

There are approximately 1 billion stray cats and over 600 million stray dogs around the globe and many guests are concerned about the welfare of stray animals, particularly if they are not used to seeing them at home. Stray animals can also be considered a pest in your community, sometimes leading to instances of animal abuse or the use of inhumane methods to control their population.

We encourage Travelife accommodation providers who do have stray cats and dogs at or near their property to implement a humane stray animal management programme that will improve their welfare and help to humanely control their numbers. This guide has been designed to provide information and ideas to get you started but **we always recommend that you consult with reputable animal welfare organisations and/or veterinarians in your community** before implementing any new procedure involving animals.

Welfare and control

- If stray animals could starve without the food they get from your property, try to create a single feeding area that is far away from your kitchens and dining areas, then give a small team of staff responsibility for feeding the animals at the same times each day.
- Ask guests not to feed stray animals to help discourage them from coming onsite but make sure you let guests know that the animals are fed properly elsewhere.
- Look for opportunities to work with (or support) a local government initiative, veterinarian or animal welfare charity on humane sterilisation programmes that will prevent more animals stray from being born.
- Can you create an alternative safe place for them to sleep and eat for them that will help to largely contain them in one area once they have been neutered?
- Find out if there is a local animal welfare charity who will safely remove the animals from your property and take them to a reputable shelter where they will receive good care.

Engaging guests and staff

- Create a policy about how guests and staff should interact with stray animals, including any rules about feeding them. Communicate this policy to your staff and guests.
- Add training about your stray animal policy to your regular staff training schedule and ensure this is discussed with any new staff or contractors working at your property.
- Use signs to remind people at your property about how they should behave with stray animals, and what you are doing to care for their welfare.
- Find a way for guests to make donations that support local animal welfare charities.
- Look for ways to turn problems with stray cats and dogs into something your animal-loving guests and staff might find rewarding. For example, perhaps staff could work with a local animal welfare organisation on promoting an adoption programme or could be given a few days off work per year to volunteer at a local shelter.

Useful links

- [OIPA \(International Organisation for Animal Protection\)](#)
- [Humane Society \(USA\): How to help a stray pet](#)
- [RSPCA \(UK\): Stray control practices \(Europe\)](#)
- [Four Paws: Worldwide project to neuter stray dogs and cats](#)
- [Friends of the Stray Cats of Greece](#)
- [Montego Bay Animal Heaven Jamaica](#)
- [Negril Spay and Neuter Clinic, Jamaica](#)
- [RescataMe Punta Cana \(Dominican Republic\)](#)

Coco's Animal Welfare Clinic, Playa del Carmen, Mexico
Tierra de Animales Cancún, Mexico