



2026 - 2029

# Domestic Animal Management Plan Review - Engagement Report

To inform Council of the outcomes of community engagement for the Domestic Animal Management Plan Review, undertaken via Engage Mansfield.



Mansfield Shire



# Domestic Animal Management Plan Review - Engagement Report

## Purpose

To inform Council of the outcomes of community engagement for the Domestic Animal Management Plan Review, undertaken via Engage Mansfield during the first round of community engagement between 7 October and 3 November 2025, and again between 26 November and 8 December 2025 for a second round of engagement.

The engagement aimed to:

- Identify community priorities for animal management.
- Understand key concerns relating to responsible pet ownership, public space use, and compliance.
- Explore opportunities for improved education, infrastructure, and enforcement.
- Inform drafting of a modernised, clearer, and more effective Domestic Animal Management Plan.

## Substance

### Background

The review is part of Council's legislative responsibility to maintain relevant and effective animal management practices that protect community amenity, environmental values, and public safety.

The two engagement phases focused on collecting targeted feedback via *Engage Mansfield*, with eight detailed responses from residents and community members.

### Legislative Context

Under the Domestic Animals Act 1994, Councils must maintain and review a *Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP)* every four years. The DAMP outlines:

- How Council delivers services and strategies to promote responsible pet ownership.
- How compliance with the Act and associated regulations is managed, particularly regarding safety, nuisance, and amenity impacts.
- Evaluation measures for the effectiveness of the plan.

The current DAMP 2021–2025 was adopted on 18 October 2022 and submitted to the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions for endorsement.

## Engagement Overview

Engagement Element	Details
<b>Tool</b>	Online survey via Engage Mansfield
<b>Engagement Period</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> October 2025 – 8 <sup>th</sup> December 2025

For more information, please contact Michael Richards, Coordinator Compliance by 03 5775 8583 or [michael.richards@mansfield.vic.gov.au](mailto:michael.richards@mansfield.vic.gov.au)

<b>Participants</b>	304 visitors, 8 contributors, 8 responses
<b>Question Types</b>	Multiple choice, and open comment fields
<b>Promotion Channels</b>	Website and social media
<b>Reach</b>	Residents, pet owners, and community groups

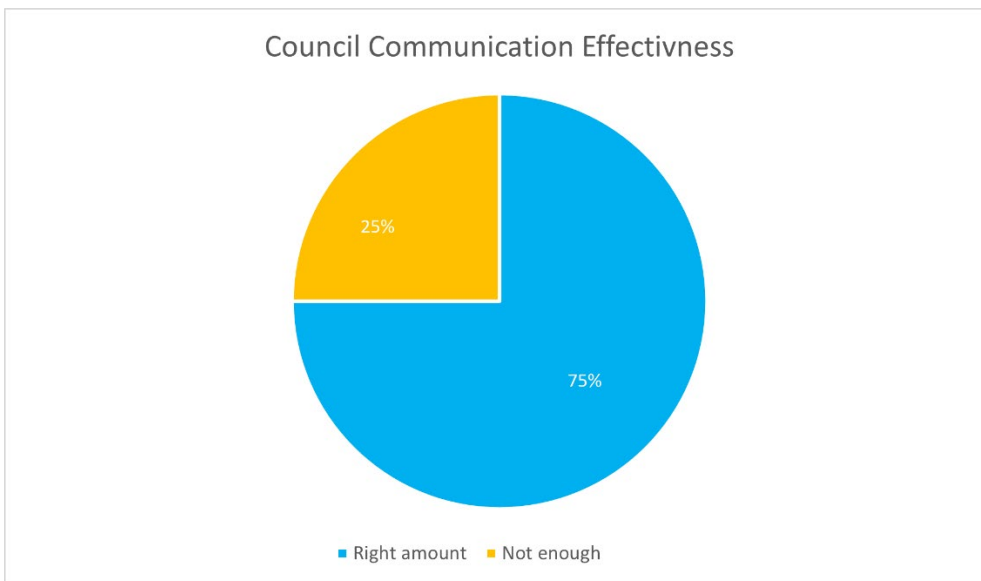
Table 1: Engagement Overview

**Response quality:** Feedback was specific and representative of recurring concerns, with practical suggestions for enforcement, education, and infrastructure improvements.

