



Cat Curfew Consultation Report

Prepared for the City of Monash

August 2020



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Background, objectives and methodology



Background, objectives and methodology

The City of Monash wants to understand community perceptions toward a potential cat curfew.

To this end, the City of Monash designed a survey to explore:

- support for a night time curfew for cats;
- reasons for or against this curfew; and
- anticipated impact for cat owners.

The City of Monash designed and administered the online survey, inclusive of scripting, distribution and hosting of the survey. A letter was sent to cat owners inviting them to do the survey. Interest groups were also alerted to the survey. The survey closed on Thursday, 30th July 2020.

N=680 residents took part in the survey.

Survey data was provided to JWS Research for analysis and reporting.

Overview of findings



Overview of findings

Majority support for a cat curfew

There is clear majority support for the introduction of a night-time curfew for cats (75% would support).

- Not surprisingly, almost all non-cat owners support a curfew for cats (96%).
- However, even among cat owners, the majority (61%) also support a cat curfew.

Among cat owners, perceptions differ based on whether the households cats are currently allowed out at night.

- Support for a cat curfew is lowest (13%) among owners who currently allow their cats out at night.
- Importantly, most cat owners (73%) keep their cats in at night.

A cat curfew will reduce negative environmental and wildlife impacts

The most common reasons why respondents support a cat curfew are:

- to help reduce nuisances caused by cats (96%); and
- to prevent negative impact to environment and wildlife (90%).

These reasons to support the curfew are consistent among cat owners and non-cat owners alike.

Reasons to oppose the cat curfew include difficulty containing cats indoors

Among the 25% of respondents who do not support a cat curfew, the key reason cited is that it is difficult to contain cats indoors at night (54%). Other reasons include:

- A preference for cats to be outdoors, e.g. allergies, toileting issues (34%) – driven by those who currently allow their cats out at night; and
- a belief that most cat owners are already responsible for their cats (i.e. bell on collar, stays within their property boundaries) (23%).

Impact of a cat curfew

More than a third of cat owners (34%) indicate the introduction of a cat curfew would have no impact on them.

Two in five cat owners (40%) concede that a curfew would impact their cat's daily routine, and one in five (19%) anticipate adjustments will need to be made to their property.

