



Brimbank
City Council



Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

September 2025



Foreword

Brimbank City Council would like to introduce you to Fred and Klaus, the two German Shepherds featured on the front cover of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029, Fred is the serious one with the intense stare.

They, together with another litter mate were rescued in late 2024 following a serious incident, at the time they were approximately 4 days old, their eyes had yet to open. Unfortunately, their mother could not be saved. The situation was daunting and their chances of survival were far from guaranteed.

Council Animal Management Officers were up for the challenge and refused to give up on them. A carer was immediately organised and the program of sleepless nights and hourly bottle feeds with special formula began, fingers were crossed all around that the three pups would pull through.

8 months later, all three are happy, healthy and thriving and have found new adopted homes with loving owners, safe to say they beat the odds.

Success stories like this don't happen every day, often the outcomes are far from happy. Buts Council strive to always achieve the best possible outcomes, for all animals, owners and the Community.

This is achieved through Council programs and initiatives, and education and enforcement of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 for the benefit of pets and the Community, which are outlined in this plan.

So, on behalf of Fred and Klaus, welcome to Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029.



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Brimbank City Council respectfully acknowledges and recognises the Wurundjeri and Bunurong Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of this land and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and future.

Introduction

Owning a pet brings with it great benefits to the family through both physical and mental health advantages. With these benefits comes the responsibility to care for the pet's health and wellbeing and to ensure no negative impacts from the pets' activities or interactions with the wider Community. Council seeks to assist pet owners in fulfilling these responsibilities, to administer and when required enforce the appropriate Legislation, being the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 outlines the services, programs and policies that Council will use to administer the Domestic Animals Act 1994 in accordance with Section 68A of that Act. The Legislative framework governing the development and requirements of this Plan can be found at Appendix 1.

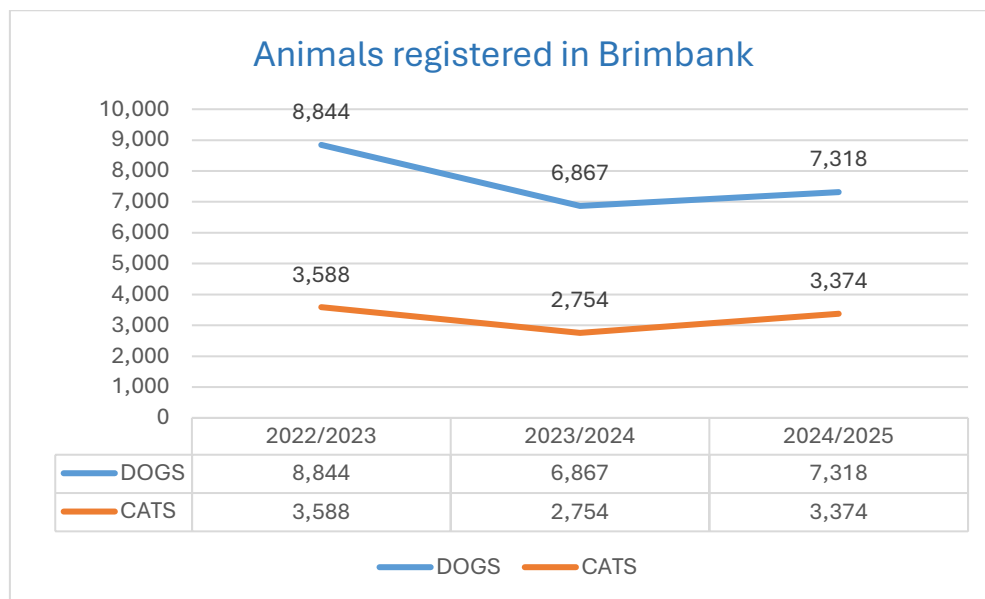
This Domestic Animal Management Plan includes actions to:

- Promote responsible pet ownership and assist owners to ensure a great quality of life for their pet, the owner and the community.
- Increase the likelihood that lost animals are reunited with their owners and reduce the number of dogs and cats in shelters and being euthanised.
- Minimise animal nuisance and possible danger of attacks created by some dogs and cats.
- Protect, as far as possible, wildlife and biodiverse areas.
- Ensure Domestic Animal Businesses within the Municipality are complying with all relevant requirements of Legislation.
- Ensure Authorised Council Officers are suitably skilled and trained to deliver high quality, responsive and effective animal management services.



Dogs and cats and their management in Brimbank

Financial and cost-of-living pressures have affected Registration numbers in Brimbank. Council, through programs and initiatives is seeking to build on the recent increases to ensure that the percentage of owned pets that are registered continues to rise.



Animal Management Staff

Animal Management services for the City of Brimbank are delivered by a team of 4 Animal Management Officers, they are supported by necessary administrative staff. Currently animal pound and after-hours animal collection services are provided via contract with the Lost Dogs Home.

In 2024/2025 Animal Management officers responded to 2942 complaints and issues raised within Brimbank City Council. These complaints included animal nuisance complaints, issues of dog aggression and attacks, animals wandering, dog barking and feral and semi-owned cats. At the time of preparing this plan recruitment is commencing for an additional Animal Management Officer for the Municipality to increase staffing to 5 Officers.

A review is planned during DAMP 26-29 to ensure staffing and resources are adequate to continue responsiveness to the Community and maximise opportunities for proactive educational and engagement activities. This also recognises the high-pressure work environment for staff. Council supports staff via ongoing training in animal handling and conflict resolution and de-escalation. Staff welfare and health is vitally important through employee assistance programs and support and debriefs after serious incidents. Brimbank has experienced an increase in instances of dog aggression and bites/attacks recently, this trend is not isolated to Brimbank but is common across many Municipalities. The challenge for Brimbank is to address these incidents according to Legislation and seek to reduce these incidents in the future.

Achievements from the previous Domestic Animal Management Plan

The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 (**DAMP 21-25**) had several areas of focus for Council, these included delivered initiatives, programs and practices in addition to investigation and benchmarking of future initiatives and programs. These areas of investigation in conjunction with Community sentiment relayed via previous consultation and a recent survey form the basis of focus areas and initiatives for Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 (**DAMP 26-29**).

