

Cats and Dogs A new set of self-adhesives

Technical details

Printer Walsall Security Printers

Process Gravure

Stamp size 37 × 27.2mm

Sheetlet size 213 × 64mm unfolded

Retail book size 240 × 64mm folded out

Perforation 14.5 × 14 die-cut

Phosphor Two bands

Gum Self-adhesive

Ten 1st class stamps featuring unusual and amusing photographs of cats and dogs will go on sale at post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic outlets on 13 February. The stamps will be printed on a self-adhesive laminate which incorporates a moisture soluble gum layer between the face paper and adhesive. The stamps can be peeled from the laminate. The stamps are arranged in two rows of five, and the sheetlet rouletted between columns 2/3 and 4/5 for ease of folding by the user. The stamps are aimed at senders of social mail, similarly to the greetings stamp issues of 1989-97.

The stamps will also be available in a special retail book containing the 10 Cats & Dogs stamps and two 1st class definitives, all self-adhesive. This book, printed by Walsall Security Printers, will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets and selected retail outlets, price £3.24.

The stamps are designed by Johnson Banks, using photographs by Magnum Photos: three dogs and two cats above, and three cats and two dogs below. The dogs are by Elliott Erwitt; the cats are by (top, from left) Richard Kalvar and Ferdinand Scianna, and (bottom, from left) Martine Franck, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Jean Gaumy. The Queen's silhouette and the 1st indicator are printed in silver ink.

Details of sponsored handstamps for 13 February will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). For a sample copy, write to The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ.



Colours

Black ● light grey ● bluish-grey ● silver

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 13 February, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Petts Wood, Orpington must reach the Bureau by the day of issue. Price £3.59 UK (including VAT) or £3.06 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: British Philatelic Bureau, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (Petts Wood postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0103' (Bureau), or 'FD0104' (Petts Wood). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Petts Wood postmark. A non-pictorial Petts Wood postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'FD0104 NP' ●

celebrates our closest of animal companions

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Royal Mail First Day Cover

Small text on the right: Royal Mail 15 South Gate Crescent, Eastleigh, Hants RG50 1AA



Although dogs and cats are very different, they share one important feature: they are the only animals on which we have bestowed the full freedom of our homes.

We keep many other companion creatures – birds in aviaries, hamsters in cages, fish in tanks and rabbits in hutches – yet they aren't allowed the free run of our houses or apartments. So why have cats and dogs been elevated to the unique position of our house-mates?

Part of the answer lies in the long history of domestication. Back in the Stone Age, human hunters set about taming the wild wolf – their competitor – into the domestic dog that would become their guardian and hunting companion.

The differences between wolf and dog DNA show that it has taken 135,000 years for the wolf to evolve into all modern dog breeds.

Wolves are highly sociable and learn to be subservient to dominant pack members.

Similarly, once a dog is tamed, it transfers all its emotional attachment to its human companions. It treats them as if they are rather strange-looking wolves and is quickly prepared to follow its human 'pack' leader. The behaviour of wolves has not merely been retained in modern dogs. It has been exaggerated in the different breeds.

Those that are best suited to being indoor pets are the ones that have been selectively bred to become the most 'juvenile'. The lap and toy dogs

Dogs come in many shapes and sizes, but cats are far closer to their wild origins – the North African wild cat. The vast grain stores of ancient Egypt were overrun by rats and mice, which attracted the local wild cats. Before long, these valuable pest controllers were cared for and, indeed, protected by humans. To kill a cat was punishable by death.

In personality the cat differs significantly from the dog: it isn't a pack animal. The dog sees its human companions as pseudo-parents and pack leaders to be protected and obeyed. The cat also sees its human companions as pseudo-parents, but beyond that they are merely a useful source of food and shelter. The dog is a slavish follower; the cat is more self-centred. As a result of these differences, it has been said that cat-people and



A well-illustrated presentation pack (left, price £3.05) and stamp cards (price 25p each) will be available at main post offices and philatelic outlets. The pack has been written by well-known writer and broadcaster Dr Desmond Morris.