

CATS UNLOVED

37 SNOWDON ROAD, CHRISTCHURCH
PH 3515-171 FAX 3518-375

4 May 2004

LTCCP Submissions
Christchurch City Council
P.O. Box 237
CHRISTCHURCH

To Whom It May Concern

Thank you for your consideration of our submission. We would like to ask to be heard in person.

Kind regards,



Wendy Sisson

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SUBMISSION TO THE CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL LONG TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLAN

WHO WE ARE:

Cats Unloved is a voluntary group which began operating in February 2002. We are concerned at the growing number of abandoned domestic and feral cats in Christchurch.

THE PROBLEM WE ARE TACKLING:

We believe Christchurch has an abandoned/feral cat problem for the following reasons:

- (1) Irresponsible owners abandon unspayed/unneutered cats.
- (2) Council staff deny the existence of and/or do not implement the **Christchurch City Animals (other than dogs) Bylaw 2000 Clause 5 (a) (b) (c).** (see appendix A)
- (3) The RSPCA does not accept unwanted domestic cats.
- (4) The RSPCA does not accept responsibility for stray or feral cats unless delivered to their shelter. They regard these cats as the responsibility of the Council. (see appendix B)
- (5) Many people are unable to afford to spay a female cat (\$80 to \$100) or male cat (\$40 to \$50)
- (6) People are deliberately breeding kittens to sell as Xmas presents.

We believe that as neither the CCC or the RSPCA hold themselves responsible for trapping abandoned domestic or feral cats it is logical that Christchurch has an abandoned and feral cat problem.

Volunteers from Cats Unloved trapped 1952 abandoned or wild cats in the city between Feb 2002 and March 2004 (see validated analysis appendix C). We receive 1 to 3 calls most days from members of the public asking for our help. (see appendix D).

THE CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

The Christchurch City Animals (Other Than Dogs) Bylaw 2000 clause 5 states:

5. GENERAL CONDITIONS OF KEEPING ANIMALS

No person shall keep, or suffer to be kept, any animal or bees in a manner that:

- (a) is or is likely to become a nuisance; or
- (b) is or is likely to become offensive, injurious to health, or dangerous.
- (c) every person keeping animals as permitted by this bylaw shall ensure that the animals have access to sufficient food, water and, where appropriate adequate exercise.

Although there is a bylaw governing the conditions for keeping cats/animals, it is our experience that members of the public who enquire as to whether there is a bylaw governing the keeping of cats have been told by staff within the Environmental Health Unit and/or Animal Control that there is NO bylaw and that the CCC has no responsibility in this area. (see appendix E for a list of people who have reported this fact to us. Also documented conversations between Council staff and Wendy Sisson and between Council staff and Detective Garry Burrowes appendix E).

SPECIFIC SIGNIFICANT EXAMPLES

Appendix F is a list of people who appear to be in breach of the Council's bylaw the **Christchurch City Animals (Other Than Dogs) Bylaw 2000** and/or in breach of the **Animal Welfare Act 1999**. Some of these people are keeping 10, 20, 30, 40 or more neglected and diseased cats and kittens.

Cats Unloved has also been informed about large colonies of either neglected domestics or wild cats being kept by people in the following areas. We are currently waiting on the CCC to advise what if anything will be done about these specific situations.

Orcades Street, Shirley
Two addresses in Thornton Street, St Albans
Riverlea Estate Drive, Stewarts Gully
Radnor Street, Edgeware
Colac Place, Wainoni
Two addresses in Flesher Ave, Richmond
Wordsworth St, Sydenham
McGregors Rd, Linwood

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Files and statements are available upon request from members of the public unable to get the RSPCA or the CCC to assist with:

- abandoned domestic cats
- feral cat colonies
- large numbers of neglected owned cats causing health and nuisance concerns for neighbours.
- Video evidence of cats/kittens the RSPCA and the CCC declined to help.

PROPOSED:

- (1) Cats Unloved would like the Council to acknowledge and enforce their bylaw the **Christchurch City Animals (other than dogs) Bylaw 2000**.

