



CATS IN CLARENCE

CONSULTATION OPEN



Clarence City Council

Cats in Clarence consultation

Community feedback

August 2024

Image: Social Media Tile from during the engagement

Cats in Clarence consultation

- Table of Contents
 - Project background
 - Methodology & Consultation overview
 - Survey results
 - Next steps
 - Appendix
 - Demographics
 - Engagement summary – sources of traffic
 - Survey questions
 - Individual submissions
 - Workshop results – ‘what was shown & what we heard report’



What the Community saw on council Your Say project page



CATS IN CLARENCE



Cats in Clarence

How to get involved and have your say

We will have multiple ways for you to share your feedback. The survey and any other feedback can be provided online, email or post, over the phone or in person. The consultation will be open from **9 July to 6 August**.

- Please click our **survey** link - survey.alchemer.eu/s3/90726680/Cats-in-Clarence-Community-Survey
- Register to attend a community **workshop** 3 August at Rosny Library - register here - events.humanitix.com/cats-in-clarence-what-are-your-ideas-for-cat-management
- Also please leave a pin on the **Map** below to show us where you have an idea or have seen a problem
- Email us to tell us more at yoursay@ccc.tas.gov.au, a submission can be short or detailed (please add *Cats in Clarence* to the subject line)
- Leave ideas in our idea box at our front desk, or use our public computer to complete the survey
- Call any of the people and teams in the 'Who's listening' list



Key Dates

 Community workshop - Cats in Clarence
August 2024

 Harvest Festival Warrane Community Garden - Pop up
9.30am - 12.30pm
March 2024

FAQs and Links

 [Responsible Cat Ownership in Tasmania Overview](#)

 [Responsible Cat Ownership - Keep your cat from roaming](#)

 [Podcast Australia Explained: What does responsible cat ownership involve? | SBS](#)

Continued next page...

What the Community saw on council Your Say project page

Background

Clarence City Council is committed to improving the management and control of pets at home and in public spaces. Owning a pet has many benefits, including an improved sense of wellbeing, safety and social connectedness. However, not everyone shares the same views about pets. Council is seeking feedback on pets and public spaces to ensure we understand and meet the broad and diverse needs of the Clarence community.

There is now an opportunity to understand and better meet community expectations around cats in Clarence through the creation of a potential Cat Policy to accompany our existing Dog Policy. This will help to ensure a safe, enjoyable, and harmonious community and environment.

We are seeking to understand perceptions of cats in Clarence from residents of all ages. We are wanting to understand cat ownership, experiences with cats and suggested inclusions in a policy. We would like to hear from both cat owners and non-owners in a similar way that we approach our Dog Policy which seeks to balance the needs of dog owners with non-owners in our shared spaces.

Some of the following topics are common inclusions in other council's cat policies and management frameworks and will be covered as part of the survey:

- registration for pet cats
- cat curfews (inside between dusk and dawn)
- cat confinement to reduce roaming (indoor and cat enclosures)
- microchipping and desexing
- ensuring cats wear identification (collar with tag)
- limit on number of cats per household (addressing cat hoarding)
- declaration of cat prohibited areas to protect wildlife (in conservation areas, reserves and sensitive wildlife areas)
- localised cat control strategies tailored to specific issues
- feral cat management

We expect this topic to be of interest to many and we are looking forward to hearing what you think!

There are a variety of documents and links to read and understand more about cats and cat management in the folders to the right. A couple to start with:

- Listen to this [Podcast](#) from SBS for a general overview of what responsible cat ownership involves
- Watch [Scruffy Cat](#) and his adventures - [That's Cats](#) Four-part short video series including microchipping, desexing, and roaming.

 [State Government - Tasmanian Cat Management Plan](#)

 [Federal Government looking at stronger cat management](#)

 [Impacts of cats on human health - Stray Cats](#)

 [Cats in the news - growth in pets & killer kitties articles](#)

 [Where to go for more information on cats on a variety of topics](#)

 [What have other surveys found elsewhere in Tasmania?](#)

 [Ideas and more information on cat enclosures & runs](#)

TassieCat Video Series - Scruffy the Cat

 [That's Cats video series - Scruffy the Cat 4 part series on keeping cats happy and healthy](#)

What the Community saw on council Your Say project page

Submissions

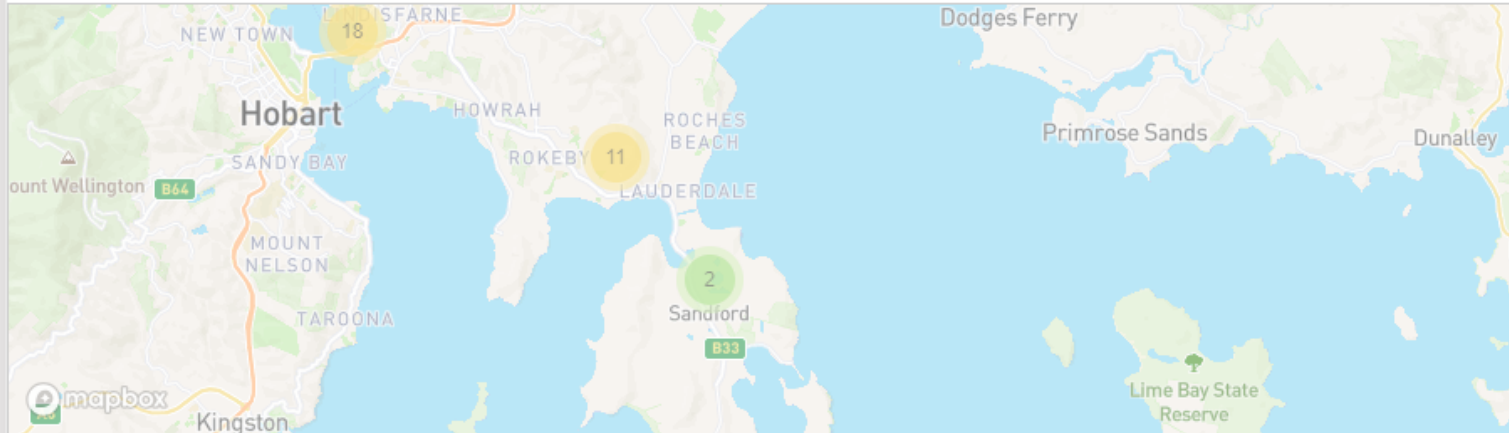
 Invasive-Species-Priorities-for-the-next-Tasmanian-government-1.pdf (1.79 MB) (pdf)

 Cats in Clarence Submission- Australian Pet Welfare Foundation.pdf (311 KB) (pdf)

Map - Cats in public places

Cats in Clarence - Places

2 months



Tell us where we need to know more about cats in Clarence

- where you have a suggestion or idea
- where you have seen cats hurt or at risk
- where you have seen or experienced problems with cats.

[GO TO MAP](#)

Consultation methodology

Timeframe:

- Four weeks from **9 July to 6 August 2024**

Key consultation approach and activities:

- Your Say survey online
- Harvest Festival pop up earlier in the year to help inform the engagement approach
- Workshop at Rosny Library (externally expertly facilitated)
- Ideas box at front desk of chambers throughout consultation

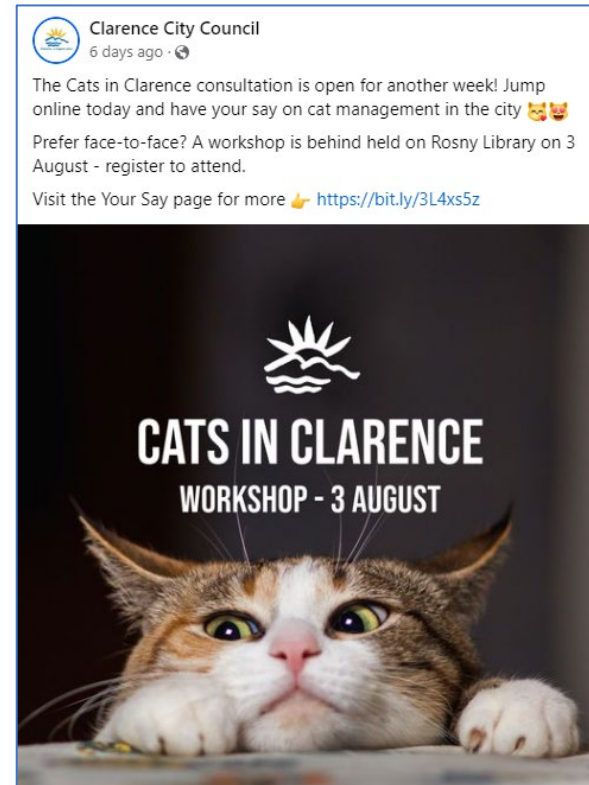
Responses:

- **832** survey responses (only 11 outside Clarence)
- 43% of responses from cat owners (364 cat owners). 57% are owners of dogs (493 dog owners), other pets and some community members who don't own any pets and some who have a small menagerie
- **18 email submissions** were also received (see appendix) from Clarence residents and experts and **13 comments** left in our ideas box
- 12 workshop attendees including community members and organisations

Communication and promotion key moments:

- Council website and featured on council Your Say page
- Facebook posts throughout consultation period (with 57 shares across the two posts)
- Eastern Shore Sun ads
- Idea box at front desk of council chambers
- Significant ongoing media interest with the survey mentioned repeatedly (print & radio)

Facebook post example



Stakeholders are varied with different areas of interest and concern

Key Stakeholders (focusing on those located or operating in Clarence) were identified, and many were directly alerted to the consultation, invited to make a submission or to participate in a workshop or have a conversation. Facebook posts and sharing helped alert individuals in the community and other experts to encourage involvement.

Cat management & welfare

- Ten Lives
- TassieCat
- RSPCA
- Rescue Cats Safe Haven
- Brightside Farm sanctuary
- Small Paws Animal Rescue
- Birchgrove Feline Assistance
- Neonatal kitten rescue
- Southern Tas Cat Rescue

Cat impact & control

- Bonorong wildlife sanctuary
- Invasive Species Council
- Landcare
- Coastcare
- Birdlife Tasmania
- Centre for Invasive Species Solutions

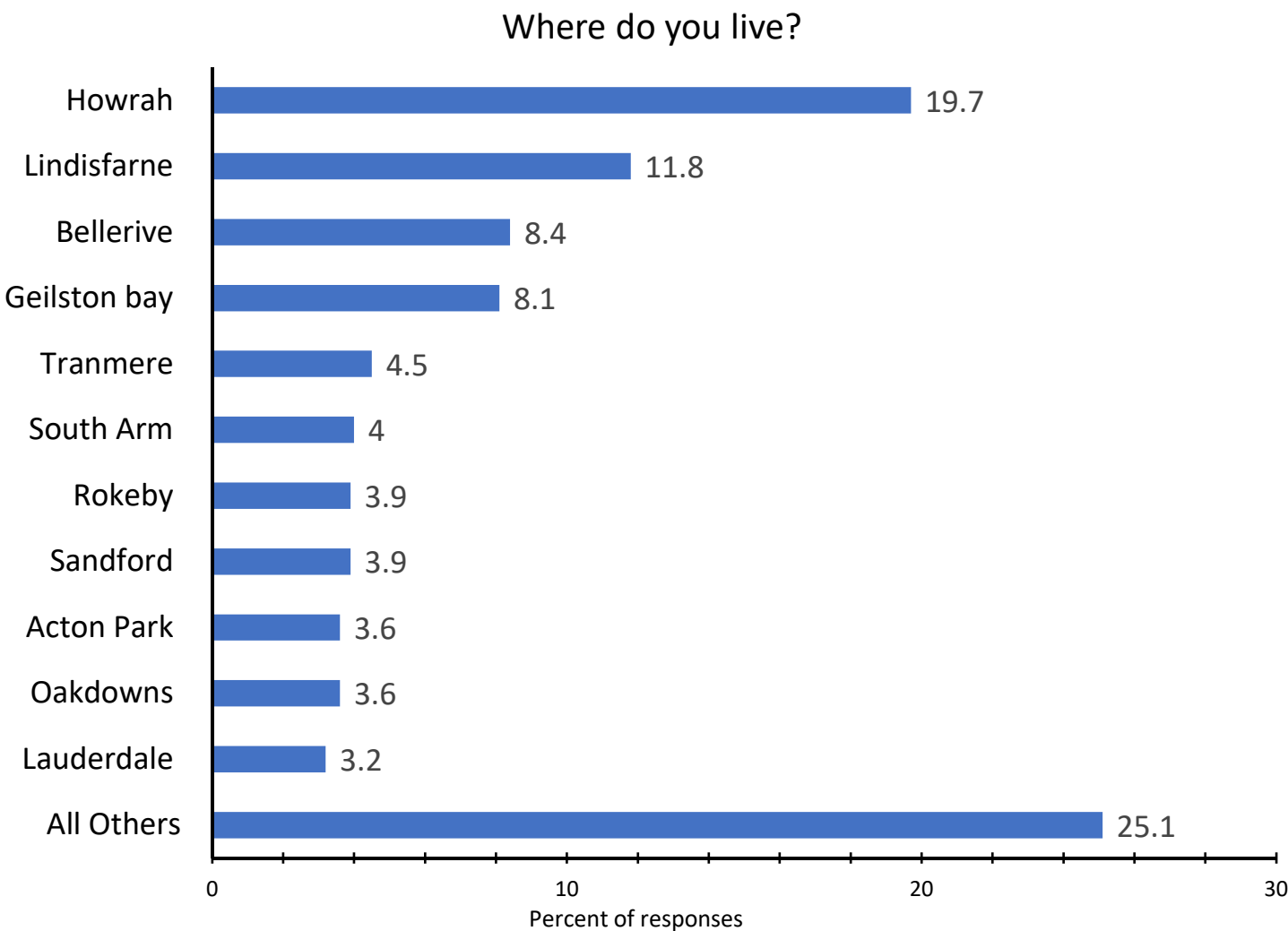
Cat groups & businesses

- Cat breeder associations
- Vets (Lindisfarne Vet Clinic, Tasmanian Vet Hospital Bellerive, Hobart Community Vet, New Town Cat Clinic, Hobart Animal Hospital,
- Petbarn Rosny, Petstock, Bunnings



Demographics

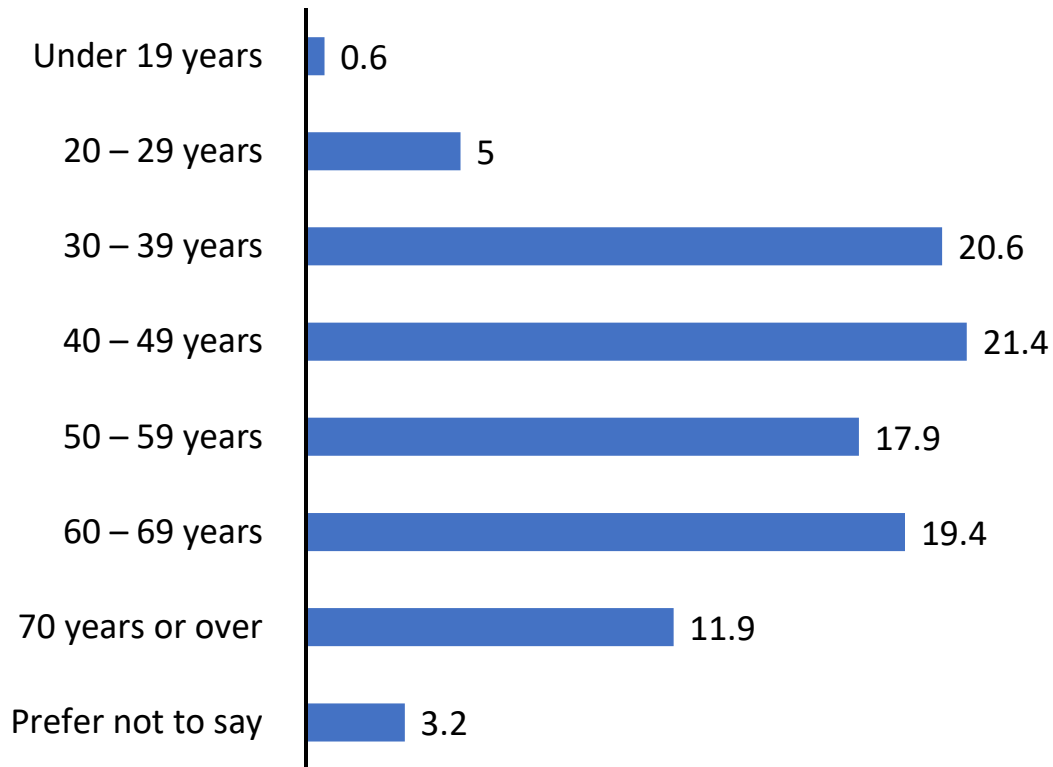
- Responses from across Clarence



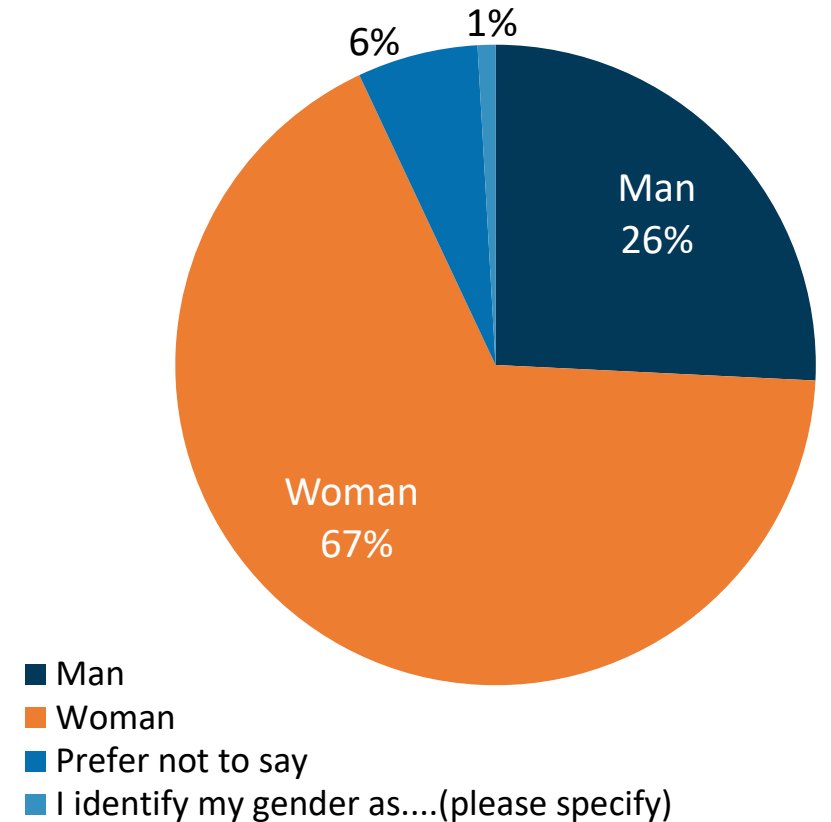
Demographics

- Age breaks broadly reflecting the overall diversity withing the Clarence community
- We heard from more women (67% of all responses) than men

What is your age?



What is your gender?



n=832 all respondents (cat and non-cat owners)



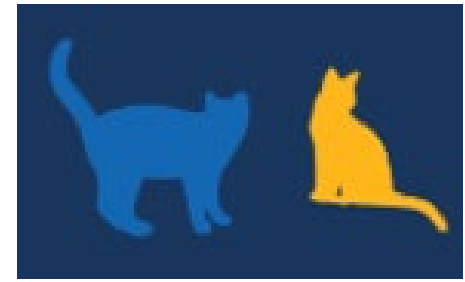
CATS IN CLARENCE



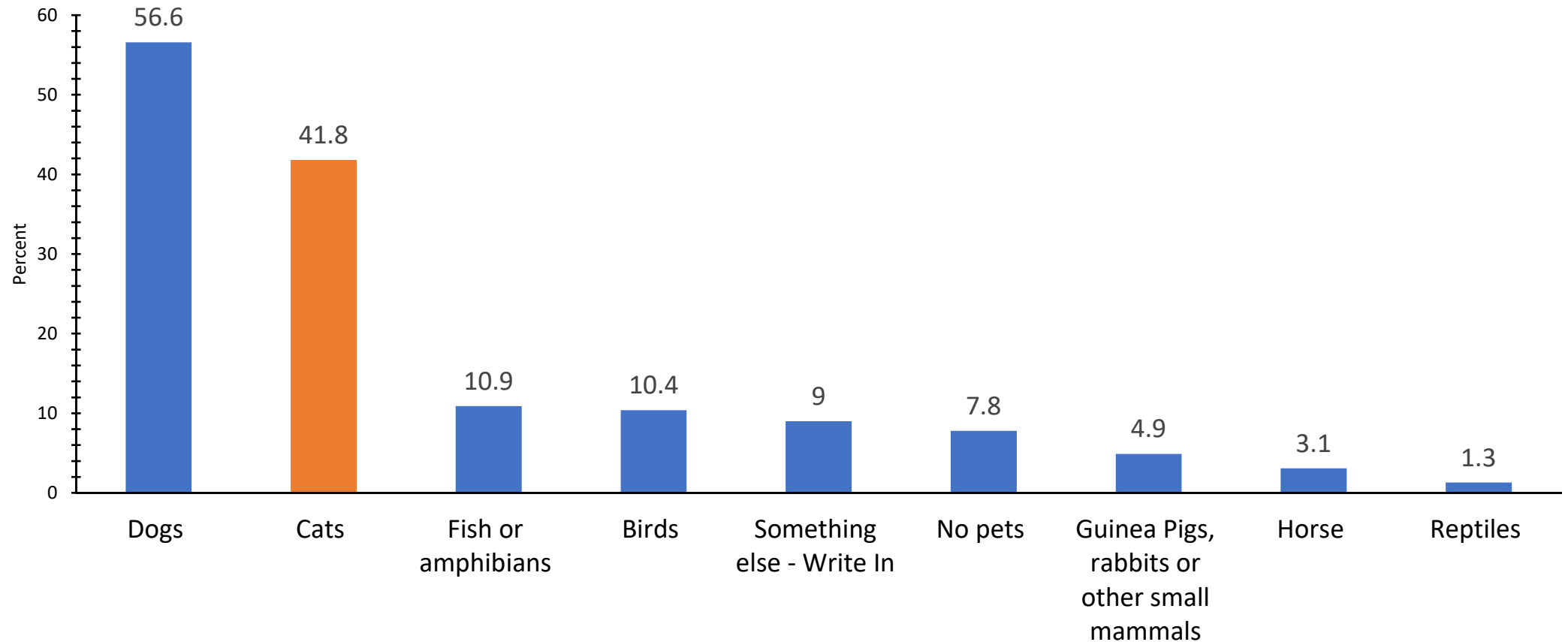
Classification questions

- Do you own any of the following types of pets
- Which of the following best describes your place of residence?
- Do you have children under 18 living in your home some or most of the time?
- Do you own your home or are you renting? (to help us better understand where pets are living)

Pet ownership



- 43% of responses from cat owners (364 cat owners). 57% are owners of dogs (493 dog owners), other pets and some community members who don't own any pets and some who have a small menagerie



1. Do you own any of the following types of pets?

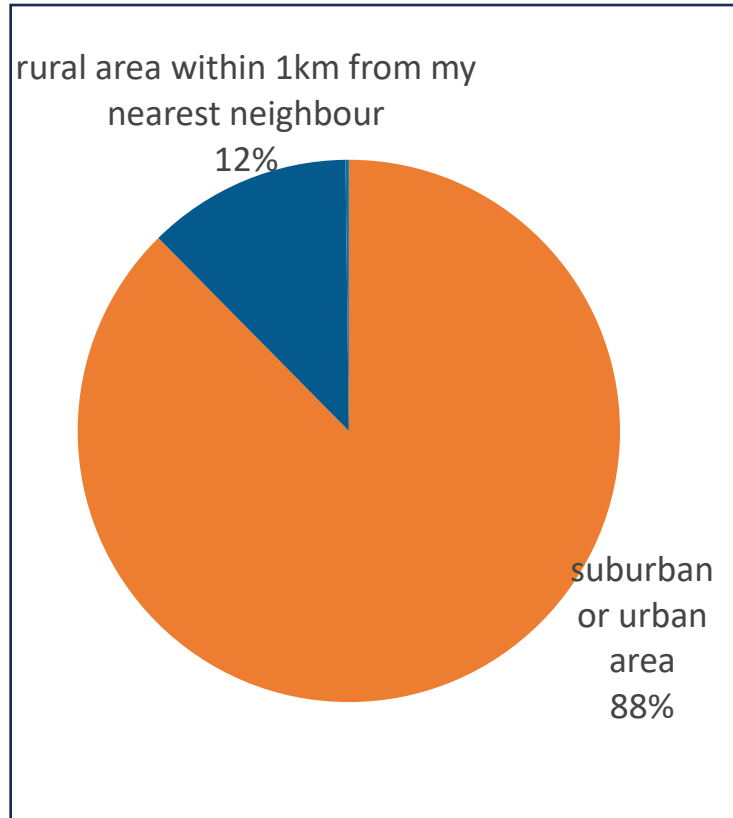


Clarence... a brighter place

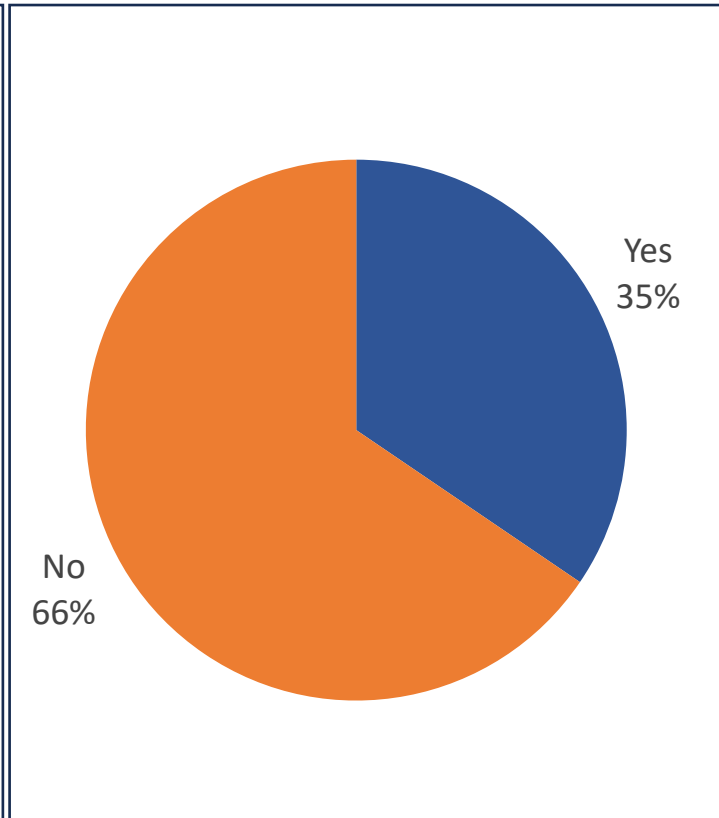
Classification information

- A stronger understanding of pet owners lives will help with evaluating ideas and initiatives

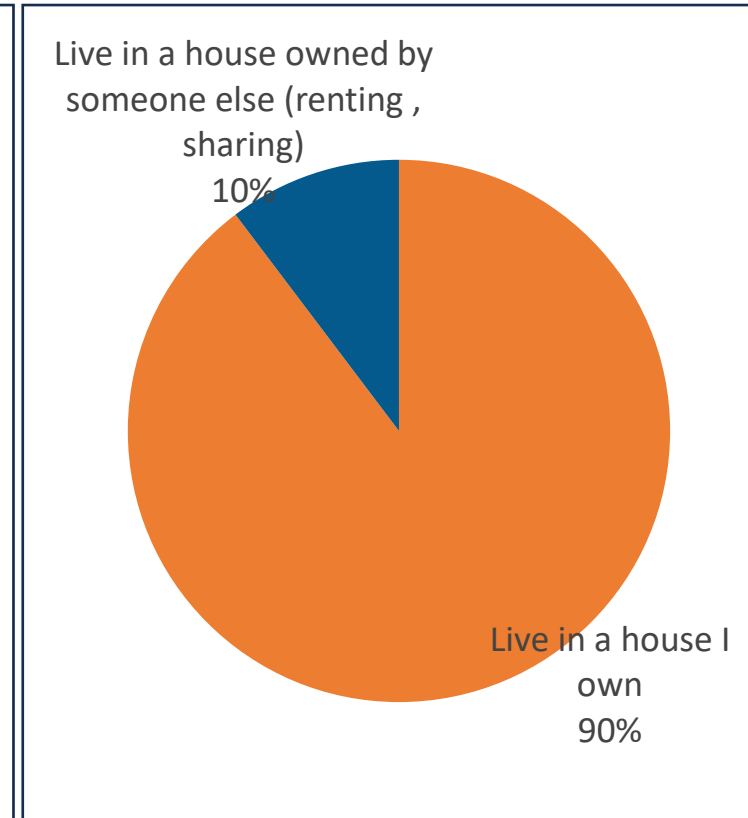
Which of the following best describes your place of residence?



