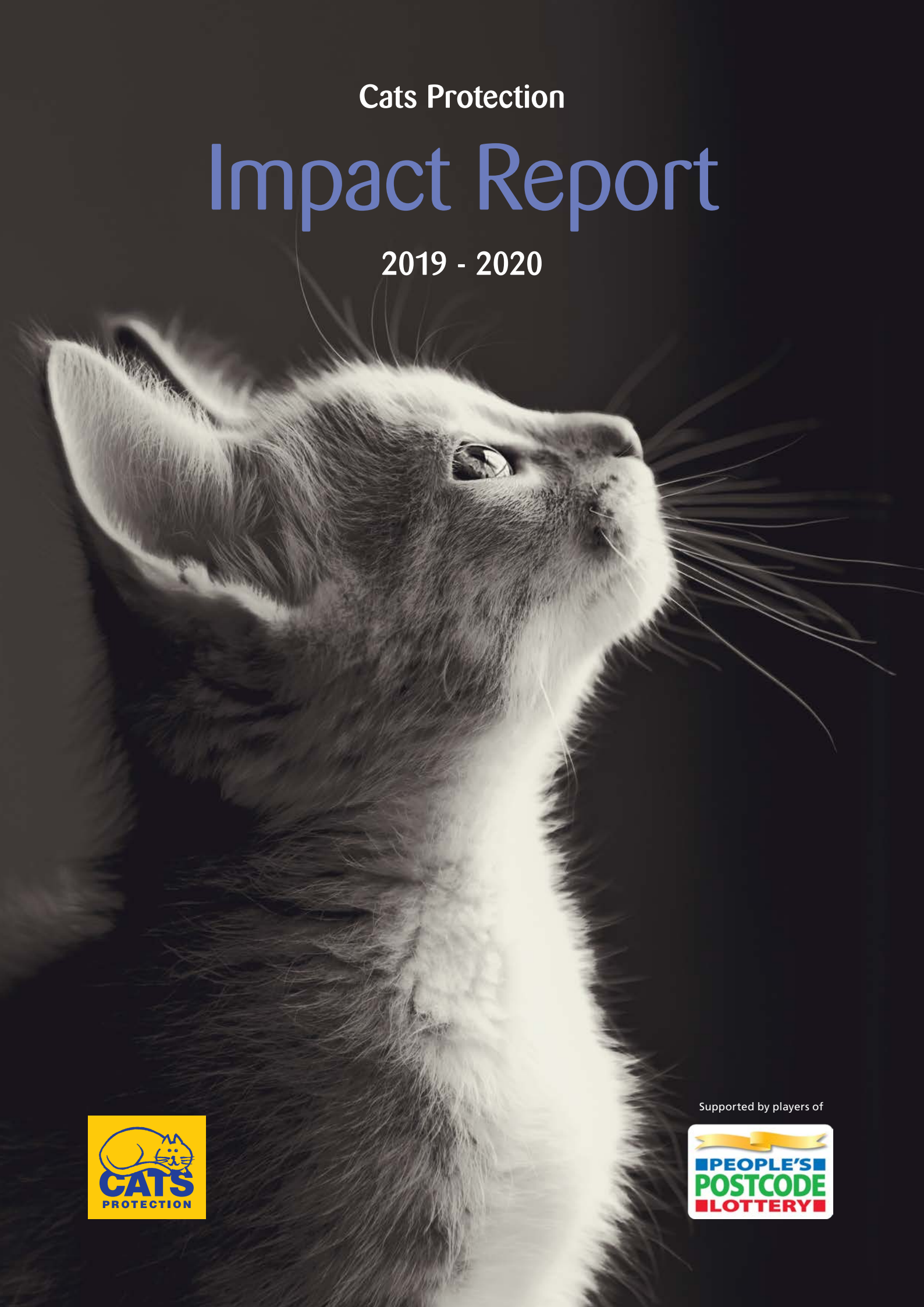


Cats Protection

# Impact Report

2019 - 2020



Supported by players of



# Thank you

2020 has been a particularly challenging year for the charity sector, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here at Cats Protection, the safety and wellbeing of our volunteers, employees, supporters and beneficiaries – and of all the cats in our care – has always been of paramount importance; a fact that has been highlighted by the crisis.

