# Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-29
## Engagement Summary Report

October 2025

## Background and context

Every four years, councils in Victoria must create a plan to manage pets in the community, known as a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP). Maribyrnong's current DAMP runs until the end of 2025, and we're working on the next one for 2026-29.

The DAMP helps balance the needs of pet owners with everyone else in the community. It covers things like:

- dog and cat control in public areas
- barking and nuisance pets
- microchipping and desexing
- dog on/off-leash zones
- cleaning up after pets
- training for animal officers.

The primary focus for the new DAMP is responsible cat ownership. In 2024, we asked the community what they thought about a potential cat curfew. Over 1,000 people responded, and nearly 76% supported a cat curfew. Of those, approximately two-thirds preferred a 24/7 cat curfew, while the remaining third preferred a dusk-to-dawn curfew.

Further information, including the full Engagement Summary report can be found on the project page at www.yourcityyourvoice.com.au/cat-curfew

The draft DAMP included a 24/7 cat curfew and mandatory desexing of cats. The project page can be found at www.yourcityyourvoice.com.au/damp

## Methodology

The community was encouraged to provide feedback on the draft DAMP from **20 August to 21 September 2025**.

Feedback could be shared online using a survey on Your City Your Voice (YCYV), by email to the Animal Management Team, or by attending an in-person event. Registered cat owners were sent a brochure with a reply paid form to provide feedback.

To encourage participation, residents were invited to share photos of their pet/s to the online project page.

The project was promoted across Council's communication channels including:

- a media release published on 20 August 2025
- a paid advertisement in the Star Weekly on 21 August 2025
- a flyer with tear away feedback form sent to **2,700** registered cat owners in the City
- two eNewsletters to Your City Your Voice users with matching interests and Cat Curfew (2024) project followers, each reaching over **627** people
- the Possum Post sustainability eNewsletter reaching **1,975** subscribers
- a newsfeed item on the Your City Your Voice home page
- an article in the Spring edition of Council's quarterly magazine, Maribyrnong Messenger, delivered to **42,000** households between 21-28 August 2025

- social media posts on Council's corporate social media accounts on 20 and 27 August, 4 and 19 September 2025
- posters and flyers delivered to six veterinarian clinics across the area
- displays at libraries, community centres, Phoenix Youth Centre, digital signage at the Civic Precinct and Community Hub, and the Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre[1].
- promotion on Smart Cities kiosks in Footscray.

## Overall response

A total of **951** responses were received, which included:

- **578** online survey responses
- **253** reply paid tear away forms from registered cat owners (just under 10% of all registered cat owners)
- **65** people shared feedback across two in-person events
- **35** emails sent to the DAMP and Customer Service teams
- **20** people submitted photos of their pets to the online 'pet parade'.

At four in-person events, Council staff handed out information flyers and dog waste bags/holders to **143** people.

### Your City Your Voice (YCYV)

A total of **1,242** people visited the project page during the engagement period.

Of **1,662** visits, **51.38%** (**854**) stayed on the page for at least one active minute, **45.13%** (**750**) performed two actions on the page and **32.91%** (**546**) of visits led to a contribution being made. Both were higher than the average for other Council engagement projects where the conversion typically between 10-20% of visitors. **Sixity four** people also followed the project page[2].

There were three main peaks across the engagement period:

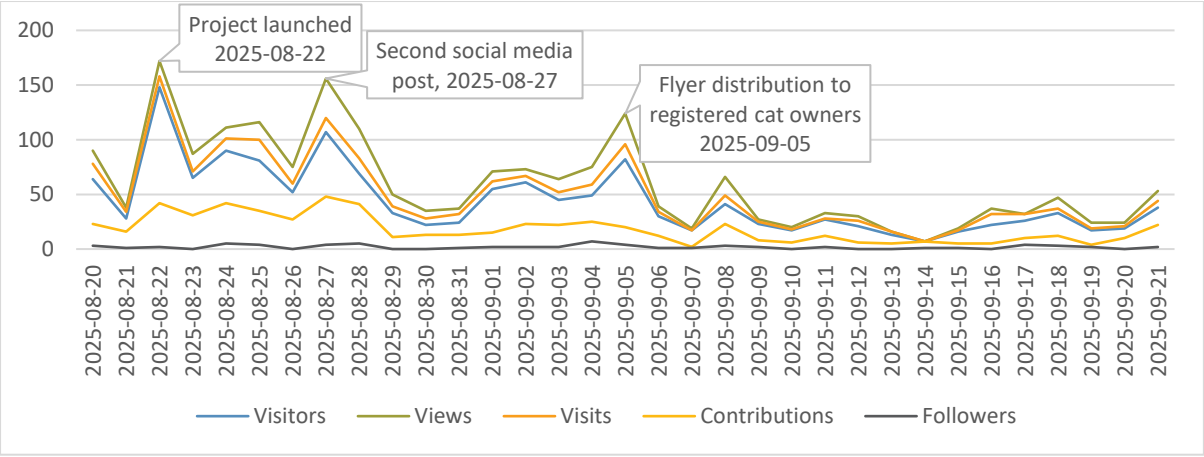



*Figure 1. Online engagement performance summary*

[1] On average nearly **3,500** community members visit the Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre each day.
[2] Following a project allows community members to easily keep track of projects and receive alerts whenever updates are made.

