

Cats Protection's 2022 Agenda for Cats



The problems:

Cats are often viewed as being able to look after themselves but they need our protection.

- Cats are the victims of horrendous crimes including being shot, poisoned with antifreeze, caught in snares, abandoned or attacked by dogs that are not controlled
- Cats suffer from a lack of specific legislation to protect them and there are enforcement and prosecution issues where legislation does exist
- Cats are affected by wider political issues including Brexit, which poses risks to both cat and human health
- Cats suffer due to a lack of responsible pet ownership caused by poor knowledge of animal welfare among some cat owners

The solutions:

- New and updated legislation where necessary
- Greater use of preventive measures to safeguard cat welfare, such as licensing air guns
- Dialogue with housing providers to encourage them to have responsible and reasonable pet policies
- Dialogue with antifreeze manufacturers to encourage the development of alternatives which are non-toxic to cats
- Greater public awareness of cat welfare and responsible pet ownership, such as microchipping cats

Find out more: www.cats.org.uk/speakingup

Follow us on Twitter: [@CPadvocacy](https://twitter.com/CPadvocacy)



Cats are not political – they come in all colours: black, white, ginger and many more – yet politicians from all parties can improve cat welfare immeasurably by addressing some of Cats Protection's 2022 Agenda priorities. While cats might seem less important than mainstream issues they are part of society and part of many family lives with nearly a quarter of UK households owning a cat¹. A cat can bring companionship and happiness to a household and even provide benefits to health and wellbeing, making cats a much loved pet across the UK.

Our Agenda for Cats sets out what we want Parliament to achieve by 2022. Cats Protection is asking MPs to back measures to improve the lives of the nation's estimated 10.3 million cats².

Our 2022 Agenda

- **Cats and air guns:** we want air gun licensing to be introduced in England and Wales, as it already is in Northern Ireland and Scotland, to prevent cats being fatally shot or injured
- **Microchipping of owned cats:** we want this to be compulsory across the UK to aid the reunification of cats that are lost or injured with their owners. We also want to collaborate with others to promote greater awareness of the benefits of microchipping cats
- **Breeding of cats for sale:** we want regulation where cats are bred commercially to ensure that all cats are bred with good welfare standards
- **Cats and housing providers:** we want all housing providers to have responsible and reasonable pet policies to enable individuals to own and keep cats, and to reduce the separation of cats from their owners when they move
- **Cats entering the UK:** we want to see enhanced border checks, the creation of a national database to aid traceability of cats and the reintroduction of tick and tapeworm treatment for cats entering the UK
- **Dog attacks on cats:** we want strengthened legislation to prevent dog attacks on cats. We also support community policing initiatives, such as Local Environmental Awareness of Dogs (LEAD) run by the Metropolitan Police
- **Cats and the curriculum:** we want animal welfare education to be included in the national curriculum to help children learn about responsible pet care
- **Cats and personal wellbeing:** we want the benefits of cats to be routinely taken into consideration by health and welfare professionals when they are assessing an individual's care needs to aid the emotional wellbeing of those needing care
- **Products toxic to cats:** we want clear labelling of flowers, plants and household products that are toxic to cats so cat owners know which to avoid. We would like to see the widespread availability of an affordable, non-toxic alternative to antifreeze to avoid cats being poisoned
- **Cats and snares:** we want snares to be banned to prevent inhumane and cruel suffering, injury to or death of animals, which includes cats

¹ PDSA Animal Wellbeing Report (PAW) report 2017

² PDSA Animal Wellbeing Report (PAW) report 2017

Many of the Agenda items are of the highest concern to our supporters and the millions of cat owners across the UK. Below we feature three priority Agenda issues:

Cats entering the UK

The problems:

Many cats enter the UK unchecked and this presents a potential public health risk as well as a risk to animal welfare.

This is an ideal time for the Government to consider enhancing border checks and review its procedures concerning pets entering the UK as it works to formulate its policies post-Brexit.

21,404 cats entered the UK in 2015 under the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS). The adoption of harmonised rules on travelling with pets made it easier for EU citizens and their pets to enjoy the freedom of movement within the Union.

However, these changes also introduced risks as tapeworm treatment became no longer compulsory for cats. Tapeworm *Echinococcus multilocularis* can cause disease in people. There is also no requirement for cats to be treated against ticks before entering the UK. Tick-borne disease leishmaniasis is also zoonotic meaning it causes severe disease in both humans and cats.

Currently there is no centralised database recording all pet cats entering the country under the PETS scheme. Such a database would confirm that a cat had been checked, scanned for a microchip and had entered the country legally. Currently only animals that are declared get checked before entering the UK.

The solutions:

Cats Protection is calling for the creation of enhanced border checks, a central record for all cats entering the UK legally and the reintroduction of tick and tapeworm treatments for cats entering the UK.



Just one cat or kitten smuggled in could put the UK at risk of a case of rabies or other infectious diseases.

Cats and air guns

The problems:

Cats are frequently reported as having been the victims of attacks by air guns.

A survey of 1,000 vets carried out by Cats Protection in 2016 showed that many more cats are killed in air gun attacks than 20 years ago. The same survey found that almost half of vets questioned (44%) had treated cats which had been the victim of attacks by air-powered weapons in the last year, with nearly half of these shootings proving fatal (46%).

Since January 2012 the RSPCA has kept a log of calls they have received regarding animals that have been shot. These statistics highlight that cats are often the victim of shootings with 1,814 reported shooting of cats, second only to wild birds³.

Air guns are already licensed in Northern Ireland, under the Firearms (NI) Order 2004 and in Scotland under the Air Weapons and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2015. In 2016 90% of press reports of cats being shot were in England and Wales, where air guns are not licensed.

