

Cat Welfare Survey 2025

Report of Findings

October 2025

Ipsos Ref # 25-047493-01



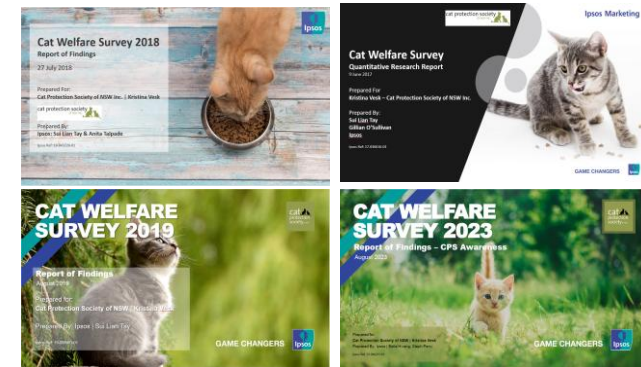
Background to the research



Cat Protection Society (CPS) of NSW has a vision of finding every cat in need, a loving and responsible home. In addition to that, they also work with the government and the community to promote socially and environmentally responsible cat ownership.



One of its strategies is to encourage cat owners to desex their cats at an early age. Research studies conducted by Ipsos since 2017 indicate that around 90% of cat owners in NSW desex their cats.



The latest wave of research considers biannual studies from 2017 to 2023 to assess cat desexing rates among owners in a specific area of southwestern Sydney.

This 2025 study provides insights to inform the development of targeted plans and strategies for cat welfare communications in those areas

Addressing the business questions

1

Business question:

- Who are the owners who have and who have not desexed their cat?

Research Objective:

- Identify the profile of owners who have desexed their cats
- Identify the profile of owners who have not desexed their cats

2

Business question:

- Are certain type of cats more likely to be desexed than others?

Research Objective:

- Identify the profile of cats which have been desexed
- Identify the profile of cats which have not been desexed
- Determining whether the origin of cats highly correlates with owners not knowing if their cats have been desexed

3

Business question:

- What are the barriers to early-age desexing?

Research Objective:

- Investigate the barriers to desexing
- Verify whether cost is a barrier for not desexing their cats

4

Business question:

- Will health messaging improve the rate of cat desexing?

Research Objective:

- Awareness of health benefits of desexing cats by each group
- Examine whether health benefits have an impact on owner/future owner's decision to desex their cats

Study Design



DESIGN

- Quantitative online survey
- Survey length: 10 mins
- Fieldwork dates: 08/07/2025 → 08/08/25



WHO WE INTERVIEWED

- Aged 18+ years, cat owners, living in New South Wales (NSW) in three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield and Canterbury-Bankstown)
- Spread across age and gender

Sample sizes	2018	2019	2023	2025
Total respondents	524	516	513	507
• Cat owners	364	356	513	507
• Non-cat owners*	160	160	N/A	N/A
Total number of cats	542	582	803	836

*Excluded in 2023



ANALYSIS

- Analysis is conducted by the following groups:
 - Cat owners
 - Who have desexed all their cats
 - Who have not desexed all their cats (including 'don't know')
 - Cats which have been desexed
 - Cats which have not been desexed
- Data was weighted by age, gender and location at total level
- Total sample analysis is not possible due to quota sampling

Cats and their Owners

The proportions of single and dual cat households are similar to previous statewide surveys but there is a slightly greater share of households with three cats.

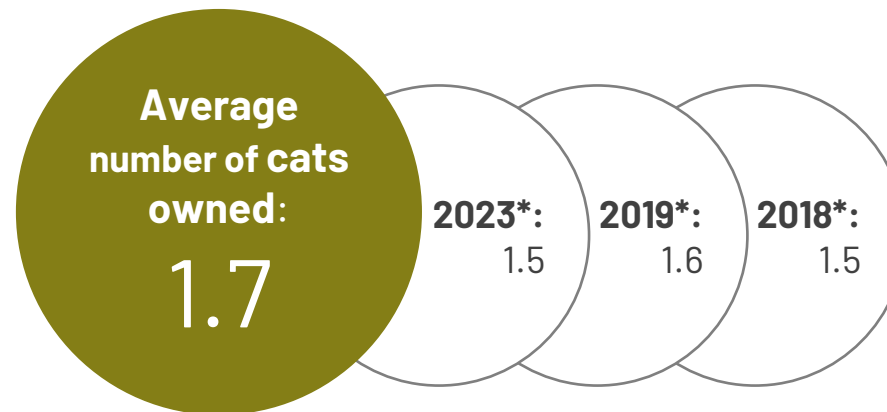
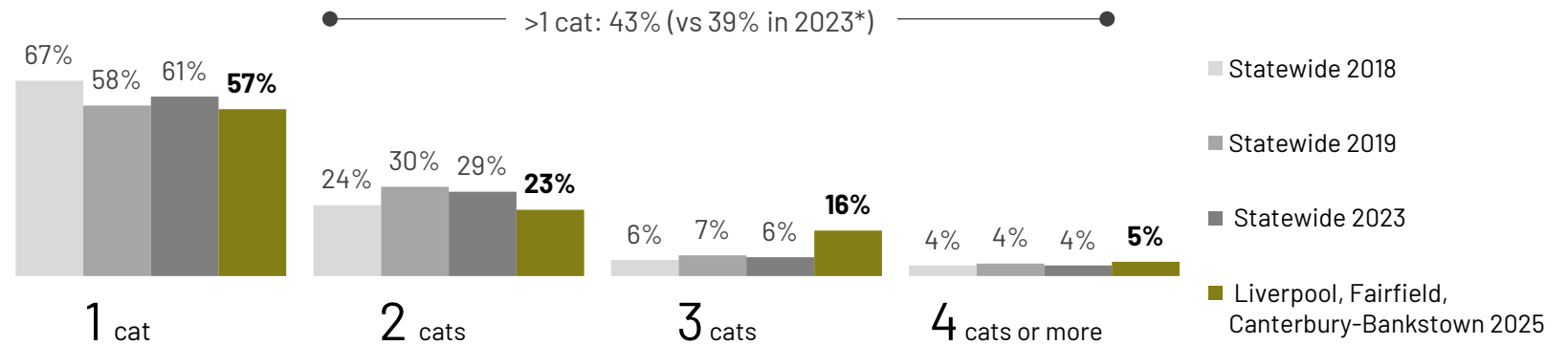
Consistent with statewide surveys, the primary source for obtaining cats was family and friends, although there were more cats acquired after being found on the street/in the wild. Cat registration and desexing are notably lower than 2023 statewide rates, while vaccination rates are similar to the 2023 NSW survey.



NUMBER OF CATS OWNED

On average households in Liverpool, Fairfield and Canterbury-Bankstown own just under 2 cats, a comparable number to the 2023 ownership of the broader state.

Number of Cats Owned Per Household



Base: Cat owners, 2018 n=364, 2019 n=356, 2023 n=513, 2025 n=507

Source: Q2. How many cats do you own?

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

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WHAT OTHER PETS DO CAT OWNERS HAVE?

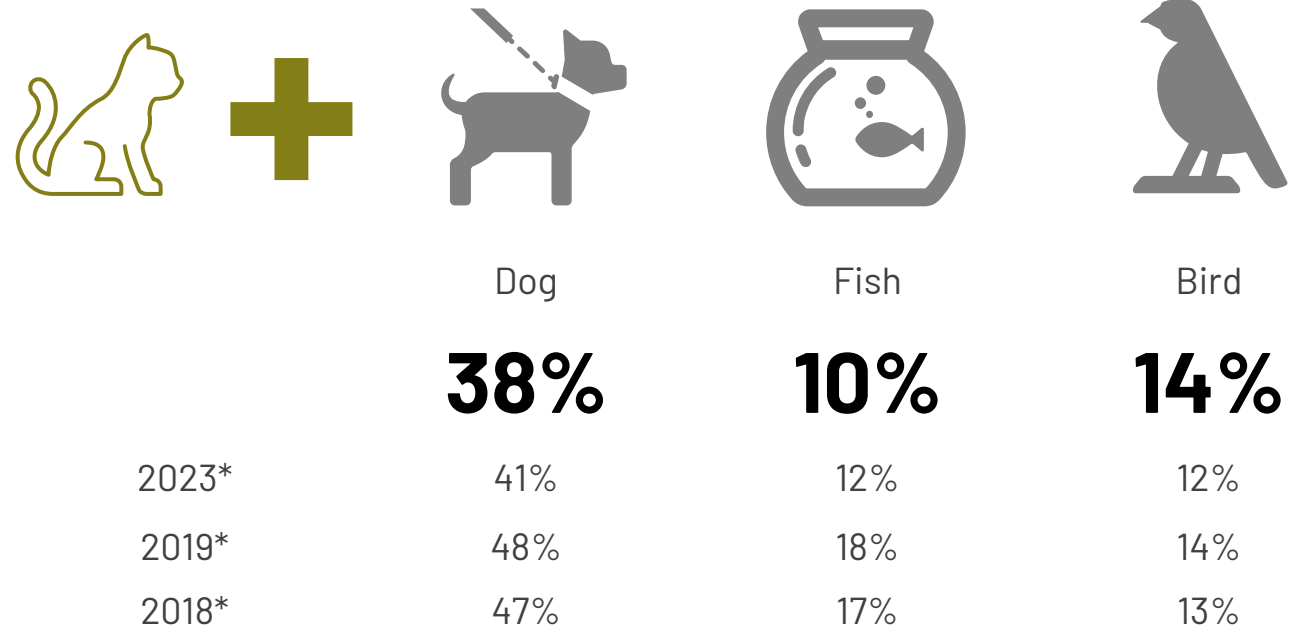
Base: Cat owners, 2018 n=364, 2019 n=356,
2023 n=513, 2025 n=507

Source: Q1. Can you please tell us which of
the following type of pets, if any, do you
own?

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and
2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield,
Canterbury-Bankstown)

Among cat owners, a third also own dog(s), followed by birds and fish at 14% and 10%, respectively.