Focus of DAMP 21-25

- increasing compliance with cat and dog registration requirements.
- initiatives to reduce stray cat populations and associated euthanasia rates.
- issues associated with barking dogs, owner control of dogs when in public places, and dogs not confined to their property.
- enhancing the understanding of the changed scope of the service within council and partnerships with relevant departments to address common service needs and objectives.
- the provision of pound and shelter services.
- planning of provision for dogs in public open space.
- optimising partnerships with the community to achieve DAMP recommendations.
- enhancing communication with CALD communities that often have divergent attitudes and experiences relating to pets, dogs in particular.
- support to pet owners in crisis situations.

Outcomes of DAMP 21-25

- Despite a decrease that coincided with increased societal financial pressures, the latest figures show Animal registration figures improving and trending upward, this trend and improvement to be a focus of ongoing initiatives and programs.
- Over the span of DAMP 21-25, 260 pets were desexed under Council's program of subsidised desexing to residents where costs were heavily reduced to the residents with cooperation of Council.
- Service improvements and availability of forms and process via internet to provide easier access to services and programs.
- Commencement of plans to relocate and expand animal holding facility to improve access to services and allow local collection of animals to be reclaimed.
- Ongoing training of Animal Management staff to ensure currency of skills and skill improvement.
- Investigation and benchmarking completed regarding cat confinement/curfew initiatives in other Municipalities to determine the best approach for Brimbank.
- Increased Cooperation, engagement and integration with other Council units to achieve best results.
- Relationship building with local external stakeholders and providers to assist residents.

Initiatives of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029

Registration and identification

Under the Domestic Animals Act 1994, every cat and dog over 3 months old must be registered with Council and must wear an identification marker when outside of their home. All cats and dogs must be microchipped before they can be registered. Brimbank City Council also has an existing order made under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 that requires all dogs and cats are desexed prior to their initial registration with Council, unless exempt. The exemptions that are provided for are in line with the Act and relate to the health of the animal and the owner's membership of applicable organisations. This historical order was implemented to address over population issues and has been in effect since 2009.

Despite the advantages of registration in ensuring lost animals are quickly returned to their owners, not all animals are registered. Council continues to work hard to raise the understanding of why a pet should be registered and to increase registration rates.

Our Goal	To increase the % of owned dogs & cats that are registered within Brimbank.
Our measure of success	Yearly increase in the % of owned dogs & cats that are registered within Brimbank.

How will we achieve this goal

#	Actions	When
1.1	Partner with vets and other Community stakeholders, e.g. pet shops, to provide information to the community on the benefits of registration and microchipping.	2026-2027 and ongoing as a priority throughout DAMP 2026-2029
1.2	Map cat and dog ownership on Council's GIS system to identify areas of low registration and target in door knock programs.	2026 - mapping. 2027 and ongoing - targeted campaign
1.3	Use all available communication channels to animal owners throughout the year and in annual registration (e.g. SMS).	Ongoing

#	Actions	When
1.4	Finalise investigations and business case to consider expansion of local animal Holding facility, allowing better service and interaction with the Community and removing a barrier to animal reclaim and registration, being the current need for all owners to attend Lost Dogs Home in North Melbourne. Increasing reclaim rates and pet registration.	2026.
1.5	Animal Management staff to attend all available Community festivals with branded marquee highlighting the benefits of animal registration for both cats & dogs. The same marquee to be used across the Municipality at Off-leash parks on weekends to contact and interact with dog owners and share the benefits of registration and overall responsible pet ownership.	Ongoing



Responsible Pet Ownership & Reducing Nuisance

Pets and people can live together and pets provide great benefits to their owners and enrich their lives. However, this requires pet owners to be aware of their obligations and ensure that their furry family member does not cause nuisance to other residents and the community.

This includes:

- Through responsible supervision of dogs when out in the Community and always cleaning up faeces or refuse from their dog.
- Ensuring their dog is socialised and obedient when utilising Council's network of off-leash dog parks.
- Limiting possible nuisance to neighbours from barking by addressing excessive barking at the first opportunity.
- Ensuring their cat does not cause nuisance to neighbouring properties or impact local wildlife.

Cats - background

Information obtained by Council during the consultation period for **DAMP 21-25** showed a high level of concern for cats creating a nuisance, this was described in terms of wandering, entering another property and urinating or defecating, disturbing and/or fighting with neighbouring pets by wandering on neighbouring properties and through predation and injuring local and native wildlife. This information led to Council investigating and benchmarking other Municipalities approaches to cat curfews and confinement policies during **DAMP 21-25**.

Over the life of **DAMP 21-25** and in the early stages of preparing **DAMP 26-29** Council continued to receive comment and submissions regarding these issues. A further survey was conducted in the development of DAMP 26-29 in June -July 2025.

Results of recent survey regarding cats in the Community 2025

% of respondents who have been negatively impacted by wandering cats

Do you have a current or recent issue with...	% response
Cats that are not confined to their property.	78.05
Cats that wander into my garden	73.17
Cats creating a nuisance (e.g. -killing wildlife, fighting etc).	73.98

The benchmarking and investigation undertaken by Council during DAMP 21-25 looked at cat curfews vs different cat containment policies in other areas.

Cat curfews were found, for the most part to be unenforceable and did not address the above concerns from residents that can occur at all times, not just at night. Many Municipalities that have implemented curfews have reported similar experiences and outcomes.

Measures from other Councils implemented recently have addressed these concerns through a Policy requiring cats to be confined to their owner's property at all times.

Brimbank proposes to implement a Cat Containment Initiative requiring that all cats are contained to the property of their owners at all times, this Initiative will commence on January 1, 2028.

Council recognises this to be a large impost on cat owners and brings with it financial costs in addition to a drastic change in practices for the cat owner, the implementation date of January 1, 2028, will allow cat owners the necessary time to carry out works required to contain their cats to their properties. It will also allow Council and Animal Management Officers 2 years to assist and advise owners with options for containing their cats and for an extensive media campaign to be undertaken to advise of this change.