The first peak (22 August) coincided with the launch of the project. Specifically:

- the project page being published
- an online notification email to registered members of YCYV with matching interests and/or Cat Curfew project followers
- a video from the Mayor outlining Council meeting outcomes across social media
- a media release.

The second peak (27 August) coincided with the second social media post, while the steady rise to the third peak (from 1 to 5 September) can be attributed to the distribution of the information flyer to registered cat owners.

**Flyer to registered cat owners**

An information flyer with tear away feedback form was sent to **2,700** registered cat owners in the City. Almost 10% (**9.37%**, **253**) cat owners shared their feedback using the form.

**In-person events**

Four in-person events were held which included:

- Civic Precinct and Community Hub at 61 Napier Street Footscray, Thursday 28 August, 12-2pm
- Slow Food Edgewater Farmers' Market at Maribyrnong Family Park, Saturday 6 September, 9am-1pm
- Wellbeing Week at Victoria University Footscray Campus, Thursday 11 September, 11am-12.30pm
- Clarke Street Park in West Footscray, Saturday 13 September, 9-10.30am.

Across these events, there were **143** interactions with community members and **65** adults and children provided feedback.

**Emails**

During the engagement period **35** emails were sent directly to both the Animal Management team, and the Emergency Management and Regulatory Services inbox.

**Social Media**

On 27 August, a social media post announced the sharing of the draft DAMP for feedback. The Facebook post reached 2,734 people with 5,264 views, and the Instagram post reached 797 people with 2,005 views. There were six comments and 17 shares on Facebook and one on Instagram.

On 4 September, a social media post promoted multiple engagement projects and in-person events. The Facebook post reached 2,689 people with 4,440 views, and the Instagram post reached 1,347 people with 2,790 views. There were seven comments and four shares on Facebook and none on Instagram.

On 19 September, a social media post promoted the closing of engagement on the draft DAMP, as well as opportunities to participate in other projects. The Facebook post reached 754 people with 1,337 views, and the Instagram post reached 854 people with 2,091 views. There were two comments and one share on Facebook and one Instagram.

## Overall findings

Engagement on the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026-29 generated a strong community response across multiple channels. This included **578** online surveys, **65** pieces of feedback at in-person events, and **35** emails. Participation rates and online conversion metrics were well above average for Council projects, indicating strong community interest – particularly around the proposed 24/7 cat curfew and mandatory cat desexing.

In addition, **253** reply-paid feedback forms were returned by registered cat owners – almost 10% of all registered owners – demonstrating the effectiveness of this targeted approach. Feedback indicated that residents appreciated receiving a direct opportunity to have their say, with many noting that the mail-out made it easier to participate and ensured their views were heard.

Across all engagement methods, views on the 24/7 cat curfew were mixed but tended more toward opposition. In the online survey, almost **60%** disagreed with the 24/7 cat curfew, and feedback from registered cat owners showed similar sentiment, with **42%** opposed. While not specifically asked if to select a preference between dusk-for-dawn and 24/7 cat curfews, further analysis of open ended responses showed respondents supported to a dusk-to-dawn/overnight curfew as a compromise.

Qualitative feedback highlighted concerns about cost, practicality for renters and older residents, and concerns for animal welfare due to sudden confinement. Others questioned the enforceability of a 24/7 cat curfew and raised potential increases in vermin numbers if cats were confined.

However, many respondents acknowledged the benefits for native wildlife and pet safety, and a smaller proportion of participants – particularly non-cat owners and dog owners – expressed clear support for the 24/7 cat curfew.

Demographic analysis showed that cat ownership strongly influenced views: **77%** of cat owners opposed the 24/7 cat curfew compared with **74%** of dog owners who supported it. Younger respondents (aged <25 years) and those aged 45-64 years were the least supportive, while people aged 25-44 were evenly divided. Geographically, Braybrook residents were most in favour (**73%** support), while Footscray, Yarraville, Seddon, and Maribyrnong residents were among the least supportive, with around 60-65% opposed.

