



CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 Wales<sup>©</sup>  
[www.cats.org.uk/stats-regional](http://www.cats.org.uk/stats-regional)



**Cats.  
Wales loves them.  
It's official!**

There are almost **607,000 owned cats in Wales** – that’s one for almost every five people! Wales is truly a nation of proud cat lovers.

As the cat experts, Cats Protection is excited to share with you the amazing and fascinating stats from the CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 Wales report, the first of its kind.

This independent research project involved speaking to over 900 people from across Wales, making it the largest and most comprehensive report on cats.

The survey was carried out in early spring 2020 and the results already showed us just how much joy cats bring to people. We know that the subsequent COVID-19 pandemic, with its lockdown and restrictions has made many of us appreciate the joy and comfort cats give us even more.

This report gives us a new, robust and unique insight into the world of cats as well as their owners. It provides compelling evidence that cats are complex, with varied needs that we must meet, and it resoundingly shows just how much we love our cats. Cats Protection will use these statistics to inform everything we do, from rehoming strays to promoting the benefits of neutering and microchipping. It will also help us to speak up for cats with legislators, decision makers and anyone with influence over cat welfare.

I hope you find CATS 2020 Wales useful – together we can make a better world for cats.



**James Yeates BVSc, FRCVS**  
Chief Executive

*James with his cat, Monkey*



COVER PHOTO: ISTOCK.COM/PAVLINA POPOVSKA / ILLUSTRATIONS: RUS HUDDA



## Methodology

We commissioned an external and independent agency, Basis Research, to conduct the research contained in this report. An online survey was used to collect information among a nationally representative audience of over 18s in the UK, allowing us to identify the proportion of cat owners in the UK. We also conducted a more detailed survey among cat owners. This was carried out between 28 February 2020 and 5 April 2020.

# BASIS

The sample consisted of a nationally representative sample of N=3,520, of which we collected N=160 living in Wales. We interviewed N=803 cat owners in Wales in total.

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# Welcome to the CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 Wales<sup>©</sup> first annual report

People love cats in Wales. It's official! Over one in four households in Wales has a cat (26%).

