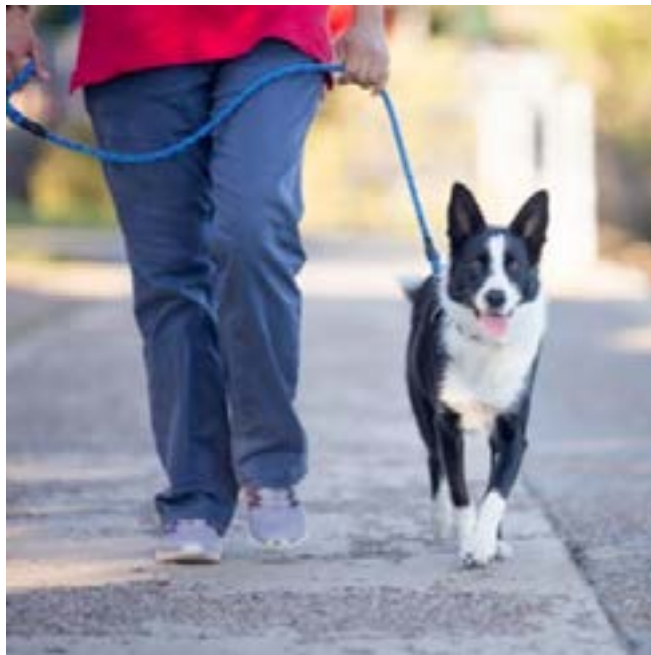


Take The Lead

Funded by Tweed Shire Council



The Take the Lead project explored the profound impact of urbanization on biodiversity, particularly the significant human-wildlife conflict attributed to habitat loss, domestic pets, and car accidents. This project specifically tackled non-compliant dog ownership behaviours and potential solutions, with statistically significant insights obtained across three distinct phases.

Exploration through Research: The initiative began with an extensive Literature Review, delving into various strategies targeting dog leashing. Drawing from existing research, this phase highlighted the significance of modifying dog park facilities and utilizing community events for educational purposes.

Insights from Key Players: Expert Interviews provided firsthand perspectives from stakeholders. These interviews revealed critical barriers hindering leashing practices (e.g., lack of training, negative attitudes, communication gaps, inadequate off-leash areas) and identified enablers like improved communication and partnerships, offering potential solutions.

Understanding Dog Owners' Perspectives: A Community Survey engaged 628 dog owners, offering statistical insights into behaviours and perceptions. Notably, 61.3% reported consistent leashing, while 81.9% strongly believed in the responsibility of leashing in public. This phase identified influential factors on leashing behaviour,

including perceived control, self-efficacy, outcome expectancy, and injunctive norms.

The project's recommendations stemmed from data-driven insights gathered across these phases, advocating for tailored, community-engaged strategies. Proposed interventions aimed to encourage dog owners to leash their pets, emphasizing co-design workshops, targeted behavioural approaches, community engagement, and strengthened regulations.

- **81.9% strongly believed in the responsibility of leashing in public.**
- **61.3% of dog owners reported consistent leashing.**
- **Community events should be utilized for educational purposes.**