## Key Findings

### Top Community Priorities

- More off-lead areas and improved facilities.
- Better enforcement and ranger patrols.
- Increased education and communication.
- Cleaner public spaces (dog waste management).



Graph 2: Council Communication Effectiveness

## Detailed Analysis of Feedback

### 1. Communication

- 6 respondents: Council communicates the right amount.
- 2 respondents: Not enough communication.
- Preferred channels: Website, vets, email, social media, registration renewal notices.

### 2. Public Space Use

- Strong support for more bag dispensers and bins (all respondents).
- Mixed views on fenced dog parks; some prefer open areas to avoid dog fights.
- Suggested new off-lead areas: College Oval, Lords Oval, Main Oval.

**3. Compliance and Enforcement**

- Common issues: barking dogs, wandering cats/dogs, dog waste.
- Desire for more ranger patrols, especially weekends and outlying areas.
- Support for warnings for first-time wandering pets.

**4. Education and Awareness**

- Requests for clearer information on registration fees, Council services, and complaints management.
- Interest in pet care resources and community pet groups.

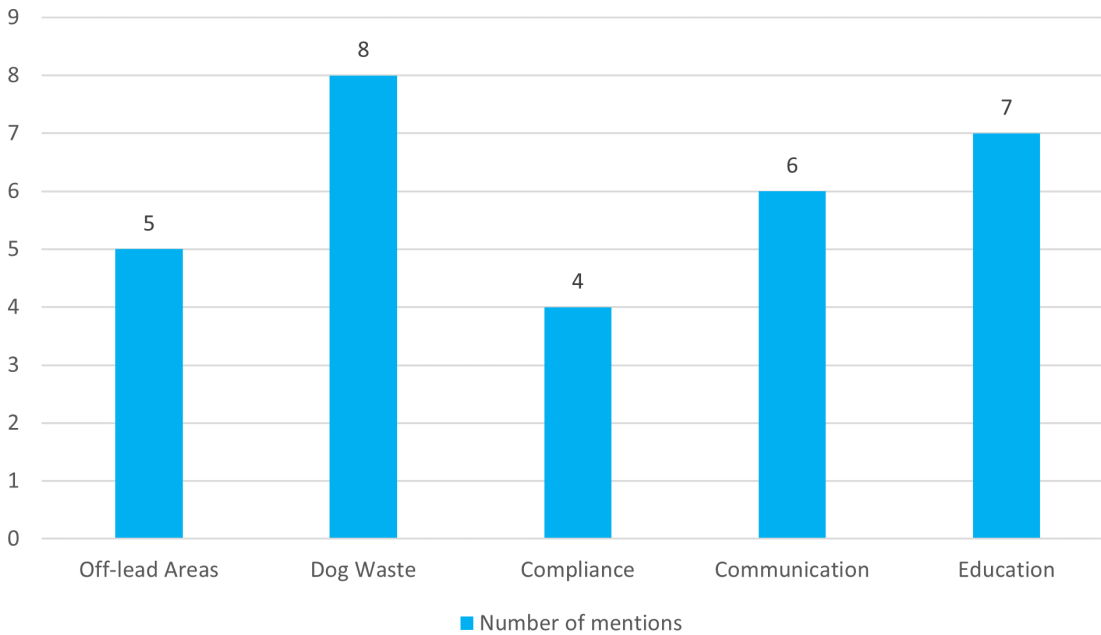


Table 2: Common Themes and Areas of Concern

**Common Themes and Areas of Concern**

Theme	Summary
<b>Dog Waste</b>	Universal concern; calls for more bins, enforcement, and education.
<b>Off-lead Areas</b>	Majority want more off-lead spaces; flexible timing suggested.
<b>Compliance</b>	Need for more ranger patrols and stronger enforcement.
<b>Communication</b>	Mixed views; preference for multi-channel updates.