We have had to adapt to new ways of working to ensure that people and cats remain safe. This included a temporary pause on rehoming (while our volunteers and employees continued to care for the thousands of cats in our care) and, later, the introduction of a new 'hands-free' rehoming process to allow people to continue safely adopting cats from us and cats to reach their forever homes.

We have also had to stop many activities that generate the money for cats' care. Our shops have faced temporary closures and our face-to-face fundraising activities and events had to stop for long periods.

Throughout all this, the support we have received from players of People's Postcode Lottery has enabled us to continue our essential work helping cats in need and their owners. It has made the difference in what we have been able to do, during COVID-19 and in looking to the future.

On behalf of all of us at Cats Protection, I would like to say a heart-felt thank you to players for their ongoing generosity, which has never been appreciated more than over the last year.

Thank you!

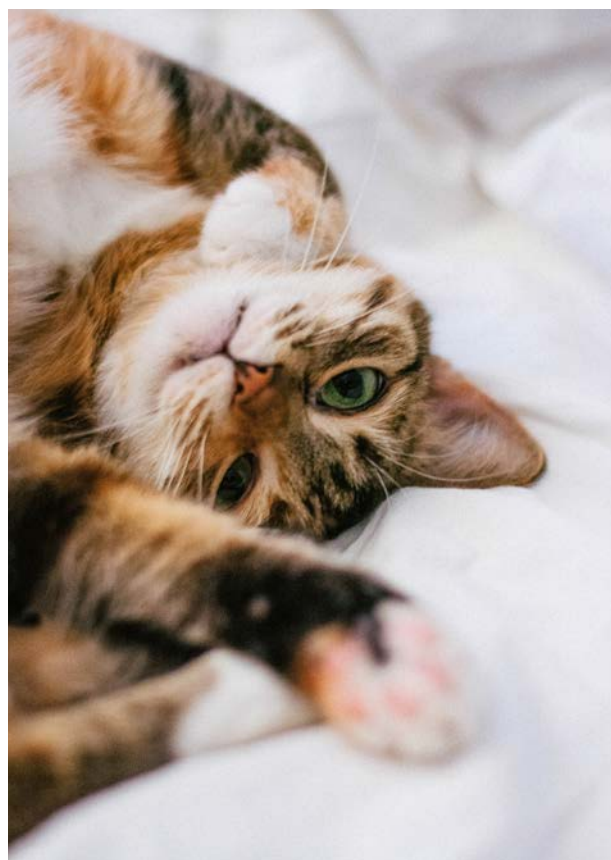


**James Yeates**  
Chief Executive  
Cats Protection



## What Cats Protection achieved in 2020

- Despite COVID-19 restrictions, our branches and centres across the UK homed over 10,000 cats between the first lockdown in March and the end of October through the introduction of 'hands-free homing'. This uses an online matching process, including phone and video calls with potential adopters, and either socially-distanced delivery of cats by employees and volunteers to their new homes or COVID-safe collection, as and when lockdown measures allow
- We continued to run the largest single-species neutering programme in the world; helping neuter 76,000 cats and kittens by the end of October
- We supported around 11,500 volunteers to help cats across the UK, adapting roles where possible to accommodate restrictions
- Due to restrictions on face-to-face gatherings this year, the Education team started to deliver talks virtually, with sign-ups picking up once schools reopened in September. They also started using digital platforms to reach young audiences. They received over 30,000 views on their Facebook Lives and created downloadable 'Moggy Modules' home education packs, which were supported by videos. They had 3,445 YouTube views on their Moggy Modules and World Animal Day videos, and reached 13,686 Moggy Modules and Feline Focus pack downloads
- Our Contact Centre handled over 99,000 enquiries from members of the public between the start of the year and the end of October, offering much-needed help, advice and reassurance. When we were restricted to only taking in cats in emergency situations, the team helped prioritise urgent cases. In June we launched a new web chat feature on our national website enabling the public to get instant answers to their cat-related queries
- In the first 10 months of 2020 we achieved 5.3 million visits to our branch, centre and national websites. This is a huge increase on the 4.4 million visits we received during 2019, which is largely due to our 'cats and coronavirus' content and FAQs that were widely searched for
- We released our CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 UK report. This involved speaking to over 10,000 people from across the UK, making it the largest and most comprehensive report on cats. This was sent to the government animal welfare teams in England,



- Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as a number of organisations in the animal sector and we received very positive feedback
- We held our first annual Feline Behaviour Conference, which became an online event due to the pandemic, allowing us to share our expertise and insight. 450 people signed up from all over the world, including the USA, India, New Zealand, Brazil, Ireland and the UK. The event was attended by people from across the animal welfare sector, including vets, vet nurses and charity workers, as well as members of the public
- We held our first online drop-in event for MPs to talk to them about our campaign to make microchipping compulsory for owned cats. Over 40 MPs attended and pledged their support
- We opened our new Harrow Homing Centre in North London in March, which contains 20 cat pens and can care for up to 600 cats per year
- We reopened our Wrexham Adoption Centre in a new, more prominent location and with better facilities in January. The centre can take in up to 45 cats at one time

# How have People's Postcode Lottery players helped?

At the end of 2019 we received £1.216m thanks to players. This supported our homing and volunteering work in England, Scotland and Wales throughout 2020 by funding:

## 25 Cat Care Assistant roles

Cat Care Assistants (CCAs) look after the day-to-day care of the cats in our centres, making sure they receive top-notch care and helping to get them ready to go to loving new homes.

## 19 Volunteer Team Leader roles

Our Volunteer Team Leaders (VTLs) recruit, train and manage teams of volunteers who support the employees in our centres in a variety of different roles.

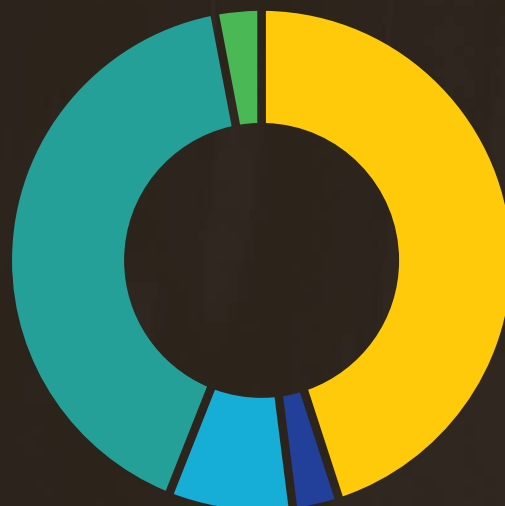
## 2 Behaviour team roles

Our Behaviour team helps branches and centres to provide the best possible care for each cat while they are with us as well as providing positive cat behaviour information to the public, helping owners understand their cats better and leading to more cats living happy lives.

## 10,000 microchips for cats leaving our centres

Our CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 UK report showed that 26% of the nation's 10.2m owned cats are not microchipped. We firmly believe that microchipping is the best and safest means of identification for cats and greatly increases the chances of a happy reunion should a cat go missing. This is why every cat over the age of 12 weeks that leaves our care is microchipped before adoption.

This is how we allocated funds from People's Postcode Lottery in 2020:



£547,200	45%	Cat Care Assistant posts
£498,560	41%	Volunteer Team Leader posts
£97,280	8%	Behaviour team posts
£36,480	3%	Microchipping at centres
£36,480	3%	Impact reporting and partnership management

# What have Cats Protection and players of People's Postcode Lottery achieved together?

Support from players of People's Postcode Lottery has enabled us to keep working, both directly and indirectly, towards our ultimate goal of every cat being treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs.