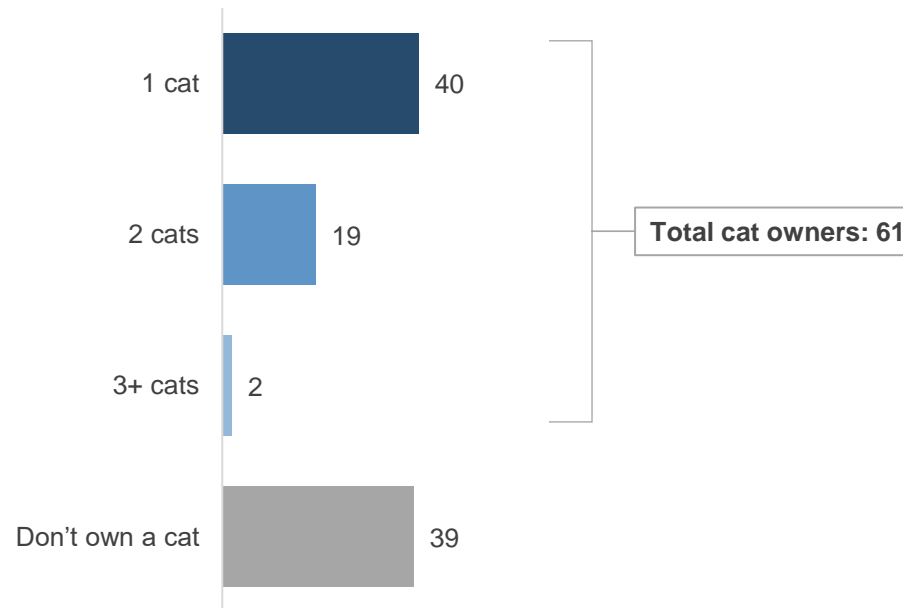


Detailed findings



Three in five survey respondents own a cat

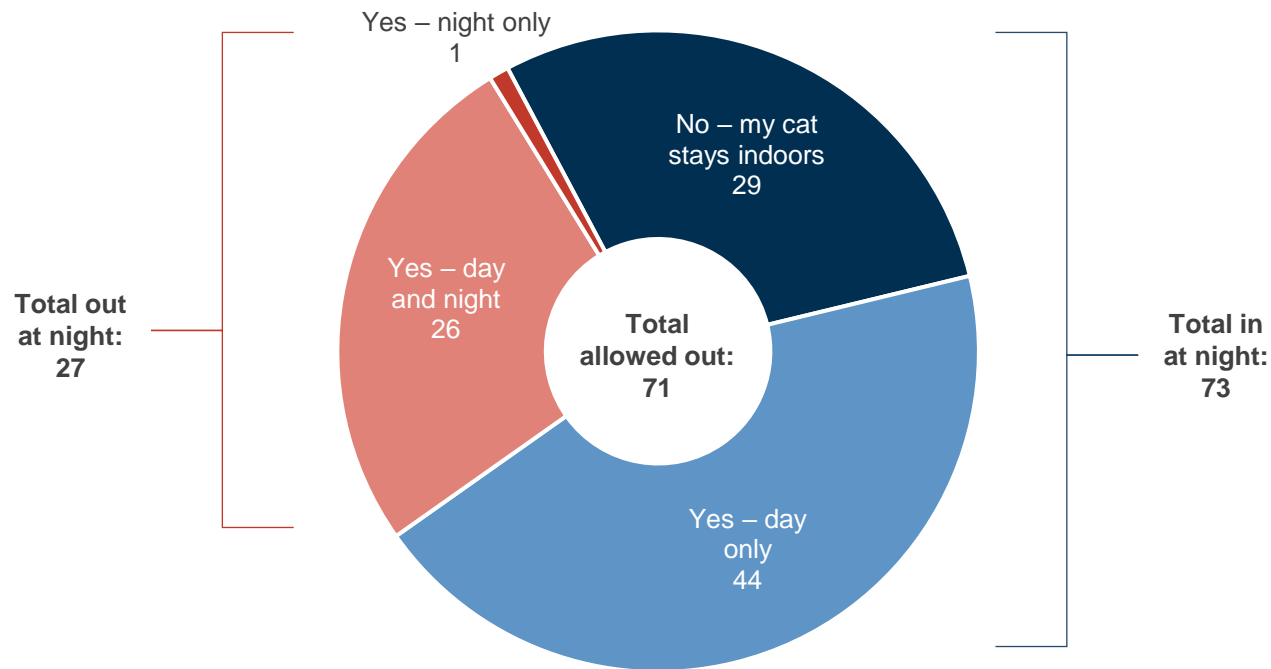
Cat ownership (%)



More than one in four cat owners allow their cat out at night



Cat(s) allowed outdoors (%)
(among cat owners)



Permitting cats outdoors at night does not differ significantly based on the number of cats in the household.

