

Considering Fostering?

Then read on...

(N.B. "cat" refers to cats or kittens)

Warning: Be prepared for an emotional roller-coaster: you may become very attached to your foster cat and find it difficult to give it up when the time comes. It's possible you may end up with an extra cat but remember that you will help more cats in the long term by continuing to foster for us.

You should have spoken in detail to at least one other fosterer, have read this document and discussed your decision to foster with all other members of your household (even children) and especially your partner (if you have one). You need to have 100% backing from everyone in your home.

Commitment: you need to commit some of your time to the cat; we can't guarantee when homes will come up, so the length of time each cat is with you can vary greatly.

Support: we give ongoing advice and support; we can provide all necessary equipment and we pay for all veterinary treatment. We are a small charity, but if necessary, we can help towards the cost of food and litter. We will not ask you to take more than one cat at a time, unless you have offered to foster a pair or a litter of kittens. We do not overload our fosterers. If you need to be away from home (e.g. illness or holidays) we can take the cat back. We will never leave you with a problem or "forget" that you have one of our foster cats.

Types of fostering: There are six possible situations, each with different requirements:

- **Friendly kittens** - can be kept anywhere in the home, will be ready for homing at any time.
- **Feral kittens** - should be kept caged to begin with, preferably in the living room. They can't be homed until they are friendly and purring.
- **Nervous cats or kittens** – not feral, but not used to living in a normal home environment. They need to be confined to one or two rooms at first.
- **Mother and kittens** (usually a very young litter) – need to be kept in a room away from any other cats. Once the kittens are weaned, they can be passed to other fosterers.
- **Friendly adult cats** - should be kept separate from other cats to start with, but would need some human companionship.
- **Recovery** – typically an adult female feral cat who needs to stay in a cage for 3 days (usually) after being spayed, before being returned to the colony. These cats must be kept somewhere quiet and not too warm. Human contact has to be kept to a minimum to try to minimise the stress to the cats.

Transport: we rely on fosterers to take their cats to the vet when necessary, so access to a car is essential. We can sometimes arrange transport for fosterers living locally.

Communication: we need to be able to contact our fosterers by phone; we also use email and WhatsApp to keep in touch with each other.

If you decide to go ahead, you will be given a comprehensive information/advice pack and asked to sign an agreement to say you will adhere to our guidelines. You will be paired up with a “buddy”, an experienced fosterer who will keep in close touch with you for the first few weeks.