Other Pets Owned by Cat Owners in this survey



*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

CAT DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

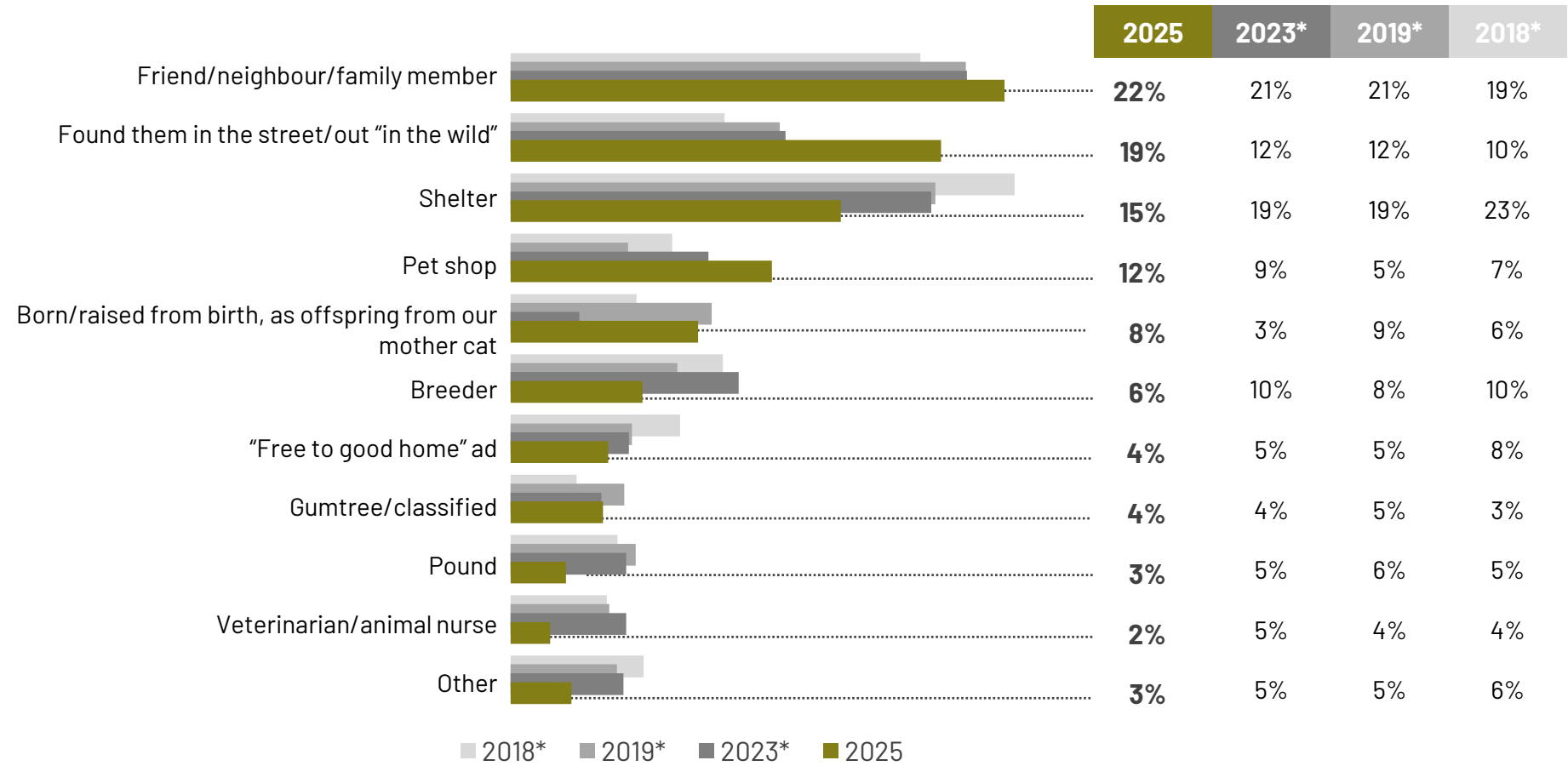
Base: All cats, 2017 n=554, 2018 n=542, 2019 n=582, 2023 n=803, 2025 n=836

Source: Q5. Where did you get your cat/cats

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Most cat adoptions occur through friends, neighbors, or family members, with cats more likely to be found on the street in the 3 LGAs compared to 2023 statewide results

Cat Adoption Locations

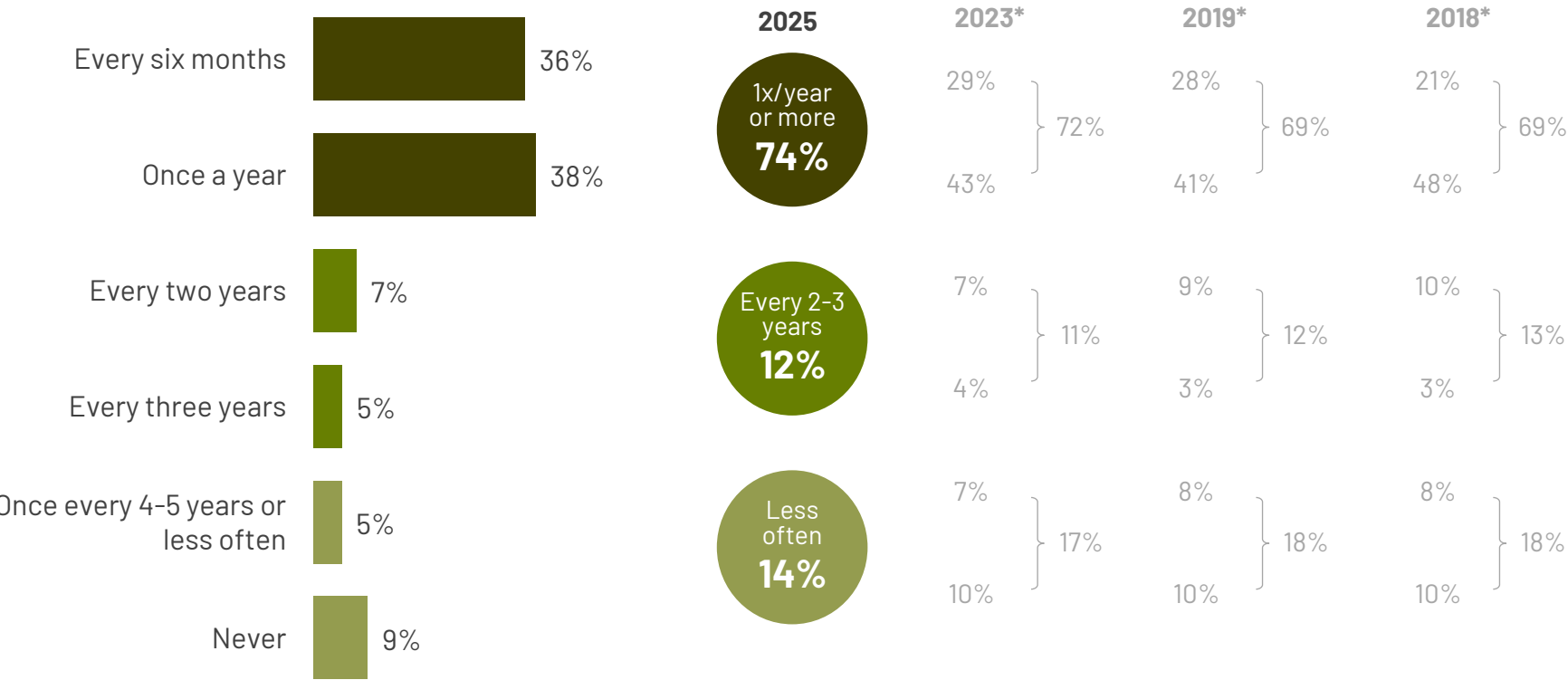


*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

FREQUENCY OF VISITS TO THE VET

Visits to the vet are relatively consistent with earlier statewide results, with three quarters of all homed cats having access to the vet at least once a year.

Frequency of Vet Visits



Base: All cats, 2017 n=554, 2018 n=542, 2019 n=582, 2023 n=803, 2025 n=836
Q6. On average, how often do you take your cat/cats to the vet?
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

DESEXING, VACCINATION AND REGISTRATION INCIDENCE

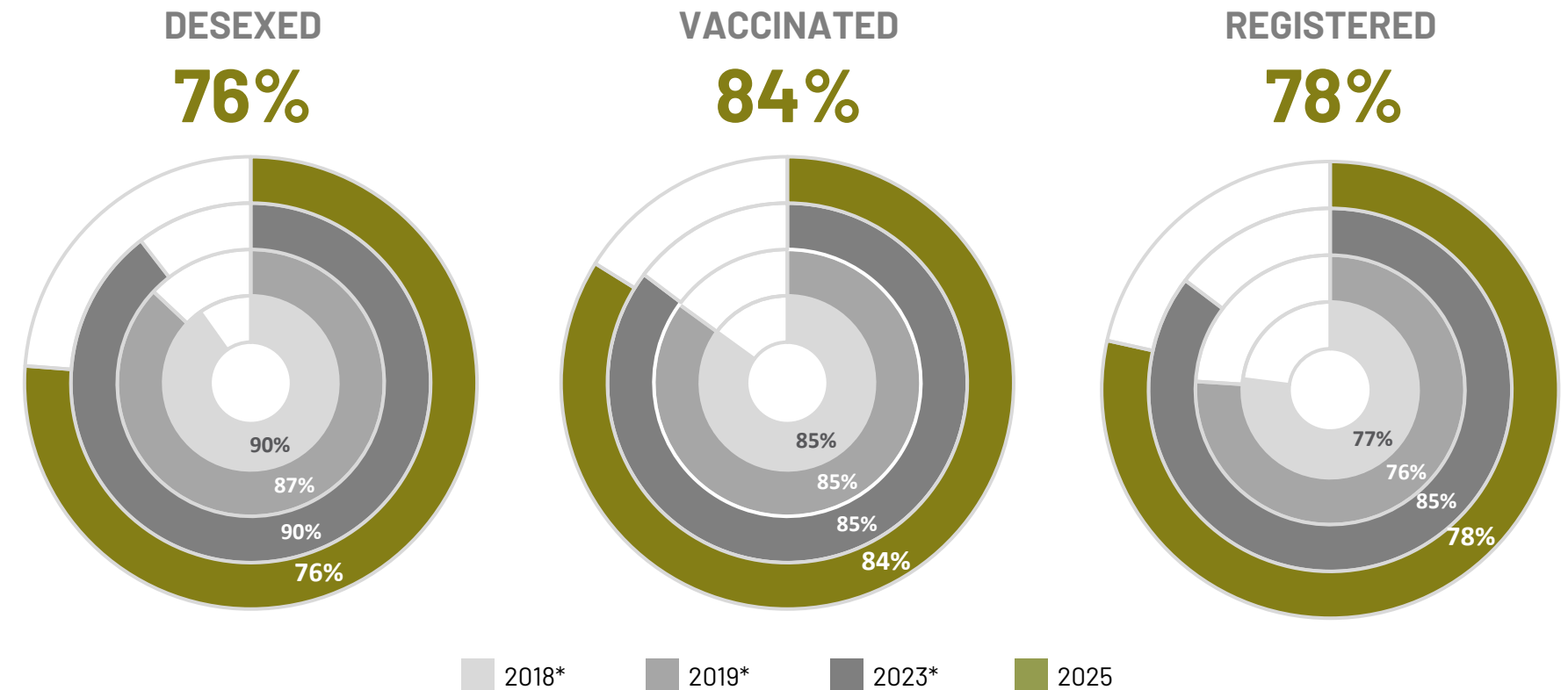
Base: All cats, 2017 n=554, 2018 n=542, 2019 n=582, 2023 n=803, 2025 n=836

