



Pyrenees
Shire Council



Domestic Animal Management Plan

2026-2029 (DRAFT)

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Nations, whose land and waters the Pyrenees Shire operates on. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, recognise and respect their customs, stewardship, and continuing connection to Country.

1 INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT



1.1 PURPOSE OF DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Under Section 68A of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (The Act), every Council must prepare and implement a Domestic Animal Management Plan.

The purpose of the plan is to provide Council with a strategic framework that delivers policy direction and action plans for animal management over the next four (4) years.

A domestic animal management plan prepared by Council must:

- Set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to requirements of the Act and the Domestic Animal Regulations.
- Outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure they can administer and enforce the requirements of The Act in the Councils municipal district.
- Outline programs, services, and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district including:
 - Promotion and encouragement of responsible ownership of dogs and cats;
 - Ensuring that people comply with the Act, the regulations, and any related legislation.
 - Minimising the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.
 - Addressing any overpopulation and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats.
 - Encouraging the registration and identification of dogs and cats.
 - Minimising the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance.
 - Effectively identifying all dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs in the

district and ensuring that they comply with the Act and the regulations.

- Provide for the review of existing orders made under the Act and local laws that relate to the Councils municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable.
- Provide the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Councils municipal district that it thinks necessary.
- Provide the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy, or review outlined under the plan.

Every Council must:

- Review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend it.
- Provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan.
- Publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

1.2 PROCESS APPLIED IN DEVELOPING THE PLAN

This plan was developed by Council following a review of its existing Domestic Animal Management Plan objectives and achievements. Authorised Officers from the Community Safety & Amenity Team, under the guidance of the Manager of Planning & Development, used current data, statistics, research, and reporting to inform its development.

A draft of the plan was then prepared and reviewed by the Council. The community was also consulted as part of this process. Following this feedback, the plan was revised, improved, and submitted to Council for adoption.