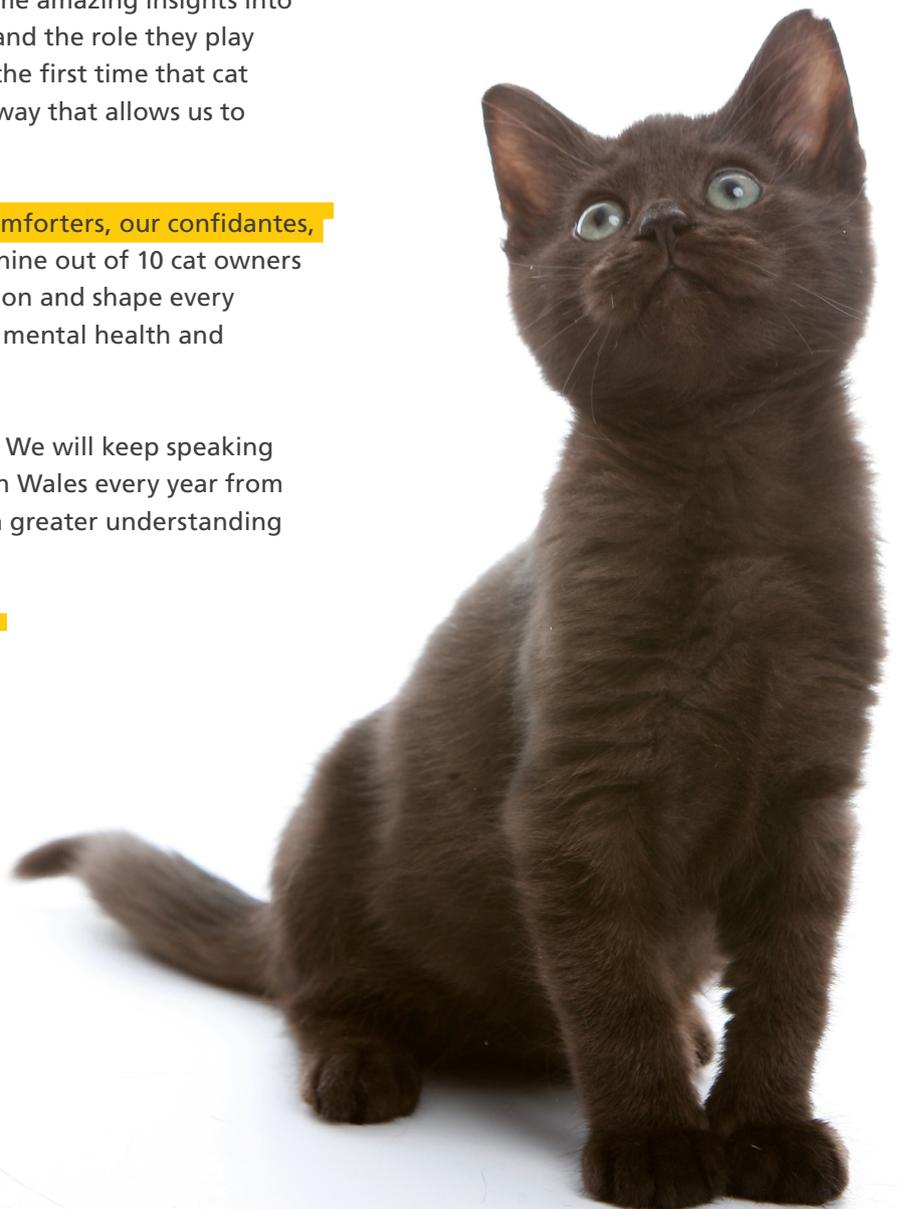
This report is the most comprehensive picture of owned cats in Wales based on **speaking to over 900 people** in Wales – both those who already own cats but also to those that would like to. It is an analysis for Wales taken from the UK-wide survey CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 by Cats Protection, the leading feline welfare charity.

The CATS 2020 Wales report gives some amazing insights into their lives, their relationship with us and the role they play in modern society within Wales. It is the first time that cat owners' voices have been heard in a way that allows us to really understand how life is for cats.

The report shows that **cats are our comforters, our confidantes, our entertainers** and our joy (almost nine out of 10 cat owners said so). They speak to every generation and shape every aspect of our lives. They improve our mental health and reduce our stress.

This first report is just the beginning. We will keep speaking to cat owners (and non-cat owners) in Wales every year from now on so we can continue to build a greater understanding of cats and their owners.

