

Leave It – Stage 2

Summary Progress Report

30 April 2020

This report summarises the progress to date and the next steps for the *Leave It* Project - Stage 2. Further information on the results for each of the items will be detailed in the final project report.

Train the Trainer sessions and public seminars

Three train the trainer sessions were held on the 27th and 28th March and the 16th April 2020. Six dog trainers attended the sessions and thereafter these trainers servicing the Redland City Council community have been confirmed as “*Leave It*” accredited trainers.

Of the 19 dog related training companies who had not elected to receive *Leave It* expert training prior to the Stage 2 project an additional 6 new companies have become *Leave It* partners in 2020 (32% conversion to *Leave It*). While some dog trainers cannot be reached after multiple attempts (n=8) a further 5 companies have advised the *Leave It* project team of their interest in partnering with *Leave It* but timing of the 2020 training offerings were not compatible with their needs.

In total, 15 dog companies in the Redlands region are accredited “*Leave It*” trainers. This represents a total reach of 46% of the dog trainers servicing the Redland City Council area. *Leave It* accredited dog trainers demonstrate (varying) levels of proficiency in the delivery of koala/wildlife aversion training. Basic to advanced levels of proficiency are evident and full mastery to expert level remains rare. All *Leave It* accredited trainers have agreed to implement wildlife aversion training into their daily business and some have indicated a willingness to assist the Redland City Council animal management shelter.

Train the Trainer

Steve Austin trained four companies in person in March 2020 (Dog Sense dog training, Nicky Wright Dog behaviourist, Capalaba Vets puppy pre-school and Karin Burns from Redlands Obedience Club). The training consisted of *Leave It* training protocols. All trainers received training focussing on the behaviours of wildlife aversion, recall and denning. This was an intensive delivery conducted in one day that aimed to assist in embedding these behaviours into dog training programs. All dog trainers brought a dog with them to help facilitate the training.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, Ryan Tate’s workshop was conducted online (Zoom). He delivered two separate one-on-one training sessions for Fellowship of the Paws and Victoria Point Vet Clinic. The training sessions went for 1.5 hours and covered the same *Leave It* protocols Steve Austin used in his face-to-face, within the limitations of an online session. The sessions focused on training techniques for recall for wildlife aversion and denning and how to embed these into the trainers programs.

Public Seminars

Steve Austin ran a public seminar on March 28th 2020. Despite extensive promotion - flyers, newsletter and website – there were limited registrations with all RSVPs (n=6) coming to the seminar. It is important to note that COVID-19 limited demand for public in person events. All people attending were able to bring their dogs. Members of the public received information on denning, barking, and wildlife aversion.

Leave It accredited trainers: classes offering

Accredited *Leave It* trainer Dog 101 offered two 4-week classes. Class offerings were promoted via the *Leave It* website. These classes were dedicated to the *Leave It* program. These courses were promoted through the *Leave It* website, newsletter and the trainers own website and social media channels. Dog 101 promoted dedicated *Leave It* offerings and they embedded *Leave It* protocols such as denning and wildlife aversion in both courses. The courses started on the 26th April and are working with Social Distancing regulations. The two courses were: Puppy preschool and Advanced basic commands.

Animal Management

Adoption Welcome Package

The Animal Shelter Team provided their Welcome Home pack to the *Leave It* project team on 25th March. Our team have been working on the Welcome home pack to incorporate *Leave It* resources into the Welcome Home Pack. The first draft has been produced pending internal revision and will be sent to RCC and Animal Shelter for comments early May. An A5 insert that can be included in council notices for owners following dog barking complaints is also being provided.

Partnership Agreements

The *Leave It* team has recruited accredited trainers who are willing to train the Animal Management Team and dogs twice per year on a roster basis. An agreement was developed to ensure that terms and conditions were clear to the trainers, and five trainers have signed the partnership agreement at this stage. Recruitment for more accredited trainers continues.

Prof. Rundle-Thiele met with the Animal Management team on 30th April and a follow up meeting is scheduled for end May/early June.

Engagement and promotion

Website: The [Leave It web site](#) is currently being re-designed to offer a more dynamic experience. We have engaged a graphic designer and an IT officer to improve the website experience and to increase cross over to relevant Redland City Council pages. Once the new website design is complete, we will add Council links for registration, other dog resources. We are creating interactive content and are testing approaches to improve audience engagement. Initiatives currently in progress are:

1. Filmed and edited 16 short tutorials in March 2020 with Steve Austin and in April with Ryan Tate for various dog commands (example sit, stay, recall, wildlife aversion, barking). These videos are on average 2 minutes long and have step by step process of how to train your dog.
2. *Blogs:* We have added one blog to the website with 6 draft blogs to be delivered in the coming two months, schedule fortnightly to be rolled out. To ensure relevance to dog owners, these blogs will relate to issues dog owners care about:
 - a. 5 tips on settling a new dog into your home (adoptions – which will include links to the animal management social media and other related sites)
 - b. Enrichment ideas at home.
 - c. Coping together (how are you and your dog coping at being at home together all day every day)
 - d. How to make separation easier (for when we return to work)
 - e. Is your pooch missing off leash dog parks? Fun ways to exercise/enrich your dog
 - f. Teaching old dog's new tricks – fun things you can teach your dog to do

Social media posts: Social media posts have been sent and applied to Animal Management and Redlands Facebook; *Leave It* has also shared posts on 7 community pages around Redlands and Social Marketing @ Griffiths pages (Facebook and Twitter).

Newsletter: Newsletters have been sent out on a monthly basis (February, March and April) to an audience of 1,580 Redland dog owners. On average, the newsletters have been opened by 31.4% of people on the distribution list and newsletters are achieving a 4.7% click through rate.

Flyers: Over 100 flyers were distributed to more than 30 dog related businesses around Redlands, these flyers were for Steve Austin's public seminar. *Leave It* is currently working on a flyer to distribute to dog owners living in wildlife corridors. This will be a mail drop to suburbs known for koala and other wildlife sightings. Flyers focussing on puppies are currently being finalised to send to RCC for review. These

flyers will be distributed to puppy preschools and training centres in Redlands to provide information on *Leave It*.

Bus shelter advertising: Four bus shelters in Redlands are currently been utilised with *Leave It* messaging.

Next steps:

- Ryan Tate will be hosting two live events on [@RedlandAnimalShelter](#) Facebook page on 2nd May, with live Q&A with the community.
- Six blogs are currently in draft mode and are currently being finalised.
- Newsletters will be sent out monthly.
- Designs of downloadable PDFs for each video are being developed for dog owners to use in their training process.
- Website upgrades are continuing.
- More accredited trainers are being recruited for the Animal Management training. We will facilitate the connection between partnered dog trainers and the Animal Shelter team so onsite training can be arranged in the future.
- Final Report due on 30th June.

Contact details of the Leave It Team:

Ms. Jessica Harris
E: jessica.a.harris@griffith.edu.au

Dr. Patricia David
E: p.david@griffith.edu.au

Prof. Sharyn Rundle-Thiele
E: s.rundle-thiele@griffith.edu.au

Dr. Bo Pang
E: b.pang@griffith.edu.au