



# CATS PROTECTION

## NORWICH & DISTRICT BRANCH

HELPING CATS IN NEED



Monty & Don (ginger) and Chelsea & Swift (black), some of the many adorable kittens that have been rehomed this year

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Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter, how time flies. Once again our volunteers have been very busy carrying out all aspects of our work. It is not always easy when they have serious family commitments to deal with, but we all do our utmost to carry out our roles in helping the many cats in our area. We are also grateful to you and all of our supporters in helping to make this financially possible.



With Christmas fast approaching, we begin to consider what to buy our family and friends for presents, just a thought if they are cat lovers, why not treat them to a year's subscription to Norwich & District Cats Protection.

By Maureen Bennett

## Note from the Editor

As always, I hope you will enjoy this issue of the Norwich & District Cats Protection Newsletter, and remember you can visit your local Cats Protection Face Book page at “Cats Protection Norwich & District”. The branch is always extremely grateful for all your continued support and although it is very fortunate to have some great volunteers, it is always looking for more. If you know anyone that would like to become a volunteer, please contact them via the website: [www.norwich.cats.org.uk](http://www.norwich.cats.org.uk) or telephone on 0345 494 1900.

## Bella

We have had Bella for just over 18 months now, and we have passed all our tests to become her official slaves! She likes nothing more than to have you at her beck and call, to do what ever she wishes. She announces her arrival in the morning by coming in to the bedroom and standing by the doorway moaning at the top of her voice, and then leaves promptly when she realises you are awake.

She loves playing with anything that can be scrunched up in to a ball; and races along the hallway, catches it in mid-air and then bats it around the kitchen floor, sometimes sliding sideways in the process. We have lost count of the times we have had to retrieve them from under the kitchen appliances. She enjoys going out and has no qualms with wearing her harness, which she insisted on being red to enhance her ‘ginger’ fur and ‘green’ eyes (not that she is vain in any way). When bored with sitting on the garden flowers, which is very rare, she loves to sit in her cardboard box, watching the pigeons, believing they cannot see her as she peeps over the top.



Bella recently started to loose some weight and upon a visit to the vets, has been diagnosed as having an over-active thyroid, something that apparently is unusual in a cat for her age (just over 8 ½). She is currently on tablets twice a day (in ham of course) to enable her to put some weight back on so she can have an operation to remove it. This has not stopped her in any way from being Bella, the ball player, the spider hunter and shoelace pouncer. At the end of a hard day of play, she loves to chill out in her cat tree, where she can look down on her subjects. She is such a pleasure to be around.

*By Karen Blyth*

## CAUTION: ANTI-FREEZE

With the cold weather creeping in, please be cautious with antifreeze, it is deadly to cats.

If you use antifreeze and spill any, please clean it up - Thank you



## Celebrating Black Cats this October

With October comes Halloween, a time that for many of us brings to mind images of carved pumpkins, scary ghouls and.... black cats. This connection with Halloween mainly comes from old-fashioned superstition, where black cats were associated with witchcraft and bad luck. However, in some countries a black cat crossing your path is seen as good luck!

As anyone who really loves cats will tell you, the colour of a cat's fur does not determine its personality or ability to bring good or bad luck to one's life, and black cats are absolutely as adorable, loving and affectionate as a cat of any other colour. The four pure black cats that I have fostered have all had wonderful personalities as well as being beautiful to look at with their yellow/green eyes and white teeth in stark contrast to their black fur.

So, if it's not their personality and we forget the association with witchcraft and bad luck, why are black cats much harder to re-home than cats of any other colour? A survey carried out by Cats Protection in 2016 found that black or black and white cats (which account for nearly half of all cats coming into Cats Protection's care) typically wait 22% per cent longer to find a new owner than cats of other colours. According to those surveyed, black cats were seen as being less friendly, playful, vocal and attention-seeking than ginger cats or tabbies, and less exciting as they are much more common among the cat population.

Thankfully, there is increased awareness on the negative image of black cats, and National Black Cat Day is held every year on 27<sup>th</sup> October to appreciate the black cats in our lives and recognise those that are looking for a loving new home. Hopefully, this continued support for black cats will change perceptions and encourage more people to adopt them.

