



## **I cannot let my cats outside because of my high traffic location**

Ideally, to maximise their quality of life, cats should be allowed to go outside. However, this may not be possible if you live in an area of very high traffic density with very busy roads.

But does this mean that they won't be able to go outside at all?

Not at all.

You can actually take cats for walks on a harness and lead!

Taking a cat for walks on a harness and lead is not as far-fetched as you might think. We ourselves take cats for walks from time to time – as it can be very useful when the cat lives in a busy built up area where it cannot be allowed out because of the danger from traffic. Most cats take to a lead very well indeed; it's only the fact that we don't often see cats on a lead that there is a general perception (incorrect), that cats will probably not take to a lead.

With the harness in place on the cat, open the door and allow it to walk outside. You may find that it doesn't want to go outside! In this case, you will need to pick the cat up, and place it gently on the ground about 5 yards from the door. Keep the lead taut so that the cat cannot take off at high speed in a particular direction. If the cat appears to be stressed, bend down and stroke and reassure it. If this reassurance doesn't work, and the cat is totally freaked out, pick the cat up and take it back into the house. (The process can be repeated a few hours later). Hopefully the cat will eventually begin to explore and sniff the surroundings, and enjoy the fresh air. Gently lead it away from awkward places (behind bushes etc) otherwise the lead will become tangled up. You may find that the cat eventually makes its way back to the door, in which case, open the door and let it back into the house – reassure it, stroke it, and perhaps give it an edible treat. That has been a success! By repeating this process several times a day, over a period of several days, the cat will get to know the "route" back into the house and will begin to look forward to its daily walks.

And so will you!