

Cat Protection has a range of free resources at www.catprotection.org.au to support cat owners being good neighbours, scan to find out more:



See our YouTube channel: [@catprotectionsociety](https://www.youtube.com/@catprotectionsociety) for Good Neighbour Project topics, cat care tutorials and videos in community languages.



If you need assistance with discount desexing please call our welfare office on 9519 7201 or email info@catprotection.org.au



Are you looking to take in a stray cat and give them a forever home? We can help! Our Adopt-a-Stray program offers a heavily discounted vet package. For more information call our welfare office or email adoptastray@catprotection.org.au

Cat Protection also has resources to support people working with cats; these are available on our professional cat care site www.catcare.org.au

Adoption Centre

103 Enmore Road Newtown NSW 2042

Welfare & Education Centre

214 Marrickville Road Marrickville 2204

t 9557 4818 or 9519 7201
info@catprotection.org.au
www.catprotection.org.au

Rehoming Organisation Number
R251000224
ABN 81 610 951 615

Cat Protection provides shelter and adoption of homeless cats and kittens; discount desexing and vaccination; feline health and welfare policy, advocacy and research; and information and education on cat care. As a charity, we rely on donations, bequests, and sponsorship.

If you would like to support our cat-caring mission, you can donate, become a member, volunteer, become a foster carer, leave a bequest, or buy your cat food and accessories from us. Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible.



The Good Neighbour Project

cat protection society OF NSW

Cats matter to people

Being a good neighbour Cats have been companions to people for some 10,000 years, supporting the development of human settlement and agriculture by protecting grain stores from rodents.

The unique bond between human and feline continues to evolve, and now for many of us the humble moggy is a buffer against the stress and strain of modern life, providing companionship, relaxation and purposeful caring.

People who live with feline friends tend to have well-honed communication skills, possibly because they are more attuned to non-verbal cues they have learned to observe in the subtle body language of their cats. Children who grow up with pets are more empathic and have better social skills. Pet ownership is positively associated with social contact and neighbourhood friendliness.

Living with a companion animal provides a bridge to the greater natural world, reminding us how precious all life is and of the importance of looking after all our fellow creatures: human and non-human.



Being a good neighbour

Pets are a vital part of our human ecology but pet ownership requires consideration of both natural and social/built ecologies.

Being a responsible cat owner means ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of your cat as well as protecting the local fauna and neighbourhood amenity. Put simply, it means being a good neighbour.

Being a good neighbour means different things in different places: whether you live in an apartment or a house; whether you live in the inner-city, suburbs, country or bordering a wildlife-sensitive area.

It depends on whether your human neighbours wish to welcome visits from your cat: some people value and enjoy being able to interact with the neighbours' cats but don't make assumptions that they do; some might just be too polite to complain.

Issues to consider are:

• **The safety of your cat**

Confining your cat to your own property means they are at a reduced risk of being killed or injured by cars, other animals or people; and at a reduced risk of exposure to poisons, disease and parasites.

• **The welfare and wellbeing of your cat**

If you confine your cat to your own property, you must ensure that your cat is still provided with sufficient environmental enrichment to express normal feline behaviours such as scratching and scent-marking, choosing to spend time alone or in company, security of resources (eg water, food), physical activity including play, vertical spaces, capacity to retreat, clean litter and proper veterinary care including regular parasite treatment (even indoor-only cats), vaccinations and health checks.

• **The right cat for the right environment**

If you already have a cat, your focus will need to be on adapting the home to suit your cat. If you don't already have a cat, you have the opportunity to choose the 'right' cat for your home and environment.

• **The local regulatory requirements**

Check with your council whether there are any restrictions on cat ownership in your area. Ensure your cat is registered and keep their registration details up-to-date.

• **The local natural environment**

Different areas support different species of birds and



native wildlife and their activity levels and behaviours will be important to consider. A dusk to dawn curfew might be sufficient to protect the local wildlife or it might be important to keep your cat exclusively indoors, or with outdoor access confined to a secure run. If you are installing cat-proof fencing or netting be guided by local expert. Check with the environment department of your local council or local wildlife service.

• **Who are your neighbours? What pets do they have?**

Are they genuinely okay with your cat coming on to their property? Remember that neighbours can change. If your cat-loving next door neighbour moves out and a cat-unfriendly, dog-owning neighbour moves in, this could be disastrous for your cat if your cat considers your neighbour's property as a part of their territory.

• **YOUR CAT MUST BE DESEXED**

Unless you are a registered breeder, there is no reason for your cat not to be desexed. Kittens can be desexed from as young as 8-10 weeks of age (early-age desexing) and to meet the discounted registration fee in NSW, they should be desexed before 4 months of age. Waiting longer than this can lead to pregnancy (yes, kittens can have kittens) and also the development of unwanted behaviours associated with sexual maturity, such as spraying and wandering, as well as increasing the cat's risk of various cancers of the reproductive organs. Feline overpopulation is a serious welfare problem for cats, people and the environment. Early-age desexing is the only humane solution to feline overpopulation.