# Dog and Cat
## Management Plan 2026–2030

Our Adelaide.
**Bold.**
**Aspirational.**
**Innovative.**

CITY OF ADELAIDE

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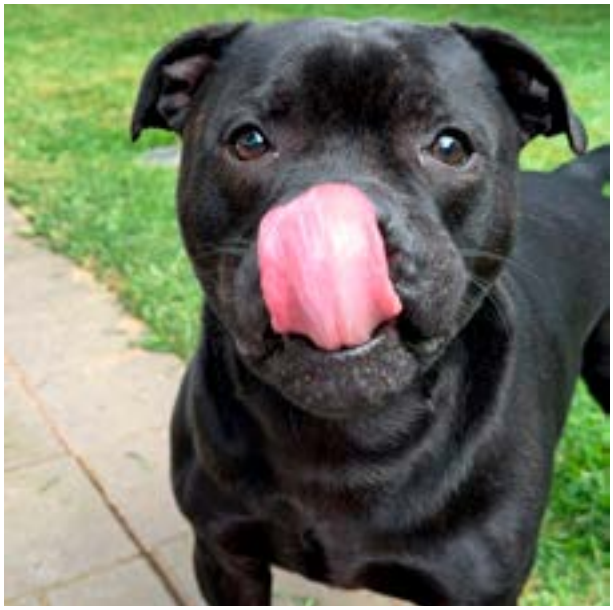
**Thank you for sharing photos of your adorable fur babies and best friends – they truly make our day!**



# 1 Our City

The City of Adelaide is South Australia's capital city council, encompassing the Adelaide CBD and North Adelaide and surrounded by the Adelaide Park Lands. First shaped by the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains, Then by Colonel William Light, Adelaide is known for being a liveable city that is progressive, resilient, bold, trailblazing and enterprising. It is a vibrant, high-density urban environment that supports a growing residential population of approximately 30,000, a significant workforce of over 170,000 local jobs and over 350,000 visitors each day. Public spaces, parks and streets are heavily used, making the effective management of dogs and cats essential to community safety, amenity and wellbeing.

Pet ownership continues to grow across Australia, with approximately 69% of households owning a pet. This growing trend is reflected within the City of Adelaide, which encompasses approximately 760 hectares of Park Lands, including 29 parks and six city squares. These expansive open spaces, along with the city's dedicated dog parks, have become vibrant social hubs that foster connection among residents, visitors and the wider community.

Pet ownership enhances quality of life for individuals and families and delivers broader community benefits, including increased physical activity, social interaction and improved mental health and resilience.

Pet ownership plays an important role in achieving a vibrant, connected and inclusive city by strengthening community ties and enhancing the everyday experiences of those who live, work and play in Adelaide. City of Adelaide's Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026–2030 builds upon these values, supporting a city that is both pet-friendly and responsibly managed.

## About Our City

# 2 Background

The City of Adelaide is responsible for administering and enforcing the provisions of the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* (the Act) across the City and North Adelaide. The Act provides the legislative framework for managing dogs and cats in the community and outlines the responsibilities of councils, owners, and the broader community.

The objectives of the Act are to:

