

AUTUMN EDITION 2020

# Island Mews



**Read about Alfie**  
He'll warm your heart

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

# WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN EDITION OF ISLAND MEWS

We love an excuse to bring out the cakes! And here at Cats Protection, we have a double cause to celebrate - our very own Suzie's 16th birthday and, more importantly, Jo, our deputy manager's 30-year milestone at Cats Protection IOW.

In truth, every cat we rehome is a cause for celebration. And despite the challenges of Covid (and our Centre being closed), our hands-free homing has enabled us to rehome over 100 cats over the last four months. So we have at least 100 reasons to celebrate!

We're still uncertain as to when we'll be allowed to reopen, but rest assured, our cats continue to get the best of care, and we do everything possible to ensure the right cat goes to the right home. So if you're thinking of adopting a cat, please don't be put off by hands-free homing. It's simple, it's safe and we're here to support you every step of the way. Do take a look on page 9 to see how it works.

COVID has definitely been a time of reflection for everyone. Our roles have changed beyond all recognition, but fundamentally we still believe we make a difference and the end result of homing still



*Suzie and Jo enjoying a joint celebration*

gives us immense joy.

At the end of each day, we are fortunate to be able to go in and look at a cat in need and say "We will get you a home, no matter what!" It's that determination which drives us on.

And don't forget, we are always here, available to help, and take into our loving care any cats in need of a home.

**Have a lovely Autumn and stay safe.**

*Mel, Jo and the CP team*

## SUZIE IS 80 'CAT' YEARS OLD!

It was Suzie's 16th birthday on the 24th of August; in human years that's the equivalent of 80 years old. It was also a year since she came into our care. Hard to believe what a scared little cat she was back then.

Suzie is now a happy part of our reception team and just wants to say thank you to everyone who sent her birthday wishes and gifts.

**A huge thank you to Luca and Evie for making these birthday cards. They have Suzie's purr of approval.**



## A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY

### JO CELEBRATES 30 YEARS AT CATS PROTECTION IOW

**When I joined Cats Protection IOW as a cat mad teenager in 1990, I never thought that this would be my 'home' for the next 30 years. What a roller-coaster ride it's been!**

When I started, there were chickens, ducks, goats, rabbits and guinea pigs. The ducks used to chase me until I was brave enough to stand up to them. Then we had two orphan sheep who would steal my lunch. Amazingly, our little band of animals and humans all got on as one happy family, including all our resident cats, of whom we've had many throughout the years. I remember each one of them with great fondness – from Old Tom, Curly Bob, Tabitha, Smokey, Humphrey, Timmy, Fat Sam, Mac the Knife, Tiddles, Purdy and Poppy to name just a few.

I have so many fond memories, including staying at the cattery when Mel was away and singing to the cats in the evening when the cattery was closed. (Don't ask why!)

And of course, who can forget, our 2019 Grand Opening, when the Mayor of Ryde and our very own James Yeates, Cats Protection CEO, arrived to cut the ribbon.



*Mel and Jo watch on as the brand new IOW Adoption Centre is officially opened*



1990



1994



1996



2012

The IOW Centre has always been an incredibly rewarding and friendly place to work – there can't be many places where both manager and deputy have lasted over 30 years together!

During this time, I've formed a great friendship with Mel, who has been a great teacher, leader and tower of support.

Above all, I am so proud to have worked here, doing the job I love most – helping cats in need. We have had so many wonderful cats, including the incredibly shy and fearful ones, the ragged strays, the three-legged ones, the one-eyed ones, those with heart conditions, skin problems and countless more. Admittedly, there have been a few sad times and a few tears. But we are always determined to give every cat the best care we can and we never give up trying to find each one a loving home. For me, that's why the Isle of Wight Adoption Centre will always have a special place in my heart.

And of course, there's been no end of kittens arriving at our centre, including six stowaways who arrived on a ship from Malta.

## TWIZZLE'S SPECIAL STORY

Every now and then we get a special needs cat, who needs a bit of extra help. Here's Twizzle's story.

### Hello, I'm Twizzle...

My short little life has been full of uncertainty as I was born with a disability. I was small and weak and my front legs were twisted. My carers at Cats Protection didn't know if I would ever be able to walk properly.