In contrast, there was overwhelming support for mandatory cat desexing across all engagement channels. In the online survey, more than **90%** of respondents agreed, and among registered cat owners, **95%** supported the proposal. Qualitative responses reinforced the view that desexing would reduce stray populations and prevent unwanted litters, with many calling for subsidised or low-cost options for low-income households.

Feedback on other DAMP initiatives was largely positive. Respondents strongly supported actions focused on education, responsible pet ownership, and partnerships with animal welfare organisations. The least supported initiative was enhanced enforcement patrols, with more than **one-third** expressing concern about overregulation. General comments also emphasised the importance of addressing dog behaviour issues and ensuring that engagement findings would influence the final plan.

## Detailed findings

**Your City Your Voice survey**

There were **578** surveys completed online.

***Question: To what extent do you agree with the following initiatives?***

Answered by **578** respondents.

Over 50% **51.73%** (**299**) strongly disagreed with the introduction of a '*24/7 cat curfew'*, while one third **33.91%** (**196**) strongly agreed. When combined, almost 60% **59.17%** (**342**) do not agree with the 24/7 cat curfew.

*'Mandatory cat desexing with subsidies and low-cost subsidies'* was viewed more favorably by respondents, over 70% **70.76%** (**409**) strongly agreed with the initiative, while **22.15%** (**128**) agreed. When combined, over 90% **92.91%** (**537**) agreed with the introduction of mandatory cat desexing.

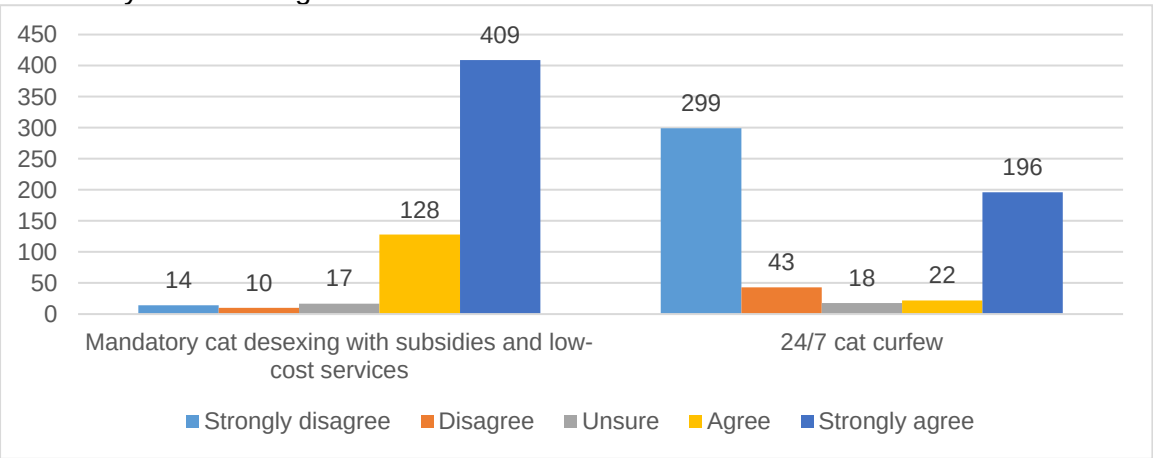



*Figure 2. Respondents' level of agreement with 24/7 cat curfew and mandatory cat desexing.*

Respondent sentiment for the remaining seven initiatives was more supportive than not.

*'Promoting responsible pet ownership, e.g. education campaigns and new owner welcome packs'* and *'Running adoption days through the Lost Dogs Home and support for Pets of the Homeless programs'* had the greatest level of support with **52.08%** (**301**) and **49.65%** (**287**) of respondents selecting 'Strongly support' for these initiatives respectively.

*'Enhancing patrols and improving enforcement'* had the least support from respondents, with over one third combined **37.54%** (**217**) selecting '*Strongly disagree*' or '*Disagree*'.