Q9 (desexed), Q7 (vaccinated), Q8 (registered)

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

The proportion of desexed, and registered cats are lower than 2023 statewide findings, while vaccination rates are relatively consistent.

Incidence among Total Cats



*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

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VACCINATION & REGISTRATION INCIDENCE BASED ON DESEXED STATUS

Base: Cats which have been desexed n=637;
cats which have not been desexed n=172
Q9 (desexed), Q7 (vaccinated), Q8 (registered)
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and
2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield,
Canterbury-Bankstown)

Desexed cats show higher vaccination and registration rates than non-desexed cats.

Among cats which have been desexed



**Have been
vaccinated**

89%

2023*: 89%

2019*: 89%

2018*: 87%



**Have been
registered**

87%

2023*: 91%

2019*: 82%

2018*: 80%

Among cats which have NOT been desexed

71%

2023*: 59%

2019*: 65%

2018*: 63%

53%

2023*: 38%

2019*: 41%

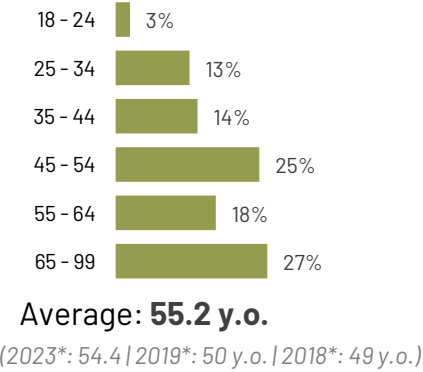
2018*: 51%

*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

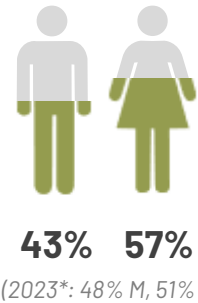
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PROFILE: CAT OWNERS WHO HAVE DESEXED THEIR CATS

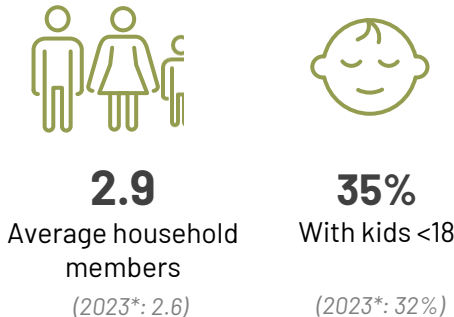
AGE



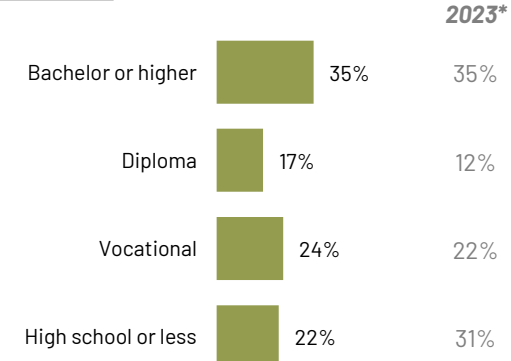
GENDER



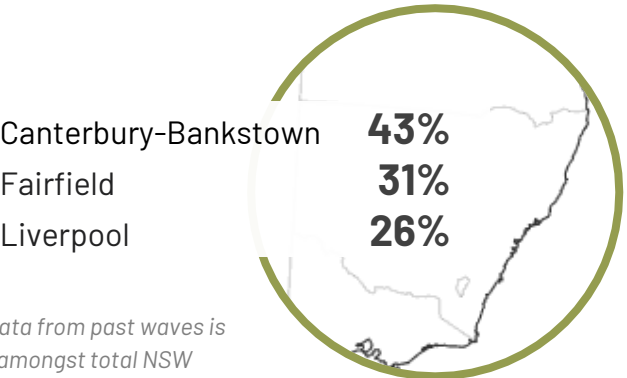
HOUSEHOLD



EDUCATION



REGIONS IN NSW



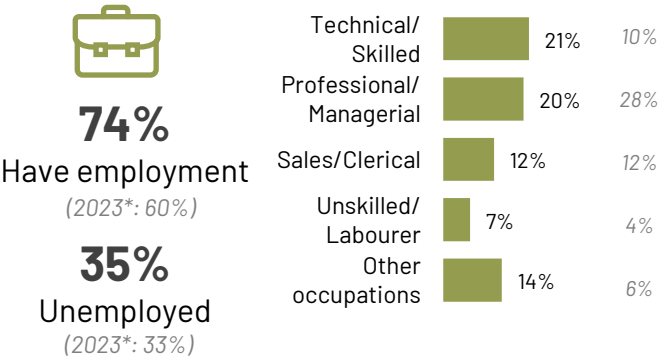
*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

Base: Cat owners who have desexed all their cats, 2019 n = 307, 2023 n=447, 2025 n=369

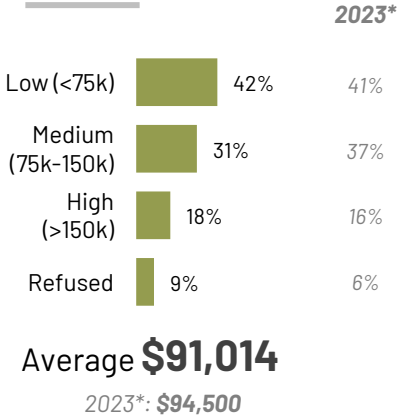
Source: D2 (age), D3 (gender), Q6D (number of people in HH), Q7D (with kids <18), Q4D (highest education level), Q11D (area), Q8D (working status), Q8Da (Work from home status) Q9D (occupation), Q10D (household income)

