

WINTER EDITION 2019

# Island Mews

**Bring some festive  
magic to a cat  
this winter!**



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

# WELCOME TO THE WINTER EDITION OF ISLAND MEWS

Well, one thing's for sure, this was a magical year for all our kittens! 113 kittens came in to our Centre and we managed to find loving new homes for them all.

It seemed like kittens were everywhere, including this cheeky little lad Pablo, who soon took over manning our Reception desk. Pablo, together with his sister Mable, had been found as four week-old orphan kittens. Hand-reared by our staff, they were brought into work every day and provided a warm welcome to all our visitors.

Kittens are not the only news however. With our newly renovated Centre, we've been able to create a much better experience for our visitors and staff; and, with the appointment of our new Volunteer Team Leader, Emma, we've recruited a record number of volunteers to help us with fundraising, cat-care and cat socialisation.

Volunteering with Cats Protection is such a great way of meeting new people and learning new skills. We regularly hold get-togethers and training days, including our most recent one on how best to help shy and fearful cats, of which, sadly, we see many in the cattery.

Next year we'd love to welcome even more volunteers and of course, many more visitors. So please, do come over to our Centre and help us make 2020 a year to make a difference to the lives of even more cats. *(And if you could bring a small toy for the cats, they would meow for joy - we are desperately short; their little Christmas stockings are looking very empty!)*

Wishing you all a very prosperous and magical new year.

*Mel, Jo and the CP team*

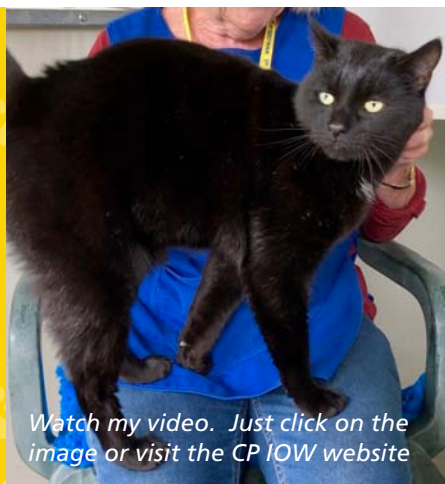


## SHY CAT? NOT ME!

So here's one lad you won't find hiding under the bed. It's our front cover star, the very marvellous magnificent Maurice.

Super confident lad. Likes people, but not really a cuddle cat - probably more of a leg man (it's his way of showing affection). Occasional lap cat (if there's sport on TV). Disdainful of toys, unless there's a tasty delicacy to play for.

He's now looking to recruit a super human servant who will cater to his every need. Be warned, he's likely to own you and your home. He's interviewing now, so do contact us for an appointment - and we'll let him know you're here.



*Watch my video. Just click on the image or visit the CP IOW website*

# FUNDRAISING FOR OUR CATS



Some of our very appreciative team: Kelly, Dave, Emma, Stacey and Lauren

## COUNTING EVERY PENNY.....

A big thank you to all our fabulous supporters, who have raised over £7,300 in 2019. From climbing up the Spinnaker to zipwiring over Wales, to running marathons, flying kites, holding tea parties, hosting quiz nights, manning stands at festivals, holding pop-ups in-store and, for the very bravest, holding collection tins in the pouring rain.

Every penny really does make a difference.

## CATS GO CRAZY FOR BINGO!

Wow, what a night! Bingo at Shanklin Conservative Club, organised by our amazing Livvy Rogers. Who would have thought we would have sold out all the tickets? Over 100 people turned up and we raised over £700 for Cats Protection Isle of Wight.

A big thank you to Livvy and all who donated prizes and attended. One of our top prizes, a TV, went to an IOW Zoo volunteer who hinted she may donate it to the zoo for their monkeys to watch. So if anyone spots the monkeys watching TV at the zoo, do send us a photo. We would love to see it!

## RAISING FUNDS FOR MARTHA

When ten year-old Martha came to us distressed and with a terrible eye injury, we knew we had to act quickly. She was rushed to the vet, but sadly, her eye could not be saved.

Luckily the operation went well. Once she was free of pain, Martha was full of purrs and always comically marching away on her blanket when she saw us. Best of all, a few weeks later, Martha was adopted and has now found love and happiness in her forever home.

