

# ***MEDIA RELEASE from***

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## **Free Love for Felines this Valentine's Day**

**From 14 February to 16 March 2001, Cats Protection, the UK's largest feline charity, will be springing their biggest annual neutering campaign into action....for FREE!**

During this time, Stourbridge Branch of Cats Protection, along with many other Branches around the country, will be putting their money where their mouth is by providing a **local free of charge neutering service** for cats belonging to owners on low incomes.

"Like many areas of the country, we have a problem with unwanted cats and kittens. Responsible preventative measures such as neutering need to be taken very seriously by cat owners." said Helen, Branch Co-ordinator for Stourbridge. "Our full-cost neutering voucher scheme aims to help stop the problem where it starts to reduce the number of abandoned and suffering cats in this area."

The campaign has been timed for maximum effectiveness, according to Debbie Pearce, Head of Operations at Cats Protection. "Anecdotal evidence would suggest that the kitten season is starting earlier in spring due to the recent spate of milder winters", she said. "By starting our campaign in February, we hope to reach female cats before the toms do! Additionally, despite some male cat owners' fears that neutering tom cats is the unkindest snip of all, we would stress that neutering both male and female cats is essential for controlling that cat population."

- A female un-neutered cat can be responsible for 20,000 descendants over five years.
- A female cat can start to reproduce from six months old, having up to three litters a year, with up to five or six kittens per litter.
- Male cats are fertile from six months, and can impregnate up to 32 female cats a year.
- Most cats killed on the roads are un-neutered males.
- It is a misconception to think that a cat should have a litter before she is neutered.
- Neutered cats are healthier, happier and more affectionate – particularly males.

Cats Protection currently neuters around 115,00 cats annually. Cats and kittens aged over 6 months of age in the organisation's care are neutered prior to re-homing. Additionally, the charity runs several innovative low or no-cost neutering initiatives throughout the year.

Members of the public wishing to obtain a full-cost neutering voucher should call **Stourbridge Cats Protection on 01384 897061**. It should be noted that the vouchers are limited and are issued on a first-come, first-served basis.

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**For more information**, please contact Helen, Stourbridge Branch Co-ordinator on 01384 423410, or Emma Osborne, Cats Protection Press Officer on 01403 221934.