

“I want them to live their best lives.” A qualitative exploration of owner experiences with walking their cats

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Supplementary material

Initial Survey Questions:

Exploring Cat Walking Practices and Owner Perceptions

Owner

1. Age: (State)
2. Gender: (State)
3. Location: (State/Province/County and Country)
4. What type of property do you live in? Select one:

- ☐ House (Detached)
- ☐ Semi-detached house (Duplex)
- ☐ Terraced house (Town home)
- ☐ Flat (Apartment)
- ☐ Vehicle Home (Caravan, etc.)
- ☐ Other (Please state)

Cat

5. Age: (State)
6. Sex and Neuter Status - Select one: Male Neutered / Male Entire/ Female Neutered / Female Entire
7. What outdoor spaces does your cat have access to at home? Select all that apply:
 - ☐ None
 - ☐ Porch or balcony
 - ☐ Catio/Other enclosed outdoor area
 - ☐ Garden (not enclosed)
 - ☐ Own wider property (owned fields/land)
 - ☐ Unowned wider property (public or neighbour-owned gardens/fields/land)
8. What degree of access does your cat have to outdoor spaces at home? Select one:
 - ☐ None
 - ☐ Restricted (I will let them out if they ask and I think it is okay, and I have to give them access)
 - ☐ Semi-restricted (I will let them out whenever they ask, but I have to give them access)
 - ☐ Unrestricted (They can go outdoors whenever they want to, through a cat flap, constantly open window, etc.)

Initial Interview Schedule/Questions:

Exploring Cat Walking Practices and Owner Perceptions

- *Introduce yourself to participant, thank them for their interest*
- *Briefly remind them of the project direction*
- *Confirm they have read PIS, signed consent form and completed demographics survey*
- *Ask if they have any questions*

Main Interview

Q1 - Tell me about your cat/s

-How would you describe the relationship between you and your cat?

-Where did you obtain your cat? How long have you had them?

Q2 - Why do you walk your cat?

Q3 - Tell me about how you introduced your cat/s to walks?

-How old was the cat when you started?

-What equipment did you use?

-What training, if any, did you use?

Q4 - What normally happens on a walk?

-Where do you go?

-How long do walks tend to be?

-Do you tend to stick to any routine or is there a lot of variation?

-What is the main purpose of your walks (for example, exploration, exercise or bonding)?

Q5 - What does your cat normally do on a walk?

-Is that what you would like the cat to do?

Q6 – What is your overall experience of walking your cat like?

-What, if anything, do you enjoy?

-What, if anything, do you not enjoy?

Q7 – What did you think about walking cats before you started?

-How did you become aware of it?

-Were there any physical/mental/social barriers or challenges you were concerned about?

Q8 – How do other people react to you walking your cat?

-How do strangers when you come across them when out walking?

- How do people react in conversation?
- Have you experienced reactions being different in different areas at all?
- Has anything bad happened that you are willing to share?

Q9 – Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your experience? (RQ1)

Thank the participant for taking part, remind them they can ask for the findings once completed