gulls and terns and 19 waterfowl species. All birds are protected under the Wildlife Conservation Act, with some of the waterbirds protected under the Commonwealth EPBC Act or part of international treaties with Japan, China and South Korea.

The Yawuru Nagulagun / Roebuck Bay Marine Park Joint Management Plan 2016 reports that a number of migratory shorebird populations at Roebuck Bay have been declining. While this is primarily due to issues on the East Asian Flyway, birds spending the non-breeding season in Broome face disturbance from vehicles on the beach, people, dogs, helicopters and other craft. This can impact on their fitness to make the long migration to the Arctic/sub Arctic breeding grounds. Juvenile shorebirds only migrate in their second or third year. They are therefore present in the Bay all year round. Excessive disturbance could make them choose to feed and roost across the Bay at sites inaccessible to people. This would be a significant loss to local and visiting bird lovers, and to the tourist industry.

Although shorebirds are present in highest numbers between late October and early March, physical disturbance can be a year-round issue because many young birds remain in Roebuck Bay during winter when visitor numbers are highest.

Suggested strategies for improved dog management in the *Yawuru Nagulagun / Roebuck Bay Marine Park Joint Management Plan 2016 include:*

- Restrict access for dogs in the Marine Park to designated areas and on vessels only (consistent with Parks and Wildlife Policy Statement No. 18).
- Ensure the education and interpretation program increases awareness of the national and international significance of shorebird and waterbird populations in and adjacent to the marine park, informs visitors about impacts some human activities can have on birds and steps they can take to minimise these, and informs users that vehicles and dogs are only permitted in designated areas of the marine park.

Be dingo aware

Dingoes are occasionally sighted in Broome.

For personal safety and dingo welfare:

- NEVER offer food or water to dingoes, even indirectly.
- DO NOT approach dingoes or attempt to lure them closer.
- Secure your food, food scraps and rubbish.
- Supervise children always, including teenagers.
- If walking alone, carry a long stick or similar.

What to do if a dingo threatens you:

- Stay calm.
- Stand to your full height.
- Face the dingo and maintain eye contact.
- If you are with others, stand back-to-back.
- If you have children, gather them to you and remain calm.
- Loudly and confidently call for help.
- DO NOT RUN – running incites a chase response from the dingo.
- DO NOT move suddenly or wave your arms and feet – this will excite the dingo.
- If you can, back away to a safe area, preferably a vehicle, or until the dingo gets bored and moves away.

Who is responsible for managing dingoes?

The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Parks and Wildlife Service is responsible for managing dingoes.

If you have a negative dingo encounter, report it to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions by phoning 08 9195 5500.

In an emergency call 000.

