



ELTHAM, SIDCUP & DISTRICT BRANCH

Registered Charity No. 203644

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2021-2022

A MYSTERY TAIL

BIANCA is a lady of mystery with a past shrouded in uncertainty.

The pretty tortie was reported to us when her owner disappeared without a trace, leaving her behind in Grove Park.

His flat was being cleared by the landlord, so he was obviously not coming back.

A kind neighbour Jeunine saw Bianca's plight and stepped in with another resident to feed her.

But the little cat was living outside and the weather was turning cold. By this time, Bianca had been fending for herself for four weeks and really needed help.

A volunteer collected her and then did the customary sweep for a micro-chip.

There was one and we expected it to register her with the man in Grove Park. But there was a surprise as it gave her official owner as Joanna in Greenford, West London!

It also said that the cat had been reported missing in September 2017.

Jeunine knew her neighbour had called the cat Bianca and the name on the chip was Banka.

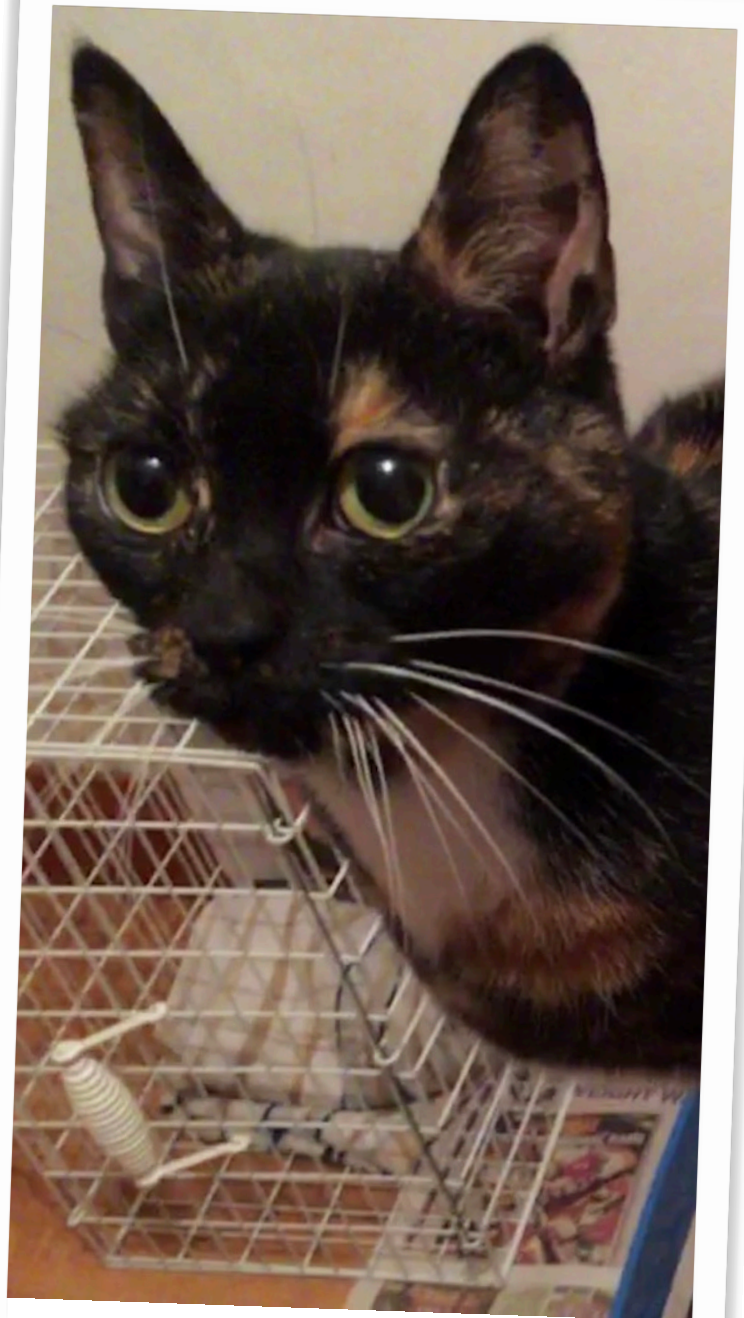
It was too similar to be a coincidence and we hoped Joanna would be able to solve the mystery of how Bianca had ended up on the other side of London with a different 'owner'.