Do you have children under 18 living in your home some or most of the time?



Do you own your home or are you renting? (to better understand where pets are living)





CATS IN CLARENCE



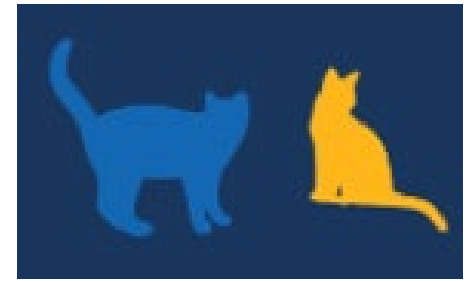
Cat owner section

- What were your main reasons for getting a cat?
- Where did you get your cat or cats?
- How many cats do you own?
- Which of the following apply to your cat or cats? (microchipped, desexed, vaccinated etc)
- If your cat or cats isn't desexed or microchipped we would like to understand your reasons why
- Which of the following best describe your cat or cats and their access to inside and outside areas?

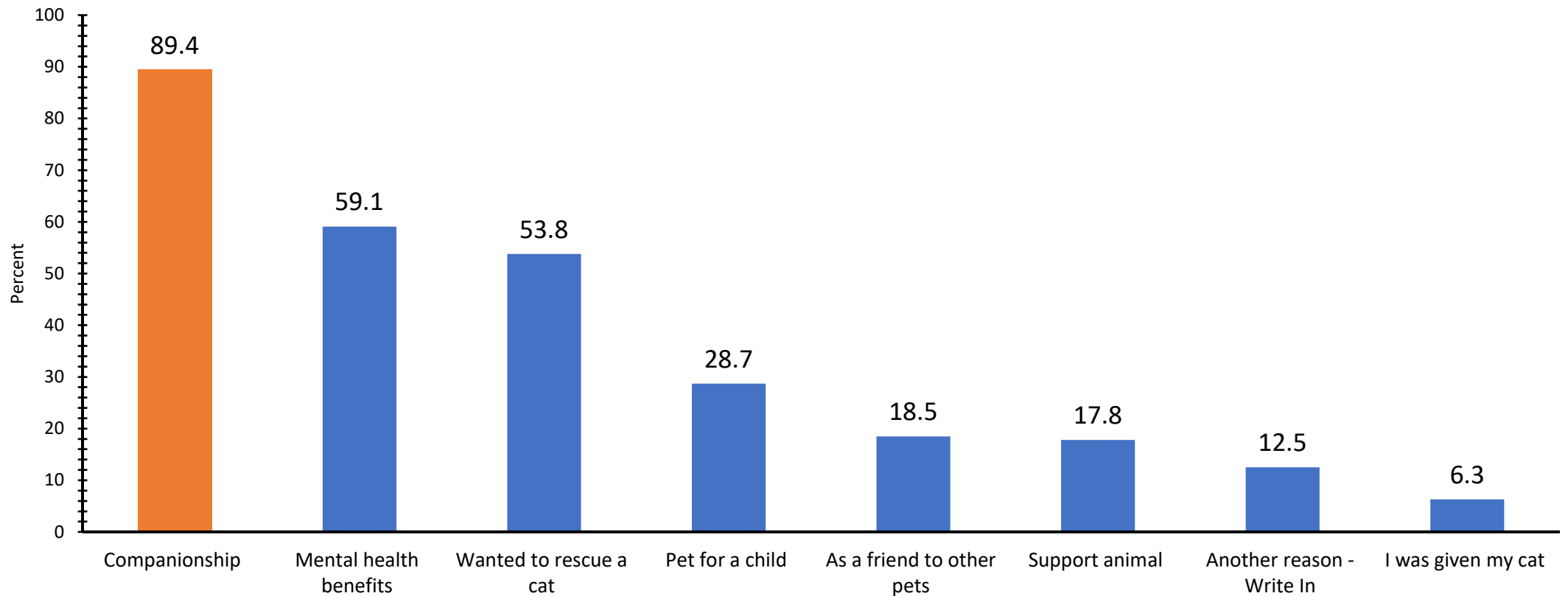


Clarence... a brighter place

Main reasons for owning a cat



- 9 in 10 say companionship was the main reason for getting a cat
- Mental health benefits and wanting to rescue a cat are also key reasons for Clarence cat owners

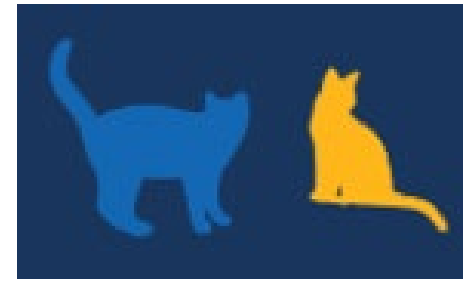


2.What were your main reasons for getting a cat? Please select all that apply (cat owners only)

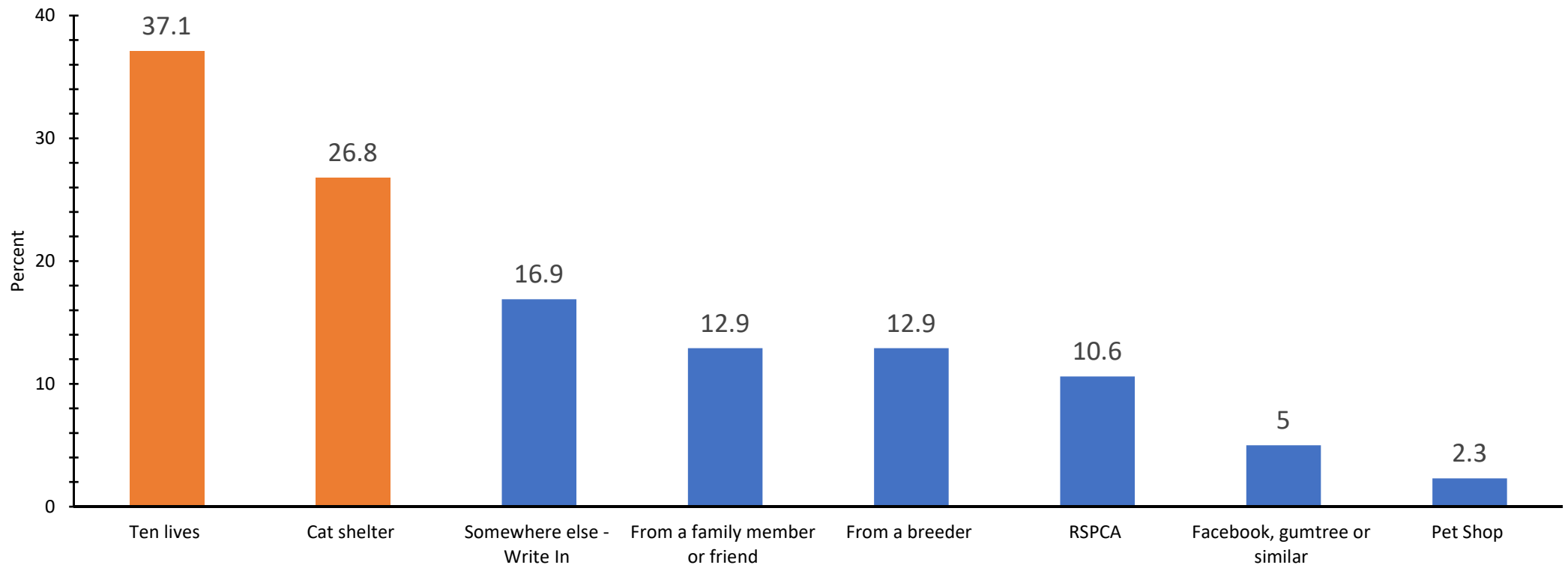


Clarence... a brighter place

Where did you get your cat?



- Clarence cat owners are getting their cats from Ten Lives and other cat shelters most often
- Some of the clear benefits of shelters is cats and kittens are sold already desexed and microchipped helping cat owners meet some of the requirements stipulated in State Legislation



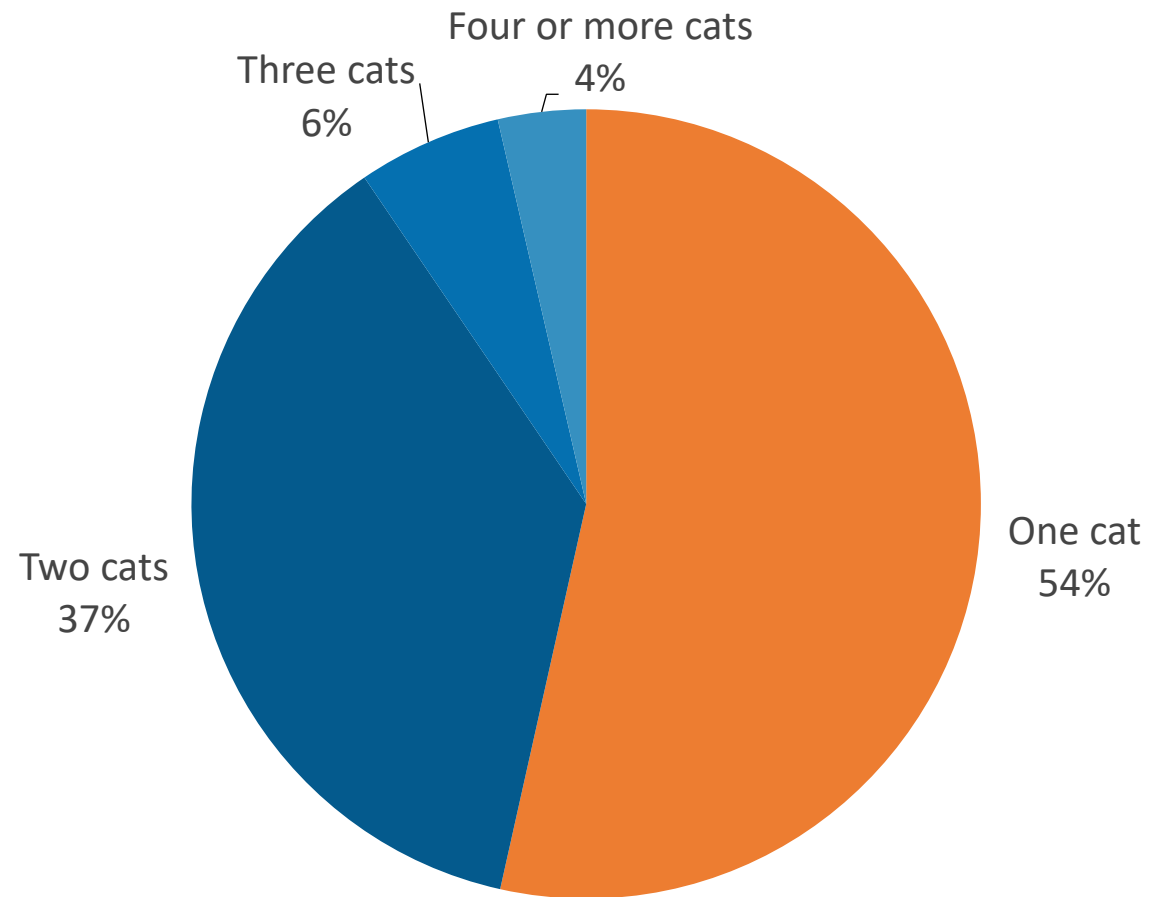
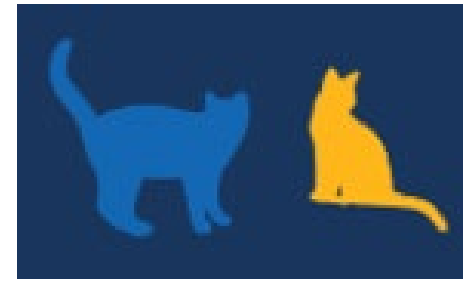
3.Where did you get your cat or cats? Please select all that apply



Clarence... a brighter place

How many cats are owned?

- 9 in 10 cat owners have one or two cats
- Most often one cat, 54% of owners, with a further 37% owning two cats.

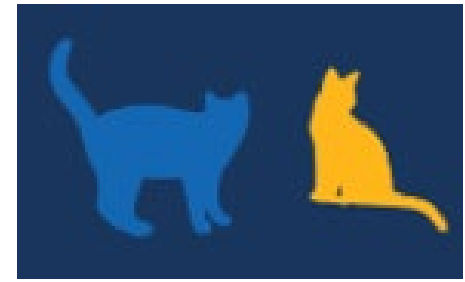


4.How many cats do you own?



Clarence... a brighter place

Microchip and Desexing status



- A high proportion of pet cats in Clarence are microchipped, desexed and vaccinated
- Only 65% of cats have a collar with identification, however...
 - Over 70 % of cats without a collar are kept indoors
 - Some types of collars aren't recommended due to risk of strangulation (but there are now readily available breakaway collars which are safer)

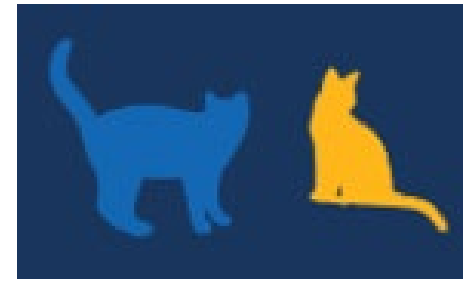
	All of my cats	None of my cats
My cat is microchipped	97.3%	1.7%
My cat is desexed	98.7%	0.7%
My cat wears a collar with identification	31.8%	64.4%
My cat is vaccinated	91.4%	6.3%



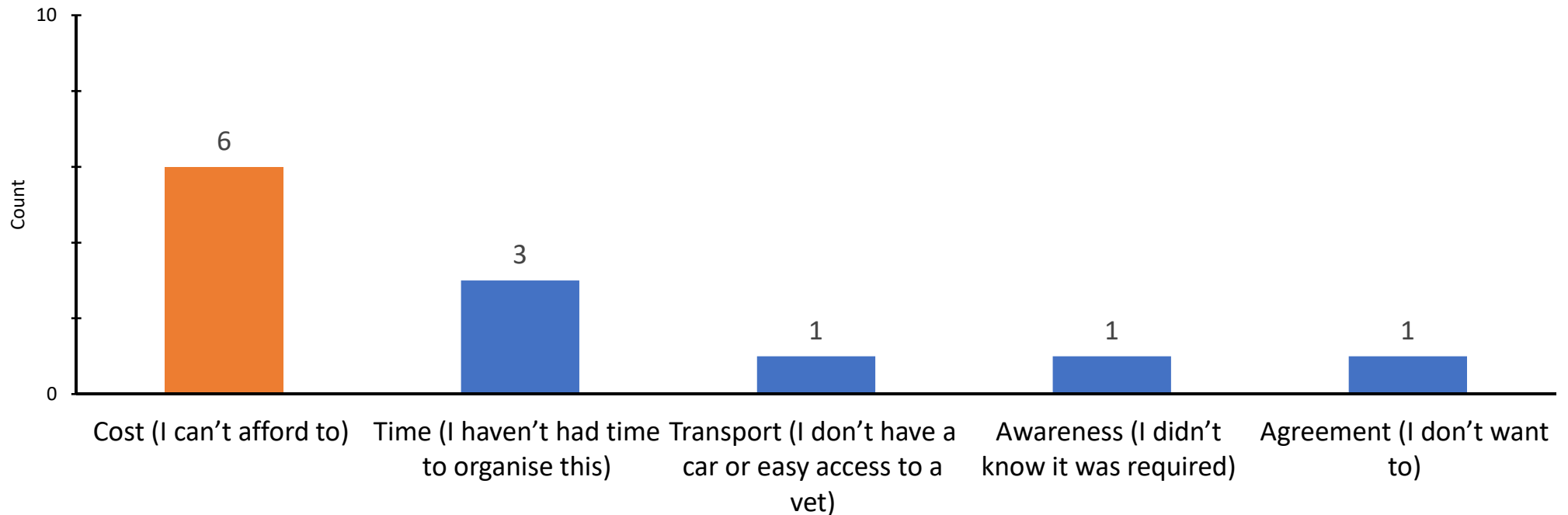
Clarence... a brighter place

5.Which of the following apply to your cat or cats? Please select all, some or none

Main reasons for not having cats desexed or microchipped



- Very few responses to this question but the feedback aligns to other local surveys and broader surveys (including Birchgrove, RSPCA and Tassie Cats). The main reasons are barriers rather than not wanting to. Other survey results can be found on council Your Say page as FAQs for easy comparisons to these questions and others
- The main reason for not desexing and microchipping is cost. This is a barrier found in many council areas and a common response has been to find ways to support cat owners (City of Banyule is an example)
- One reason for high compliance is due to many cat owners getting cats from shelters where every cat and kitten is already desexed and microchipped.



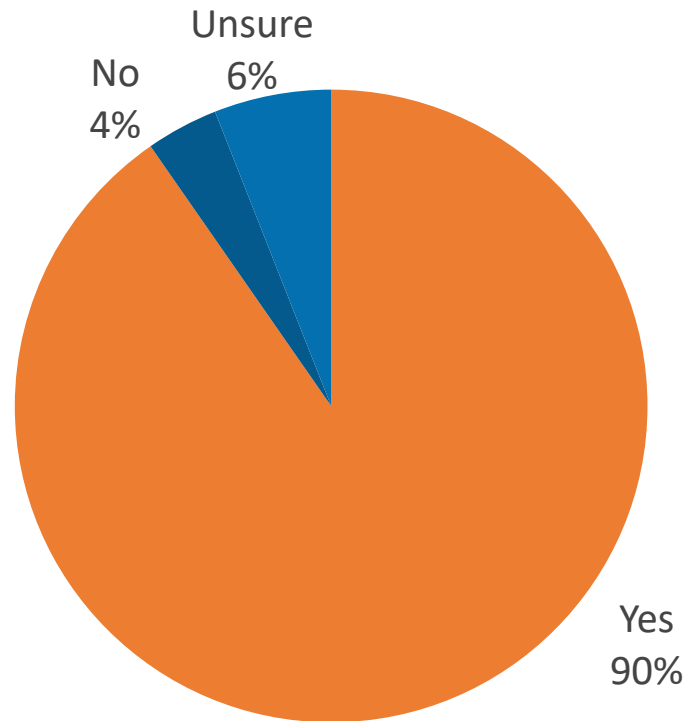
6.If your cat or cats isn't desexed or microchipped we would like to understand your reasons why (12 respondents only)

Microchip details



- 9 in 10 have up to date microchip details
- Most cat owners who have updated microchip details described it as 'easy' and 'simple'
- Some found it difficult, especially if they didn't know their microchip numbers. A few described having to go to the vet to find their microchip number to be able to complete the form

Microchip details up to date



7. Are your cat's microchip details up to date?

How was the process?

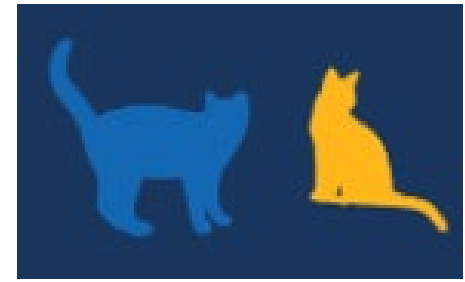


10. If you've ever updated microchip details, how did you find the process? Please tell us what was simple or easy or anything you found difficult

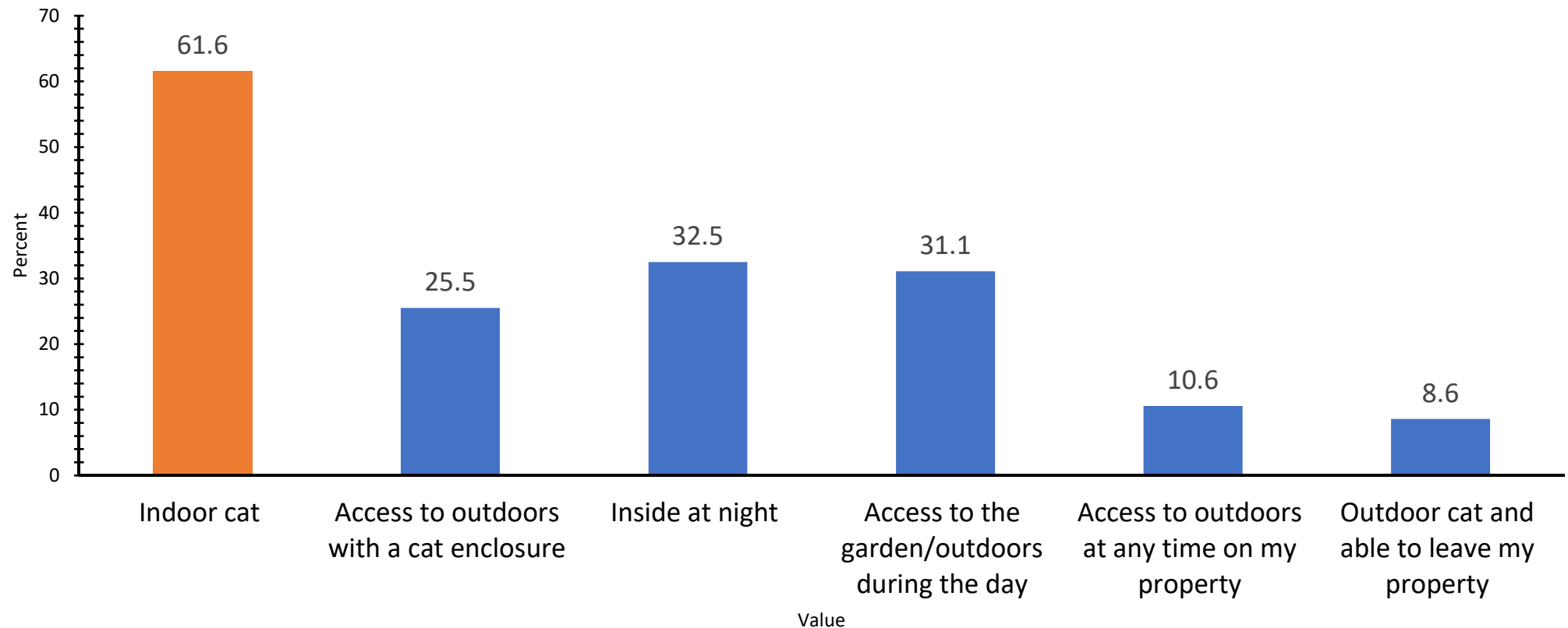


Clarence... a brighter place

Cat access to inside and outside areas



- 6 in 10 cat owners have cats who are indoor cats (61%)
- 26% of cats have access to an enclosure
- Only 9% of cats are considered by their owners to be outdoor cats and able to leave their property.