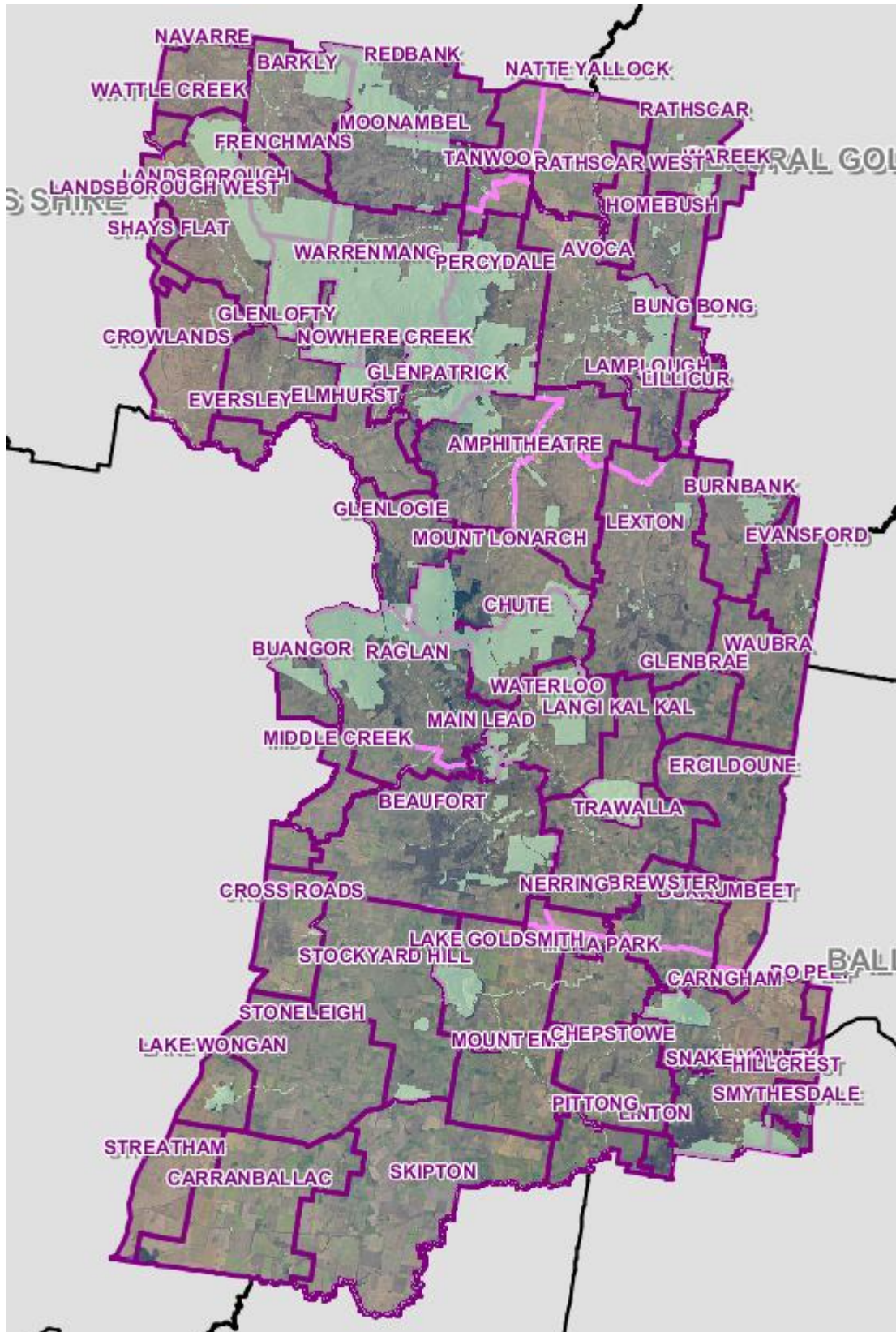
1.3 DEMOGRAPHIC AND PROFILE OF COUNCIL

The Pyrenees Shire is a rural municipality located about 130 km northwest of Melbourne, covering approximately 3,500 square kilometres. It lies within the traditional lands of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar, and Wotjobaluk Aboriginal peoples.

The Shire spans the region between the major centres of Ballarat and Ararat and includes 29 communities, each with its own heritage, character, and rural identity. These towns and settlements are diverse and distinct, each with a strong sense of place.

Just over half of the population lives in one of nine main towns or localities, while the rest live in rural areas. Because the population is spread across a large area, smaller townships play a vital role as hubs for community life and social connection.

The Shire has a population of 7,958 residents (Remplan, 2026). It is a rural area that includes the townships of Beaufort, Avoca, Lexton, Snake Valley, Waubra, Amphitheatre, Landsborough, Moonambel, Evansford, Raglan, Crowlands, and Redbank.



1.4 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

A broad range of programs and services are provided to ensure Council meets its responsibilities under the Domestic Animal Act regarding the management of domestic animals within the shire.

Program/Service	Service Level
Identification & Registration	Council officers visit residents all year round to check if pets are microchipped and registered. A door knock campaign is undertaken annually in the months of May and June following up on outstanding registration renewals and any unregistered pets. Notices of registration renewals and follow-up visits are placed in the public notices section of the newspaper, Council website, and on social media.
Domestic animal complaints/enquiries	Complaints and enquiries are captured electronically in Councils Customer Action Request Database - Average response time is 1 to 2 business days.
Dangerous dog complaints	Complaints and enquiries are all captured electronically in Councils Customer Action Request Database - Average response time is 1 business day.
Pound	Pyrenees Shire Council does not have a pound facility. An agreement is in place with the City of Ballarat and Northern Grampians Shire to utilise their Animal Shelter facilities as required. Operating Hours of the facilities are as follows: Monday – Friday - 9am-4pm Saturday and Sunday Closed
Micro-chipping and / or desexing programs	Council provides a reduced registration fee for desexed animals. Council participates in the City of Ballarat shelter programs when available.
Barking dogs and nuisance cats	Council provides advice and education material to residents to assist with barking dog matters. Officers use a range of enforcement tools if the matter is not resolved. Council owns 15 cat traps which are available to residents free of charge to help deal with nuisance and feral cats.

Wandering and lost dogs & cats	A dedicated animal management vehicle is used to transport impounded, wandering, unwanted, or unowned cats and dogs. The vehicle complies with the Code of Practice for the Transportation of Dogs and Cats. Lost dog and cat reports are recorded and maintained by officers in a register, which assists in reuniting pets with their owners. Where possible, registered animals are returned directly to their owners rather than being taken to the pound, unless there is a history of non-compliance.
Education	Animal Welfare Victoria website links, along with electronic fact sheets and brochures, are made available on Council's website and at customer service centres. Officers also provide information to animal owners to support responsible animal care and management. Relevant mandatory codes under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986—covering the keeping of domestic animals as well as boarding, breeding, and training establishments—are made available to residents.
After hours emergency service	An after-hours emergency service is provided Monday to Friday from 5:00pm to 8:30am and 24 hours over the weekend.
Dog attack complaints	All dog attack complaints are Investigated as a priority. A comprehensive investigation is undertaken by officers which is then reviewed to determine a suitable course of action.
Routine street patrols	Officers conduct weekly proactive patrols of streets and properties to identify unregistered dogs and cats, or any other related issues.

1.5 DOMESTIC ANIMAL STATISTICS

A summary of statistics relevant to the management of domestic animals in the Pyrenees Shire are outlined in the table below.

Year	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
Authorised Officers (EFT)	2	2	2	2
Registered dogs	2146	2104	1994	1879
Dogs impounded	33	57	27	30
Dogs returned to owner	30	47	24	21
Dogs rehomed	2	6	3	4
Dogs euthanized	1	2	0	1
Dogs surrendered to council	1	2	0	1
Registered cats	503	492	467	470
Cats impounded	82	42	172	33
Cats returned to owner	18	5	13	1
Cats rehomed	3	14	22	8
Cats euthanized (feral)	61	23	137	22
Reported dog attacks on dogs	2	4	1	4
Reported dog attacks on person	2	2	7	5
Reported dog attacks on livestock	19	15	8	4
Domestic animal complaints & requests	333	248	261	237
Domestic Animal Businesses	1	1	1	1
Prosecutions	1	7	8	3
Infringements Issued	36	83	60	52

2. TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS



This section outlines the current and planned training programs for authorised officers. These programs ensure officers can administer and enforce the requirements of *Section 68A(2)(b) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994* within the Council's municipal district.

