

Double dip recession spells trouble for cats

May 2 2012

Figures released today, and backed up by a recent University of Bristol study from the School of Veterinary Sciences, show an ever decreasing number of people coming forward to adopt cats, while the number of people needing to give up a cat or report a stray is on the rise.

This is the worst it has been for the UK's leading feline welfare charity, [Cats Protection](#), since the start of the [recession](#), which has led to this plea for help.

“I cannot emphasise enough how serious this is,” said Peter Hepburn, Cats Protection's Chief Executive. “The recession has been disastrous for the UK's pets and, following the latest news of the UK entering a double dip recession, sadly the situation for cats shows no signs of improving.”

Queries to the charity's national helpline from 2009 to 2011 show:

- The number of people wanting to adopt a cat fell by 31 per cent (5,016 to 3,471)
- The number of people wanting to give up a cat increased by 14 per cent (8,308 to 9,459)
- The number of people reporting stray cats increased by 7 per cent (6,924 to 7,426)

“These figures are just the tip of the iceberg because our 260 volunteer-run branches and 30 adoption centres all receive calls directly, which

means the problem is much larger than we can demonstrate here. Our volunteers and staff regularly report that they are asked for help by owners who have to give their cats up for financial reasons, so I understand how tough it is for people at the moment.”

These latest figures raise serious concerns for animal welfare and are backed up by a recent University of Bristol study which estimated that 131,070 cats entered the care of UK welfare organisations during 2009, the first full year since the onset of the recession. Over 40 per cent of these were cared for by Cats Protection.

The charity has over 8,700 volunteers working round the clock to help as many cats as possible but with the number of unwanted cats increasing and the number of people calling to adopt cats dropping, the charity has been left with a backlog of cats in need of homes.

Provided by University of Bristol

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