This Initiative is reliant on an order made under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and subsequent provisions contained within Council's Local Law. Council is required to implement a new Local Law to come into effect on January 1, 2028. This time frame will allow Council to bring the 2 pieces of Regulation and Legislation into effect on a common date and facilitate the assistance, advice and promotion of the Initiative.

A period of warnings to cat owners for breaches of the order will be undertaken following 1 January 2028 prior to enforcement by way of infringements being issued.

Owning a pet, whether it be a dog or cat brings great benefit to their owners, however Council and more importantly the pet owners have an obligation to ensure that these pets do not negatively impact the community, as is the case through cat nuisance issues.

Other measures will be implemented during **DAMP 26-29** to address animal nuisance issues, and are included in the following table, however Council recognises the Cat Containment Initiative to be of greatest impact and importance to the Community.

Dog Nuisance

Dog nuisance complaints feature dog barking complaints and owners not collecting their dog's faeces while in public.

The process for resolution of barking dog complaints relies on State Legislation requires extensive evidence through logs to be presented in Court, as a Magistrate has power to make Orders to resolve barking nuisance. Council has made resources available to residents via its website so that logs can be commenced prior to lodging their complaint, reducing the time they experience the nuisance. Once a complaint is lodged the owner of the alleged nuisance dog also received information on how to reduce the barking of their dog and the nuisance.

Collection of dog faeces is covered under Council's Local Law, where owners must carry and use items to collect and dispose of their dog's waste. As Officers need to identify offenders to take further actions increased proactive patrols of walking trails and dog parks are planned together with media programs.

Our Goal	To address the instances dogs & cats within Brimbank causing nuisance to other residents and the Community.
Our measure of success	Community satisfaction with implemented programs, initiatives and activities and positive resolution of nuisance complaints.

#	Actions	When
2.1	Work with the Lost Dogs Home, local vets and other stakeholders to continue and expand existing opportunities for these groups to carry out subsidised desexing in conjunction with Council.	Ongoing
2.2	Audit dog off-leash parks for safety including fencing and signage in conjunction with Council's Urban design team	Ongoing
2.3	Audit the number and quality of Council's cat cages to ensure they meet current and future demand and cat welfare needs.	2026
2.4	Attend community events and use social media to promote responsible ownership including: • Desexing programs and initiatives • Benefits of Registration • how to reduce dog barking • dog off-leash parks and areas including new sites, re-developments and upgrades. • dog leashing requirements and effective control of dogs • advise and assist cat owners with information leading up to the 1 January 2028 commencement of the Cat containment initiative and continue providing information and assistance following implementation.	Ongoing

#	Actions	When
2.5	Deliver a targeted program of education to advise residents of the implementation of the Cat Containment Initiative, including: - the benefits of the initiative in reducing the impact on wildlife and the Community from wandering cats. - advising cat owners of the available options to ensure their cat can be contained to their property, e.g. cat enclosures and treatments to contain cats.	2026 and 2027
2.6	In conjunction with production of new Local Law 2028, prepare necessary order under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and Gazettal for implementation of the Cat Containment Initiative, 1 january,2028.	2027
2.7	Following implementation of the Cat Containment Initiative, continue to assist and educate residents and initiate a warning period prior to infringements being issued for breaches.	2028-2029

Programs to address over-population and euthanasia rates

The focus of Animal Management services and programs within Brimbank in this regard is to ensure that all animals are given the chance to be reclaimed by their owners or rehomed if they are not reclaimed. Through partnerships with our service provider, being the Lost Dogs Home, all eligible animals are given this opportunity with animals remaining in care for as long as needed to find a new home.

Euthanasia of any animal is a last resort and only carried out under the provisions of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 in the event the animal is:

- diseased or for other health concerns as determined by a veterinarian
- the animal is considered feral or uncontrollable
- the animal has been impounded or surrendered due to aggression, as these animals are not to be rehomed under the Domestic Animals Act 1994

Impounded animal outcomes for Brimbank

Outcome	23/24 financial year	24/25 financial year
eligible* impounded animals reclaimed	22.99 %	28.77 %
eligible+ impounded animals rehomed	94.67 %	89.43 %

*eligible animals in this category are those animals available to be reclaimed, animals that are diseased, feral or uncontrollable are excluded.

+eligible animals in this category are those animals that remain available to be rehomed after not being reclaimed.

The above figures are within target ranges but Council recognises that further improvements are always possible and strived for. Whilst reclaiming figures have improved, current financial pressures on households impact these figures and have also influenced the reduction in rehoming.

Amendments to the Domestic Animals Act through Puppy farm Legislation in recent years have sought to address the over-population situation regarding dogs, however this pressure still exists around cats. As a Council with a pre-registration desexing order in place Council recognises this as a focus area. Programs and initiatives in this area have been in place during **DAMP 21-25** and will continue and seek to be strengthened or improved to further deliver on this issue this includes Council's subsidised sexing programs. The proposed Cat Containment Initiative will seek further improvement as it is recognised that wandering cats are responsible for increases to the cat population in addition to the impact of feral/semi-owned cats through breeding.

Our Goal	To increase reclaim rates of pets in Brimbank and continue to work with partners to rehome all eligible pets and implement programs and initiatives to address over-population.
Our measure of success	Increase in reclaim rates of animals & maintaining or improving on high rate of rehoming and feedback to be received regarding programs to address over population.

