

12th November 2025

Hume City Council
Sam Ferrier, Manager City Safety
Email: participate@hume.vic.gov.au

Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

Animal Care Australia (ACA) is a national incorporated association established to lobby for real animal welfare by those who keep, breed and care for animals. Our goal is to promote and encourage high standards in all interactions with the animals in our care.

Animal Care Australia is currently recognised by Animal Welfare Victoria as a key stakeholder in the review of Victoria’s Animal Welfare Act and its associated regulations. Animal Care Australia is directly consulting and advising during that review, including the future revision of Codes of Practice for the keeping of all pets.

Animal Care Australia encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale, and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species, including pets, companion animals, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation.

How to participate

Your feedback on what you like and what you think is missing will help shape the final Plan.

You can read the draft and share your thoughts in the form below **until Thursday 13 November 2025**.

[Open](#)

Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026 - 2029

Let us know what you think we've missed and what you like about the draft Plan.

Privacy Statement

The personal information on this form is required so that Council may contact you in response to your feedback. The information will be used for purposes directly related to this form and will not be disclosed to any other party except as required by the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)*. You may access this information by contacting Council's Research and Engagement team on 9205 2200.

Please tell us what you think we've missed:

You have 1,000 characters remaining

Please tell us what you like:

You have 1,000 characters remaining

In case we have any questions:

Name: Required

Email address: Required

[Submit](#)

Animal Care Australia is engaged with state governments to develop more appropriate model Local Laws and model Subordinate Local Laws governing the keeping of animals in each state. Nationally, Animal Care Australia is finding Local Councils placing restrictions and permit requirements on their residents which do nothing to improve animal welfare and tend to lead to greater non-compliance.

Animal Care Australia **DOES NOT SUPPORT the single use of surveys** as a means of claiming consultation, and in particular the current approach being taken. This is NOT an acceptable form to offer residents to make a submission relating to a 43-page document with multiple topics of importance. 1000 characters is simply NOT enough space to adequately address multiple topics!

The “How to participate” directions should also include an option for respondents to send a comprehensive response to an email address at the very least. (Yes, there

is an email address to the right of the instructions, but the instructions clearly indicate that the only way to submit is via the form underneath the instructions).

It is vital that Councils support the keeping of all pets within their shires/municipalities and that Councils consult with the appropriate stakeholders when looking to address the many myths or phobias that are expressed by uneducated members of the public, in relation to the keeping of some animals.

Some notable statistics:

- Population = 271709 with almost half from non-English background (48%)
- Area = 504km²
- Registered dogs = 16200
- Registered cats = 6535
- Registration numbers decreasing year-on-year (6.2%)
- Pound service via Lost Dogs Home – 2024/25 3096 animals impounded, 620 reclaimed, 933 euthanised
- Number of designated off-leash exercise areas = lots. However, only 3 are listed on Council website in the Pets section/pages. Animal Care Australia had to search in order to find others. These are located on an unrelated page about recreational areas. Council should provide the full list under pets' pages or at the very least, supply a link to the information from the pets section to the other section.

Key Commendations and Great Initiatives:

Animal Care Australia commends Council on:

- ✓ Evidence-based planning using data analytics.
- ✓ Elevated focus on welfare, equity, and safety.
- ✓ Increased enforcement and transparency.
- ✓ Expanded rescue and desexing initiatives.
- ✓ Better inclusion of vulnerable and CALD groups.
- ✓ Website available in multiple languages.
- ✓ Plans to hold a Pet Expo, albeit not until 2028.
- ✓ Subsidised desexing programs and vouchers for low-income owners.
- ✓ Plans to host local cat/kitten adoption events annually.
- ✓ Relatively low and reasonable registration fees.
- ✓ Plan for initial pet registrations to be offered free.
- ✓ Plan to increase pro-active patrols.

Recommendations for Strengthening Opportunities and further Improvement:

- Embedding standardised competency frameworks aligned to ACM qualifications.
- Developing community education toolkits across councils.
- Establishing inter-council data sharing for attacks and registrations.
- Funding for desexing/microchipping in low-income areas.
- Strengthening volunteer/rescue partnerships with MOUs
- Investigate the causes/reasons for high euthanasia rates.

Further feedback and MAJOR concerns:

Training of authorised officers:

Draft DAMP mentions dedicated animal management officers within the City Laws Team but does not say how many of these officers are actually performing this role/function. This makes it impossible to work out if there are sufficient officers to achieve the goals laid out within this DAMP

Training action plan looks adequate, but not knowing the current status of officer training makes it difficult to see where any deficiencies may exist.

Programs to promote and encourage responsible pet ownership and compliance with legislation:

Animal Care Australia support cat containment to owners' property, however this must be introduced with time allowances for people to erect containment measures and re-train outdoor cats to being contained.

Council must consider the downside of a cat containment policy will be an increase in the number of roaming cats that will need to be impounded to allow owners to locate/reclaim them. Noting Council already has a high number of animals impounded and more importantly the higher rate of euthanasia. Council must seriously investigate these numbers and the reasons behind the increase.