We have written to the Environmental Health Unit asking for the statistics relating to the number of people in breach of the bylaw and understand that our request for this information is currently being considered by the Council's solicitors but is unlikely to be granted.

- (2) Cats Unloved would like the Council to impose penalties on those found to be breach of the existing bylaw. No penalties currently exist.
- (3) Given that the RSPCA has not to date held themselves to be responsible for abandoned and feral cats (see appendix B) and does not seem interested in taking on such responsibilities even if funded, that the CCC amend its budget relating to Environmental Health issues to add an amount sufficient to contract professional or voluntary services to enable the capture and euthanasia of up to 1000 wild cats per year.
- (4) We would like the Council to advocate for the desexing and microchipping of all domestic cats to be compulsory or making desexing at point of sale or transfer compulsory.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

Nationally the RSPCA receives over 2 million dollars in legacies per year. This figure does not include donations or fundraising.

One female cat could be responsible for 2400 offspring over a 12-year life span. She can start producing from 5 to 6 months of age. She can have between 4 to 8 kittens in one litter and have up to 3 litters in one season.

Feral cats and stoats combined kill 95% of kiwi chicks born in the wild.

PERSONAL STATEMENT FROM W. SISSON. This information is provided for the benefit of Council staff and Councillors not for the public.

I, Wendy Sisson a volunteer with Cats Unloved am currently working 14 hours a day (and longer) most days of the week. I have been working these hours for the last two and a half years.

I am daily trapping and transporting wild and diseased cats. I deal with welfare issues and abate health and nuisance concerns for affected neighbours who live in close proximity to people in breach of both the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and the Council's bylaw. I spend about \$50 every week on petrol as well as trying to provide for the petrol needs of two other volunteers.

As a ratepayer I am providing a free animal/cat control service for Christchurch at my own expense. I am engaged not only in trapping the many thousands of wild cats scavenging in the city but also having to dispose of their bodies.

I have for some time been seeking the co-operation of Council staff and Councillors to address the feral cat problem as well as the need to address the problem of the disposal of their bodies.

I have emailed or contacted every Councillor including the Mayor informing them of many of the situations volunteers are dealing with.

I am including in my statement an acknowledgement of the help I have received from 3 other female volunteers.

Kirsten was only 15 years old when she began providing animal/cat control for the city. Kirsten trapped 35 diseased and dying cats from an address in McGregors Rd, Linwood. Unfortunately, the RSPCA and Council staff told affected neighbours - nothing could be done.

Affected neighbours are most grateful to a 15-year-old schoolgirl who was able to abate health and nuisance concerns for them, that were legally the responsibility of the Council. Unfortunately, because the Council does not enforce its bylaw, volunteers from Cats Unloved are currently trapping more cats emanating from this address. (File and statement available).

Kerry has been providing a free cat/animal control service for the city for the last two and a half years. She goes to isolated and lonely places at night trapping wild cats on the streets, industrial sites, scrap yards etc.

Marcia is in her 70's she has been verbally and physically threatened whilst providing a free cat control service for the city.