Could it have been a relationship breakdown, with the male partner taking the pet?

Sadly we will never know as Joanna did not respond to text and emails. A letter sent to the address on the chip resulted in the current resident of the property telling us she had moved.

What we do know is that, whatever her past, Bianca is a beautiful and amazingly friendly girl. Legally we have to wait two weeks after taking her in to be able to rehome her.

Once she has been checked by the vet and had her first jabs, she can be adopted. And this time, we'll have our fingers crossed that it will be her forever home.



www.elthamsidcup.cats.org.uk

www.facebook.com/cpelthamsidcup



CATS Protection has been campaigning for it to be compulsory for pet felines to be microchipped.

And all that hard work paid off with the announcement that new laws will come into force by 2023.

They will make it a criminal offence not to comply, with fines of up to £500 for owners who fail to have their cats chipped.

The change brings felines in line with dogs, which already have to be microchipped, and aims to reunite lost and stolen animals with their owners.

Microchips are the size of a grain of rice and are implanted usually into the back of the neck.

Each has a unique reference number which is registered on a data base and linked to the name and address of the owner.

Once an animal has been chipped, it is crucial to keep the details up to date if you move so the cat or dog can be traced back to the correct home.

All cats and kittens which are homed by this branch and others in the charity have a chip. They either come in with one, which we then update, or our vet implants one before adoption. However, despite the efforts of charities and vets, around 2.8million of the UK's 10.8million pet cats are thought to be unchipped.

Jacqui Cuff, CP's head of advocacy and government relations, said: "As the country's leading cat charity, we have been at the forefront of the campaign for compulsory

CHIPS AHOY

microchipping of pet cats. Every day we see how important microchipping is for cats and for the people who love them.

"It is by far the most effective and quickest way of identifying lost cats and can help ease the pressure on rescue charities.

"Without a chip, a lost cat will most likely end up being rehomed as there is often no trace of their original owner."

On this theme, we'd like to advise our members and supporters to ask their vet to check their cat's chip each time you take them in.

That way, you know it's functioning properly and has not slipped out of position.

So, if the worst happens and your pet goes missing, you can be sure it can be traced back to you.



LUCKY COOKIE

WE always microchip cats in our care and encourage owners to do the same for their pets. And the story of Cookie shows just why this is so important.

We didn't know this was her name when a ginger-and-white cat was reported to us as a stray on the Coldharbour estate.

A resident had been feeding it for six months after it turned up in her garden but could not continue as she had to go into hospital.

The lady's mother Valerie had stepped in to call round every few days and leave plates of food for the cat. But this could not continue and she asked the branch for help.

Fortunately we were able to take in the very sweet and friendly cat and Valerie kindly gave us a generous donation.

The first thing we did was check for a microchip and got that magic beep on the scanner which showed one had been implanted. Then the next question was to check if it had up-to-date details.

We looked on PetLog and found it was registered to an address about three-quarters of a mile away so it was feasible the

cat had travelled that distance. One phone call later and we found out that the cat was a nine-year-old female called Cookie who had disappeared about 18 months before!

Her owners had sadly suffered a family break-up so she had been taken in by a nearby family friend.

Cookie had a habit of disappearing for days at a time and going to other homes where she was given food.

But then she failed to return at all and no-one knew what had happened until we were called in and were able to trace Robyn, the step-daughter of her original owner.

She was still living in the family home and had been searching for Cookie on Facebook sites and locally with no success.

So Robyn was at first very surprised and then really happy when Cookie was found again. Valerie was also delighted that we had traced the owners of the "dear little cat", saying she was "over the moon".

Cookie is now back home - thanks to her chip - and we hope she's settled in and put her wandering days behind her.

PUSS N CUTES

THESE two beautiful young tabby-and-white siblings were handed in as strays. After a short stay, when they were neutered and microchipped, seven-month-old Daisy and Toby went off to a new home with Sarah in Eltham.

