

Mornington Peninsula Shire
Community Consultation Phase 1
Pets on the Peninsula

Summary Outcomes

2021

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1. Background

Mornington Peninsula Shire is developing a new Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP). This is a document all Victorian Councils must produce every four years. The Plan will outline the Shire's approach to our animal management (dogs and cats) for the next four years.

Pet ownership has many benefits for health and wellbeing. The welfare of pets and protection of the community and the environment from nuisance dogs and cats are also important.

The Domestic Animal Management Plan is being developed in consultation with Council's Community Safety Team, and informed by community and stakeholder consultation, research and benchmarking activities. It is a four-year strategy that guides the delivery of animal management services across the Shire.

Council sought feedback from across its municipality so that Council may better understand broader community views in relation to issues that affect the community. This feedback will be used to inform development of a new draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2022-2025.

In Mornington Peninsula Shire, dogs are required to be on leash unless otherwise indicated by signage. In addition to the Domestic Animal Management Plan, Council will develop a Dogs in Public Places Policy during 2021. The purpose is to provide a strategic and consistent approach to leash free and dog prohibited areas across the Shire.

1.1 Methodology

The following consultation tools were made available via Council's online survey tool – Shape Your Future:

- Online survey – provide feedback and suggestions on a series of dog and cat matters.
- Mapping tool - mark on a Shire map areas dog or cat related concerns or ideas.
- Upload a written submission.
- Email DAMP@mornpen.vic.gov.au

The following non-digital methodologies were utilised:

- Hard copy survey - available for completion at all Mornington Peninsula Shire Service Centres; or mailed out upon request.
- Write to Mornington Peninsula Shire, Private Bag 1000, Rosebud Victoria 3939.

A communications plan was developed to coordinate community messaging. The survey was promoted via the following methods:

- Media releases.
- Newspaper advertisements.
- Social media posts (Facebook).
- Published on Council's website (Shape Your Future)
- E-newsletter.
- Customer Service video reel and poster to display at Service Centres.
- Council Briefing Paper followed by direct email to Councillors inviting feedback.
- 79 key external stakeholders (eg. vets, shelters, animal groups, domestic animal businesses, interested residents etc) were directly emailed an invitation link to participate in the community consultation activities.

Consultation activities were available from 3 to 23 May 2021. Late responses were accepted until 1 June 2021.

1.2 Social Media Reach

Dedicated paid social content on Council’s Facebook page promoting the consultation activities between 3 and 23 May 2021 reached 11,585 people.

1.3 Response Rate

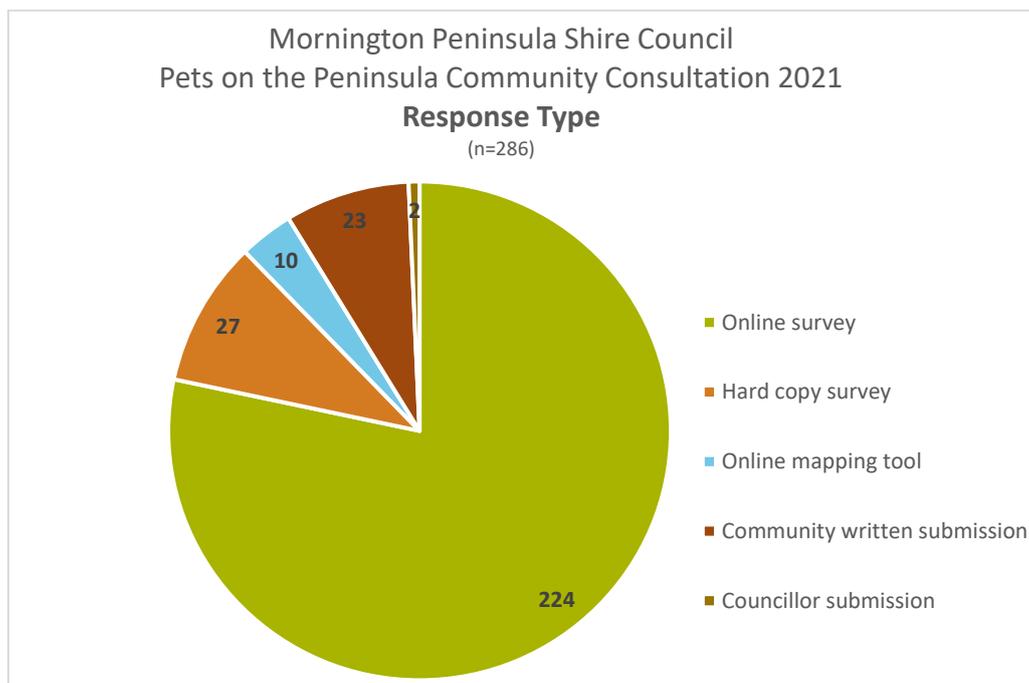
A total of 251 valid survey responses were received and processed (224 online and 27 hard copy responses).