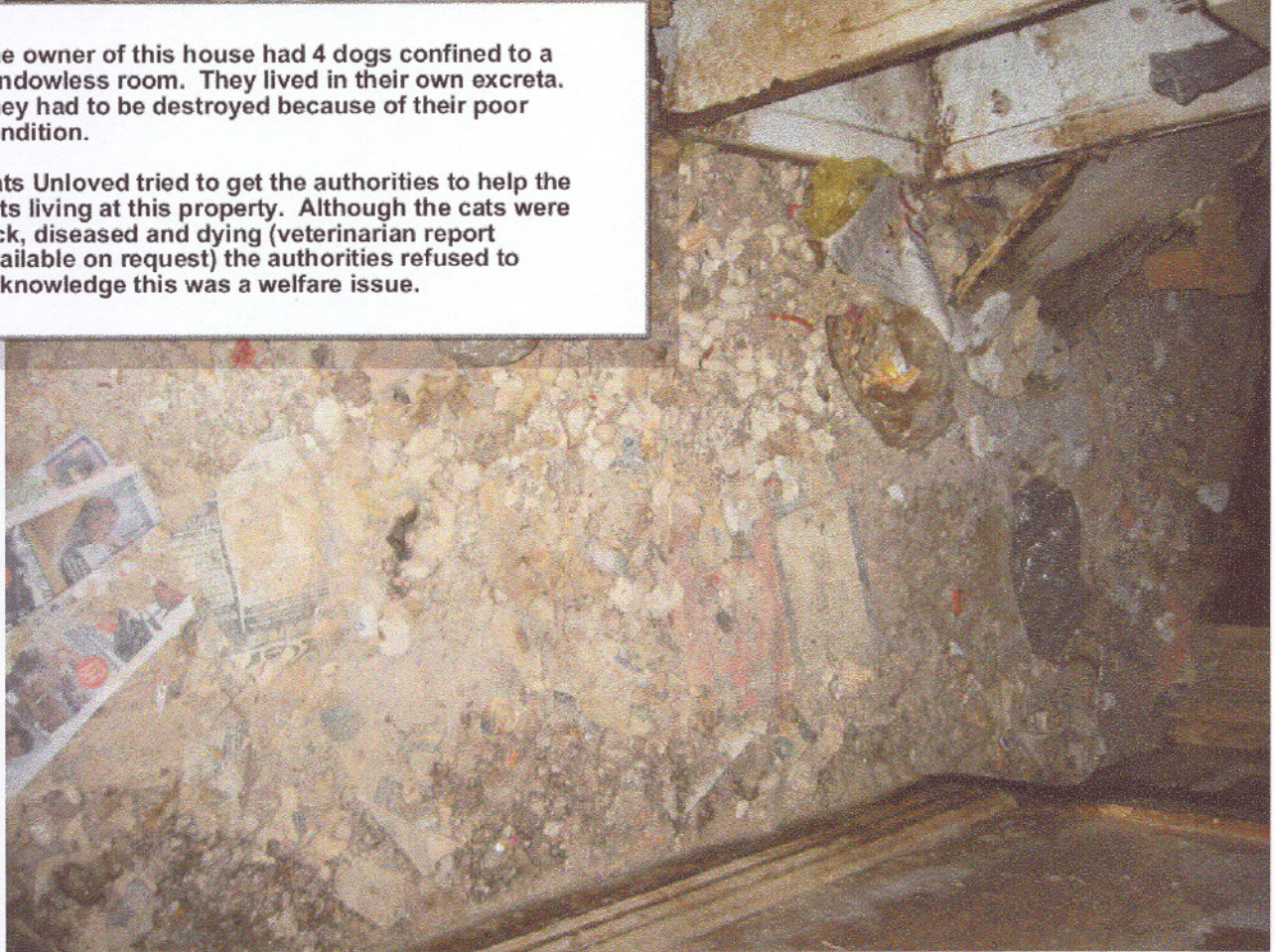
The couple who own this cat and 20 others are in breach of the Animal Welfare Act and the Council's bylaw.

Cats Unloved and neighbours tried to get help for their 21 neglected cats. Unfortunately, according to the authorities 'nothing could be done'.



The owner of this house had 4 dogs confined to a windowless room. They lived in their own excreta. They had to be destroyed because of their poor condition.

Cats Unloved tried to get the authorities to help the cats living at this property. Although the cats were sick, diseased and dying (veterinarian report available on request) the authorities refused to acknowledge this was a welfare issue.





The cat in the photo has large raw, weeping and hairless patches on his head, elbows and backbone. He comes from Emmett St, Shirley.