Charities often take in cats which have been living outside for months or even years while being fed by residents.

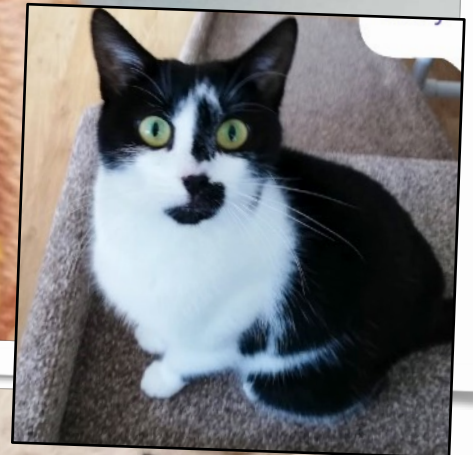
But we urge anyone in this situation to take the cat to the vet as soon as possible to scan for a chip. This check is always done free of charge and is very quick and easy.

Then if there is an owner, the pet can be returned home to where it belongs. Often the chip is registered to someone local, who believes their cat has been lost when in reality it's still close by.

This happened to Ruby, *inset right*, who was fed by an elderly lady for over a year. The black-and-white female was not spayed so became pregnant and may already have had several litters.

Another resident alerted us to ask for help and brought Ruby, aged about four, into our care. It turned out she was chipped and registered to someone in the local area. But they were reluctant to take her back as she had been away for a long time and they feared she would not settle back in her old home.

So after being spayed, Ruby was rehomed to a new family in Sidcup while her three kittens, *right*, will also be on their way to new lives soon.



TOP OF SHOPS

IT would be great if our shop could be open six days a week to offer bargains to our customers. But, because of a shortage of helpers, we have to close early on two days and all day Thursday. So we're sending out an appeal to members and supporters who live locally to rally round and help our shop to stay open longer.

Our volunteers sort donations, put them out on display and serve at the till.

It's busy but there's always time for a cuppa and a chat!

Helping out is a great way to meet new people, the staff are friendly and you get to know a lot of our regular customers. If it appeals, why not give us a call and come in for a day to see if it's for you?



We are at 14 Tudor Parade, Well Hall Road, Eltham, London SE9 6SX and have two shifts – 10am to 1pm or 1pm to 4pm.

Our current hours are Monday 10am-3.30pm, Tuesday 10am-1pm, Wednesday 10am-3.30pm, Thursday closed, Friday 10am-1pm and Saturday 10am-3.30pm.

Please note the role involves lifting and moving bags and items so would not suit anyone with back problems. We also hope our volunteers will be with us for a while so this is also not for someone looking to fill in time before returning to work.

To find out more or have a chat, please call Jacqui at the shop during opening hours on 020 8859 6009 or email eltham.shopmanager@cats.org.uk.

IN CHARGE OF KITTY

WE are delighted to welcome one of our members as the branch's new treasurer! Many thanks to Michelle for volunteering for the vital role. Here she tells us about herself and the cats in her life.

I'VE been a member of the branch for a long time, ten maybe 15 years. I'm originally from the Midlands and moved to South London in 2000. I live in Eltham now and have done since 2001. I don't have cats at the minute because I travel frequently and I would worry about the main road near me. I have had lots of cats in my life though. My first cat was called Dennis because of his bushy eyebrows [named after Dennis Healey -

younger readers may have to Google that!]

He was a mischievous black-and-white boy. Sadly, he died when he was just five from cancer. We were truly heartbroken.

We still had Sharon, though, another black and white, quite timid and shy but boy did she absolutely love cheese and onion crisps. She died a few years ago but lived to a ripe old age. My last cat was Elvis, who appears with me on the [rather old now] photo. He was an alpha



male, a noisy and wonderful tabby. He used to follow us on walks so we called him Tracker Tabby! Once he went missing for a week so we scoured the area shouting Elvis at the top of our voices - which was quite embarrassing - and asked people to search sheds and unoccupied buildings etc but nope, no sign of him.

About a week later he came home from his adventures, with a sheep's tick and would not leave my side for about a week.