Clarence... a brighter place

8. Which of the following best describe your cat or cats and their access to inside and outside areas? Please select all that apply, some may overlap



CATS IN CLARENCE



Whole community section

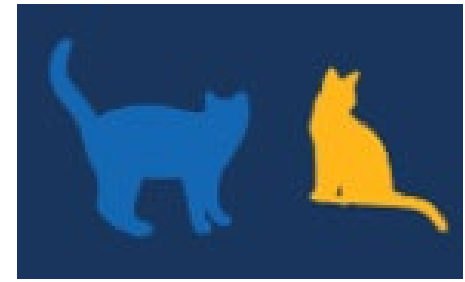
(57% non-cat owners and 43% cat owners)

- What are the good things about cats in Clarence?
- What are the negatives of cats in Clarence?
- Thinking about the last 12 months. Have you seen or experienced any of the following problems or issues with cats in Clarence? How often do cats that you do not own come onto your property?
- Cat management vision statements. Which of the following would you like Clarence to be known for?
- Which of the following areas of cat management do you support in clarence?
- Which of the following areas do you support having stronger cat control strategies to protect wildlife?
- Which of the following areas of cat owner support would you like to see in Clarence to help support responsible ownership?
- Where would you go to find information about cats including responsible cat ownership and cat impacts?



Clarence... a brighter place

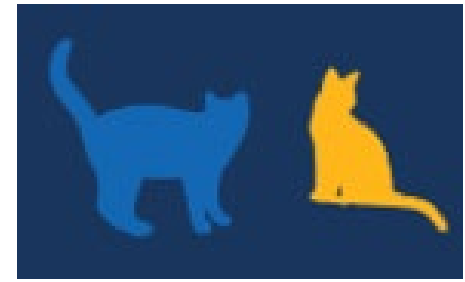
Good things about Cats in Clarence



- Appreciation that they are good pets for their owners, offer companionship and other benefits
- Some like patting and getting to know neighbourhood cats



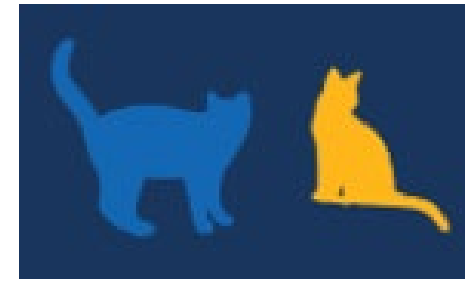
Negatives about Cats in Clarence



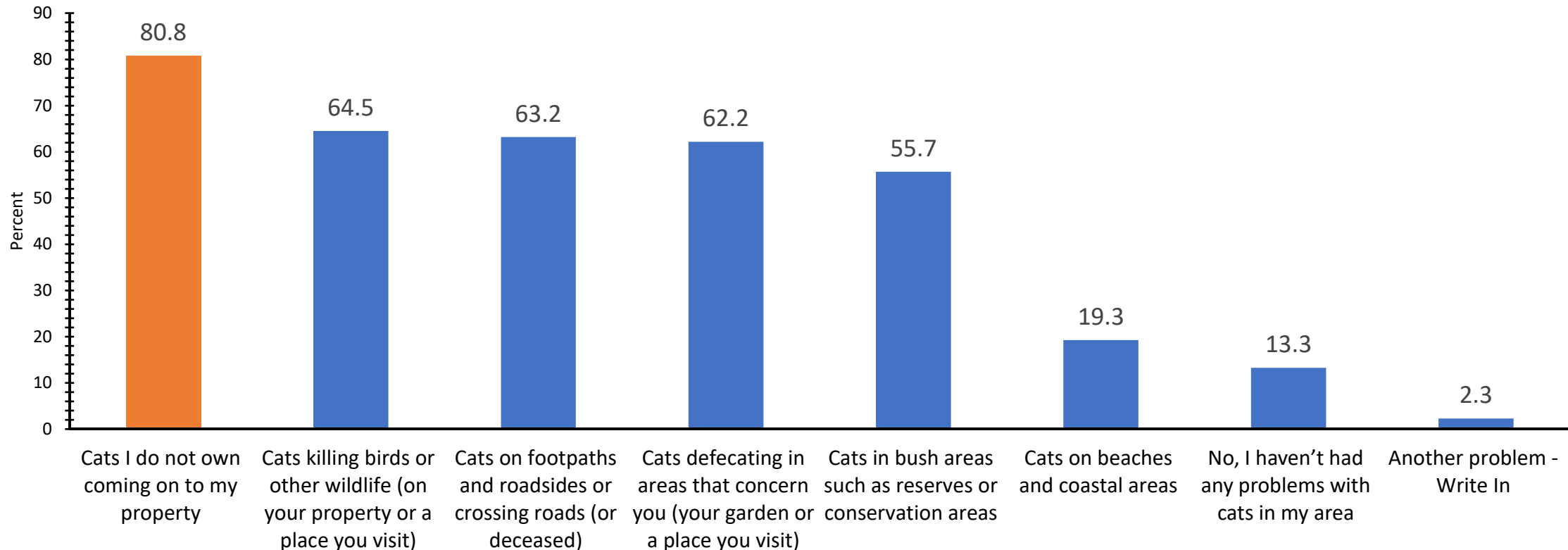
- The main negative identified about cats is their impact on wildlife.
- The impacts are mentioned for natural environments and also seen as issues for birds and wildlife in urban backyards
- The impact on people and other animals of cat diseases is also a key issue for many (toxoplasmosis in particular)



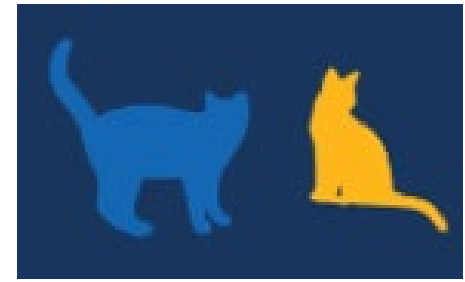
Problems or issues experienced with Cats



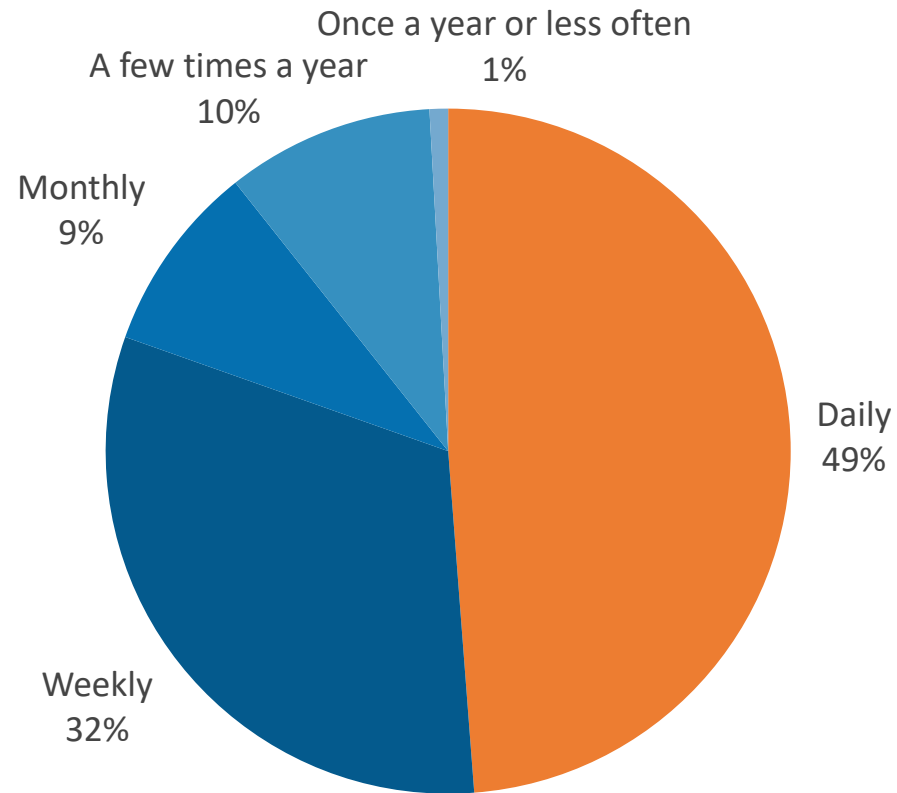
- 8 in 10 contributors have experienced cats coming on to their property (that don't belong to them)
- Cats killing birds, around in the community, and defecating in unwelcome places are all key problems being experienced across our community
- These issues may be from pet, stray or feral cats



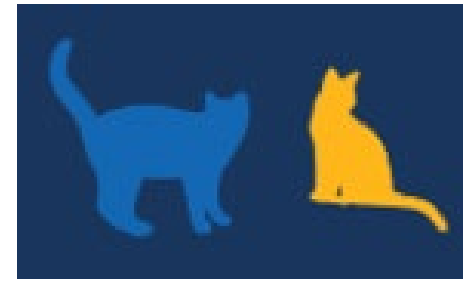
Frequency of cats coming onto properties



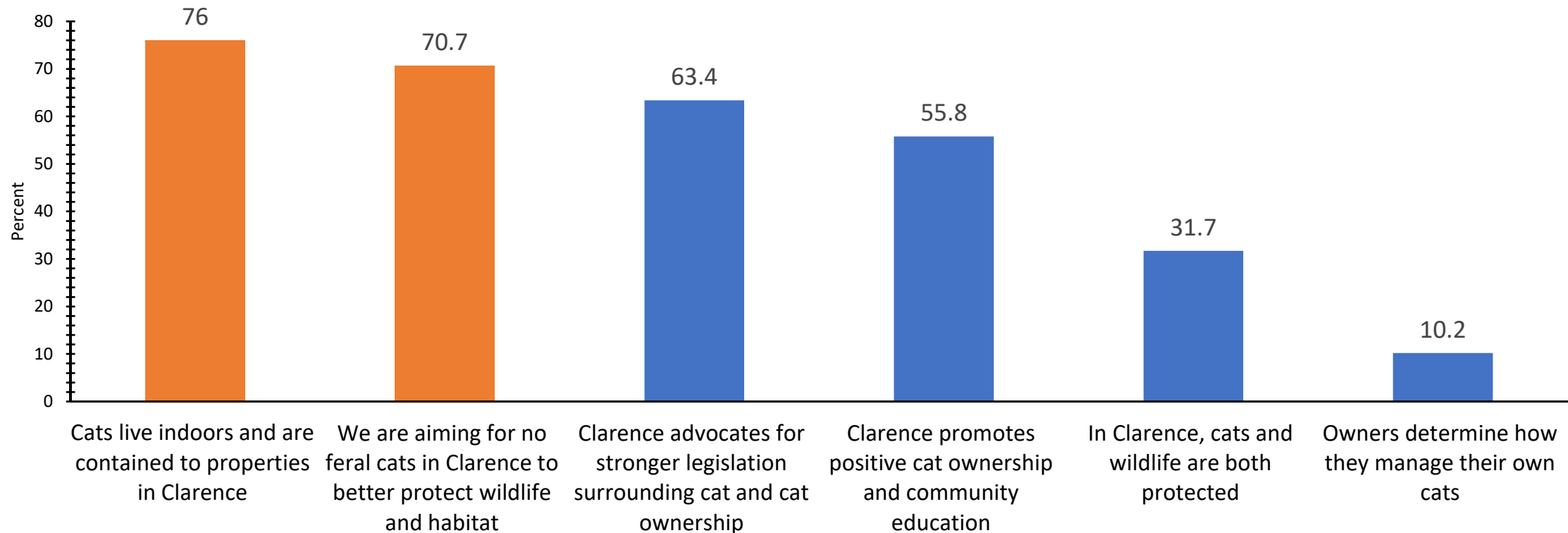
- 5 in 10 are saying that cats are coming onto their properties daily



Cat management community statements



- There is a high interest in change for Clarence in how cats are managed
- Over 7 in 10 would like to be able to say the following about Cats in Clarence:
 - 'Cats live indoors and are confined to properties in Clarence'
 - 'We are aiming for no feral cats in Clarence to better protect wildlife and habitat'
- There is also strong support for advocating for stronger legislation and positive community education
- There is very limited support for owners determining how they manage their own cats



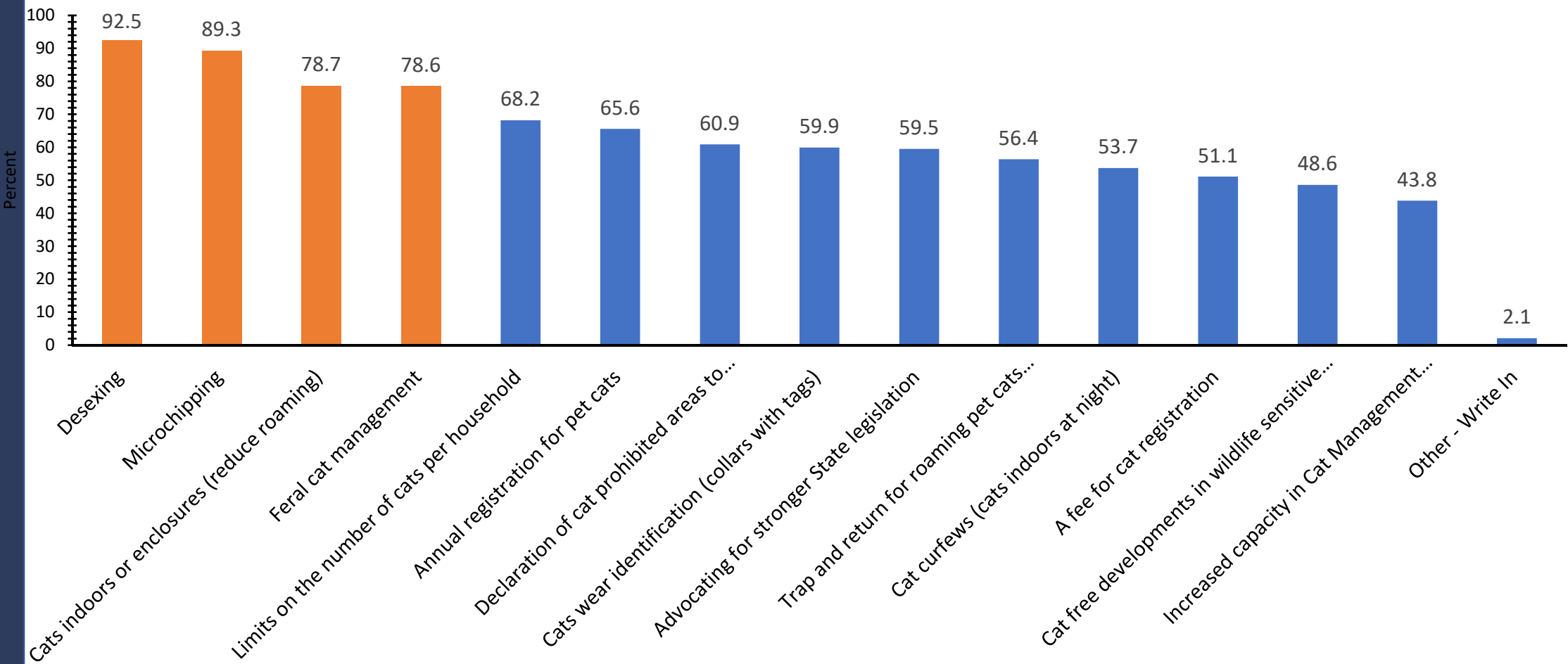
Clarence... a brighter place

Cat management vision statements Which of the following would you like Clarence to be known for? (n=830 all respondents)

Support for cat management elements



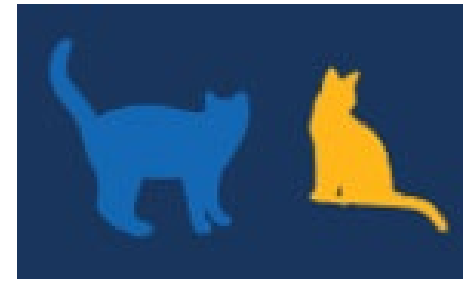
- 9 in 10 support the existing measures of desexing and microchipping
- 8 in 10 support Cats indoors and feral cat management
- Many other potential ideas also had community support (some are already in existing legislation)



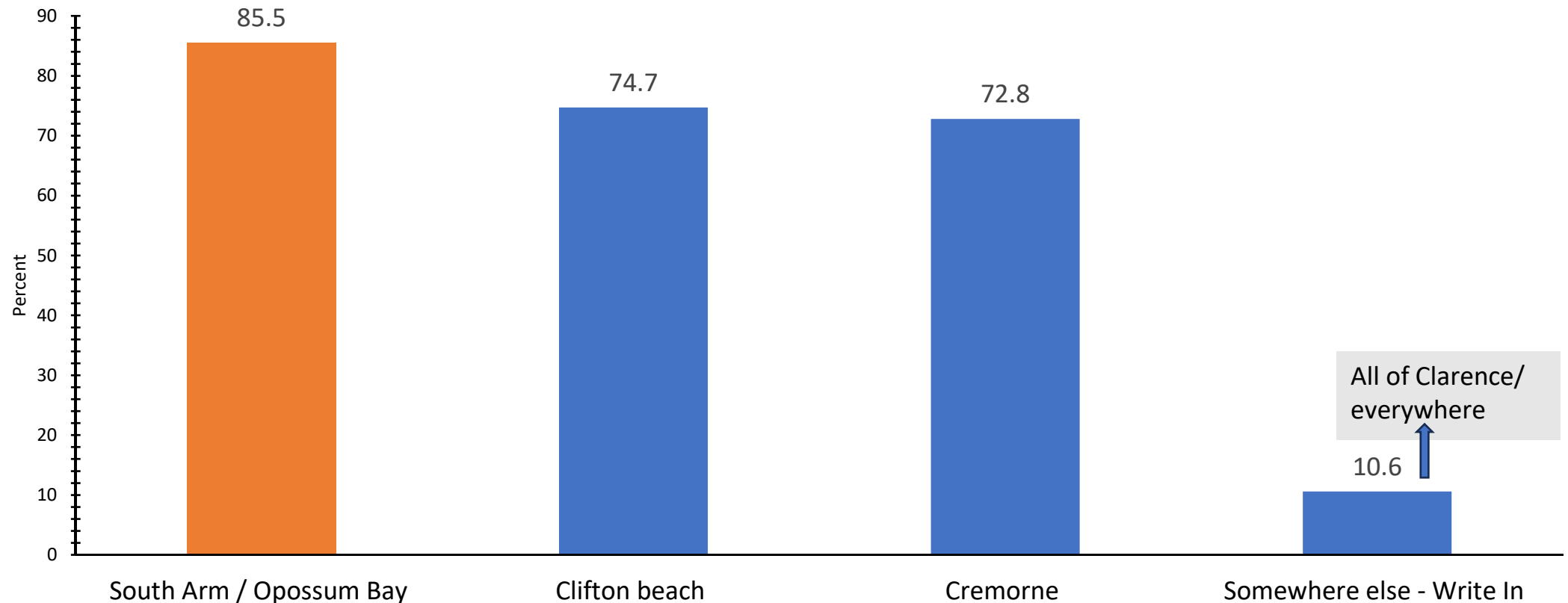
Clarence... a brighter place

Which of the following areas of cat management do you support in clarence? This could be in a policy or supported in another way. Please select all that apply

Localised cat control locations



- 9 in 10 support South Arm / Opossum Bay area as an appropriate location for stronger cat control
- Both Clifton Beach and Cremorne areas have support for stronger controls
- In the somewhere else locations suggested there was a wide range of suburbs from Howrah to Sandford mentioned with most suggesting that all of Clarence should be considered (or even all of Tasmania)

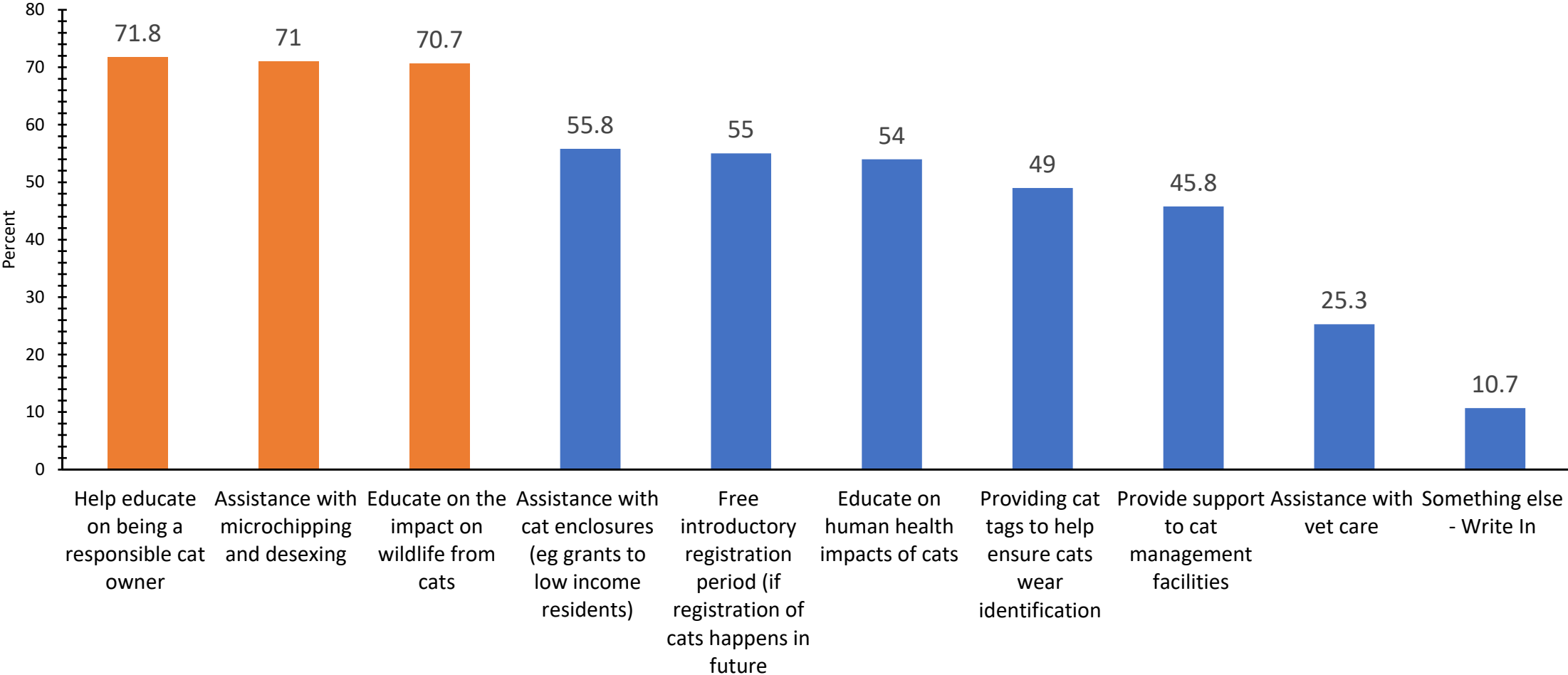


The Tasmanian Cat Management Plan 2017-2022 supports localised cat control strategies tailored to specific issues such as removing stray cat colonies or protecting local assets and native wildlife. It has been suggested that South Arm could be appropriate to investigate. Which of the following areas do you support having stronger cat control strategies to protect wildlife?

Cat owner support



- 7 in 10 would like a range of owner support in Clarence including assistance for owners with microchipping and desexing as well as some support for cat enclosure assistance
- There is strong interest in community education including on being a responsible owner, the impact on wildlife from cats as well as the human health impacts of cats



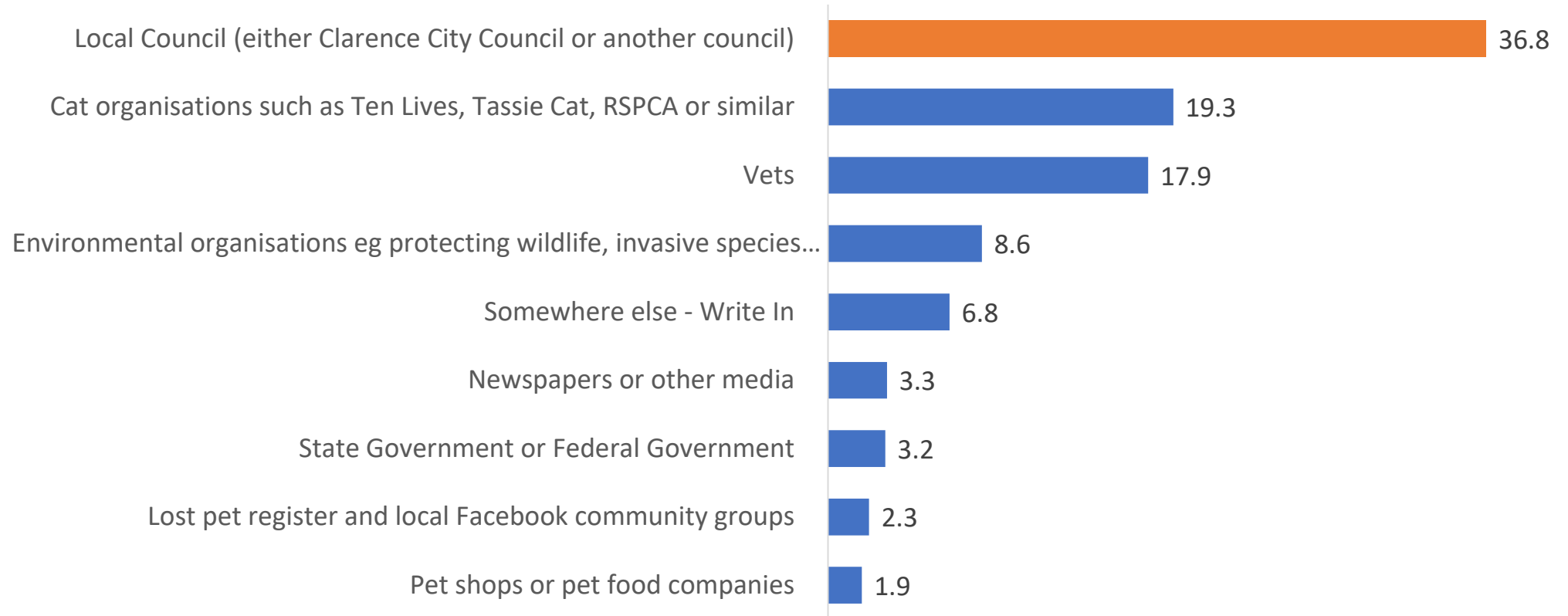
Clarence... a brighter place

Which of the following areas of cat owner support would you like to see in Clarence to help support responsible ownership? These ideas are how some other councils use funds raised through cat registration. Please select all that apply

Expected places to find information

- Community members are considering a wide range of places to find information on cat ownership and cat impact
- The expected source for many (37%) is a council website. There is an opportunity to share a range of relevant information and links of where to go for information and support for the topics that are of most interest.