Online survey responses were collected. Hard copy surveys were manually entered. Data analysis was undertaken using a combination of software packages including the Shire’s ‘Shape Your Future’ platform (quantitative) and Leximancer (qualitative).

A number of individual comments were made within the survey open ended fields.

10 responses were received via the Online Mapping Tool.

23 community and 2 Councillor written submissions were received and collated.



1.4 Community consultation findings – key issues and suggestions

The following table provides a summary of key issues and suggestions identified as a result of consultation activities.

Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dogs off lead / not under owner control• Dog waste• Not enough leash free areas• Signage – inconsistent and confusing• Clarity of information – where are leash free / dog prohibited areas?• Safety – potential of dog attacks• Dogs barking• Enforcement of dog controls• Wandering cats impacting wildlife
Suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More dog off leash areas• Fewer dog off leash areas• Provide / improve facilities in leash free areas• Review dog controls – locations / dates• Improve signage• Provide solutions to address dog waste• Enforce regulations• Greater Ranger presence• Improve Shelter accessibility, facilities and animal welfare outcomes• Education and communication to promote responsible pet ownership

2. Community Surveys –Summary of Key Results

The following provides an overall summary of key results through the analysis of survey responses received.

Response Overview

- 251 valid survey responses were received.
 - 89.2% - online
 - 10.8% - hard copy
 - 80.9% pet owners. 19.1% non-pet owners.
 - 75.7% own a dog.
 - 19.5% own a cat.
 - 91.6% live in the Shire.

Registration and Identification of Pets (n=91)

- 89.2% of respondents reported that they were aware of pet registration and microchipping requirements.
- The most favoured initiatives for pet registration fees to support include:
 - Improved dog park facilities (69.2%)
 - Education and communication around responsible pet ownership (57.1%)
 - Improving Community Animal Shelter & Pound facilities (48.4%)
 - Cheaper registration fees and the ability to register pets at vets were favoured as ways to make it easier for people to register their pets.

Dog Aggression / Attacks (n=82)

- 45% of respondents reported that they had been affected by dog aggression / attacks in the past 12 months, however only 50% of these had made a report to Council.

De-Sexing Dogs (n=49)

- 57.1% of respondents reported that they agree or strongly agree with the potential introduction of mandatory dog de-sexing.
- 24.5% of respondent reported that they disagree or strongly disagree with the potential introduction of mandatory dog de-sexing.
- A further 18.4% reported that they were neutral.

Nuisance Cats (n=69)

- 87.1% of respondents reported that they were aware of the 24 hour cat curfew.
- 58.2% of respondents reported that they were aware of Council's cat trapping program.
- 53.7% of respondents reported that they had been affected by cat nuisance in the last 12 months, however only 28.6% had made a report to Council.
- Wandering cats and cats impacting wildlife were the most common type of cat nuisance noted.

Nuisance Dogs (n=101)

- 74.3% of respondents reported that they had been affected by dog nuisance in the last 12 months, however only 31.6% had made a report to Council.
- Dog poo, dogs walked off lead / not under control of owner and dogs barking were the most common type of dog nuisance noted.

Community Animal Shelter & Pound (n=62)

- 24.2% of respondents reported that they had interacted with the Community Animal Shelter & Pound in the last 12 months.
- Improving accessibility, site facilities and animal welfare were the most common comment types noted.

Dogs in Public Places (n=195)

- Signage guiding the community on dog controls in public places:
 - 26.6% of respondents reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with signage.
 - 48.2% of respondents reported that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with signage.
 - 25.1% of respondents reported that they were neutral.
- 68.9% of respondents reported that the community is 'okay' when following dog on leash or dog prohibited orders.
- A majority of dog walkers reported a high level of personal compliance with dog controls:
 - 90.5% reported that they most of the time or always follow controls.
 - 99.4% reported that they most of the time or always carry something to pick up their dog's poo.
- The presence of dog poo bags and bins would encourage 86% of dog walkers to pick up after their dog.
- The most prominent concerns with leash free areas include:
 - Not enough leash free areas (64.0%)
 - Facilities – eg. bins, seating etc. (48.7%)
 - Dog poo (42.6%)
 - Clarity of information – where are leash free areas? (39.1%)
 - Safety – potential of dog attack / aggression (38.6%)
 - Signage – inconsistent and confusing (36.5%)
- The most prominent concerns with dog prohibited areas include:
 - Too many dog prohibited areas (38.8%)
 - Clarity of information – where are dog prohibited areas? (27.3%)
 - Signage – inconsistent and confusing (21.9%)
 - Dog poo (20.8%)