**If you need a cat fact/stat for Wales** then make it a CATS 2020 Wales one.



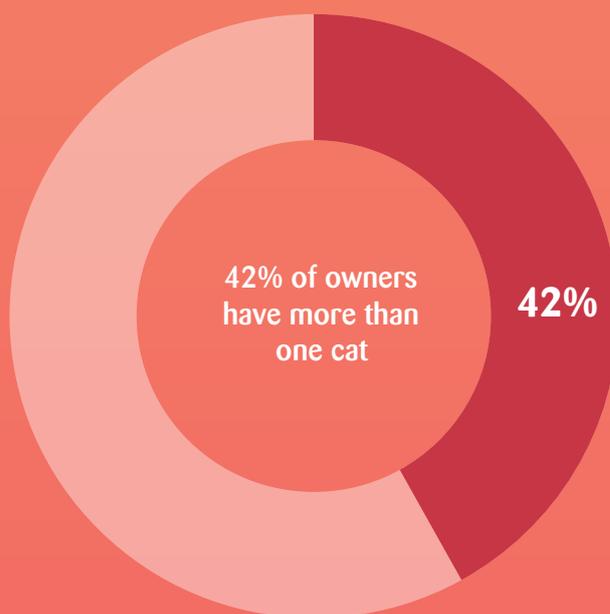
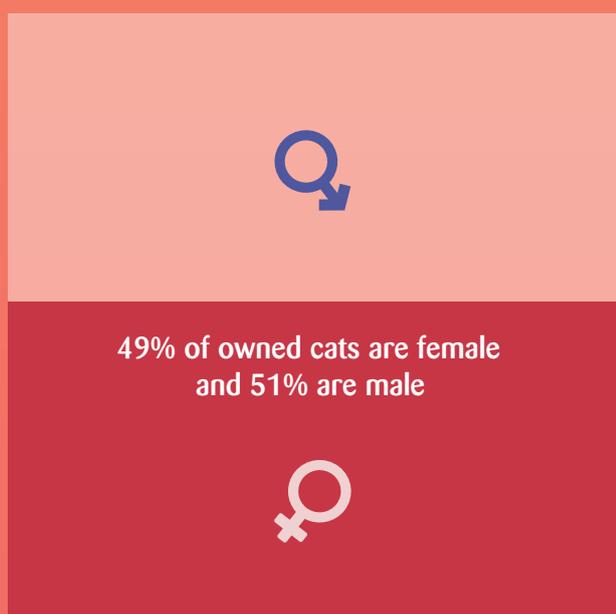
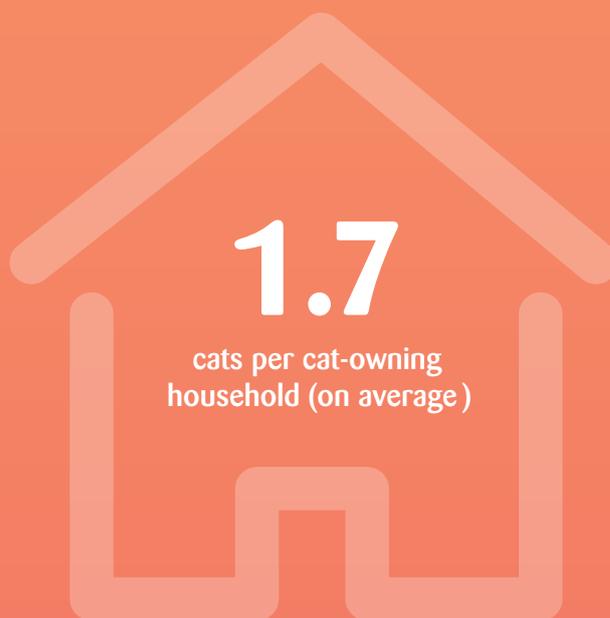
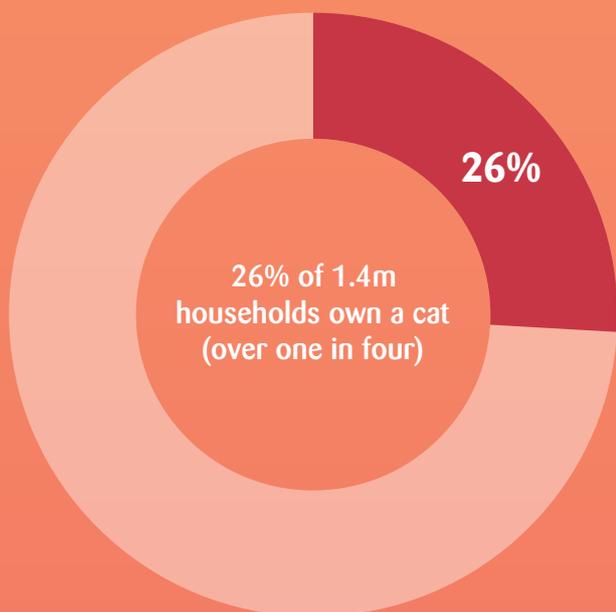
# People and cats

## Population

Did you know that there are almost

**607,000** owned cats in Wales?

That's one for almost every five people!