My foster mummy did a great job of feeding and cleaning me and I soon started to grow. Wobbly at first, like any kitten, I soon discovered a way of moving that suited me. I rolled around with my siblings and made my back legs work harder.

Once the vet confirmed that I could have a good quality of life, we started looking for that special someone to look past what I can't do and see what I CAN do! I can run, jump and play fetch with crinkly balls. I love having cuddles and once I've worn myself out I'll happily snooze on you. I'm also very talkative, although I have been told that I'm a little attention-seeker that loves to get up to mischief.

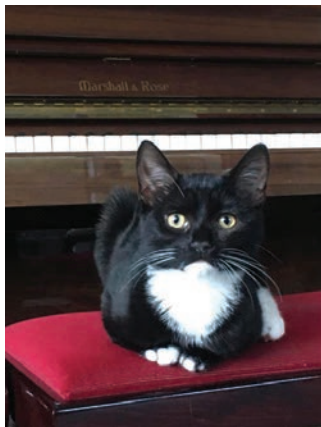
Well as you can imagine, I soon found that special someone who was willing to give me a chance in life. Here's what my new mum says about me...

### Hello from Twizzle's new mum...

When Cats Protection asked me to write a few notes about Twizzle, it was hard to think of what to write when, after only a few short weeks, she's already completely part of our family. I can't imagine what life would be like without her now.

Having just lost our cat Daisy in May, I can honestly say that I wasn't actively looking so soon for a new friend to join our household of three humans and two dogs, but suddenly a beautiful little face leapt out at me from the Cats Protection page on Facebook. I immediately applied to adopt her.

Twizzle manages perfectly at home; absolutely nothing holds her back and she's the fastest member of this household by a long way! We're certain that this is 100% down to the amazing love, hard work and dedication of her foster mum and the Cats Protection team, who spent countless hours helping her feed and giving her physio in order to help her be as strong as possible and ready to face the world. I would heartily recommend a disabled cat to anyone!



## PRINCESS GETS A FAIRYTALE ENDING

You may remember Princess from our last edition. We were desperate to find a loving home for this elderly cat who needed a bit of extra special care. Well along came that very special person.



### Here's Princess to tell you more...

When you hear about a cat called Princess, what do you imagine? A rare breed of posh cat with long glossy fur? Bet you don't think about me – a starry-eyed black-and-white moggy.

Tragedy struck when I was only eight weeks old. Being the adventurous character I am, I chewed an electrical cable and received the shock of my life! I was a whisker away from passing on but somehow I survived. (I've never done it since, I learnt my lesson).

When I arrived at Cats Protection I had been kept in a shed with another cat. I wasn't looking my best, my white bits were stained yellow as I find it difficult to groom myself as the electric shock deformed my tongue. It took a few months but I gradually got back in shape, with good food, the occasional bath and lots of brushing. The staff and volunteers were always finding an excuse to come and give me a cuddle.

At 14 years, I still have the spirit of a kitten and love to chase anything with ribbons. I also love a lap to snuggle on while I watch TV – and a good head tickle is always welcome.

I chose a home with one lovely lady for my retirement years, who wants to pamper and spoil me. I've settled in lovely.



Because of my disability, I need a little extra looking after. Don't worry, I can still eat and drink ok, but I make a little mess, so having a plate on a mat easily solves this.

I find grooming myself a bit tricky too so I'm grateful to have an owner who tries to brush me daily and make me feel beautiful.

I'm very lucky to still be here after my misadventures and I should really stick to the quiet life in my retirement.

Meows

*Princess x*

## JO AND KITTENS HAVE FUN IN LOCKDOWN



**These eight tiny kittens were discovered in a box by our Centre's gate early on a cold April morning. We swiftly took them in, checked them over and gave them milk as they were only three or four weeks old.**

With lockdown in place, we couldn't foster them out, so we decided that four would go home with me and the other four, with another of our team.

They were so small, I soon lost them, although they were kept in one room. They managed to pull the lining off the bottom of the sofa and creep inside to hide. But after a couple of days they soon adjusted to their foster home and acted as if they owned the place.

I got another scare when a kitten plopped out from the chimney. They were always fascinated by it and trying to climb up but thankfully it is blocked off safe.