I'm convinced he was really making a Disney movie or maybe 'The Truth about Cats & Dogs'. Happily, there are still plenty of cats in my life: Buttons and Snub are my stepson's cats, a tabby and a black and white. My sister has Henry, a gorgeous grey, my niece has the adorable and very affectionate Freddy,

and my brother has a less affectionate house cat called Monty.

My friend has a black-and-white feline called Michael Jackson and my best friend in Brighton has three cats, two of which are Rex.

I'm volunteering because I love cats. My dad worked in a quarry and always made sure that the feral cats there were looked after and I want to carry on the tradition of helping cats who need help.

MARVELLOUS!



IT turned out to be a case of mistaken identity after Lin called to say she had been feeding a 'small black female' for a month at her home in Lee.

The cat turned up regularly at the front door and wolfed down three sachets at a time so it was obviously hungry. Putting on a paper collar and checking local groups yielded no clues. By then, the stray was appearing every day. When a box and blanket were put out as the weather was turning colder, it immediately used them.

So Lin and her partner called us as their own cat would not welcome a new companion. Luckily the stray was very friendly and popped into a carrier with no problems. That's when its character became clearer as the fosterer could see that the cat was probably male because of its size. A later check

confirmed it was definitely a 'he' who needed to be snipped.

And when the cat, named Marvin by us, settled down on a lap for a cuddle and relax, his lovely white tummy and chest were revealed.

So it was definitely not a small, black female! But Lin had only seen the cat in the dark so it was an understandable mistake.

We set about getting Marvin neutered, micro-chipped and sorted for flea and worm treatment then put him on our website.

The two-year-old was an amazingly affectionate boy and had started purring within minutes of coming into foster care.

Lin told us: "We're so pleased he's OK. He looks so happy and comfortable with you. He is a little sweetheart and so deserves a nice home." Marvin had probably

been someone's pet but we have no idea why he ended up living outside and it was time to find him a forever home.

There were several inquiries but they didn't seem right until we heard from Meredith and Nick in East Dulwich, who were looking for their first cat together after moving into a new home.

They came to meet Marvin, who was his usual mega-friendly self, which is hard for anyone to resist.

We passed on the good news that he had been reserved to Lin, who said: "I hope he has a really happy life with them. They'll certainly gets lots of love from him. Please give him a goodbye cuddle from us before you send him on his way."

Then it was time for Marvin to have another trip to his new home where he will continue to purr for England...



SIGN UP!

WELCOME to our newest member, **CHRISTINE WATSON** from **Eltham**!

All our members are important, whether you joined a long time ago or recently. So if you adopted a cat or kitten from us, or had any help or support from our branch, please consider joining us.

It would be so good to have some more members in our branch, as we do lose a few each year, so our numbers go down if we do not get new members joining.

Without our supportive members there would be no branch!

Please encourage friends, neighbours, relations, colleagues, fellow cat-lovers etc etc to join us or maybe give them membership subscription as a Christmas or New Year gift.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

The end of the year is fast approaching so please remember to renew your membership for 2022. Thanks to the folk who have sent already! Most memberships expire at the end of December, just check your membership card or contact me if you are unsure when your membership is valid to.

If you wish to pay for a few years in advance to save this annual chore you are very welcome to do so. (Please just make it clear that any extra money is for that reason and not a donation.) Cheques and postal orders still work fine, or you

may prefer to pay online, which is a quick and easy way to do it. Please email Clare at coordinator@eltham.cats.org.uk for details. New membership cards will be sent with the next newsletter

EMAIL NEWSLETTER RECIPIENTS

Please print off the membership form if you can and send with your subscription, otherwise just state clearly who it is from. Remember to let me know if you would like your membership card posted to you as it does act as a reminder of the renewal date.

STANDING ORDERS

If you would prefer to pay this way please set up your payment for the 1st of January each year and let us know you have done this.

As a reference put your surname and SUB so renewals can be identified.

I always send a thank you for donations over £5 but if you would rather not receive one, just let me know.

Stamped addressed envelopes (or just a stamp even!) are always very welcome too.

Let's hope for a happy and healthy year next year.