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

EMPLOYMENT

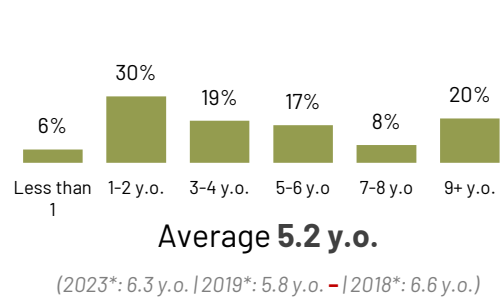


HH INCOME

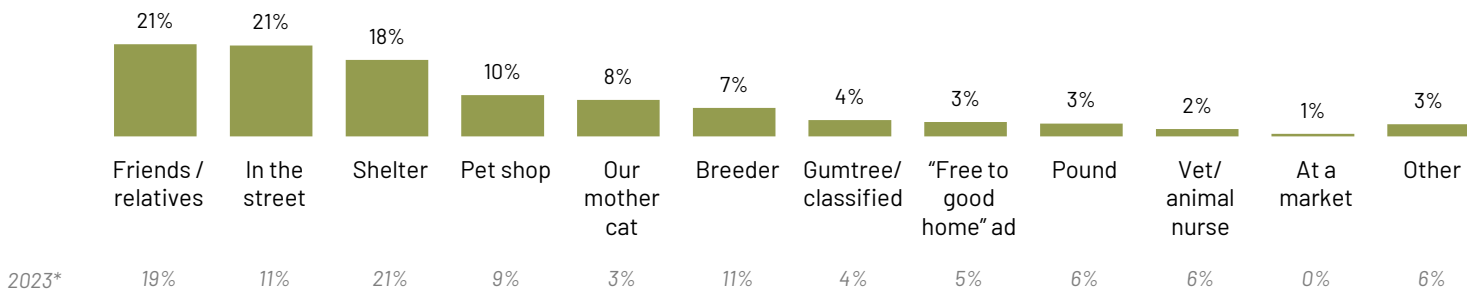


PROFILE: CATS THAT HAVE BEEN DESEXED

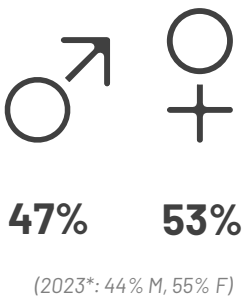
AGE OF CAT



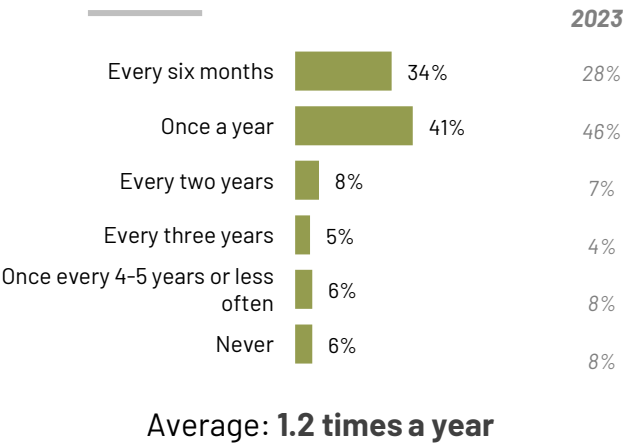
WHERE THEY GOT THE CAT FROM



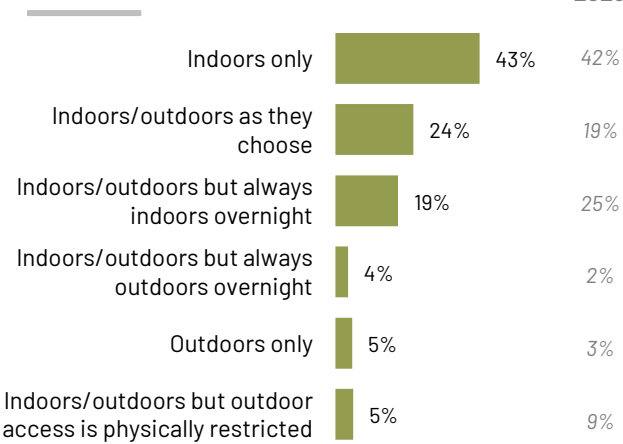
CAT GENDER



VISITS TO THE VET



WHERE CAT LIVES



VACCINATION & REGISTRATION



89%
Have been vaccinated
(2023*: 89%)



87%
Have been registered
(2023*: 91%)

Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW (2023: Once a year)

Base: All cats that have been desexed, 2019 n=509, 2023 n=719, 2025 n=637

Source: Q4 (cat age), Q3 (cat gender), Q5 (where they got the cat), Q6 (frequency to the vet), Q7 (vaccination), Q8 (registered), Q12b (lives).

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Non-Desexed Cats and their Owners

The proportion of multi-cat households that had desexed all their cats is lower in the 2025 Liverpool, Canterbury-Bankstown, and Fairfield survey compared with the 2023 Statewide survey. Among households that have not desexed all their cats, most also owned a dog, followed by a bird.

Cost and the belief that “my cat has a right to a sex life” are the main reasons for not desexing. Owners who have desexed and haven’t desexed all their cats perceive the cost to be similar, expecting it to be over \$200.

Cost, age, and time cited as the main reasons for delaying the desexing procedure.

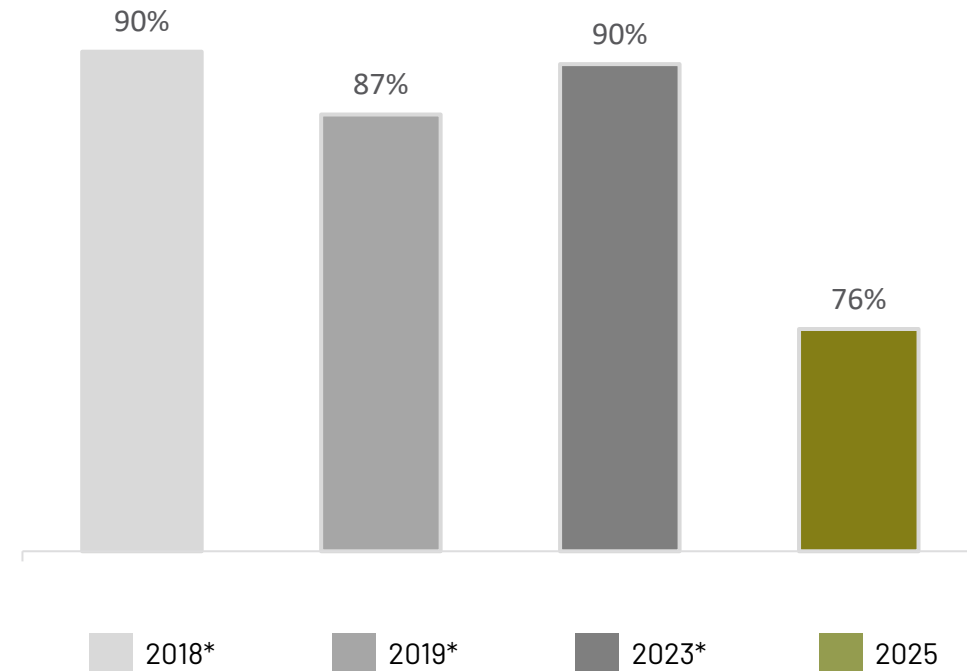


INCIDENCE OF CAT DESEXING

About 3 in 4 cats in the 3 target LGAs are desexed, a proportion notably lower than the 2023 statewide survey.

Incidence among Total Cats

76%
OF CATS ARE
DESEXED
IN the 3 LGAs



Base: All cats, 2017 n=554, 2018 n=542, 2019 n=582, 2023 n=803, 2025 n=836 Q9 (desexed)

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

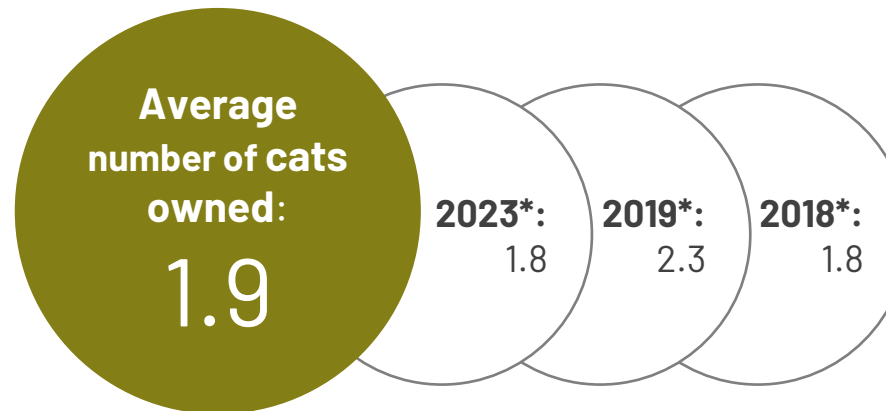
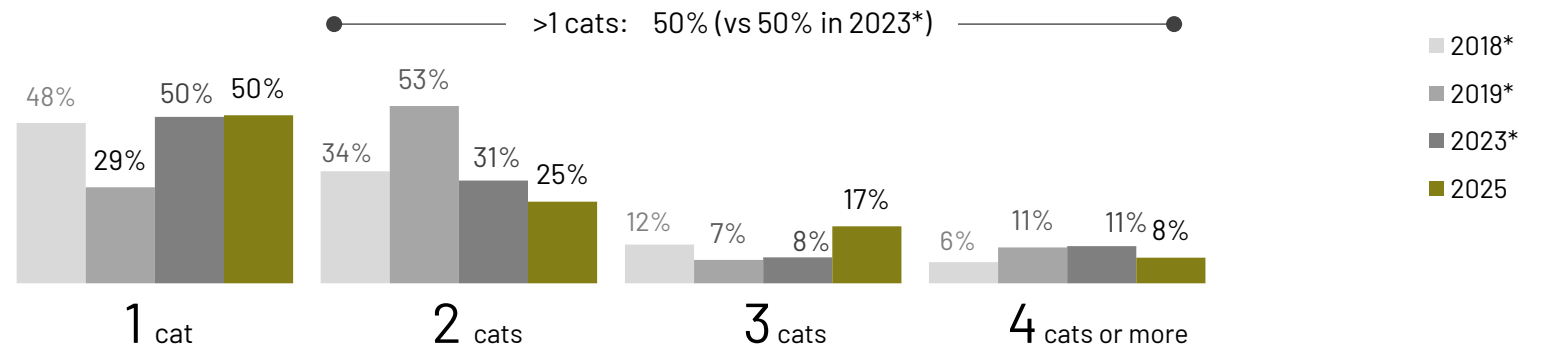
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OWNERS WITH NON- DESEXED CATS

Base: Owners who have not desexed all their cats, 2017 n=46, 2018 n=39, 2019 n=49, 2023 n=66 (caution – small base), 2025 n=138
Source: Q2. How many cats do you own?
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Half of owners with non-desexed cats have only the one cat in their household. 1 in 5 owners who have not desexed all cats have three cats

Number of Cats Owned per Household
(Among owners who have not desexed all their cats)



*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

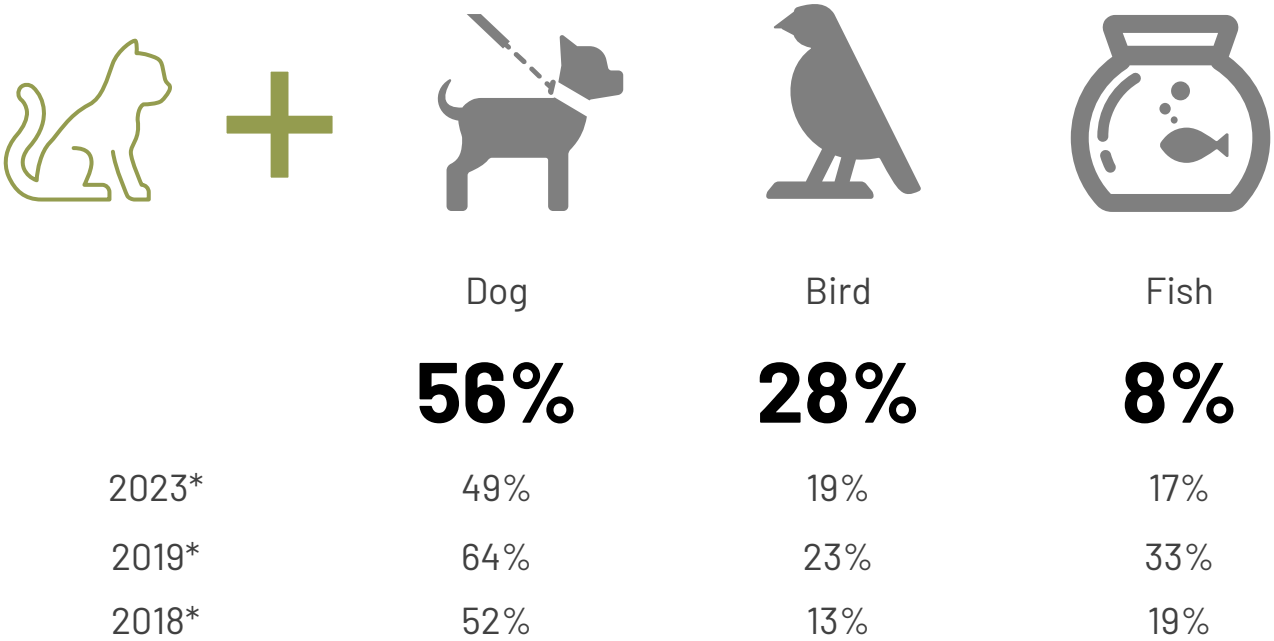
OTHER PETS IN THE HOUSEHOLD

(OF OWNERS WITH NON-DESEXED CATS)