#	Actions	When
3.1	Work with the Lost Dogs Home, local vets and other stakeholders to continue and expand existing opportunities for these groups to carry out subsidised desexing in conjunction with Council.	Ongoing
3.2	Map complaints of feral/semi-owned cat complaints on Council's GIS system to enable implementation of trapping programs to address feral cats in conjunction with desexing initiatives in targeted areas.	2026
3.3	Finalise investigations and business case to consider expansion of local animal Holding facility, allowing better service and interaction with the Community and removing a barrier to animal reclaim and registration, being the current need for all owners to attend Lost Dogs Home in North Melbourne. Increasing reclaim rates and pet registration.	2026
3.4	Attend community events and use social media to promote responsible ownership including: - Desexing programs and initiatives - Benefits of adopting pets in general and specifically the pets and programs offered by partner Lost Dogs Home, previous events have featured pets available for adoption from LDH being at the Animal Management Marquee. - advise and assist cat owners with information leading up to the 1 January 2028 commencement of the Cat containment initiative and continue providing information and assistance following implementation.	Ongoing
3.5	Post-implementation of the Cat Containment Initiative, re-examine GIS systems and other Council databases to assess the initiative and its effect.	2028-2029

Dog attacks and managing dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs

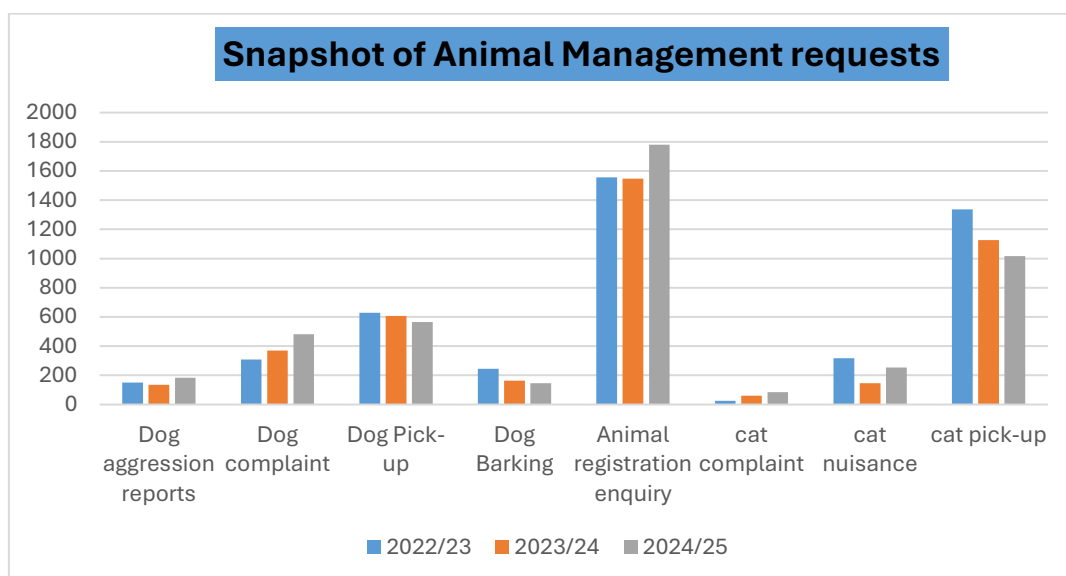
Dog attacks have terrible impacts on everyone involved, including victims, families, dog owners and witnesses. Victims are often left with significant hospital or vet bills and can suffer physical and ongoing emotional trauma. The owners of attacking dogs are liable for prosecution and restrictions being placed on the attacking dog in public places. If necessary, Council or a court may order the attacking dog to be euthanised.

Brimbank City Council, like many Municipalities across the State has seen a recent increase in the instances of dog attack and reports of dog aggression, this increase has been evident over the past 12 months.

The reason for this increase is believed to be the increase in dogs purchased during COVID as companion pets. These pets are now at an age where they are able to inflict serious injuries from acts of aggression or attack. In many cases this is paired with a lack of socialisation and/or formal training being conducted with the animal. There may be several reasons for this lack of training however financial and time pressure on families is a common reason given.

Where sufficient evidence is available and supported by Legislation Council seeks to hold dog owners responsible for attacks and acts of aggression. Complaints are investigated and action taken either via Infringement, Prosecution or Menacing/Dangerous dog declaration, or a mixture of these actions. This will continue, however during DAMP 26-29, further emphasis will be placed on the prevention of acts of aggression and attack to reduce the impact and harm experienced by victims and to ensure community safety.

Local Council initiatives are supported by the State Government safety around dogs program delivered to primary schools. Councils pay \$4.50 from each animal registration to the State Government to make this valuable program possible. Council Animal Management Officers will also attend schools if invited to supplement this program and offer further education on Responsible pet ownership and dog safety advice.



Our Goal	To reduce the instances of dog aggression or attack reported to Council and to ensure appropriate actions are taken on all complaints received.
Our measure of success	Reduction in the number of aggression/attack reports received by Council, and assessment of Infringement and Prosecution data regarding actions taken.

#	Actions	When
4.1	Investigate possible models & programs of providing dog training opportunities to residents & their dogs, whether via online delivery of programs through Council website or face-to-face training opportunities with partners that may subsidise training with Council assistance.	2026
4.2	Build on existing relationships with vets to encourage them to notify Council if they become aware of aggressive dogs or concerning behaviours.	Ongoing
4.3	Publicise via Council media portals, information on: • what "effective control" of a dog means • Responsibilities of dog owners in the community, e.g. at off leash parks, near playgrounds, around bike paths • The benefits of obedience training and socialisation for the dog, the family and the Community • the implications for their dog and themselves if their dog attacks a person or animal; and • how to report dog attacks.	Ongoing
4.4	Service review of Animal Management services and if workforce shortages are identified make appropriate applications via Council Budget process for additional Officer(s)	2026
4.5	Ensure all staff have the necessary training and skills in Investigations and Court procedures to investigate all matters appropriately.	Ongoing
4.6	All declared Dangerous, Menacing and any Restricted breed dogs are inspected regularly for compliance with housing and keeping requirements.	Ongoing

Domestic animal businesses

Domestic animal Businesses include pet shops, dog Breeding establishments, Dog & cat boarding premises and dog training facilities. Council's current animal Holding facility is also classed as a domestic Animal Business.

These businesses must comply with the relevant Code of Practice made under the Domestic Animals Act 1994. These codes cover animal housing and health, staff training and qualifications, disease control and cleaning and maintenance programs.

There are currently 6 Domestic Animal Businesses operating within Brimbank.

Our Goal	To ensure all current and any future Domestic Animal Businesses operating within Brimbank are compliant with all requirements of Legislation and operated to a high standard.
Our measure of success	Successful completion of annual inspections and other periodic inspections, investigation results in the event a complaint is received.

