



Newsletter

Summer 2021

Issue 20



**Barnstaple & District
Cats Protection**



Pawsome Afternoon Tea

Brew-Bake-Invite-Delight

Be part of the greatest afternoon this August by hosting your own Pawsome Afternoon Tea.

Make a cuppa for your Family, Friends or workmates, Bake or buy some tasty treats and have a fun filled afternoon in aid of Cats Protection.

**Sign up to receive your free pack at :
www.pawsometea.org**



Thank you

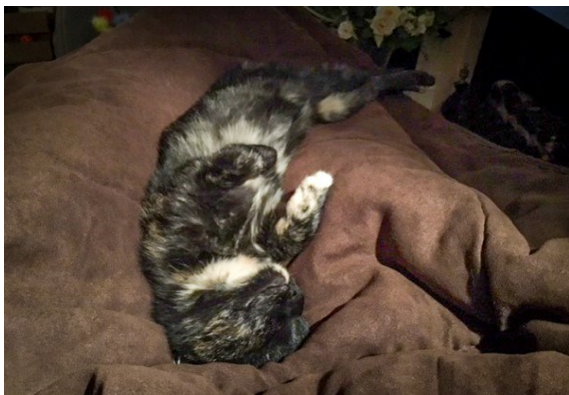
We would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who has put food etc. in our supermarket food collection bins.

If you are a local business who would be happy to have a Cats Protection collection box on the premises, could you please contact us at, enquiries@barnstaple.cats.org.uk

Tilly the Blind Kitten Update

Readers may remember Tilly featuring in the Spring Newsletter. As well as being totally blind, Tilly was diagnosed with a serious heart condition and not expected to live for very long. Her adopter Liz installed 12 video cameras and strategically positioned them throughout the cottage, so she could keep an eye on Tilly while at work. Concerned that Tilly wouldn't suffer, Liz also obtained medication from the vet (as a precaution) so she could calm Tilly should she need to be put to sleep. Happily, Tilly is still enjoying an active life, with no signs yet of slowing down. Strangely, it was Liz herself, rushed to hospital with a suspected heart attack, who thought she was beating Tilly to it.

Fosterer Sue had Tilly back with Jack Russell Squidge for a few



days, and was amazed how easily Tilly settled back in, just as if she had moved into another familiar room. Tilly clearly found Squidge's presence reassuring and would try and rub against her. Ever patient and tolerant, Squidge was careful not to tread on her, but also aware

that Tilly often tries to give her a playful swipe.

It didn't take Tilly long to locate a large scratchpad tunnel (a new acquisition), immediately giving it the seal of approval with a lively zooming in and out play session. As before, Tilly did a lot of kneading and purring on Sue's lap. Also, she felt safe and secure enough to sleep stretched out on her back, something she hadn't done before, and even loved having her belly stroked. Sue was impressed with how confident and contented she had become.

Following her discharge from hospital, Liz couldn't wait to be reunited with Tilly. She was pleased to see how amazingly well Tilly settled back home as though nothing had happened. Not fazed by the car journey ether. Touchingly, the other two cats (looked after by a neighbour) greeted Tilly like a long-lost friend, sniffing and kissing each other for a full two minutes before going off to play, bonded and happy. Liz is recovering well from blood clots on the lungs. When first adopted by Liz, Tilly had been terrified of falling down the stairs. Liz placed small boxes on each step to help. These were removed as Tilly soon became more confident and no longer needed her own flight of steps. Tilly now treats the stairs like the fast lane of the M4!

Social distancing in the breakfast queue!



Liz always went to bed with the dog and three cats. Tilly loved to sleep near Liz, but the best spots had already been taken, so Liz bought a radiator hammock and fitted it over the headboard. Next time she looked she was amazed to find Tilly curled up fast asleep in it. She had found it on her own and seemed to know it was meant for her. Something fell to the floor with a loud bang, one evening which really scared Tilly. Rushing off, she ran up the stairs to hide under the bed. Liz was surprised to see cat Maggie rush after the frightened kitten to comfort and reassure her that she was safe.



