

Delegation Speech 10 September 2008

Introduce our delegates **Thanks for the opportunity**

Jacky, Daphne and Sylvia as per list

Why we are here again?

To promote responsible pet ownership and good citizenship

Quick recap and update since 2006 to 'Custodians of the Purse'

- tenancy agreements made more robust
- Welcomed openly by Cllr Carter and officers from Housing
- Given access to newsletters and notice boards
- given access to office foyers and staff training
- over 2000 cats neutered since we met you at a cost of £70,000

What now?

- more of the same access please
- urge greater tenancy monitoring-WHY?
- seek council support for JOINT workshop WHY?

WHY?

Challenge is still on-HUGE numbers CAN'T DO IT ALONE

Call- outs again to people we SORTED last year +++++

e.g .2006 Farsley (16 cats to neuter and rehome most)

Tenant re-housed to Pudsey and in July 2008 has-

11new CATS-most needing neutering-DONE BY US

2 new DOGS need neutering DONE with our links

Definitely two bird cages with lots of birds (more than 6 in each) LOTS OF BIRDS

Definitely one very large aquarium with lots of fish (more than 6) LOTS OF FISH - IN SHELTERED TYPE HOUSING !

As Commissioners of housing you should ask yourselves if this is acceptable?

From OUR angle unfair to Cats

From ALL angles unfair to other tenants

Unfair to tax payer when public property and environment suffers

Appendix to my speech contains further examples too numerous to mention verbally

ALL this despite two years of offering FREE or very cut price NEUTERING to anyone on low income

We can take you to street after street with unneutered cats WITH owners. Pregnant cats with owners. They are not all strays. You choose LS13 or LS9 LS15 or LS8 or more

BUT many become strays. STUDENT lets too in LS6

The offer still stands

Can you match it with meaningful tenancy agreement monitoring?

**Graham Hoult
Voluntary Co-ordinator
Wharfe Valley Branch
Cats Protection**

**Tel 0845 194 7292 Option 4
Branch web site www.cats-wharfevalley.org.uk**

Appendix to speech 2008 Real life examples of tenancy agreement weaknesses. Cats Protection both branches present.

A *Neville Place and Close LS9-several houses*

Request for help from neighbour of woman with many unneutered cats in garden and house. Fed up with howling and fighting during mating.

We found at least 20 cats in the street-some with owners and all unneutered. Checks in next street uncovered even more.

DESPITE leaflet drops and fixed exhibition and our volunteer 'stall' at nearby community centre in months previously

B *Copperfield View LS9*

We were called in by a neighbour to a man's rented house

He had been found dead in his chair. House in a state of unhygienic chaos and with TEN resident cats (ALL UNNEUTERED) and SEVERAL passage migrants. Council about to board up a cat! Rest escaped as police broke in. All cats infested with fleas and worms. Property infested.

Garden area full of collapsing sheds, lean to, old van and caravanette. This man regularly sold kittens according to neighbours.

Other houses in street being refurbished as we worked here trapping cats

C *Farsley Park and Pudsey LS28*

In 2006 we were asked by Housing to remove 16 cats from a House in Farsley Park. We did so despite being full!

All needed neutering bar one. Many roamed the park and others hid indoors. Tenant was relocated to allow refurbishment. She was permitted to take two adult neutered cats with her.

In August 2008 an 'acquaintance' asked us to help again. The woman tenant, now occupying specialist supported council accommodation, admitted to having ELEVEN unneutered CATS, 2 UNNEUTERED DOGS-Cages of BIRDS and Tanks of FISH. She is reported to have a CARER and a purpose supplied garage to house 150 life size dolls. Her behaviour is constant and predictable yet she appears to remain unmonitored and lives outside any reasonable tenancy agreement.

Over £1000 of Cats Protection resources have been swallowed up by one woman's folly

D *Bawn Gardens and Bawn Drive Farnley.*

Whole area littered with households failing to exhibit duty of care to animals including cats. RSPCA involved (with minimal impact). Housing staff and Police involved in one house. Regular swapping of kittens and puppies.serves only to spread problems all around estate. Again ALL despite a CP leaflet drop and special campaign in the area using our team's own transport to actually take cats to a vet AT no cost. One home appeared trashed. Some potential hostility here via Pit Bull dogs and aggressive tenants.

E Barden Mt and Place area LS12-

Called in by Housing. Old man with 30 unneutered cats and kittens. Many were neglected ill or dying. Attempts to rehouse him 'faltering and protracted' Massive effort by our volunteers in dreadful domestic conditions and minimal cooperation from tenant saw removal of 30 cats over six days. Some kittens were dying of anaemia, flea burden was the cause. House infested from cellar to loft. No duty of care being exercised as demanded by Animal Welfare Act A well know tenant but still no intervention until ostensibly too late. Property in a dangerous state from home made electrical adaptations and rotting food everywhere. Many neighbour disputes and some suggestions of cats being killed. Likely to repeat itself. This is not the first brush with animal welfare.

F Aberdeen Walk LS12

Tenant absconded (and facing eviction). Council officials opened the house to find evidence of many cats and caged **pet rats**. We were called in to trap and rescue **11 cats and kittens**. Overflowing litter trays in two rooms down stairs and multiple fouling upstairs. Flea infestation evident on cats. No real duty of care being exercised. Most needed neutering.

G Belle Church and Windmill Road LS11

Asked by local church to trap and neuter SIX cats in churchyard fed by helpers. On visiting site manifestly 21 more cats in adjacent gardens. Door knocking and persistence unearthed dozens of unneutered cats. One source found in Windmill lane where woman tenant encouraged breeding strays in back garden. We found bones from **dead cats** and three identifiable recent bodies and one mummified corpse in a tea chest supporting **12 small kittens**. The house tenant tried to hide them. The whole colony was blood tested and many were positive for **fatal feline leukaemia virus**. The kittens were handed around the streets like sweets. Housing alerted but no feedback to us. She has done this before and been stopped by RSPCA. We found this, neither the landlord nor the RSPCA. We leafleted the area and wrote articles for local newsletters

NOTE

Many of these examples are in the west of the city where we have built up a reasonable working relationship with ALMOS and other council staff as well as some tenants' groups. Here we have held several workshops, training sessions and staffed small 'advice desks' in council premises with help of local managers.

There are numerous examples too of cat neglect and overpopulation in South, East and North Leeds too. We can cite examples from every ward. We can also cite examples of a few shining' beacons' in some neighbourhoods who are our ears and eyes reporting problems and helping sort them out. To attempt this on our own is burdensome and inefficient as many of us live miles from the areas concerned. We need more folk like this.

GJH August 2008

Wharfe Valley CP

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