#	Actions	When
5.1	Conduct annual audit of all Domestic Animal Business premises and pro-active spot-check inspections to ensure all businesses are operating to the expected standards of all Codes of practice and Legislation.	Ongoing
5.2	Liaise with Council's Planning department to ensure all new applications for Domestic Animal Businesses are compliant with Domestic Animals Act and Code of Practice requirements.	Ongoing
5.3	Ensure all aspects of Council's relocated and expanded animal holding facility are compliant with Legislative requirements, including in design and construction stages and during ongoing operation.	2026 & ongoing

Building the capability & capacity of our Animal Management Officers

The most important and vital part of the Animal Management Services provided by Brimbank City Council is the staff. The Council and the Community is currently served by a current staff of 5 dedicated Authorised Animal Management Officers.

Their responsibilities include stray animal collection, investigation of complaints, investigation of dog attack reports and preparing court documents if required, proactive patrols of parks and off-leash areas, cleaning of Councils animal holding facility and attendance after hours for emergencies and urgent animal collection.

Council is committed to ensuring the staff have access to all possible and required training and resources for the safe and effective completion of their roles and so that they can provide the highest quality services to the Brimbank Community.

Our Goal	To ensure there are sufficient staff, trained to the necessary levels with the appropriate resources to provide quality Animal Management Services to the Brimbank Community.
Our measure of success	Assessment of completed requests and time frames of completion, regular staff assessments in addition to bi-annual reporting on selected animal management statistics

#	Actions	When
6.1	Ensure all Legislated training needs are met and that all areas requiring ongoing training to maintain compliance are current at all times. Including specialised training for critical incidents and in support of Victoria Police operations and all OH&S requirements to perform role safely	Ongoing
6.2	Ensure all staff are trained and all Standard operating procedures updated for the possible expanded animal holding facility.	2026
6.3	Carry out service review to determine if staffing levels are adequate to meet demands, community expectations and Statutory requirements, if required budgetary submissions to be made for any additional staff identified.	2026-2027 budget year
6.4	Ensure staff have the opportunity to attend industry training events/seminars and programs to maintain and develop skills	ongoing

#	Actions	When
6.5	Ensure existing Council support programs for staff health and wellbeing are available, offered and effective to support staff in dealing with their roles or critical incidents	ongoing

Implementation, monitoring and annual review

#	Action	2026	2027	2028	2029
1.1	Partner with vets and other Community stakeholders, e.g. pet shops, to provide information to the community on the benefits of registration and microchipping.	X	X	X	X
1.2	Map cat and dog ownership on Council's GIS system to identify areas of low registration and target in door knock programs	X	X	X	X
1.3	Use all available communication channels to animal owners throughout the year and in annual registration (e.g. SMS).	X	X	X	X
1.4	Finalise investigations and business case to consider expansion of local animal Holding facility, allowing better service and interaction with the Community and removing a barrier to animal reclaim and registration, being the current need for all owners to attend Lost Dogs Home in North Melbourne. Increasing reclaim rates and pet registration.	X			
1.5	Animal Management staff to attend all available Community festivals with branded marquee highlighting the benefits of animal registration for both cats & dogs. The same marquee to be used across the Municipality at Off-leash parks on weekends to contact and interact with dog owners and share the benefits of registration and overall responsible pet ownership.	X	X	X	X
2.1	Work with the Lost Dogs Home, local vets and other stakeholders to continue and expand existing opportunities for these groups to carry out subsidised desexing in conjunction with Council.	X	X	X	X
2.2	Audit dog off-leash parks for safety including fencing and signage in conjunction with Council's Urban design team	X	X	X	X

#	Action	2026	2027	2028	2029
2.3	Audit the number and quality of Council's cat cages to ensure they meet current and future demand and cat welfare needs.	X		X	
2.4	Attend community events and use social media to promote responsible ownership including: • Desexing programs and initiatives • Benefits of Registration • how to reduce dog barking • dog off-leash parks and areas including new sites, re-developments and upgrades. • dog leashing requirements and effective control of dogs advise and assist cat owners with information leading up to the 1 January 2028 commencement of the Cat containment initiative and continue providing information and assistance following implementation.	X	X	X	X
2.5	Deliver a targeted program of education to advise residents of the implementation of the Cat Containment Initiative, including: • the benefits of the initiative in reducing the impact on wildlife and the Community from wandering cats. advising cat owners of the available options to ensure their cat can be contained to their property, e.g. cat enclosures and treatments to contain cats.	X	X		
2.6	In conjunction with production of new Local Law 2028, prepare necessary order under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and Gazettal for implementation of the Cat Containment Initiative, 1 january,2028.		X		
2.7	Following implementation of the Cat Containment Initiative, continue to assist and educate residents and initiate a warning period prior to infringements being issued for breaches.			X	X

#	Action	2026	2027	2028	2029
3.1	Work with the Lost Dogs Home, local vets and other stakeholders to continue and expand existing opportunities for these groups to carry out subsidised desexing in conjunction with Council.	X	X	X	X
3.2	Map complaints of feral/semi-owned cat complaints on Council's GIS system to enable implementation of trapping programs to address feral cats in conjunction with desexing initiatives in targeted areas.	X			
3.3	Finalise investigations and business case to consider expansion of local animal Holding facility, allowing better service and interaction with the Community and removing a barrier to animal reclaim and registration, being the current need for all owners to attend Lost Dogs Home in North Melbourne. Increasing reclaim rates and pet registration.	X			
3.4	Attend community events and use social media to promote responsible ownership including: - Desexing programs and initiatives - Benefits of adopting pets in general and specifically the pets and programs offered by partner Lost Dogs Home, previous events have featured pets available for adoption from LDH being at the Animal Management Marquee. advise and assist cat owners with information leading up to the 1 January 2028 commencement of the Cat containment initiative and continue providing information and assistance following implementation.	X	X	X	X
3.5	Post-implementation of the Cat Containment Initiative, re-examine GIS systems and other Council databases to assess the initiative and its effect.			X	X

