

Monday 5 November 2012

RYDE COUNCIL WINS TOP ANIMAL MANAGEMENT PLAN AWARD

The City of Ryde has won Animal Management Plan of the Year at the annual Australian Institute of Animal Management (AIAM) awards.

The Award recognises the Council's effective promotion of responsible pet ownership through public awareness, regulation and suitable infrastructure, and effectively minimising public pet nuisance.

City of Ryde Manager of Ranger Services, and owner of *Bundy*, a young Maltese-Shitzu X, Leon Marskell, said: "Companion animals play an important role in society and the pleasure of owning a pet carries with it the dual responsibilities of care for the animal, and respect for the community.

"Reliance on laws will always be the backbone of companion animal management. However, there is now a greater emphasis on the development of non-regulatory approaches such as public education, which is a major component of our Animal Management Plan.

"Our number one priority is the microchipping and registration of all companion animals in the Ryde LGA. This helps speed the prompt return of lost pets to owners, reducing the number of animals that need to be impounded," he said.

It is estimated that around half of the 44,000 local households own either a cat or a dog, so a significant number of residents have a direct involvement in companion animal issues.

Last year, Rangers responded to 756 call-outs on various companion animal issues, including:

- 138 complaints of stray, abandoned or roaming dogs
- 131 barking dog investigations
- 35 dog attack investigations
- Of 152 dogs either seized or found, 83 were returned to their owner (55%)
- Of 124 cats detained, 15 were returned.

Council's Animal Management Plan involves a wide range of topics including:

- Registration and micro-chipping
- Provision of public facilities such as off-lease exercise areas
- Improved signage
- Environmental protection such as dog droppings management
- Protection of native wildlife (from roaming pets)
- Liaising with local animal rescue and rehoming organisations
- Domestic and public open space design guidelines.

For full details on responsible pet ownership, or view the Companion Animal Management Plan go to www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/catsanddogs