<b>Education</b>	Desire for info on fees, services and pet care.
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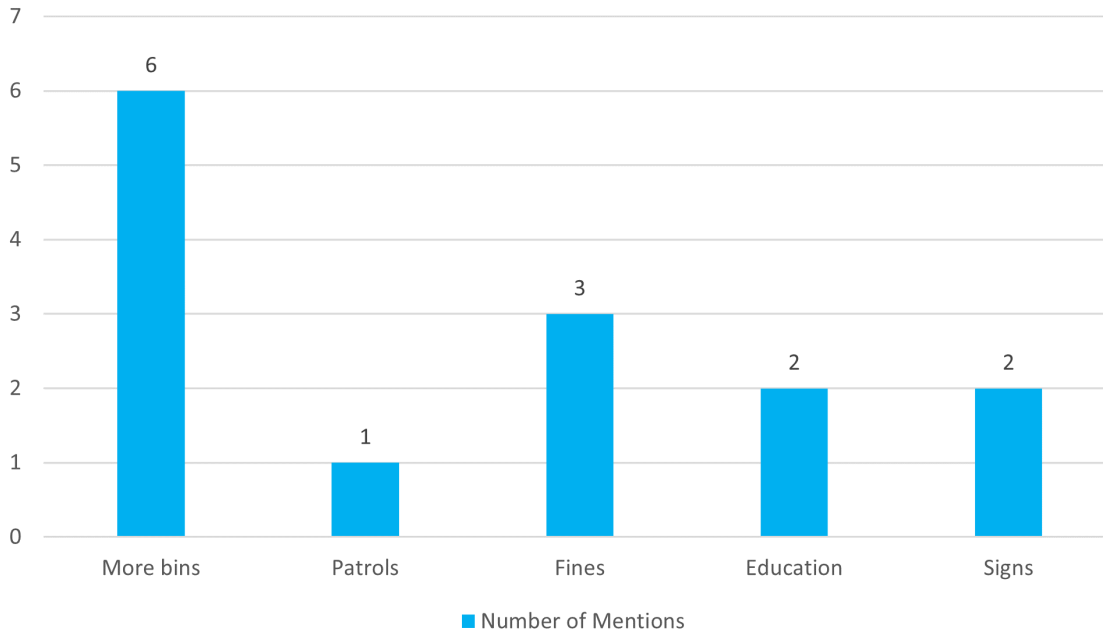


Table 3: Suggestions for Dog Waste Management

**Considerations**

Based on the survey feedback, the following has been included in the DAMP final draft.

- Expand off-lead areas and review timing flexibility.
- Install more bag dispensers and bins in parks.
- Increase ranger patrols, especially weekends and outlying areas.
- Strengthen enforcement for nuisance issues and wandering pets.
- Enhance education campaigns via website, social media, and renewal notices.
- Consider cat curfew policy (6 pm lock-in suggested).
- Improve signage and transparency around compliance processes.

**Options**

This report presents the findings from the first and second rounds of community engagement undertaken from for the Domestic Animal Management Plan Review. These outcomes have informed the drafting of the revised plan, which will be submitted to Agriculture Victoria for adoption.

**Resource and Financial Implications**

The Domestic Animal Management Plan Review was undertaken within existing staff resources and was funded through the 2025–26 Budget. No additional resources were required for the engagement phase. Future implementation actions (e.g., installing more bins, signage, or expanding off-lead areas) may require budget consideration in subsequent financial years.

## Proposition

That Council note the results of the initial engagement undertaken as part of the Domestic Animal Management Plan Review, including detailed feedback collected through Engage Mansfield, which has informed the drafting of the final draft plan.