2.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

Council's animal management service is managed by the Community Safety and Amenity Team, which sits within the Planning and Development department.

Council employs two full-time Community Safety and Amenity Officers with a combined 20 years of experience across multiple councils. The officers are multi-skilled, and in addition to domestic animal management, their responsibilities include:

- Livestock management under the Impounding of Livestock Act 1994
- Litter control under the Environment Protection Act 2017
- Fire prevention under the Country Fire Authority Act 1958
- Animal welfare under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986
- School crossings
- Local laws enforcement
- Parking enforcement
- Council prosecutions

All authorised officers are required to hold, at a minimum, a Certificate IV in Government Statutory Compliance, Animal Control and Regulation, or have equivalent experience, and must complete all

Council-mandated training programs.

Additional completed training includes:

- Animal Welfare Victoria training and information sessions
- First aid
- Working alone and/or in remote areas
- Family violence identification
- Conflict management
- Dealing with difficult and aggressive customers
- Animal handling and behaviour
- Occupational Health and Safety

2.2 TRAINING FOR AUTHORISED OFFICERS

A range of training programs, along with Council-adopted policies and procedures, are available to all authorised officers to support them in conducting their roles. Training options are reviewed annually to ensure they remain current and relevant, enabling officers to perform their duties safely and effectively.

The planned training program for the 2026–2029 period is outlined below.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Officers to attend training conducted by Animal Welfare Victoria	As offered	Annual Review to include review of attendance with training register
New officers will be trained in Certificate IV in Government	After commencement	Annual Review of successful completion of course
New officers will be trained in Certificate IV in Animal Control and Regulation	After commencement	Annual Review of successful completion of course
First Aid	Every 2 years	As arises
Working alone and/or in remote areas	Every 2 years	As arises
Conflict management Dealing with aggressive customers	Every 2 years	As arises
Animal handling and behavior training	Every 2-3 years	As arises
Investigations, enforcement, and prosecutions training	As arises	As arises
Council e-learning opportunities	As per Council requirements	As arises
Attend training and seminars offered by the Australian Institute of Animal Management	As offered	As arises

OHS Training	As offered	As arises
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2.3 OUR PLAN

Objective 1: *Develop a training policy that clearly sets out the minimum training requirements for animal management officers, as well as any additional training needs; they should undertake to support effective and compliant service delivery.*

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify minimum training requirements by consultation with management and staff	Year 2 & 3	Documentation to be finalised and incorporated into a Council OHS training policy
Continue with current training listed in section 2.1	See section 2.1	See section 2.1

Objective 2: *Develop and maintain a training register for each officer that records completed training and identifies any proposed or required future training.*

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop a register listing each officer showing their completed and proposed training	Year 2 & 3	Update and maintain training spreadsheet as needed



3. RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP



3.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

Council currently promotes responsible pet ownership through various programs and strategies. These include but are not limited to:

- Providing educational material to the public via our website, use of social media, visitor information centres, and face-to-face contact when dealing with the community.
- Educating the community about responsible pet ownership, including the benefits of desexing, registration, and microchipping.
- Running a cat trapping program across the shire focusing on reducing feral cat numbers and nuisance complaints. The council currently has 15 traps which are in use throughout the year.
- Providing dog waste bags and dispensers in key locations along with pictogram signs advising of regulations in the area.
- Providing a 24-hour emergency animal control service to the public.
- Conduct campaigns in targeted areas to capture unregistered dogs and cats, and to also ensure excess numbers of animals are not kept on properties without a local law permit.

- Annual audits of domestic animal businesses and any declared menacing, dangerous, or restricted breed dogs.
- Annual door knocks across the shire to identify unregistered animals.
- Customer Action Request electronic database that captures complaints lodged by the public regarding nuisances and other domestic animal related matters.
- Enforcement tools are used discretionally depending on the nature of the issue, type of offence, and relevant history. These tools comprise letters with educational material, a notice to comply issued under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, the issuing of an infringement/s or prosecution in the magistrate's court.

3.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT ORDERS:

In 2008 the Council resolved to make the following Orders under the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*.

1. An Order that requires the mandatory desexing of first-time registered cats, except for those cats exempt under *Section 10(b) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
2. An Order for a night curfew for cats within the township zones of Avoca, Amphitheatre, Beaufort, Landsborough, Lexton, Moonambel, Snake Valley and Waubra.
3. An order requiring dogs to remain on leash within the business precincts of the townships of Avoca, Amphitheatre, Beaufort, Moonambel, Landsborough, Lexton, Snake Valley, and Waubra. The Dog on Leash Order will also apply to sign-posted areas around schools and kindergartens.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

The council has several local laws relating to the keeping of domestic animals. Those of relevance are listed below and detailed further in **Appendix 2**.

