



## The 'Cat Longitudinal Analysis of Welfare Study' Newsletter Autumn 2013



Photo: Bridgend Cats Protection

### STUDY PROGRESS:

Thank you to everyone for their continued participation in our feline welfare study – **over 80% of you** came back to tell us about your kitten when he/she reached 6 months of age, a fantastic response! Most of the study kittens are now one year old, and some have reached 18 months! A poster on the study was recently presented at the **Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW)** international symposium on 'Science in the Service of Animal Welfare'. Lizzie Rowe received a grant from **UFAW** to attend the meeting and present the poster. To view a copy of it, please visit our website.

As a reminder - we will be asking you to complete **five** 20 minute long questionnaires in total:

- 1) when you first adopt your kitten (aged 2-6 months)
- 2) When your kitten is 6-7 months
- 3) When your kitten is 12-13 months
- 4) When your kitten is 18-19 months
- 5) When your kitten is 24-25 months

**We will send you an email or a paper copy of the questionnaire in the post when the time comes!**

### BEHAVIOURAL STUDIES:

A huge thank you to those of you who took part, and offered to take part, in our recent behavioural study investigating how cats differ in how long they will keep trying to release food treats from a puzzle feeder, to help us understand individual differences in persistence in cats. Here are some photos of some of our feline participants!



**We will soon be carrying out new research** linking behavior and welfare in cats, comparing lone cats with those living in a household with other cats. The research will involve cats between 10 and 18 months old in the Bristol area. **We will be getting in touch** with some of you in the next few months with the hope of finding some participants – **we hope you can help!**

### BODY CONDITION SYSTEM



### BODY CONDITION SCORE CARDS:

Thank you very much to everyone who has been sending in their completed **Body Condition Score Cards** (as displayed left). Body condition is an important part of feline health and is an area we would like to investigate in this study. As a reminder, please take this card along with you when you take your cat for his/her annual vaccination, or any veterinary appointment, at around **15 months of age**, and **ask your vet to complete and stamp** the card. Then return it to us using the freepost envelope provided. **If you need another card/envelope, please let us know.**



### FREE GIFT!

We really appreciate the time and effort you take to complete our questionnaires. Every completed questionnaire we receive enables us to gather information on how a cat's early environment shapes his/her health and behaviour as he/she develops. Therefore when you complete our **fourth questionnaire** (for 18 month old cats) we will be sending you a **small gift as a token of our thanks**.

### PRIZE DRAW

To further thank you for your commitment to the study, all completed questionnaires will be entered into a prize draw every 6 months for a **£50 gift voucher of your choice** from [www.voucherexpress.co.uk](http://www.voucherexpress.co.uk)! At the end of the study, participants who have completed all five questionnaires could win **£100 of vouchers!**

Our winners so far are:

**Samantha Hayes and her C.L.A.W.S. kitten Lucky**  
**Sian Roberts and her C.L.A.W.S. kittens Abby and Aura**

So do please keep those completed questionnaires coming in. Thank you.

### CAT OF THE MONTH

Thank you to all the owners who have been sending us pictures of their cats and posting them on our Facebook page – keep them coming, it's lovely to be able to see our feline participants! Don't forget that each month we will be selecting a cat to be featured as our 'Cat of the Month' on our website and Facebook page, and to receive a fantastic cat toy! Here's September 2013's 'Cat of the Month' Alfie, and a few words about him from his owner Tony Ecuyer:

"Hi my name is Alfie, and I have just celebrated my 1st birthday. I live with Linda and Tony and my sister Jess. I was adopted from Cats Protection and spent the first couple of days in my new home hiding under a chair with Jess so that nobody could touch us. Now we have settled in and pretty much own the place, generally treating it like a hotel, which we have booked on a full board basis of course! I like to get up on the higher surfaces in the house and look for stuff to knock off on to the floor. Jess chases stuff round, like bits of wire, twisty ties, food packet tops etc. but I tend to take it a bit more easy and watch. We are definitely enjoying living here, think we found a nice spot. So that's about it from me, better to get off to do some hunting before Dad calls us in for bed again ..."



### CONTACT US:

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I would like to take this opportunity to thank you again for participating in this project. The study will help us better understand the development of these amazing animals, and improve the welfare of our pet cats. Please continue to complete our questionnaires, as the more data we collect, the more chance we have of generating useful results.

**Please help us to improve the lives of our feline friends. Thank you.**

Very best wishes,

Lizzie Rowe



Photo: Bridgend Cats Protection