

# Cats in the neighbourhood

Cats like to wander and may enter another person's property. It is an offence, under our Cat Bylaw, for your cat to wander onto someone else's property without their permission. Therefore you need to take steps to avoid this.

## **Below are some strategies to encourage cats to stay on a property:**

- Provide an enclosed cat run.
- Adapt your fencing to discourage your cat from leaving your property.
- Confine your cat to an enclosure or indoors. This protects your cat from injury and disease or from becoming lost and protects local wildlife.
- Desex your cat.
- Keep your cat indoors from sunset to sunrise.

## **What if a cat is on my property?**

If the cat is from your neighbour, we suggest you talk with them and develop a solution.

## **Below are some strategies to prevent cats from coming onto your property:**

- Try gently squirting the cat on its body (not the face) with a spray bottle, nothing pressurized. This is only effective if consistent.
- Keep the area wet. Cats generally don't like to have wet, muddy feet.
- Place citrus peel, sprigs of rue (herb), pepper or citronella oil on the ground. Cats do not like these smells.
- Use a cat repellent spray or gel (available from plant nurseries or vets).
- Spread Vaseline on the fence posts and post tops - this will make the posts slippery and the cats will not be able to grip the greasy surface.
- Attach old CD's onto string with knots keeping them apart. The reflecting light with assist in deterring cats.
- Clean away rubbish, brush and other clutter that can harbour mice, rats and other small prey that cats love to pursue.
- Ensure that all access points for cats are boarded up. This includes all holes that would allow access to sheds, garages, or under decks and porches. Stray cats and their prey may take up refuge in these places.
- If cleaning cat urine, do not use ammonia based products as this will attract cats.

Cats are creatures of habit and not all methods will work for every cat. Each deterrent should be trialled for two weeks to try to break the habit.

## **Trapping**

Trapping a cat is the last resort. A resident can only place traps on their own property. It is not permitted to enter another property unlawfully in order to trap a cat.

Cat traps can be hired to residents within Council for a maximum hire period of 14 days. A fee may be payable upon collection of the cage. The cage is required to be returned by the due date in a clean and undamaged condition.

If you trap a cat that can be identified you must release it immediately in the area where it was trapped. Identification includes wearing a collar with an address or telephone number on it, or a cat that has the letter "M" tattooed inside one of its ears which indicates that it is microchipped.

## **Unidentified Cats**

If the cat is unidentified it will need to go to a shelter or vet within 12 hours of trapping. The resident hiring the trap will be responsible for the surrender of the animal and pay any associated costs to the shelter or vet. Shelters are struggling to cope with the influx of unidentified cats, ideally, trapping is not encouraged. It is recommended that other deterrents are used first.

## **Feeding a cat that does not belong to you**

You can help by not feeding a cat that does not belong to you. Feeding a cat that is not yours is not caring for it. Feeding cats can contribute to the wider problem and can also encourage the cats to breed. It also encourages the cats to return to that location, which can lead to creating a nuisance for yourself and your neighbours.