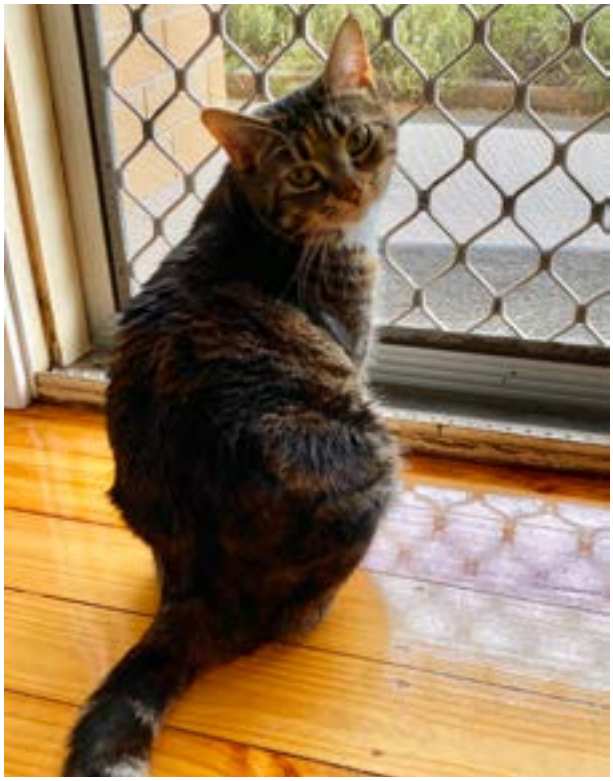
- Encourage responsible dog and cat ownership
- Reduce public and environmental nuisance caused by dogs and cats
- Promote the effective management of dogs and cats, including through mandatory microchipping and desexing

Councils are required to develop a five-year Dog and Cat Management Plan to guide the care and control of dogs and cats within their local area. This plan must address compliance, education, registration, identification, and facilities for dogs and cats, as well as broader community engagement and environmental protection.

The Dog Cat Management Plan 2026–2030 outlines how the City of Adelaide will meet its legislative responsibilities, promote responsible pet ownership, and support a safe, inclusive and sustainable urban environment aligned with the priorities of our Strategic Plan.

The Plan has been developed through:

- Review and evaluation of outcomes from the previous Dog and Cat Management Plan (2019–2024).
- Analysis of requests, registration statistics and incident/impounding data.
- Consideration of emerging legislative reforms and policy directions.
- Engagement with internal and external stakeholders, including the Dog and Cat Management Board and animal welfare organisations.
- Engagement with the community through Council's public consultation processes.



# 3 Strategic Context

The City of Adelaide Strategic Plan 2024–28 has several key priorities which will support and enable residential population growth to a target of 50,000 by 2036. Effective animal management within a such a growing and diverse capital city environment is critical.

The objectives of the Dog and Cat Management Plan 2026–2030 align to the goals the Strategic Plan. The following table demonstrates the relationship between the goals of each Plan.

| Strategic Plan Aspiration | Relevant Strategic Actions | Alignment with Dog and Cat Management Plan |
|---|---|---|
| Our Community – Vibrant, connected and inclusive | Enable community-led services which increase wellbeing, social connections and participation in active lifestyles | Recognises pet ownership as a social connector<br><br>Promotes mental and physical wellbeing through pet interaction and dog parks<br><br>Support pet owners in higher density living |
| Our Environment – Resilient, protected and sustainable | Protect and restore native habitat in our city | Promote protection of local wildlife<br><br>Encourage responsible pet ownership (eg picking up waste)<br><br>Support microchipping and desexing to manage populations sustainably |
| Our Places – Interesting, purposeful and safe | Create safe, inclusive and healthy places for our community<br><br>Review the Dog and Cat Management Plan<br><br>Provide services that encourage responsible pet ownership | Dog park infrastructure and off-leash areas provide safe recreation<br><br>Dog registration and enforcement reduce risks in public spaces<br><br>Barking and roaming dog management enhances community safety and wellbeing |

# 4 Legislative Responsibilities

The City of Adelaide's responsibilities under the Act are as follows:

- Ensure all dogs are registered from three (3) months of age
- Ensure that all dogs are identified by an identification tag
- Maintain a register of dogs containing the information required by the Dog and Cat Management Board (The Board), which may be kept in electronic form, and that is to be readily available for public inspection; and ensure that the Board is provided with information contained in the register as required
- Appoint a suitable person to be Registrar
- Appoint the equivalent of one full-time animal management officer or make other satisfactory arrangements for the exercise of the functions and powers of animal management officers
- Make satisfactory arrangements for the detention of dogs seized under the Act
- Make satisfactory arrangements for fulfilling other obligations under the Act, which include:
    - Management and control for dogs found to be wandering at large
    - The issuing of expiations where a person responsible for a dog has failed in their responsibilities under the Act and/or Regulations; including:
        - Investigation and management of barking (nuisance)
        - Investigate chase, harass or attack complaints

# 5 Management of Dogs and Cats

The City of Adelaide enforces the requirements of the Act and relevant by-laws through education, compliance monitoring and enforcement.