Tilly has become very adept at 'zoom bombing' meetings at Church and work. She clambers up on Liz's chest and/or neck and flops on her side batting her earrings and rubbing against Liz's cheek. Tilly's antics cause a lot of laughter and (sometimes) a welcome distraction to the meetings.

Tilly has learnt several words now that make it easier for her Mum to come to her rescue. One of these words is 'Air-lift'; as a younger kitten she would climb up on to things she shouldn't, only to find she couldn't get down. She would squeakily meow to Liz until she went over and lifted her down. Liz used to ask Tilly, "do you need an air-lift?" It wasn't long before she knew that meant Liz was going to place her hand under her to airlift her out. She instinctively nestled down into the palm of Liz's hand and dangled her front paws though Liz's fingers – just like a mother hen lowering her body to sit on an egg!

Another word she knows now is "fluff-bucket". Her fluff-bucket is one of Tilly's favourite places to sit – it's a circular furry hammock at the top of her scratching tree. When she hears this word, she knows exactly where Liz is going to 'airlift' her to. Amazingly, she then starts to feel for the fluff bucket with one of her back legs until she is securely in it.

Tilly now spends a lot of time outside, making full use of the 54ft x 17ft secure cat/rabbit-run. She bombs up and down it, and fully uses the climbing activities created by Liz, wooden shelves, ladders and tunnels. She also enjoys dive-bombing the grass and scratching the tree. It is sometimes hard to believe she has no sight at all because she's mapped everything out in detail using all of her other senses.

Because of her enlarged heart, Tilly was deemed far too vulnerable and weak to be spayed. Recently, she experienced her first heat cycle. There was a lot of caterwauling and yowling vocalisations, and Tilly did a lot of presenting to neutered cat Jamie (and anything else!).

A Feliway pheromone diffuser seemed to calm poor Jamie down. Let's hope all the excitement and loud vocalisations haven't put too much strain on Tilly's heart. Fortunately, there is no chance of Tilly getting pregnant as the back garden is a fully secure self-contained run. She spends a lot of time out there now, and her favourite trick is stalking the rabbit, Rupert; fortunately he doesn't mind, being already used to the other two cats.

As cats use sound and smell more than sight, blindness is not so



much of a handicap for them as we might think. Tilly is always listening and responding to encouragement, such as, when it's safe to step or jump down, and she always comes when called. The total trust she has in Liz enables her to learn very quickly. Sue and Liz believe blind cats can live more interesting lives because they are so full of investigation and discovery. Life is so much more of an adventure to them.

Whatever happens to Tilly, Liz can be happy in the knowledge that her short life will have been blessed with much happiness and love.

All these cats and kittens are now settling into their new homes.



Flip



Amber



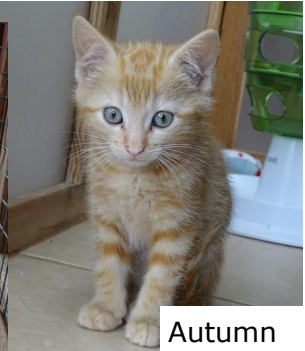
Archie



Dexter



Ash



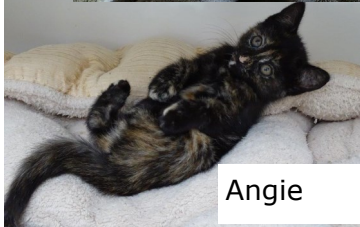
Autumn



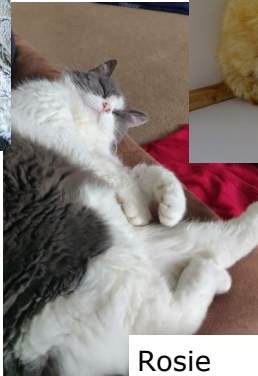
Majsi



Bailey



Angie



Rosie

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Please tick this box if you are a UK taxpayer and want to gift aid this donation, and any other donation you make in future or have made in the last 4 years to Cats Protection ☐

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