Sources of information



What we heard

Workshop summary



Summary of overall themes emerging from Workshop

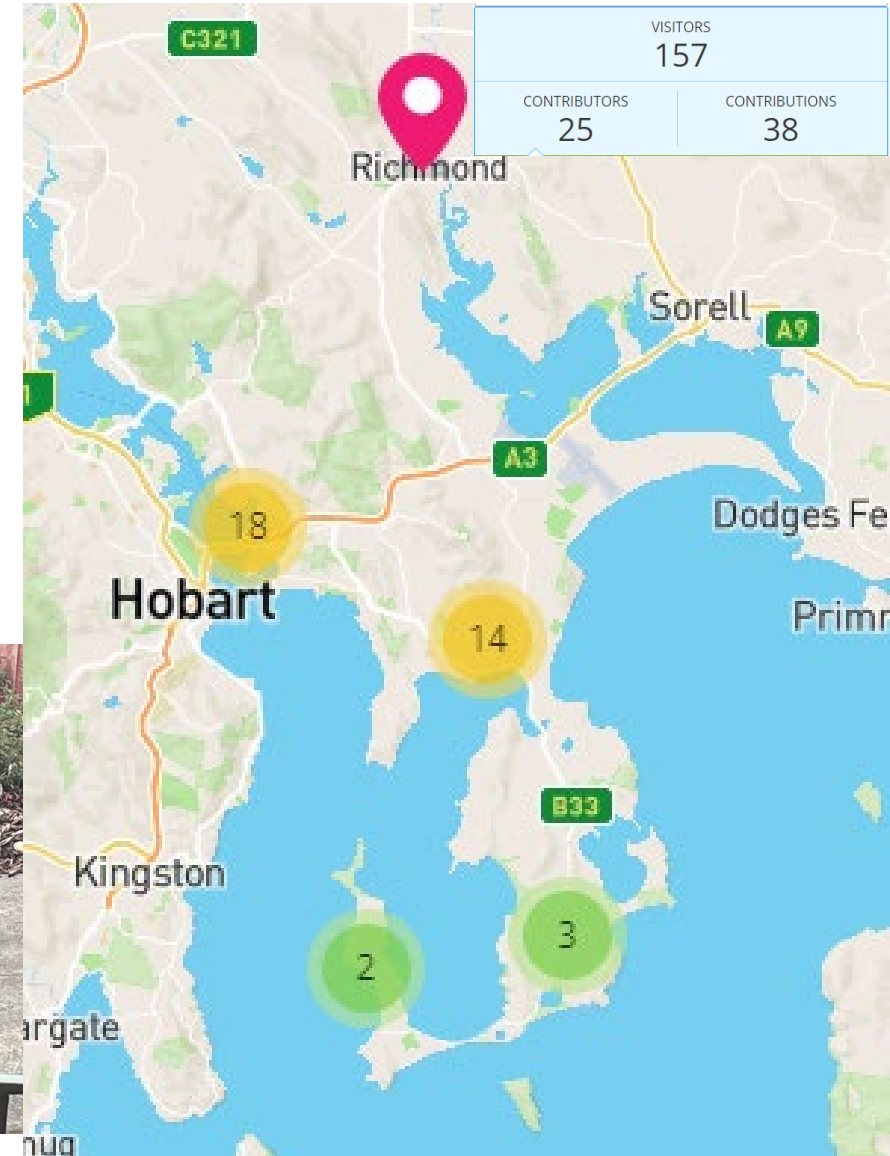
- ***Keeping cats indoors/in enclosures more often + desexing*** emerged as the strongest combination of short-term, priority, cat management strategies – together, these two things have a positive flow on effect to other issues such as cat over population and endangerment of wildlife.
- Beyond these two things, ***microchipping and feral cat management*** were also considered key priorities.
- Given that there are many and varied stakeholders involved in working through these issues – from community members to community organisations to government, and beyond – there is a need for more ***collaboration*** between these groups, to bring about positive change
- The ***tone of voice*** in communication to cat owners about responsible behaviours is more likely to have a positive impact if it is ***encouraging, not judgmental***
- While there is support for more enforcement of measures such as desexing of cats, in particular, this is more likely to work if it is ***helpful and accessible*** (e.g. affordable, easy to access) ***rather than punitive*** (i.e. fines for non-compliance)
- ***More fundraising options*** should be considered to help provide solutions (e.g. to provide free desexing services) – not just government, but non-government funding such as Go Fund Me and philanthropy via wealthy community members
- Ultimately, we need to keep in mind that this is a ***‘people management’*** issue, just as much as a ‘cat management one’. That being the case, it is important to find ways to get helpful information out, in an encouraging tone of voice, to those who need to change their behaviour most. Many of these people may not be ***active seekers*** of information – either by choice, or due to disability - so we need to get creative in finding ways to reach them effectively, where they live.



What we heard – MAP

CATEGORY DISTRIBUTION

Cats in bush or beaches (wildlife risk)	28%
Cats in my backyard (not my cat)	28%
Feral or stray cat sightings	23%
Other comments	13%
Ideas	0%
Cats hurt or at risk	5%



COMMENTS ON MAP	ADDRESS OF MAP PIN OF COMMENTS
Stray/feral cats in area and toxoplasmosis symptoms evident in wallabies & bandicoots	
Feral kitten found in bush verge between beach and private property.	19 Kirra Road, Roches Beach Tasmania 7170,
At least 4 different cats hunting wildlife along Rivulet, day and night. Seen, and also caught on wildlife camera in garden drinking from birdbath and stalking wildlife. Wildlife found dead - native hens (adults & chicks), green rosellas, Pacific ducklings, sugar glider, brush and ringtail possums. Sick pademelons and wallabies. Likely other victims - frogs, lizards, microbats, variety of wild birds, moths, butterflies, grasshoppers, katydids etc.	950 Cambridge Road, Cambridge Tasmania 7170,
Multiple (at least 4 on this small track) domesticated cats roaming freely, with collars attacking and killing wildlife. They catch and kill bandicoots and small birds such as fairy wrens. Owners refuse to contain or limit them. Long term issue.	37 Cornwall Street, Lindisfarne Tasmania 7015,
Many neighbourhood cats roam freely in this block of land during the day and night, there are noticeably less birds in the area.	11 Madden Court, Rosny Tasmania 7018
I have seen neighborhood cats roaming and hunting, day and night, on my boundary fence and in the Rosny Hill Nature reserve. There has been a significant decline in the numbers of birds, particularly smaller species such as the blue wren and red breasted robins	36 Kellatie Road, Rosny Tasmania 7018,
Killed wildlife	126 Forest Hill Road, Sandford Tasmania 7020,
We have many stray cats crossing our property and have had a number of feral kittens born in the area.	3475 South Arm Road, South Arm Tasmania 7022,
There was a southern brown bandicoot regularly here. On several occasions a disrupted a cat stalking it. I have now not seen the bandicoot for over 6 months.	16 Musgrove Road, Geilston Bay Tasmania 7015,
Cat lurking in bushes	16 Granville Avenue, Geilston Bay Tasmania 7015,
Ginger cat always hides under cars or in bushes adjacent to foot path.	86a Derwent Avenue, Geilston Bay Tasmania 7015,
Neighbouring cat would constantly walk along fence lines and in result make several dogs around bark. Owner of cat claimed on local Facebook group that their inside cat that was allowed outside for the toilet had gone missing. Whose yard was this cat using as a toilet?? Cat fell victim to a negligent owner who didn't keep it safe away from angry Neighbour's, dogs or the highway traffic. My own cat is lucky enough to be safely contained indoors but if my children and dog are not allowed to roam the streets so why should my cat?!	39 Oakdowns Parade, Oakdowns Tasmania 7019,
It is a cat superhighway through and around our house.! Over the years I have taken over 20 cats to 9 lives., only to see some return the next day!! Irresponsible cat ownership. They are not charged fees like dogs are if they end up at pounds/rescue centres. We have trapped several families of feral cats as well(Mum, Dad and kittens) We have put motion sensor cameras and out and are horrified at the amount of cats that are on our property both day and night. We are all for complete cat containment and registration for cats. Also make it easier to trap and remove stray., straying and feral cats on our property to a facility to deal with. Most facilities wont take animals as they are full up now. Our wood heap is now a smelly toilet for local cats! We also are egistered for wildlife garden and struggle at times to kept cats away when birds are nesting and lizards and frogs are around.	26 Eurobin Street, Geilston Bay Tasmania 7015,
Domestic pet cats - neighbour's cats - roaming my property eating the wild life. Discussions with the neighbours haven't resulted in a change to their behaviour and they don't keep their cats on their own property nor indoors.	15 Thompson Way, Clifton Beach Tasmania 7020,
Roaming cats	87 Corinth Street, Howrah Tasmania 7018,
I have seen neighborhood cats roaming and hunting, day and night, in the front yard of my property. There has been a significant decline in the numbers of birds, particularly smaller species such as the blue wren and red breasted robins.	36 Kellatie Road, Rosny Tasmania 7018,
I have 2 cats. They have 2 outdoor cages and are also leash trained. Even when outside they are contained to my yard, supervised and are not free to kill wildlife. In short i am doing my best to be a responsible pet owner however there is a ginger cat that is allowed to roam freely at all hours. This causes my cats territorial stress and they redirect aggression towards each other when the cat is around. This has resulted in the need to medicate one of the cats and to restrict my cats use of their cages and outdoor time on leads. It has caused stress, spraying and vet visits. It has also caused one of my cats to opportunistically escape twice from the house to pursue the other cat and almost get hit by cars in their pursuit. Cats should be contained or leashed at all times in all places. I have tried to follow it to find its owner but it roams so widely it is impossible to know where it comes from.	55 Derwent Avenue, Geilston Bay Tasmania 7015,
Cats constantly let to roam and defecate in gardens . Cats having litters of kittens . This problem has been ongoing for years. The cats belong to a family in this street but have been free ranging for many years. Owners of cats should be made to keep them in their own property as with dogs.	34 Tranmere Road, Howrah Tasmania 7018,
Pet and feral cats in my yard- ginger, 2 grey and white	8 Algona Street, South Arm Tasmania 7022,
Feral cats wander at night	4 York Street, Bellerive Tasmania 7018,
Entering from front and back of property,often with a substitute collar!	127 Balook Street, Lauderdale Tasmania 7021,
Neighbouring cats are forever in our back & front yards, using it as their own personal bathroom!	7 Mosman Road, Clarendon Vale Tasmania 7019,
We are at 9 Percy Street. Since living here we have had numerous cats wandering around our yard. I contacted 10 lives and trapped 2cats which I surrendered to their depot at Cornelian Bay. One of which was a feral cat that had lost an eye and they said would have been in considerable pain so it was euthanized. Prior to trapping cats I followed 10 lives guidelines of talking to all our neighbors. The last time I caught a cat 10 lives could not take it as they were at capacity. I the last year we have become inundated with cats wandering through our property have not been able to catch them. We have a large garden with a huge variety of bird life but it is very distressing to find piles of feathers quite regularly around our yard. I like cats but would not own one because they cause this damage. Any help would be very much appreciated. Our neighbors last week saw 3 cats in our driveway one of which was extremely large. This is not acceptable and we are willing to work with someone to do something about it.	10 Percy Street, Richmond Tasmania 7025,
Roaming pet cats regularly seen around Oakdowns. Have trapped and transported 3 to 10 lives in the past 3 years. Recently saw another in my yard. Commonly see others on the streets whilst driving or walking.	23 Woodleigh Drive, Oakdowns Tasmania 7019,
Numerous feral cat sightings and catching feral cats and kittens over the years. These cats have been seen actively hunting numerous native bird species and the eastern barred bandicoot at this location.	9 Bardia Court, Roches Beach Tasmania 7170,
Could be strays or could be pet cats in this block	11 Madden Court, Rosny Tasmania 7018,
Feral cats breeding in the Reserve. They, and some domestic cats seen on cameras at night on our and neighbours property.	90 Rosny Esplanade, Rosny Tasmania 7018,
Large number of feral cats. Possibly a result of the tip in Lauderdale from many years ago.	126 Forest Hill Road, Sandford Tasmania 7020,
Since January 2024 we have sighted 13 different feral/stray cats on our trail cameras.	2083 South Arm Road, Sandford Tasmania 7020,
Large stray cats sighted	Tangara Trail, Sandford Tasmania 7020,
Stray tabbies and a black/white one frequenting area	150 Balook Street, Lauderdale Tasmania 7021,
I have seen neighborhood cats roaming and hunting, day and night, all along Kellatie Road. There has been a significant decline in the numbers of birds, and I suspect other animal species as well.	11 Heskett Court, Rosny Tasmania 7018,
I have seen neighborhood cats roaming and hunting, day and night, all along Kellatie Road. There has been a significant decline in the numbers of birds, and I suspect other animal species as well.	23 Kellatie Road, Rosny Tasmania 7018,
I have seen neighborhood cats roaming and hunting, day and night, all along Kellatie Road. There has been a significant decline in the numbers of birds, and I suspect other animal species as well.	44 Kellatie Road, Rosny Tasmania 7018,
Unable to determine if a pet or a stray, the cat is frequently outside, all times of day, sheltering under parked cars.	8 Heskett Court, Rosny Tasmania 7018,
Cat ran over. Have seen many cats on the side of the road in this area. I'd say they are feral/stray cats breeding in this area.	154 South Arm Road, Rokeby Tasmania 7019,
Often up to 6+ cats with garage door slightly open with food and water for them. Elderly woman lives there. A cat sat in the middle of the road and wouldn't move so a car had to drive around it. Either blind, not able to hear or dementing cat. Black and grey in colour.	33 Llenroc Street, Geilston Bay Tasmania 7015,
When my cat escaped in pursuit of a free to roam cat both were almost killed by passing vehicles	

Idea box – comments

Comments from Harvest Festival

- Registration of cats like dogs
- Grants/community funds to help owners build safe cat enclosures
- Register cats
- Change legislation
- Cats to be contained
- Owners should be responsible for their own cat. Keep them inside so they don't kill wildlife
- Cats should be contained on properties
- Cat owners should be required to keep cats on their property probably in an enclosure. Kingborough council has this policy.
- I think that cats should be kept away from wildlife of all sorts. A large cat cage attached to the house would be great

Comments left at front desk

- Oceana Drive: we have a stray orange cat that is frequently in our garden. Probably after the native birds we try to attract. Cat enclosures should be mandatory & enforced.
- Ensure cats are on leads or in runs to protect birdlife same as dogs.
- My suggestion re cats is to give all cat owners one month to have their cats euthanised. They are not native to Australia and serve no purpose. They have decimated our native wildlife in suburbia and in the wild. A planted a native garden to attract birds but unfortunately it attracts the neighbours cat. The plants play a role in our habitat unfortunately the cats do not.
- Please, please enforce that all cats be kept inside or on owners property before dark. A lady in Alford St, Howrah has many cats and she purposely lets them out when its dark. They do their business in our garden and are always coming into our backyard as we have budgies outside. The cats scare our pets etc. We and our neighbours are sick of her and the law should be adhered to if it comes in & enforced. We keep our pets on our property, as do other people. CATS are a problem. Registration & desexing also would be most welcomed (dogs are). Thanks for taking on board, hopefully



Next Steps: feedback will inform timing, inclusions and prioritisation of potential actions (including but not limited to the following):

Education & Support

- Promotion of responsible cat ownership and community education
- Providing positive information and practical support (subsidised microchipping, desexing, containment solutions covered in the survey for feedback)

Cat management frameworks

- To inform a future cat policy
- To inform the Southern Tasmania regional cat management strategy
- To inform consideration of all management options available including by-laws

Partnerships & advocacy

- Develop strong partnerships and relationships to deliver regional solutions
- Advocacy with LGAT, State and Federal Governments and other partners
- Consideration of resourcing required and pursuing grant opportunities
- Consider cat management areas and participate in workshops



Appendix

- Dog owner questions for comparison on adherence to key legislation
- Survey demographics
- Channels
- Survey (available both online and as a hard copy on request)
- Submissions
- Workshop report in full – what was shown and what was heard



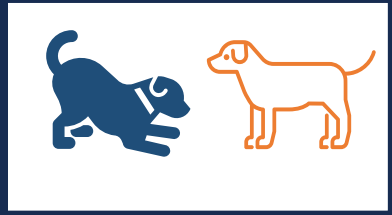


Dog owner questions

- Which of the following apply to your dog or dogs? (microchipped, desexed, vaccinated etc)
- If your dog or dogs isn't desexed or microchipped we would like to understand your reasons why
- If you've ever updated microchip details, how did you find the process? Please tell us what was simple or easy or anything you found difficult

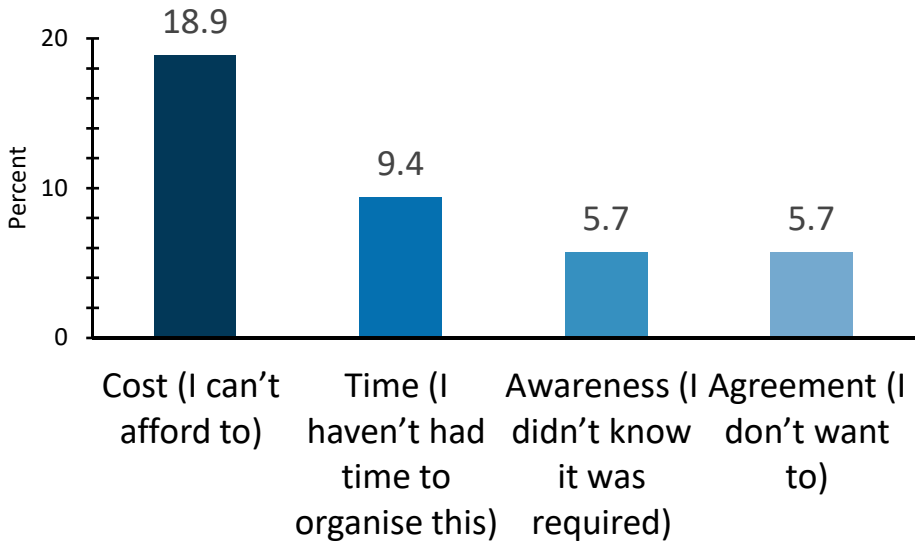


Microchip and Desexing status



- Pleasingly a high proportion of pet dog owners in Clarence (who participated in this survey) are complying in full with the legislation
- However, not all dogs are registered and a nearly 1 in 10 aren't wearing a council tag as required.
- The main barriers mentioned are cost and time.

All of my dogs	
My dog is microchipped	99.7%
My dog is desexed	94.0%
My dog wears a collar with identification (a council tag)	90.6%
My dog is vaccinated	97.5%
My dog is registered	97.7%



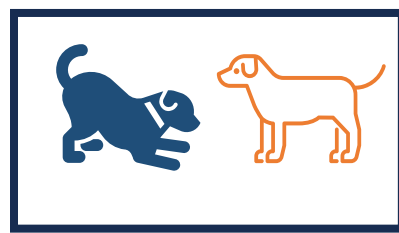
And now a couple of questions just for dog owners.
Which of the following apply to your dog or dogs? (n= 398 dog owners)

If your dogs aren't registered, desexed or microchipped we would like to understand your reasons why? (small sample n=21 dog owners)



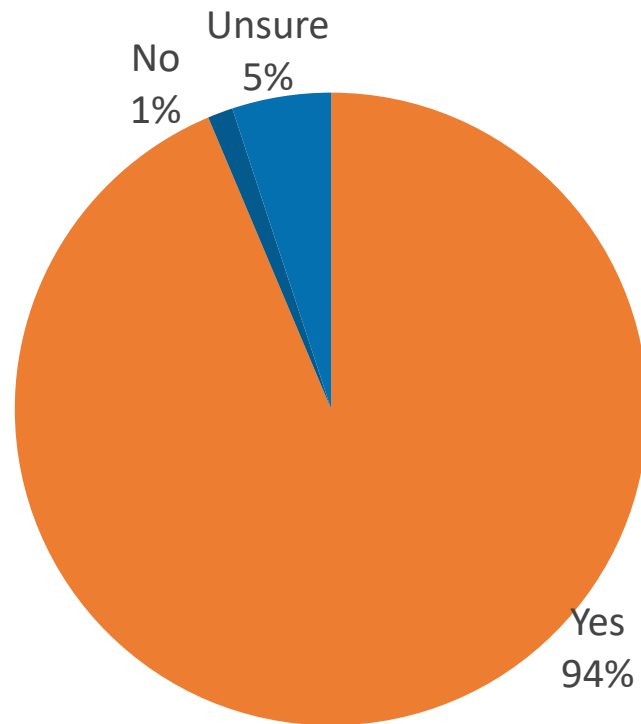
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Microchip details



- 94% have up to date microchip details
- Similarly to cat owners, most dog owners who have updated microchip details described it as 'easy'

Microchip details up to date



7. Are your dog's microchip details up to date?

How was the process?



10. If you've ever updated microchip details, how did you find the process? Please tell us what was simple or easy or anything you found difficult



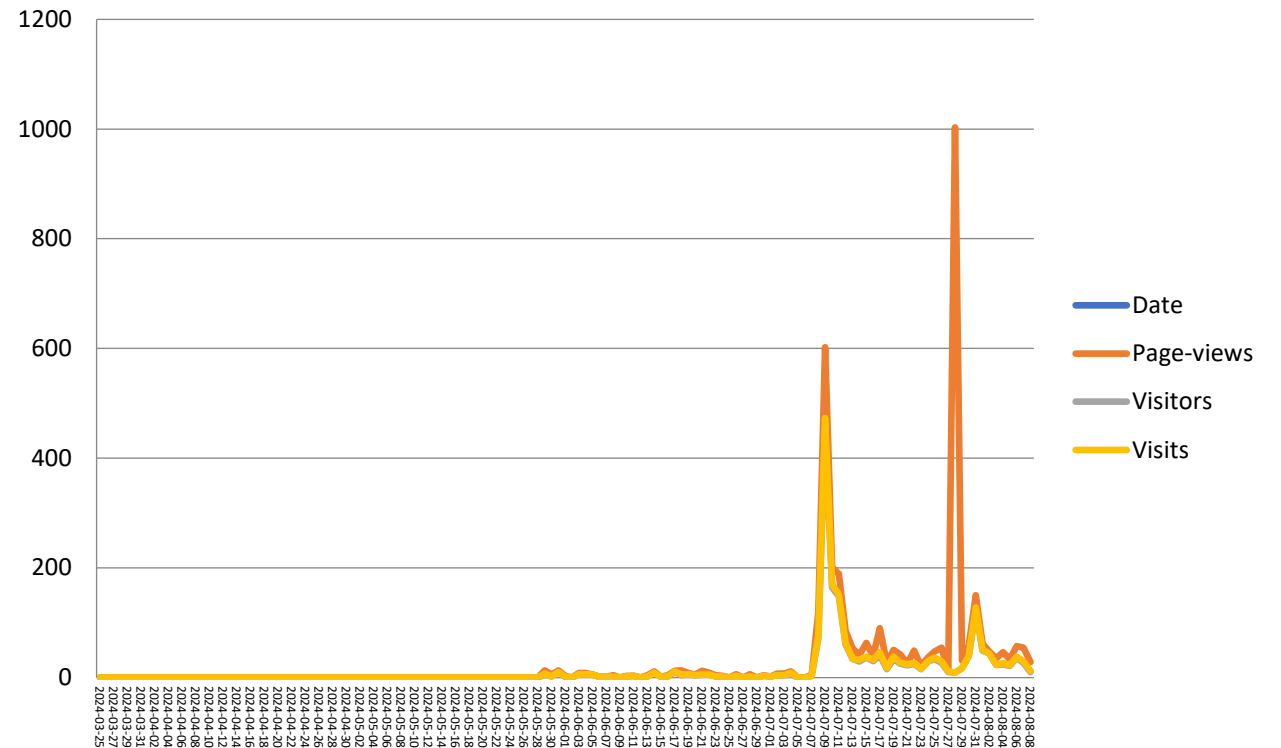
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Digital engagement summary

High levels of digital engagement:

- Total page visits was 1,940
- Aware visitors was 1,649
- Completed surveys was 832
- Contributed to the map was 26

Visitors Summary

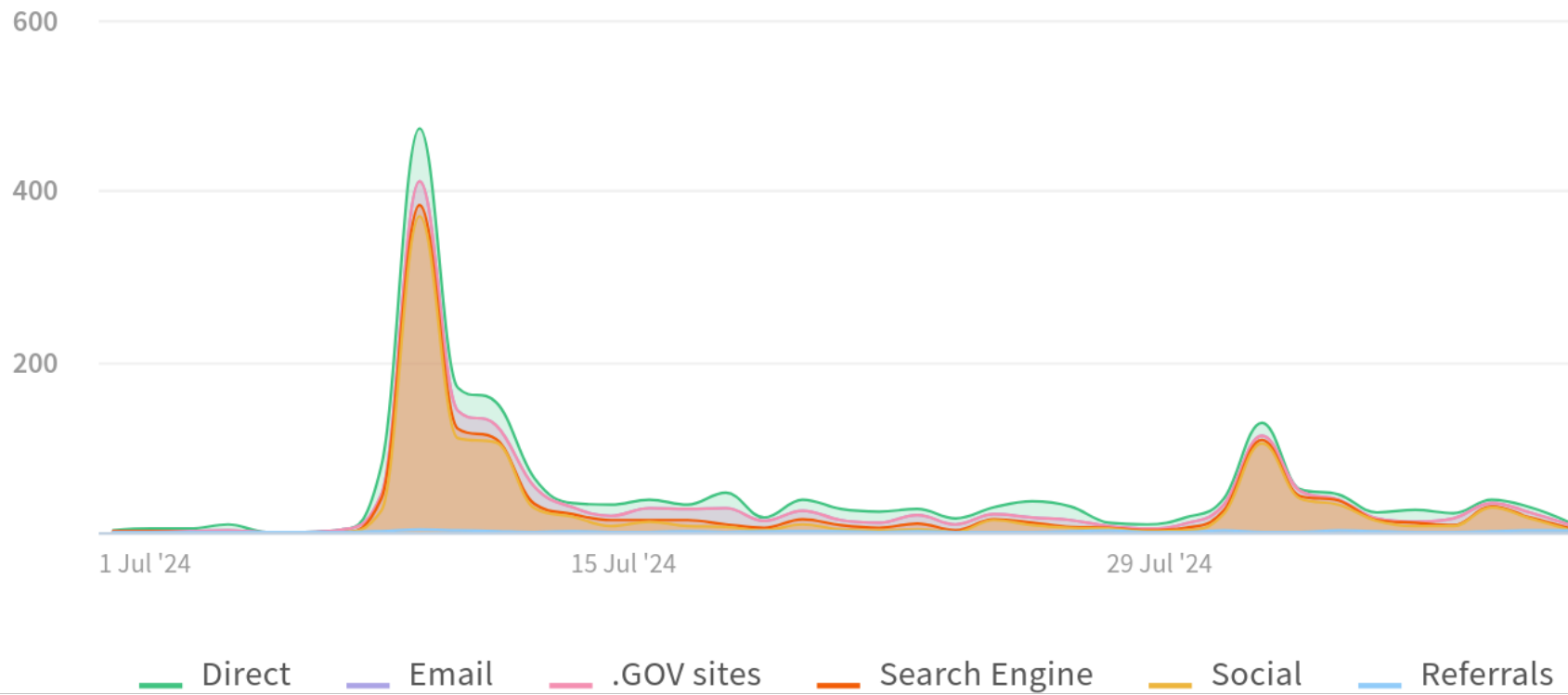


Key channels for website engagement

- Strong response from social media
- Direct emails and corflutes helped increase engagement

Visits by Channel

Your Say Clarence from 01 Jul'24 to 08 Aug'24



What was asked

Introduction



CATS IN CLARENCE



Thank you for taking part in this survey about cats in Clarence. We are wanting to understand cat ownership in Clarence, experiences with cats and expectations for a cat policy.