The kittens loved to sit with us looking out of the window, enjoying the sunshine and watching passers-by. We often spotted people looking in, and saying "Awwwww".

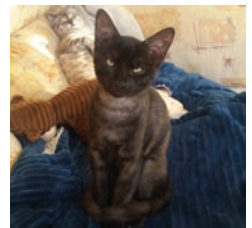
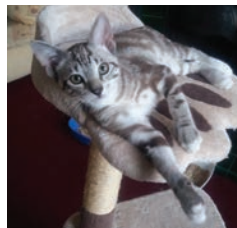
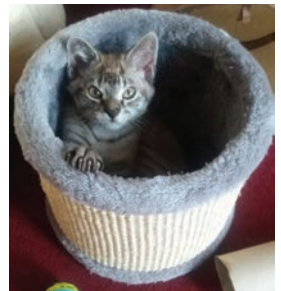
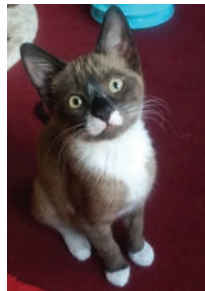
As they grew, their toys grew too. The room was taken over with a large scratching post, cardboard boxes to hide in, balls which we had to keep retrieving, mice and more.

But was that enough? Of course not. I heard a weird noise and saw that Noah had something in his mouth. I rushed over to fish it out and it was my son's ring! This wasn't the last of it, bracelets, necklaces were all stolen to play with and soon we had to make sure nothing sparkly was left lying around.

I can't tell you how much joy the family had playing with the kittens, as we had nothing else to do. They filled our days, made us laugh and gave us a cuddle when feeling down. It's very sad to find kittens or cats left at the gates but at least they left them at the right place and people must be in desperate times.

All the kittens went to new homes in June and have been totally spoilt and adored. It was hard to give them back but I look forward to the next litter that will need fostering.

**If you are interested in fostering and have a spare room in your home, please do turn to page 11 for more details. We'd love to hear from you.**



### LOLA, LOOKING FOR A HOME

Lola came to Cats Protection because of the death of her much-loved owner, who absolutely adored her. Lola's whole world has now been turned upside down, and understandably, she was very scared when she arrived. She's in foster care at the moment, but she's now ready for adoption. Here's what her foster mum says:

"Although Lola's still quite nervous, she's starting to trust us and enjoy human companionship once more. She adores being brushed, which is just as well, since she's got the most gorgeous ebony fur coat. Although she can sometimes be a little madam and will tell you when she's had enough.

She likes to sit with us in the evening and occasionally jump on the sofa to say hello. We can pick her up and give her a quick kiss and cuddle (but not for too long). She's happy, just getting used to us in her own time."

**Do contact our team to find out more about Lola.**



*Lola, 9 years old, one gorgeous fluffball looking for a home.*

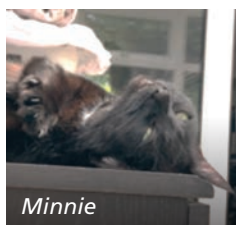
[Click here to see my showreel](#)

### SHY MINNIE AND MO FIND THEIR FOREVER HOME

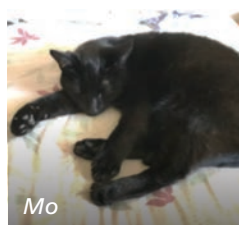
**Minnie and Mo (Tiny, as she was called then) were two very shy cats that arrived at our Centre. We were desperate to rehome them together, but sadly they kept getting overlooked because they were so timid. If only we could find someone who was willing to spend a little more time and patience with these lovely cats, we knew that these kitties would blossom. And then, along came Sharon and David.....**

"When we first saw Minnie and Mo, we instantly fell in love with them. When they first came home with us, they were so timid. Minnie was the first to venture out to the food bowl. Mo however was far more reluctant to explore her new environment. Over time (and a lot of treats later) the girls began to build their confidence. They have come such a long way since we first got them.

Tiny Mo has learnt how to train us, while Minnie likes sharing the TV from the arm of the sofa. Tiny is now called Mo, as she is quite insistent on breakfast not being late. Minnie has grown to love sleeping next to her favourite people in the house and watching the birds through the window, whereas Mo tends to be vocal when she wants our attention and is the first to run to the kitchen when the fridge door is opened. Both are very happy in their new loving home".



