



Media Release from Cats Protection

Scotland's first feline manifesto presented to Scottish politicians

Scotland's first 'Manifesto for Cats' was delivered to members of the Scottish Parliament this morning (Thursday 3 March 2016), at an event aimed at putting the welfare of cats firmly on the political agenda, ahead of the Holyrood election.

Cats Protection, the UK's leading cat charity, unveiled its 10-point document at a reception at the Scottish Parliament. It was hosted by Christine Grahame MSP and supported by Petplan.

In Scotland, 23 per cent of households have at least one cat, which is an estimated cat population of approximately 900,000. Of those it's estimated that 45 percent (approximately 400,000) of owned cats are not microchipped and that there are approximately 90,000 unneutered cats in Scotland*.

Cats Protection is calling for existing and prospective MSPs to get behind the Manifesto for Cats: Scotland in order to ensure that one of the nation's best loved pets is fully protected by policies and the law. Its 10-point manifesto calls for:

1. **Cat breeding:** update the law to control the breeding and sale of cats to reduce the number of unwanted kittens and ensure good welfare. The Licensing of Animal Dealers (Young Cats and Dogs) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 sets out some licensing requirements for those who sell young cats under 84 days old, but this is not adequately enforced. Laws on pet sales need reviewing and updating to protect cats and kittens sold online.
2. **Microchipping:** make it compulsory to microchip owned cats in Scotland (Microchipping of dogs will become compulsory in [Scotland in 2016](#), along with England and Wales, and is already compulsory for dogs in Northern Ireland. Microchipping of cats is already compulsory in some countries, for example Spain and France.
3. **Enforce and monitor** new air gun licensing laws to prevent injury or death to cats shot by such weapons (Stricter legislation of air guns under the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2015 is set to come into force in 2016)
4. **Dangerous dogs:** review the effectiveness of Dog Control Notices as a way of preventing dog attacks on cats
5. **Animal welfare education:** include animal welfare in the Curriculum for Excellence, so that children learn about responsible pet care
6. **Cats and housing providers:** ensure Scottish Government recognises the needs of people with cats and other pets in rented housing and care homes, to allow people to keep their pets
7. **Care and wellbeing:** ensure Scottish Government recognises the benefits cats and other companion animals bring to health and personal wellbeing
8. **Labelling toxic products:** clearly label flowers, plants and household products that are toxic to cats so cat owners know which to avoid
9. **Banning snares:** bring in an outright ban on snares on the basis they are inhumane and cruel and inflict suffering, injury or death upon animals caught in them, including cats

10. Illegal imports: create a national database to ensure that a central record is kept of all cats entering the UK legally so those entering illegally without a rabies vaccine can be identified without delay

Cats Protection has over 1,300 volunteers and 48 branches which operate alongside its Glasgow Adoption Centre. In 2014, its Scottish branches and adoption centres found homes for over 5,700 unwanted and abandoned cats. As well as rehoming unwanted and abandoned cats, the charity also promotes neutering, provides cat care advice, and delivers talks about cat care to thousands of schoolchildren and community groups every year.

Cats Protection's Advocacy Manager Jacqui Cuff said: "Over the past few years, we have been contacted about a worrying number of issues that our supporters and the general public want us to raise with the Scottish Government.

"Nearly one in four Scottish households owns a cat, so the issue of feline welfare is very relevant to Scottish voters.

"Delivery of the manifesto for cats would improve the lives of thousands of cats in Scotland and prevent them from harm. We're hoping that politicians will back our call to improve the welfare and wellbeing of thousands of cats. There's much more that Scottish government and local authorities can do to ensure a better world for cats."

Christine Grahame MSP said "As a cat owner myself, my cat Mr Smokey has been microchipped and I would encourage other owners to do the same.

"I also believe there are many areas of policy where more can be done to improve feline welfare and I look forward to working with Cats Protection."

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Notes to Editors:

*Figures taken from PDSA Animal Wellbeing Report (PAW) 2015

1. Cats Protection is the UK's leading feline welfare charity and helps over 205,000 cats each year through a national network of over 250 volunteer-run branches and 32 centres.
2. Cats Protection's vision is a world where every cat is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs.
3. Cats Protection's registered charity number is 203644 (England and Wales) and SC037711 (Scotland). Founded as the Cats Protection League in 1927, **the charity adopted the name Cats Protection in 1998. We ask that you use the name Cats Protection when referring to the charity in all published material.**
4. Petplan is the largest provider of animal health insurance in the world. Established more than 30 years ago, Petplan is part of Allianz Insurance, one of the largest general insurers in the UK. Petplan works with over 1,200 animal charities, more than any other insurer.
5. More information about the work of Cats Protection can be found at www.cats.org.uk
6. The manifesto and a summary is available to download online www.cats.org.uk/manifestoscotland

7. Follow our advocacy work and tweets about the manifesto on Twitter @CPAdvocacy, #CatManifestoScotland