The survey should take 5-10 minutes to complete, depending on your answers.

We will ask couple of structured questions and also provide opportunities to share your reasons. Lastly, we will ask a few general questions about you. This is an anonymous survey and we won't ask any questions that would identify you.

We are looking forward to hearing what you think!

Pet Ownership

1. Do you own any of the following types of pets?

- ☐ Cats
- ☐ Dogs
- ☐ Birds
- ☐ Guinea Pigs, rabbits or other small mammals
- ☐ Reptiles
- ☐ Horse
- ☐ Fish or amphibians
- ☐ Something else - Write In
- ☐ No pets

Cats in the community

2. What are the good things about cats in Clarence? Thinking about your cats or other cats in Clarence

3. And, what are the negatives of cats in Clarence? Again, these could be your cats or other cats in Clarence

4. Thinking about the last 12 months.

Have you seen or experienced any of the following problems or issues with cats in Clarence? These could be pet, stray or feral cats. *Please select all that apply*

- ☐ Cats I do not own coming on to my property
- ☐ Cats killing birds or other wildlife (on your property or a place you visit)
- ☐ Cats defecating in areas that concern you (your garden or a place you visit)
- ☐ Cats on footpaths and roadsides or crossing roads (or deceased)
- ☐ Cats in bush areas such as reserves or conservation areas
- ☐ Cats on beaches and coastal areas
- ☐ No, I haven't had any problems with cats in my area
- ☐ Another problem - Write In



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What was asked – Cat owner section

Cat Owner Section

2. What are the good things about having a cat?

3. And, what are the negatives of having a cat (if any)?

4. What were your main reasons for getting a cat? *Please select all that apply*

- ☐ Companionship
- ☐ Mental health benefits
- ☐ Pet for a child
- ☐ I was given my cat
- ☐ Wanted to rescue a cat
- ☐ As a friend to other pets
- ☐ Support animal
- ☐ Another reason - Write In

5. Where did you get your cat or cats? *Please select all that apply*

- ☐ Ten lives
- ☐ Pet Shop
- ☐ RSPCA
- ☐ Cat shelter
- ☐ Facebook, gumtree or similar
- ☐ From a family member or friend
- ☐ From a breeder
- ☐ Somewhere else - Write In

6. How many cats do you own?

-- Please Select -- ▼

7. Which of the following apply to your cat or cats? *Please select all, some or none*

	All of my cats	Some of my cats	None of my cats
My cat is microchipped	☐	☐	☐
My cat is desexed	☐	☐	☐
My cat wears a collar with identification	☐	☐	☐
My cat is vaccinated	☐	☐	☐
None of these apply to my cat (my cat isn't desexed, no identification)	☐	☐	☐

What was asked – cat owner section

8. If your cat or cats isn't desexed or microchipped we would like to understand your reasons why *(answer only if one or more of your cats isn't desexed or microchipped)*

- ☐ Cost (I can't afford to)
- ☐ Transport (I don't have a car or easy access to a vet)
- ☐ Time (I haven't had time to organise this)
- ☐ Awareness (I didn't know it was required)
- ☐ Agreement (I don't want to)
- ☐ Veterinary exemption
- ☐ Something else - Write In

9. Are your cat's microchip details up to date?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

10. If you've ever updated microchip details, how did you find the process? Please tell us what was simple or easy or anything you found difficult

11. Which of the following best describe your cat or cats and their access to inside and outside areas? *Please select all that apply, some may overlap*

- ☐ Indoor cat
- ☐ Access to outdoors with a cat enclosure
- ☐ Inside at night
- ☐ Access to the garden/outdoors during the day
- ☐ Access to outdoors at any time on my property
- ☐ Outdoor cat and able to leave my property

What was asked

5. Cat management vision statements

Which of the following would you like Clarence to be known for?

- ☐ Owners determine how they manage their own cats
- ☐ We are aiming for no feral cats in Clarence to better protect wildlife and habitat
- ☐ Cats live indoors and are contained to properties in Clarence
- ☐ In Clarence, cats and wildlife are both protected
- ☐ Clarence promotes positive cat ownership and community education
- ☐ Clarence advocates for stronger legislation surrounding cat and cat ownership

6. Which of the following areas of cat management do you support in clarence? This could be in a policy or supported in another way. *Please select all that apply*

- ☐ Annual registration for pet cats
- ☐ Cat curfews (cats indoors at night)
- ☐ Cats indoors or enclosures (reduce roaming)
- ☐ Microchipping
- ☐ Desexing
- ☐ Cats wear identification (collars with tags)
- ☐ Trap and return for roaming pet cats (outside the property where they live)
- ☐ Declaration of cat prohibited areas to protect wildlife (in conservation areas)
- ☐ Cat free developments in wildlife sensitive areas
- ☐ Limits on the number of cats per household
- ☐ Feral cat management
- ☐ A fee for cat registration
- ☐ Increased capacity in Cat Management facilities
- ☐ Advocating for stronger State legislation
- ☐ Other - Write In

7. The Tasmanian Cat Management Plan 2017-2022 supports localised cat control strategies tailored to specific issues such as removing stray cat colonies or protecting local assets and native wildlife. It has been suggested that South Arm could be appropriate to investigate.

Which of the following areas do you support having stronger cat control strategies to protect wildlife?

- ☐ South Arm / Opossum Bay
- ☐ Clifton beach
- ☐ Cremorne
- ☐ Somewhere else - Write In

8. Which of the following areas of cat owner support would you like to see in Clarence to help support responsible ownership? These ideas are how some other councils use funds raised through cat registration. *Please select all that apply*

- ☐ Free introductory registration period (if registration of cats happens in future)
- ☐ Assistance with cat enclosures (eg grants to low income residents)
- ☐ Assistance with microchipping and desexing
- ☐ Assistance with vet care
- ☐ Providing cat tags to help ensure cats wear identification
- ☐ Provide support to cat management facilities
- ☐ Help educate on being a responsible cat owner
- ☐ Educate on human health impacts of cats
- ☐ Educate on the impact on wildlife from cats
- ☐ Something else - Write In

What was asked

9. Where would you go to find information about cats including responsible cat ownership and cat impacts?

- ☐ Vets
- ☐ Local Council (either Clarence City Council or another council)
- ☐ State Government or Federal Government
- ☐ Newspapers or other media
- ☐ Pet shops or pet food companies
- ☐ Cat organisations such as Ten Lives, Tassie Cat, RSPCA or similar
- ☐ Environmental organisations eg protecting wildlife, invasive species council
- ☐ Lost pet register and local Facebook community groups
- ☐ Somewhere else - Write In

10. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Demographics and Classification Questions

11. Where do you live? (suburb in Clarence or somewhere else)

12. Which of the following best describes your place of residence?

- ☐ suburban or urban area
- ☐ rural area within 1km from my nearest neighbour
- ☐ rural area more than 1km from my nearest neighbour

13. What is your age?

- ☐ Under 19 years
- ☐ 20 – 29 years
- ☐ 30 – 39 years
- ☐ 40 – 49 years
- ☐ 50 – 59 years
- ☐ 60 – 69 years
- ☐ 70 years or over
- ☐ Prefer not to say

14. What is your gender?

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ I identify my gender as....(please specify)

15. Do you have children under 18 living in your home some or most of the time?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

16. Do you own your home or are you renting? (to help us better understand where pets are living)

- ☐ Live in a house I own (or are paying off)
- ☐ Live in a house owned by someone else (renting , sharing)

What was asked – dog owner section

Dogs in Clarence

21. And now a couple of questions just for dog owners

Which of the following apply to your dog or dogs? Please select all, some or none

	All of my dogs	Some of my dogs	None of my dogs
My dog is microchipped	☐	☐	☐
My dog is desexed	☐	☐	☐
My dog wears a collar with identification (a council tag)	☐	☐	☐
My dog is vaccinated	☐	☐	☐
My dog is registered	☐	☐	☐
None of these apply to my dog (my dog isn't desexed etc)	☐	☐	☐

22. Are your dog's microchip details up to date?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure

23. If you've ever updated microchip details, how did you find the process? Please tell us what was simple or easy or anything you found difficult

24. If your dogs aren't registered, desexed or microchipped we would like to understand your reasons why?

- ☐ Cost (I can't afford to)
☐ Transport (I don't have a car or easy access to a vet)
☐ Time (I haven't had time to organise this)
☐ Awareness (I didn't know it was required)
☐ Agreement (I don't want to)
☐ Something else - Write In



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Detailed submissions: on Your Say in full

Link to full submission on council Your Say:

- <https://www.yoursay.ccc.tas.gov.au/92719/widgets/438052/documents/287568>
- Main suggestions for cat management:

Improve the management of cats to protect wildlife

Mandate pet cat containment to protect wildlife and keep pet cats safe at home.

Update and fund a new state-wide 5 year cat management strategy and continue to fund the **Tasmanian Cat Management Project**, focused on responsible cat management.

Support local governments to enforce pet cat containment, desexing and pet registration.

Declare feral cats as a 'pest' species outside urban areas.

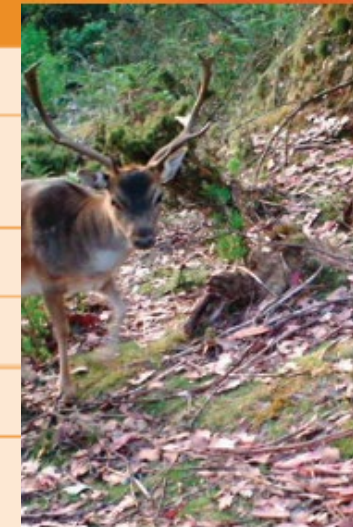
Commit to continued support of three regional cat coordinators to support community action and education.

Appoint a state-wide feral cat coordinator to implement and coordinate a state-wide feral cat control strategy.

Prioritise feral cat eradications on off-shore islands, such as lungtalanana/Clark Island.

Tackling invasive species

Priorities for the next Tasmanian government



Clarence... a brighter place

Detailed submissions: on Your Say in full

Link to full submission on council Your Say: <https://www.yoursay.ccc.tas.gov.au/92719/widgets/438052/documents/287568>

3. Improve the management of cats to protect wildlife

Current situation

Feral cats have helped push **at least 27 native Australian species into extinction** in the past 200 years and now **imperil at least 50 Tasmanian species** including **15 threatened species**. Both feral and domestic cats are widespread in the state, including in urban and outer-urban areas where they **hunt and kill native wildlife** in nearby bushland and backyards.

Pet cats that are allowed to roam freely outside **kill an estimated 241 million native Australian animals every year** - an average of 186 animals killed each year per roaming pet cat. Research suggests that **most cat owners (70%) allow their cats to roam freely all or part of the day**, with pet cats roaming over as much as 30 hectares around their home base. The number of pet cats in Australia **increased by 34%** between 2019 and 2022.

Feral cats impact native wildlife through **predation, competition** and the **spread of diseases** such as **toxoplasmosis**. The absence of invasive foxes in Tasmania means that feral cats are the primary non-native predator threatening mammals, birds, reptiles and frogs. Evidence is also emerging that the threat of feral cats may be increasing as the Tasmanian devil populations have plummeted due to the devil facial tumor disease.

Toxoplasmosis is a disease transmitted by cats. **It kills native animals and can cause abortions in sheep and goats**. It can also be transmitted to humans and affects the eyes and brain as well as cause miscarriages. According to a 2014 CSIRO study, **Tasmania has one of the highest rates of toxoplasmosis in the world**, with over 80% of feral cats in Tasmania carrying the infection and a 50–62% infection rate in humans (compared with only 23–35% on the mainland). Toxoplasmosis is estimated to cost the state up to \$6 million a year.

Feral and pet cats are currently managed under the *Tasmanian Cat Management Plan 2017-2022*. In 2019, the Tasmanian government launched the Tasmanian Cat Management Project 'TassieCat' to contribute to the plan's objectives. In 2022, important amendments were adopted to improve the Cat Management Act. However, there is a need to update and commit continued funding to support the initiatives of the plan and project. Furthermore, as feral cats are not a focus of the TassieCat project, there is a need for dedicated feral cat management programs and planning.

Actions needed

The next Tasmanian government should:

1. **Mandate pet cat containment** to protect wildlife and keep pet cats safe at home.
2. **Update and fund a new state-wide 5-year cat management strategy** and continue to fund the **Tasmanian Cat Management Project** focused on promoting responsible cat ownership.
3. **Support local governments to enforce pet cat containment, desexing and pet registration.**
4. **Declare feral cats as a 'pest' species** outside urban areas.
5. **Commit to continued support of three regional cat coordinators** to support community action and education.
6. **Appoint a state feral cat coordinator to implement and coordinate a state-wide feral cat control strategy.**
7. **Prioritise feral cat eradications on off-shore islands**, such as lungtalanana/Clark Island.

Opportunity

Eradication of feral cats from the main island of Tasmania is currently unfeasible due to a lack of effective broad-scale techniques and continual recruitment from escaped or abandoned pet cats. However, **eradication is possible on islands** or small areas where barriers (e.g fences) can be erected.

With planning and resources, focused control efforts can **protect threatened wildlife** and areas of high conservation value from the impact of roaming cats. Tasmanian needs an updated **state-wide feral and domestic cat strategy** and **dedicated funding**.

Improving the management of pet cats in Tasmania would save the lives of millions of native animals around our towns and cities every year. Currently, local councils can create 24/7 curfews for pet cats, but without **community education, funding for enforcement and consistent state-wide rules**, this tool is not being used effectively.

Every year cats in Australia kill ...



1,067,000,000
mammals



399,000,000
birds



609,000,000
reptiles



92,000,000
frogs



Ring tailed possum killed by feral cat. Credit: Barry Brook



Feral cats threatened Tasmania threatened mammals including eastern quolls. Credit: Ways.



Detailed submissions: on Your Say in full



All Correspondence:
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The Australian Pet Welfare Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt Foundation

6 August 2024

The Australian Pet Welfare Foundation (APWF) is a research and advocacy not-for-profit organisation investigating effective and humane strategies aligned with a One Welfare approach to manage urban dogs and cats. Adopting a One Welfare mindset means balancing and optimizing the well-being of animals, people, and their environment. You can read more about us and our vision on our website: <https://petwelfare.org.au>.

APWF's research is aimed at improving the welfare of dogs and cats and the people who care for them, which includes eliminating euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals in shelters and pounds. We share the outcomes of this research with the community, staff in shelters and pounds, state and local governments, and veterinarians to create positive change for animal welfare and the legislation that governs this.

Under the guidance of Dr. Jacqui Rand, Emeritus Professor of Companion Animal Health at The University of Queensland and a registered specialist in small animal internal medicine, APWF has significantly contributed to shelter research. Over the past 16 years, Dr. Rand has led numerous studies, including collaborations with the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League, and various local government bodies. Her tenure at UQ included teaching Urban Animal Management, and she has co-authored 23 peer-reviewed articles focused on this subject, particularly addressing the management of semi-owned and unowned cats.

This submission is in response to the Cats in Clarence, Tasmania consultation for the new Cat Policy.

Link to full submission

- <https://www.yoursay.ccc.tas.gov.au/92719/widgets/438052/documents/2922>

Recommendation-

- We recommend a more nuanced approach that includes supporting the construction of affordable and simple cat enclosures and exploring subsidies for those in need and promoting bedtime feeding where feasible.
- Look at proactive programs to support cat confinement within the community, rather than implementing further laws that will fail.

Recommendation-

- Implement free and low-cost microchipping targeted to communities contributing to high stray intake into the pound or shelter is effective. These are usually underserved communities. Combine these events with "check a chip" so pet owners can update their contact details for their pet on the microchip database.
- Provide free engraved ID tags and collars, so all pets have visual identification and therefore neighbours can return pets directly to owners without impounding and the subsequent risk that they will not be reclaimed because of prohibitive fines.
- Adopt a process for wandering at large or trapped cats, so any cat wearing visible ID, the owner is contacted directly and returned to the person, bypassing the pound.

Recommendation-

- Multi-cat household application assessments and permits become the responsibility of the council's domestic animal management specialists.
- Partnerships are developed and maintained for behavioral change interventions for cat hoarding-specific properties and appropriate processes are documented for ongoing management of these properties.

Recommendation-

- Implement proactive free or subsidised cat desexing programs, including free microchipping and identification tags, in the most problematic areas will reduce the need for declaring these priority areas.

Recommendation-

- Implement an effective proactive approach to help people with the desexing and microchipping of their semi-owned cat, and supporting them to take full ownership.
- This is achieved through Community Cat Programs, i.e., high-intensity free desexing programs targeted at areas of high impoundments and cat-related complaints. By significantly reducing the number of unwanted kittens born, these programs, not mandated curfews, are the key solution to reducing the problem of wandering cats and the associated issues such as nuisance complaints, costs to local governments, and potential wildlife predation (APWF 2023).
- City of Clarence encourages State government to set up a grant program, or subsidies through council or Department of Natural Resource and Environment, for cat owners wanting to purchase enclosures for their cats.
- City of Clarence develop partnerships and funding with manufacturers of cat enclosures, allowing discounts/ subsidies for community members who want to contain their cats by purchasing enclosures.

Recommendation-

- Using non-lethal methods of managing feral cats that improve the survival of native species of conservation concern should be implemented as a priority and in preference to lethal methods.
- Develop guidelines based on recommendations by veterinary behaviorists and scientific literature for the assessment of cats entering shelters and pounds, especially those impounded through council trapping processes.

Submissions – Local landcare group

I write on behalf of the members of the Rokeby Hills Community Landcare Group.

Our brief submission towards this is something that our group has been aiming towards since day one and that is cat management in the Rokeby Hills Reserve. As of early last year we were gaining progress towards having the ability to conduct cat management within the reserve this however failed to come to light being that Emmalene(volunteer coordinator.) who was assisting with this, vacated her role.

My discussions with other Landcare group managers is that they would also like to be able to assist with this. It's for this reason we request that council look into contacting local Landcare Groups in Clarence to gauge their interest into working with council for Cat Management in the Reserves and think a workshop would be best method to discuss how this partnership may be best developed.

Kind Regards Bradley Walker

Convenor

Rokeby Hills Community Landcare Group Inc

Submissions — On behalf of Shooters, Fishers & Farmers Party of Tasmania (SFFP) members

Dear Clarence Council Members,

On behalf of Shooters, Fishers & Farmers Party of Tasmania (SFFP) members we are writing to express our strong support for the implementation of stricter measures regarding cat containment within our community. It is essential that we adopt responsible cat ownership practices, specifically ensuring that all cats are either contained within their owner's home or in a secure cat run. Here are the key reasons why this measure is crucial for our community:

- 1. Protection of Wildlife:** Cats are natural predators and can significantly impact local wildlife populations. Free-roaming cats pose a serious threat to birds, small mammals, and reptiles. By containing cats, we can protect the biodiversity of our local environment and ensure the survival of many native species.
- 2. Reducing Public Nuisance:** Free-roaming cats can become a nuisance in neighborhoods, causing disturbances by marking their territory, digging in gardens, and making noise, especially at night. Containing cats will help reduce these issues and promote a more harmonious living environment for all residents.
- 3. Improving Cat Health and Safety:** Allowing cats to roam freely exposes them to various dangers, including traffic accidents, diseases, and fights with other animals. Contained cats are less likely to suffer from injuries or illnesses, leading to longer, healthier lives.
- 4. Preventing Overpopulation:** Uncontrolled breeding among free-roaming cats contributes to the problem of cat overpopulation, leading to increased numbers of stray and feral cats. By containing cats, owners can better manage their pets' reproductive health, helping to reduce the number of unwanted litters.
- 5. Enhancing Owner Responsibility:** Mandating cat containment encourages responsible pet ownership. Owners will be more accountable for their pets' behavior and welfare, fostering a culture of care and consideration within our community.
- 6. Health Concerns:** Free-roaming cats can carry diseases that pose risks to humans and wildlife. One such disease is toxoplasmosis, which can be particularly harmful to pregnant women, young children, and individuals with weakened immune systems. Additionally, cats can defecate in children's sandpits and neighbors' vegetable and herb gardens, leading to potential health hazards from parasites and bacteria present in cat feces. Containing cats will significantly reduce these risks, promoting a healthier environment for everyone.
- 7. Legal Compliance:** Many regions have already implemented cat containment laws with positive outcomes. Adopting similar measures will align Clarence with best practices in animal management and demonstrate our commitment to responsible pet ownership.

In conclusion, SFFP urge the Clarence Council to take decisive action and mandate cat containment, either within the owner's home or in a secure cat run. This policy will benefit our wildlife, reduce public nuisance, improve cat health and safety, prevent overpopulation, enhance owner responsibility, and mitigate health risks associated with free-roaming cats.

Thank you for considering this important issue. We trust that the council will recognise the value of responsible cat ownership and implement the necessary measures to protect both our community and our environment.

Sincerely,

Adrian Pickin, SFFP chair



Submissions - individual

Submission 1

I wish to make a submission regarding the Cats in Clarence community consultation. Due to the significant impact on Tasmanian wildlife and resulting animal welfare issues, I strongly support any council imitative that reduces the number of pet cats roaming and being dumped. I also strongly support any efforts to reduce and/or eradicate feral cat populations in Clarence.

Cats are one the main threats to Australian wildlife due to predation and toxoplasmosis infection. Clarence is home to a very wide range of native species, including endemic, migratory and endangered birds, mammals, amphibians and reptile. The average roaming cat in Australia kills 110 animals a year. Personally, even a single skink being killed by a cat, if it could be otherwise avoided, is unacceptable. Multiplying the number of "my cat only kills skinks and the occasional bird" roaming cats and this amount to millions of native animals being killed a year across Australia by roaming pet cats alone.

A single scratch is enough to kill some species. During my time working in wildlife rehabilitation, I would commonly see bandicoots, including orphaned joeys, coming into care due to cat scratches. If these wounds are not treated with antibiotics, the injured animal will die. These are just the lucky ones that are found and for every bandicoot that is found following a cat attack, there are many more that are not and are left to die from the resulting infection.

Cats can killed wildlife without needing to attack them. Roaming cats are the main transmitter of toxoplasmosis in urban areas. Toxoplasmosis causes blindness and eventual death by starvation in marsupials, still-births in sheep and can cause blindness and birth defects in humans. During my time working in wildlife rescue, calls for Bennett's Wallabies, Tasmanian Pademelons, Brushtail Possums and occasionally bandicoots exhibiting symptoms of toxoplasmosis would be received almost daily. This puts enormous pressure on veterinary clinics and wildlife rehabilitators, including the mental toll of needing to euthanise sick wild animals daily. Wallabies, Pademelons and Brushtail Possums are very common in Tasmania now, but this does not mean they deserve to suffer so that somebody can let their cat explore.

Roaming cats can also breed with nearby feral populations. This can not only supplement the numbers of a feral population through impregnating feral female cats, it also adds new genetics into a population's pool. The more diverse the genetic pool, the healthier the population. This makes the management and eradication of feral cats even more difficult for managers.

In addition to the enormous amount of pain and suffering in native animals I have seen caused by cats, I have also had issues on my own property. I have observed roaming cats enter my yard to stalk my own animals, and on one occasion I had a cat break into an enclosure and kill one of my birds. In order to protect my own animals and the wildlife in my area, I have previously trapped cats on my property in Clarence and transported them to Ten Lives. This is not something I enjoy and would much rather people kept their pets contained.