## Age is just a number

When you're a cat you're considered 'mature' from the age of seven (that's 44 in human years). **43% of owned cats in Wales are mature.** Many adopters opt for the cute kitten as first choice but anyone with an older cat can tell you their many virtues.

Cat ownership is higher among **younger people** (28% among those aged 18-44 vs 24% for 45+). Those in Wales are more likely to adopt a cat than buy (29% adopted vs 18% bought).



## So much to love

Cats bring joy. Ok so we might be biased, but **87% of owners in Wales agreed!** And there's also joy to be had from other people's cats with two thirds (**66%**) regularly going online to view funny and cute cat pics and videos.

Cats are great companions and can relieve stress or loneliness; **52% agreed.**

**92%** said that their cats are part of the family. **85%** talk to their cats (how is this not more?!) and **63%** love to spoil them. Over half (**56%**) admitted to putting their cat's needs ahead of their own.



# Cats and their people

One of the best things about having a cat is sitting down with them after a hard day or when you just feel like relaxing and giving them a stroke. **92% of owners said they did this every day** and **60%** actively play with their cat every day. Overall, **78%** considered themselves to be heavily involved with their cat; feeding, playing and generally being there for them.

The **majority of cats enjoy both outdoor and indoor life (70%),** coming and going more or less as they please. But **27%** live exclusively indoors.



Did you know that some cats have to live indoors for their own safety, due to medical conditions such as FIV, or having a disability such as poor eyesight or hearing? Learn more about what indoor cats need [here](#).

**92% stroke their cat every day!**

**60% actively play with their cat every day**

**78% are heavily involved with their cat**

# Cats and their welfare

## Neutering

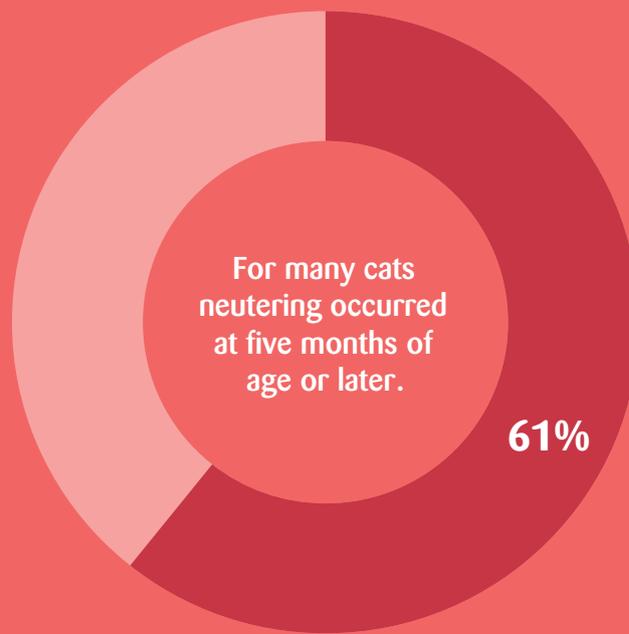
89% of cat owners in Wales said that their cats are neutered or spayed.

Cats Protection recommends that cats should be neutered from four months old as this is when they can become sexually mature and begin to get pregnant with kittens. However, for many cats in Wales (61%), neutering occurred at five months of age or later. 17% of neutered females have a first litter before they are spayed.

Indoor cats were less likely to be neutered (83%). However, cats are veritable Houdinis and can escape through the smallest crack in an open window or door. So, Cats Protection recommends neutering indoor-only cats as well as cats that have access to the outdoors. There are additional health benefits from neutering as well as controlling the population so it should be considered for all cats.



Did you know that **unneutered** female cats can have up to three litters a year and 18 kittens a year?