One black cat that I can certainly vouch for is the beautiful Oscar, who has been in my care for four months and is still waiting for his forever home. He has watched six of his housemates in the opposite pen come and go, after being adopted to loving new homes, yet Oscar is still overlooked. He is a wonderful boy and would love to have the chance to start a new life. If you would like to talk to us about adopting Oscar, please contact us on 0345 4941900 option 1.

*By Vanessa Sewell (Branch Fosterer)*



## Fireworks – Remember to keep animals safe



With November 5<sup>th</sup> fast approaching it's the time of the year pet lovers dread, especially the owners of nervous animals. Many bonfire parties are thankfully well organized and with these we know when and where they are to take place. But no matter whether we live in the deepest countryside or in built up areas, there will always be those who do not consider animals when they let off fireworks, and sadly even do so intentionally to upset and harm them.

Please keep your cats in after dark [over this period](#).

*By Maureen Bennett*

## Snowy



I would like to thank Cats Protection for bringing Snowy into our family and her forever home. She is such a spirited, loving and calm girl, and is very settled into our home as the pictures show.

The best thing is to be able to give such a loving cat a home where she can be happy. I would recommend anyone who loves cats to give a forever home to a lovely soul like Snowy.

*By the new owner of Snowy*

## Ed and Etta

Ed and Etta came to live with us on 29th August and soon made our home their own. They are a very feisty pair who have only two speeds, asleep or 100 miles an hour! Ed is a lively character whose favourite time of the day is 5am when he insists that everyone is 'up and at em' and thinks all food is fair game. Etta is a sweet laid back girl who loves nothing more than cuddles with her dad and is desperate to make her big brother Chester her best friend.

It was fantastic to see the great work that their foster mum Kathy does and the passion she has for caring for these beautiful animals.

We would highly recommend adopting from Cats Protection.

*By Adrian*



## Ivy and Spidey (formerly Alice and Tink)

Alice and Tink have fitted in very well in the Hunt household, and the children adore them both.

We have re named them both as we already have an Alice in the house. Their new names are Ivy and Spidey, which the children picked. They don't quite know their new names yet but I'm sure they will get used to them.

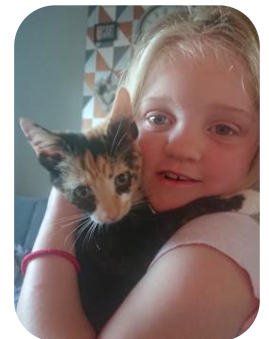


Ivy is very playful and is often waiting around a corner to pounce on something or someone.

Spidey is a bit shy but enjoys playing with his sister and the children. They both love to have a cuddle.

Thank you Cat Protection, Maureen and Kathy for letting us have them both.

*By Natalie*



## MICROCHIPPING

### Sign Cats Protection's petition for compulsory microchipping



Cats Protection has launched a petition to make microchipping compulsory for owned cats across the UK to help reunite missing cats with their owners.

We need to collect as many signatures as possible to show the public support for the compulsory microchipping of owned cats, so please share the petition with everyone you know!

8 out of 10 stray cats that Cats Protection's UK adoption centres take in are sadly not microchipped. Cats roam and may become lost but a microchip gives a lost cat the best chance of being safely reunited with its owner.

Microchips also provide closure to owners whose cats have been victims of road traffic accidents.

Compulsory microchipping of dogs is already in force across the UK. Please help us to ensure cats are treated fairly and have the same chance as dogs of being reunited with their owners if they go missing.

Sign the petition here: [www.cats.org.uk/microchippingpetition](http://www.cats.org.uk/microchippingpetition)

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## Camille's Story

Camille was found on 15 August on the edge of a wood at Easton College.

She had been possibly dumped, or could have been born to a feral mum, as there were reports of other cats in the area. She was very poorly and had she not been found would not have survived. She came to me weighing 800 grams, but by keeping her warm, well fed, medicated, not to mention lot's of TLC she has pulled through.



Although not 100 per cent yet as she still has weepy eyes, enlarged glands and breathing difficulties. This has not stopped her from being a sweet little girl who loves being cuddled (my husband's evening companion).