It is now well-known that keeping cats contained is more responsible and better for cats. Roaming cats are vulnerable to cars, dogs and injuries from fighting with other cats. The only argument for not keeping cats contained 24/7 is from irresponsible cat owners.

I strongly support all of the initiatives suggested that have been used in other councils, except for curfews. Curfews are ineffective due to the cats still being able to prey on birds, reptiles and resting mammals. Cats roaming during the day will still spread toxoplasmosis. Curfews are also more difficult to enforce than a general ban on roaming as they are harder to see at night and much harder for other residents to identify and report.

I strongly support mandatory registration and microchipping. Rescued/found dumped cats or trapped roaming/feral cats should always be scanned. Penalties that properly reflect the illegality and cruelty of dumping should be enforced on people dumping cats. I also support a limit to the number of cats that can be owner and would support additional initiatives such as phasing out particular breeds in favour of more domesticated breeds that have a smaller impact if they escape (eg. Ragdolls).

I would like to see similar measures implemented for other domestic species apart from dogs and cats. Domestic ducks and geese are commonly dumped in Clarence waterways (Especially Richmond and Lauderdale) and there is currently no way to track down culprits. These dumped ducks rapidly form and/or join self-sustaining feral populations and cross-breed with native ducks.

I look forward to seeing Clarence City Council leading the way on cat management issues in Tasmania. I know my concerns regarding roaming cats and support for the council in this regard is matched by cat and wildlife rescue organisations and environmental groups.

Submissions - individual

Submission 2

Hi,

We have a terrible problem with stray cats on our property at South Arm Rd.

Once or twice a year we have kittens born on the property and have laid traps to catch them (with varying degrees of success). We then take them to cat refuges and provide a food donation at our own expense as I understand that most are self funded by people who care both about cats and local wildlife.

When they are not being killed by feral cats we have a population of bandicoots (Southern Brown mainly but we have also sighted an Eastern Barred Bandicoot a few years back), echidnas and many native birds.

I suspect the cats are coming from houses across the road from our property in the Algonia Street area. We sight them crossing our property on a daily basis.

I hope that this is a problem that can be addressed as it is distressing to think about the wildlife that is suffering and currently it seems as if it is a problem that just keeps recurring.

I look forward to the Council addressing this situation.

Thank you for raising this as an important issue to be solved.

Kind regards,

Submission 3

We live on acreage and have a stray cat problem. We live next to a protected wetlands area where we have witnessed the native wildlife being killed by these cats including wallabies with toxoplasmosis (confirmed by Bonorong after being euthanised).

We decided that the best option was to trap the cats and take them to Ten Lives (as stated on your webpage). We attended Ten Lives Cat Centre on a Saturday to surrender a cat that we caught in a possum trap. The treatment we received from Ten Lives was appalling and they wanted \$90 to surrender this stray cat. We will certainly not be returning to Ten Lives.

There is a large stray cat problem in our area creating a lot of destruction however there is nothing that a home owner can do about this. By introducing a very overdue Cat Policy will hopefully assist in making this matter which really is a health issue, any worse.

The protection of our native wildlife is a high priority to us.

Regards,

Submission 4

Good Afternoon,

I was wondering what are your thoughts on cats roaming, I am in Lindisfarne and we have ringtail possums & brushtail possums, & bandicoots, a lot of cats that the owners let roam, even at night, this is not only dangerous for our beautiful native animals but for the cat also, the cat over the road torments the dog which starts him/her barking, I can see someone complaining, not me, and it's not the dog's fault, is there anything you can do to pass rules that cats must be kept indoors or in outside runs?? If not you who can I speak to regarding this,

kind regards



Submissions - individual

Submission 5

To whom it may concern,

Back in August of 2023 I was told by the cat management facility in Southern Tasmania, Ten Lives, to release a female (possibly pregnant) unmicrochipped, undesexed cat on our property which backs onto bushland in Clarence. Clarence City Council offices told me it was a State Government responsibility and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment website on invasive species directs me to Ten Lives creating a cycle of non-action. This is a never ending circle of inaction. I applaud Clarence for taking action to investigate ways to address this issue. We have multiple roaming cats on our property daily. One neighbour, despite many conversations, refuses to stop their cat roaming in the bush and on our property. It is pointless catching their cat as I know where it lives and would need to return it to the property owner who has no intention of keeping it indoors. We have watched this cat kill one of our pet chickens with our kids watching on!

However, after having our domestic chickens killed and watching blue tongue lizards, birds and small mammals being hunted on our property (which backs onto the bushland), I decided to begin trapping other cats on our land. All cats trapped are taken to a vet who will scan for a microchip. If the cat has a microchip, the vet will contact the owner to arrange a collection for a fee. But if in the event a cat is not microchipped, it is then my responsibility to take it to a cat management facility. This process is almost impossible in Southern Tasmania leading to invasive feral and stray cat populations which are not desexed being re-released into the environment.

I am writing to raise awareness and call for action. If governments (both Local and State), want to take invasive species seriously, they must provide guidelines, funding and support that ultimately provides a way to surrender feral or stray cats posing a risk to the environment, at no cost to community members that surrender cats. Governments are failing to adequately fund programs which humanely destroy cats when community members follow the Cat Management Act to try to legally address this issue. The Department of Natural Resources and Environment states that after trapping a cat, a person must arrange for the cat to be taken to a Cat Management Facility within 24 hours. This is all good in theory but it isn't in practice!

One can apply to trap a cat, wait for a lengthy approvals process, pay \$50 and have a 5-day window in which to then trap said nuisance cat before surrendering it. How lovely it would be if feral and nuisance cats would be so obliging and fit in with that timetable even if one was willing and able to pay the \$50 fee per cat.

I understand recent changes to the Cat Management Act may have gone some way to preventing the issue but the changes fall very short and have failed to address the issue of stray and feral cats that are already ravaging our environment. While experts should be consulted on the best way forward, as a community member I would like to see humane traps available from Council to community members for the cost of a refundable bond. The trap could be provided with instructions on how to comply with the Act. There then also needs to be funding for those community members to be able to surrender the cat either to Council or to a vet or a cat management facility at no cost to the management facility or those community members giving up their time to help address this growing issue.

To me this is a no brainer. It shouldn't really be up for debate. The real issue is how to fund it and this does need to be debated. Cat owners who have chosen to be irresponsible should be required to pay to collect their cat and have it desexed and microchipped as appropriate. However, I realise that someone still needs to fund management of the cats that are not claimed by owners. This either has to be via rates, State Govt funding/grants, or via a registration fee for cat owners. Hopefully Council can calculate which of these is the best option or start with a trial period to see what works.

Thanks for listening. Regards



Clarence... a brighter place

Submissions – individual

Submission 6

I am a former cat owner and have previously lived in both suburban, coastal including Lauderdale, and rural areas in Tasmania. I now reside in Sandford. The extent of uncontrolled domestic cats and feral cats is most evident when in rural areas including Sandford where there is a finely balanced and unique flora and fauna subculture that is highly vulnerable to cars, development, dogs and cats. (A separate issue being the high strike rate from cars along Gellibrand and Rifle range bordering the Mortimer Bay reserve which requires a 60k dusk to dawn advisory sign to assist and some speeding control)

We walk our property and through the Mortimer Bay reserve every evening and see on average feral and domestic cats at least three times a week, sometimes daily. Last summer we saw three cats on our land at one time and on the neighbours land as well as three down near the Southern Mortimer Bay carpark in proximity all in the same week. Sightings include a large number of different cats as well as the same identifiable cats.

Since residing in Sandford we have noticed a significant drop in bettongs, barred bandicoots, native quail, and native rakali (water rats) on our land and within the Mortimer Bay Area and a steady increase in cat sightings. We witnessed the aftermath of a cat attack on a local regular bettong who lost part of his tail but amazingly survived the normal death of toxoplasmosis. An entire tree of nesting honeyeaters were wiped out by a feral cat living on our property in one month. And our quail population and rare blue winged parrot numbers heavily reduced. We attempt to grow shelter areas but Sandford is a difficult place to grow new flora.

Issues:

An existing high feral cat population

No feral cat trapping control programme

No cat management of domestic cats which roam 24 seven contributing to the wildlife impact and increase in uncontrolled cats.

No council policing of local residents of any kind

Considerations:

Cats at loose are not compatible with Tasmanian wildlife and require significant measures to protect Tassie and Clarence's unique fauna including:

Mandatory cat curfew as a minimum

Restriction of cat ownership in areas bordering reserves- either no cats or demonstrated cat enclosures required

Mandatory cat enclosures in designated areas (or if the appetite is there- all areas)

Cat registration and microchip

Free Cat drop off areas for unwanted and trapped cats

Free cat trap rental with suitable instruction

Active feral cat control and trapping in conjunction with parks/Wildlife whose reserves CCC frequently manage parts Theron eg Tangara trails through Mortimer Bay reserve.

Consider engagement of community groups including mens sheds and volunteers to assist some residents particularly elderly to build cat enclosures recognising cat companionship is important to many elderly and others

Subsidies for building cat enclosures or a rate reduction on demonstration of building your own cat enclosure

- Education is a consideration but most people are aware of issues already and disregard or need assistance to help control their cat. Some need enforcement, others need financial or physical assistance to be responsible cat owners

- Active after hours council enforcement and pest management activities (cat or dog)



Submissions - individual

Submission 7

I have been a resident of Otago Bay for almost 40 years. In that time I have observed the decrease in small birds & the increase of roaming cats on my property day & night, moreso of a night, I have observed them through my CCTV cameras I used to have endangered 40 spotted pardolotes frequent my property & nesting in my bank garden but I haven't seen any for approximately 3 or so years. I would love to see more stringent control of cats in my neighborhood ie: make Otago a prohibited  area for cats. The education & responsibility of cat owners to keep their cats on THEIR property should be a prerequisite for owning one. Regards

Submission 8

I have three indoor cats. desexed. microchipped..no way can I get them to wear a collar.

Since having no outdoor cats .this Rosny park . neighbour hood has experienced. more rats and mice. coming into homes gardens etc .instead of penalizing responsible owners...make it cheaper to be able to desex cats , the cost is not affordable to many people.

Try sorting out the feral cats first..they are the issue .not home cats that are responsibly looked after. Put the money into feral eradication..

As a cat lover it grieves me to say kill ferals .start with the problem...not us who care about our cats welfare and keep them indoors .

Submission 9

Subject: Cat capers at the Men's Shed | GeoCatch

Hi - found that a shed in WA is into cat enclosures

<https://www.geocatch.asn.au/cat-capers-at-the-mens-shed/>

Submission 10

I can only hope any future cat policy is an improvement on dog management by Council in particular nuisance, peace disturbing barking dogs.

My experience is it's just too hard for Council.

I have endured 18 months of a persistent barking dog when it is left alone with no action required by a laughing denialist owner.

Cats and their associated problems will eventually go in the same basket no doubt whatsoever.

Submission 11

I feel cats should have to be confined to there own property as they kill wild life. i am not a cat owner yet I have three cats that come on my property leaving there feaces behind killing birds as well. i have also had one get stuck on my roof. dog owners have to register their dogs and keep them on there property why are cats any different



Submissions - individual

Submission 12

Good afternoon Cats are vermin and spread disease and kill much of our wildlife. They should be contained to the owners property, preferably kept indoors and if found anywhere else outside the property boundary should be captured and euthanized . No cat owner should be permitted to own more than 2.

I have seen them kill many birds, kill reptiles, kill bandicoots, torture small animals and they spread toxoplasmosis.

They grow larger when they enter bush land and become feral and kill penguins and possums, small wallaby and lambs.

They are another introduced species that has done untold damage to our nation. Regards

Submission 13

Good afternoon, I am in strong favour of registration of all cats in our council area. There needs to be a firm commitment of all cat owners to restrict their open movements in order to protect birdlife in particular. Also their contamination of gardens with their ablutions where the owners are not held responsible for cleaning up like dog owners have been having to for many years now. I have allergies to cats and find I can smell them before I see them! I have been a dog owner in the past and have always believed it was unfair that dog owners had so many restrictions on their behaviour, where you could walk or not walk and so on. It is time for all pet owners to have a registration and be responsible pet owners in general. Regards

Submission 14

Hello all,

I feel cats given the wildlife they destroy should be treated similarly to dogs in that:

1. Must be registered and pay
2. Must be chipped
3. Desexed
4. Not allowed to stray either to neighbours and or bushland
5. fare of both your pet cat and Tasmania's native wildlife
5. Never dump unwanted cats or kittens (this is against the law) Prevent your cat from roaming
6. Never feed stray cats or kittens

Given the alarming stats below are concerning due to cats across Australia annually:

546 million animals per year (including 323 million native animals),
every day matters.

On average, cats kill 2.92 million mammals, 1.67 million reptiles, 1.09 million birds, 0.26 million frogs and 2.97 million invertebrates every 24 hours.

Thanks happy to discuss further



Duncan Abey

Hobart cat owner Alex Paton knows her pets are natural born killers, but takes every step to ensure her furry friends do not damage Tasmania's fragile environment.

Away from home, the UTAS invasive species ecologist keeps busy by tackling Tasmania's feral cat problem, crunching data gathered from an array of 600 cameras set up in bushland across the state.

The PhD candidate will join other experts at the University of Tasmania's Sandy Bay campus on Wednesday for the Island of Ideas public talk "The Cat Catastrophe: Pet or pest?"

Ms Paton said although Tasmania's wild-roaming feline population was unquestionably a destructive force, it paled in comparison to the damage caused by pet cats who were not de-sexed, microchipped, or not kept indoors.

"We know that an outdoor domestic cat will kill only a quarter of the animals that a feral cat will each year," Ms Paton said.

"But because there are so many domestic cats in suburban areas, their impact on our native wildlife is actually between 28 to 42 times that of feral cats.

"You might think that your cat isn't doing much damage,



PhD candidate and environmental consultant Alex Paton with her cat Megatron at Honeywood and feral cats carrying a rat and snake (inset below). Main picture: Chris Kidd



but when you consider your pet, plus your neighbour's, plus the guy down the road, it's actually immense."

Ms Paton said that since European settlement, cats had made themselves at home in every corner of the state, including in the remote South-West wilderness and on Tasmania's many offshore islands.

And while Tasmania, unlike the Australian mainland, had

not yet lost a native mammal species to the introduced predators, it was vital to reform the state's cat management regime for the sake of the ecosystem.

"Impacts can come at any time, and we know we'll be facing big changes in the environment," Ms Paton said.

"So we need people to urge politicians to push for cat control on our offshore islands, but also for responsible pet ownership.

"I get frustrated, because we could be doing so much more to control our domestic cats."

A new Tasmanian Cat Management Plan for 2024-2029 is being developed by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, in consultation with key stakeholders.

In a recent submission to the government, the Invasive Species Council's Tasmanian conservation officer, Dr Tiana

Pirtle, warned that feral and roaming cats threatened the future of at least 50 of the state's native animals.

Dr Pirtle called for an updated feral cat strategy in Tasmania; dedicated funding for eradication efforts on the state's offshore islands; and increased education on responsibly owning domestic pets.

"Improving the management of pet cats in Tasmania would save the lives of millions of native animals around our towns and cities every year," Dr Pirtle said.

"Currently, local councils can create 24/7 curfews for pet cats, but without community education, funding for enforcement, and consistent statewide rules, this tool is not being used effectively."

In 2019, Kingsborough Council introduced Tasmanian-first by-laws preventing households on Bruny Island from keeping more than two

cats. To protect the island's unique native wildlife, residents are also required to have their cats registered, de-sexed, and microchipped, and prevent their pets from straying onto neighbouring properties.

Ten Lives Cat Centre chief executive Noel Hunt said owner education was vital in reducing the increasing number of cats being collected by his team.

And Mr Hunt said the 70-year-old organisation was now just as concerned for the Tasmanian environment as it was about feline welfare.

"It's pretty simple, we love cats but they have to be in the right place, and being in the bush killing wildlife isn't the right place," he said. Mr Hunt said many people did not realise that even a four-month-old kitten could get pregnant, so Ten Lives promotes early de-sexing at eight weeks old."

duncan.abey@news.com.au

CLAWS OUT FOR PROBLEM TABBIES



Clarence... a brighter

Other council initiatives reported in the media: (The Mercury – 22 July 2024)

City of Banyule offered free desexing and reduced cat complaints and reduction by 1/3 of cats going to shelters).



City of Banyule offered an Australian-first, free cat desexing.

City sets cats plan for all to follow

In Melbourne's north-east, the City of Banyule is ahead of the game.

Free cat desexing has been on offer to cat owners since 2013.

More recently, Banyule City Council consulted its community about cats, running a survey over eight weeks. The survey was widely publicised and accessible online or through the mail. A print version was sent to a random sample of 2000 residents to ensure broad representation.

Three walk-in sessions were also held to hear directly from residents on ideas such as cat curfews, cat confinement and mandatory cat desexing.

Ultimately, there was considerable support for restricting the movement of cats, be it a night-time curfew or 24-hour containment indoors or in enclosures.

Most respondents viewed the restrictions as a necessary compromise for the protection of wildlife and safety of cats.

Cat owners and non-cat owners were in highest

agreement on compulsory desexing of cats over six months of age, as a way to control population, improve cat welfare and protect wildlife.

In 2013, when the City of Banyule launched its council-funded targeted cat desexing program, no one could have predicted the results.

Cat desexing, microchipping and registration were all free in the first year. Free transport was provided to ensure everyone had access to these services, especially those in disadvantaged suburbs.

After eight years, the intake of stray or unwanted cats had fallen by a third. Cat-related complaints fell too.

The impact of Banyule's free cat desexing program was studied by researchers from University of Queensland and Australian Pet Welfare Foundation. Their findings highlight the importance of removing barriers to cat desexing, resulting in better outcomes for people, cats, councils and the environment.



Clarence... a brighter place

I'm looking for...



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Pet problems and owner responsibility

As a pet owner, it is your responsibility to make sure your pet is not a nuisance to your neighbours.

[Dogs](#)

[Cats](#)

Reporting

If you have an issue with cats, report it to us on [9490 4222](#).

For information on how to prevent your cat from becoming a nuisance please contact the [Cat Protection Society](#) or contact our rangers.

Desexing

Desexing your cat avoids unwanted kittens, helps calm aggressive animals and reduces their instinct to wander.

Have your cat desexed at:

- most veterinary surgeons
- RSPCA [9224 2222](#)
- Lort Smith Hospital [9328 3021](#)
- Lost Dogs Home [9329 2755](#)
- Cat Protection Society [8457 6500](#).

Free voucher

We offer a free cat desexing voucher year round for local residents to use at vets in Banyule.

This helps with the reduction of strays and and protects our native wildlife.

Eligibility and getting your voucher

You must visit one of our [customer services centres](#) in person to get a voucher.

To be eligible, you must:

- provide proof of local residency
- provide proof of pet registration and microchipping
- be able to transport your pet to and from a vet
- agree to desex your pet within 30 days.

Vouchers are valid for 1 month from issue date, and are accepted at all vets in Banyule.

Cat Protection Society offer

If you have a health care, pension or seniors card, the [Cat Protection Society](#) are offering subsidised cat desexing.

IT'S TIME WE HAD 'THE TALK'

July is National
Desexing Month with
nationwide discounts
on desexing

CLICK FOR MORE
INFORMATION

IS YOUR PET DESEXED?

When you desex your pet, you're doing yourself, your pet and your community a big favour.

Your pet's health and longevity improve, you're saving yourself large vet bills from all the health complications that could come from an undesexed pet, and you are preventing unwanted litters ending up in pounds or shelters. The National Desexing Network (NDN) is an Australia-wide referral system giving pet owners in financial need access to low-cost desexing. Our goal is to end pet overpopulation by making desexing available and more affordable to pet owners who need it most. If you're a pet owner you could be eligible for discounted desexing for your pet, directly on-line if you are a pension/concession card holder; or through calling our NDN team to access a Council Cooperative Desexing program.

If you are a vet, you can join hundreds of vets across Australia who are helping the National Desexing Network end pet overpopulation. Follow the prompts below to see how you can get involved or get in contact with us.

If you are a Council anywhere in Australia, please get in touch with the National Desexing Network about our NDN Cooperative Desexing Programs, which we organise and manage on Councils' behalf. We would love to work with you and assist you through the process of ending pet overpopulation in your area.

National Desexing Network is a proud initiative of the [Animal Welfare League Queensland](#).



PET OWNERS

You may be eligible for low cost desexing all year round or just in National Desexing Month in July. Follow the link below to find out the options available to you.

VETERINARIANS

Are you doing all you can to end pet overpopulation? Join the National Desexing Network and help us get ahead of the problem.

LOCAL COUNCIL

Is your council doing everything it can to help end pet overpopulation? It's not hard to get your community on board. Let us tell you how.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

If you are involved with an animal rescue, welfare group or other organisation and want to do more to help end pet overpopulation we want to hear from you!

WHICH OTHER COUNCILS ARE INVOLVED?

RECENT POSTS

- [Central Coast Council Tasmania free cat desexing & microchipping](#)
- [Waratah-Wynyard Council Cat Desexing Program](#)
- [Kentish Council, Tasmania](#)
- [King Island Council, Tasmania](#)
- [Latrobe Council, Tasmania](#)



CATS IN CLARENCE

CONSULTATION OPEN



Clarence City Council

Cats in Clarence Workshop
Community Session

**What was shown &
What we heard report**

August 3rd, 2024



CATS IN CLARENCE



Summary of overall themes emerging from Workshop

- ***Keeping cats indoors/in enclosures more often + desexing*** emerged as the strongest combination of short-term, priority, cat management strategies – together, these two things have a positive flow on effect to other issues such as cat over population and endangerment of wildlife.
- Beyond these two things, ***microchipping and feral cat management*** were also considered key priorities.
- Given that there are many and varied stakeholders involved in working through these issues – from community members to community organisations to government, and beyond – there is a need for more ***collaboration*** between these groups, to bring about positive change
- The ***tone of voice*** in communication to cat owners about responsible behaviours is more likely to have a positive impact if it is ***encouraging, not judgmental***
- While there is support for more enforcement of measures such as desexing of cats, in particular, this is more likely to work if it is ***helpful and accessible*** (e.g. affordable, easy to access) ***rather than punitive*** (i.e. fines for non-compliance)
- ***More fundraising options*** should be considered to help provide solutions (e.g. to provide free desexing services) – not just government, but non-government funding such as Go Fund Me and philanthropy via wealthy community members
- Ultimately, we need to keep in mind that this is a ***‘people management’*** issue, just as much as a ‘cat management one’. That being the case, it is important to find ways to get helpful information out, in an encouraging tone of voice, to those who need to change their behaviour most. Many of these people may not be ***active seekers*** of information – either by choice, or due to disability - so we need to get creative in finding ways to reach them effectively, where they live.





CATS IN CLARENCE



Why are we here today?

- To engage you as people who live in the Clarence City Council area, so that you can have your say about issues involving cats in your community.
- This is a the first step in a bigger discussion about this topic – we want get your input up front so that, together, you and the Clarence City Council can come up with some ideas, and potential solutions, in an informal and constructive way.
- And, by the way, I don't work for the Clarence City Council – I'm an independent person who has been in to help guide the process today. So I have no vested interest and I hope that will make you feel comfortable about being open and honest in expressing your views. But first, Alexis from the Council will give you a bit more background on the bigger picture, some of the topics for discussion and some of the other stakeholders involved.





CATS IN CLARENCE



Background

- Clarence City Council has previously committed to improving the management and control of cats and dogs at home and in public spaces.
- The proposed consultation is designed to first understand, to then help meet community expectations around cats in Clarence. This is the first stage and policies, plans or other frameworks created will be taken back to the community and stakeholders in stage 2.
- We want to understand cat ownership, experiences with cats and expectations for cat management from residents of all ages. We also want to hear from non-owners and experts.
- The overall information received will inform development of key cat management documents including a possible cat policy. Identifying areas for education, advocacy and partnerships is also included in the approach.
- The approach and survey has drawn on our recent survey as well as a range of similar surveys and consideration of what other councils are doing with Cat Management. It will help inform a long-term vision as well as shorter term actions.





CATS IN CLARENCE



The following are just some of the topics for discussion as part of the engagement process

- registration for pet cats
- cat curfews
- cat confinement to reduce roaming
- microchipping and desexing (already required but further supporting)
- limiting number of cats allowed per household
- feral cat management
- ensuring cats wear identification (including owners name, address and phone number)
- declaration of cat prohibited areas to protect wildlife (in conservation areas and reserves)
- advocating for stronger State legislation in areas outside council control



CATS IN CLARENCE



The stakeholders in this process are varied: beyond the overall community, the following stakeholders will be either alerted to the consultation, invited to make a submission or to participate in a workshop or have a conversation.

Cat management, welfare

- Ten Lives
- TassieCat
- RSPCA
- Rescue Cats Safe Haven
- Brightside Farm sanctuary
- Small Paws Animal Rescue
- Birchgrove Feline Assistance
- Neonatal kitten rescue

Cat impact focus

- Bonorong wildlife sanctuary
- Invasive Species Council
- Landcare
- Coastcare
- Birdlife Tasmania
- Centre for Invasive Species Solutions

Cat groups, businesses

- Cat breeder associations
- Vets (Lindisfarne Vet Clinic, Tasmanian Vet Hospital Bellerive, Hobart Community Vet, New Town Cat Clinic, Hobart Animal Hospital,
- Petbarn Rosny, Petstock, Bunnings

Note that, during the workshop discussion, Southern Cat Rescue was also mentioned, which is not on the above lists - stcr.org.au





CATS IN CLARENCE



What are we going to do today?