#	Action	2026	2027	2028	2029
4.1	Investigate possible models & programs of providing dog training opportunities to residents & their dogs, whether via online delivery of programs through Council website or face-to-face training opportunities with partners that may subsidise training with Council assistance.	X	X		
4.2	Build on existing relationships with vets to encourage them to notify Council if they become aware of aggressive dogs or concerning behaviours.	X	X	X	X
4.3	Publicise via Council media portals, information on: • what "effective control" of a dog means • Responsibilities of dog owners in the community, e.g. at off leash parks, near playgrounds, around bike paths • The benefits of obedience training and socialisation for the dog, the family and the Community • the implications for their dog and themselves if their dog attacks a person or animal; and how to report dog attacks.	X	X	X	X
4.4	Service review of Animal Management services and if workforce shortages are identified make appropriate applications via Council Budget process for additional Officer(s)	X	X		

#	Action	2026	2027	2028	2029
4.5	Ensure all staff have the necessary training and skills in Investigations and Court procedures to investigate all matters appropriately.	X	X	X	X
4.6	All declared Dangerous, Menacing and any Restricted breed dogs are inspected regularly for compliance with housing and keeping requirements.	X	X	X	X
5.1	Conduct annual audit of all Domestic Animal Business premises and pro-active spot-check inspections to ensure all businesses are operating to the expected standards of all Codes of practice and Legislation.	X	X	X	X
5.2	Liaise with Council's Planning department to ensure all new applications for Domestic Animal Businesses are compliant with Domestic Animals Act and Code of Practice requirements.	X	X	X	X
5.3	Ensure all aspects of Council's relocated and expanded animal holding facility are compliant with Legislative requirements, including in design and construction stages and during ongoing operation.	X	X	X	X
6.1	Ensure all Legislated training needs are met and that all areas requiring ongoing training to maintain compliance are current at all times. Including specialised training for critical incidents and in support of Victoria Police operations and all OH&S requirements to perform role safely	X	X	X	X
6.2	Ensure all staff are trained and all Standard operating procedures updated for the expanded animal holding facility.	X			
6.3	Carry out workload assessment to determine if staffing levels are adequate to meet demands, community expectations and Statutory requirements, if required budgetary submissions to be made for any additional staff identified.	X	X		
6.4	Ensure staff have the opportunity to attend industry training events/seminars and programs to maintain and develop skills	X	X	X	X

#	Action	2026	2027	2028	2029
6.5	Ensure existing Council support programs for staff health and wellbeing are available, offered and effective to support staff in dealing with their roles or critical incidents	X	X	X	X

In addition to the requirement to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan under the *Domestic Animal Act 1994*, Council must also:

- review the Plan annually to ensure actions and priorities are still relevant and can be completed within available resources

undertake a major review of the plan in 4 years (2029).

This is to ensure that Council has met all goals set out in **DAMP 26-29** and allows flexibility to respond to any identified issues or further opportunities that may arise over the four-year period.



Appendix 1: Domestic Animal Act, 1994 requirements for a Domestic Animal Management Plan & current Brimbank specific Legislation

Section 68A Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans

1. Each Council must, in consultation with the Secretary (of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions) prepare a domestic animal management plan at the end period of each four years.
2. A domestic animal management plan prepared by a Council must:
 1. 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 the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and
 2. outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and
 3. outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district:
 - i. to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and
 - ii. to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and
 - iii. to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
 - iv. to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
 - v. to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
 - vi. to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
 - vii. to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and
4. provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's 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; and
5. provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
6. provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the Domestic Animal Management Plan.



3. Every Council must:

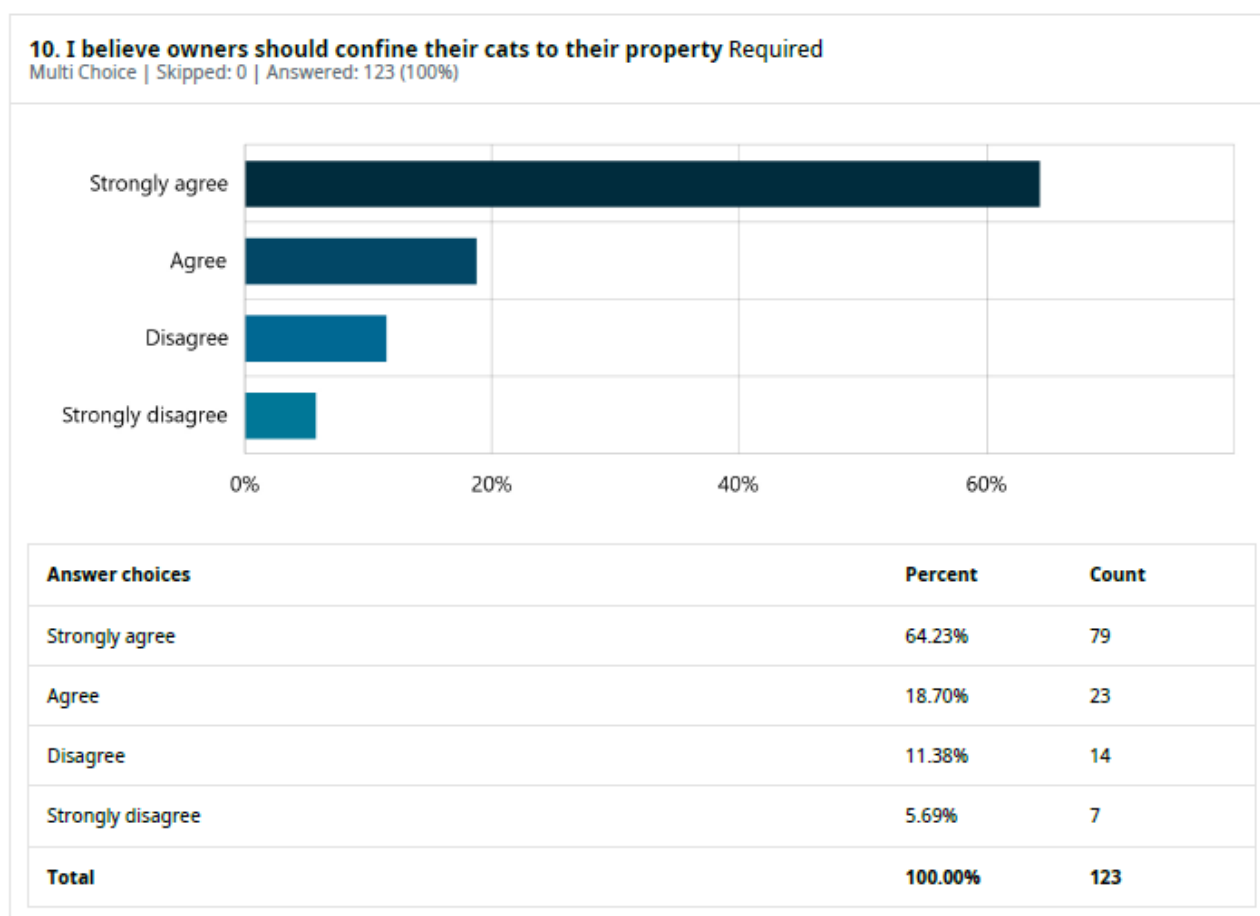
1. review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the Domestic Animal Management Plan; and
2. provide the Secretary with a copy of the Domestic Animal Management Plan and any amendments to the Domestic Animal Management Plan; and
3. publish an evaluation of its implementation of the Domestic Animal Management Plan in its annual report.