Did you know that across the whole of Wales Cats Protection runs a **£5 neutering and chipping scheme?**

# 146,000

**24% of owned cats are not microchipped**

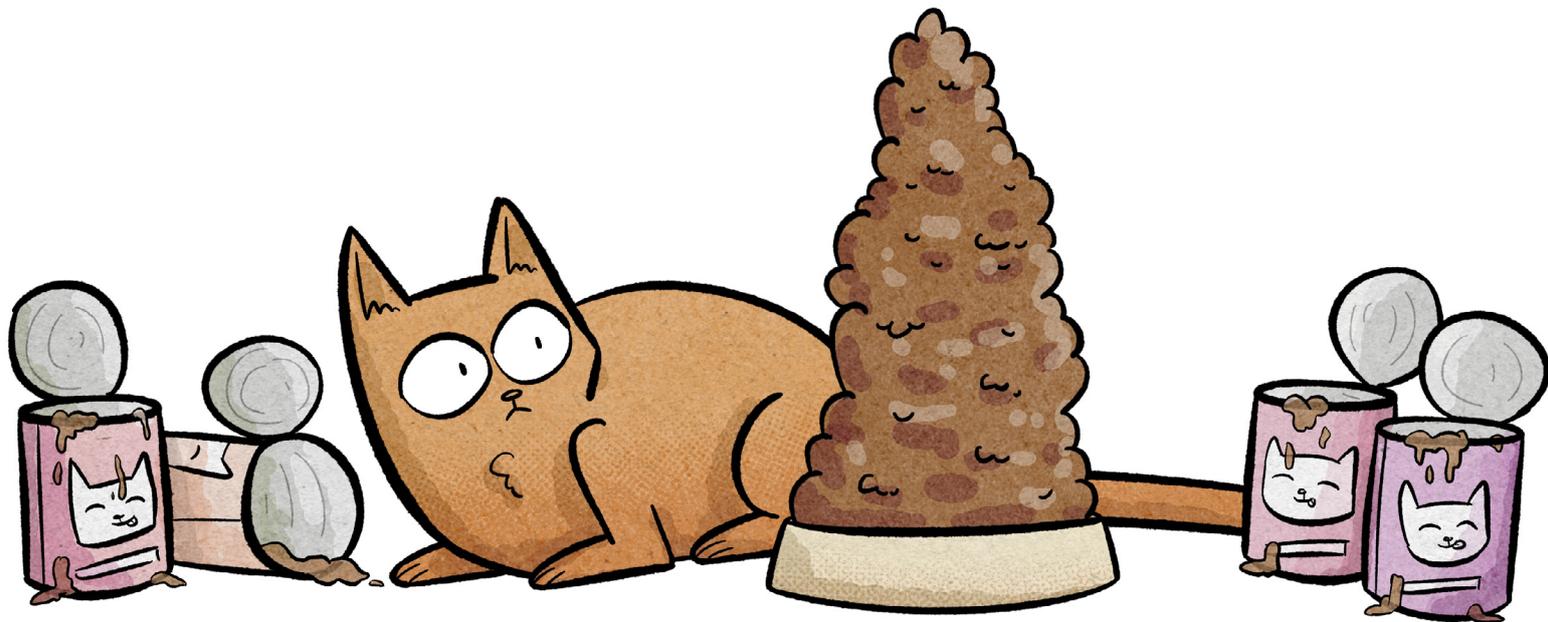
## Microchips reunite

Microchipping is a **safe, permanent and low-cost** way of identifying an owned cat, and gives a lost cat the best chance of being reunited with their owner.

72% of cats in Wales have a microchip (24% of owned cats are not microchipped, 72% are, 4% don't know). This means that around **146,000 owned cats in Wales are still not microchipped.**

Thankfully 90% of cats in Wales with a microchip have up-to-date microchip details.

Cats Protection is calling for compulsory microchipping of owned cats in Wales and across the UK. To find out more visit [www.cats.org.uk/microchippingpetition](http://www.cats.org.uk/microchippingpetition)



## A weighty issue

Weight is a growing problem in cats across the UK, and Wales is no exception. Based on a series of picture prompts and descriptions:

- 34% of cat owners in Wales believed their cats to be overweight
- 27% of cat owners in Wales believed their cats to be an ideal weight
- 35% of cat owners in Wales believed their cats to be underweight
- 5% didn't know

It's always good to get your cat's weight regularly checked!

