

A concerned member of the public called us, after spotting a deserted house in Newlands, with many cats in the (what used to be!) garden. On arrival, we found one of the worse cases of animal abuse and neglect, we have ever come across. There were many cats everywhere; difficult for us to estimate the number.

We also found 2 very tiny kittens, only a few days old. They are now in the care of our vet, dr Shelagh Hahn. There were carcasses and skeletons of cats lying all over in the garden. Empty bowls were lying around with only some rainwater inside.

According to the neighbours, who hate the cats because they are killing their baby rabbits (yes, these people are breeding with rabbits!), a very old lady use to live in the house, but when she fell ill, her son fetched her and left all the cats behind. This was approximately 6 months ago!

The cats are all emaciated and some of them have become wild from being left to fend for themselves for so long. The house was locked and we suspected that there were many more kittens inside the house.

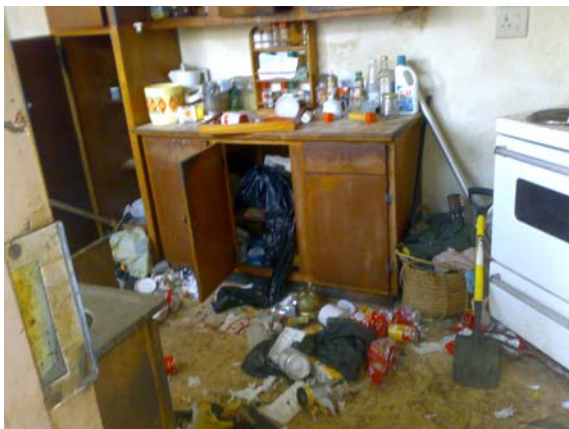
The next day, the Newlands police broke the lock on the kitchen door, giving us access to the house. Four more kittens were found inside the house, as well as more body parts of cats. This suggests that, cats either died of hunger and were eaten by the others, or cats have been slaughtered, or both! There was also the biggest mess inside the house any of us had ever seen. Rubbish and cat feces were covering the floors throughout the house.



Heads, skins and tails from different cats



Skeletons and bones



Rubbish in the kitchen



Rubbish in the living room



Cat feces everywhere in the house



Skin, hair and dry blood on the main bedroom's carpet

We are still continuing rescue operation, however many factors are complicating the situation and therefore hampering our rescue attempts. We asked the Newlands police to arrange a meeting at the house with the old lady's son. He denies having anything to do with the cats dying at the house and also claims that they are all strays and do not belong to his mother. The police told us that they cannot investigate the case any further.

With all the commotion going on, the cats disappear during the day and only return at night. We are now leaving traps overnight, something we NEVER do, but this is our only hope to get the cats out. We have trapped another 4 cats this way, which brings the total to 19.



Some of the cats we have rescued



There are so many unanswered questions. Is the old lady still alive? Does she know her cats were left behind? How did these cats die? Why is there so much rubbish and cat feces in the house? Why didn't her son clean up the mess in her house after removing her?