By-laws directly related to the effective management of dogs and cats include:

- Dogs By-law 2024
- Cats By-law 2024

City of Adelaide's animal management services are predominantly delivered through the Community Safety function. Community Safety Officers (CSOs) are trained and delegated with responsibilities in relation to managing animal issues, and delivery of the Dog and Cat by-laws. CSOs respond to community concerns and conduct proactive monitoring of the community, including designated Dog Parks.

Council ensures staff responsible for dog and cat management are appropriately trained and experienced in responding to complex animal management situations, including dog attacks. The team is supported by standard operating procedures and the appropriate tools and equipment to respond effectively to incidents, compliance matters and emergencies.

Animal management activities undertaken by staff include:

- Ensuring dogs are microchipped and, where required, desexed
- Annual registration of dogs from three months of age using the Dogs and Cats Online (DACO) system
- Administration of the Dogs By-law 2024 & Cats By-Law 2024, including limits on the number of dogs per dwelling, dog-free areas and responsible pet waste removal obligations
- Enforcing on-leash, off-leash and dog-prohibited areas
- Responding to reports of dogs wandering at large, barking nuisance, harassment and attacks
- Maintaining appropriate arrangements for the seizure and detention of dogs

In order to successfully undertake our animal management responsibilities, Council works with:

- Local impounding and rehoming services
- The Dog and Cat Management Board
- Veterinarians, trainers and education providers
- Neighbouring councils
- Local Government Association SA
- Local Government Authorised Persons Association

While cat registration is not currently a legal requirement, registration and identification is strongly encouraged to support the prompt reunification of lost cats with their owners.

Council focuses on ongoing community education to support responsible cat ownership and reinforce awareness and compliance with established legislative obligations.

Council supports the 'Good Cats Play at Home' strategy and encourage all cat owners to contain their cats to their property.

## 5.1 Community Education and Information

Council delivers proactive education to encourage responsible pet ownership, increase dog registrations, microchipping and desexing, and reduce instances of animal nuisances or public safety risks. Education covers:

- Legal responsibilities of dog owners
- Preventing nuisance behaviours such as barking and wandering at large
- Safe interactions between dogs and people
- The benefits and responsibilities of dog ownership

Education is delivered through Council's website, social media, signage, registration processes and partnerships.

Clear and accessible information is made available to residents and visitors on dog and cat rules in public spaces, including registration and compliance requirements and responsible pet ownership within a capital city environment.

## 5.2 On-Leash, Off-Leash and Prohibited Areas

Council provides a mix of on-leash, off-leash and dog-prohibited areas to balance recreation, safety and environmental protection. Designated off-leash dog parks provide secure spaces for exercise and socialisation.

Council is committed to reviewing these arrangements throughout the life of the plan to ensure they continue to reflect changing community needs, population growth and the needs of both pet owners and the broader community.

Details of all on-leash and off-leash areas are provided in Appendix A and on Council's website.

**cityofadelaide.com.au/resident/pets-and-animals/dog-on-leash-and-off-leash-areas/**

# 6. 2026–2030 Objectives & Actions

Increase dog and cat registration through community education, promotion and compliance monitoring. City of Adelaide has 1,174 dogs and 510 cats registered as at March 2026

As the city's population and activation levels increase, the volume of registered pets and the potential for reported animal incidents also increases. The actions within the Plan seek to positively impact the level of reported incidents relating to dogs and cats, in a growing capital city environment.