Base: Owners who have not desexed all their cats, 2018 n=39, 2019 n=49, 2023 n=66 (caution – small base), 2025 n= 138
Source: Q1. Can you please tell us which of the following type of pets if any, do you own?
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Among owners who have not desexed all their cats, most own a dog, and a quarter also own a bird.

Other Pets Owned
(Among owners who have not desexed all their cats)



*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

REASONS FOR NOT DESEXING ALL THEIR CATS

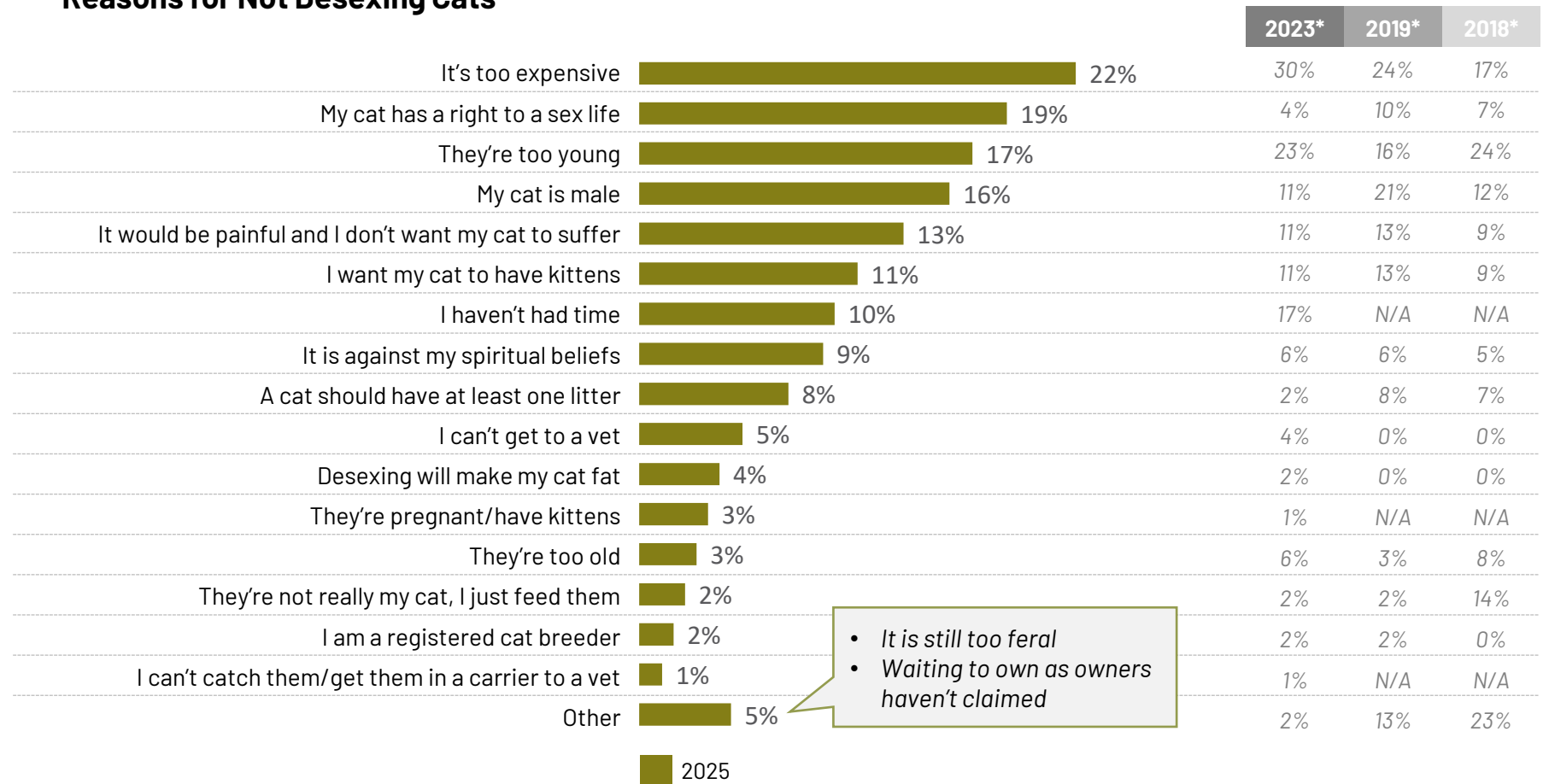
Base: Cats which have not been desexed, 2017 n=54, 2018 n=50, 2019 n=63, 2023 n=81, 2025 n=172

Source: Q10. You mentioned that your cat/cats is/are not desexed, could you please state the main reason(s) why not? | Q16. Do you feed or care for a stray cat or cats?

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

The top two reasons for not desexing cats relate to cost and the belief that 'my cat has a right to a sex life.'

Reasons for Not Desexing Cats



*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

PERCIEVED COST TO HAVE A CAT / KITTEN DESEXED

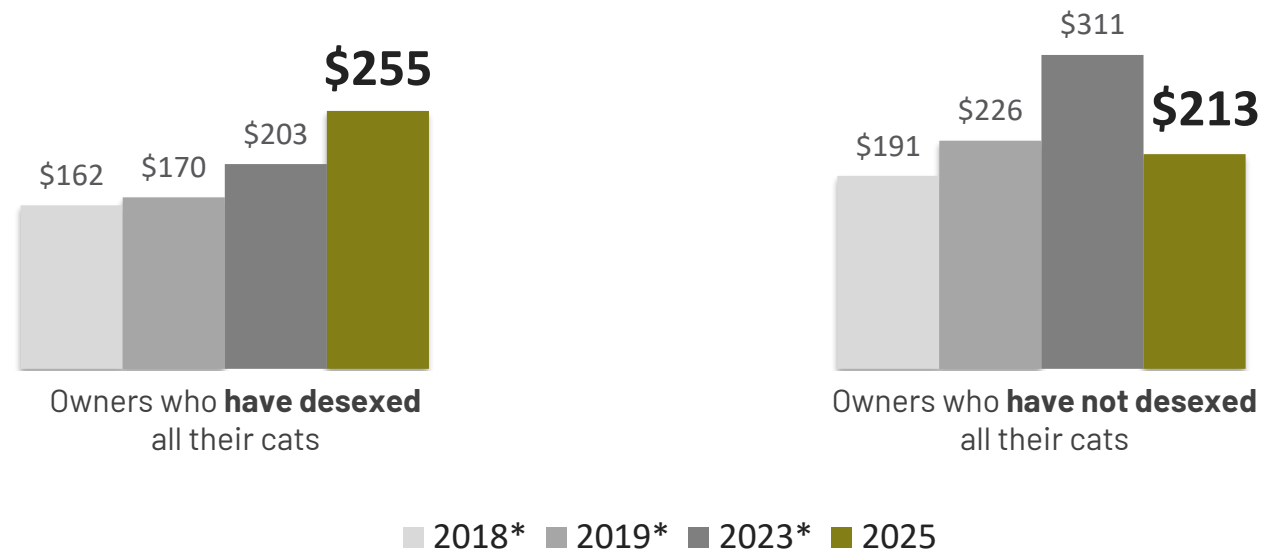
Base: Cat owners who have desexed all their cats (n=369); cat owners who have not desexed all their cats (n=138)

Source: Q20. What do you think it would cost to have a cat or kitten desexed?

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Owners who have desexed all their cats considered the cost slightly higher than those who haven't desexed all their cats, although the perceived costs are similar overall.

Perceived Cost of Desexing



*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

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PLANS TO DESEX CATS

Base: Cats which have not been desexed, 2017 n=54, 2018 n=54, 2019 n=72, 2023 n=83, 2025 n=198

Source: Q11. Do you plan to desex your cat/cats? | Q12. Given that you plan to desex your cat/cats, what is the main reason(s) you have delayed desexing them?

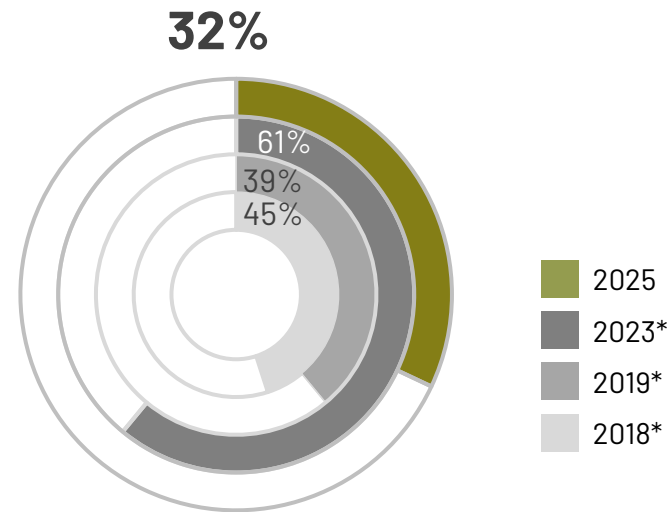
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Only 1 in 3 intend to desex their cats, with cost, age, and time cited as the primary reasons for delaying the procedure among those who still plan to desex.