Thanks to all our amazing supporters, our Just-Giving campaign raised over £800 to help fund Martha's care. A massive thank you! It is only through the activities and donations of kind supporters like you, that we can ensure cats like Martha get the best chance in life.





## GIVING OUR SHY AND FEARFUL CATS A CHANCE

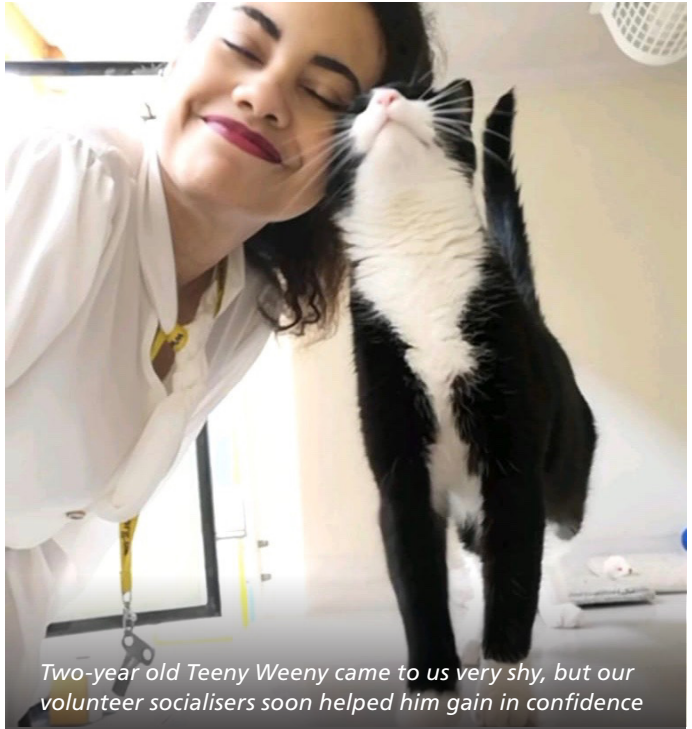
So often our shy cats get overlooked. Hiding away right at the back of their little fort, wide-eyed and rigid with fear when you approach them. No wonder that many of our visitors pass them by in favour of their more outgoing (and often outspoken!) buddies.

### Why are some cats so shy?

Sometimes it's a lack of socialisation as a kitten. Other times it may be association with bad experiences in their early life. Sometimes it is simply down to genetics.

Here at the Centre we create specific socialisation plans to help build their trust again and gain confidence.

We also try to expel the common notion that these cats are beyond help. This is simply not the case.



*Two-year old Teeny Weeny came to us very shy, but our volunteer socialisers soon helped him gain in confidence*



*Oreo and Star – our very shy youngsters, who have recently been adopted*

They may always be a little fearful, but in the right home, a shy cat can blossom into a loving companion for life.

Adopting a shy cat does take patience, but the rewards are huge, especially when you get your first head butt, leg rub or purr from your new furry friend. Once in a loving, patient home, a shy cat will often start to build confidence.

On the next page, we've listed a few tips to help you.

## SHY CAT TIPS

- **Provide plenty of hideaways for your cat around the house** – Cats de-stress quicker if they can hide. A cardboard box on its side or blankets placed on shelves or wardrobes can help your cat feel safe.
- **Set a routine for mealtimes and play** – An uncertain cat feels more settled when she knows what to expect and when.
- **Respect personal space** – Tempting as it is, to reach out and comfort her, never force your cat to endure cuddling. Let her make the first move – direct approaches are extremely threatening so don't force attention on your cat.
- **Get her used to your presence** - Start by sitting quietly in your cat's vicinity to allow them to get used to you in their own time. Ignore them while you do something else eg reading a book, so that they don't feel anxious about your presence.
- **Create positive associations** - Try sitting with them while they are eating or provide a small treat so they associate your presence with something positive. The time you spend near them can gradually be built up as they adjust.
- **Find common ground** – Take some time to learn what activities she prefers. Does she respond well to being brushed? Love snacks? Always plays with wand toys? Use these distractions to encourage and reward interaction.
- **Take baby steps** – As she gets more comfortable, increase the length of interactions a few minutes each day. Use treats to reward your kitty after she lets you pet her or hold her – even if just for a few moments.
- **Try synthetic pheromones** – Feliway spray or diffusers can create a reassuring environment for the cat and may help to reduce stress.
- **See if they like being brushed** – Not all cats like this, but for those that do, brushing is a marvellous way to calm your nervous cat. The regular strokes of the soft bristles mimic the grooming tongue of her mother when she was very young, reminding her of a time when she was loved, cared for, fed, nursed, washed, and comforted and safe.
- For more information on shy cats, click the image below and take a look at our guide. Or visit the Cats Protection website for the full range of our guides. <https://www.cats.org.uk/help-and-advice/information-leaflets/essential-guides>