## Direct impacts

### Cat Care Assistants

- The funding directly impacted on 10% of Cat Care Assistants at our centres across England, Scotland and Wales who, during the first nine months of 2020, oversaw the care of almost 1,000 cats
- During the first ten months of 2020, our centres homed over 9,000 cats and reunited 217 cats with their owners
- Despite a reduction in the number of cats homed this year, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, CCAs have continued to provide first-class care to cats at our centres while they wait to find new homes
- CCAs have worked hard to provide extra entertainment and interaction for the cats, knowing that their stays would be longer than usual
- CCAs have adapted to new ways of working to ensure the safety of the cats, team members and potential adopters
- They embraced the new hands-free homing technique, allowing cats to be adopted while keeping social distancing measures in place. This included learning new ways of using technology to accommodate cat introductions to potential new owners. As always, every effort is made to ensure the right cat goes to the right home
- CCAs spend time socialising nervous, hard-to-home cats in particular to improve their chances of being adopted more quickly

### Volunteer Team Leaders

- The funding directly supported the roles of all 19 of the Volunteer Team Leaders at our centres across England, Scotland and Wales
- These VTLs directly support around 2,000 volunteers who assist centre employees in a variety of different roles
- While some volunteer roles have had to be put on hold at certain intervals during 2020, VTLs have worked hard to keep their teams engaged and interested in the charity's work
- VTLs have recruited and overseen volunteers to take on a new role driving cats to their new homes as part of our hands-free homing process
- The involvement of volunteers frees up time for some of the experienced employees to focus on specialist tasks
- Volunteers bring a diverse range of experience and knowledge to the charity, which is shared within teams
- Socialisation volunteers improve the quality of life for cats while they are in the shelter environment and help get them ready for new homes
- Support from volunteers helps ensure the organisation's sustainability and capacity to deliver
- The work of VTLs improves the retention rate of volunteers, meaning the skills and knowledge the volunteers bring are not lost
- Members of the public have a variety of volunteering opportunities to get involved with

## Behaviour team

- Funding covers the roles of our two specialist cat behaviour employees who are dedicated to understanding cats' needs
- They provide best practice advice and support to our 37 centres and around 230 branches across the UK to help them best meet the behavioural needs of the cats while they are in our care
- Between the start of the year and the end of October, the team assisted with over 300 individual behaviour cases relating to cats in care, adopted cats or potential relinquishments
- Cats are matched appropriately with new owners
- Cats are better prepared for homing
- Cats are less stressed while they are in our care through awareness of stress reduction practices
- Hard to home cats are given the best opportunity to find their forever home
- Employees are enabled to have conversations with new owners about cat behaviour, leading to fewer cats being returned after adoption
- Cats Protection continues to lead as an authority on cat welfare through increased awareness of feline behaviour, both in care and in the home
- Our behaviour knowledge is shared across the animal welfare sector with team members speaking at events, writing for external publications and educating vet and vet nurse students about cat behaviour
- The team organised our first ever Feline Behaviour Conference which took place online due to the pandemic, improving cats' lives beyond Cats Protection's care
- Input into the design of our new Harrow Homing Centre to reduce stress for cats while they await new homes



## Microchips

- Funding covers the microchipping of 10,000 cats across our centres in England, Scotland and Wales
- This contributed to our overall achievement of microchipping every cat over the age of 12 weeks before adoption, thus increasing the proportion of cats with a permanent means of identification as well as the likelihood of happy reunions should these cats go missing
- Our employees and volunteers discuss the importance of microchipping, as well as the importance of keeping details up to date and the dangers of collars, with new owners which increases awareness around these issues
- Our stance on microchipping allows us to lobby government and other stakeholders
- Stray cats that come into our care with a microchip stay with us for less time due to easier identification of their owners. This frees up space more quickly allowing us to help more cats
- Our Christmas animation, *Casper's Magical Journey*, was based around a real-life microchipping reunion and promoted the benefits of having pets chipped. It was voiced by Holly Willoughby and was featured by *This Morning* as well as a wide selection of national and regional media