- **Local Law No. 4.1 Animal Keeping**

- (1) The owner or occupier of land must not, without a permit, keep or be allowed to be kept on that land for any more domestic pets than is set out in the following table.

Area	Dogs	Cats
Residential Area	2	2
Rural Area (less than 2 ha)	2	2
Rural Area (more than 2 ha)	4	4

- **Local Law 4.2 Animal Litter**

- (1) The owner or person in charge of an animal in a public place must:
 - (a) carry a litter device suitable for the collection of any excrement from that animal.

- (b) produce the device on request of an authorised officer; and
- (c) immediately collect and dispose of any excrement from that animal into a waste receptacle.

3.3 OUR PLAN

Objective 1: Review and update Councils Orders under the Act.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct a community consultation program to determine the feasibility of: - the implementation of a new updated Off Leash Order that is in line with other rural Councils and community expectations - The introduction of a 24-hour cat curfew (currently only dusk to dawn) - Identify dog off lead park areas and create fenced and un- fenced dog parks once the new and updated Order is passed	Years 2, 3 and 4	Determine support and appetite for change by the community and update Orders accordingly Have at least two dog off-lead parks in the shire.

Objective 2: Develop a discounted pet desexing program for concession card holders

Activity	When	Evaluation
Apply for grants for pet desexing offered by the state government & MAV	As they arise	Obtain grant

Objective 3: Develop Standard Operating Procedures and Policies for the domestic animal management team.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Create policies and procedures for dealing with the following matters: - Nuisance complaints (i.e. barking dogs, dog attacks, excess animal permits)	Year 2 & 3	Review the use of procedures by Officers during their annual review or as arises

4. OVER-POPULATION AND HIGH EUTHANASIA RATES

4.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

Overpopulation and high euthanasia rates of cats continue to be an issue in the Pyrenees Shire. Officers dedicate considerable time and resources to collecting and managing trapped cats. While the introduction of compulsory desexing and a cat curfew in 2008 has had an impact, stray and feral cat populations remain a significant concern.

In the period from 2020–2025, Council impounded 329 cats. Of these, only 15 % were returned to their owners. Most were unidentifiable and appeared feral and were therefore humanely euthanised by a veterinarian.

In comparison, during the same period, officers impounded 147 dogs. Of these, 83 % were reunited with their owners, and a further 17 % were rehomed through adoption.

Education, Promotion and Compliance Activities include:

- Encouraging responsible pet ownership by promoting desexing of cats (mandatory) and dogs (optional). Council offers reduced registration fees for desexed animals.
- Providing a cat trapping program with 15 traps available for community use.
- Discussing options for surrendering and rehoming excess animals.
- Investigating reports of excessive animal numbers on properties.
- Limiting animal numbers on properties through enforcement of Council local laws and permit conditions.
- Issuing official warnings, infringement notices, or initiating prosecution where necessary.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Number of local law notices issued to property owners to reduce numbers on properties	3	7	12	9	3
Number of excess animal permits issued	11	9	7	10	9

4.2 OUR ORDERS AND LOCAL LAWS

CURRENT ORDERS:

- The Domestic Animals Act Order requires the mandatory desexing of first-time registered cats, except for those cats exempt under *Section 10(b) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994*.
- The Domestic Animals Act Order prescribes a night curfew for cats within the township zones of Avoca, Amphitheatre Beaufort, Landsborough, Lexton, Moonambel, Snake Valley and Waubra.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

Local Law No. 4.1 Animal Keeping

- (2) The owner or occupier of land must not, without a permit, keep or be allowed to be kept on that land with any more domestic pets than are set out on the following table.

Area	Dogs	Cats
Residential Area	2	2
Rural Area (less than 2 ha)	2	2
Rural Area (more than 2 ha)	4	4

4.3 OUR PLAN

Objective 1: Reduce the number of impounded and unregistered cats in the Shire.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Run education campaigns regarding feral and semi-owned cats	Ongoing	Public feedback
Circulate safe Cat, Safe Wildlife education material throughout municipality (www.safecat.org.au)	Ongoing	Less reports of wandering/nuisance cats
Purchase more cat traps and proactively offer to residents in or close to high bio-diversity areas	Ongoing	Tracks impound statistics and monitor results in these areas

Objective 2: Encourage the desexing of animals and assist with low-cost desexing for concession card holders.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Apply for animal desexing grants through Animal Welfare Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria when they arise	As arise	Successfully obtain grant and record number of animals desexed via the program
Continue to promote desexing of pets	Ongoing	Responsible pet ownership
Look at further registration discount options i.e., Free first-time registration for cats and dogs under the age of six months that are desexed and microchipped	Year 1	Compare registration statistics

Participate with neighbouring Council campaigns and promotional days around microchipping and desexing when available.	As arise	Record number of participants and outcomes.
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5. REGISTRATION AND IDENTIFICATION



5.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

All dogs and cats older than 3 months must be registered with the Council under the Domestic Animals Act 1994. Registration fees are paid annually and are due by 10 April each year. When you register your pet, you will receive a durable lifetime identification tag.

