

# Cats Protection submission of 27 June 2022

## PE1938/C – Introduce compulsory microchipping of Cats in Scotland

### Summary:

- **Cats Protection is calling for microchipping of owned cats to be made compulsory in Scotland, as it is for dogs, to aid reunification of cats with their owners and to identify and inform a cats owner in the sad event that a cat is a victim of a road traffic accident (RTA)**
- **The UK Government has committed to introducing compulsory microchipping of owned cats in England and the Welsh Government included considering the case for extending microchipping to cats in its Animal Welfare Plan for Wales.**

**Microchipping of cats in Scotland:** Cats Protection's Cats and Their Stats 2021 Scotland Report found that 27% of pet cats in Scotland are not microchipped. This equates to around 182,000 cats in Scotland that have no permanent means of identification. Compulsory microchipping of dogs is already in force in Scotland and Cats Protection is calling for compulsory microchipping of owned cats.

### Failure to microchip a cat can result in the following problems:

- Difficulty reunifying a cat that goes missing with its owner
- Cats being needlessly rehomed by animal welfare charities because they are believed to be strays and the owner cannot be identified
- Worry about a pet cat in the event of an accident
- Vets finding that they are unable to contact cat owners in any case of emergency
- Ownership disputes (including theft) being difficult to resolve

### Benefits of Microchipping:

- Cats roam and a microchip increases the chances of a lost or injured cat being safely reunited with its owner
- Microchipping is a safe and permanent method of identification for cats
- Unlike collars, microchips don't come off, or put cats at risk of collar-related injuries
- Microchips can be scanned by a vet or other trained professional for information identifying the owner. The details of the microchip need to be kept up to date by the cat owner, e.g. when they move house

**Support for microchipping cats:** A 2018 UK survey found that 92% of veterinary professionals agree that microchipping should be made compulsory for cats<sup>1</sup>. A 2014

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<sup>1</sup> PDSA Animal Wellbeing Report (PAW) Report 2018

Cats Protection survey of members of the public across the UK found that 93% of those surveyed agreed that microchipping of owned cats should be compulsory.

**Microchipping is part of responsible pet ownership:** If microchipping of owned cats became compulsory it would be the responsibility of the cat owner to get their cat microchipped. Cats Protection does provide financial assistance towards the cost of microchipping (and neutering) to those on low incomes. We run a range of schemes across Scotland and further details can be found here: <https://www.cats.org.uk/what-we-do/neutering/neutering-campaigns>