SUE KELLY
(Membership secretary)



Why should I neuter my cat?

Getting your cat done is good for them... and you! Why? Read on...



Did you know?



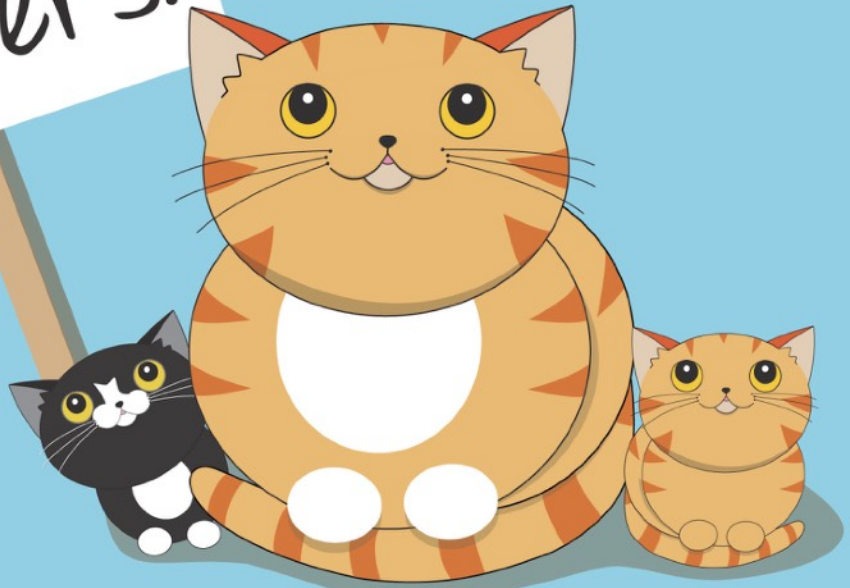
We can give you a voucher for your vet to pay for your cat/s to be neutered. Just contact us and we can help:

- email neutering@eltham.cats.org.uk
- pop into our shop at Tudor Parade, Well Hall Road, Eltham SE9 6SX
- inbox us on our Facebook page
- call us on 07591 120331



Eltham, Sidcup and District

We need
fosterers!



- UNABLE TO COMMIT TO LONG-TERM CAT OWNERSHIP, BUT CAN'T PASS A STREETCAT WITHOUT STOPPING FOR A STROKE?
- IS YOUR PHONE FULL OF PICS OF OTHER PEOPLE'S CATS?

THEN WHY NOT TRY CAT FOSTERING?!!

- Caring for our cats & kittens in your own home while they wait for adoption won't cost you a penny, & we provide training and lots of support.
- Time and love are all you need to get started!

**Please contact us via our website or Facebook page,
or email: adoption@eltham.cats.org.uk**

HELLO KITTIES

JENNI had been with us for only one day when she had three kittens. Her owner from Bromley gave up the one-year-old as she didn't want more than one cat.

It would have been simple to achieve this if she had just got Jenni spayed, but sadly the owner didn't do that so the young cat inevitably became pregnant. Then the owner contacted us and said she couldn't look after Jenni any more and the mum-to-be came to us before having her litter the next day.

One of the little ones had cat flu, but luckily the other two were fine and all three will be homed when they are ready to leave their mum for the big, wide world.