Registration and microchipping help authorised officers quickly identify pets and return them to their owners if they are found wandering or outside their property. Pet owners are encouraged to ensure their animals wear their registration tag to make identification easier.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Dog and Cats Registered	2695	2631	2596	2461	2349
Notice to Comply to Register	88	75	85	58	54
Failure to Register Infringements	7	21	24	23	18

Pet registration and identification are very important to Pyrenees Shire. They help Council understand how many pets are in the community, which supports better planning of services and programs for pet management.

Council uses a range of tools to educate pet owners about registration, including:

- Local media and websites to promote registration requirements.
- Regular articles and media releases in local newspapers about responsible pet ownership.
- Providing educational materials and brochures for the community.
- Council uses its website and social media to share information, including links to relevant agencies and helpful resources.
- Annual registration renewal notices are issued in March each year, followed by an overdue notice in April. Text message reminders are sent two weeks later, with phone calls and on-site inspections conducted for any registrations that remain outstanding.
- Council promotes responsible pet ownership and registration requirements through its social media channels.
- Any dog or cat seized by an authorised officer will only be returned to its owner if it is microchipped, registered, and the applicable reclaim fee has been paid.
- Registered animals with no history of compliance issues that are found wandering or unsecured are returned directly to their owners.
- As Council does not operate its own pound facility and relies on animal shelters in Ballarat and Stawell, every effort is made to reunite stray or wandering dogs with their registered owners.
- Council regularly updates its animal registration database to maintain accurate records.
- Properties keeping more animals than permitted must have the appropriate local law or planning permits, and Council ensures compliance with these requirements.
- Reduced registration fees are available for eligible pets, including those that are desexed, over ten years old, recognised working dogs, or part of a registered domestic animal business or relevant organisation.

5.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT ORDERS:

Refer to Appendix 1.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

Refer to Appendix 2.

CURRENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

- Investigate all complaints and ensure they are captured on Councils relevant databases. Patrols conducted upon request and proactively on a regular basis.
- Regular cat trapping program (15 traps are available with no fee applied).
- Issue Notices for detected offences and Infringement Notices if compliance is not achieved. Prosecution in the Magistrates court for breaches of the Domestic Animals Act when appropriate.

5.3 OUR PLAN

Objective 1: Council will work to maximise the number of registered and identifiable domestic animals. This supports compliance activities and improves the chances of reuniting lost pets with their owners.

Objective 2: Council will continue to deliver its existing programs and use the tools outlined earlier in this section (see Section 5.1: Context and Current Situation).

Activity	When	Evaluation
Use local newspapers, community newsletters, social media, and Councils website to promote and advertise registration requirements prior to the 10th of April renewal date	Feb/Mar/Apr each year	At least one article to be submitted before renewal date
Council's website to provide information to residents on when and how to register their pets.	Ongoing	Review annually before the registration renewal period begins
Investigate the use of Variable Message Signs in strategic areas across the municipality during the registration renewal period	Years 1, 2, 3, and 4.	Evaluate registration uptake and statistics from databases to see if registration trends have increased
Try and identify all deceased cats and dogs by scanning them for a microchip	Over the next 4 years	Create a policy that outlines process in managing deceased cats and dogs found in the shire
Council Events & Promotional Activities. Set up a marquee/stand at local events to educate the community	Ongoing	Capture and review data from the community, i.e., how many attendees, material handed out, questions asked, registration forms handed out, etc.



6 NUISANCE

Actions in this section address Sections 68A(2)(c)(vi) and 68A(2)(a), (c)(i), (c)(ii), (d), (f) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* by outlining programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance.

6.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

Council aims to encourage responsible pet ownership that protects animal health and welfare, supports the benefits of companionship, and minimises the risk of nuisance or harm to others.

CATS

The most common nuisance complaint received by Council relates to cats trespassing on private property. In many cases, these cats are feral or semi-feral and are not microchipped, making them difficult to identify.

As a result, ownership cannot be established, and no one can be held accountable for their impact on the environment.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total Customer Enquiries and complaints for Cats	35	43	22	49	48
Requests for traps and/or collection of a trapped cat	71	56	15	45	39

Council provides a free cat trapping program and enforces mandatory desexing of cats within the municipality. It also regulates the maximum number of cats that can be kept on a property under local law, and a cat curfew is in place to help reduce roaming and associated impacts.

Cat owners are encouraged to consider purchasing or building a cat enclosure to keep their pets safely contained. Information brochures are available to support owners in setting up appropriate enclosures and managing their cats responsibly.