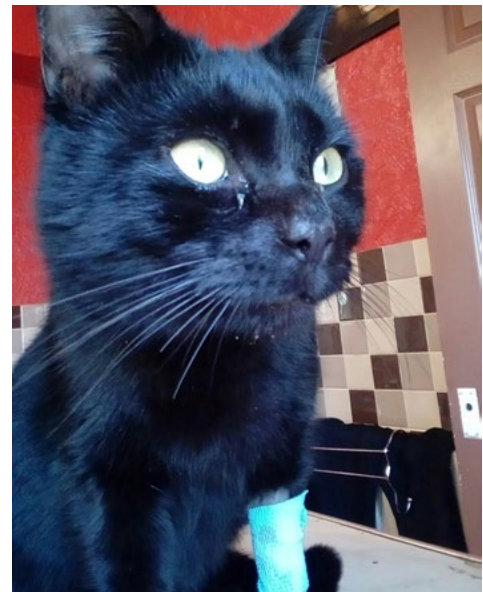
Where air guns are used randomly, casually or deliberately to inflict injuries on cats (and other animals) we are aware that the owners of those cats are often unable to proceed to prosecution under current law for reasons related to lack of evidence.

A Cats Protection survey in 2016 found that 78% of the public support the introduction of air gun licensing.

The solutions:

Cats Protection is calling for licensing of air guns in England and Wales so that licensing is in place across the UK.

Licensing air guns will help stop these deadly weapons falling into the wrong hands so easily, reduce the number of cats killed or left with life-changing injuries and help trace the culprits when cats are shot.



“Clyde is slowly recovering from being shot five times but still has a limp”

Eighteen-month-old Clyde went missing from his home in Sheffield in April 2017. Twenty days later he managed to make his way home. He was clearly injured and his worried owner took Clyde to the vet. The vet found that Clyde had been shot five times. The pellets had lodged in his spine, causing damage to his leg. Clyde is slowly recovering from his ordeal but still has a limp.

³ www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/latest/details/-/articleName/2017_07_12_airgun_attacks_at_five_year_high

Cats and housing providers

The problems:

Many housing providers across the UK do not allow cats.

Cat owners are being forced to give up their cats because their housing provider does not allow pets. Similarly, potential cat owners who could provide a loving home for a cat are being denied the opportunity to do so. It is not right that these individuals should be deprived of having the companionship, love and affection that a cat can bring to a household. Every cat given to Cats Protection for housing related reasons is a tragedy and means yet more cats are added to the thousands already in the charity's care for rehoming.

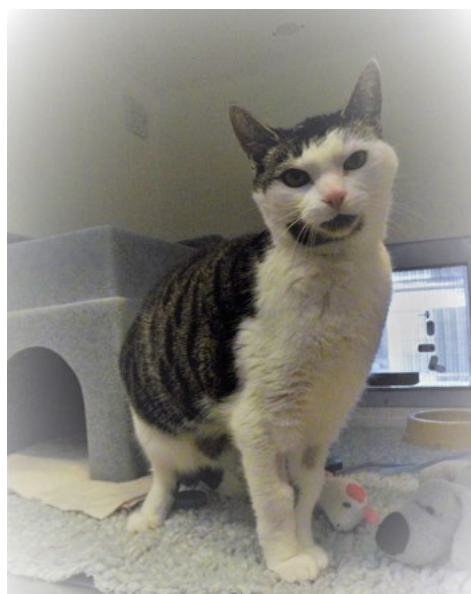
More and more people do not own their own homes. In 2015, 37%⁴ of households in the UK were living in a private or social rented property and this figure is increasing.

In 2016, Cats Protection conducted a survey of its network of branches and adoption centres. Over 50% of those contacted responded and, of the respondents, 60% said that housing and pet policy issues account for a significant number of the cats they take in for rehoming. 74% of respondents stated that the problem was getting worse.

The solutions:

Cats Protection is asking housing providers and landlords to have responsible and reasonable pet policies and tenancy clauses which allow cats. This should include the requirement for cats to be neutered, microchipped and vaccinated as well as limits on the number of cats that can be owned per household.

⁴ Department for Communities and Local Government Dwelling Stock Estimates 2015: England, Scottish Government Housing Statistics for Scotland 2015, Local Government Data Unit – Wales National Survey for Wales results 2014-15 accommodation and Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency Housing Statistics 2015-16



“Alexis is a typical example of a cat being given up to Cats Protection because she can't move with her owners”

Seven-year-old Alexis was sadly given up to our National Cat Adoption Centre in Sussex because her owner was moving and her new landlord would not allow her to bring Alexis. Alexis never had any behavioural issues such as scratching or spraying but the landlord would still not allow her to come with her owners. The four-year-old son of Alexis' owner was heartbroken to have to give up his cat.

In summary

Cats Protection speaks up for cats to ensure they are not forgotten. Politicians and decision makers can help to create a better world for cats and improve their lives immeasurably by working with Cats Protection to deliver our 2022 Agenda for Cats.



Cats Protection is the UK's leading feline welfare charity.
We are supported across the UK by around 10,000 volunteers, over 250 volunteer-run branches and 34 centres to rehome stray and abandoned cats, promote neutering and deliver education talks.

Our advocacy and government relations work is focused on 'Speaking up for cats', influencing policy and practice on issues relevant to cat welfare.

For more information on the 2022 Agenda visit

W: www.cats.org.uk/2022agenda

For more information about 'Speaking up for cats' visit:

W: www.cats.org.uk/speakingup

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Thank you

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