Taren Point Animal Shelter
A story of local government success

By Jeremy Bennett
Coordinator
Animal Shelter Operations
Regulation & Enforcement
Sutherland Shire Council

Sutherland Shire COUNCIL

Sutherland Shire Animal Shelter

Sutherland Shire COUNCIL

Sutherland Shire

- Sutherland Shire covers and area of approximately 380sq kilometres
- Second largest population in New South Wales (215,000)
- Population greater than that of the entire Northern Territory
- One of the largest companion animal populations in New South Wales approximately (39,800) registered
- One of the lowest euthanasia rates in Australia 4.3%
- One of a few metropolitan Councils to operate an Animal Shelter
- 76% Re-homing rate

Taren Point ‘Pound’

In the beginning;

It is estimated that the Taren Point ‘Pound’ has been established over 30 years. Back then the facility was converted from a waste processing yard to a impounding facility for mainly dogs and horses.

The facility relied upon the seven (7) and (14) fourteen day provisions of the *Impounding* Act, 1993 to reduce tenure at the impounding facility by euthanizing unwanted dogs or dogs that had little or no prospect of sale.

These provisions were applied during times of increased population and at times of sickness. The facility was clean and humane with generous and oversized kennels, however the exterior of the facility resembled a waste processing yard.

The Pound

Change

- A Notice of Motion (MOT003-06) was considered by Council on 5 September 2005, and the following decision taken :
- 1. That all animals offered for sale shall be de-sexed before being sold.
- 2. That a review be undertaken of all areas of the shelter's operations including current procedures, policies and financial position.
- 3. Further, that a report be provided to Council that compares the current operations and procedures of neighbouring councils and that of other local government areas so as to highlight best practice and alternate operating parameters for the control of animals within the shire.
- 4. That the Animal Shelter not be outsourced.
- 5. The review or report not include options for outsourcing the Animal Shelter but consider improvements to a Council run facility only, and a facility which includes utilising community volunteers.

Animal Shelter

It was with this Council motion and more importantly Council support that the ‘pound’ became an Animal Shelter.

It was this Council motion that became the catalyst for change……

- A ‘No Kill’ or low euthanasia policy was adopted.
- De-sexing became compulsory for all companion animals sold.
- The Shelter was not to be outsourced, this provided a direction for the future of staff and companion animal policy.
- Guidelines on the shelter operations and criteria for euthanasia were adopted
- And more importantly a Volunteer program was approved.

Volunteers

A key to success for the Animal Shelter has been the introduction of a volunteer program that has seen the recruitment of some 25 volunteers that roster themselves to attend throughout a 7 day period from 10:30am til 2:30pm.

Benefits of Volunteer Program;

- Animals are exercised daily
- Socialised
- Taught basic obedience; sit, stay, lay
- Animals are better adjusted and become more suitable for re-homing through constant human and animal contact
- Local community & business's have adopted volunteers by placing seats shade and water out the front of their businesses.
- Promotes community spirit and health & well being for retirees
- Attendance at community stall & raffles

Animal Shelter Volunteers

Sutherland Shire COUNCIL

Achieving Best Practice

City of Sydney & Sutherland Shire Council - Partnership

- SUTHERLAND ANIMAL SHELTER TO CARE FOR LOST AND ABANDONED PETS

- I am pleased the City has entered into a partnership with Sutherland Animal Shelter to care for our lost and abandoned pets. The Shelter, located at Taren Point is committed to providing the highest standard of animal welfare and has the lowest euthanasia rate in Australia.

- After extensive investigation, the Sutherland Animal Shelter was selected as its work reflects the City's own animal welfare policies, has an
- exemplary reputation and high standards of care, and aims to rehouse every suitable animal.

- In addition to the Shelter's paid staff, there is a team of 25 volunteers to ensure the animals are exercised, groomed and engaged in play and human contact every day. The Shelter has a close partnership with the Sylvania Veterinary Clinic, which provides heavily discounted health checks; veterinary treatments and de-sexing services; and a 24-hour service and drop off point for stray and injured animals.