Appendix 2: How Brimbank developed DAMP 26-29

Development of this Domestic Animal Management Plan actually started during the extensive Community consultation that was undertaken during **DAMP 21-25**. This Consultation led to Council investigating further actions, programs and initiatives during **DAMP 21-25** to shape **DAMP 26-29**.

Prior to commencement of works on this Plan a further community survey was conducted to assess Community feelings and feedback on issues affecting Animal Management within Brimbank City Council.

These survey results reinforced the Community's feelings particularly in the area of Cat Containment, and it is this feedback together with investigations and benchmarking that has delivered the proposed Cat Containment initiative, based on your feedback as seen below.



The Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2029 will be available for a period of further consultation and this additional Community feedback and comment on the draft will be considered and possible changes made prior the final Plan being produced.

Appendix 3: Animal Management Staff training Brimbank City Council

QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING DEVELOPMENT					
TRAINING OF AUTHORISED OFFICERS	Animal Management Team Leader	AMO	AMO	AMO	AMO
Cert IV Animal Control/Gov't Reg./ Relevant Industry Experience	X	X	X	X	X
Customer Service Training/ Dealing with Difficult Customers	Bi-annual	Bi- annual	Bi- annual	Bi- annual	Bi- annual
Aggressive Dog Handling Training	R-Yr 2	R-Yr 2	R-Yr 2	R-Yr 2	R-Yr 2
Bite/Baton Stick Training	R-Yr 1	R-Yr 1	R-Yr 1	R-Yr 1	R-Yr 1
Investigation/Prosecution/ Statement Taking Training	R-Yr 2	R-Yr 2	R-Yr 2	R-Yr 2	R-Yr 2
Writing-Reports/ Procedures/General Correspondence	Bi-annual	Bi- annual	Bi- annual	Bi- annual	Bi- annual
Manual handling	R-Yr 3	R-Yr 3	R-Yr 3	R-Yr 3	R-Yr 3

LEGEND: X = Completed; Yr # = Year to be renewed (R); AMO=Animal Management Officer

Appendix 4: Legislation & Current Specific Orders in Brimbank

All Municipalities are governed by the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and associated Regulations as the primary pieces of Legislation relating to Animal Management across the State.

However other Legislative tools are available to Councils to address local concerns and issues, these are made under powers of the Local Government Act regarding Councils General Local Law No. 2 2018, and under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 regarding Orders in place for Brimbank City Council.

Local Law 2018 provisions relating to Animals

18. Limits on Animals

18.1. Without a permit, an occupier of any land must not keep on that land –

- more than 6 different species of animal;
- any agricultural animal unless the land is securely fenced and has a minimum area of 2 hectares for the first animal and a further 0.5 hectares for each additional animal; or
- more than the maximum number of animals as set out in the following table –

Type of Animal	Maximum number allowed on non-farming land	Maximum allowed per dwelling in a multi-residential development	Maximum number allowed on farming land
Dogs	2	2	6
Cat	2	2	4
Cockatoo/Galah	Permit required	Not permitted	20
Pigeon (racing)	60	Not permitted	100
Pigeon (other than racing)	10	Not permitted	20
Poultry	10	Not permitted	No limit
Roosters	Not permitted	Not permitted	20
Birds other than specified	60	5	100
Agricultural Animal	Not permitted	Not permitted	as per 18.1(b) restrictions

19. Animal Housing

- 19.1. The occupier of any land on which animals are kept must provide housing which is, in the opinion of an authorised officer, appropriate in the circumstances, taking into consideration –
- a) the type of animals to be kept;
 - b) the dimensions and location of the shelter;
 - c) the number of animals to be kept;
 - d) the capacity to maintain it in a sanitary and inoffensive condition;
 - e) the capacity to protect neighbours from animal noise;
 - f) the minimum distance between any enclosure used to house animals and any boundary fence, being 900mm from the boundary fence line to allow cleaning around the enclosure; and
 - g) any other matters which Council considers relevant and has communicated to the occupier of land in a Notice to Comply issued in accordance with clause 49 of this Local Law.

Infringement Penalty: 4 Penalty Units

- 19.2. All animal housing must be maintained so that –
- a) all manure and other waste is removed and/or treated as often as necessary so that it does not cause a nuisance to neighbours or conditions that are, in the opinion of an authorised officer, offensive;
 - b) all manure and other waste is stored in a fly and vermin proof receptacle unit, until removed from the premises or otherwise disposed of, so as not to create a nuisance to neighbours or conditions that are, in the opinion of an authorised officer, offensive;
 - c) the ground surrounding the housing is drained, so not to cause flooding or ponding of water;
 - d) the area of land within 3 metres of an animal housing area or structure, is kept free from dry grass, weeds, refuse, rubbish or other material capable of harbouring vermin;
 - e) all food, grain or chaff is kept in vermin proof receptacles; and
 - f) animal housing areas are kept thoroughly cleaned and maintained at all times in a clean and sanitary manner, so as not to cause a nuisance to neighbours or conditions that are, in the opinion of an authorised officer, offensive.