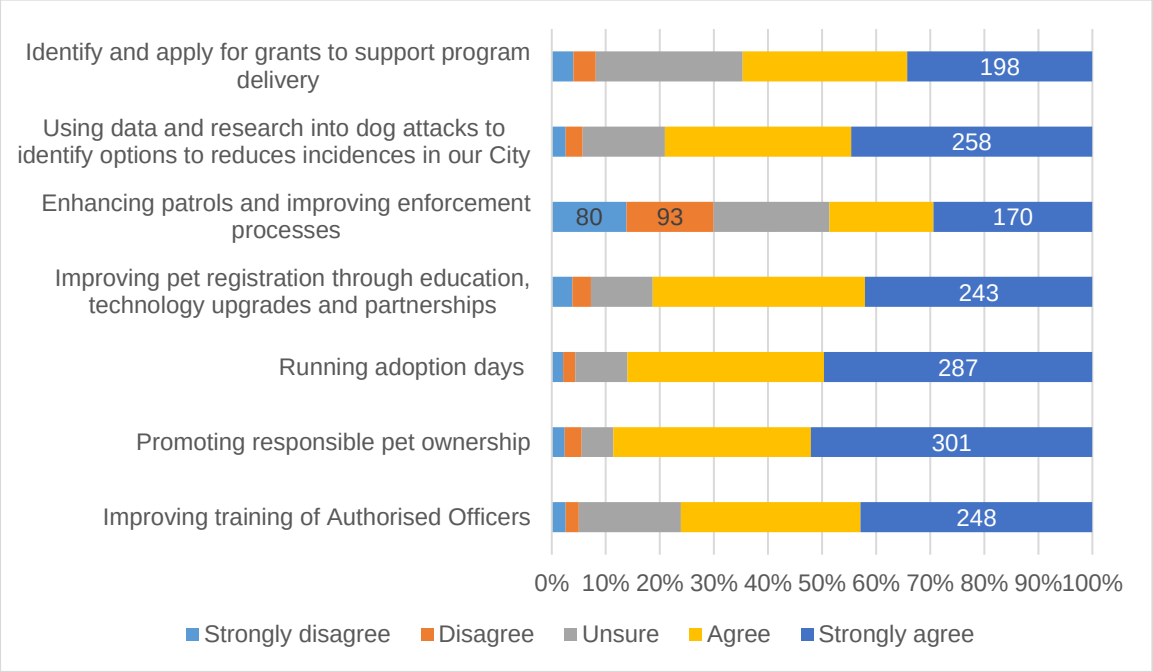



*Figure 3. Respondents' level of agreement with remaining draft DAMP initiatives*

***Question: If you would like to, please share your feedback on the proposed 24/7 cat curfew.***

Answered by **499** people.

Respondents could opt to provide written feedback on the proposed 24/7 cat curfew. The top five common themes and a sample quote are detailed in the table below.

Analysis indicated a preference for a dusk-to-dawn/overnight cat curfew, with approximately one third of respondents **(30.66%, 153)** supporting this approach.Note: Some responses have been coded under multiple themes, so totals may exceed 100%.

| Theme | Sample quote | N= | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Suggest an overnight curfew | *I don't agree with a 24/7 cat curfew but I do agree with keeping cats in overnight which is often their prime hunting times.* | 153 | 30.66 |
| Protecting wildlife | *Protection of indigenous wildlife needs to be prioritised over pets being allowed to roam, breed and become feral.* | 110 | 22.04 |
| Expressing support for a curfew | *Please introduce a 24/7 cat curfew. We have cats on our property every night making noise and causing trouble and we are beyond over it. Owners need to keep their cats inside at night. Dog owners keep their dogs in so why shouldn't cat owners.* | 92 | 18.44 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cost prohibitive to install enclosure | *A curfew that requires all cats remain within property boundaries is unjustified and unnecessary in an urban environment. For renters it is not possible to make changes to fencing in order to ensure compliance and for some within the community it could be cost prohibitive.* | 65 | 13.03 |
| Too big a change for cats | *This cannot just be instantly implemented. I am a vet and this would cause immense distress and anxiety for cats currently going outside. Cats are routine based creatures, sudden changes in their habits can cause health issues related to their heart and blood flow, linked to stress.* | 36 | 7.21 |

*Table 1. Top five themes for open responses regarding the 24/7 cat curfew*

***Question: If you would like to, please share your feedback on the proposed mandatory cat desexing.***

Answered by **353** people.

Respondents could opt to provide written feedback on the proposed mandatory cat desexing. The top five common themes and a sample quote are detailed in the table below.

Note: Some responses have been coded under multiple themes, so totals may exceed 100%.

| Theme | Sample quote | N= | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Expressing support for mandatory cat desexing | *Desexing should be mandatory. There is no need to breed more cats or dogs when there are already so many without homes who end up euthanised due to human selfishness and irresponsibility.* | 299 | 84.70 |
| Subsidies for low-income earners | *Agree with desexing of all pets, but in today's economic climate it needs to be free or very low cost for those struggling financially. It needs to be the same for dogs!* | 46 | 13.03 |
| Too many cats | *Desexing should be mandatory. There is no need to breed more cats or dogs when there are already so many without homes who end up euthanised due to human selfishness and irresponsibility.* | 46 | 13.03 |
| Benefits of desexing to prevent issues | *Fantastic idea provided that there's support for low-income cat owners. [It] will massively reduce the number of stray cats and cats in shelters.* | 39 | 11.05 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Concessions/ flexibility for breeders | *Yes agree with mandatory desexing, unless the owner us intending to breed for hobby or commercial purposes. A license system may be a suitable way to implement this.* | 30 | 8.50 |

*Table 2. Top five themes for open responses regarding mandatory cat desexing*

***Question: If you have general feedback on the Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan, please share it here.***

Answered by **223** people.

