

Petition to make reporting road incidents involving cats proves popular with animal lovers

Jillian Brown who lives in Livingston has begun a petition asking that motorists are compelled to report any incidents involving cats on Scotland's roads which more than 1,500 people have now signed.

As it stands the only obligation on drivers is to report incidents involving other vehicles, people on foot or on bikes and a collision involving a dog. The legislation refers to incidents involving animals which are generally thought to include dog – but not a cat.

Jillian, who runs a lost and found page for local cats, thinks it should become mandatory for any incidents which either result in a cat being injured or killed. She is glad of the support for her [petition](#) and believes that the tide is turning and that more and more people want the law to be changed.



Jillian with Tigger

She said: “Recently animals have been formally recognised as sentient beings, and I want to see the law changed so cats can be covered by the Road Traffic Act. My petition is gathering momentum.

“When I was a little girl I was witness to our family cat being run over by a car outside our house and the driver never stopped. My mum went out and picked her up off the road. I even got bullied at school as a result of seeing such a horrible thing happening, it haunts me to this day. Every time I see a cat hit on the road it takes me back to the little girl seeing her cat getting running over. Crying, wondering and never understanding why the driver never stopped.

“I have stopped many times over the years to pick a deceased cat off the road and take it to the vet to be scanned for a microchip in the hope it could be returned to its owner. The chances are it’s someone’s pet and there is a family looking for it. It’s a living breathing creature, not a bit garbage just to be discarded.

“At times if veterinary help had been called for the cat could have been saved rather than being left to die an agonising death alone.

“It is now required cat owners microchip their cats or face a fine. It’s about time the law is changed so drivers have to report if they hit a cat on the road. The Road Traffic Act needed to be amended to take into account our cats.”

A previous petition was lodged by Mandy Hobbs of CatsMatter with The Scottish Parliament in August 2019. It was supported by Cats Protection who pointed out however that the Road Traffic Act is a matter reserved to Westminster. One of the solutions which the charity proposed was to make microchipping of pets mandatory.

At present Transport Scotland employs operating companies to remove any identification tags from found animals and give them to police with a description of the dead animal. The carcass must be kept for at least two weeks in case the owner wants to claim it back.

Similar petitions have also been established in England but this has not led to the definition of animal being change din the Road Traffic Act to include cats. Most responses point to microchipping as the best solution.