*Minnie*

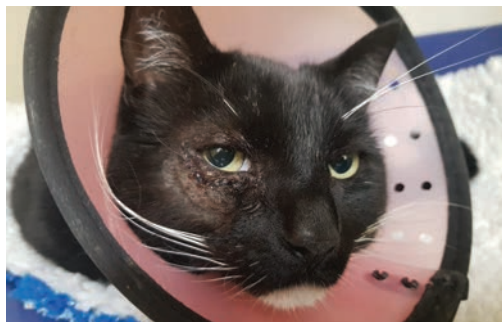


*Mo*

### LEO GETS HIS LASHES DONE

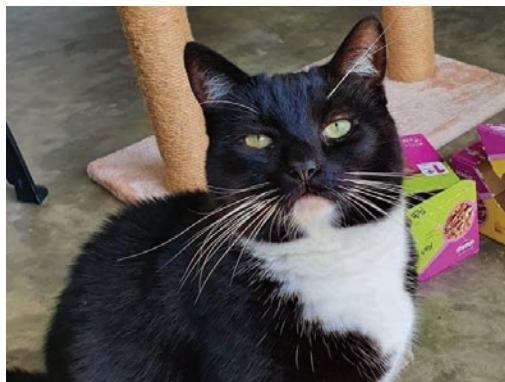
Leo arrived from Southampton after he was found as a stray. Sadly, although he was microchipped, his original owner didn't want him back.

Leo was a larger-than-life character and a very dapper lad in his tuxedo, so we thought we would rehome him really quickly. But then lockdown put a stop to that.



Leo enjoyed lots of time with our team, but they could tell his right eye was bothering him. We soon discovered that he had Entropion, where his eye lashes were growing towards his eye, causing irritation. It was decided that Leo would need an eye lash lift.

Thankfully a lovely lady saw him on the website and, after his operation, adopted him. He's not looked back, taking over the home and loving his new life. Leo has definitely found the home he deserves.



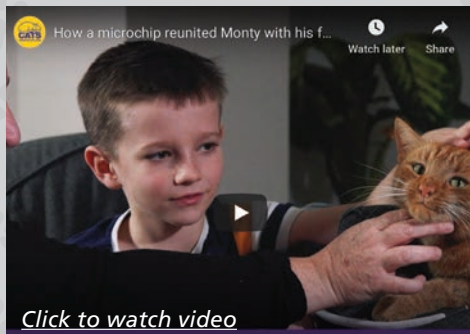
### COMPULSORY MICROCHIPPING - WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Cats Protection needs your help. We need as many Members of Parliament as possible to support a change in the law to make microchipping owned cats compulsory. The major political parties put compulsory microchipping of cats in their 2019 election manifestos. But no progress has been made and the issue risks falling off the political agenda.

Please help by emailing your MP asking them to support compulsory microchipping of owned cats and attend a Cats Protection virtual event. Just click the link at the bottom, enter your contact details and send the template email to your MP.

Click on the video to hear how a microchip reunited Monty with his family.

[Ask your MP to support compulsory microchipping of cats today](#)



# SAFELY REHOMING OUR CATS DURING COVID 19

If you had told us at the beginning of the year that we would be homing cats that the adopter had not met, we wouldn't have believed it! However Hands-Free Homing has proved an incredible success in helping us to keep homing cats during the pandemic.

## How does Hands-Free Homing work?

### Step 1 – view the cats online

Take a look at the available cats on our [Adopt-a-Cat](#) page of our website

### Step 2 – register your interest

Simply complete the online form, settle back and wait to hear from our team in a few days.

### Step 3 – chat to our team

A member of our team will get in touch to have a chat. We'll ask you a bit about your home environment and also tell you as much as we can about the cat you're interested in. This ensures the best possible match for you. Sometimes after the initial chat we may discover the cat isn't best suited and we may suggest another cat that may suit you better.

### Step 4 – complete the adoption forms

We can email or post these over to you, so you can complete them at home, and send them to us before collecting your kittie.