Respondents could opt to provide written feedback on the draft Plan more generally. The top five common themes and a sample quote are detailed in the table below.

Note: Some responses have been coded under multiple themes, so totals may exceed 100%.

| Theme | Sample quote | N= | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Against curfew | *In general the DAMP is reasonable, with the exception of the completely unreasonable 24/7 cat curfew nonsense.* | 30 | 13.45 |
| Community engagement process | *I understand it's a draft but there should be more detail about how firm these proposals are. Is my feedback actually going to have a result? Given you came up with the plan of a 24/7 cat curfew based on responses from only 519 people (who may not even have cats) and these 519 people represent 0.55% of the population in Maribyrnong, I would hope it's not too late for us to have an impact. Your initial consultation on the cat curfew didn't reach me and I bet I'm not the only one.* | 20 | 8.97 |
| Support for the draft Plan | *Fully support all elements of this plan. We really need this in Maribyrnong* | 18 | 8.07 |
| Cost to Council/ratepayers | *The cost to monitor locations of all cats would be astronomic. I do not think it is a wise use of tax payers' money.* | 17 | 7.62 |
| Concerns about misbehaving dogs | *Please address the more pertinent issues of unrestrained dogs in our council first and foremost, before we worry about cats.* | 15 | 6.73 |

*Table 3. Top five themes for open responses regarding the draft Plan*

***Respondent demographics***

- **49.31%** (**285**) of respondents own cat(s), while **21.63%** (**125**) do not own cats or dogs, **16.26%** (**94**) own dog(s), and **12.92%** (**92**) own cat(s) and dog(s).
- **62.80%** (**363**) of respondents identified as female, while **31.31%** (**181**) identified as male, and **5.88%** (**34**) have another identity.
- **47.75%** (**276**) of respondents were aged 46-64, followed by **38.75%** (**224**) aged 25-44.
- **26.64%** (**154**) of respondents lived in Yarraville, followed by **19.20%** (**111**) from West Footscray and **16.44%** (**95**) from Footscray
- **14.53%** (**84**) of respondents are members of the LGBTQIA+ community, **10.03%** (**58**) are people living with a disability, **7.44%** (**43**) speak a language other than English at home, and **2.07%** (**12**) are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

***Further analysis by pet ownership status and demographics***

The online survey has been further analysed to reveal preferences both for/against the 24/7 cat curfew based on whether a respondent owns pet(s), by gender, age, suburb of residence and diversity.

**Pet ownership**

- Cat owners were the strongest opponents of a 24/7 cat curfew with**77.19%** (**220**) opposed and **18.95%** (**54**) supported it.
- Those who owned dogs showed the opposite trend, with **74.47%** (**70**) in favour of the 24/7 cat curfew.

**Demography**

- Younger people aged under 25 were the most opposed group – **74.28%** (**26**) opposed the 24/7 cat curfew.
- The 25-44 age group was evenly split – **48.21%** (**108**) against and **50.01%** (**112**) for the 24/7 cat curfew.
- Older respondents (45-64) showed strong opposition towards the 24/7 cat curfew – **68.12%** (**188**).
- Those aged 65+ were more divided, though slightly leaning against the 24/7 cat curfew – **56.52%** (**20**).
- Gender identity did not strongly affect views. All groups were more opposed to a 24/7 cat curfew, though males (**62.98%**, **114**) were marginally more opposed than females (**57.03%**, **207**).

**Diversity**

- LGBTQIA+ respondents were almost evenly split on a 24/7 cat curfew – **48.81%** (**41**) against, **46.43%** (**39**) for.
- People with a disability showed similar opposition to the overall sentiment with **57.81%** (**34**) against a 24/7 cat curfew.
- People who speak a language other than English also leaned against a 24/7 cat curfew – 62.80% (**26**) against.

**Suburb or residence**

- Braybrook respondents were the most supportive of the 24/7 cat curfew with **72.73%** (**16**) in favour.
- Footscray, Maribyrnong, Seddon, West Footscray/Tottenham and Yarraville residents were among the most opposed, with around 60-65% of respondents from these suburbs against the curfew.
- Kingsville respondents were the almost evenly split – **52.18%** (**24**) against, **45.65%** (**21**) in favour of a 24/7 cat curfew.