- *Have a conversation* about cats in your community – let you do most of the talking (this is not a presentation, though we will be sharing some information with you to open up discussion and give you food for thought)
- Try to focus and stay present for the next couple of hours (phones on silent please)
- Be open and honest in your opinions – but also try to be constructive and solutions focused
- We really want everyone to get a chance to have their say, so I'm going to try to ensure that we get all of your opinions



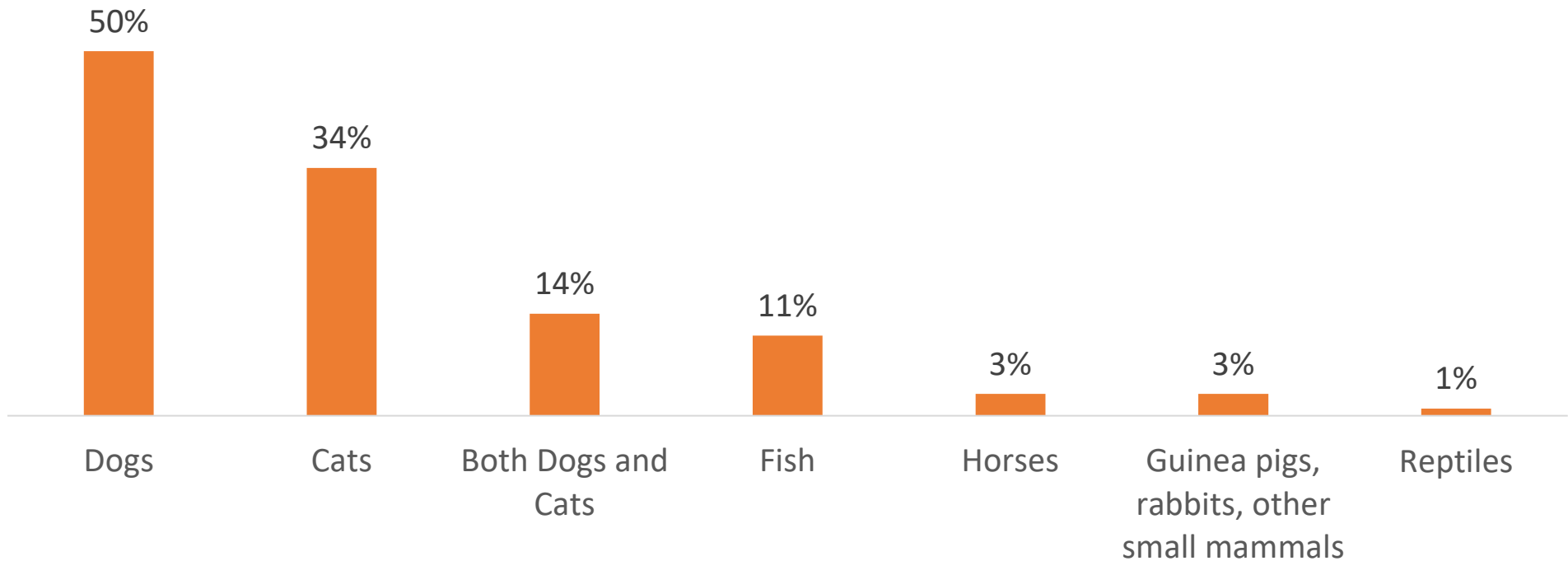


CATS IN CLARENCE



Some of the survey results we'd like to share with you

Types of pets owned



Based on 600+ responses received as at the time of the workshop



Clarence... a brighter place

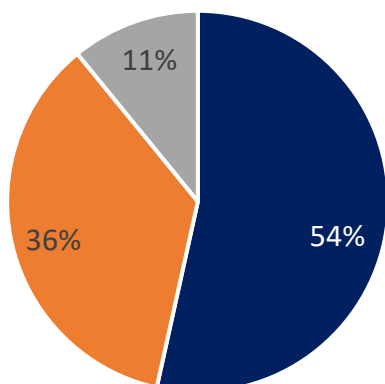


CATS IN CLARENCE



Some of the survey results we'd like to share with you

Nearly 9 in 10 had 1-2 cats



■ 1 cat ■ 2 cats ■ 3 or more cats

During the workshop discussion, there were questions around whether the stats in the centre of this slide might be inflated, vs reality – e.g. Possible that survey respondents might be mainly 'responsible owners'?

98%

of cats were microchipped

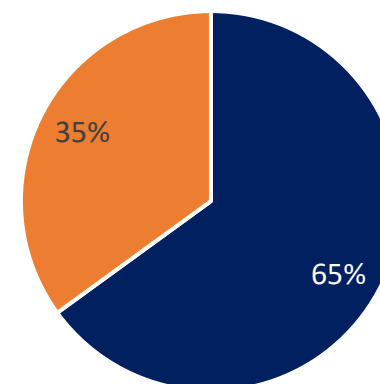
99%

of cats had been desexed

92%

of cats were vaccinated

But two thirds of cats don't wear a collar with ID



■ My cat does NOT wear a collar with ID
■ Some/all of my cats wear a collar with ID

During the discussion, a key barrier to cats *not* wearing an id collar was that collars can be seen as unsafe/dangerous for cats to wear (e.g. If they catch on something, trapping the cat and/or come off altogether).

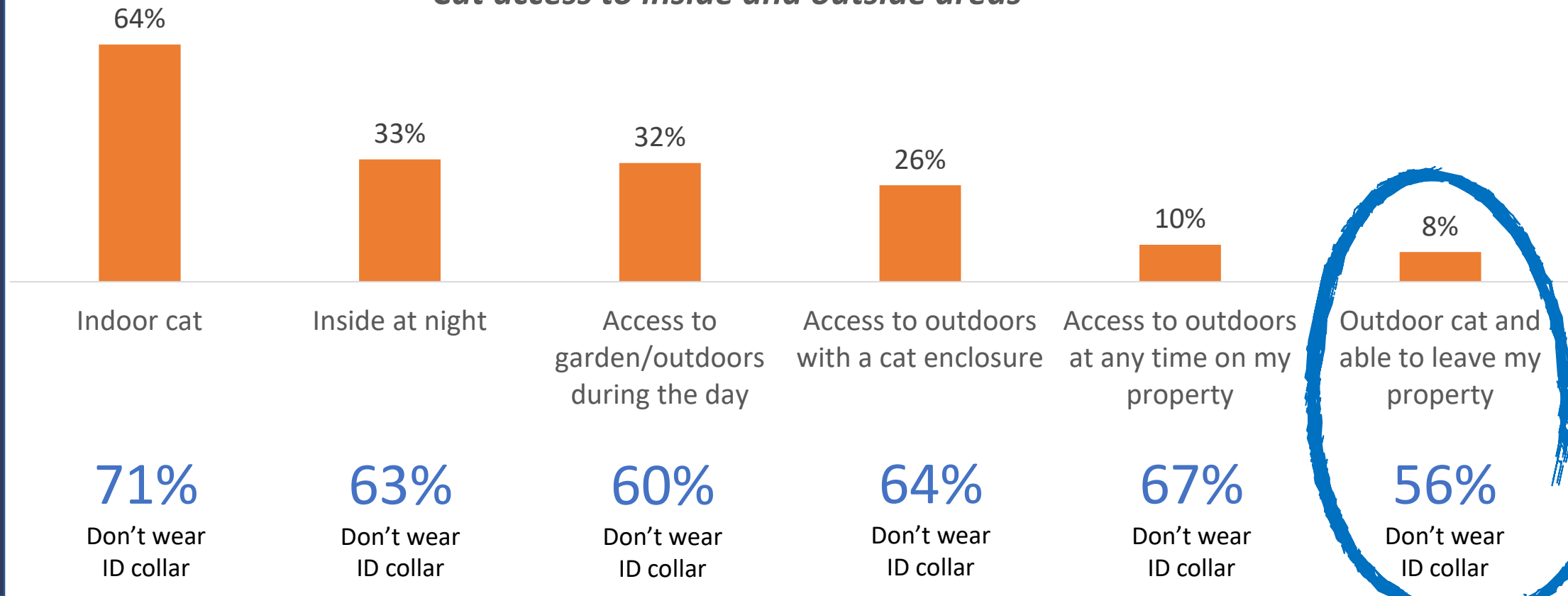


CATS IN CLARENCE



Indoor cats are the most likely to *not* wear a collar with ID

Cat access to inside and outside areas



Clarence... a brighter place



CATS IN CLARENCE



The **positives**
of owning a
cat....

...what those
surveyed told
us



Clarence... a brighter place

Clean/quiet
Fun/entertaining/personality
Affectionate/loving/cuddly
Companionship

Stress relief/calming/good for mental health

Pest control
Low maintenance/independent

Part of the family/teaches kids responsibility



CATS IN CLARENCE



The **negatives** of cats in the community....
.....what those surveyed told us

Feral cats

Owners not controlling/containing cats

Cats killing native wildlife

Spreading disease (e.g. Toxoplasmosis)



Clarence... a brighter place



CATS IN CLARENCE



Are there any other *negatives* about having cats in your community that come to mind?

WORKSHOP FEEDBACK:

There was quite a bit of discussion about feral cats, and need for better management e.g.:

- 'Real' feral cats can look 'big', 'ugly', 'scary', 'head like a dog!'
- Sometimes people don't make/understand the distinction between 'feral' and 'stray' cats
- Feral cats are more difficult to control, and potentially damaging, than stray cats
- Some participants, living in more urban parts of the council area, rarely/never saw feral cats, while others – e.g. in Sandford or Lauderdale – often saw them.
- There was frustration from at least one participant about lack of assistance from the NRE who had just said that 'if we trap one feral cat, another will take its place'.

But also, some felt that mismanagement of pet cats was as big of a problem, if not bigger, than management of feral cats. E.g. in South Arm/Sandford many cats being dumped and couldn't always be rehomed. Especially post COVID – more cats had been dumped since then and the cost of keeping a cat and/or getting it desexed seemed, now, more of an issue than ever.





CATS IN CLARENCE



How have some of these issues been tackled in other areas?

Duncan Abbey

Hobart cat owner Alex Paton knows her pets are natural born killers, but takes every step to ensure her furry friends do not damage Tasmania's fragile environment.

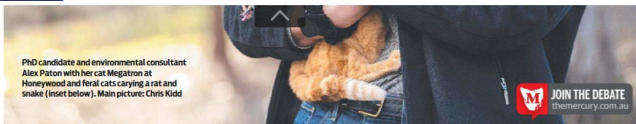
Away from home, the UTAS invasive species ecologist keeps busy by tackling Tasmania's feral cat problem, crunching data gathered from an array of 600 cameras set up in bushland across the state. The PhD candidate will join other experts at the University of Tasmania's Sandy Bay campus on Wednesday for the Island of Ideas public talk "The Cat Catastrophe: Pet or pest?"

Ms Paton said although Tasmania's wild-roaming feline population was unquestionably a destructive force, it paled in comparison to the damage caused by pet cats who were not de-sexed, microchipped, or not kept indoors.

"We know that an outdoor domestic cat will kill only a quarter of the animals that a feral cat will each year," Ms Paton said.

"But because there are so many domestic cats in suburban areas, their impact on our native wildlife is actually between 28 to 42 times that of feral cats."

"You might think that your cat isn't doing much damage



PhD candidate and environmental consultant Alex Paton with her cat Megaron at Honeywood and feral cats carrying a rat and snake (inset below). Main picture: Chris Kidd



but when you consider your pet, plus your neighbour's, plus the guy down the road, it's actually immense."

Ms Paton said that since European settlement, cats had made themselves at home in every corner of the state, including in the remote South-West wilderness and on Tasmania's many offshore islands.

And while Tasmania, unlike the Australian mainland, had

not yet lost a native mammal species to the introduced predators, it was vital to reform the state's cat management regime for the sake of the ecosystem.

"Impacts can come at any time, and we know we'll be facing big changes in the environment," Ms Paton said.

"So we need people to urge politicians to push for cat control on our offshore islands, but also for responsible pet ownership."

"I get frustrated, because we could be doing so much more to control our domestic cats."

A new Tasmanian Cat Management Plan for 2024-2029 is being developed by the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, in consultation with key stakeholders.

In a recent submission to the government, the Invasive Species Council's Tasmanian conservation officer, Dr Tiana

Pirtle, warned that feral and roaming cats threatened the future of at least 50 of the state's native animals.

Dr Pirtle called for an updated feral cat strategy in Tasmania, dedicated funding for eradication efforts on the state's offshore islands and increased education on responsibly owning domestic pets.

"Improving the management of pet cats in Tasmania would save the lives of millions of native animals around our towns and cities every year," Dr Pirtle said.

"Currently, local councils can create 24/7 curfews for pet cats, but without community education, funding for enforcement, and consistent statewide rules, this tool is not being used effectively."

In 2019, Kingsborough Council introduced Tasmanian-first by-laws preventing households on Bruny Island from keeping more than two

cats. To protect the island's unique native wildlife, residents are also required to have their cats registered, de-sexed, and microchipped, and prevent their pets from straying onto neighbouring properties.

Ten Lives Cat Centre chief executive Noel Hunt said owner education was vital in reducing the increasing number of cats being collected by his team.

And Mr Hunt said the 70-year-old organisation was now just as concerned for the Tasmanian environment as it was about feline welfare.

"It's pretty simple, we love cats but they have to be in the right place, and being in the bush-killing wildlife isn't the right place," he said. Mr Hunt said many people did not realise that even a four-month-old kitten could get pregnant, so Ten Lives promotes early de-sexing at eight weeks old.

tenlives.org.au

tenlives.org.au

tenlives.org.au

tenlives.org.au

tenlives.org.au

tenlives.org.au

tenlives.org.au

WORKSHOP FEEDBACK:

While the 'helpful' approach used in Banyule was positively viewed (especially from a financial assistance POV), there was some support for the stricter measures imposed on Bruny Island...BUT, overall this hardline approach was seen to be more appropriate to Bruny specifically as it's an island and a 'stronghold of wildlife'....
..."We're not an island"



City of Banyule offered an Australian-first, free cat desexing.

City sets cats plan for all to follow

In Melbourne's north-east, the City of Banyule is ahead of the game.

Free cat desexing has been on offer to cat owners since 2013.

More recently, Banyule City Council consulted its community about cats, running a survey over eight weeks. The survey was widely publicised and accessible online or through the mail. A print version was sent to a random sample of 2000 residents to ensure broad representation.

Three walk-in sessions were also held to hear directly from residents on ideas such as cat curfews, cat confinement and mandatory cat desexing.

Ultimately, there was considerable support for restricting the movement of cats, be it a night-time curfew or 24-hour containment indoors or in enclosures.

Most respondents viewed the restrictions as a necessary compromise for the protection of wildlife and safety of cats.

Cat owners and non-cat owners were in highest

agreement on compulsory desexing of cats over six months of age, as a way to control population, improve cat welfare and protect wildlife.

In 2013, when the City of Banyule launched its council-funded targeted cat desexing program, no one could have predicted the results.

Cat desexing, microchipping and registration were all free in the first year. Free transport was provided to ensure everyone had access to these services, especially those in disadvantaged suburbs.

After eight years, the intake of stray or unwanted cats had fallen by a third. Cat-related complaints fell too.

The impact of Banyule's free cat desexing program was studied by researchers from University of Queensland and Australian Pet Welfare Foundation. Their findings highlight the importance of removing barriers to cat desexing, resulting in better outcomes for people, cats, councils and the environment.

City of Banyule (Melbourne) – a survey and community engagement sessions, free (and accessible) cat desexing, microchipping and registration. After 8 years the impact of stray/unwanted cats fell by a third. Cat curfews were discussed but not imposed.



Clarence... a brighter place

Bruny Island – in 2019 Kingsborough Council introduced by-laws preventing households on Bruny Island from keeping more than 2 cats and also compulsory cat registration, desexing, microchipping and containment, to protect the island's native wildlife. Cat curfews could be imposed, but are not.



CATS IN CLARENCE



Background

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CATS IN CLARENCE



And the NDN has promoted the benefits of desexing pets



IS YOUR PET DESEXED?

LOW-COST DESEXING GET INVOLVED ABOUT NDN **NEWS**

When you desex your pet, you're doing yourself, your pet and your community a big favour.

Your pet's health and longevity improve, you're saving yourself large vet bills from all the health complications that could come from an undesexed pet, and you are preventing unwanted litters ending up in pounds or shelters. The National Desexing Network (NDN) is an Australia-wide referral system giving pet owners in financial need access to low-cost desexing. Our goal is to end pet overpopulation by making desexing available and more affordable to pet owners who need it most. If you're a pet owner you could be eligible for discounted desexing for your pet, directly on-line if you are a pension/concession card holder; or through calling our NDN team to access a Council Cooperative Desexing program.

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National Desexing Network is a proud initiative of the [Animal Welfare League Queensland](#).



WORKSHOP FEEDBACK:

Agreed – but though the ROI of getting pets desexed is high, both from financial and pet health perspective, the cost is also high.

PET OWNERS

You may be eligible for low cost desexing all year round or just in National Desexing Month in July. Follow the link below to find out the options available to you.

VETERINARIANS

Are you doing all you can to end pet overpopulation? Join the National Desexing Network and help us get ahead of the problem.

LOCAL COUNCIL

Is your council doing everything it can to help end pet overpopulation? It's not hard to get your community on board. Let us tell you how.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

If you are involved with an animal rescue, welfare group or other organisation and want to do more to help end pet overpopulation we want to hear from you!



CATS IN CLARENCE



And the Men's Shed
guys are lending a
hand by building
'catios'



Clarence... a brighter place



Cat capers at the Men's Shed

📅 July 23, 2020 | 🐾 Cat, Community

Busselton Men's Shed is helping local cat owners transition their cats to be indoors and in catios to reduce injury and death to cats and local wildlife in the Geopraphe Bay Catchment.



CATS IN CLARENCE



Other workshop feedback on approaches to tackling issues:

- There seem to be lots of 'rules', and in some cases legislation, but little enforcement
- But there is no 'one size fits all' approach (e.g. 'strict' Bruny approach vs less strict Banyule approach) to a council area like Clarence, which includes both urban and semi-rural areas
- Night curfews help protect nocturnal wildlife, but not all wildlife (e.g. Skinks)
- There are areas which are meant to be cat protected but are full of feral cats and it's a real problem (e.g. Dodges Ferry)
- Fines for non-compliance with responsible cat ownership behaviours don't always make sense (e.g. WA example where cats over 4 months old must be desexed for owner to avoid a fine, but sometimes it takes months to get an appointment with a vet)
- Could enforcing harder rules on cat owners (e.g. mandatory registration) discourage people from wanting to own, or take on a rehomed, cat?
- Mobile cat desexing clinics was welcomed by many as a great idea (but is illegal in Tasmania?)



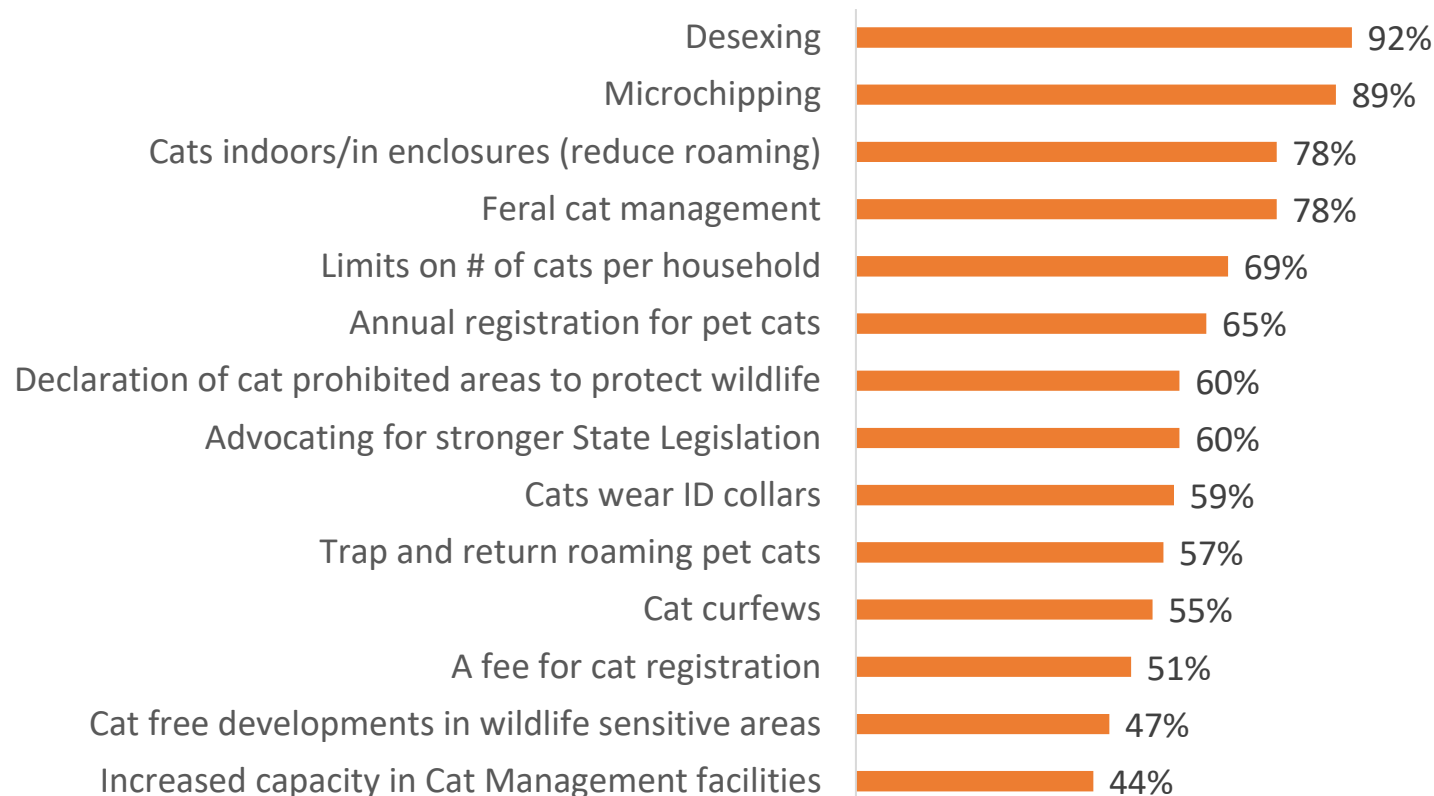
Clarence... a brighter place



CATS IN CLARENCE



Support for Potential Cat Management Strategies



WORKSHOP EXERCISE:

Please take a look at our survey results on which potential cat management strategies people ranked most and least important, and then put a green sticky note on YOUR no.1 priority and write WHY on it, then a blue sticky note on your no. 2 priority and an orange sticky note on your no. 3 priority.

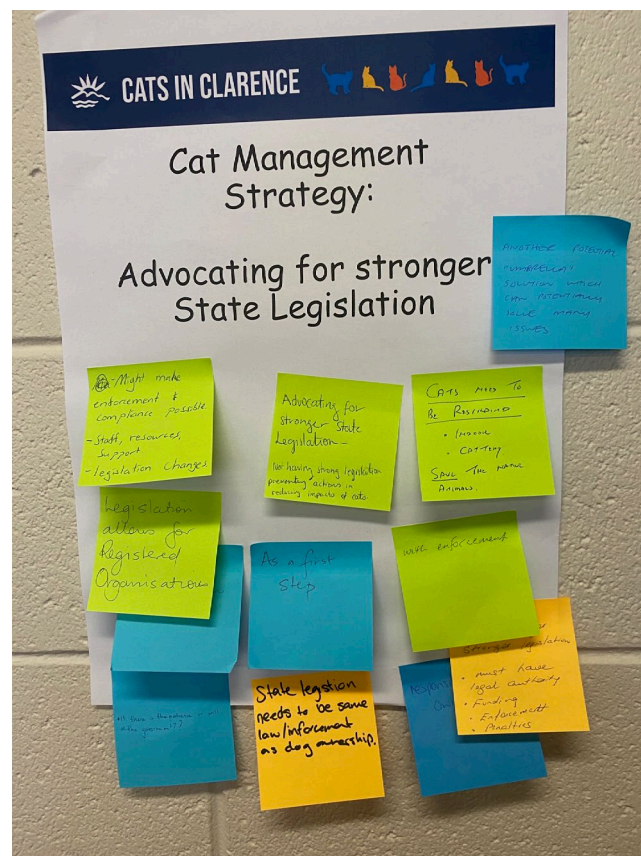
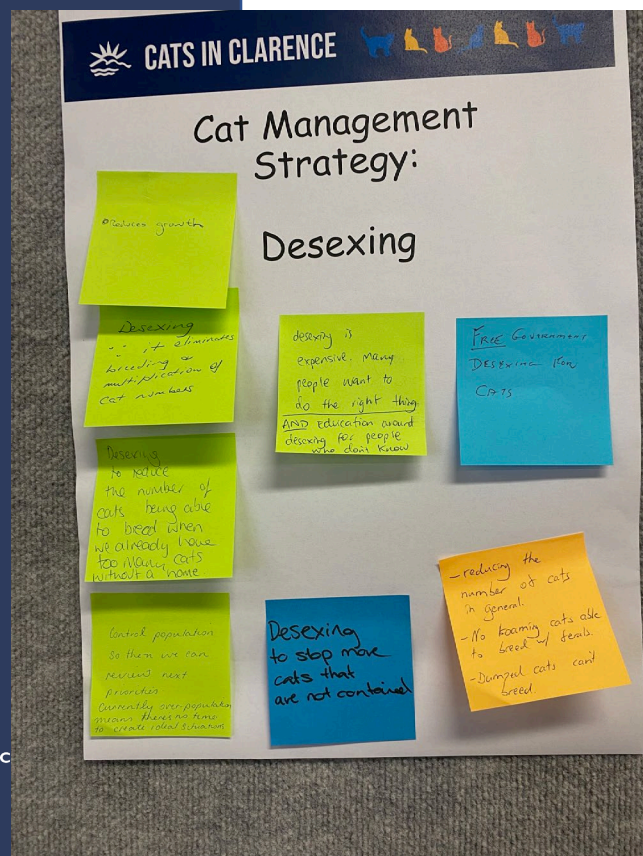




CATS IN CLARENCE



Cat support management strategy top 'voting' results (and reasons)



WORKSHOP FEEDBACK:

The two strategies which got the most GREEN/PRIORITY 1 votes were desexing and advocating for stronger State Legislation. Both also received priority 2 and 3 votes from some.