Our plan for responsible animal management

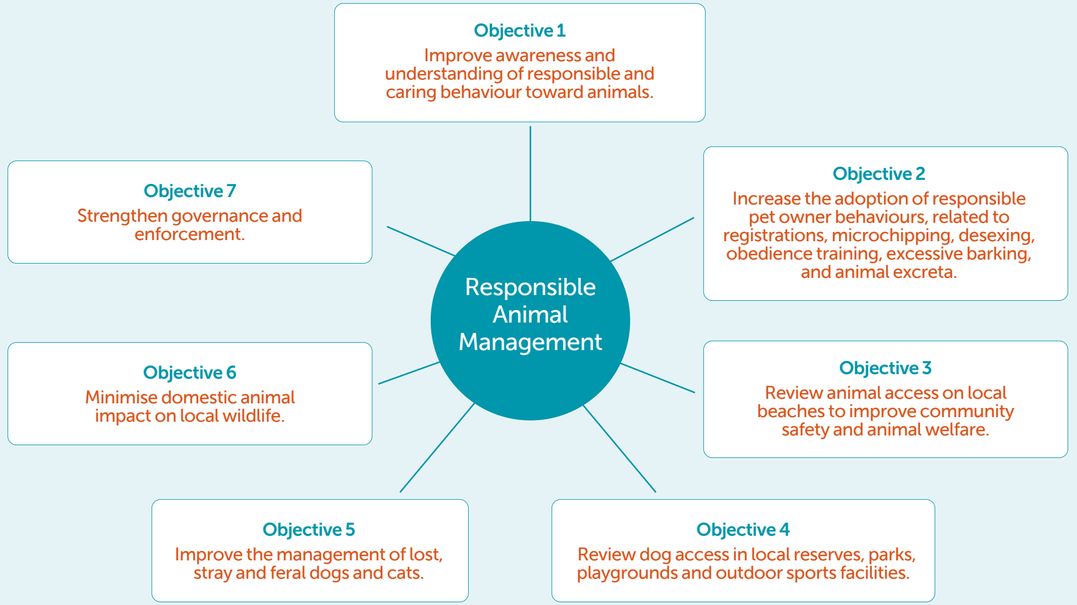
What we will continue to do

To encourage responsible animal management, the Shire of Broome will continue to promote, deliver and improve existing animal management services.

- Animal welfare advocacy
- Responsible pet owner education and communications
- Pet registration services
- Enforcement of legislation
- Ranger patrols
- After hours emergency services
- Management of lost and found animals
- Feral animal managment, including cat and dog trap hire
- Respond to community complaints (nuisance animals, excessive barking, etc.)
- Dog attack investigations
- Management of dog poo bags and bins
- Review and issue permits

Key objectives to improve service delivery

In addition to existing services, the Shire will focus on delivering new and improved services to address seven core objectives:





Objective 1

Improve awareness and understanding of responsible and caring behaviour toward animals.

Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
1.1 Create and implement a **public education program** to improve responsible pet ownership. The Shire will draw on educational resources from trusted sources (State Government, RSPCA etc.), create new materials to close gaps, and collaborate with key partners to effectively communicate key messages: - Ensure your dog or cat is securely contained in your home or yard for improved community safety and animal welfare. - Register and microchip your dog or cat to help rangers and vets to return lost pets. - De-sex your dog or cat for better health outcomes and to help manage animal populations. - Know the risks of Parvo & Ehrlichiosis (brown tick disease) and how to keep your puppy or dog safe. - Keep your dog on leash in public places, unless signage says otherwise. - Pick up and dispose of dog waste responsibly. - Know what to do if you see a stray animal. - Keep riders' and animals safe - always put dogs on-leash around horses and camels.	Ranger Coordinator; Marketing and Communications Coordinator	o	o	o	o	Additional operating budget ($10k in year 1 and 5k onwards).

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources

Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
1.2 Review **pet registration and renewal forms** to clearly communicate responsible pet ownership requirements and infringements for non-compliance.	Ranger Administration Officer	●				Existing
1.3 Review and update **Council's website** to effectively communicate: - Legal requirements of animal ownership and how to comply (with links to local laws, policies and registration forms). - Responsible behaviours. - Where animals are permitted across the Shire of Broome. - How to report lost and stray animals, dog attacks and bites, excessive barking, nuisance cats and other animal welfare concerns. - Animal rescue and rehoming services. - After-hours services and contact details.	Ranger Coordinator; Marketing and Communications Coordinator	●	●			Existing
1.4 Review and update **signage in public places** to ensure clear, consistent messaging about where animals are permitted.	Ranger Coordinator	o	o			Additional operating budget (c.$15k - $20k)
1.5 Facilitate the introduction of the **RSPCA's AWARE** Program in local schools. The **A**nimal **W**ellbeing: **A**wareness, **R**esponsibility and **E**ducation program provides free teaching and learning resources aligned with the Australian Curriculum to fit easily into classroom programs. Find out more at www.kids.rspca.org.au	Ranger Coordinator		●			Existing
1.6 Facilitate discussions with Camel Operators to agree on an approach to mark the **Camel Route and Camel Zone** to improve community safety and reduce the incidence of parked vehicles along the route and in the zone.	Ranger Coordinator	o	o			Additional operating budget (to be confirmed)

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources

Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
1.7 Partner with Camel Operators to develop a public education campaign to inform community members and visitors about how to behave responsibly around camels. **Key messages** may include: - Stay 3 metres away from camels, unless invited to approach by a camel's handler. Camels can kick up to 3 metres in all directions. - Supervise children around camels at all times. - Avoid making sudden, jerky movements and loud noises around camels. - Never approach a camel from behind. - Dogs must be on-leash when a camel is in-sight. - Vehicle traffic must slow down when approaching or passing a camel train on roads and the beach. - Observe no parking signs on the camel route.	Ranger Coordinator; Marketing and Communications Coordinator; Independent Camel Operators	●	●			Additional operating budget (accommodated in Action 1.4)
1.8 Collaborate with key partners such as Broome Turf Club and the Broome Horse Riders' Club to develop and deliver key messages to improve **responsible horse-riding behaviours**, such as: - Know the rules for riding a horse in Broome - Places where you can and cannot ride a horse in Broome - How to approach or pass a camel safely on a horse - Be safe – choose to wear a helmet	Ranger Coordinator; Marketing and Communications Coordinator			●	●	Existing

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources



Objective 2

Increase the adoption of responsible pet owner behaviours related to registrations, microchipping, desexing, obedience training, excessive barking, and animal excreta.

Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
2.1 Provide a business case for the Council to introduce a **Free Pet Registration Program** for up to 1 year. The program would aim for all dogs and cats to be registered with the Shire of Broome. In support of this program: - Rangers would do on-the-spot checks and registrations in the community. - When registering for Free Pet Registration, pet owners would be encouraged to pay lifetime registration fees, currently discounted to $100 for sterilised dogs and cats. - The Shire will communicate that there are no costs to transfer an existing dog registration in another local government area to the Shire of Broome.	Ranger Coordinator	●	●			Existing
2.2 Provide a business case for Council to consider extending **pet registration discounts** currently available for pensioners to include concession card holders. After a Free Pet Registration for up to 1 year, concession card holders would be required to pay for a 1-year, 3-year or lifetime pet registration.	Ranger Coordinator		●			Existing

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources

	Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
2.3	Trial the use of **email notifications and reminders** for the renewal of 1-year and 3-year animal registrations.	Ranger Administration Officer		●			Existing
2.4	Provide an option to sign up for **automatic renewals** and payments for 1-year and 3-year animal registrations.	Ranger Coordinator			o	o	Additional operating budget (to be confirmed)
2.5	Write to registered dog and cat owners to request up-to-date information on pet ownership and contact information to **update Shire records** on live, deceased and rehomed pets.	Ranger Administration Officer			●		Existing
2.6	Review and update communications to improve awareness and take-up of available **grants and subsidies for discounted desexing and microchipping services.**	Ranger Coordinator; Marketing and Communications Coordinator		●			Existing
2.7	Advocate for DLGSC, WA Rangers Association and the Veterinary Practice Board WA to explore options to introduce a **ranger training program to provide microchipping** and for Local Government Authorities to be recognised as approved microchip providers.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	●	●	●	●	Existing (if successful, budget may be required for training)
2.8	Seek grant funding to facilitate access to free or subsidised places for **puppy school and dog obedience training** for pensioners and concession card holders.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers		●		●	Existing
2.9	Install additional **dog bag dispensers and bins** in priority locations.	Parks and Gardens	o				Additional operating budget (to be confirmed)
2.10	Develop a business case for Council to introduce innovative **noise monitoring technology** to support investigations of nuisance barking.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers			●	●	Existing