Do They Plan to Desex Their Cats?

(Among Those Who Haven't desexed any of their cats)

Percentage % Yes



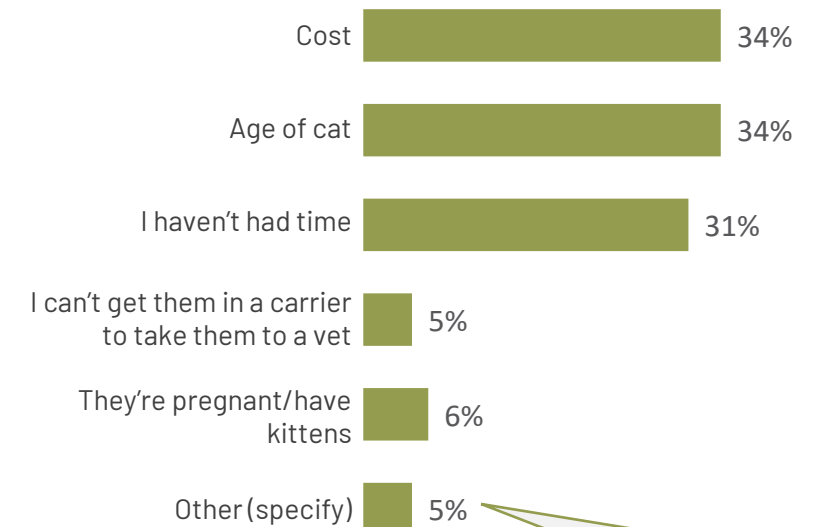
(50% of these cats will never get desexed and 16% the owners are not sure)

Vs. 2023*: 22% will never and 15% not sure

Reasons For the Delay in Desexing Their Cats

(Among Those That Plan to Desex)

Base: 64 cats



- Too feral to handle
- Don't yet officially own
- Own by my son

*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

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PLANS TO DESEX CATS

Only a small proportion of owners are unsure if their cats had been desexed, with majority of these cats coming from friends/neighbours or family members

HOW MANY ARE UNSURE

3% of owners are unsure if they have been desexed or not

27 out of a total of 836 cats

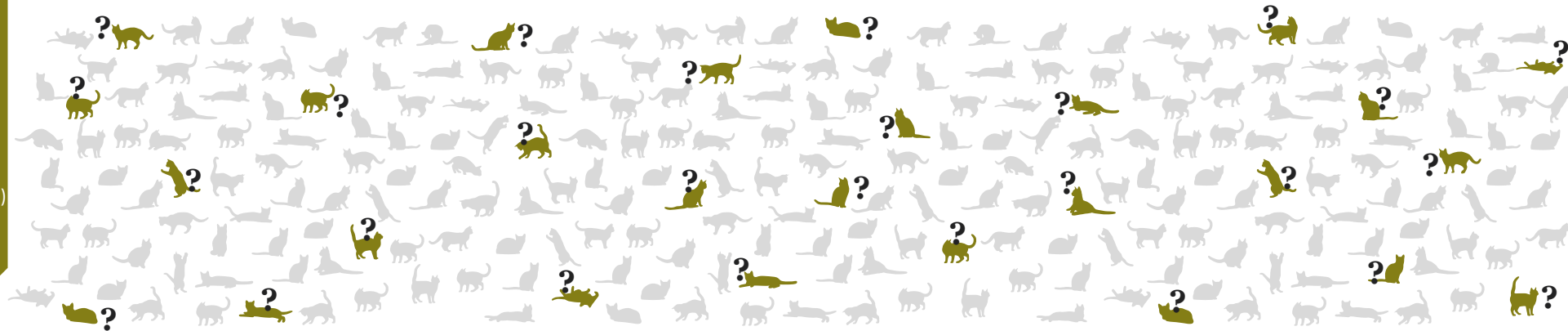
(2023*: 3 from 803)



WHERE THE CATS WERE FROM

- 13 Friend/neighbour/family member
- 5 Found them in the street/out "in the wild"
- 4 "Free to good home" ad
- 2 Breeder
- 1 Pet shop
- 1 Veterinarian/animal nurse
- 1 Born/raised from birth, as offspring from our mother cat

Base: Cats unknown if desexed or not, n=27
(caution small base)
Source: Q9 (desexed), Q5 (where they got the cat)
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and
2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield,
Canterbury-Bankstown)

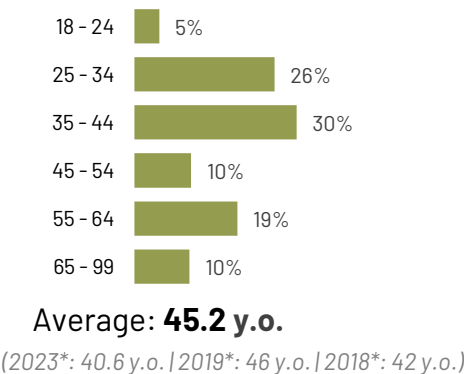


*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

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PROFILE: CAT OWNERS WHO HAVE NOT DESEXED ALL THEIR CATS

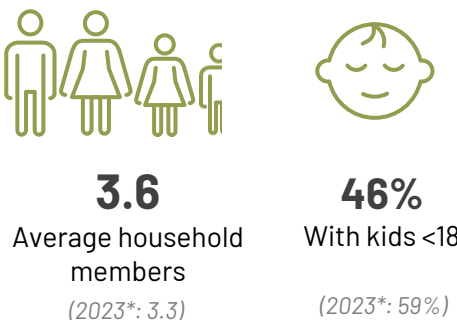
AGE



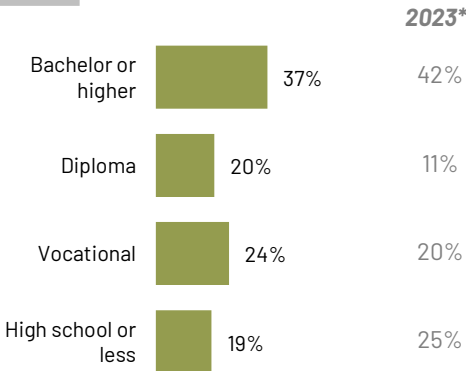
GENDER



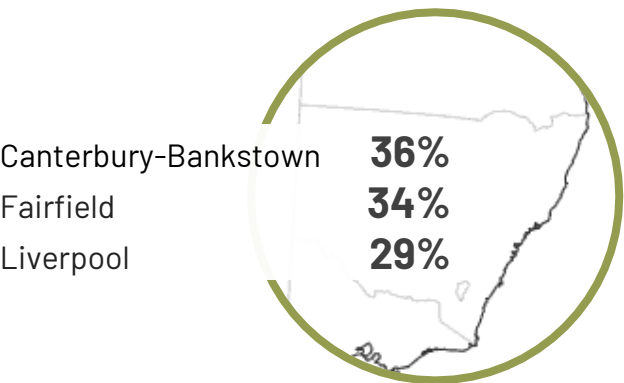
HOUSEHOLD



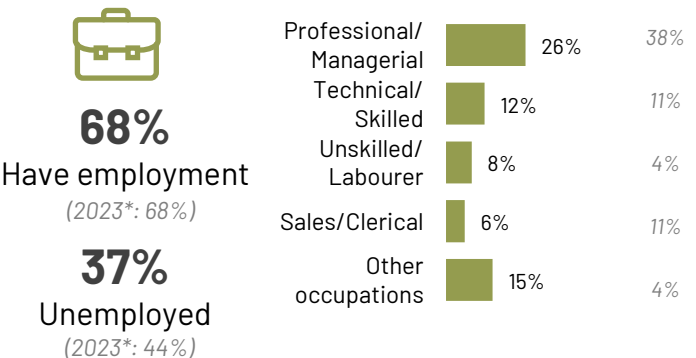
EDUCATION



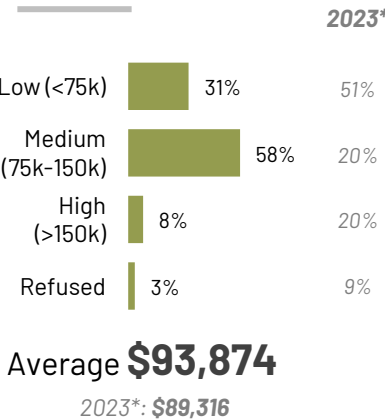
REGIONS IN NSW



EMPLOYMENT



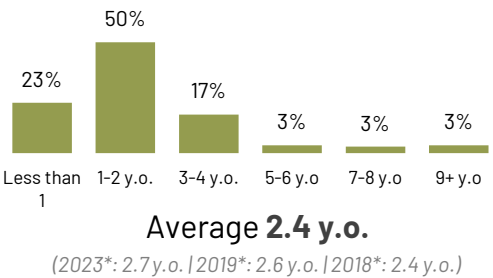
HH INCOME



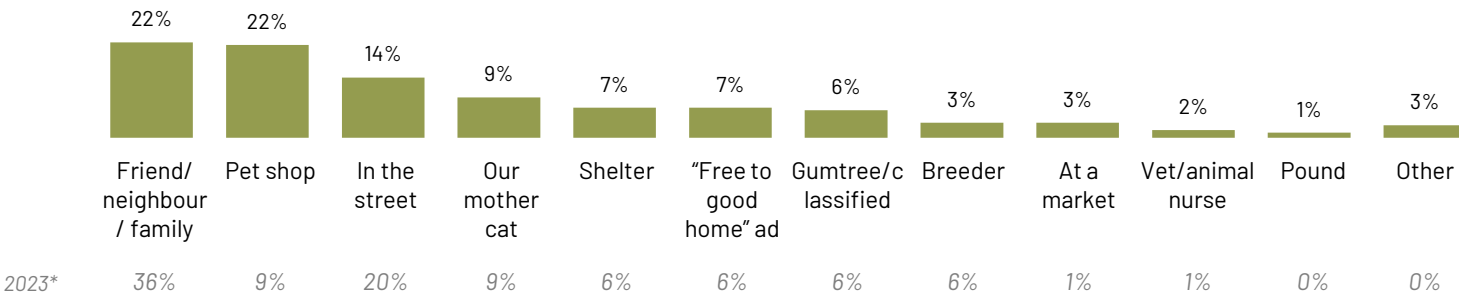
*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW
Base: Cat owners who have not desexed all their cats, 2019 n=49, 2023 n=66, 2025 = 138.
Source: D2 (age), D3 (gender), Q5D (marital status), Q6D (number of people in HH), Q7D (with kids <18), Q4D (highest education level), Q11D (area), Q8D (working status), Q9D (occupation), Q10D (household income)
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