Once again we have been smitten and it's looking as if she has found her forever home. She has doubled in weight in 5 weeks and has now started to play. It has been a team effort by our volunteers Marilyn and her husband David and also by the lady (who Camille is named after) who spent each evening for a couple of weeks trying to catch her and bring her to me.

They have been over recently to see her progress and like myself think she is beautiful.

*By Kathy Bates (Branch Fosterer)*

## Preparing your home for your new cat

So, you've finally found the (feline) love of your life and now it's time to bring them home.

Right now you are feeling excited and happy about this new little furry being coming to share your life, but you have probably got some questions too.

To help you settle your new cat into their home, here are my five top tips to prepare for their arrival.

1. Designate one room for your new cat. Your cat is going to be unsettled and possibly scared, so letting them have the run of the house as soon as you get them home could result in them bolting under the nearest wardrobe and not being seen for days. Keeping them to one room for a couple of days will give them a chance to explore their new surroundings without feeling overwhelmed. After this time, you can slowly introduce them to the rest of the house as they gain confidence.
2. Ensure that every single window and door in your home is securely closed. Cats can flatten themselves into wafer-thin creatures if they want to, and they can (and do) get out of/into the tiniest of gaps. When you bring your new cat home it will have no concept of you being its new owner, or your home being its new territory – it can easily bolt out of an open window or door, never to be seen again.
3. Check the designated room for potential hazards that could harm your cat – are there any loose wires, pulleys for blinds, dangerous substances, items that could fall from a height, plants that are poisonous to cats, sharp items? Look at your room objectively and identify anything that could harm your cat. Cats are curious and they don't understand what could be dangerous to them, and kittens are particularly vulnerable to accidents in the home caused by seemingly innocent items.
4. Buy the biggest litter tray you can, and fill it with "sandy" clumping litter. Make sure that the litter tray is kept well away from the food and water stations – after all, who wants to eat and drink near their loo?
5. Prepare the perfect feeding station by buying some wide ceramic bowls. Cats prefer large food and water bowls that allow their whiskers space to not touch the sides. I recommend buying ceramic bowls as they are more hygienic than plastic and cats like the feel of it. Placing the water bowl in a separate location to the food bowl will encourage your cat to drink more water. Oh – another thing – always give your cat water, not milk. Cats are lactose-intolerant!



*By Vanessa Sewell (Branch Fosterer)*

## Pets at Home - Charity of the Year

Charity of the Year is an exciting initiative that gives one rescue and one Pets at Home store the opportunity to work together to raise funds, awareness and generally shout about the great work the rescues do.

It all started in April with many of us taking advantage of the Easter Bank Holiday, introducing ourselves to the Pets at Home customers and holding our first ad-hoc awareness day. These ad-hoc days have been well received and those rescues utilising these days have raised over £40,000. On these ad-hoc days 100% of donations are taken away by the rescue at the end of the day.

The 'Fill Empty Tummies' campaign was the first of our 2 major annual fundraising events and took place during May/June, raising £683,476. The second event, Santa Paws, will be launched 22<sup>nd</sup> November and will run through to 24<sup>th</sup> December.

The total donation for our rescue for the year to date is **£1564.47**

*By Maureen Bennett*

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## FUND RAISING- Confessions of a Tin Rattler

Except that, contrary to popular belief, we don't rattle tins! Pets at Home in Sprowston very kindly allow us to carry out coin collections, (notes always welcome too!), in their store as we are their partnered charity for 2019. No doubt the constant sound of tins rattling would drive everyone, including us, to distraction. So we stand quietly by the door hoping that people will notice us in our blue and yellow CP livery and with a picture of a hopeful-looking ginger cat on our tins. Sometimes it can feel as though one has morphed into a stack of dog food as people sail past without a glance in our direction, or with a muttered 'sorry, I haven't any cash', but the generosity of those who do give for our cause does restore one's faith in human nature. Many interesting conversations, cat-themed or not, are to be had, and many interesting characters pass through the door, such as those who say: 'I don't like cats', but put money in the tin anyway! When it's quieter, there is always people-watching or dog-watching to pass the time, or a quick chat with the staff. A constant stream of pets passes through – either dogs coming to get their supply of dinner, or the less fortunate ones on their way to a consultation with the vet. A loud meowing will announce the arrival of a cat going to the vets, but a peek into a quiet carrier might reveal the long ears of a rabbit.