Shelter Re-development

Stage 1: Construction & Upgrade of Cattery (Rain tree Cat Condo)

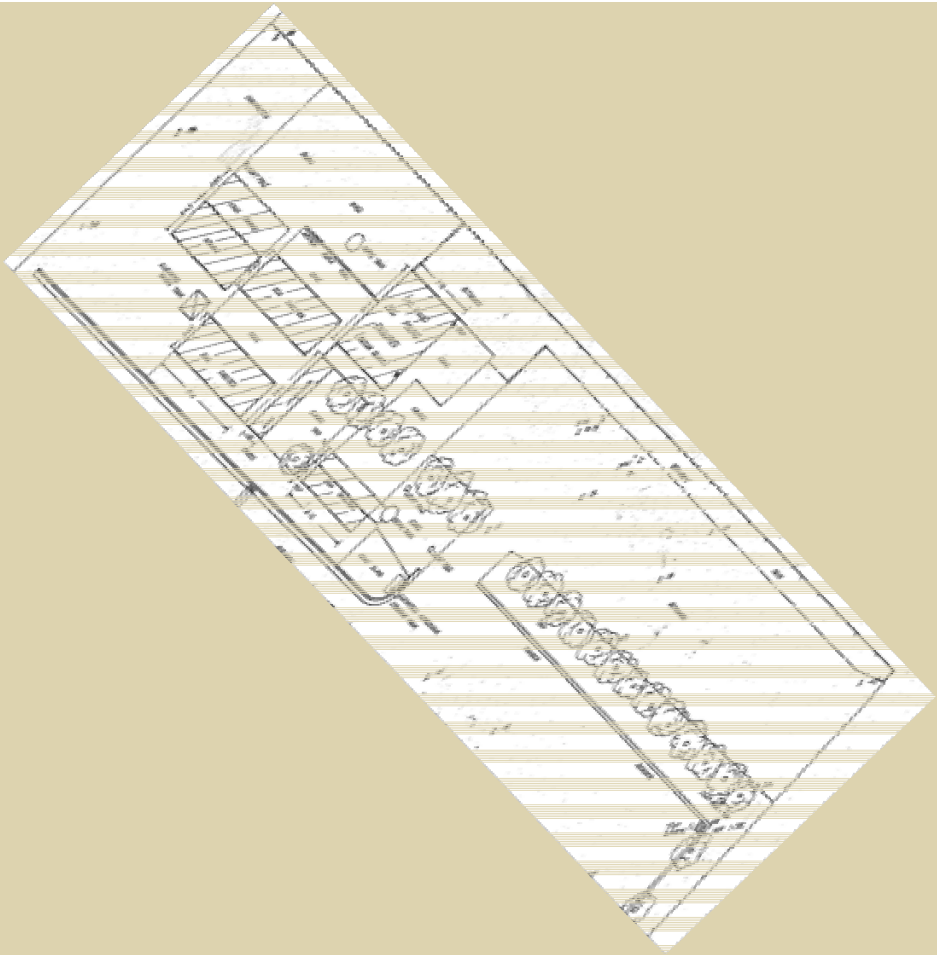
Stage 2: Upgrade/Refurbishment of existing kennel infrastructure

Stage 3: Development of new kennel bank

Stage 4: Upgrade/Refurbishment of existing shelter infrastructure facilities & staff administration Building

New & Improved Facilities

New & Improved Facilities



Achievements

- **Achievements:**
- Sutherland Shire Animal Shelter has constantly recorded one of the lowest euthanasia rates in Australia over the last 5 years
- 2007 Pet Care Business Award of the Year St George & Sutherland Shire Communities
- 2008 Community Group of the Year - Animal Shelter Volunteers

Contacts

- Questions

Jeremy Bennett
Coordinator
Animal Shelter Operations
Sutherland Shire Council
jbennett@ssc.nsw.gov.au

Sutherland Shire COUNCIL