

The Lost Dogs' Home State Election Priorities 2026

In Victoria, the rising cost of vet care, growing stray cat populations and ageing facilities are placing unprecedented pressure on animal welfare organisations to find a home for the increasing number of animals that come to us each year.

1. Reducing the cost of vet care

Problem

- Pet owners experiencing hardship are increasingly struggling to afford vet care, leading to an increase in pet surrenders.

Background

- The Lost Dogs' Home Vet Pet Survey had 713 responses, with 61% of respondents living below the Australian Poverty Line and 58% having to delay vet care because of the cost.

Ask

- The Lost Dogs' Home is calling on the State Government to provide low-cost vet care to pet owners experiencing hardship including providing grants for low-cost desexing, microchipping, registration and vaccinations.

2. Finding homes for stray cats

Problem

- There are an estimated 680,000 unregistered cats and kittens in Victoria and the majority of these are stray (semi-owned and unowned) (Ref: Victorian Cat Management Strategy 2025-2035).

Background

- In the last five years, the Lost Dogs' Home has admitted 43,756 stray cats and kittens and this is increasing each year.

Ask

- The Lost Dogs' Home is calling on the State Government to provide funding to Councils to offer incentives to encourage and enable people to adopt stray cats, including low-cost desexing, microchipping, vaccinations and reduced registration fees.



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For further information contact
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or Scan the QR Code to learn more.



3. Improving animal welfare facilities

Problem

- There is an enormous strain on shelters and pounds in Victoria with over 73,300 cats and dogs admitted in 2024 (Animal Welfare Victoria, Shelter and Pound Dataset 2024).
- The animal welfare sector faces a shortfall in fit-for-purpose facilities to house the increasing number of animals that it supports each year.

Background

- 25% of the animals admitted to shelters and pounds in Victoria go to the Lost Dogs' Home, which is more than any other provider. We are the largest animal welfare shelter in Australia, supporting over 18,000 animals each year.
- The Lost Dogs' Home provides shelter services to 16 Councils across Victoria and there is increasing demand from other Councils for our high quality services at both our North Melbourne and Cranbourne sites.

Ask

- The Lost Dogs' Home is calling on the State Government to commit dedicated multi-year funding to upgrade and expand our animal welfare facilities over the next four years.
- We are also calling for State-wide investment in the existing network of animal shelters. This investment is essential to protect animal welfare, support Councils and ensure Victoria's shelter system remains fit-for-purpose as demand continues to rise.



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