## Enabled impacts

### Cat Care Assistants

- The funding has indirectly impacted on all cats homed throughout our centres in England, Scotland and Wales, as knowledge is shared between centres and CCAs, who interacted with all cats that came into our centres' care
- Although there have been fewer opportunities for CCAs to interact with members of the public face-to-face this year, they do still offer advice when having virtual meetings with potential adopters so owners are enabled to meet their cats' welfare needs, thus improving the lives of cats
- A benefit of the situation this year has been that, as the homing process has evolved, there have been more follow-up conversations with adopters than before. This means more people are better informed about cats' needs and responsible cat ownership
- The new process has proved to be very successful in matching cats to homes
- Cat suffering is reduced as CCAs are trained and equipped to best meet their individual needs while in care
- Lifelong companion animal bonds are formed between cats and their new owners. This has been particularly important for people during a time when many have spent a large amount of time at home alone or without their usual routine and interactions



*Volunteer Team Leader Cate Dodds with former feline visitor Maud at Newbury Adoption Centre*



*Cat Care Assistant and fosterer Lynzi Sizeland with Pickle the kitten*

### Volunteer Team Leaders

- Opportunities for people who love cats but can't have one of their own to benefit from spending time with them
- Volunteers develop skills that will be useful in the workplace and improve their employability and potential income, which will benefit them and their families
- Volunteering acts as a springboard into a career in animal welfare
- Increased self-esteem and general wellbeing of volunteers
- Reduction in loneliness and isolation as volunteers are part of a team and build connections with others in their area
- Volunteers also engage with Cats Protection and animal welfare issues in general. They become ambassadors for cat welfare



## Behaviour team

- Undesirable feline behaviours are better understood and reduced or eradicated leading to happier cats and reduced stress for owners. More cats will stay in their homes as a result
- Human-feline relationships are improved, and people gain more joy from pet ownership, supporting the creation of lifelong bonds
- Owners are enabled to better meet their cats' behavioural needs
- The general public are more aware of cat health and wellbeing, particularly relating to behaviour
- Discussions around cat behaviour with new owners promote greater awareness of cats' behavioural needs, which can be shared more widely
- Team members took part in two cat behaviour-themed Facebook Live sessions that received 19.3k and 187k views
- The team also had input into more than 20 behaviour-related videos that were shared on our Facebook page during the year, receiving a total of over 1.6m views, leading to many cat owners being better informed about their cats' welfare

## Microchipping

- Cats begin their new lives safer, more identifiable and demonstrably owned
- Cats more quickly reunited with their owners
- More cats can be easily identified if killed or injured in a road traffic incident, meaning their owners receive closure
- Ownership disputes can be more easily resolved when cats are microchipped
- In emergency situations veterinary care can be more readily given as owner permissions are easier to secure
- The general public are better informed about the importance of microchips and of keeping their contact details up to date
- Owned cats are less likely to be mistaken for strays and homed to a new family when their owners cannot be traced



# How have players transformed the lives of cats and people?

Players of People's Postcode Lottery have supported the work which has made each of these outcomes possible:

## Jaffa gets the treatments he needs at Downham Adoption Centre

The most common type of behaviour case dealt with by our Behaviour team is aggressive-type behaviours towards people, which account for about a third of cases.

When Jaffa came into the care of Cats Protection's Downham Market Adoption Centre for displaying aggressive behaviour, it was suspected there may be underlying causes. He had clearly overgroomed his whole hind quarters and his previous owner had also noticed a decrease in his appetite, so he was taken to the vet the next day.

He was sedated for x-rays which showed pelvic abnormalities, with his right pelvic wing fractured and possibly fused. The vets thought this was most likely caused by an old trauma injury, such as a possible road traffic accident, and decided on a trial of pain relief to see if this made a difference.

Deputy Manager Stacey Ely said:

“ Gradually, he settled and began to respond to people in a positive way and, over time, his pain scores improved, too. When the vet saw him nine days later, she was amazed in the difference in him – he was mobile, far less reactive to being handled and generally much happier, approaching her for a fuss with no issues. His fur was also beginning to grow back.

