



MEDIA RELEASE

Stourbridge and District Cats Protection

For immediate release: 4th August 2006

New research reveals 49 per cent of missing cats are never found

New survey findings released today by Cats Protection, the UK's leading feline welfare charity, have shown that nearly one in two cats that go missing never return.

The research, conducted by Cats Protection and *Your Cat* magazine, revealed that forty-nine per cent of missing cats either failed to return home or were never found and, crucially, less than fifty per cent of missing cats had any sort of identification tag.

Owners who did find their cats managed to do so thanks to a variety of methods, including making sure their cat was microchipped and/or identified in some way, approaching local vets and charities for help, placing newspaper ads and putting up posters in the local area.

Rob Hall, PR Officer for Stourbridge and District Branch, explained:

“It is very sad to think that some cats are never reunited with their owners so making sure your cat is easily identifiable is vital to increase the chance of a happy reunion.

“Microchipping offers cats a safe method of identification which can be more reliable than other forms of identification such as collars that can get removed, snagged or lost. However, if you do choose to put an ID collar on your cat, it is important to make sure it is a quick release safety version and that it is correctly fitted.”

Sue Parslow, Editor of Your Cat magazine, said:

“Every cat owner whose cat has access to the outside needs to be aware that they can buy themselves peace of mind by having their cat microchipped. It's also worth making sure you have a good quality photograph of your cat handy to put on leaflets and notices in case he goes missing.”

There are a number of things you can do if your cat goes missing. The Stourbridge and District Branch of Cats Protection, in common with most Adoption Centres and Branches, operates lost and found registers to assist those who are concerned about a stray or lost cat, or whose cat has disappeared. Staff and volunteers can also provide useful information on practical measures to take when a pet goes missing.

For help and advice if your cat has gone missing, you can contact Stourbridge and District Branch's 'Lost and Found Helpline' on 07092 388015.

The survey identified some other interesting facts:

- **Age:** Younger cats, especially around the age of two, were most likely to go missing. (This could be for a variety of reasons - cats tend to be more curious around this age, they can be more prone to hunting behaviour and may wander further so could be more likely to get lost).

- **Quick return:** Cats were most likely to return in the first week of going missing (43 per cent).
- **Shut in:** When the cat returned home by itself, nearly a third of respondents believed their feline had been shut in a shed or garage (30 per cent).
- **Seasonal differences:** Winter was the most common time of year for cats to go missing (34 per cent).

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For more information, or to arrange a photo, please contact Rob Hall, PR Officer, on 07092 364572.

Notes for Editors

- The Stourbridge and District Branch of Cats Protection covers postcodes DY1 – DY13, which includes Stourbridge, Kinver, Kingswinford, Hagley, Brierley Hill, Tipton, Dudley, Sedgley, Kidderminster, Stourport, Bewdley and the Wyre Forest area. It is part of the charity's nationwide network of 29 Centres and 260 voluntary-run Branches that together rehome around 60,000 cats and kittens every year.
- Cats Protection is the UK's oldest and largest feline welfare charity. Founded as the Cats Protection League in 1927, **the charity adopted the name Cats Protection in 1998. We ask that you use the name Cats Protection when referring to the charity in all published material.**
- *Your Cat* Magazine is Britain's best-selling cat magazine, available in newsagents and supermarkets. For more information see www.yourcat.co.uk
- Microchipping is a safe and permanent method of pet identification. Each microchip carries a unique identification number linked to a database containing details of the pet, as well as the owner's contact details. When a scanner detects a microchip, a simple phone call can ascertain the owner's details and the pet can then be quickly returned home. However, the system is reliant on owners ensuring their registration details are fully up to date.
- Microchipping can be done by a vet or other specially trained personnel. A microchip is very small and is simply inserted under the cat's skin between his shoulder blades. The insertion procedure is no more painful than an injection. Microchips can migrate to other locations under the skin so it is important that a cat is scanned all over when checking for a 'chip. It is also a good idea to have a vet or other trained person scan any recently acquired cats that are presumed to be lost or strays, to double-check that they don't already have a 'chip.
- The aims of Cats Protection are:
 - To rescue stray and unwanted cats and kittens, rehabilitate and re-home them.
 - To encourage the neutering of all cats and kittens not required for breeding.
 - To inform the public on the care of cats and kittens.