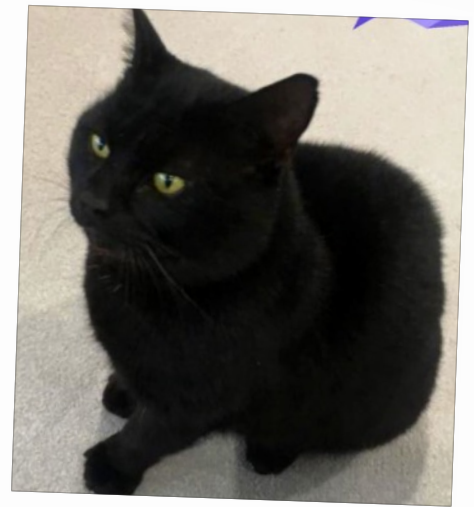
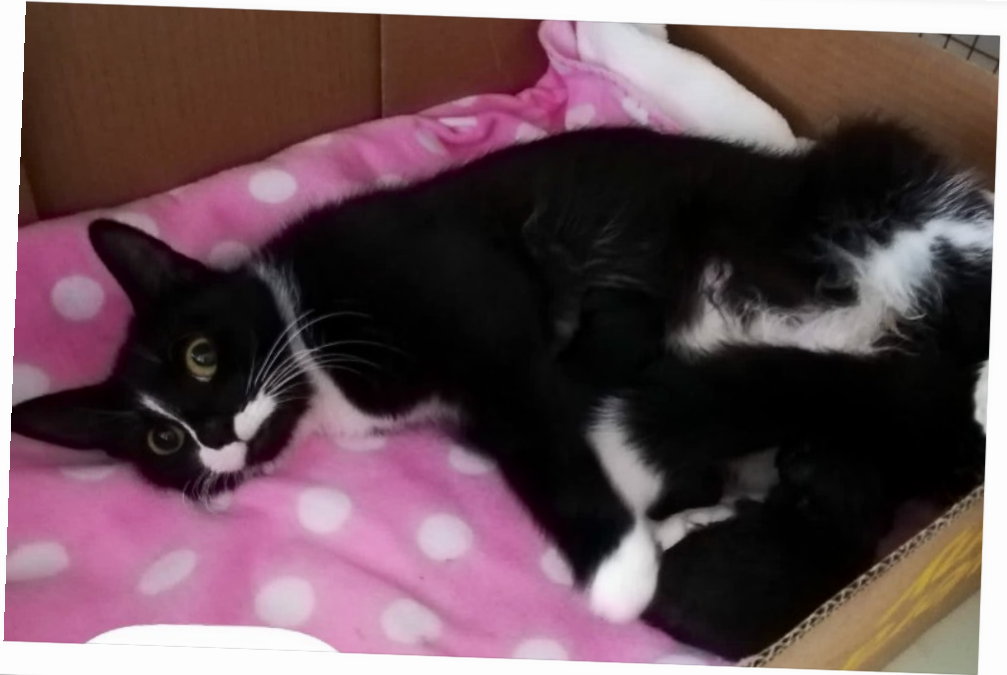
One lucky stray has started a new life after being rescued by our branch.

Timmy, aged two, was featured in our last newsletter when he was still getting back on track.

He came into care after living outside in the Plumstead Common area where kind-hearted resident Grace had tried without success to find his owner.

Timmy, *above left*, was very friendly but not in a good condition, covered in fleas and poorly. He went to our vet in Passey Place for neutering but it was clear he needed more help. So he stayed there for some extra TLC and antibiotics before going to a fosterer, where he enjoyed his home comforts. After getting the all-clear from the vet, it was time to find Timmy a new home and he was adopted by Lisa in Orpington.

Four-year-old Gus, *above right*, came to us after appearing in the gardens near where our lost-and-found volunteer Sam lives in Eltham.



Neighbours were feeding him and, although we had no foster space, we arranged for him to be neutered.

Unfortunately he was not chipped so we had no leads in finding a possible owner.

Finally, after a few months, we were able to take him in and he quickly settled with our fosterer. "He was very hungry when he arrived and meows when he can see his next meal arriving," she said.

"Having been a stray out in the cold, I am sure he can't believe his luck at finding himself warm, dry and well-fed."

Gus is a very friendly boy who likes sitting on laps and he will make a lovely pet for a lucky new owner.

TABBY boy Tommy has had a couple of major scrapes in his life, luckily coming through both unscathed.

He had been spotted under a car near the Yorkshire Grey roundabout and was coaxed to safety by the crew of a fire engine who saw his plight.

The rescued cat - dubbed Fireman Sam - was taken to our vet at Passey Place who alerted us. He was not microchipped so we had no success in finding an owner,

But we did have a potential adopter on our waiting list, Lisa, who took him to live with her in Eltham and named him Tommy.

Then, five months later, he went on his second adventure, disappearing from his new home.

There was no news for a month, which was a very worrying time.

Fortunately he now had a chip, which proved crucial when Tommy turned up in a garden in Bexleyheath after somehow making the four-mile journey there.