BARKING DOGS

Dogs that bark excessively can cause significant annoyance for residents. To help address this issue, Council uses a range of programs and tools to educate pet owners, including:

- Owners of barking dogs are advised verbally and in writing on strategies to reduce excessive barking.
- Complainants are provided with a noise log to record nuisance barking, which can then be returned to Council for assessment and action.
- Community Safety and Amenity Officers advise pet owners on suitable breeds or types of dogs based on their needs and circumstances.
- A range of educational brochures on responsible pet ownership is available to the community.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total customer enquiries & complaints relating to dogs	147	234	211	167	150
Barking dog complaints	17	18	31	32	17
Dogs at large, or needing collecting	45	54	58	51	47

AT LARGE, WANDERING DOGS & DOGS IN PUBLIC PLACES

- A person in charge of a dog must immediately remove and properly dispose of any faeces their dog deposits in public places. Dog owners are also required to carry a suitable bag or device (such as a poo bag) to collect waste when out in public.
- Dog waste dispensers were installed across Pyrenees Shire townships in 2011 to support responsible disposal of dog waste.
- Dogs must be kept on a leash in business precincts and in signed areas around schools, kindergartens, and playgrounds, in accordance with the current Domestic Animals Act Order.
- Under the Domestic Animals Act 1994, dogs and cats must be registered from three months of age.



6.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS, COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT ORDERS:

Refer to Appendix 1.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

Refer to Appendix 2.

OUR CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES:

- The council provides educational materials to animal owners and supplies noise logs for barking complaints. Where required, it may issue notices, infringements, and pursue prosecution through the Magistrates' Court.
- Council operates an intensive year-round cat trapping program using 15 traps. All complaints are investigated, and appropriate action is taken.
- Objection notices are issued to owners whose cats or dogs' trespass on private property. Notices are also issued to ensure dogs are securely confined within their property.

6.3 OUR PLAN

Objective 1: Reduce cat nuisance complaints

Activity		Evaluation
Continue to enforce cat curfew	Ongoing	Keeping a register of nuisance complaints should result in fewer cat nuisance complaints.
Continue to promote and enforce desexing of cats	Ongoing	Continuing promotion.
Provide education material about cat enclosures and nuisance	Ongoing	Annual Review of website content and brochures available at Shire Office and Information Centres
Use social media as a tool to promote responsible cat ownership	Mar/Apr each year	Posts on social media platforms promoting responsible cat ownership especially around renewal time

Objective 2: Reduce dog nuisance complaints

Activity	When	Evaluation
Make available information about how to address barking dogs for both owners and neighbours and how to go about solving nuisance issues	Ongoing	Increased advice and information should result in fewer complaints. Keep a register of nuisance complaints

Utilise Council's on hold message facility, website, and social media as a promotional tool	Ongoing	Annual review of content
Continue to promote desexing of animals via website and social media	Ongoing	Annual review of content
Review signage and placement of dog faeces bag dispensers in municipality. Increase numbers in areas that require them	Ongoing	Increased availability of bag dispensers should result in less complaints about dog faeces in public places
Create a standard operating procedure for managing barking dog complaints	Year 2	Adopt procedures.



7 DOG ATTACKS

Actions in this section address sections 68A(2)(c)(iii) and 68A(2)(a), (c)(i), (ii), (d), (f) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 by outlining programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.

7.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

Pyrenees Shire Council makes every effort to prevent dog attacks within the municipality. As a rural Council, most reported incidents involve attacks on livestock. All reported dog attacks are recorded in the Council's Customer Action Database and are fully investigated.

Below is a summary of all reported dog attacks in the Shire over the past four years.

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Attack on Livestock	6	18	16	8	5
Dog on Dog	1	2	4	2	4
Dog on Person	4	2	2	8	5
Dog Rushing Person	2	2	3	2	5

7.2 OUR ORDERS, LOCAL LAWS

CURRENT ORDERS:

Refer to Appendix 1.

CURRENT LOCAL LAWS:

Refer to Appendix 2.

CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES:

All dog attacks are thoroughly investigated by authorised officers. Evidence is collected, including witness and victim statements, and interviews are conducted. Offending dogs are seized and impounded where practicable.

A brief of evidence is then prepared and reviewed to determine the most appropriate outcome for all parties and the wider community.

Depending on the seriousness of the incident and the strength of the evidence, Council may take one or more of the following actions:

- Issue notices and infringements
- Proceed with charges in the Magistrates' Court
- Seek a destruction order for the offending dog(s)
- Declare the dog(s) as menacing, dangerous, or a restricted breed



7.3 OUR PLAN

Objective 1: Reduce attacks by dogs and cats on people, livestock, pets, and wildlife.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Create and adopt a comprehensive policy and procedure around how the shire deals with and investigate dog attacks in the municipality	Year 2	Adopted policy
Court results of successful prosecutions to be released to the media as a way of raising awareness and responsible dog ownership	As they occur	As arise
Encourage the community to report dog attacks to Council by improving public awareness through media campaigns, educational material, websites, and social media.	Ongoing	Reviewed annually
Patrol areas reported dog attacks on livestock where the dogs were not identified. Conduct educational letter drops or speak to all surrounding dog owners advising them of the recent attack and of their responsibilities	ongoing	As arise

8 DANGEROUS, MENACING AND RESTRICTED BREED DOGS

Actions in this section address *sections 68A(2)(c)(vi) and 68A(2)(a), (c)(i)(c)(i), (c)(ii), (d), (f) of the Domestic Animals Acts 1994* by outlining programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs in the district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations.