We also do a street collection once a year in Norwich city centre, in August. This comes with its own challenges, in particular, the weather. A scorching hot day sends everyone to the beach, and a downpour means wet volunteers, water in the collection buckets, and potential donors rushing past with heads down and umbrellas up. Of course nowadays there are also the phone zombies glued to their screens, sometimes requiring a quick move out of their way. Generally the weather is kind and we make a reasonable amount of money. My most memorable street collection was four years ago when I was standing in London Street and witnessed the smash-and-grab raid on Winsor Bishop Jewelers. Luckily that is indeed a rare occurrence!

So 'tin rattling' can be a useful way to make money for our branch, but with the advent of a cashless society, I wonder how long it will be before we have to invest in card readers?

*By Helen Bell (Branch Fund Raiser)*

## The Importance of Neutering

Let's get one thing straight to start with: neutering applies to either sex; castration is for males and spaying for females. Why do we do it? Several reasons, but the most important is to keep down the number of unwanted kittens. We all love kittens of course, but if there were unlimited good homes available there would not be so many strays and ferals, nor so many being passed around via social media. If kittens were less easy to obtain perhaps people would take better care of them. If you are a Cats Protection member you do not need convincing of this!

The other reasons affect the health and welfare of the individual animal. Unneutered tomcats, as we all know, tend to wander, get into fights and cause a nuisance in the areas they visit. Because of the wandering they get run over with depressing frequency; because of the fights they develop abscesses and put themselves at risk of contracting Feline Immunodeficiency Virus and other infections. Unneutered females are likely to produce kittens twice a year, which can be a strain on their health, and the association with the tom exposes them to his infections. But, I hear you say, my cat is an indoor cat so none of these risks apply! True, up to a point, but the sex urge in unneutered cats is powerful and keeping them indoors is frustrating for them. The male is most likely to display this by spraying urine around the house; the female will come in season at intervals of a couple of weeks in the spring and autumn and during this time she may be unsociable and, again, prone to urinating on the carpet and possibly developing cystitis. A cat which keeps coming in season without being mated is likely to develop abnormalities of the uterus after a few years - I have seen these in cats from three years old - and in the long term this can lead to a full scale pyometra (pus-filled uterus) which may require emergency spaying. It is not fair to keep them unneutered and prevent them from breeding; you should also bear in mind that they will be doing their best to escape when their hormones are active.

What does neutering involve? Removal of the gonads which produce the hormones and also the sperm or eggs necessary for breeding. In males this is straightforward, the testicles are on the outside and (look away now, gentlemen) can easily be approached by a quick slice through the scrotum, pulled out, the cords tied off in some manner and then cut. This is, of course, done under general anesthesia though I can remember my father doing it on a conscious cat just wrapped in a blanket - it is that quick. The law has been changed since then and an anesthetic is legally required you will be relieved to know. The female keeps her ovaries on the inside so spaying is a bigger operation: it can either be done through the flank or through the midline of the abdomen. The flank spay is traditional, it can usually be done through a very small incision and because the weight does not come on the wound when the cat stands again there is no risk of serious wound breakdown. The midline has the advantage of making it easier to find the uterus, sometimes with the flank spay it can be tricky finding the second horn (a cat has two long uterine horns with an ovary at each end, joined low down near the cervix), but the wound is usually larger and more at risk of breakdown if the cat decides to go tree-climbing the next day. There are studies that suggest the flank spay causes more pain but in my forty years of flank spaying, I have rarely seen a cat show any concern about the wound.

Is it dangerous? Every anesthetic carries some risk, cats vary in their response and sometimes one develops problems on a dose that should have been safe but this is rare with modern anesthetics. Every operation also has its risks, the main one is bleeding which can, but very rarely, be fatal; sometimes while searching for a tricky uterus some other organ gets accidentally damaged which is potentially serious; I have already mentioned wound breakdown which can, in the worst case, lead to intestines escaping - this seldom causes problems if repaired promptly. Occasionally there are minor wound infections in either sex. Problems with neutering are, in my experience, uncommon in cats.