Our volunteer Sam had featured him on our Lost and Found page on Facebook, where Lisa was able to tell her: "Good news. Tommy found in Bexleyheath and handed to a local vets. Being chipped saved the day."

Sam replied: "That's amazing! Is he ok? Thank goodness for the microchip."

Lisa said her pet was "a little bit skinny but otherwise in good shape".

The lady whose garden he had appeared in could see he was not on familiar ground and took him to the vet where the chip revealed his address.

Lisa added: "It's a mystery how he got there. Must have got disorientated and just kept going. Luckily the owner of the garden knew he wasn't a local cat and he bolted into her house desperate for food."

Tommy could also have ended up such a long way from home after getting into a vehicle.

Diane said: "I would say he got a lift to Bexleyheath. A lot of cats get into an open car or van or lorry. It's too far from Eltham to Bexleyheath for him to travel without getting injured. So glad he's back."

It could all have ended so differently if Lisa hadn't ensured her pet was microchipped with up-to-date details.

The happy reunion would also not have been possible without the lady who took Tommy to be scanned, so we're thankful to her as well.

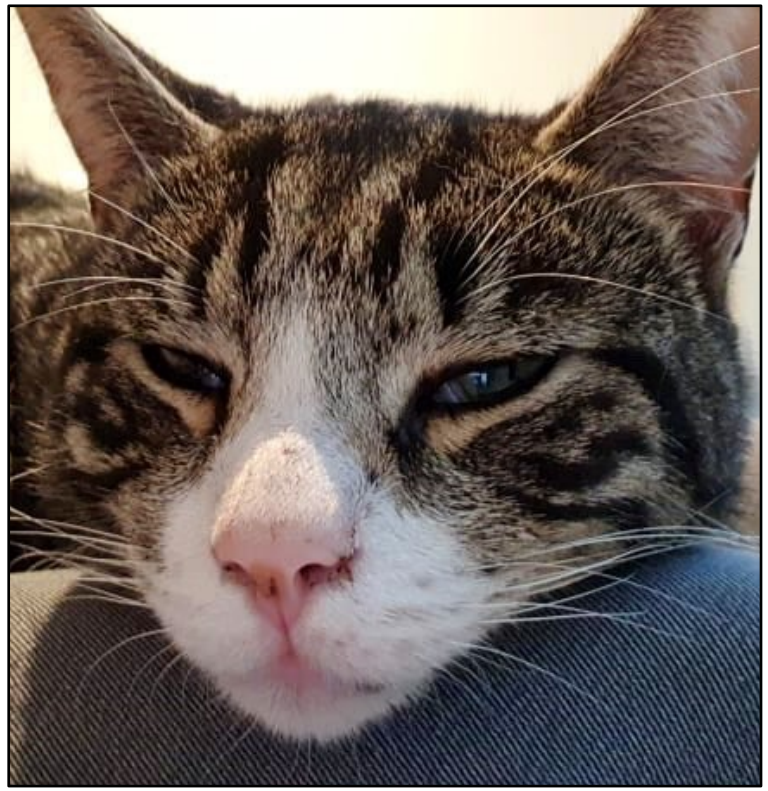
In another story with a happy ending, sweet girl Poppy, *right*, was left to fend for herself after her owner moved.

It was perhaps a blessing in disguise as she had been ill-treated by the family's children and so spent most of her time outside the block of flats where they lived.

Once they left, she was given food and water by a lovely lady who contacted us for help.

However Poppy, aged about three, took a while to get ready for rehoming as she needed help to learn that not all humans were unkind.

After being given time to gain her confidence, she began to show her loving character by following her fosterer around from one room to



Rock on Tommy!

another. Poppy also enjoyed a fuss but was still a bit worried about being picked up so we knew she needed a quiet home with no young children.

Her fosterer called the long-haired girl "a beautiful cat who was easily scared by any loud noises".

But she added: "Poppy settled in with me pretty swiftly, becoming very affectionate. She was not a lap cat but enjoyed sitting on the back of the sofa just above my head, often with her very fluffy tail in my face.

