

18. April 2024

Public policy

## **More and more found cats: Animal welfare organisations and the city ask for help**

### **Meeting of local animal welfare organisations // Neutering obligation is often not observed**

Again and again, the animal rights activists from the animal emergency call centre, the Bocholt animal shelter and the Bocholt cat charity, as well as the city of Bocholt, have to deal with found cats and feral cats that have not been neutered. Now the city of Bocholt is once again drawing attention to the problem - and pointing out the existing neutering and labelling obligation.

The large number of found cats and feral cat colonies have been a major challenge for the organisations and the city administration for years. As the animals are often not neutered and young cats become sexually mature just a few months after birth, colonies of feral animals are formed time and again. And that is a problem, explains Natascha Kempers from Katzenhilfe Bocholt e.V.

"This also has a health aspect for the animals", says Kempers. Unneutered domestic cats can develop tumours on their ovaries, for example. "That's why every domestic cat that doesn't get out should be neutered", says Kempers. According to Kempers, Katzenhilfe Bocholt e.V. has neutered around 1,500 feral cats in the past 10 years. This is a huge task for the volunteers, and the sharp rise in costs for veterinary care is particularly problematic.

The Bocholt animal welfare organisation has had similar experiences. Wolfgang Baten, Chairman of the animal welfare organisation, reported at a meeting with representatives of the city of Bocholt that a large proportion of the costs of running the animal shelter are accounted for by the many found cats. Food, personnel and energy costs have risen sharply, and the animals are often in poor condition or injured and require veterinary treatment. The municipal reimbursement of costs for found animals has therefore recently had to be significantly increased.

Bettina Krabbe from the animal emergency call centre confirmed the cat problem. In 2023 alone, they were called out to 185 calls involving cats in Bocholt. One problem identified by the associations was the lack of a rescue centre to take care of feral domestic cats for a few days after they have been neutered or injured until they have recovered.

### **Cat protection ordinance since 2019**

Unneutered outdoor cats should no longer exist, as there has been a cat protection ordinance for the Borken district since 2019, which also obliges cat owners in Bocholt to label, neuter and register their outdoor cats.

It is possible that not all cat owners are aware of this regulation. Support in any form is always welcome from the animal welfare organisation and, of course, both the animal welfare organisation and the cat charity are happy to place cats in new homes.

### **Contact**

Bocholt animal shelter, (02871) 23153, [info\(at\)tierheimbocholt\(dot\)de](mailto:info(at)tierheimbocholt(dot)de)

Katzenhilfe Bocholt e.V., (0177) 7104298, [katzenhilfe-bocholt\(at\)hotmail\(dot\)de](mailto:katzenhilfe-bocholt(at)hotmail(dot)de)

Animal emergency call Bocholt e.V., (02871) 9911188, [tiernotrufbocholt\(at\)gmail\(dot\)com](mailto:tiernotrufbocholt(at)gmail(dot)com)





*Representatives of the Bocholt Animal Welfare Association, the Bocholt Cat Aid, the Bocholt Animal Emergency Call Centre and the city of Bocholt remind us of the cat protection ordinance*  
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