The following table details support for/against the 24/7 cat curfew on pet ownership, gender, age, suburb of residence and diversity.

For the purpose of analysis, *'Agree/Strongly agree'* are considered supportive of a 24/7 cat curfew, while *Disagree/Strongly disagree* are against it.

| Group or category | n= | Against a 24/7 cat curfew | Support a 24/7 cat curfew | Unsure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Pet ownership** | | | | |
| Yes, cat(s) | 285 | 77.19% (220) | 18.95% (54) | 3.86% (11) |
| Yes, dog(s) | 94 | 24.47% (23) | 74.47% (70) | 1.06% (1) |
| Yes, cat(s) and dog(s) | 92 | 70.65% (65) | 28.26% (26) | 1.09% (1) |
| I do not own cats or dogs | 125 | 36.80% (46) | 59.20% (74) | 4.00% (5) |
| **Demography** | | | | |
| Female | 363 | 57.03% (207) | 39.40% (143) | 3.58% (13) |
| Male | 181 | 62.98% (114) | 34.81% (63) | 2.21% (4) |
| Other identity | 34 | 61.76% (21) | 35.29% (12) | 2.94% (1) |
| Young people <25 | 35 | 74.28% (26) | 20.00% (7) | 5.71% (2) |
| Aged 25-44 | 224 | 48.21% (108) | 50.01% (112) | 1.79% (4) |
| Aged 45-64 | 276 | 68.12% (188) | 28.63% (79) | 3.26% (9) |
| Aged 65+ | 43 | 56.52% (20) | 46.51 (20) | 6.98% (3) |
| **Diversity** | | | | |
| Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander[3] | 12 | 66.67% (8) | 33.33% (4) | 0% (0) |
| A person with a disability | 58 | 57.81% (34) | 37.93% (22) | 3.45% (2) |
| A member of the LGBTQIA community | 84 | 48.81% (41) | 46.43% (39) | 4.76% (4) |
| A person who speaks a language other than English | 43 | 62.80% (26) | 34.88 (15) | 2.33% (1) |
| **Suburb of residence** | | | | |
| Braybrook | 22 | 27.73% (6) | 72.73% (16) | 0% (0) |
| Footscray | 95 | 61.05% (58) | 36.84% (35) | 2.11% (2) |
| Kingsville | 46 | 52.18% (24) | 45.65% (21) | 2.17% (1) |
| Maidstone | 35 | 54.29% (19) | 40.00% (14) | 5.71% (2) |
| Maribyrnong | 40 | 65.00% (26) | 35.00% (17) | 0% (0) |

[3] Given the small number of respondents, findings presented are indicative only.

| Group or category | n= | Against a 24/7 cat curfew | Support a 24/7 cat curfew | Unsure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Seddon | 63 | 65.08% (41) | 33.34% (21) | 1.59% (1) |
| West Footscray/Tottenham | 111 | 60.39% (67) | 36.94% (41) | 2.70% (3) |
| Yarraville | 154 | 61.68% (95) | 33.12% (41) | 5.19% (8) |

*Table 4. Support for/against displayed 24/7 cat curfew by group/category*

**Online 'Pet Parade'**

Visitors to the Your City Your Voice page were encouraged to share photos of their pets. A total of 20 people took up the opportunity. The online gallery can be viewed at https://www.yourcityyourvoice.com.au/damp/pet-parade

**Flyer to registered cat owners**

***What is your feedback on the proposed 24/7 cat curfew?***

Answered by **252** people.

The common themes and a sample quote are detailed in the table below.

Responses to this question were varied. Some were clearly for or against the introduction of a 24/7 cat curfew, while others preferred a third option – a dusk-to-dawn cat curfew **(44.84%, 113)**. Other responses were more nuanced, with **22.22% (56)** expressing opposition to a 24/7 cat curfew but support for a dusk-to-dawn curfew instead.Note: Some responses have been coded under multiple themes, so totals may exceed 100%.