I think lots of people are unaware that a change in behaviour may be caused by a medical issue, so we would urge anyone whose cat starts behaving unusually to take them to the vet for a check-up as soon as possible. ”



Jaffa during his stay at  
Downham Adoption Centre

Jaffa was adopted by an owner who was happy to take him on knowing he would need medication long term to help keep him comfortable and pain free. He is now happily settled into his new home.

## Volunteering at Harrow Homing Centre is a lifeline during pandemic

**Laura Duggan suffers with a number of health conditions including fibromyalgia, osteoarthritis and an autoimmune condition called Sjogrens Syndrome, and says that volunteering has been a real lifeline to her during the pandemic this year.**

Laura took on a Cat Care Volunteer role at Cats Protection's new Harrow Homing Centre shortly after it opened in March 2020. Soon after, however, lockdown hit and she was unable to visit the centre for many months.

In August she was able to return in a more restricted role as Cat Care Support Volunteer. Despite the role having little to no cat contact, Laura is delighted to be back at the centre.

Volunteer Team Leader Caroline Shilton supports Laura in her role and said:

*“ Laura’s presence brightens the day for the team as she is always so enthusiastic and proactively looks for new ways she can help. She is even taking home damaged cat beds and things to repair in her own time. She’s currently working on fundraising ideas too! ”*

Laura says that having a routine and knowing she is directly helping the team to care for the cats has helped her regain a sense of purpose and made all the difference to her wellbeing this year.

She said:

*“ Caroline is so wonderful and supportive and the whole team is very understanding of my health conditions, which is fantastic as I never know how much my body will be able to move from day to day. It’s such a relief not to have any stress about this, as worrying would inevitably exacerbate my physical symptoms.*

*Having been bed-bound for some time after my accident I’m just so grateful that I can have some semblance of a normal life. It was such a dramatic change going from being an active working mum to being stuck at home for so long, so it’s wonderful to feel useful again! ”*



Laura Duggan ready for her volunteer shift at Harrow Homing Centre



## Tabatha and kittens receive expert cat care at Bridgend Adoption Centre

**Tabby cat Tabatha was heavily pregnant when she arrived at the Bridgend Adoption Centre, following the death of her previous owner, and gave birth to six kittens just a few days later.**

Two of the kittens were much smaller than the others and sadly, despite vet care and the best efforts of the team, one did not survive. The rest of the litter were named Chadwick, T'challa, Nakia, Okoye and Ramonda, after the late Chadwick Boseman and characters from his movie *Black Panther*, following a call for naming suggestions on the centre's social media.