PROFILE: CATS THAT HAVE NOT BEEN DESEXED

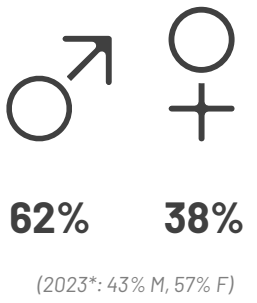
AGE OF CAT



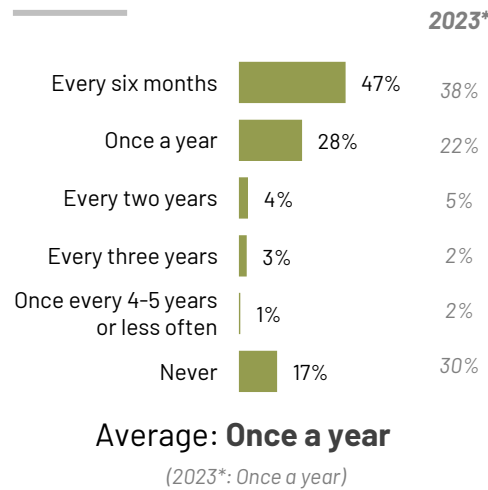
WHERE THEY GOT THE CAT FROM



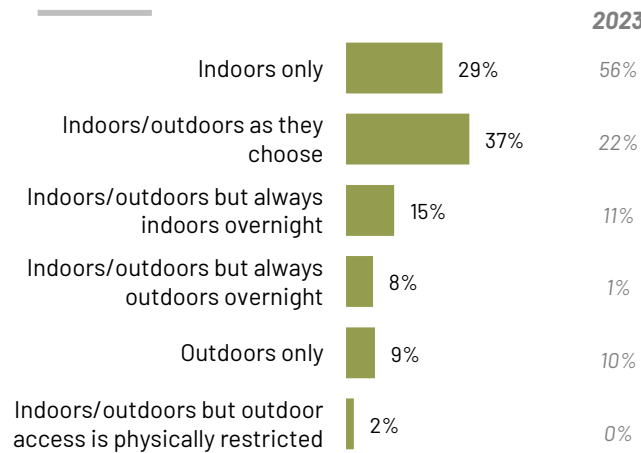
CAT GENDER



VISITS TO THE VET



WHERE CAT LIVES



VACCINATION & REGISTRATION



71%
Have been vaccinated
(2023*: 59%)



53%
Have been registered
(2023*: 38%)

*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW
Base: All cats that have not been desexed, n=172
Source: Q4 (age), Q3 (gender), Q5 (where they got the cat), Q6 (frequency to the vet), Q7 (vaccination), Q8 (registered), Q12b (lives).
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)



Communicating the Benefits of Desexing

Awareness that cats can be safely desexed from 8–10 weeks was 69%, slightly lower than the 2023 statewide finding of 76%. There is opportunity to reinforce this messaging among all cat owners.

Following education, one-third of previously unsure owners chose to desex their cats, although 42% are still unsure.



AWARENESS OF FACTS ABOUT DESEXING

Base: All cats owners, n=507, Cat owners who have desexed all their cats n = 369, Cat owners who have not desexed all their cats n = 138
Source: Q17 (Desexed 8-10 weeks), Q18 (Pregnant 4-5 months), Q19 (Health benefits)
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Overall, 7 in 10 are aware that cats can be safely desexed from 8-10 weeks, with a similar proportion knowing that female cats can get pregnant at 4-5 months old and that desexing also provides health benefits.



	<i>% aware</i>	Cat owners (n=507)	Cat owners who have desexed all cats (n=369)	Cat owners who have not desexed all cats (n=138)
Cats can be safely desexed from about 8-10 weeks of age		69% 76% 69% 67%	75% 79% 72% 70%	49% 53% 44% 43%
Female kitten can get pregnant from as young as 4-5 months old		68% 65% 63% 62%	70% 66% 62% 64%	62% 56% 73% 44%
Early age desexing provides health benefits such as reducing the risk of various feline cancers, and behavioural benefits such as less wandering, fewer cat fights and also cats are less likely to 'spray' (urine)		70% 69% 68% 60%	75% 71% 69% 61%	52% 50% 63% 48%

smaller font, light grey
2023* | 2019* | 2018*

*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

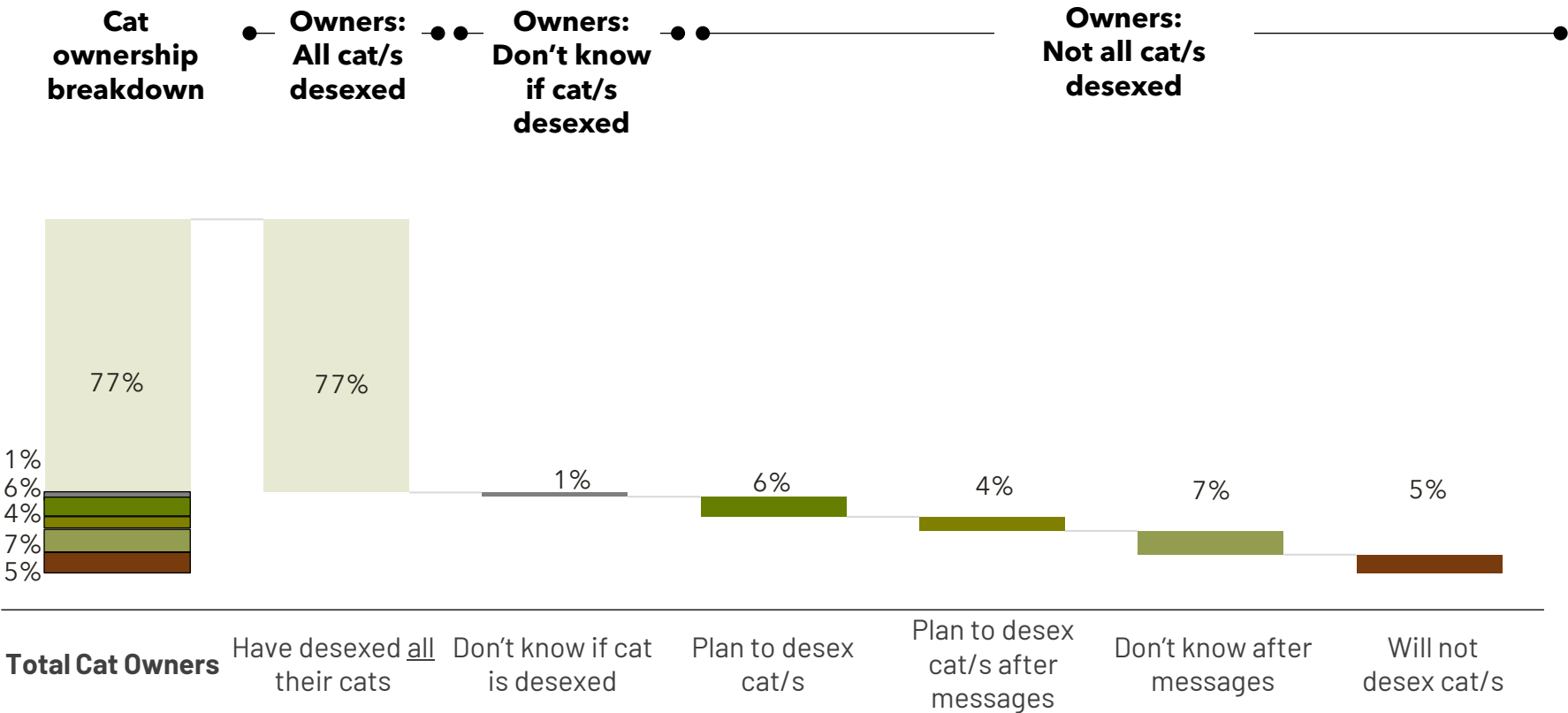
CAT OWNERSHIP BREAKDOWN

Base: All cat owners n=507

Source: Q19_PostB. Now that you've had the opportunity to learn about some of the health benefits described above: for your cat(s) that is not desexed, would you now make the decision to have them desexed?

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

The majority of cat owners have desexed all their cats, with education prompting an additional 4% to plan desexing in the future. 7% remain unsure even after messaging.