*Our very shy Vespa. A patient adopter will soon find a lovely sweetheart behind this shyness. Click his image to find out more.*



## MIA - ONE OF OUR SHY CATS

One of our lovely adopters, Gina, has experienced first-hand the challenge and joy of helping a nervous cat overcome her fears.

Mia was a stray that came to us last year. She was one of the shyest cats we have had, always hiding in the back of her fort, absolutely terrified of everybody and everything. She was with us for many months before being fostered and then finally adopted by Gina, who shares her story.

### MIA'S STORY...

"When I first got Mia, she didn't come out of her hideaway for days except at night when she would eat. So, for the first week, I just left her alone and carried on my normal routine around her, sometimes just sitting in the same room as her, reading or chatting away. I was worried she'd be scared and hiding forever, but gradually she got more used to me and one day she emerged from her hideaway and very cautiously approached me. From then on, we started to bond.

Over the next few weeks, she came out regularly for strokes and then games. I soon realised that she loved being brushed, so I made a point of doing this whenever she came to say hello.



*Mia, in the image below left, hiding away, scared of everything but now a purring affectionate companion*

It has taken many months, lots of patience, and lots of Dreamies (a reward for every time she came up to me) but she now follows me everywhere in the house, and although she is still skittish at sudden movements and very wary of strangers, she's changed beyond all recognition.

She loves her routine - breakfast in the lounge with me, followed by playtime and then curling up on the sofa next to me for strokes, whilst I read the paper. In the evening she watches TV with me – and usually both of us fall asleep. She even sits and watches me intently as I play the piano, which is usually enough to frighten anybody off. Perhaps she's just being polite.

I know she will always be a shy cat, but she's become a constant loving companion to me. She's made a big difference to my life, and hopefully I've made a difference to hers"



### LEARNING TO LOVE CATS

One of our aims is to help people of all ages to understand more about cat behaviour and their welfare. We regularly give free talks to people of all ages - from schools, to youth groups, community groups and clubs. And we will always be very happy to give tours (from individuals to large groups) at our Centre.

As part of this activity, we often have Beavers and Brownies come to the Centre for a tour which can count towards badges and achievements. The children love the talks and tours and often give back to the Centre by donating food and toys for the cats.

Here's what Eleanor, one of our cat-loving Brownies, told us.

To complete the Brownies Gold Award, I had to complete three interest badges. I did Baking, Painting & Gardening. I also chose to do a Charity which was the Cats Protection.

To involve others at Brownies, I did a talk at Brownies and, to encourage others to help, by bringing in cat toys the following week, to give to the cats at Ryde. I really enjoyed this badge and would hope others would help other charities and get involved.



Eleanor, we are extremely appreciative for all your support, your donations and your efforts to involve others in the vital work we do. A big thank you from all the team at Cats Protection!

Just a reminder to all our lovely readers - all talks are free services provided by Cats Protection so please do get in touch with us for more information or to book your talk or tour. We'd love to tell you more.





### CARLING – PROBABLY THE BEST CAT IN THE WORLD!

At our Centre, we love all our cats (well most of them!), but sometimes a cat just touches your heart. Carling was such a cat. Here's Jo, our Deputy Manager to tell you more.

"I fell in love with Carling as soon as I saw him. Big personality, 15 years old, lots of character, one pink ear and one black - a lovable chunky boy, who loved his food. Needless to say, he was snapped up quickly.

#### A few weeks later, Carling returned...

Carling's owners had noticed something amiss and brought him back to the Centre. He was a changed cat. Thin, lethargic and very subdued. He even fell asleep on our scales.



Blood tests subsequently revealed Carling was diabetic. This now meant a complete lifestyle change for him - a special diet and twice-daily insulin injections. How would Carling cope?

