

Domestic Commercial Sales of Cats and Kittens: Illustrations

– Appendix to Cats Protection’s response to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs consultation on the review of animal establishments licensing in England.



Produced: March 2016

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Problems for cat welfare: examples

Kittens sold in poor welfare conditions

– Leeds Cat Rescue

4 March 2015

We were contacted by a lady who had bought two kittens from a person on a Facebook pet selling site for £10 each. She was so shocked by the state that these kittens were in that she realised that she needed help. These two sisters were sold as miniature kittens but really they are malnourished, flea infested, have a massive worm burden, filthy and in the worst condition we have seen kittens come in from a private home in a long time. One may have to have her tail amputated as it is 'crispy' through urine burns and on bathing them (we couldn't use flea spray as their skin is too sore) the feet on their paw pads just came off and are now raw. One kitten has burns all over its head and the purchaser was told that it had had an accident and jumped in a fire or oven. Due to the worm burden one kitten had a prolapse of her bowel. These kittens are three months old and weigh under 700g which is the healthy weight of a seven-week-old kitten.



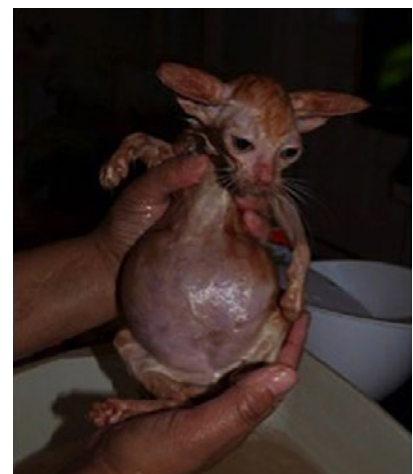
Kittens as purchased: malnourished and flea infested



Raw paw pads



Kitten's head after bathing – flea spray could not be used as the skin was too sore



Belly swollen due to worm infestation

Fraserburgh Cats Protection Branch

April 2015

Fraserburgh Cats Protection Branch received a cardboard box with some filthy blankets and six very sick looking kittens in it. The lady who brought the kittens said that she had gone to a puppy farm to rescue a puppy and the person there gave her the box of kittens. The lady asked where their mother was and was told she was dead. The kittens were starving and all of them had eye problems.

The Cats Protection branch took the kittens to a vet. In the vet's opinion the mother cat had had Chlamydia or cat flu when the kittens were born which had caused the eye problems. The kittens received veterinary treatment for their eyes and three of the kittens recovered their full eyesight. Two of the kittens lost sight in one eye but the last kitten, although having a little vision, was virtually blind. The blind kitten, Stevie, loved to play with noisy toys and seemed extremely bright but relied very much on his sister, Tiny. Stevie used to take Tiny's tail in his mouth and she would lead him to where his bed was.

All the kittens were rehomed, Stevie with Tiny but sadly Tiny passed away early in October 2015.

Had the kittens been treated sooner than they were they may all have had their sight returned.

This particular breeder has been known to Fraserburgh Cats Protection for over 20 years. She not only breeds cats but dogs and horses as well. The SSPCA have been called to her in the past and action was taken at that time.



“ I took in a kitten yesterday, from a family who had travelled to Wallingford to buy her from an advertiser who had placed an advertisement on (major online classified site). The family had been told the kitten was eight weeks old - they had never had a kitten before so they didn't know any different. She was obviously half that age, her eyes did not look brilliant and she was frantic and hungry. I took her straight to the vets who said she was more like four weeks old, with conjunctivitis and raging diarrhoea, and jumping with fleas. We are now caring for the kitten who we have called “Twinkle”. There were several in the litter, so I hope all the others went to people who knew what they were doing...”

Volunteer

Cats Protection Basingstoke & District Branch²¹

“ We had a kitten in two years ago being offered for sale on (classified site). It was so badly infested with fleas we had to take it straight to the vets as it was anaemic, sadly it didn't survive the loss of blood. His new owner had him for exactly one day ”

Glasgow Adoption Centre Manager

Cats Protection

Hannah's story – Deify survived

Hannah saw an advert on a major online classified site selling kittens, which suggested that the kittens were the offspring of the family pet. At the seller's house Hannah saw up to 15 kittens, all in the same room and huddled together in groups. Hannah chose two kittens, Simba and Deify, and asked where the mum cat was but was told it lived elsewhere. The seller said that Simba was part Bengal and Deify was part Ragdoll, that they were both eight weeks old and weaned. Hannah paid £360 for the two kittens.

When Hannah got home Deify was very ill, kept vomiting and had diarrhoea. The vet confirmed that the kittens were likely to be younger than eight weeks, not weaned and were in poor condition. Deify was admitted to the vet's hospital and received critical care costing £2,000. Deify did eventually recover.