Animal Care Australia reminds Council that not all unchipped or unregistered cats are unowned or "feral." Community or colony cats do exist, and if these are being seized/impounded by Council then Council must amend its policies to recognise and acknowledge many of these cats may be amenable to human habituation and be adoptable, rather than simply euthanising them. Council must also be aware the policies and practices of the Lost Dogs Home are under extreme scrutiny at this time so Council should look at making or amending the conditions of the agreement with the Lost Dogs Home to require them to enter into 84Y agreements with more 3rd party rehoming groups to decrease euthanasia stats for cats (and dogs for that matter).

Council should look at becoming more aligned with Victoria's Cat Management Strategy.¹

Council should look into seeking funding through the state's animal welfare funding grants to enable the provision of additional free or low-cost microchipping and desexing for financially compromised residents.

Overpopulation and high euthanasia rates:

Pound outcome statistics presented in DAMP for 2024/25 are alarming.

Animal Care Australia again questions whether Council has inquired or investigated into why the euthanasia rates for both cats and dogs have increased so dramatically?

Animal Care Australia equally notes the numbers listed for all years do not add up (eg, 23/24 dog numbers are 978 impounded, yet outcomes reported only adds up to 599 – and the 24/25 outcomes only adds up to 952, rather than the 995 reported as impounded. All columns have discrepancies. This also requires further investigation.

Regardless of the above discrepancies, a roughly 20% euthanasia rate for dogs in particular is seriously problematic when there are many third-party rehoming groups that could take animals from Lost Dogs Home under 84Y agreements. Animal Care Australia is aware the Lost Dogs Home is often inundated with animals and so therefore Council should be more acutely aware of this issue and implement further policies to not only assist the Lost Dogs Home, but to secure better welfare outcomes and indeed lives for the animals.

Animal Care Australia reminds Council that high release fees, plus any infringement or registration requirements may be a deterrent to some owners reclaiming their impounded pets – some simply cannot afford the fees. Council could look into payment plans for financially compromised owners to help them reclaim their lost pets

¹ [Victorian Car Management Strategy](#)

It does not require research to identify barriers to desexing – the simple answer is cost. Subsidised desexing programs DO work. Council should look into the successful RSPCA NSW “Keeping Cats Safe at Home program”²

Animal Care Australia acknowledges Council’s plan to complete a feasibility study for “Last Litter Program” however, this is slated for 2028. Given the current issues with high impound and euthanasia rates Animal Care Australia strongly suggests this study is completed earlier and implement by 2028.

Animal registration and identification:

While Council does have relatively low/reasonable registration fees there is always room for reducing them even further to encourage better uptake.

Pet number caps are a deterrent to anyone who owns more than the listed numbers of pet types. Animal number caps should be advisory and only enforced if compliance issues arise with a particular pet owner. **Mandatory Excess Animal Permits should be scrapped**

Council could hold free or low-cost microchipping services at local markets or events and offer the low-cost (or free) desexing vouchers at the same time.

Animal Care Australia notes Council seems to have only focused on registrations in this section and needs to have an equal focus on identification uptake possibilities.

Nuisance:

Animal Care Australia commends Council on planned increasing of proactive patrols, however, these need to be used to educate rather than to look for opportunities to give out infringements. A tiered approach is needed with first providing friendly verbal warnings to residents found doing the wrong thing and educating them on how to do the right thing in future and progress if the matters continue.

The DAMP is lacking information on whether dog excrement bags are provided for free at designated off-leash areas or dog parks? If not, it is advised to do so.

The existing excess animal permit requirements may stop some dog owners from exercising their dogs for fear of being found in breach of Local Laws. Bored dogs may bark more than exercised dogs. This is why Animal Care Australia does not support mandatory excess animal permits. And we continually suggest removing caps and excess permits to encourage not only uptake in registrations, but this extends to residents feeling freer to exercising bored pets. This activity alone should reduce the number of barking complaints and possibly reduce attack/rush complaints as dogs are generally socialised better if exercised regularly.

Other matters:

Animal Care Australia notes and commends Council on adopting some (but not all) of our previous recommendations outlined in correspondence dated 16th April 2023.³

Given the issues stated above and outlined throughout the DAMP, Animal Care Australia commends and strongly encourages Council on looking into a locally operated animal management facility. It is becoming increasingly obvious that the Lost Dogs Home is not coping as well as it should. While this raises questions as to why they continue to encourage and sign agreements with multiple councils, it is a factor that Council must take ownership of its own impounded and homeless animals. A twenty percent euthanasia rate for impounded dogs is significantly more than most other councils are experiencing and needs to be addressed by Council.

For a comparison of the current DAMP versus the Draft DAMP see appendix 1.

² [RSPCA NSW – Keeping Cats Safe At Home program](#)

³ [ACA Submission to Hume City Council](#)

In closing:

It is necessary to call your attention to General Purpose Local Law no1 - 2023⁴

In the hope that while Council is reviewing the Domestic Animal Management Plan you will consider approving amendments to Local Laws taking into consideration our feedback and provide the opportunity for residents to keep their pets without the need for permits.