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources



Objective 3

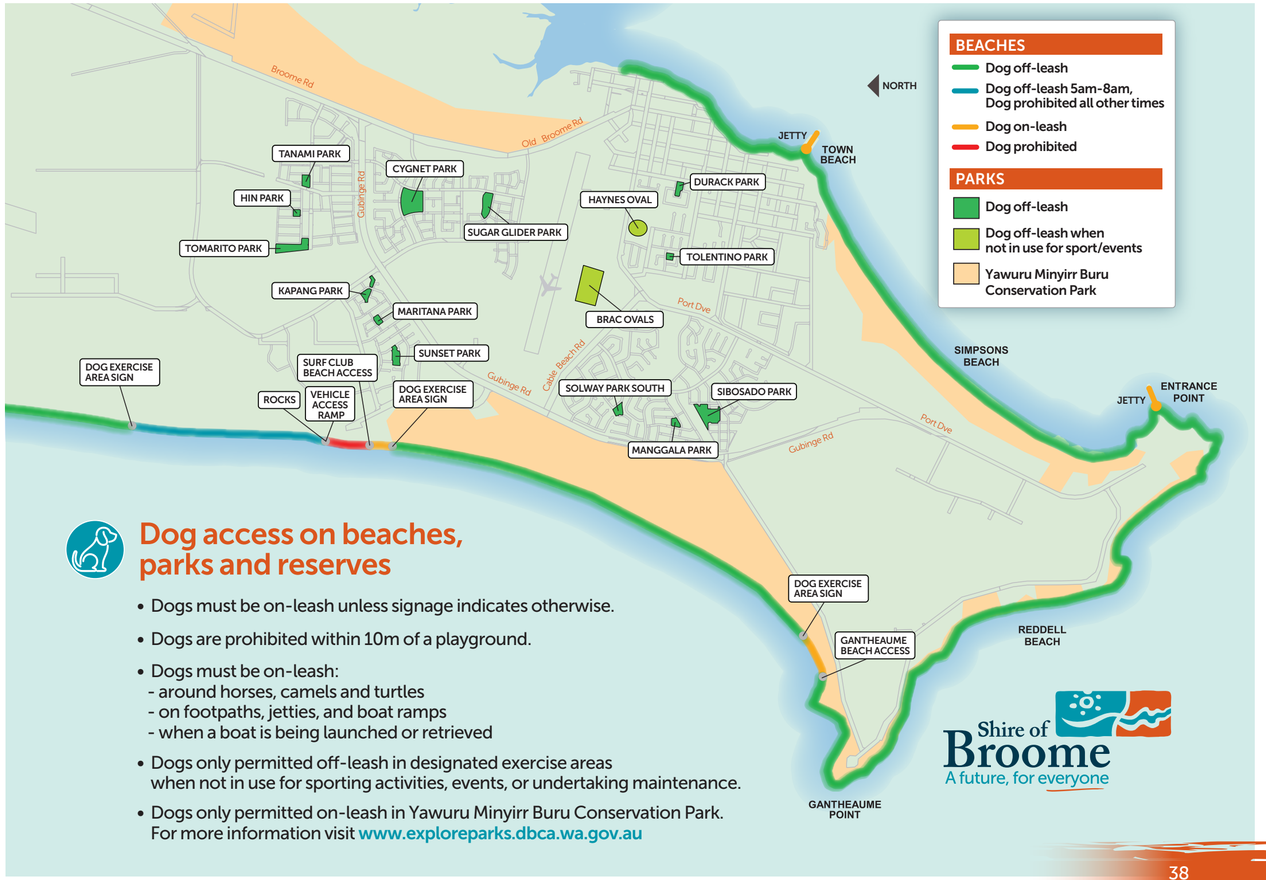
Review animal access on local beaches to improve community safety and animal welfare.

	Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
3.1	Change dog access on **Cable Beach North** to meet diverse community needs, including an area of beach where dogs are prohibited and an area where dog owners can continue to exercise early morning. - Between the rocks and 2km north of the rocks, dogs will be permitted off-leash between 5am and 8am. This area will be known as “Cable Beach North Dog Exercise Area”. - At all other times, dogs will be prohibited between the rocks and 2km north of the rocks. - To access Cable Beach North Dog Exercise Area between 5am and 8am, dog owners will be permitted to walk their dog on-leash using a designated route. - In support of this change, the Shire will provide new signage and community education.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	o	o			Additional operating budget (c.$5k in total)

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources

	Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
3.2	Revise dog access on **Cable Beach South** and provide signage and communications to improve awareness about how to access "Cable Beach South Dog Exercise Area" responsibly from the Broome Surf Life Saving Club carpark, through Minyirr Reserve, or at Gantheaume Point. - Revise the northern boundary of Cable Beach South Dog Exercise Area to commence 450m south of Cable Beach Surf Club access ramp and retain the southern boundary where Gantheaume Point Vehicle Access Area commences. - To enter and exit Cable Beach South Dog Exercise Area, dogs must be on-leash from all entry and exit points. For example, if approaching from the Broome Surf Life Saving Club carpark, dogs must be on-leash in the carpark, down the Surf Club access ramp, and on the beach for 450m until they reach the Cable Beach South Dog Exercise Area.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	o				Additional operating budget (accommodated in Action 1.4)
3.3	Revise dog access at **Gantheaume Point** for improved community and animal safety, with supporting signage and communications: - Vehicle Access Area: revert from dog exercise area to dog on-leash. - Beyond the Vehicle Access Area: retain as off-leash dog exercise area, with a requirement for dogs to be on-leash in the Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area when being used by horses from 7am to 10am.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	o				Additional operating budget (c. $5k)
3.4	Review and update the ***Horses on Cable Beach Policy*** and *Application for Approval: To Walk, Lead Ride, Drive or Herd A Large Animal on Local Government Property* to: - Clarify when thoroughbred racehorses and non-racehorses are permitted to use the Gantheaume Point Horse Exercise Area and Horse Swimming Area. - Clarify exclusions in the Gantheaume Point Horse Swimming Area (boats, jet skis, windsurfers, etc.) - Clarify when non-racehorses are permitted to access Cable Beach Reserve to Coconut Wells and the permitted beach access points. - Clarify that dogs must be on-leash when a horse is on the beach.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	●	●			Existing