Incident data in recent years is shown in the table below. In addition to those registered within the City of Adelaide, many dogs from other Council areas visit City of Adelaide's Dog Parks and Park Lands.

| | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Cat complaints** | 13 | 20 | 12 |
| **Dog attacks** | 43 | 31 | 34 |
| **Dog barking complaints** | 70 | 70 | 47 |
| **Dogs wandering at large** | 119 | 91 | 100 |
| **Dogs impounded** | 4 | 5 | 4 |

## a. Dog and cat registration and responsible ownership

Increase in awareness of pet ownership responsibilities, through community education, promotion and compliance monitoring, leading to a higher rate of dog and cat registration.

| Actions | Timelines | Key measures |
|---|---|---|
| Provide clear information on dog and cat registration requirements, responsibilities and benefits | Ongoing | Community reach via website, social media and community engagement |
| Promote responsible cat ownership practices, including the benefits of microchipping, desexing and managing roaming behaviour | Ongoing | Increased community awareness and engagement with cat management information |
| Monitor and enforce registration compliance | Annual | Inspections and renewals tracked |
| Monitor legislative reforms affecting registration | Ongoing | Compliance with updated statutory requirements |
| Update Council website with trusted external resources (eg Dog and Cat Management Board, AWL, RSPCA) | Year 1 | Improved access to information and reduction in general pet enquiries per registered pet |
| Promote responsible pet ownership messaging through campaigns, including effective control of dogs and picking up after your pet | Ongoing | Reduction in nuisance pet reports per registered pet (20 cat complaints reported in FY24/25) |
| Develop a map of all doggy bag dispensers located in dog parks and playgrounds across the city and North Adelaide | Year 1 | A greater understanding of current infrastructure to inform future investment options |
| Deliver regular community education initiatives | Ongoing | Increased community awareness and engagement |

## b. Microchipping and desexing

Increase microchipping and desexing awareness and participation to support animal welfare, reduce wandering pets and improve legislative compliance.

| Actions | Timelines | Key measures |
|---|---|---|
| Deliver education and promotional materials on microchipping, desexing and responsible pet ownership | Ongoing | Community engagement and information reach |
| Maintain registration rebates to encourage compliance | Annual | Increased microchipping and desexing rates |
| Explore opportunities to promote community cat management activities, such as ChipBlitz microchipping events | Ongoing | Effective and consistent response to stray and roaming cat concerns |

## c. Response to animal related incidents

Reduce animal related incidents and respond effectively to protect public safety and animal welfare through education, containment and enforcement.

| Actions | Timelines | Key measures |
|---|---|---|
| Increase patrols of dog parks and off-leash areas to proactively educate dog owners on responsible pet ownership responsibilities, including effective control and leash requirements | Ongoing | Reduction in wandering dog reports per registered dog (91 incidents reported in FY 24/25) |
| Provide staff training for responding to dog attacks, animal incidents and community safety concerns | Years 1–2 | Workforce capability maintained |
| Maintain partnerships to ensure adequate impounding capacity | Years 1–2 | Service agreements maintained |
| Review on-leash, off-leash and dog free areas within the life of the Plan | Year 2 | Community feedback considered and areas reviewed in response to changing community needs |

## d. Dog barking incidents and owner behaviour

Minimise the impact of nuisance barking and support responsible dog ownership through education and early intervention.

| Actions | Timelines | Key measures |
|---|---|---|
| Respond to barking nuisance complaints with education and advice | Ongoing | Reduction in barking complaints per registered dog |
| Provide information on nuisance barking, owner responsibilities and available support | Year 1 | Increased community understanding and reduced repeat complaints |
| Trial new technology to assist dog barking compliance monitoring | Year 2 | Increase in customer satisfaction relating to dog barking requests |
| Develop and distribute early intervention education materials | Ongoing | Reduction in dog barking requests per registered dog (70 requests reported in FY 24/25) |