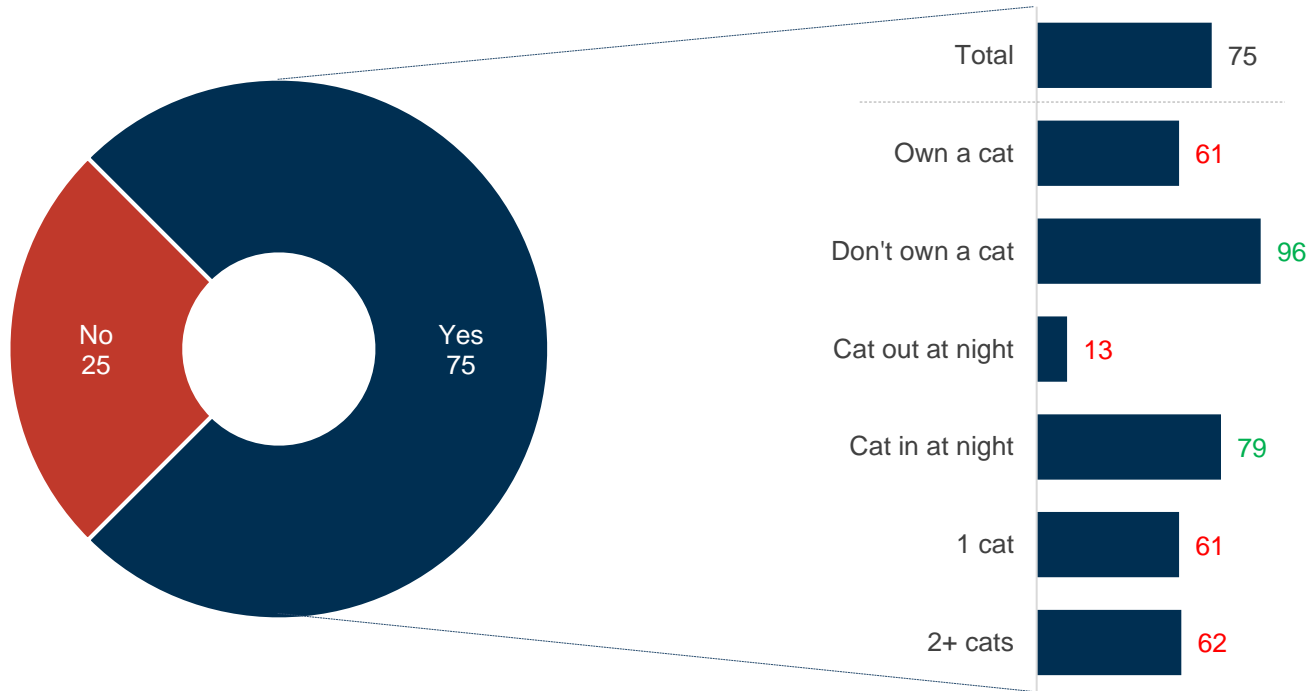
- 29% of households with only one cat allow their cat out at night.
- 23% of households with more than one cat allow their cats out at night.

Q. Do you allow your cat(s) outdoors?
Base: Cat owners (n=416).

Three quarters of respondents support a night time curfew for cats



Support for night time curfew for cats (%)