8.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

Pyrenees Shire currently has no restricted breed dogs, two declared menacing dogs, and two declared dangerous dogs within the municipality.

Council officers ensure that owners of any declared dogs comply with legislative requirements by undertaking the following activities:

- Ensuring all declared dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry, a statewide database used to centrally record information about dangerous, menacing, and restricted breed dogs across Victoria.
- Conducting annual property inspections where declared dogs are kept confirming that all housing and containment requirements under the Act are being met.
- Carrying out regular patrols of industrial and commercial areas to identify potential guard dogs and advising owners of their obligations under current legislation.
- Investigating complaints received through the Dangerous Dog Hotline, a reporting mechanism introduced by the Victorian Government.

These measures ensure that declared dog requirements are properly monitored and enforced where applicable.

8.2 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CURRENT PROCEDURES:

- Council's animal registration form includes a category for declared and restricted breed dogs. Fees for these categories are significantly higher to recover the additional costs associated with auditing and managing declared dogs. These fees do not attract concession rates like other categories and act as a deterrent for keeping declared or restricted breed dogs.
- In accordance with the Act and Regulations, all declared dogs are entered into the Victorian Declared Dog Registry.

CURRENT COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES:

Refer to 8.1 Context and Current Situation

8.3 OUR PLAN

Objective 1: Develop a policy to assist in the decision-making process of declaring a dog, ensuring the policy is fair, reasonable, and consistent.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review all investigations / briefs of evidence relating to dog attacks to determine if a declaration should be sought	As occurs	Outcomes of declaration proposals
Draft and adopt a standard operating procedure / policy for declarations which standardises the process to ensure consistency and fairness	Year 3	Number of proposed declarations, appeals, and successful declarations

Objective 2: Ensure declared dogs comply with the act and regulations.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Refer to the measures outlined in section 8.1 Context and Current Situation	As occurs, ongoing and annually	Successful outcomes and recording of data to show trends Review of actions and offences detected



9 DOMESTIC ANIMAL BUSINESSES



Actions in this section address *Sections 68A(2)(c)(ii) and 68A(2)(a), (c)(i), (d), (f) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994* by outlining programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with the Act, the regulations and any related legislation.

9.1 CONTEXT AND CURRENT SITUATION

There are five types of domestic animal businesses:

- Pet Shops
- Boarding establishments
- Dog training establishments
- Shelters and pounds for dogs and cats
- Breeding and rearing establishments

There is currently one registered Domestic Animal Business in Pyrenees Shire. This is a boarding establishment located on the outskirts of Avoca. The property is audited annually prior to the renewal of its registration.

Several breeding establishments also operate within the municipality. These are exempt from Council business registration as they are members of an approved organisation, as recognised by the Minister for Agriculture under the Act.

Unlike many other Councils, Pyrenees Shire does not own or operate a pound or shelter. Instead, Council has service agreements with the City of Ballarat and Northern Grampians Shire Council, which are used as required.

Pyrenees Shire Council works with business owners to promote and maintain best practice animal welfare standards. All Domestic Animal Businesses are audited annually.

Council investigates all complaints received and takes appropriate enforcement action where non-compliance is identified.

9.2 OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Domestic Animals Act provides a prescriptive framework for the management of domestic animal businesses. Pyrenees Shire Council enforces all legislative requirements under the Act.

- All applicants are required to complete an application form and pay the relevant fee.
- Applications are referred to the Council's planning department for assessment prior to approval.
- Domestic animal businesses are comprehensively audited on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the Act and the relevant Code of Practice.

9.3 OUR PLAN

Objective 1: Ensure all Domestic Animal Businesses operate in accordance with statutory requirements and community expectations.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify non-registered Domestic Animal Businesses by monitoring social media, local advertising boards, and newspapers in the municipality (or similar, including online sites) to identify businesses selling pets / products and services. Cross reference results with the Pet Exchange Register	Ongoing	Achieve compliance. Compare number of DAB's before and after activity.
Audit all current domestic animal businesses within the municipality	Annually	Keep a register and review annually that all domestic animal businesses and breeders have been audited
Utilise Councils database to conduct proactive inspections of properties identified as having more than 3 fertile females	Ongoing	Achieve compliance.

Objective 2: Develop a standard operating procedure and guidelines for assessing applications and dealing with non-compliance issues.

Activity	When	Evaluation
Outline the process for assessing new applications. Ensure the planning and building department are consulted and included.	Year 2	Documented process and procedure.
Outline enforcement actions for persons found operating an unregistered domestic animal business.	Year 3	Documented process and procedure.

10 ANNUAL REVIEW OF PLAN AND ANNUAL REPORTING

Under *Section 68A(3) of the Domestic Animals Act*, every Council must review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and amend it where appropriate. Councils are also required to provide the Department Secretary with a copy of the plan, including any amendments, and publish an evaluation of the plan in their annual report.