# Appendix A – Dog On-leash/off-leash areas

## City Centre

| Location | On-leash/Off-leash |
|---|---|
| Public roads and streets | On-leash |
| Adelaide Himeji Garden | On-leash |
| Wellington Square | On-leash |
| Light Square | On-leash |
| Hindmarsh Square | On-leash |
| Victoria Square | On-leash |
| Whitmore Square | On-leash |
| Hurtle Square | On-leash |
| North Terrace (in front of Government House and Cultural Precinct) | On-leash |
| Adelaide Zoo | Not within Council control, please adhere to each area's dog leash arrangements |
| Adelaide Railway Station | Not within Council control, please adhere to each area's dog leash arrangements |
| Torrens Parade Ground | Not within Council control, please adhere to each area's dog leash arrangements |
| Universities and Cultural Precinct | Not within Council control, please adhere to each area's dog leash arrangements |
| Lot Fourteen | Not within Council control, please adhere to each area's dog leash arrangements |
| Adelaide Botanic Gardens | Not within Council control, please adhere to each area's dog leash arrangements |

## Adelaide Park Lands

In addition to the locations below, dogs must be kept on-leash at all times when:

- within a play space.
- within five metres of children's play space equipment if play space is not enclosed.
- organised sport is in play.

| Location | On-leash/Off-leash |
|---|---|
| Denise Norton Park/Pardipardinyilla (Park 2) | Off-leash |
| Yam Daisy Park/Kantarilla (Park 3) | Off-leash |
| Bragg Park/Ngampa Yarta (Park 5) | Off-leash |
| Bundey's Paddock/Tidlangga (Park 9) | Off-leash |
| Red Gum Park/Karrawirra (Park 12) | Off-leash |
| Rundle Park/Kadlitpina (Park 13) | Off-leash |
| Rymill Park/Murlawirrapurka (Park 14) | Off-leash |
| King Rodney Park/Ityamai-itpina (Park 15) | Off-leash |
| Victoria Park/Pakapakanthi (Park 16) | On-leash and off-leash – See map for areas |
| Victoria Park Grandstand & Criterium Track | On-leash |
| Carriageway Park/Tuthangga (Park 17) | Off-leash |
| Peppermint Park/Wita Wirra (Park 18) | Off-leash, on-leash in Himeji Gardens |
| Pelzer Park/Pityarilla (Park 19) | Off-leash |
| Blue Gum Park/Kurangga (Park 20) | Off-leash |
| Veale Park/Walyu Yarta (Park 21) | Off-leash |
| Golden Wattle Park/Mirnu Wirra (Park 21W) | Off-leash |
| Josie Agius Park/Wikaparntu Wirra (Park 22) | Off-leash |
| G S Kingston Park/Wirrarninthi (Park 23) | Off-leash |
| Ellis Park/Tampawardli (Park 24) | Off-leash |
| Gladys Elphick Park/Narnungga (Park 25) | Off-leash |
| Bonython Park/Tulya Wardli (Park 27) | Off-leash |
| John E Brown Park (Park 27A) | Off-leash |
| Mary Lee Park (Park 27B) | Off-leash |
| Possum Park/Pirltawardli (Park 1) | On-leash |
| Lefevre Park/Nantu Wama (Park 6) | On-leash and off-leash – See map for areas |
| The Olive Groves/Kuntingga (Park 7) | On-leash |
| The Olive Groves/Parngutilla (Park 8) | On-leash |
| Bullrush Park/Warnpangga (Park 10) | On-leash |
| Mistletoe Park/Tainmuntilla (Park 11) | On-leash |
| Tarntanya Wama (Park 26) | On-leash |
| Palmer Gardens/Pangki Pangki (Park 28) | On-leash |
| Brougham Gardens/Tantutitingga (Park 29) | On-leash |
| Adelaide Botanic Gardens | No dogs at all times. Assistance dogs exempted. |
| Frome Park | On-leash |
| Lefevre Park Horse Paddock | No dogs at all times. Assistance dogs exempted. |