| Theme | Sample quote | N= | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| For a dusk-to-dawn/overnight cat curfew | *I'm in favour of a dawn to dusk curfew. My cats are both indoor cats and we have a problem with surrounding cat owners allowing their animals to roam free at night - spraying on my doors and affecting my own cats behaviour. I don't agree with 24/7, just dusk-to-dawn for now.* | 113 | 44.84 |
| Against 24/7 cat curfew | *I am opposed to the 24/7 cat curfew. I love meeting friendly neighbourhood cats - they make our local area feel like a lovely friendly community. This area would not be the same without the occasional activity to pat a neighbours cat and I love learning about the viewpoints of some of the more outgoing cats such as Shadow who lives in Yarraville and visits the Sun Theatre.* | 107 | 42.46 |
| Support a 24/7 cat curfew | *Yes - a 24/7 cat curfew would prevent fighting and injury amongst cats. Keep them safe, reduce lost cats and extra cost that goes along with retrieving and finding them. Also prevent wildlife loss (particularly small birds).* | 78 | 30.95 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Against 24/7 cat curfew **AND** for dusk-to-dawn/overnight cat curfew | *I do not support a 24/7 cat curfew. Not practical for outdoor cats. I do support a dusk-to-dawn curfew.* | 56 | 22.22 |
| Protection of wildlife | *We agree on the proposed 24/7 cat curfew for all the reasons outlined. We see on a daily basis feathers across pathways by birds most likely attacked by cats. We keep our cat indoors and take him on a lead to our cat yard. We want birds to feel safe.* | 36 | 14.29 |
| Too costly for owners/renters/older people | *Many cat owners are renters or pensioners who would find the cost of securing their compound expensive and unaesthetic.* | 29 | 11.51 |

*Table 5. Top themes for open responses regarding the 24/7 cat curfew*

***What is your feedback on the proposed mandatory cat desexing?***

Answered by **246** people.

There were only two main themes regarding mandatory desexing. Both are detailed in the table below.

Almost all respondents (**95.12%**, **234**) were in favour of mandatory cat desexing. Just **four** respondents (**1.63%**) explicitly stated they did not support the initiative.

Note: Some responses have been coded under multiple themes, so totals may exceed 100%.

| Theme | Sample quote | N= | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Agreement/support for mandatory desexing | *Fully support. There's enough cats in the pound. People should adopt, not breed more* | 234 | 95.12 |
| Subsidised/low cost desexing | *Strongly supportive as long as there can be financial assistance for community members struggling to support it.* | 26 | 10.57 |

*Table 6. Top themes for open responses regarding mandatory cat desexing*

***Respondent demographics***

As the flyer and feedback form was only sent to registered cat owners, respondents were only invited to share the suburb they lived in.

Answered by **231** people.

Most respondents said they lived in Yarraville (**26.84%**, **62**), West Footscray/Tottenham (**20.78%**, **48**), Seddon (**15.15%**, **35**) and Footscray (**14.29%**, **33**).

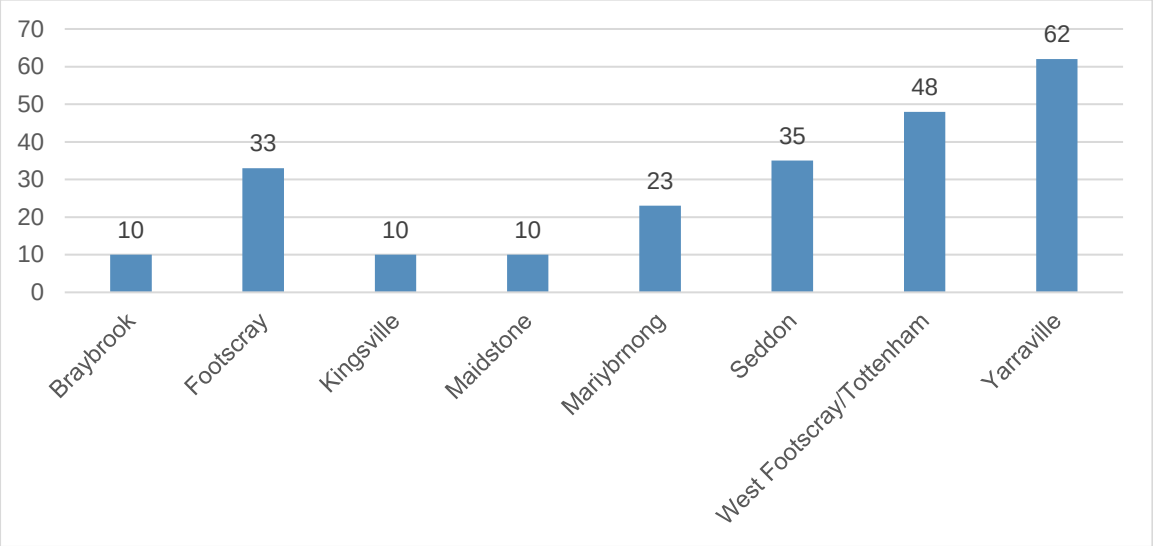



*Figure 4. Registered cat owner suburb of residence*

### *Further analysis by suburb of residence*

The feedback form has been further analysed to reveal preferences for/against the 24/7 cat curfew based on where a respondent lives.