Pyrenees Shire Council will continue to review its Domestic Animal Management Plan each year in accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act.

10.1 EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DOMESTIC ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Complete for each activity	
Was each activity completed?	Yes/No
Describe any changes you will make if you do that activity again.	
Was an activity not done or is now not planned to be done?	If so, why?
If an activity was unsuccessful	
Complete for each objective	
Did you meet your objective by carrying out the planned activities?	Yes/No
Describe your level of success/progress in meeting the objective.	



APPENDIX 1

PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL DOMESTIC ANIMALS ACT ORDER 2008

2640 G 46 13 November 2008

Victoria Government Gazette



Order for Mandatory desexing of cats –
section 10 **Domestic (Feral and Nuisance)**
Animals Act 1994

Pyrenees Shire Council resolved at its meeting on 19 August 2008 to exercise its power to make an Order under section 10 of the **Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994**. The Order requires mandatory desexing of first time registered cats, except for those cats exempt under 10B of **Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994**.

This will take effect on 10 April 2009.

Order for Cat curfew between the hours of
sunset and sunrise – section 25 **Domestic**
(Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994

At its meeting 19 August 2008, Pyrenees Shire Council has by resolution made an Order requiring a night curfew for cats within township zones of Avoca, Amphitheatre, Beaufort, Landsborough, Lexton, Moonambel, Snake Valley and Waubra. The hours of sunset and sunrise, to be defined by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Order requiring dogs to remain on leash –
section 26 of **Domestic (Feral and Nuisance)**
Animals Act 1994

Pyrenees Shire Council has by resolution, at its meeting 19 August 2008, made an Order requiring dogs to remain on leash within the business precincts of the townships of Avoca, Amphitheatre, Beaufort, Moonambel, Landsborough, Lexton, Snake Valley and Waubra. The dog on leash order will also apply to sign-posted areas around schools and kindergartens.

Local Law requiring a person in charge of a
dog to remove excrement – section 111 **Local Government**
Act 1989

At its meeting 19 August 2008, Pyrenees Shire Council has by resolution introduced a Local Law requiring an owner or person in charge of a dog to remove and dispose of excrement deposited in public places such as foot paths streets nature strips and reserves. A person in

charge of a dog must also carry a facility for the effective removal of dog excrement.

This will take effect upon publication in the Government Gazette and municipal newspapers.

STEPHEN CORNISH
Chief Executive Officer

APPENDIX 2

EXCERPT FROM PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL GENERAL LOCAL LAW 2019

PART 4 – ANIMALS

4.1 ANIMAL KEEPING

- (1) The owner or occupier of land must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that land any more Domestic Pets than is set out in the following table.

*Table 1: Number of animals per property/assessment**

Area	Dogs	Cats	Poultry (Excluding Roosters)	Pigeons or other small birds	Other small animals**	Livestock kept as Domestic Pets
Residential Area	2	2	10	10	5	Permit required.
Rural Area (less than 2 ha)	2	2	10	10	10	Permit required if property under 0.4 hectares or 1 acre
Rural Area (more than 2 ha)	4	4	50	20	10	

* Planning Scheme controls may also apply in some Zones in addition to the Local Law requirements.

** Including but not limited to, rabbits, guinea pigs, birds, ferrets, mice or similar, but excluding Livestock.

- (2) For the purpose of calculating the maximum limit of the number of animals kept, the progeny of any animal which is lawfully kept will be exempt for 12 weeks after their birth.
- (3) Where a person is the owner or occupier of adjoining allotments, all of the allotments shall be regarded as one assessment of land for the purposes of subclause (1).
- (4) The owner or occupier of land on which animals are kept must ensure that the animals are housed and fenced in accordance with the relevant Code of Practice.
- (5) The owner or occupier of land on which any animal is kept must not allow any animal to be kept in any way which is detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area.
- (6) Permit requirements for animal keeping do not apply to agricultural land uses operating in compliance with the *Pyrenees Planning Scheme*.
- (7) Dogs kept in a Farming Zone for the purpose of working stock are exempt from the requirement for an excess animal permit if the number of working dogs is 10 or less.
- (8) Domestic pets are not permitted to be kept on land zoned Commercial or Industrial under the *Pyrenees Planning Scheme*.

In determining whether to issue a permit, Council may consider:

- (a) the location of the land;

- (b) the number, type and purpose of keeping the animals;
- (c) the land-use of the applicant's land and that of adjoining allotments;
- (d) the suitability of the land for housing and fencing the animals;
- (e) any likely impact on neighbourhood amenity; or
- (f) any other matter the Authorised Officer or delegated officer reasonably believes is relevant to the application.

Infringement Notice: 3 penalty units

Court penalty: 10 penalty units

4.2 ANIMAL LITTER

(1) The owner or person in charge of an animal in a Public Place must:

- (a) carry a litter device suitable for the collection of any excrement from that animal;
- (b) produce the device on request by an Authorised Officer; and
- (c) immediately collect and dispose of any excrement from that animal into a waste receptacle.

Infringement Notice: 2 penalty units

Court penalty: 10 penalty units