



IF YOU HAVE FOUND A CAT

If you've noticed an unfamiliar cat in your area, there are a number of steps you can take towards re-uniting it with its owner. However please remember that often cats seem to be strays or lost but actually have a home. Due to their nature they do tend to roam and can appear to be lost. A cat that is hanging around looking for food, or trying to get into your house may have a home not far away, so you need to be sure they are genuinely homeless before assuming they are stray or lost and either taking it to a re-homing centre, or adopting it in yourself.

Please do not pick up an unfamiliar cat and hand him over to a shelter as many shelters do not have a no-kill policy and many animals are being euthanised if the owner can not be located on time, in many cases within 7 days.

Ask your neighbours if their cat is missing or if they recognise the cat. Someone could have adopted a new cat and just started to let it out.

Un-neutered cats have large roaming territories, especially in the summer. There may well be someone searching frantically for their much loved lost pet living few streets away.

Consider putting up a 'found' poster with a photo of the cat and giving your contact details so the owner can get in touch if they see it.

Look out for "lost cat notice" in your area.

Many areas have 'lost and found pets' groups on Facebook, or Twitter so have a look to see if there is one for your neighbourhood.

Vets and rescue centres also keep lost and found lists, so make sure you check with those local to you too.

Consider putting a paper collar on the cat you think might be lost and writing a message and your telephone number on it asking the owner to call you if the cat is theirs. You can download and print out paper collar [here](#).

Some owners do not start searching for their pets immediately so please allow some time before taking further actions.

Older people will not have an access to the internet or could have difficulties going out so please make sure there is no elderly people in your neighbourhood whose cat escaped before taking further actions.

More and more cats are being micro-chipped. Vets and rescue centres scan for chip free of charge. If the cat is chipped and lost, the owner will be notified within minutes. If you do need to get the cat to a vet, either to be scanned, or to be treated if it has been injured, please make sure to use a properly designed cat basket. If you don't have one, ask around friends and neighbours who have cats themselves, to see whether you can borrow one. Cats are known to escape from cat carriers if not designed or locked properly.

Cats have been known to jump into cars and vans and accidentally travel many miles away from home, so a microchip can sometimes be the only way of tracking down an owner.

If the cat is looking hungry and thirsty but not injured, you can feed it and give it shelter and start looking for the owners. It's possible that owners went for holidays and left the cat with a cat-sitter and the cat escaped.

If you have found an injured cat please take him to the closest vet who will be able to provide emergency care. If the cat is chipped, the owner will be traced immediately. If the cat is not chipped and you don't know its owners, please put up as many posters as possible providing the contact details of the vet or animal hospital where the cat is being treated.

If you have made a really good attempt to find the cat's owner you might wish to keep him as your own pet. Please arrange for veterinary check, micro-chipping and neutering, if this hasn't been done. Neutering will stop cats from roaming large territories in search for a mating partner and will also stop cats from fighting for territory. Although it is not going to stop them from fighting completely, it will help massively to limit the amount of fights. If these fights lead to punctures or wounds that penetrate the skin, abscesses are a common sequel. Neutering reduces fighting hence abscess as well diseases such as FIV transmitted through bites.

HAVE YOU FOUND A LITTER OF KITTENS?



If you find one or more kittens, first check to see if their mother is about. If the mum is there, the kittens don't need to be moved immediately if they're in a safe place, and there's some time to make arrangements for them to be taken inside to your home or into a re-homing centre.

It's important the mum and the kittens stay safe and warm and have shelter from the wind and rain and that the other animals (cats, dogs, foxes) don't have an access to them. You can give them a blanket or a towel. If you arrange a box with the blanket inside, the mother most probably will move the kittens to the box.

Provide food and water for the mum. Nursing females eat a lot as they are feeding newborn kittens and there is no risk to overfeed them.

Don't touch the kittens if the mum is there. She won't like it. She could attack you or abandon the kittens.

If there is no sign of their mum, try to leave the kittens undisturbed and keep an eye on them for a couple of hours to see if she comes back. She may not be far away, but frightened to return to them while you are there. Don't be tempted to handle the kittens, as this may deter her from coming back to them.

If mum still hasn't come back after a few hours then the kittens will need to be taken in as they won't be able to fend for themselves without her. Contact a vet or pet charity to get them taken in and cared for as soon as possible unless you are confident and experienced in handling the newborn kittens.

Be careful if you leave a notice that you found kittens. There is many people who will contact you as potential owners just to sell the kittens without given them a proper care and without a home check.