Cat Care Assistant  
Emily Bright with  
one of the kittens

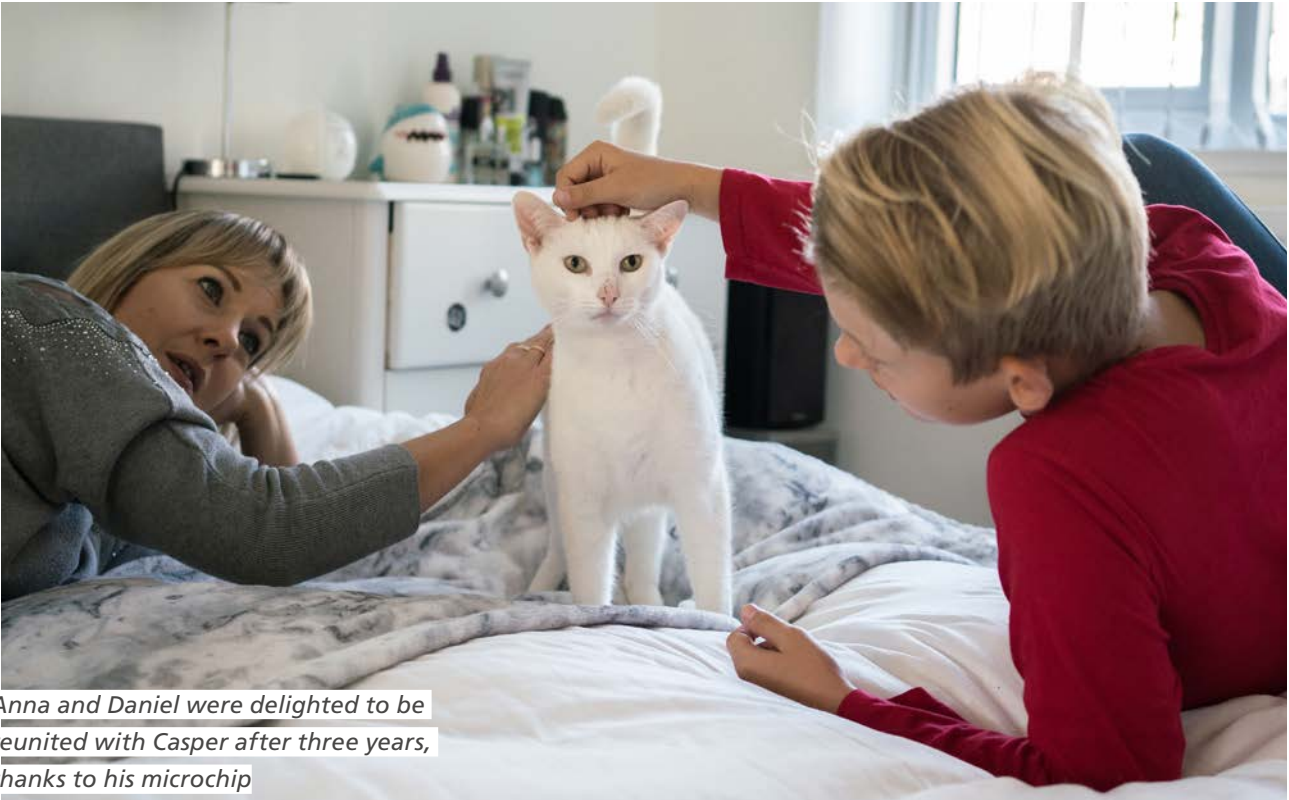
Cat Care Assistant Emily Bright, who looked after the tiny tabbies, said:

*“The last few months have been difficult for so many, so we asked our Facebook supporters for names with a theme of happiness and positivity for these kittens. We loved the suggestion to honour Chadwick Boseman and think the kittens really suit their new names.*

*We're really grateful to players of People's Postcode Lottery whose support helps fund roles like mine, allowing us to continue being there for cats in need, particularly during what has been a very challenging time.*”

Happily Tabatha and her kittens have all now found loving homes.

Photos: Cats Protection Bridgend



Anna and Daniel were delighted to be reunited with Casper after three years, thanks to his microchip

## Microchipping miracle

Our Christmas animation this year was inspired by the true tale of lucky cat Casper and his young owner, Daniel. When Casper went missing, Daniel's mum Anna worried how their beloved cat would fend for himself out in the cold, or whether he'd been injured and was unable to make his way back home.

For three long years, there was no sign of Casper.  
Anna said:

“ I was heartbroken when he didn't come back. I certainly didn't expect to see him again. ”

Then, a snowy-white moggy was handed in at Cats Protection's Cornwall Adoption Centre in Truro. The centre team were surprised when they scanned him for a microchip and found it was registered to an address in Plymouth, 55 miles away. They rang Anna straight away to give her the good news – Casper was safe, and ready to come home.

After receiving the call, Anna made the 110-mile round-trip from Plymouth to the centre in Truro to collect Casper.

Anna said:

“ I'm so glad that not only did we have him microchipped but that we kept our details up to date. Casper has settled right back in and seemed to remember us straight away. ”

With support from players of People's Postcode Lottery, Cats Protection microchips every cat over the age of 12 weeks before adoption to help ensure many more happy reunions like this one.

[View the animation at www.cats.org.uk/christmas](http://www.cats.org.uk/christmas)

“ With help from People’s Postcode Lottery players, we have been able to continue to be here for cats during the most challenging of years.

We’d like to say a huge thank you to players for their ongoing support, which enables us to help thousands of cats as well as the humans that love them. ”



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[www.cats.org.uk](http://www.cats.org.uk)