Animal welfare is NOT about numbers – it is about the conditions, behaviour, cleanliness, housing, and husbandry that each animal is kept under by the owners – your residents.

Mandated policies that restrict the keeping of animals on the basis of preventing noise, odour or other issues for neighbours are strongly discouraged. Restrictions including permit requirements inflict an unnecessary compliance burden on residents and staff which only discourages animal keeping needlessly. Laws are already in place to deal with neighbourhood nuisance issues including matters due to poor animal keeping practices.

Animal Care Australia's primary objective is 'education over regulation' and always commend Councils wherever they seek to further the education of their residents. We recommend viewing our online document: [Council Animal Management Plans](#)

Should you require further details please do not hesitate to reach out as we would be happy to meet with you and further discuss this matter.

Kind regards,



Michael Donnelly

President

0400 323 843

president@animalcareaustralia.org.au

⁴ [General Purpose Local Law No 1 - 2023](#)

Appendix 1: Comparison Report: Hume City Council Domestic Animal Management Plans

Comparison between the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–2030 and the 2023–2026 Plan.

Prepared by Animal Care Australia’s Dog Representative.

1. Strategic Direction and Structure

Aspect	2023–2026 DAMP	2026–2030 Draft DAMP and Key Changes
Duration & Alignment	Aligned with Council Plan 2021–2025 and Hume Horizons 2040.	Aligned with Hume Community Vision 2045 and Council Plan 2025–2029. Longer-term planning approach.
Purpose & Tone	Focused on community responsibility and education.	Data-driven, evidence-based, with integrated gender and social impact assessment.
Community Emphasis	Encouraged shared responsibility and education.	Expanded equity, accessibility, and sustainability themes.

2. Community Consultation and Engagement

Aspect	2023–2026	2026–2030 Draft
Consultation Process	1,128 survey responses; festivals and social media outreach.	393 responses; postcode targeting, stakeholder interviews, and cultural inclusion.
Community Priorities	Top issues: cat wandering, wildlife impact, dog control.	Same, with additional focus on enforcement and cost-of-living impacts.
Cat Curfew Support	73.7% support; 53% favouring 24/7 curfew.	77.2% support; 62.4% favouring 24/7 curfew, indicating growth in support.
Language & Accessibility	Surveys in English, Turkish, Arabic.	Improved translation, inclusivity, and accessibility focus.

3. Animal Registration, Population and Compliance

Aspect	2023–2026	2026–2030 Draft
Registered Animals	17,865 dogs; 7,024 cats.	16,200 dogs; 6,635 cats – decline of 6.2% despite growth.
Declared Dogs	43 declared (9 dangerous, 13 menacing, 8 restricted, 13 guard).	37 declared (9 dangerous, 24 menacing, 4 restricted, 15 guard).
Compliance Trends	3.6% decline since 2018; 940 infringements/year.	Further decline; 779 infringements (2024–25) and higher unregistered pet levels.
Enforcement	Education-first approach.	Greater demand for visible enforcement and higher fines.

4. Training and Professional Standards

The Draft 2026–2030 plan expands mandatory training to include MARAM family violence awareness, safety audits, and gender equity integration. It continues to require Cert IV Animal Control & Regulation but also includes structured professional development and inter-council collaboration meetings.

5. Animal Welfare and Overpopulation Management

Key changes:

- Shelter intake increased from 1,473 (2020–21) to 3,096 (2024–25).
- Expanded rescue and foster partnerships.
- New free desexing/microchipping programs targeting cost-of-living pressures.
- Multilingual outreach replacing static campaigns.

6. Policy Integration and Governance

The 2026–2030 plan updates governance to align with General Local Law 2023, integrates gender impact assessment, and implements data analytics for annual performance reporting.

About Animal Care Australia

As a nationally recognised animal welfare organisation, Animal Care Australia encourages continued development of animal welfare standards and Codes of Practice for animal husbandry, breeding, training, sale, and sporting exhibitions for a wide range of animal species, including pets, animals used for educational or entertainment purposes or kept for conservation, and in particular native birds, reptiles, and mammals.

Animal Care Australia was founded in early 2018 to establish an organisation run solely by volunteers to lobby for real animal welfare. With extreme animal rights and animal liberationist ideologies influencing government legislation, regulation, and policy at our expense and to the detriment of our animals and pets, it has become necessary to provide government with a balancing voice.

By uniting the broad spectrum of animal groups, collectively we offer an experienced, sensible approach to animal welfare.

By educating our members and the public about the importance of treating animals with kindness and respect for their needs and promoting the humane treatment of animals to improve animal welfare outcomes, Animal Care Australia is in the unique position of lobbying and advocating for all animals within our care.

Animal Care Australia provides priority to the following:

- advocating for stronger welfare outcomes
- advocating to increase education of the public in animal welfare and best care techniques
- educate the public on handling their animals with kindness & respect and the importance of their needs
- educate the public in the differences between animal welfare and animal rights