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources





Objective 4

Review dog access in local reserves, parks, playgrounds and outdoor sports facilities.

	Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
4.1	Collaborate with local sporting groups and the community to conduct a **12-month trial of sporting reserves and ovals** being dog exercise areas when not in use for active sporting events or training. Dogs to be permitted on leash at all other times. In support, the Shire will provide new signage, supporting communications, ranger surveillance and community engagement.	Ranger Coordinator	o				Additional operating budget (accommodated in Action 1.4)
4.2	Provide improved signage and communications to increase community awareness that dogs must be on-leash when visiting **outdoor sporting facilities**, such as the skate park, pump track and outdoor sports courts.	Ranger Coordinator	o				Additional operating budget (accommodated in Action 1.4)
4.3	Prohibit dogs from **playgrounds** to improve health and safety for children. In support of this change, provide new signage and community education, and consider the need to fence selected children's playgrounds where viable.	Ranger Coordinator	o				Additional operating budget (c.$5k)

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources

Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
4.4 Roll out a **12-month trial of dog exercise areas in 13 local parks**, supported with new signage, supporting communications, ranger surveillance and community engagement.	Ranger Coordinator		o	o		Additional operating budget (accommodated in action 1.4)
4.5 Host community events in sporting reserves and local parks to launch and enforce the change in use to 'dog exercise area' with **educational talks and demonstrations** on responsible dog ownership.	Place Activation and Engagement	o	●	●		Additional operational budget (c.$5k in year 1)

Locality	Park name
Bilingurr	1. Hin Park 2. Tanami Park 3. Tomarito Park
Djugun	4. Cygnet Park 5. Sugar Glider Park
Sunset Park	6. Maritana Park 7. Kapang Park 8. Sunset Park
Cable Beach	9. Manggala Park 10. Sibosado Park 11. Solway Reserve
Old Broome	12. Pelcan Gardens Park 13. Tolentino Park

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources



Objective 5

Improve the management of lost, stray and feral dogs and cats.

Action		Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
5.1	Collaborate with SAFE Broome and Broome Veterinary Hospital to review and document clear **roles, responsibilities** and the process map for delivering care, shelter and rehoming services for lost, stray and feral dogs and cats, during working-hours and after-hours.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	●				Existing
5.2	Facilitate bimonthly meetings between Shire rangers, Broome Veterinary Hospital and SAFE Broome to **review service delivery**.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	●	●	●	●	Existing
5.3	Engage with Broome Veterinary Hospital and SAFE Broome to develop a business case and implementation plan for a dedicated regional **animal management facility** (pound) to provide care and rehoming services for lost, stray and feral dogs and cats.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	o	o			Additional operating budget: total c.$30k–40k
5.4	Source funding and construct a dedicated regional animal management facility (pound).	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers			o	o	Costs to be confirmed

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources

Action		Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
5.5	Partner with key stakeholders (including universities, rescue organisations and veterinarians) to develop and trial new and innovative approaches to manage feral and stray animal populations, with consideration for an **intensive sterilisation blitz program** on an annual or as needed basis, to capture, desex and rehome stray and feral dogs and cats in the Broome township.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	●	●	●	●	Existing
5.6	Advocate for Department of Communities to ensure properties have adequate **fencing** if a tenant is permitted to have a dog.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	●	●			Existing
5.7	Develop an **education campaign** to inform the community about the responsible management of nuisance, stray and feral dogs and cats, focusing on key messages: - Report nuisance, stray and feral dogs and cats to Shire rangers to assist with animal welfare and community safety. - Do not feed stray or feral dogs and cats. - Approved cages are available from the Shire of Broome to assist with the capture and care of stray and feral dogs and cats. - Who to call for afterhours assistance with nuisance, stray and feral dogs and cats.	Ranger Coordinator; Marketing and Communications Coordinator	●	●			Existing
5.8	Procure **extra feral cat traps** to loan to community members to expand the Shire's existing feral cat trapping program.	Ranger Coordinator				o	Additional operating budget (c.$5k)
5.9	Review **procedures and fees** for processing feral cats captured in privately owned traps on private property.	Ranger Coordinator		●			Additional operating budget

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources



Objective 6

Minimise domestic animal impact on local wildlife.

Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
6.1 Collaborate with key partners to jointly provide new **turtle signage and communication materials** to a) raise awareness about where turtles nest along the Broome coastline, b) increase compliance with the Turtle Watching Code of Conduct, and c) minimise the disturbance of endangered turtles and hatchlings by humans and domestic animals.	Ranger Coordinator	o	o	o		Additional operating budget (c.$5k contribution)
6.2 Facilitate delivery of **Broome Bird Observatory and Clive Minton Discovery Centre**'s marketing materials and key messages to increase knowledge and understanding about the value of migratory shorebirds and the importance of responsible animal management to assist with conservation efforts.	Marketing and Communications Coordinator; Broome Visitor Centre	●	●	●	●	Existing

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources



Objective 7

Strengthen governance and enforcement.

Action	Who	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	Budget
7.1 Review **ranger service levels** in line with annual service delivery reviews.	CEO	●	●	●	●	Existing
7.2 Review the process for lodging, managing and reporting on **animal complaints**, related to animal welfare, stray animals, dog attacks, nuisance cats, etc. during working hours and after-hours.	Ranger Coordinator	●	●			Existing
7.3 Advocate for the **RSPCA** to support the region with sufficient inspectors to address local concerns with animal abuse.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	●	●	●	●	Existing
7.4 Advocate for local **Police** to increase surveillance and prosecution of irresponsible beach users to improve community safety and animal welfare, targeting drivers on local beaches who consume drugs or excessive alcohol and/or exceed speed limits.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers	●	●	●	●	Existing
7.5 Introduce a **new Cat Local Law** to provide for cat containment and maximum number of cats per household.	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers		o	o		Additional operating budget (c.$10k)
7.6 In conjunction with new State health-related regulations (if and when introduced), consider **amending local laws for the control of large animals, birds, chickens and bees.**	Manager Health, Emergency & Rangers			●	●	Existing

● Covered by existing resources o requires additional resources



Measuring and reporting on our success

Key performance indicators	Source	Current	Target
Community perceptions of animal management (performance score out of 100)	2024 MARKYT® Community Scorecard		53-67 between industry average and high score
Overall score in the general population		39	
Dog owners		37	
Non-dog owners		41	
Cat owners		29	
Non-cat owners		40	
Dog registrations - % of all pet dogs that are registered with the Shire	Based on estimated dog and cat populations, estimated pet life expectancy, and pet registrations	33%	60%+
Cat registrations - % of all pet cats that are registered with the Shire		15%	60%+
% of dogs found or volunteered that were **returned to owner**	Shire of Broome, 2023	46%	90%+ combined
% of dogs found or volunteered that were **rehomed**		45%	
% of cats found or volunteered that were **returned to owner**	Shire of Broome, 2023	1%	90% combined
% of cats found or volunteered that were **rehomed**		51%	
Dog bite injuries presenting to Broome Regional Hospital emergency department	Broome Regional Hospital[11], 1 July 2022 to 30 June 23	208	Decrease

[11] Joshua Briotti, Jamie Cransberg, Rama Chidambaram, and Sana Nasim, A two-year retrospective cohort study investigating the occurrence and short-term outcomes of dog-bite injures in regional Western Australia , Injury (2024), doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.injury.2024.111588. The researchers found that between 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023, an average of 4 dog-bite injuries presented to Broome Regional Hospital emergency department each week.



Do you have an idea or suggestion to improve animal management in Broome?

Please reach out to your elected member or the responsible officer at the Shire of Broome to share your thoughts and ideas.

In person: Shire Administration Centre
Cnr Weld and Haas Street
Broome, Western Australia

Phone: +618 9191 3456

Email: shire@broome.wa.gov.au

www.facebook.com/BroomeWesternAustralia/

www.instagram.com/shireofbroome/

Mail: PO Box 44, Broome, Western Australia 6725

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