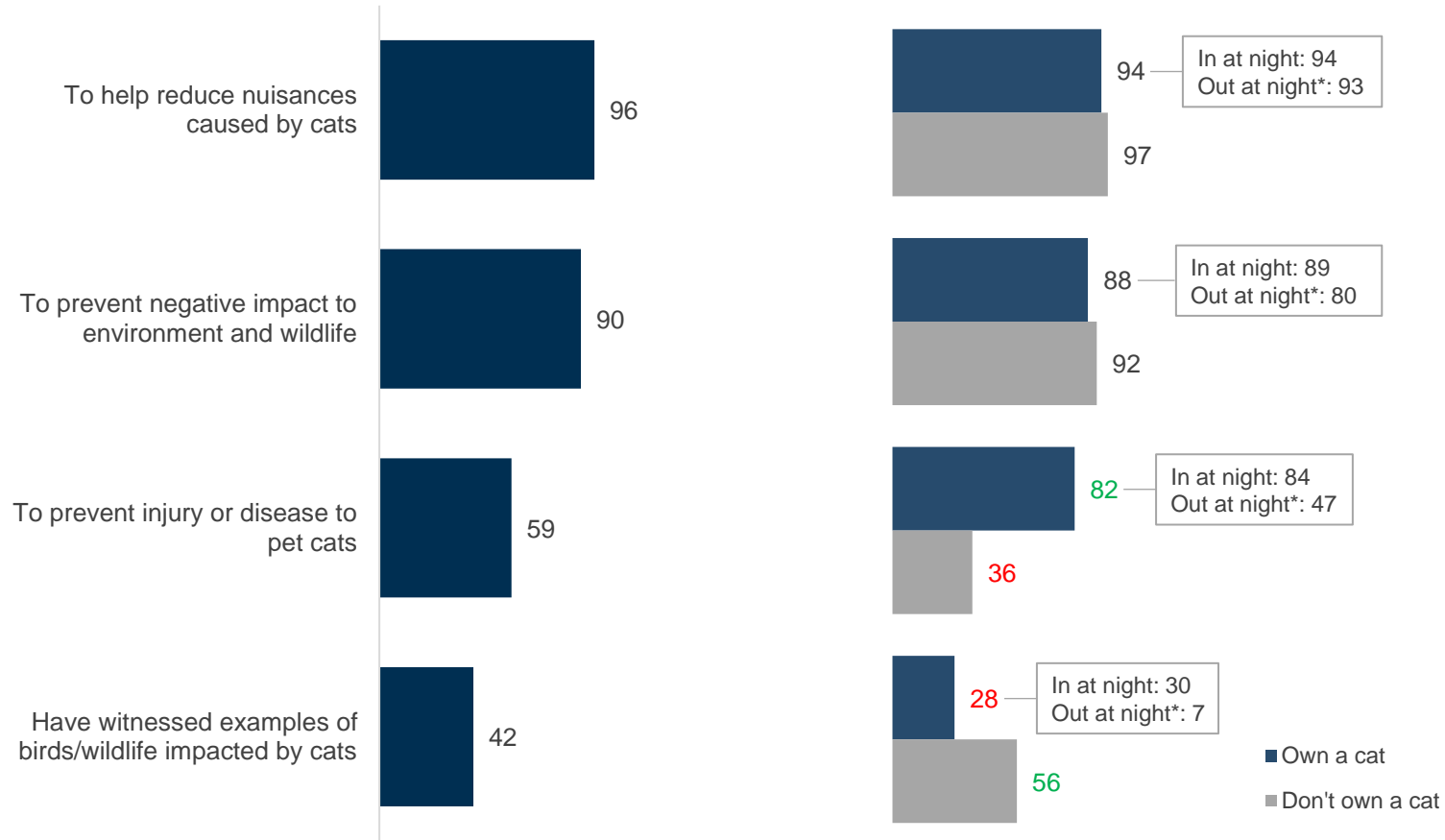


Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
 Q. Do you support a night time curfew for cats?
 Base: Survey respondents (n=680).

Main reasons to support curfew are to reduce nuisances and negative impacts to environment and wildlife



Reasons why support night time curfew for cats (%)
 (among those who support a curfew)
 Multiple response



*Caution: Small sample size (n<20).
 Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
 Q. Why do you support a night time curfew?
 Base: Support night time curfew for cats (n=508).

Examples of impact on birds/ wildlife by cats – select verbatim comments



Examples of wildlife impacted by cats witnessed

Open response

“When we first adopted our cat we let her out and she killed two birds. Since then we only let her out on a leash.”

“Since we installed cameras we get an average of three cats per night often around 3am to 4am. Cats have recently killed possums and small birds at our house.”

“I back onto Glen Waverley golf course. Our neighbour’s cat frequently leaves us presents of rats/mice (useful), but also birds from the golf course. I did persuade the neighbour to put a bell on the cat which has reduced the bird murders.”

“Tawny frogmouth damaged by cat and needed to be put down – damage verified by vet. Parrot remains scattered around garden.”

“I’m a veterinarian, I routinely see people bringing in small native animals that have been caught by cats, especially baby ringtail possums and small birds. Almost all have to be euthanised.”

“Dead birds, possums, mice scattered around Glen Waverley Primary School.”

“Cat stalking chooks in backyard and leaving dead small birds.”

“Seen domestic cats running across street with bird in mouth.”

“Saw a pet cat with live noisy miner in its mouth in owner’s front yard about one hour before sunset. My parent’s cat brought back six dead, newly hatched eastern blue tongue lizards and numerous rainbow lorikeets, ringtail and brush tail possums.”

“Attacked a tawny frogmouth owl, rosella feathers in our garden and tails of ringtail possums.”

“Twice in the last year, I have found disembowelled animals in my garden, a pigeon and ringtail possum. My neighbours have no interest in locking up their cats at night and this bylaw is well OVERDUE.”

“Native birds including rosellas found in front yard obviously deceased. Birds have been located by our young children causing distress.”

“I’ve seen cats hunt and catch lizards, frogs and mice near my house.”

“Have found mauled native animals around my home including eastern rosellas, tawny frogmouth, crested pigeons, young magpies, possums (young and adult).”