#### Well, you can see where this is going...

What else could I do but foster him to give him the best chance of adapting and controlling his diabetes.

Over the next six months, my bond with Carling deepened and I thought that there was no going back to the Centre. What I hadn't allowed for however, was my other cats not liking him. Sadly, I knew I would need to find him another home.

#### Finding Carling his forever home

We tried everything we could to find him a home, but weeks went by and we just couldn't find the right person for Carling. Then finally... Janis arrived.

She immediately fell in love with Carling and wasn't at all fazed about his special needs. She had a wonderful home to offer and she'd get lots of support from Cats Protection (who would help fund his on-going insulin needs). It was clear Carling also approved of Janis since he promptly plonked himself on her lap, ready for a fuss.

When I dropped Carling off at his new home, he had his feed and injection and then curled up in his bed next to Janis.

A few days later, Janis told us that Carling had settled in so well "It's like Carling had always lived here"

What more could I ask for!





We just love getting feedback from all our adopters. But have you ever wondered what it's like from the cat's perspective? Well, here's our very own Fluffy to tell you more...

### Hello Fluffy-friends

My catmum has just gone to use her litter tray and I saw that she'd left her laptop open. So I thought I'd let you know how things are.



Well, catmum's catpad is just fine for me. I have about six different catbeds, all chosen by me of course. One is in a big room upstairs but I have to share it with her. She says it's her catbed but I have a different idea.

I sometimes like to jump on catmum's lap when she's not expecting me. That's fun. I did it this morning when she was lapping her coffee... (mmm...better not try that again!)

Catmum has learnt that if I keep flicking my tail, to leave me alone. I had to give her the 'evil-eye' a few times when she's been stroking me, but she's trained now.



One of catmum's friends came round yesterday and I said hello to him very politely. Catmum told him my nickname – Fluffy Rattail! Ok, I realise my tail is slightly fluffless, but I was so embarrassed, I had to wash my paws to pretend I didn't care.

I moved a few things on the window sill the other day, so's I can watch what's going on outside. (Catmum did catch them – well most of them anyway.) And I've claimed the most comfy chair for ME. And if she sits on it then I just have to jump up to sit on HER.

Catmum says that I'm a 'brilliant pussycat!' She even sometimes calls me Purrcat, because I purr a lot. We have loads of cuddles and she says if visitors to the cat home had known what a lovely pussycat I am, I would have been homed on the first day. Their loss, I say!

Oh, I can hear her stomping down the stairs.

Quick, leap back on her favourite chair, curl up, shut eyes, pretend to sleep. Stop purring. otherwise she'll know I'm awake.

Oh no, I just can't stop purring.....

**Meows, purrs and licks from a very contented Fluffy Rattail Purrcat-Hackforth**



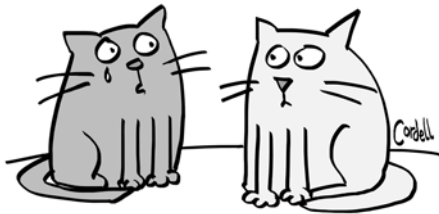
### MORE CHIPS PLEASE...

So here's one cat (all 8.5 kilos of him!) who won't be allowed any more chips - of the edible kind that is. This is our very lovely chunky George, being scanned for his very important microchip.

### Microchipping matters

During 2018, over 80% of stray cats taken in by our charity's Adoption Centres in England were not microchipped, making it virtually impossible to reunite them with their owners.

Thankfully DEFRA is now considering compulsory microchipping for all pet cats, as it is for dogs. It's vital that as many people as possible make their voice heard. So please do sign our petition [www.cats.org.uk/microchippingpetition](http://www.cats.org.uk/microchippingpetition). The consultation closes on the 4th January 2020 so the coming weeks are crucial - please don't delay. Thank you for helping our microchipping campaign.



*"I think my owner's going to throw me out - she says I'm chipped."*

### MICROCHIPPING - A FEW FACTS

Microchipping is a safe, permanent and cost-effective way to ensure that should your cat get lost, injured away from home or even stolen, you'll stand a much better chance of getting your cat back safe and sound. Microchipping also helps to ensure that fewer cats end up as abandoned strays, with many of them ending their lives in misery. Others are simply 'destroyed' by local authorities if owners can't be located.