Cont...

## The importance of Neutering (cont...)

When should it be done? The best time is pre-pubertal, four to five months old since cats hit puberty around six months. The organs are small with minimal blood supply and the cat is usually still nice and slim; recovery is quick. They can be done from ten weeks old; I have done this frequently with ferals when there may be only one chance of trapping them. If a cat has had kittens she should be spayed when the kittens are about six weeks old, she can get pregnant even before then but you have to wait till the kittens can do without her for a day; she will still produce milk and feed the kittens after she goes home. It is quite common, especially during the spring, to find that a cat is in the early stages of pregnancy when it is spayed (since the uterus is being removed the pregnancy is automatically terminated), the uterus is bigger but problems are rare. Spaying heavily pregnant cats is not very nice but unfortunately it is often necessary, especially with ferals where keeping them shut in till they give birth and the kittens are weaned is extremely stressful, even terrifying, for them. Though the wound is larger the cats do not seem bothered by the experience.

Is a cat ever too old to spay? Not if in good health, I have neutered cats of both sexes as late as ten years old without problems but I wouldn't recommend leaving it that late!

*By Susan Howard B.Vet.Med MRCVS - Howard's Neutering Clinic*

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## Help with Neutering



Unfortunately the story of kittens being dumped like this one, where they were found abandoned in a garden is all too frequent.

We offer vouchers for people on benefits to help neuter their cats, and we can also cover the full cost of neutering feral cats but our policy with feral cats is to trap, neuter and return.

Please call us on 0345 494 1900 option 2.

Sadly our fosterer, Kathy was called out one Sunday afternoon to rescue a tiny kitten from a ditch in her local area. She felt it had been dumped as it had been left in a bag.

Unfortunately even with all the possible care Kathy could give, the little kitten managed to survive the night, but died the following morning.

*By Maureen Bennett*

## A day in the life of a Cats Protection Fosterer

I have been a volunteer fosterer for the Norwich & District branch of Cats Protection for two years, dedicating much of my spare time to helping cats in need. I have a purpose-built unit in my back garden which has two separate pens and which, for a short period in their lives, is home to unwanted, abandoned or stray cats that come to stay with me before being rehomed.

As a Cats Protection fosterer, my day starts with the morning feed. When I look out from my kitchen window I can usually see hungry little faces peering at me from the pens. The cats like to get up on their shelves to look around the garden, and it doesn't take them long to work out that noise from the kitchen means human activity, which mostly results in food! Most cats will come out to greet me, but some are shy or wary and prefer to stay in the back compartment of their pen until I come through with their food. Getting to know the cats' feeding preferences is very important – you don't want to give them something that they're not used to in case they get an upset tummy, increasing their chance of infection in an already stressful environment.

I always talk to the cats (which I'm sure gives my neighbours a few laughs) and I give them lots of strokes, fuss and affection. Some cats love just being around you, weaving about your legs and showing an interest in everything you're doing. I've had cats that love attacking the dustpan and brush, ones that enjoy patting your ankles as you walk away from them and others that reach up hook their naughty paws around a food bowl that you've just filled up with their food, bringing it crashing to the ground. You have to have eyes and ears everywhere, especially with kittens. I'm always on the lookout for any signs of a cat being unwell or showing abnormal behaviour, as well as checking in their loo for anything dodgy. The entire environment needs to be kept very clean and disinfected so as to reduce the risk of infection.

Once the cats are fed and watered and their pen is clean and tidy, I leave them to their breakfast and subsequent self-grooming session. They tend to sleep between my visits, but sometimes I will hear a ball being chased around or see them on their shelves watching the pigeons stalk across the garden. I visit the cats throughout the day and evening to feed them and spend time with them. Some like to play, others want to settle down on your lap, and now and again you'll have a poor little thing that just prefers to be left alone. As a fosterer, you have to quickly establish the personality of the cat to work out what level of interaction will best suit their needs. Sometimes you will have an idea of their background from the people giving them up, but often you will have to gauge their personality from the way they behave in the pen.