“Siberian” kittens were so sick they died

A branch of Cats Protection that is in regular contact with the vet based at their local Pets at Home learned of a case where kittens had been brought in by various purchasers. It transpired they had all been purchased from the same seller.

The kittens had been described as being Siberian but were in fact non-pedigree kittens with no special “Siberian” features. They were very sickly and small – they were all under eight weeks old and the kittens all died despite veterinary care. The purchasers were not shown the queen cat when the kittens were purchased.

Lily cat - queen cat was bred repeatedly

Lily came into the National Cat Centre in Sussex gravely ill. The staff were informed that she had been used to breed kittens for sale. She had suffered years of neglect and on examination the vet suspected that she had given birth to multiple litters over her 10 years.

Blood tests showed her kidneys were failing and despite best efforts she died leaving four kittens behind. She was an attentive mother cat to the end trying to feed her kittens even when she was too sick and weak to eat.



Commercial selling: examples

Examples of online advertisements and the prices sought for non-pedigree kittens (commonly referred to as moggies).

These examples illustrate that relatively large amounts of money are sought in advertisements for ordinary cats that are not in any way specialist or rare (eg pedigree) and which are commonly available.

Fig 1.1 Gorgeous kitten for sale £300



Fig 1.2 Lovely black-and-white short-haired boy kitten £180



Fig 1.3 Very nice black-and-white kittens £280



Fig 1.5 Tabby kittens £450



Fig 1.4 Adorable white kitten for sale £300



Fig 1.6 Striking feisty black-and-ginger kitten £400



Examples of online advertisements and the prices sought for part pedigree kittens (often referred to as pedigree cross).

These kittens are not registered with a recognised pedigree breed association. These examples illustrate the relatively high prices sought where the kittens are claimed to be part pedigree compared to non-pedigree kittens.

Fig 1.7 Stunning litter of Russian X (only one left) £275



Fig 1.8 Stunning Ragdoll cross Chocolate Persians kittens £495



Fig 1.9 Red Ragdoll cross kitten £300



Fig 1.10 Ragdoll Balinese kitten £350



Examples of repeat breeding

Fig 2.1



Date of birth: 17/02/14

Advert description: SORRY THESE ARE NOW ALL SOLD BUT I DO HAVE ANOTHER LITTER OF BLACK/WHITE KITTENS WHICH ARE A LITTLE YOUNGER AVAILABLE PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE THEM.

Our gorgeous tabby mum has had a litter of 7 kittens. They are all stunning and are all extremely special kittens. There are 2 ginger females, 3 ginger boys, 1 female tabby and 1 boy black and white. This is [my cats fourth litter](#) and she is a brilliant mum and has really looked after them. They are now eating dried food, drinking weaning milk and learning to use the litter tray.

Fig 2.2



Advert description: I have for sale 1 male black and white 9 week old kitten. He is full of character and is used to being with other cats/kittens. He is fully weaned on dry food, fully litter trained, flea treated and wormed. Both parents for the kitten can be seen at any time as they are both house cats and therefore have never placed a paw outside. [I have been breeding cats for the last 7 years](#) and have never had any reported health problems with any of the kittens that I have sold previously. Any questions please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you for looking at this very cute kitten.

Fig 2.3 Multiple litters being offered for sale at the same time

Pet's age: four weeks, six days old.*

Advert description: I have 4 beautiful kittens for sale... they all have their mums loving personality, and are extremely affectionate.

They were born on 10th July... and ready to go 28th August.

They are 4 weeks old this thursday so are not ready to go yet, but a deposit will secure your chosen kitten and you are more than welcome to come and visit until they are ready to go.

All 4 are all female...

I have 1 pure white and shes quite fluffy

Another pure white and she has a few black marks on her head

I have a very fluffy black and white girl white lovely black smudges on her face

And another black and white girl who is less fluffy then her sisters.

Mum is pure white and you will be able to see her also, she is very much loved family pet. These kittens will be litter trained, flea treated, wormed, and eating dry food when they leave for their new home. They are growing up in a family enviroment, as I have 2 young daughters who handle them daily and also have 2 other cats and 2 dogs.

Please text/call if you would like to see them.

I HAVE ALSO ANOTHER LITTER FOR SALE THAT WILL BE READY TO GO ON THE 4TH SEPTEMBER...

I HAVE 1 BOY AND 3 GIRLS AVAILABLE FROM THIS LITTER.

2 TORTOISIESHELL GIRLS

1 GINGER BOY... ****SOLD****

1 FLUFFY BLACK AND WHITE GIRL

1 CHOCOLATE BOY

ALL CAN BE SEEN, AND DEPOSITS PUT DOWN WILL SUCURE YOUR CHOSEN KITTEN UNTIL THEY ARE READY TO LEAVE

£180 EACH

*NOTE: This website does allow kittens to be advertised that are less then eight weeks old but does include a warning to purchasers on their site that kittens should not be separated from the queen cat before eight weeks.