

PE2145/B: Bring in compulsory microchipping for cats in Scotland

Cats Protection written submission, 2 May 2025

Background

Cats Protection is calling for compulsory microchipping of owned cats to be introduced in Scotland. A microchip is a chip, no bigger than a grain of rice, that is inserted under the cat's skin. Every microchip contains a unique code, which is registered on an authorised database alongside contact details for the cat's owner. It usually costs between £20 and £30 to have a cat microchipped.

- Microchipping is a safe and permanent method of identifying a cat.
- 8 out of 10 stray cats taken in by Cats Protection's network of Scottish adoption centres and branches are not microchipped, which equates to hundreds of cats. When Cats Protection takes in a lost or stray cat without a microchip, it can be very difficult to trace the owner and sadly this may mean a cat that has a home ends up being rehomed needlessly. Microchipping will help to ensure that we can reunite cats swiftly and can help more stray and abandoned cats.
- The most common reasons cat owners in Scotland give for not microchipping their cats are:
 - their cat does not go outside,
 - their cat does not stray or far,
 - they haven't thought about microchipping¹
- Housecats can easily slip out of open doors and windows and cats can become startled by loud noises causing them to flee and get lost. Any cat can become lost or injured. Microchipping a safe, permanent safe of reuniting cats with their owners.

Cat Road Traffic Accidents

- **Cats Protection carried out Freedom of Information requests in 2022 asking Scottish councils about cat RTA victims. A total of 65% of councils said they scan cat RTA victims in 2022.**
- Of those councils that scan cat RTA victims, **80% tried to identify and contact the cat owner.**
- Cats Protection has created a scanning best practice guide for councils and highways staff on how to collect cat RTA victims and contact their owners. The

¹ Cats Protection's Cats and Their Stats (CATS) Scotland Report 2024 [cats-report-scotland-2024.pdf](#)

guide can be found here: <https://www.cats.org.uk/help-and-advice/lost-found-and-feral-cats/local-authority-advice-dead-cats>

Compulsory microchipping in England:

- **Microchipping of owned cats became compulsory in England from 10 June 2024.**
- In England, all pet cats over 20 weeks old must be microchipped and registered on a compliant database – or owners could risk a fine.
- There is wide public support for compulsory cat microchipping with a government consultation on Cat and Dog Microchipping and Scanning in England² receiving over 33,000 responses and 99% of respondents supported compulsory cat microchipping in England.

Single point of access for microchip databases:

- Cats Protection is calling for the introduction a single point of search for relevant authorities scanning microchips. This would make the checking of a microchip as swift and efficient as possible.
- If a cat becomes lost, is stolen and sold on or abandoned, microchip details will help to locate owners and enable a reunion. If the cat is found injured and taken to a vet, those details will also enable a vet to contact the owners. In the sad case where a cat is found dead, having up-to date microchip details will at least enable the owner to get closure. However, currently there are numerous government-approved microchipping databases operating, along with numerous bogus sites. Since an owner can choose which database to use for their cat, anyone scanning a cat may have to check multiple databases.

² [Cat and dog microchipping and scanning in England, Consultation outcome](#)