

Countryside cats in crisis as Kitten Season surge hits Battersea Brands Hatch

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Battersea Dogs & Cats Home in Brands Hatch are urgently appealing to cat lovers to rehome a rescue moggy as a surge in admissions arriving this summer has pushed the Kent cattery to maximum capacity. The rescue centre has seen almost a 20% increase in the number of cat and kitten admissions compared to the same period last year and there are around 40 felines currently waiting for their forever home.

A sudden surge in arrivals is believed to be caused by 'Kitten Season', the rise in litters during the summer months when the warm weather stirs cats' instincts to seek out a mate. Hundreds of unwanted kittens and their mums end up at rescue centres like Battersea either as strays or when owners have not had their pet neutered and they then need round-the-clock care before they can be rehomed.

After being banished to the woods, Enchanted was found abandoned in a tiny cat carrier with her three beautiful kittens before arriving at Battersea Brands Hatch where staff discovered she was heavily pregnant with yet another litter.

Ruth Dongray, Rehoming and Welfare Manager of Battersea Brands Hatch, said: "Kitten season has well and truly hit our centre and we really want to encourage people to come and rehome our felines as well as getting the message out that getting your cat neutered is an essential part of responsible cat ownership. There is no doubt that the numbers of unwanted cats coming in through the doors of rescue centres such as Battersea could be greatly reduced if owners took the decision to neuter their pets to prevent unwanted pregnancies from occurring. It's astonishing that one un-neutered female cat can produce 20,000 descendants in just five years and cats can have up to five litters a year with five or six kittens in each litter.

"At the moment we're operating a waiting list for our cattery, taking in emergency cases as a priority such as Enchanted and her kittens. We have cats out with foster carers, cats in our overflow clinic and also cats sitting in every section of the cattery so we are literally full to bursting here!"

Animal lovers can find out more about responsible cat care and meet the residents of Battersea Brands Hatch cattery during the centre's summer fun week this month. The rescue centre is inviting people to celebrate another year of finding homes for Battersea animals in the heart of the beautiful Kent countryside from 24th – 28th August. The week promises to be a spectacular family event with lots of activities including a kids fun day, dog training and agility demonstrations, a nature trail where guests will be given behind the scenes access to the centre and plenty of opportunities to meet some captivating countryside cats and canines.

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For more information and images please contact 020 7627 9265 or email press@battersea.org.uk

Notes to editors

- The Battersea Brands Hatch summer event will take place from 24th – 28th August at the Brands Hatch centre with activities running from 10.30am – 1.30pm every day. This special event raises funds which are vital to help Battersea rescue, rehome and reunite thousands of dogs and cats across the UK, and is a brilliant opportunity to enjoy a family day out.
- At Battersea, we neuter kittens as young as 9 weeks and all Battersea cats are neutered before they go to new homes. Neutering is a simple operation performed by a vet while the animal is under anaesthetic. After the operation the cat is no longer able to reproduce.
- Battersea Brands Hatch was opened in 1999.
- Battersea cares for an average of 400 dogs and 250 cats across its three centres at any one time.
- For further information on Battersea Dogs & Cats Home please visit www.battersea.org.uk.
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