Denise Norton Park/ Pardipardinyilla (Park 2)
Yam Daisy Park/ Kantarilla (Park 3)
Bragg Park/ Ngampa Yarta (Park 5)
D1
Reservoir Park/ Kangatilla (Park 4)
Horse Paddock
Lefevre Park/ Nantu Wama (Park 6)
The Olive Groves/ Kuntingga (Park 7)
The Olive Groves/ Parngutilla (Park 8)
Mary Lee Park (Park 27B)
Wellington Square/ Kudnartu
Bundey's Paddock/ Tidlangga (Park 9)
Brougham Gardens/ Tantutitingga (Park 29)
Palmer Gardens/ Pangki Pangki (Park 28)
Bullrush Park/ Warnpangga (Park 10)
Golf Links
John E Brown Park (Park 27A)
Possum Park/ Pirltawardli (Park 1)
Tarntanya Wama (Park 26)
Peace Park
Mistletoe Park/ Tainmuntilla (Park 11)
Adelaide Zoo
Botanic Park
Adelaide Oval (Core Area not subject to the provisions of this CLMP)
Red Gum Park/ Karrawirra (Park 12)
Angas Gardens
Grundy Gardens
Botanic High School
Bonython Park/ Tulya Wardli (Park 27)
Horse Paddock
Tennis SA
Frome Park / Nellie Raminyemmerin
River Torrens/ Karrawirra Pari
Pinky Flat
Elder Park
Torrens Parade Ground
Adelaide Botanic Garden
Police Barracks
Kate Cocks Park (Park 27)
Helen Mayo Park (Park 27)
Health & Biomedical Precinct
Adelaide Railway Station
Government House
Universities & Cultural Precinct
Lot Fourteen
National Wine Centre
Gladys Elphick Park/ Narnungga (Park 25)
Parliament House
Rundle Park/ Kadlitpina (Park 13)
Rymill Park/ Murlawirrapurka (Park 14)
Rymill Park Lake
Adelaide High School
Light Square/ Wauwi
Hindmarsh Square/ Mukata
Ellis Park/ Tampawardli (Park 24)
King Rodney Park/ Ityamai-itpina (Park 15)
G S Kingston Park/ Wirrarninthi (Park 23)
Victoria Square/ Tarntanyangga
Botanic Creek
Grandstand & Oxterium Track
West Terrace Cemetery
Whitmore Square/ Iparrityi
Hurtle Square/ Tangkaira
Peppermint Park/ Wita Wirra (Park 18)
Adelaide Himeji Garden
Victoria Park/ Pakapakanthi (Park 16)
Veale Gardens
Golden Wattle Park/ Mirnu Wirra (Park 21W)
Blue Gum Park/ Kurangga (Park 20)
D2
Edwards Park
Carriageway Park/ Tuthangga (Park 17)
Wetlands
Veale Park/ Walyu Yarta (Park 21)
Josie Agius Park/Wikaparntu Wirra (Park 22)
BMX Tracks
Pelzer Park/ Pityarilla (Park 19)
Care, control and management of the Corporation of the City of Adelaide
Care, control and management of the Crown or a State Authority (Does not form part of this map—please adhere to each area's dog leash arrangements)
Not part of the Adelaide Park Lands
Playgrounds
Dx
Dog parks
D1 North Adelaide Dog Park
D2 Pityarilla Dog Park
Dog off leash at all times
Unless within a playground or when organised sport is being played
Dog on leash at all times
No dogs at all times
Assistance dogs exempted
Dog on leash in all public streets and roads in the city
Dog on leash at all times within a playground / within five metres of children's playground equipment if playground is not enclosed
Dog on leash at all times when organised sport is being played
On leash means a strong leash not exceeding two metres in length
Dx
Dog off leash at all times within a dog park and under effective control

# Further Information

To register a dog or cat, please visit **dogsandcatsonline.com.au**

For information on dog and cat management, please visit:
**cityofadelaide.com.au/resident/pets-and-animals/dog-cat-registration**
or call (08) 8203 7203.

**For further information on dog and cat management, please visit:**
**Dog and Cat Management Board or contact:**
**City of Adelaide Customer Centre**
**Ph: (08) 8203 7203**
**25 Pirie Street, Adelaide.**

CITY OF
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