## Vet checks

Despite their good intentions, **50% of cat owners in Wales said they miss out on regular vet check-ups**, with cost being the greatest barrier to cats being taken to the vet more frequently (31%).

37% and 36% of cats aren't regularly treated for worms and fleas respectively. Again indoor cats are less likely to be regularly treated for worms and fleas.

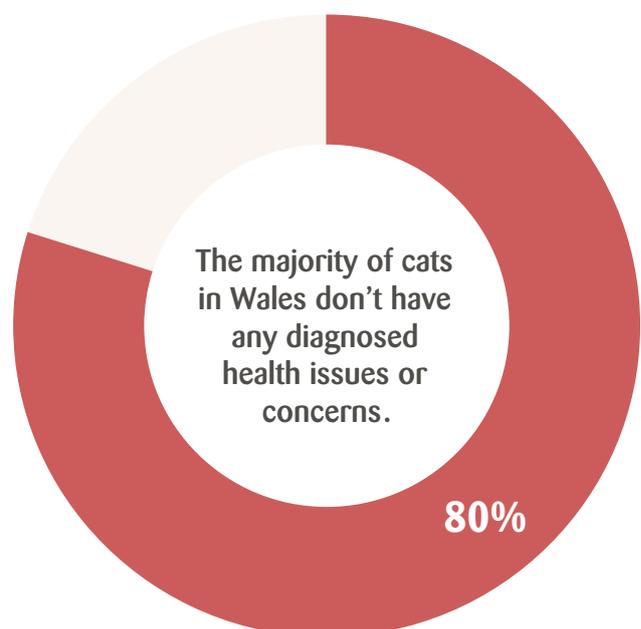
Whether indoor or outdoor, Cats Protection recommends all cats are microchipped, neutered, vaccinated and regularly treated for fleas and worms, and that they should have regular vet check-ups, at least once yearly.

## A clean bill of health

The majority of cats in Wales **(80%) don't have any diagnosed health issues** or concerns, which is great news!

For those that do the most frequently occurring health issues for cats in Wales are:

- 2% obesity
- 2% arthritis
- 2% dental disease
- 2% lower urinary tract disease (eg cystitis, bladder problems)



# So what have we learned?

In this survey of cat owners and non-cat owners across Wales we've learned that Wales is a nation of cat lovers with 92% of owners saying they sit down and stroke their cat to relax after a hard day. Our survey also reveals that despite good intentions Welsh cat owners visit the vet less frequently than other UK owners with 50% (43% UK) missing out on regular vet check-ups. Owners stated costs as the greatest barrier to frequent vet visits. Also, with around 146,000 owned cats in Wales still not microchipped more needs to be done to encourage owners to microchip and give lost cats the best chance of being identified and reunited with their owners.

Every year from now on Cats Protection will go out and build on this first report of CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 Wales. By building up a regular and comprehensive body of statistical evidence we can work together with Welsh Government, local government, veterinary professionals, other animal welfare charities, professional organisations and influencers to ensure a better world for cats in Wales. We can identify trends, tailor advice, build up understanding and be there for you. Use us and CATS 2020 Wales for all things cat!

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## Cats Protection is the UK's leading cat welfare charity

Our Welsh network includes six volunteer-run branches, three centres (Bridgend, Wrexham and Cardiff) and eight education volunteers, as well as 12 high street charity shops which also offer advice on cat care\*. In 2019 the charity rehomed 3,000 cats in Wales and helped neuter 12,000 cats.

\* as of 21 October 2020

For further information contact: [stats@cats.org.uk](mailto:stats@cats.org.uk)

To view CATS 2020 Wales online visit: [www.cats.org.uk/stats-regional](http://www.cats.org.uk/stats-regional)

To read the full UK report visit: [www.cats.org.uk/stats](http://www.cats.org.uk/stats)

Reg Charity 203644 (England and Wales) and SC037711 (Scotland)