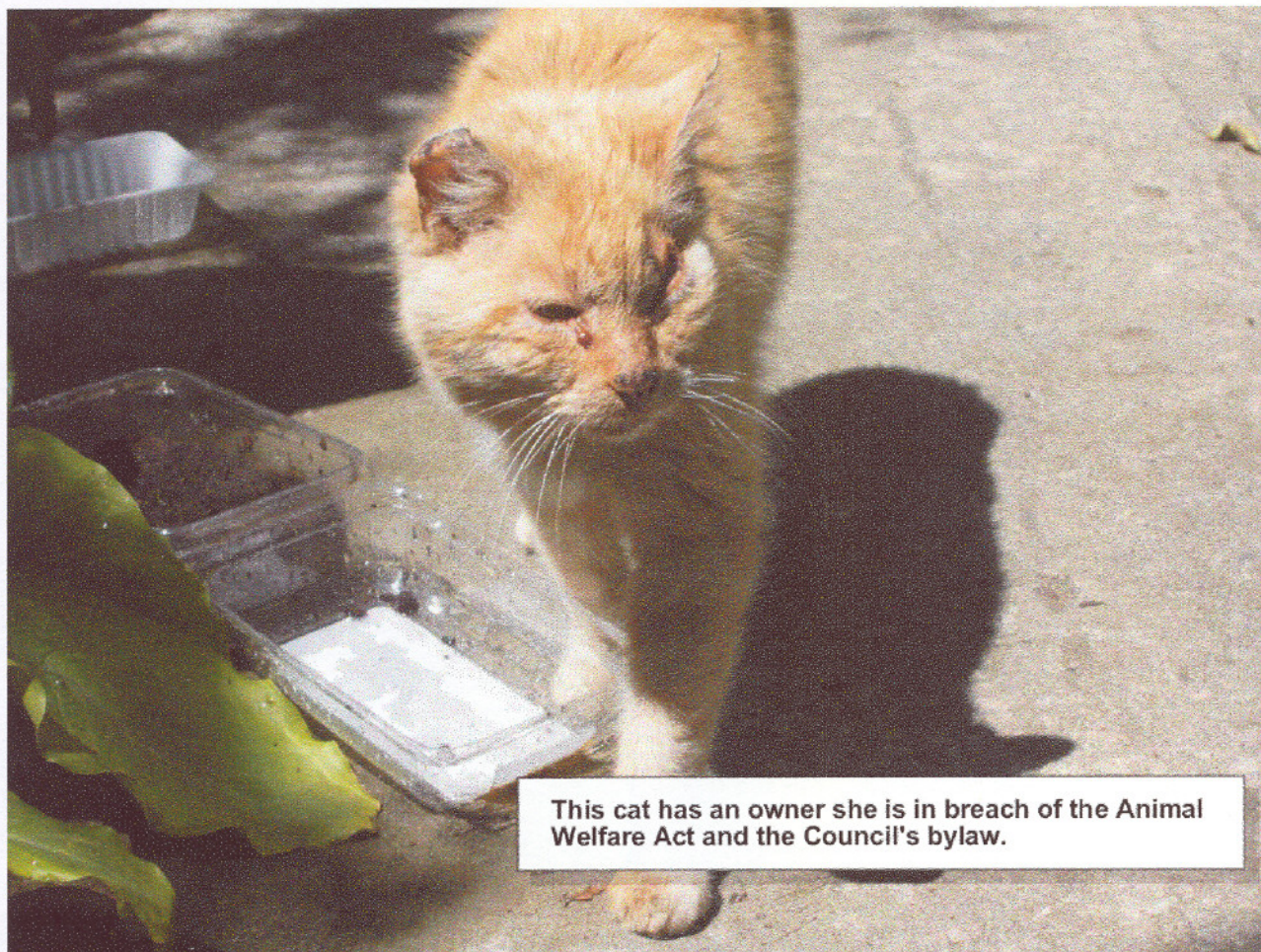
His owners don't feed him or their other 20 cats.

They are in breach of the Animal Welfare Act and the Council's bylaw.



The owner of these kittens and 8 other cats is in breach of the Animal Welfare Act and the Council's bylaw on the conditions for keeping animals.





This cat has an owner she is in breach of the Animal Welfare Act and the Council's bylaw.





Two little kittens left to die by their owner who lives in Stanton Cres, Hoon Hay.

The 3rd kitten from this litter was already dead. It's body had turned to slime in the gutter outside its home.

Cats Unloved took 11 cats. The owner still keeps one cat she doesn't feed.





This cat has an owner, she is in breach of the Animal Welfare Act and the Council's bylaw.



Cats Unloved volunteers have trapped nearly 200 cats directly at the request of the CCC.

We wrote to the Council on the 4th Nov 2002 and again on the 8 March 2003 asking them to contribute towards our costs but we received no reply.