"Her other favourite places to sit were window sills and, like many cats, in a box. In particular, she would curl up and go to sleep in my jigsaw puzzle box. She would also steal my jigsaw puzzle pieces!"

On Poppy's web listing, we said: "Could you open your heart and home to her? She deserves her forever home."

Poppy got her chance when Mairi in Catford offered her a fresh start in a loving home.

And we were delighted with an update saying Poppy has settled in well and has started sitting on people's laps. Long may it continue.



CATS PROTECTION

Eltham, Sidcup and District branch



STANDING ORDER FORM

Please complete using BLOCK CAPITALS for donations only (not membership renewals) and return to us (not your bank) at:

Treasurer,
Cats Protection (Eltham, Sidcup and District branch),
202 Kent Street,
Mereworth,
ME18 5QW

YOUR DETAILS:

Title:..... Forenames.....
Surname.....
Address including postcode.....
.....
Telephone number (for any queries).....
(To be filled in by CP) Standing order reference.....

NAME AND FULL ADDRESS OF YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY:

To the manager of
.....
Sort code ____ - ____ - ____ Account number ____ - ____ - ____ - ____ - ____ - ____

Please pay the sum of.....starting on ____ - ____ - ____
and every month/year* on the same day until further notice to the account of
Cats Protection ((Eltham, Sidcup and District branch)

Sort code ____ - ____ - ____ Account number ____ - ____ - ____ - ____ - ____ - ____
(These details to be filled in by CP)

* Delete as applicable

YOUR NAME AND SIGNATURE

Name of account holder.....

Signed.....Date.....

Many thanks for your support!

We'd love to keep in touch, by telling you about our work with cats, inviting you to support fundraising appeals, join events, campaigns or to volunteer. Rest assured, we'll never swap or sell any details about you with other organisations.

If you'd like to receive information in the following ways, please tick accordingly:

Email ☐ SMS ☐ Telephone ☐

If you'd prefer not to receive information by post, or wish to change the ways we contact you, please contact Supporter Services by telephoning 0800 160 1012 Monday to Friday during office hours (9am-5pm), emailing preferences@cats.org.uk or writing to us at Freepost RTJK-TJJK-GREZ, Supporter Services, Cats Protection, National Cat Centre, Chelwood Gate, RH17 7TT

Please visit www.cats.org.uk/terms-privacy if you have any questions about how we use your data.

Eltham, Sidcup and District Branch Committee



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JACQUI TRAYFOOT

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Email: eltham.shopmanager@cats.org.uk

(Shop address: 14 Tudor Parade, Well Hall Road, Eltham, London SE9 6SX.

Open Monday 10am-3.30pm, Tuesday 10am-1pm, Wednesday 10am-3.30pm,

Thursday closed, Friday and Saturday 10am-3.30pm)

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MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

SUE KELLY

Email: membership@eltham.cats.org.uk

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CATS PROTECTION

Eltham, Sidcup and District branch

MEMBERSHIP FORM



I wish to become a member of this branch/renew my membership:

Full name.....

Address including postcode.....

Date of birth (if under 18).....Telephone number.....

Email address.....Date.....

Tick to receive newsletter by email

☐

Subscription: (tick as applicable) Individual membership £10

☐

Joint or family £10

☐

Junior, senior citizen, joint senior citizen, HQ member £7

☐

Donations always welcome! Thank you £.....

Please make cheques payable to Cats Protection and send completed page to:
Mrs Sue Kelly, Membership secretary, 354 Well Hall Road, London SE9 6UE

Gift Aid It! Cats get an extra 25p for every £1 with gift aid

I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less income tax and/or capital gains tax than the amount of gift aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year (6th April to 5th April) then it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Please tick this box if you want to gift aid this donation and any other donations you make in the future or have made in the past four years to Cats Protection [☐]

Or if you are not a UK taxpayer, please tick the box [☐]

Please notify us if you want to cancel this declaration, change your name or home address or no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

We would love to keep in touch, by telling you about our work with cats, inviting you to support fundraising appeals, join events, campaigns or to volunteer. Rest assured, we'll never swap or sell any details about you with other organisations.

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