### What is a microchip?

A cat microchip is slightly smaller than a grain of rice and has a unique 15 digit number linked to a database holding your contact details. This can be easily 'read' by a hand-held scanner enabling you to be contacted by a vet, animal charity or local authority if your cat strays.

### The procedure

The chip is inserted under the cat's skin between the shoulder blades. The procedure is very simple and no more uncomfortable than an injection. Your cat will not be aware of the microchip's presence once it has been inserted.

### How much will it cost?

You can expect to pay around £20 to £30 for the procedure. Just check with your local vet before booking.

### Changing your contact details?

The database provider makes it easy and quick to change things online or by post.

Check out our Essential Guide on Microchipping, which can be downloaded [here](#) (or from the CP website) or just ask our Isle of Wight reception for a copy.

## SPOTLIGHT ON FOSTERING

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 until she is ready to be adopted.

The most common reasons a cat may go into a foster home include: pregnant mums who need a home environment in which to give birth and raise their new-born kittens; cats with medical issues who need time to convalesce; and cats who are scared or nervous and will thrive much better in a lower-stress environment than the cattery.



*Our very shy Peanuts hiding away, and Jazzy (recovering from a medical condition). Both desperately in need of loving fosterers.*

In 2019, our fosterers cared for over 20 adult cats and 60 kittens. And we still had many more cats that were in desperate need of foster care - but sadly not enough fosterers.

At the IOW adoption centre we home over 400 cats per year, so fostered cats contribute to almost a quarter of the cats we are able to take in and rehome!

Our fostering team is usually around ten different individuals and families, so as you can see, this small group of people do a massive amount to support us, and we really cannot thank them enough.

If you are interested in fostering for Cats Protection there is a wealth of information available on our website in the volunteering section. [Click the link here to find out more.](https://www.isleofwight.cats.org.uk)



*Izzy - eleven years old, fostered for almost eight weeks before being adopted*

## From the old to the very young...

Once in a while, kittens come to us without a mum. We rely on fosterers to take on these tiny cats and hand-rear them until they are old enough to be adopted. Very young kittens can need feeding every 3-4 hours (yes, this includes through the night!) so the commitment to do this role is really astounding, but so rewarding.

Take a look below at two such kittens who have been hand-reared on behalf of the Centre this year!





## OTHER MAGICAL THINGS HAPPENING



*Please join us for our*  
**Catmas Carol Concert**  
*Sunday 22nd December, 2-4pm  
at IOW Adoption Centre, Ryde*

**CATS PROTECTION**

**£5 PER TICKET**

with music from  
**The Boogie Woogie Sisters**

Wrap up warm and  
sing with festive cheer  
to raise money for  
our cats in need  
this Christmas

Mince pies  
and refreshments  
included

Isle of Wight Adoption Centre, 122 Marlborough Road, Ryde  
Tel: 03000 120 251 | [www.isleofwight.cats.org.uk](http://www.isleofwight.cats.org.uk)  
Reg Charity no. 203644 (England and Wales) SC03771 (Scotland)

### Libby left behind.... A winter's tale

Even more eagerly awaited than the John Lewis advert - here's our very own Cats Protection Christmas animation.

Just click the image below to view it now, or visit the Cats Protection YouTube channel on <https://www.youtube.com/catsprotection>



### Don't be left behind - why not sign up?

We will now be featuring each issue of our newsletter on our website. However, if you'd prefer to get the latest issue hot-off-the-press, delivered direct to your inbox, please do 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 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.

### Or join our Facebook group

That way you'll hear the news as it happens:  
[www.facebook.com/iowcats](http://www.facebook.com/iowcats)

### Dates for your diary

**CATMAS CAROL CONCERT**  
**Sunday 22nd December, 2-4pm**  
**Isle of Wight Adoption Centre**  
Buy tickets in advance from our IOW Centre Reception or on the day.

**CATS THE MUSICAL**  
**December 27th (check cinema for showtime)**  
**Leo Leisure/Ryde Cinema**  
We'll have our collection tin and posters there, reminding everyone that our cats can sing too!

**QUIZ NIGHT**  
**Saturday 22nd February 2020, 7:30pm start**  
**Newclose Cricket Club, Blackwater**  
£2pp, raffle, teams of up to 4 people, book your team as space is limited.

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