As well as interacting with the cats, feeding them and keeping their pens clean, my work as a fosterer continues throughout the day and can include visits to the vet, collecting cats from a relinquishing owner or strays from a person that has been looking out for them, home visits for potential adopters, and post-adoption visits to ensure that the cat has settled.

As soon as I know that I am taking in a new cat, I make an appointment at the vet for the cat to have a health check, and vaccinations and a microchip if required. If the cat has not been neutered I arrange for this to take place as soon as possible.

When one of my cats is ready for re-homing, I write the content for the Cats Protection website and Facebook page and take photos of the cat – this is easier said than done because they tend not to stay still! I will then get in contact with potential adopters to ascertain whether they are a good match for the cat, and vice versa.

I am certainly kept busy every day with my Cats Protection work, but there are so many cats in need of help that I couldn't live with myself if I did nothing about it.

It is wonderful to rehome a cat to loving new owners, knowing I and Cats Protection have done everything we can to give them the best possible chance in life.

*By Vanessa Sewell (Branch Fosterer)*

## PURR NORFOLK PET SITTING

One of our fosterers, Vanessa Sewell has started her own Pet Sitting and Pet Taxi business, appropriately named Purr Norfolk Pet Sitting. With a wealth of experience of caring for Cats Protection cats as well as having three of her own, Vanessa provides a professional and reliable pet care service in South Norfolk, North Suffolk and Norwich. Dedicated to giving the very best care to the pets in her charge, Vanessa is trained in feline welfare and wellbeing, and Pet First Aid.



Vanessa's Pet Sitting service includes:

- Spending time with your pet to relieve anxiety, stress and loneliness.
- Feeding your pet in accordance with your requirements.
- Flexible service tailored to your pet's needs and routine.
- Thorough cleaning of bowls and feeding stations.
- Administration of medication if required.

Vanessa's Pet Taxi service provides safe and comfortable transport for times when you're unable to take your pet to the vet, groomer or a new home. This service offers:

- A one-way service if you plan to collect your pet later in the day.
- A wait-and-return service where your pet will be accompanied for the entire visit.
- A suitable carrier if required.

For further details or to arrange a Pet Sitting or Pet Taxi Service, Vanessa can be contacted as follows:

Tel: 01508 538955 / 07843 190266  
 Email: [vanessa@purnorfolkpetsitting.co.uk](mailto:vanessa@purnorfolkpetsitting.co.uk)  
 Website: [www.purnorfolkpetsitting.co.uk](http://www.purnorfolkpetsitting.co.uk)  
 Facebook: [purnorfolk](https://www.facebook.com/purnorfolk)

## Can you give a home to any of these lovelies?



**SMOKEY** is a most beautiful and affectionate cat. Although Smokey has just turned 14 she is a very active girl for her age and loves to be fussed and loved. Smokey will need access to outdoors in a safe location once settled. We are looking for a new home for her where she will be the only pet and without young children. Smokey has been vet checked, neutered, vaccinated, microchipped and is up to date with flea and worm treatments.



**LEO** is a very handsome boy of 8 years and has not had the best of lives so far. Abandoned 5 years ago when his owners moved and left him behind, he was luckily taken in by a neighbour, who has now sadly passed away, so Leo is again without a home. Leo is a very loving and gentle boy, who loves company, fuss and cuddles. Leo could live with gentle children and possibly another cat. We have no history of him with dogs. He has been vet checked, is neutered, vaccinated, microchipped and flea and worm treated. He would love a home where after a suitable settling in period he could venture outside in a safe location away from busy roads.



## Here are some of the cats that have been rehomed since our last Newsletter



Bella



Elsa & Arna



Ferney



Cosmo



Betty



Emily



Hugo



Jurby



Marmite



Louis



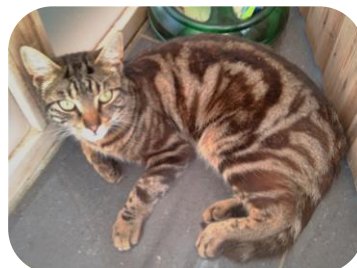
Teto



Toby



Sophie



Saber