### Step 5 – collect your lovely new buddy

We can arrange a time for you to come to our carpark to collect the cat. If you don't have transport, we may be able to bring the cat direct to your home.

### Step 6 – ensuring you and your cat are happy

We offer after-homing support and will check in with you to see how your new family member is settling in. You are still welcome to contact us at any time with any questions or concerns. We want to ensure that you and your cat are both happy, and will always take the cat back if it doesn't work out.



## It's great for the cats too!

Cats who may have been previously overlooked are now being noticed on the website as they are not being upstaged by the cat in the pen next door grabbing all the attention. Because the new owners have not met the cat before, it seems that they're also investing more time getting to know their new buddy and allowing her to settle.

Having more communication directly with the new owner before adoption, gives the adopter more time to listen to advice, read our guidelines and be more prepared for their new feline family member.

It may seem odd for people to adopt a cat they haven't been able to meet in person, but the return rate of cats across Cats Protection during the Hands-Free Homing process has actually been below the reported return rates of cats over past years across the charity. Amazing!

Since the start of the lockdown, we've rehomed over 100 cats from our Centre. So as you can see, we've kept our focus on the kitties; and we've found new, innovative, safe and trusted ways to support our cats to ensure they get the best possible chance in life with their new families.



*Joey, adopted through hands-free homing in July - with his new best friend*

# VOLUNTEERING FOR CATS

**To all our wonderful volunteers (and those of you who are thinking about doing so) – thank you for your patience and staying with us during these challenging times. Your continued support is invaluable to us.**

We know that so many of you are disappointed not to be able to return in your usual roles right now. Although slowly we're starting to reintroduce some roles, COVID-19 restrictions mean that we're still very limited in what we can do at this time.

We share your frustrations. However, there are so many ways in which you can still help – whether it's helping us spread the word and putting up posters for us (let us know if you'd like us to send you any); telling your friends, colleagues and family about our hands-free homing; raising funds, participating in our virtual events (see back page), or making the most of your skills (see below). We don't want to lose you, so please do keep your spirits up and stay in touch. We, and all our cats, still need you and really look forward to welcoming you back as soon as we can!

## CAN YOU USE YOUR SKILLS TO HELP OUR CATS IN NEED?

Beth started her Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award in 2020 through her School, Priory School Whippingham, and then lockdown happened. Beth had chosen The Cat's Protection IOW as her preferred choice to complete her three months volunteering. When she realised that this was not going to be an option this year she started to think about how she could raise money for us by volunteering her time in a different way.

Her Mum has a business in Cowes and all the staff needed masks – this is how the idea came about for making washable reusable masks and selling them from the front garden in aid of IOW Cats Protection. The masks were a much bigger hit than she had first expected and Beth raised over £400.



Beth looks forward to volunteering in person at the centre when things become a bit more normal – and we look forward to welcoming her.

**A huge thank you to Beth.**

**Why not make the most of your skills and see if you too can find a way to support us? We'd love to feature you in our next edition and inspire others.**



### KNIT ONE, PURR ONE

DO YOUR "KNIT" FOR CATS!



[Click here for the Catnip ball pattern!](#)      [Click here for the Catnip Sweetie pattern!](#)

WE WOULD DEARLY APPRECIATE KNITTED CATNIP TOYS TO ENTERTAIN THE CATS IN OUR CARE. THANK YOU VERY MUCH!



[Click here for the Catnip Mouse pattern!](#)



give a little time  
MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE  
Help Charity  
Increase Engagement and Income  
01303 711111 (weekdays)

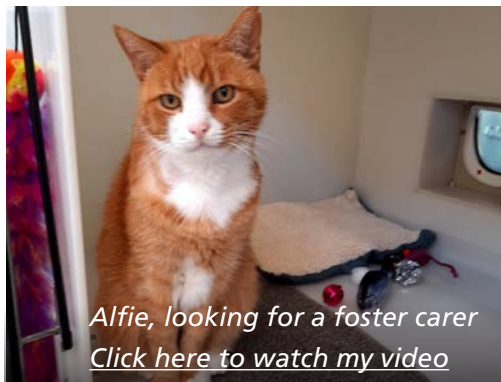
**SEND YOUR CREATIONS TO:**  
**CATS PROTECTION,**  
**122 MARLBOROUGH ROAD,**  
**RYDE IOW**  
**PO33 1AW**

### A PLEA FOR VOLUNTEER CAT FOSTERERS

At our Centre in Ryde, we always have many cats needing a little extra help until they find their forever families. These may include kittens that need socialising, or cats that are very shy and need help to regain trust in humans; others may be recovering from illness or an operation and simply need a quiet warm place to recuperate.