Respondents in Kingsville, West Footscray and Yarraville generally opposed to the 24/7 cat curfew compared to residents of other suburbs, while respondents from Braybrook and Maribyrnong were more supportive of the 24/7 cat curfew. Respondents from the remaining suburbs were more favourable towards an overnight curfew.

The table below outlines support for/against the 24/7 cat curfew and overnight based on suburb of residence.

| Suburb | n= | Against a 24/7 cat curfew | Support a 24/7 cat curfew | Overnight/dusk-to-dawn curfew |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Braybrook[4] | 10 | 20% (2) | 60% (6) | 30% (3) |
| Footscray | 33 | 27.27 (9) | 30.30% (10) | 57.58% (19) |
| Kingsville[4] | 10 | 50% (5) | 10% (1) | 40% (4) |
| Maidstone[4] | 10 | 30% (3) | 20% (2) | 50% (5) |
| Maribyrnong | 23 | 39.13% (9) | 43.48% (10) | 30.43% (7) |
| Seddon | 35 | 37.14% (13) | 25.71% (9) | 57.14% (20) |
| West Footscray/Tottenham | 48 | 56.25% (27) | 29.17% (14) | 43.75% (21) |
| Yarraville | 62 | 50% (31) | 29.03% (18) | 41.94% (26) |

*Table 7. Support for/against curfew by suburb of residence*

## In-person events – verbal feedback

Across the four in-person events, Council staff had interactions with **143** community members. Verbal feedback was collected from **65** adults and children, including:

- It is cost prohibitive to install cat enclosures (mentioned **four** times)
- expressing opposition for the proposed 24/7 cat curfew (mentioned **three** times)

[4] Given the small number of respondents, findings presented are indicative only.

- a preference for an overnight/dusk-to-dawn cat curfew (mentioned **three** times)
- support for the proposed 24/7 cat curfew (mentioned **twice**)
- support for mandatory desexing, including subsidies for low-income earners (mentioned **twice**)
- consideration for a staged approach for introducing a cat curfew, including grandfathering rules for existing and/or older cats (mentioned **twice**)
- requests for additional infrastructure for dogs – such as water bowls, dog waste bag dispensers and off lead areas (mentioned **twice**)
- the importance of cats, and pets more generally, for mental health
- consideration for subsidies and rebates for responsible pet owners (e.g., discounted registration fees)
- the benefits of cat curfews for native wildlife and cats.

**Emails**

A total of **35** emails were received during the engagement period. Of those, **32** emails were received from residents, while three emails were from animal welfare organisations.

For the purposes of this report, emails have been themed as 'for' or 'against' the 24/7 cat curfew, as well as any further feedback regarding the proposed mandatory cat desexing.

Note: only emails from residents have been summarised and the three detailed emails from animal welfare organisations will be considered by the project team.

Most emails (**71.88%**, **23**) expressed opposition to the proposed 24/7 cat curfew. Of those, **14** suggested an overnight/dusk-to-dawn curfew alternative.

Concerns raised in relation to the proposed 24/7 cat curfew included:

- it is cost prohibitive to install cat enclosures (mentioned **12** times)
- cat wellbeing concerns (mentioned **nine** times)
- staged approach/grandfathering rules if the proposed 24/7 cat curfew is introduced (mentioned **eight** times)
- concerns about vermin numbers should the 24/7 cat curfew be introduced (mentioned **twice**)
- requests for further information about what a cat curfew will look like in practice, including the amnesty period (mentioned **twice**).

**Seven** emails expressed support for the proposed mandatory cat desexing initiative.

**Three** emails supported the proposed 24/7 cat curfew.

**Social media**

Comments received related to the project across all posts included:

- expressing opposition to the 24/7 cat curfew / Council overreach (mentioned **twice**)
- expressing support for the 24/7 cat curfew
- concern about dogs barking/nuisance behaviour
- calls for draft DAMP submissions to be published
- concern about partnering with the Lost Dogs' Home.

## Conclusion

Most respondents agree on the importance of responsible pet ownership and strongly support mandatory cat desexing. However, opinions were divided about introducing a 24/7 cat curfew. Many respondents – especially cat owners – prefer an overnight/dusk-to-dawn cat curfew, seeing it as a fairer and more practical option.

The findings suggest that while the community supports protecting wildlife and keeping cats safe, support for a 24/7 cat curfew may need more education, a gradual rollout or staged approach, or exemptions for cats already used to going outside.

Overall, the engagement demonstrates strong community awareness of pet management issues and a willingness to participate in shaping the DAMP.

Insights from this process will inform refinements to the draft Plan before it is presented to Council for consideration in late 2025.