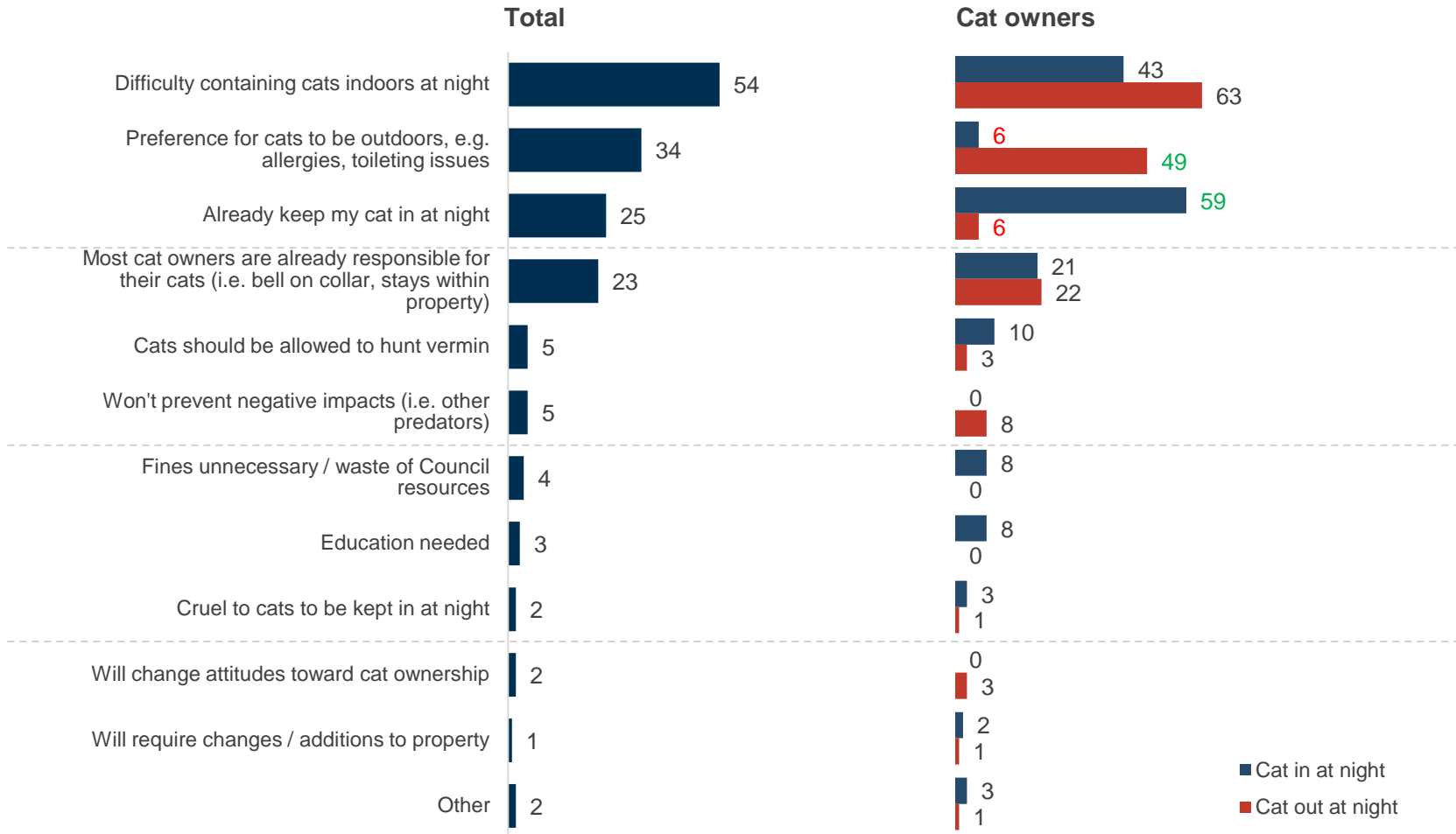
“The nasty local tom cat routinely rips apart possums and for some reason leaves them in my front yard.”

“I used to allow previous cats outside many years ago and saw first hand the devastation they can cause to local wildlife. They would bring home dead marsupials and lizards all the time.”

