

# **SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS**

(In association with R.S.P.C.A. England) Patroness: LADY Y.P. McNEICE



21 July 2011

The Forum Editor  
Straits Times

Dear Sir,

I refer to the letter “putting strays to sleep may be the kindest act yet”.

Several points were raised by the writer including suggesting that cats must be owned, loved and taken care of, otherwise the kindest thing would be to put them down.

As much as these animals are vulnerable to accidents, disease or abuse, there are countless community cats leading a happy life, cared for by many volunteers, spurred on by their dedication and commitment to help the animals. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) hopes that the current HDB rule on prohibition of cats will be reversed and that all pet cats will be required to be microchipped, sterilised and kept indoors. Microchipping (as is the case for pet dogs) would ensure owners stay accountable in the event that anyone was to abandon their pet.

Contrary to the statement that culling stray dogs reduced the problem to zero, there is still a significant population of stray dogs existing. Many of them are still being rescued and cared for by individuals or dedicated animal welfare groups, and some are more fortunate in that they do find loving homes to spend the rest of their days in.

With the Stray Cat Sterilisation Programme being resurrected and carried out in several constituencies, more animals can now have a second chance at life – yes there will be hurdles to overcome, but with the cooperation and understanding of the community at large, we think it can succeed. Culling as a means of solving the overpopulation of strays has already been carried out for decades, but the evidence from statistics proves that it has not been effective. In recent years the numbers of stray cats has steadily been decreasing, and this we attribute to individual and animal groups’ efforts to sterilise our community cats. Admittedly it is not an overnight solution, but sterilisation addresses the root cause – prolific breeding. With widespread efforts to arrest the births, it is a matter of time before the population will dwindle.

The SPCA commends the Straits Times for its editorial “There’s a place for animals too.” The positive and encouraging message has given many of us hope for the voiceless creatures in our society.

Yours sincerely,

Deirdre Moss (Ms.)