Infringement Penalty: 4 Penalty Units

20. Adequate Fencing

The occupier of land on which an animal is kept must ensure that the land is adequately fenced to prevent the escape of the animal from the land, and to prevent any part of the animal from protruding beyond the fence line.

Infringement Penalty: 4 Penalty Units

27. Animals on Council Property

- 27.1. A person in charge of an animal on Council property or in a public place must –
- a) carry a suitable device for the collection of any excrement from that animal;
 - b) produce the suitable device on demand by an authorised officer; and
 - c) collect and dispose of any excrement from that animal in a proper manner, so as not to cause a nuisance to any other person.

Infringement Penalty: 4 Penalty Units

Orders made under the Domestic Animals Act relating to Brimbank

Brimbank is one of only six Victorian municipalities which have an order in place under Section 10A of the Act, making it compulsory for all animals to be de-sexed prior to registration, unless exempt. The exemptions that are provided for are in line with the Act and relate to the health of the animal and the owner's membership of applicable organisations.

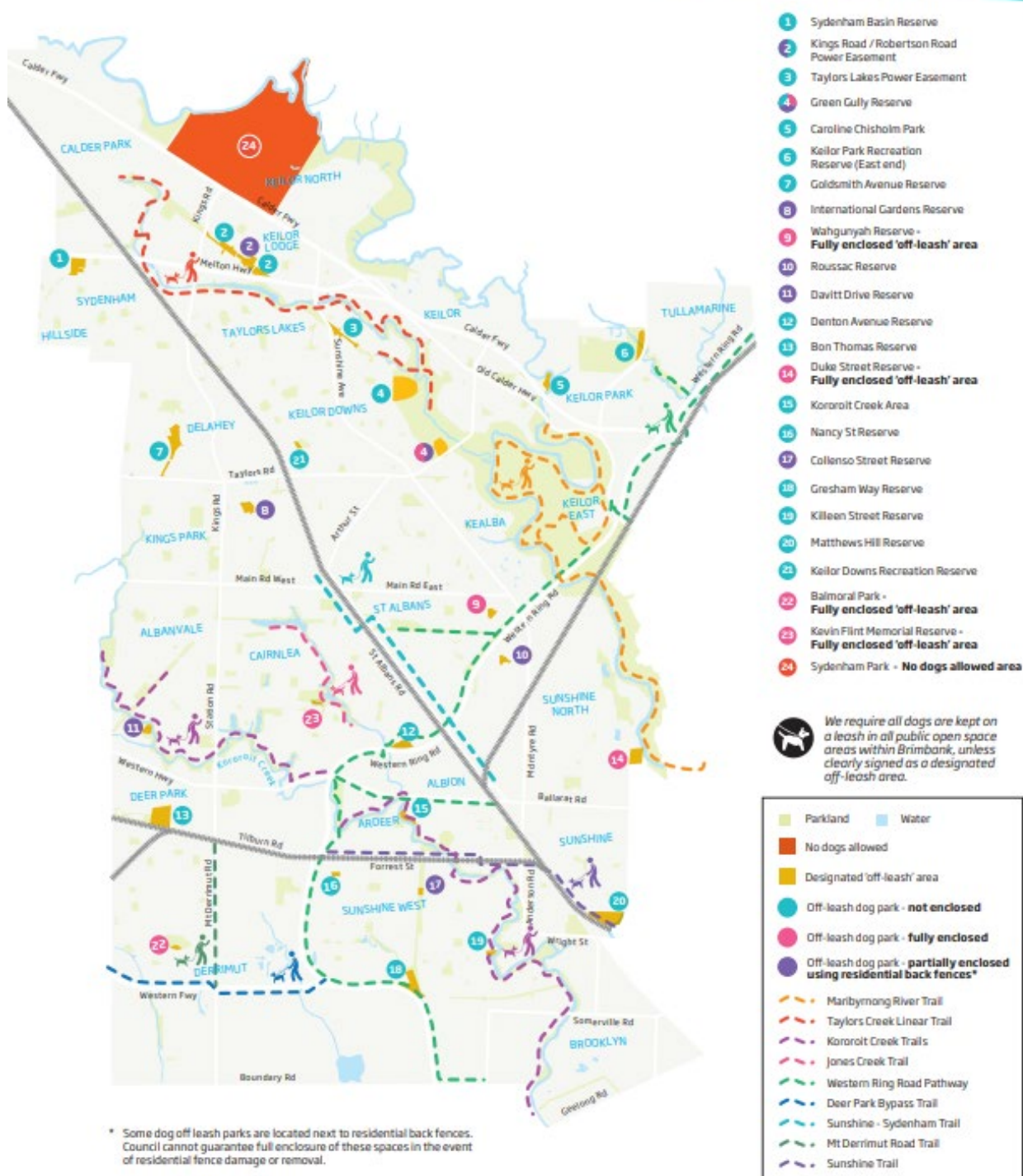
Council also has an order under Section 26(2) of the Act that requires dogs to be leashed in public places, except for designated off-leash areas. Council's Dog owners guide to Brimbank can be found on page 31.

Notwithstanding the list, dogs must be on a leash:

- During formal sports events (nominating specific times of events)
- In conservation areas
- In the vicinity of BBQ and outdoor eating areas
- In the vicinity of informal sports or social events
- Within 5m of a walking or bike path
- Within 30m of children's play areas
- Where there may be heavy pedestrian traffic to or from a school

Public parks where dogs can be exercised off a leash are important to the health and well-being of dogs. Balancing the needs of dog owners and non-dog owners in parks is a consideration Council makes in open space planning and management.

The Sydenham Basin Reserve is currently the subject of re-development to bring additional Dog off-leash facilities to the residents of Brimbank, the imminent re-development will bring exciting and enriching facilities to dogs and their owners within Brimbank.



Brimbank City Council

Telephone 9249 4000

Email info@brimbank.vic.gov.au

Post PO Box 70, Sunshine, VIC 3020

Hearing or speech impaired?

- TTY dial 133 677
- Speak & Listen 1300 555 727
- www.relayservice.gov.au, then enter 03 9249 4000



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