Fostering is a volunteer role that is extremely important to us. It involves taking a Cats Protection cat into your home and caring for her (anything from a week to a few months) until she is ready to be adopted. All you need is a spare room, a bit of time and lots of love to give. We take care of all the rest, including all the costs.

If you think this could be for you, check out our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) to find out more. Or just email Emma, our Volunteer Team Leader, [isleofwight.VTL@cats.org.uk](mailto:isleofwight.VTL@cats.org.uk)



*Alfie, looking for a foster carer*  
[Click here to watch my video](#)

*"Hello, I'm Alfie and I'm 16 years old. I'm very friendly, chatty and loving.*

*I had to come to Cats Protection, since my lovely owner died. Unfortunately, my potassium levels are a bit low right now, so I need some extra TLC whilst my levels get back to normal again. I'm looking for a lovely foster mum or dad who can look after me for a bit before I go to my forever home"*

**Do contact us if you'd like to foster Alfie**

### ISLE OF WIGHT (& BLACK) CAT CELEBRATION DAY

Cats Protection is celebrating 10 years of Black Cat Day this October. And for us here in the Centre, we love to use any opportunity not only to promote the majesty of our stunning black kitties, but also our beautiful black and white cats.

So here are Socks and Bruce, mother and son, 14 and 11 years old. Their owner sadly died and they've been in our care since July. Socks is in the early stages of kidney disease but you wouldn't know it, she is always full of beans. They would love a home together to enjoy being part of a loving home again.



**Could you offer us a home?**

[Click here to watch our video](#)

*(We've even added a bit of music!)*

## KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH OUR NEWS



# Shop

VIEW ITEMS FOR SALE AND SUPPORT CATS IN NEED

SIMPLY PAY OVER THE PHONE AND ARRANGE TO COLLECT

[HTTPS://WWW.CATS.ORG.UK/ISLEOFWIGHT/SUPPORT-USCP/SHOP](https://www.cats.org.uk/isleofwight/support-uscp/shop)

### Are your kitties missing their daily fix of the world's best catnip?

Well, make them happy once again and get your orders through. Our renowned catnip pouches are just one of the brilliant range of Cats Protection goodies that are now back on sale again. Cat and kitten calendars, diaries, Simon's Cat goodies and lots of Xmas pressie ideas - you can now purchase them all over the phone and arrange to collect from our Centre. Shopping and raising funds for cats in need – Purr-fect!

Simply head over to our [online shop](#) to view the items currently available and call or e-mail [isleofwight@cats.org.uk](mailto:isleofwight@cats.org.uk) to make an order.

### Sign up to our newsletter

We now feature each issue of our newsletter on our website. However, if you'd prefer to get the latest issue delivered direct to your inbox, please subscribe. Just phone or email Reception for a sign-up form and return it to us, and we'll do the rest. You'll receive four issues of cat-infused happiness per year, completely free of charge (for an emailed version). If you'd prefer a printed copy by post, we do ask for a small contribution of £8 per year to cover the cost of printing and postage.



### Dates for your diary

**VIRTUAL BLACK CAT QUIZ NIGHT**  
**October 30th @ 7pm**  
**Online with Facebook Live**

Cats Protection is celebrating 10 years of Black Cat Day. We are inviting everyone to help mark this achievement by joining in with our virtual Black Cat Quiz. Volunteers Mandy and Tony will be hosting the quiz. Look out for any surprise special appearances from some furry friends. As we are not able to hold our usual fundraisers, we would so appreciate any donations (via the 'donate' button) to help all the cats in need. Just register your interest on our [Facebook page](#)

**VIRTUAL XMAS FAYRE**  
**November 29th @ 1-3pm**

There will be an online auction, live chats, videos of cattery cats, Christmas songs and singing by the Boogie Woogie Sisters. And watch out for news of our online Xmas Hamper Auction!

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