Most of those who oppose a cat curfew believe it is difficult to contain cats indoors at night



Reasons why oppose night time curfew for cats (%)
 (among those who do not support a curfew)
 Multiple response

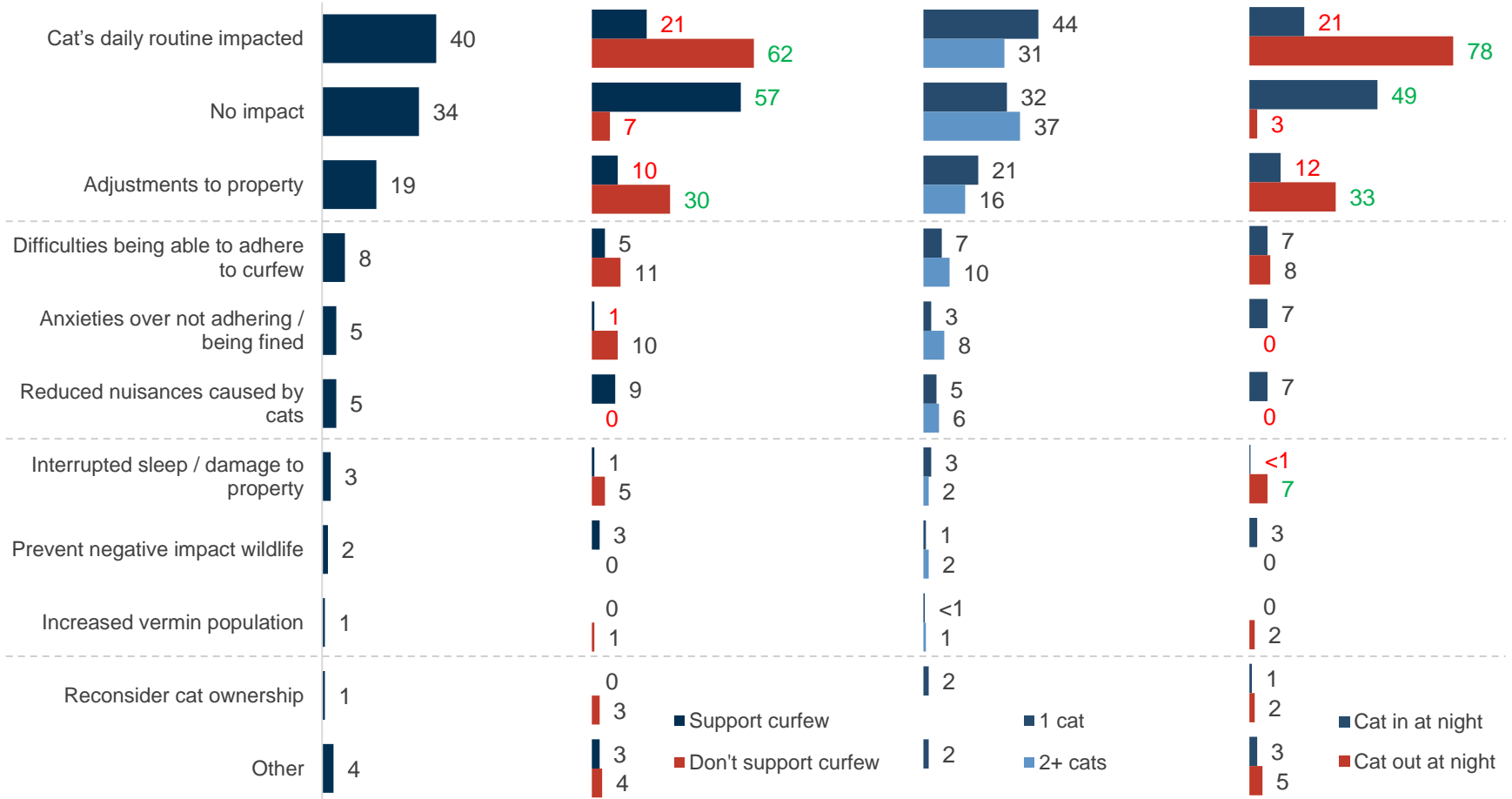


Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
 Q. Why don't you support a night time curfew?
 Base: Don't support night time curfew for cats (n=171); cat owners (n=161).

For a third of cat owners, a cat curfew would have no impact; for one in five, adjustments to property are needed



Foreseen impacts of night time curfew for cats (%)



Significantly higher / lower than the total at the 95% confidence interval.
 Q. How will you be affected by the introduction of this curfew?
 Base: Cat owners who provided a response (n=339).

**THERE ARE
OVER
200,000
PEOPLE IN THE
CITY OF
MONASH...**

**FIND OUT
WHAT THEY'RE
THINKING.**



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