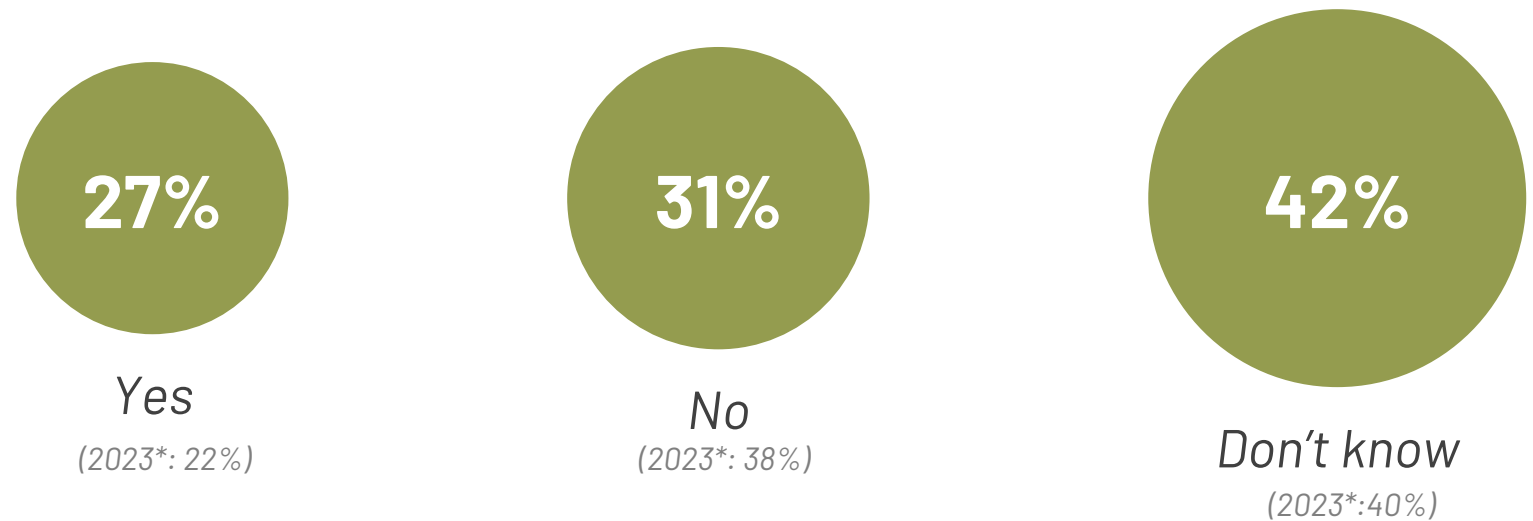
EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO BENEFITS OF DESEXING

Base: All cat owners who do not plan or are unsure whether to desex their cat(s), n=84
Source: Q19_PostB. Now that you've had the opportunity to learn about some of the health benefits described above: for your cat(s) that is not desexed, would you now make the decision to have them desexed?

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

After education, one-third of previously unsure cat owners decided to desex their cats, one-third decided against it, and 42% remained unsure, highlighting that while education drives action, a large portion of owners still require targeted support.

Decision to Desex After Education



*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

Sources of Information

Veterinary clinics are the top source of information on cat care, with online searches and cat welfare charities also playing key roles, mirroring the findings of the 2023 statewide survey.



TOP SOURCES OF INFORMATION / ADVICE ON CAT CARE

Base: Cat owners, n=507

Source: Q23 (If you were looking for information or advice on cat care, what would be the three most likely sources you would choose for that information? Please rank your top three choices where 1 = 'most likely', 2 = 'second most likely', 3 = 'third most likely')

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Consistent with the statewide results from 2023, the top sources of information about cat care come from veterinary clinics followed by internet search and cat/animal welfare charities.

Top Sources of Information on Cat Care



74%

Veterinary
Clinic



69%

Internet
Search



48%

Cat / Animal
Welfare
Charity



30%

Pet shop



25%

Friends /
Family



15%

Cat Breeder

Previous statewide survey data*

2023: 80%

2019: 88%

2018: 86%

2023: 65%

2019: 76%

2018: 73%

2023: 51%

2019: 44%

2018: 43%

2023: 31%

2019: 29%

2018: 29%

2023: 26%

2019: 26%

2018: 26%

2023: 19%

2019: 17%

2018: 19%

*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

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Relationships with Stray Cats

Nearly half of cat owners in Liverpool, Canterbury-Bankstown and Fairfield tend to stray cats. 3 in 5 of these carers would desex the stray cats if the service were low-cost or free.



CARE OF STRAY CATS

Base: All cat owners, n=507, All cat owners who care for strays, n=200
 Source: Q16. Do you feed or care for a stray cat or cats? | Q16B. How many stray cats do you feed/care for? | Q16C. If it were provided free of charge or very cheaply, would you have (this stray cat/these stray cats) desexed? | Q16D. Are there any comments you would like to make about the stray cat(s) that you feed?

Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

Half of cat owners are feeding or caring for stray cats and over half of them would desex them if the service were low-cost or free.

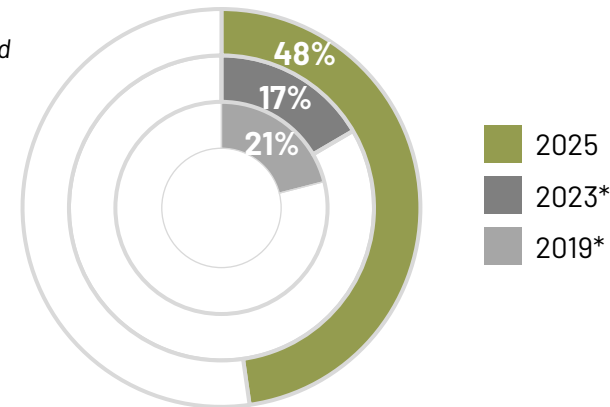
Feed Or Care For Stray Cats

Percentage % Yes

They constantly go to our house everyday for dry food and water. One is more on the orange colour and the other mix of white and grey.

The stray cats that I feed are very beautiful, they don't bite, they behave like other cats, I believe stray cats are normal cat just like others and should also be taken good care of.

They come from a litter living in the street, but council have done nothing about them despite it being reported.



Average number of stray cats

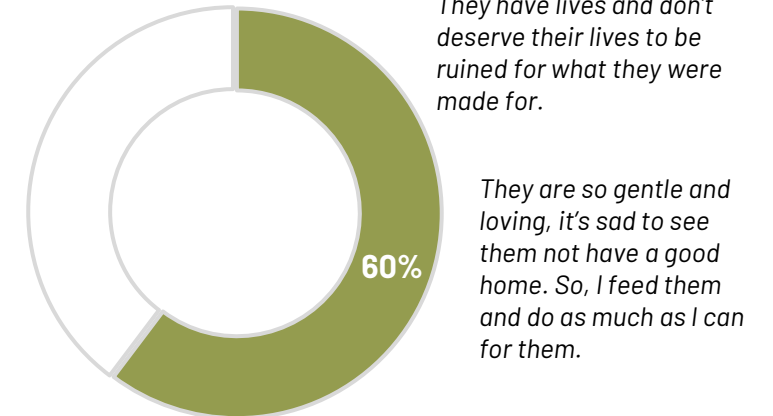
2.1

Desex Stray Cats If Free/Cheap

(Among Cat Owners Who Care For Strays)

Base: N=200

Percentage % Yes



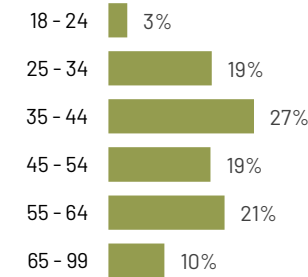
They have lives and don't deserve their lives to be ruined for what they were made for.

They are so gentle and loving, it's sad to see them not have a good home. So, I feed them and do as much as I can for them.

If you can come near him, I would love it if you can de-sex him. His injuries caused from cat fights are of concern.

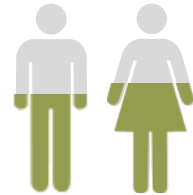
PROFILE: CATS OWNERS WHO CARE / FEED STRAY CATS

AGE



Average: **47.5 y.o.**
(2023*: 44.7 y.o.)

GENDER

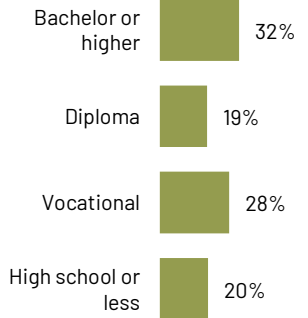


(2023*: 40% M, 60% F)

HOUSEHOLD

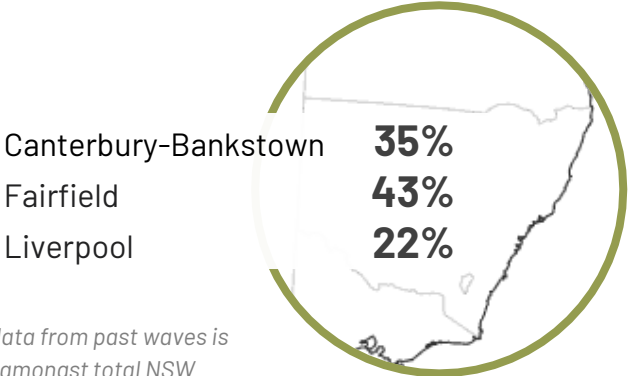


EDUCATION



2023*
51%
12%
16%
22%

REGIONS IN NSW



*Survey data from past waves is reported amongst total NSW

Base: Cat owners who care / feed stray cats, 2023 n=101, 2025 n=200.

D2 (age), D3 (gender), Q5D (marital status), Q6D (number of people in HH), Q7D (with kids <18), Q4D (highest education level), Q11D (area), Q8D (working status), Q9D (occupation), Q10D (household income)

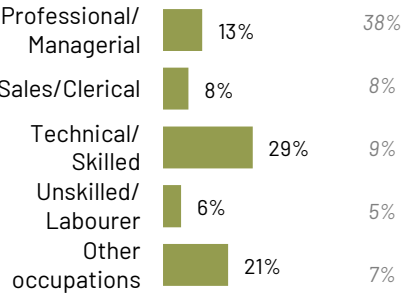
Note: All years except 2025 are statewide and 2025 are the three LGAs (Liverpool, Fairfield, Canterbury-Bankstown)

EMPLOYMENT



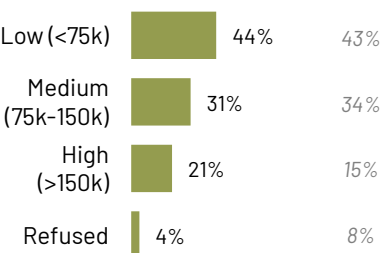
77%
Have employment
(2023*: 69%)

39%
Unemployed
(2023*: 31%)



2023*
38%
8%
9%
5%
7%

HH INCOME



Average **\$93,937**
2023*: \$91,954

THANK YOU

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