Key comments on the importance of Desexing included:

- Keeping cat numbers down/current overpopulation of cats controlled better
- Reducing non-containment of cats
- Reducing dumping of cats

But cost of desexing/need for financial assistance also mentioned by some

Key comments on importance of State Legislation included:

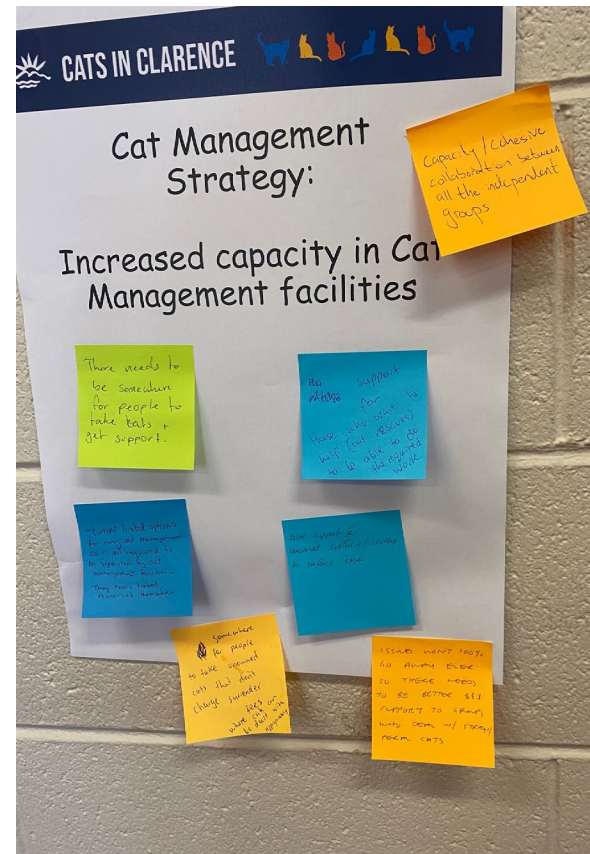
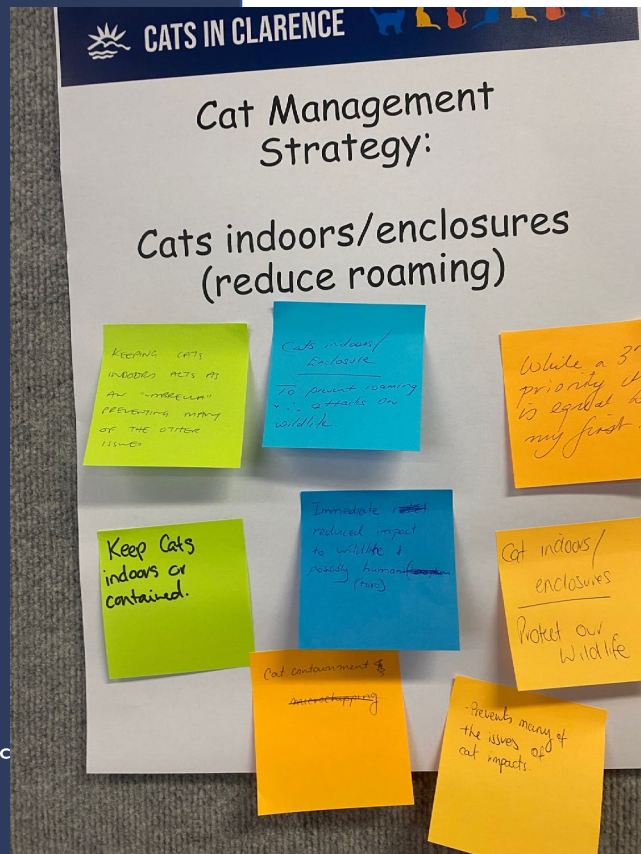
- Assists enforcement of responsible behaviours/encourages more action
- Also, an 'umbrella' solution involving government and non-government organisations collaborating was raised.



CATS IN CLARENCE



Cat support management strategy 'voting' results (and reasons) - 2



WORKSHOP FEEDBACK:

Cats being kept mainly indoors/in enclosures (to reduce roaming) and increased capacity in Cat Management facilities also received quite a few 'votes' – mainly as second or third priorities, but with the former getting 2 x first priority green stickers.

Key comments about why keeping cats indoors was important included:

- It "acts as an 'umbrella', preventing many of the other issues"
- "immediately reduces impact to wildlife and possibly humans (e.g. Toxoplasmosis)"

Key comments on the importance of increased Cat Management facilities included:

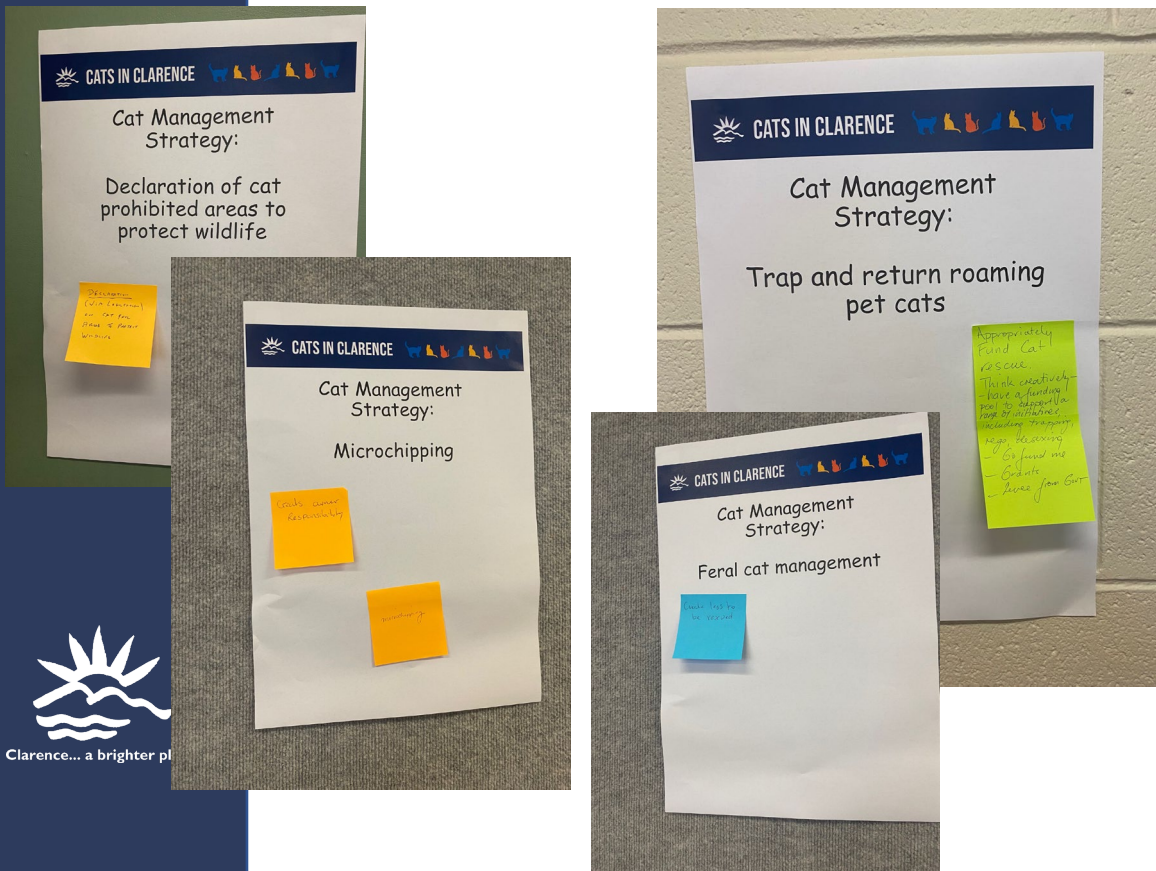
- "support for people who want to help (cat rescuers)"
- "somewhere for people to take unowned cats that doesn't charge for surrender"
- "capacity/cohesive collaboration between all the independent groups"



CATS IN CLARENCE



Cat support management strategy - other misc voting results



WORKSHOP FEEDBACK:

Other Cat support management strategies which received a one or two votes each included:

- Trap and return roaming pet cats – “think creatively – have a funding pool to support a range of initiatives including trapping, rego, desexing... (via things like) GoFundMe, grants, government”
- Feral cat management (but this seemed to relate more to stray domestic cats in the comment)
- Microchipping – “creates owner responsibility”
- Declaration of cat prohibited areas to protect wildlife

It makes sense that these measures were deemed important, but less so that others, as the top priorities, if actioned, would tend to have flow on effects to these 4 strategies – something that is actually mentioned on some of the ‘top priority’ comments.



Clarence... a brighter place



CATS IN CLARENCE



Other workshop feedback on cat management strategies:

- The issue could be more about ‘people management’ (e.g. less responsible cat owners) than simple cat management, per se
 - There will always be people who either won’t, or can’t, act as responsibly as other cat owners – this needs to be tackled as an issue in itself
- It seems like it would be more effective to provide assistance (e.g. free, or free for a period desexing services) than imposing fines, to change behaviour
- One of the key issues seems to be that there are many, different, groups involved in trying to tackle cat management, e.g. State Government, Local Council, and private or NFP groups, and not enough **collaboration** between them. This was raised in the workshop, and most seemed to agree, that there needs to be far more collaboration between all, perhaps via a regulatory board. Also better management of funding to tackle cat management issues – including government grants and levies, but also extending into fund raising via anything from Go Fund Me, to community organisations to wealthy philanthropists who have a passion for the cause.
- Need for leaders with a passion and understanding of the cause who will implement action.

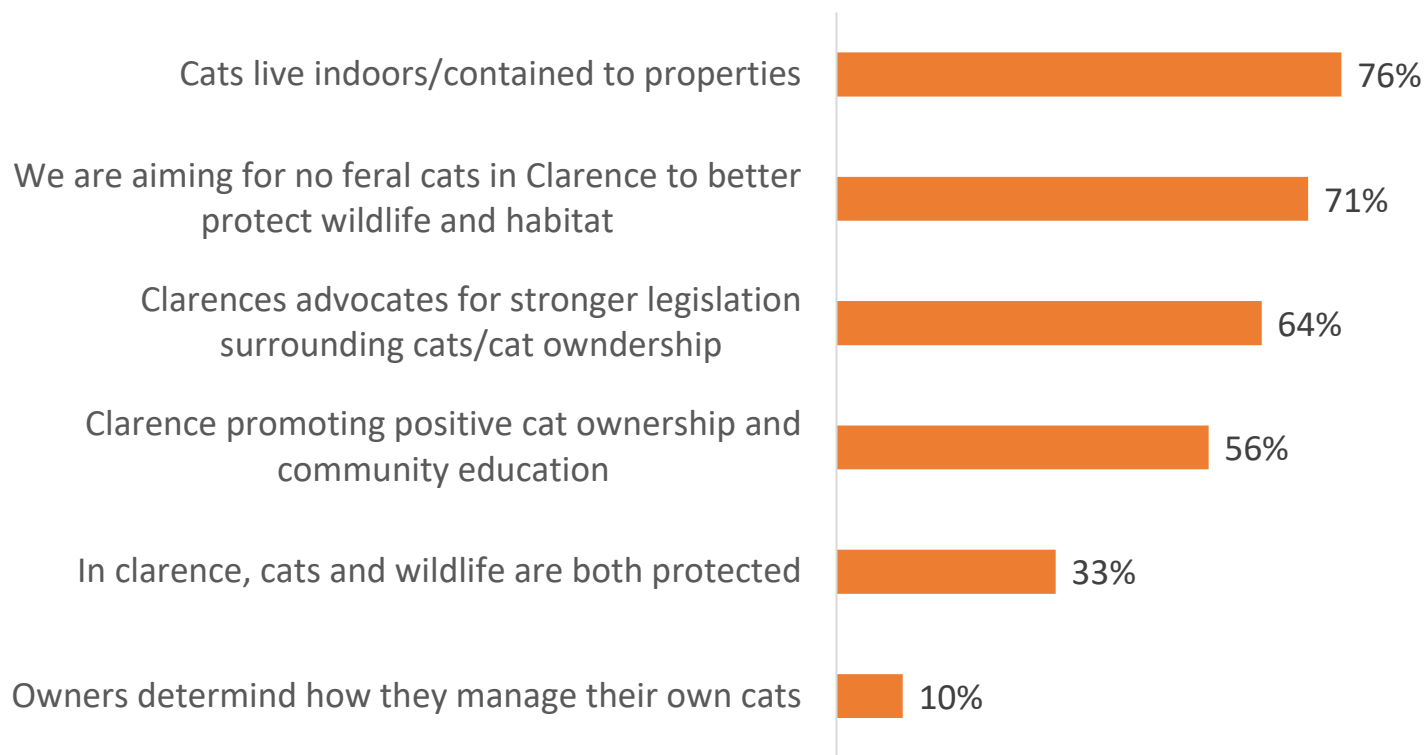




CATS IN CLARENCE



Support for Clarence City Council Vision Statements



WORKSHOP EXERCISE:

Please take a look at our survey results showing how people ranked potential Clarence City Council Vision Statements and how people ranked them, and then put a green sticky note on YOUR no.1 priority and write WHY on it, then a blue sticky note on your no. 2 priority and an orange sticky note on your no. 3 priority.

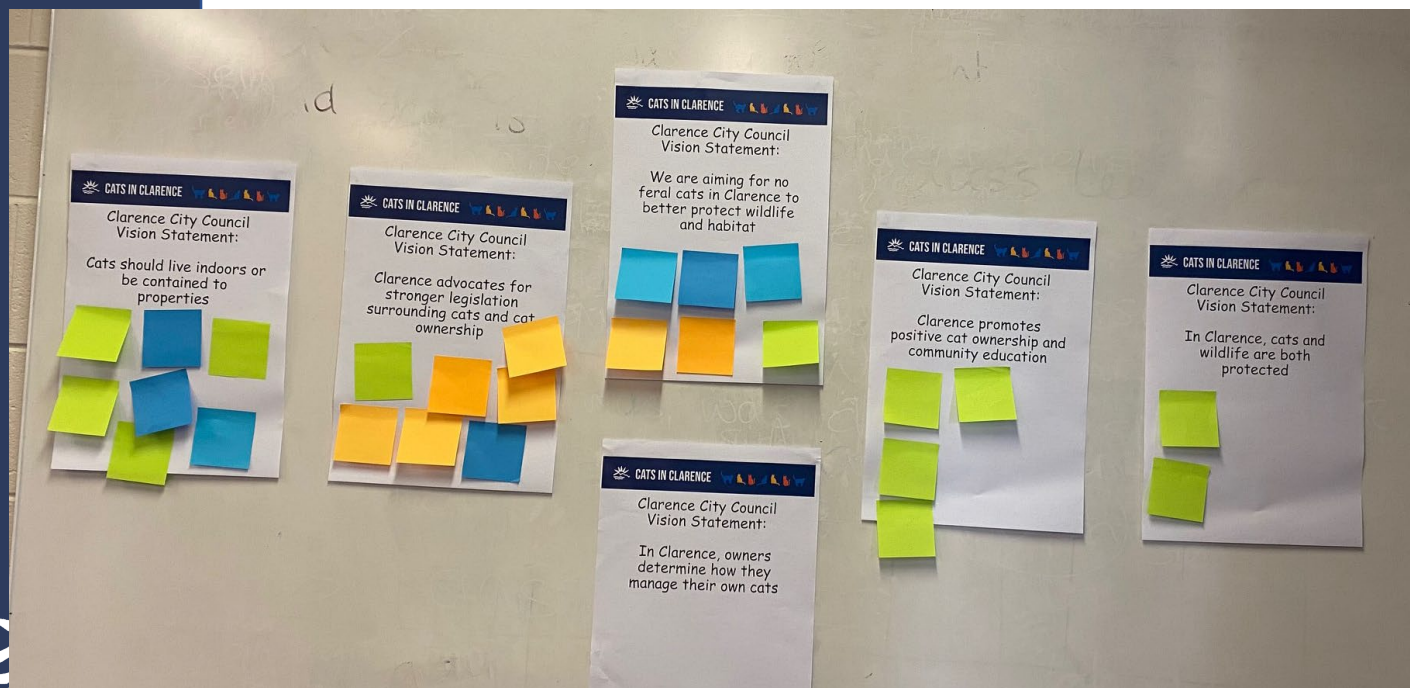




CATS IN CLARENCE



Clarence City Council Vision Statement 'voting' results



WORKSHOP FEEDBACK:

There were two pretty clear 'leading' Vision Statements, which resonated most with those present:

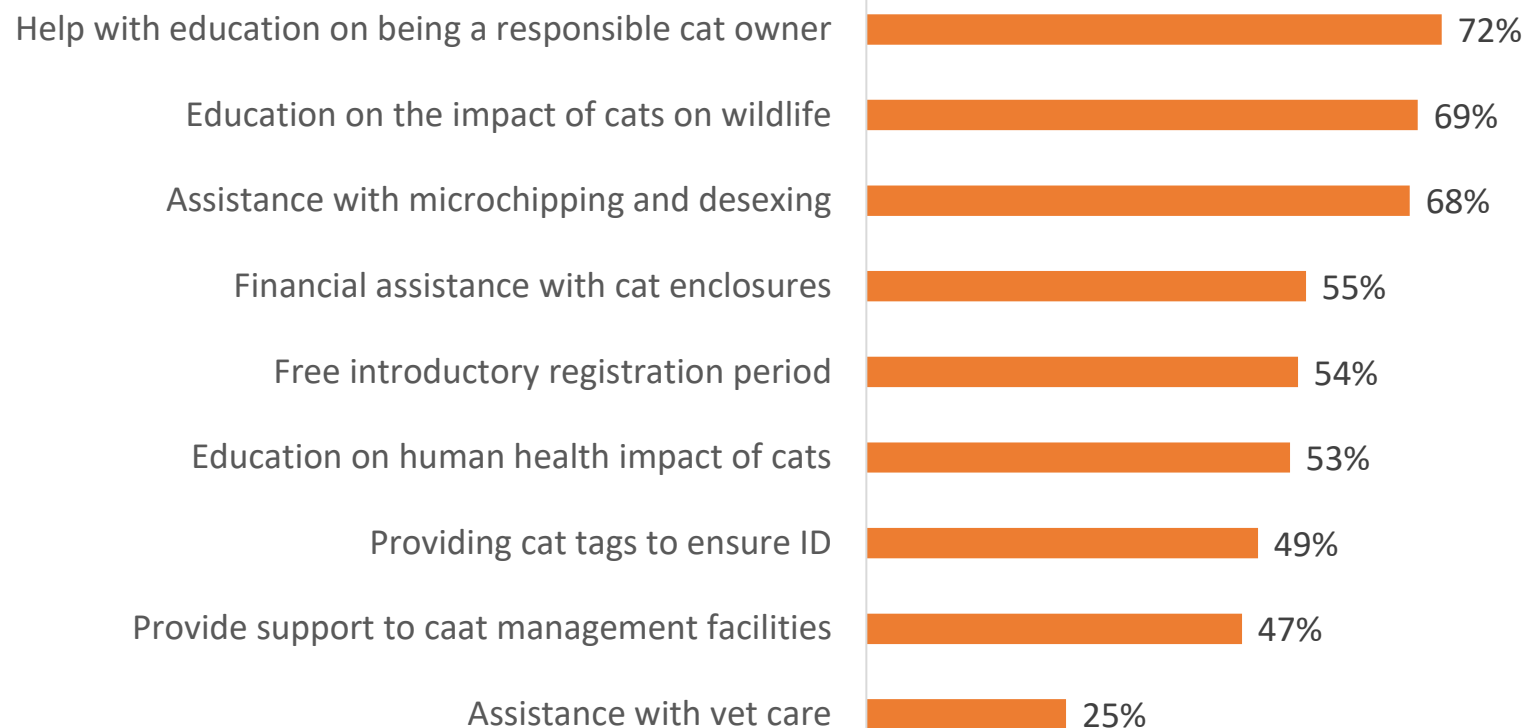
- Cats should live indoors or be contained to properties (4 green + 3 blue) AND Clarence promotes positive cat ownership and community education.
- In Clarence, cats and wildlife are both protected also received 2 x 'first vote' preferences
- Advocating for stronger legislation....and 'aiming for no feral cats...' etc also received several votes.



CATS IN CLARENCE



Support options cat owners would like to see in Clarence





CATS IN CLARENCE



To finish off with, we'd like to get your views on the best way to educate people in the community about cat management – how do we get the right messages out there, to different types of people?

Workshop exercise – discussion about opportunities to educate and disseminate information.

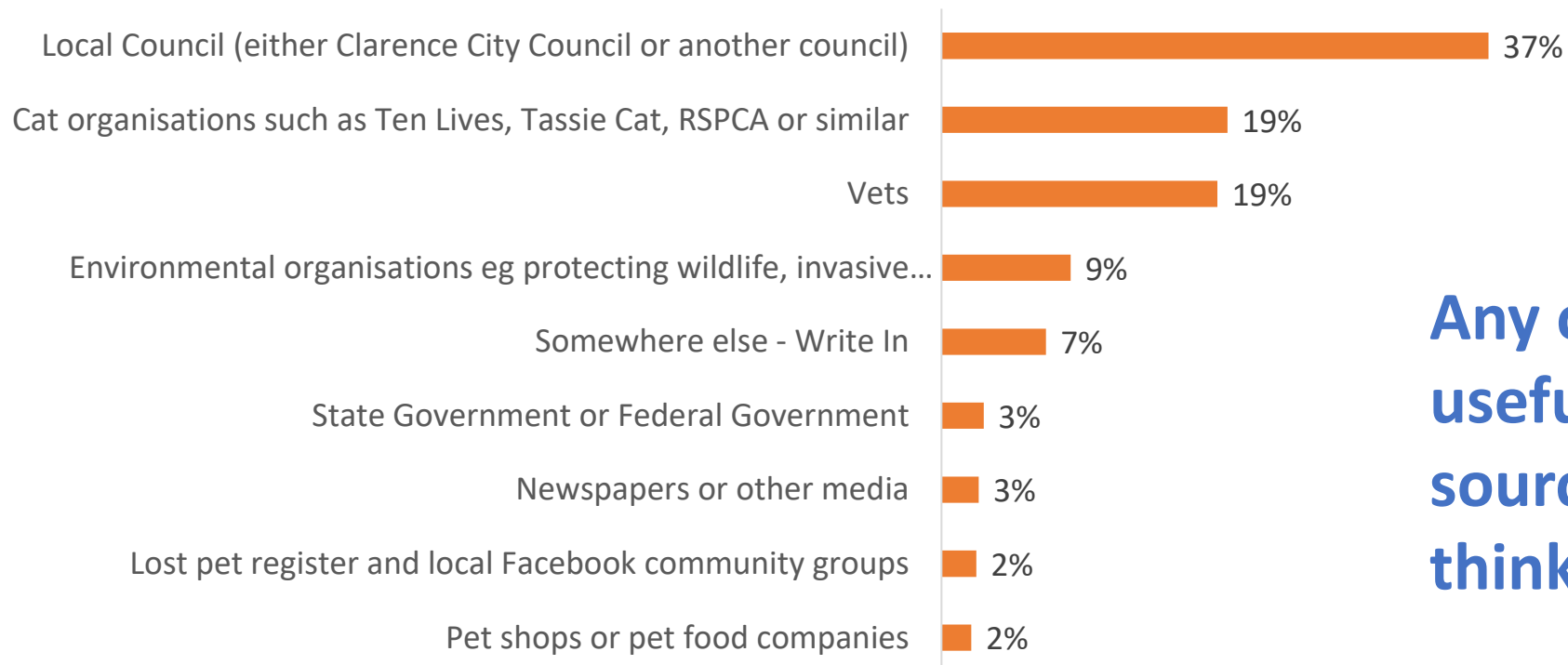




CATS IN CLARENCE



Where would people tend to look for more education on being a responsible cat owner?



**Any other
useful places or
sources you can
think of?**



CATS IN CLARENCE



Workshop feedback on education and communication (1):

- Don't rely on glossy brochures, or any 'dense' hard to read/digest information
- What would be more effective is easy to read, practical information (e.g. how to build a catio), or videos for those with limited literacy (or audio)
- There was some surprise about the survey stats on how many people chose the Council as their no. 1 source of information on how to be a more responsible cat owner (as some had experienced some frustration in this area, e.g. how to deal with roaming cats). One suggestion was that, if the council didn't have specific, practical information on how to deal with a particular issue, they should point the person asking the question to a local cat organisation which might be equipped to help them – **not** to point the person in the direction of reading legislation.
- School talks was also raised as a good way to raise awareness and understanding of responsible cat ownership, early on in life – Ten Lives seemed to be involved in this sort of program





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Workshop feedback on education and communication (2):

- But not all cat owners *actively seek* information on management of their pet. So how best to reach the harder to reach and/or less responsible cat owners? Some ideas mentioned:
 - No. 1 – try to take the information/education straight to the people who need it most
 - OOH posters in problem areas – including simple, actionable messages
 - Information/ads (again, simple, easy to digest) on social media
 - Exploring ways to get cat management education to cat owners via carers/NDIS/community workers
 - Working with NGOs like Mission Australia etc and/or housing workers (similar to above point) to get the message out
- Overall, grass roots type approaches for disseminating information were mentioned most, and importantly using a **tone of voice that was encouraging, not judgmental.**



What's next? Your feedback today will inform timing, inclusions and prioritisation of actions

Education & Support

- Promotion of responsible cat ownership and community education
- Providing positive information and practical support (subsidised microchipping, desexing, containment solutions covered in the survey)

Cat management frameworks

- To inform a future cat policy
- To inform the Southern Tasmania regional cat management strategy
- To inform consideration of all management options available including by-laws

Partnerships & advocacy

- Develop strong partnerships and relationships to deliver regional solutions
- Advocacy with LGAT, State and Federal Governments and other partners
- Consideration of resourcing required and pursuing grant opportunities
- Consider cat management areas and participate in workshops



Thank you for your time today!



Clarence... a brighter place