



FELINES

Taunton & Wellington Branch Newsletter
Summer 2020 (No. 130)



Teddy chilling out

In this edition:

- Update on our new foster pens
- Covid advice for cats
- Cats choose strange places to sleep
- Why neuter domestic cats

Custard is not panic buying

She wishes it to be known that there are always two bowls of biscuits. In these uncertain times, one can never be too sure of supplies.



***Hello Friends and Readers,
Welcome to your Felines Newsletter - Summer 2020***

It is difficult to know what to report of Branch activities in these unusual times - lockdown didn't just affect all of our lives, but also those of the cats we seek to help. Cats Protection nationally has been on full lockdown and all Branch activities ceased for the time being.

Trapping has been suspended, and our Summer neutering campaign curtailed, as without full time vet support it isn't possible to run the full activities of your Branch. We depend so much on the wonderful work of the Mount Veterinary Hospital to be on hand whenever we need them, so until they are able to operate safely for staff and visitors we must hold off.

Similarly just as we were ready to open our new foster pens, the shutters came down. Five lovely new pens, fully equipped and ready to take in cats seeking new homes - then like a television programme the 'pause' button had to be pressed. Hopefully we shall be up and running in the not too distant future.

On the domestic front, our cats declared summer early—with such a lovely April after one of the wettest winters on record, they decided kitchen door opening hours should be resumed. This year the swallows that nest in the garage rafters also turned up early. As they have a tendency to swoop into the kitchen at times, a new bead screen is now in place. The cats' initial wariness didn't last long and it saves having to rescue a swallow before a cat works out who the new visitor is.

I am not sure what they make of us hanging around all day - other than being available to pester for a treat at any time.

To all our supporters, stay safe and stay well

and a big thank you to the Mount Vets who sponsor this edition.



Health advice for cats during Covid times

Get plenty of rest

Sleep—anywhere. On or beneath the bed, in a sunny spot, under the covers, by the window, upside-down, on the couch, in the middle of the floor, on top of the refrigerator, in a cupboard, on your back, in a ball, in a box. - any box or bag in use at the time.

Keep active

Knock a bunch of coins or small bottles off a table to see how far they bounce and roll. Chase your own tail. Sprawl on top of a good book. Get scared by something - anything - and race out of the room.

Bathe regularly

Clean behind your ears. Now do it again.

Communicate with friends and family

Start screaming at 6 a.m., for no reason, at anyone within hearing distance. Yowl at the birds. Walk across (or lie down on) a computer keyboard. Cry in front of the closed door to a room you're not supposed to be in anyway. Bite a phone. Yell into your full bowl of food.

Maintain a balanced diet

Eat small meals, three to fourteen times a day. Dump food onto the floor for variety. Put your entire paw in a bowl of wet food, but then decide it's not what you want. Steal a piece of turkey from an unattended sandwich. Refuse your favourite food, as today is another day, and variety is the spice of life.

Stay hydrated

Drink plenty of water, ideally directly from a running tap.

Take on a project

Hide all of your toys under the couch. Shred loose pieces of paper. Pull apart your roommate's chair. Rub your hair on every article of clothing you can find.

Meditate

Stare at a spot on the wall or ceiling for six minutes.

Practice social distancing

Stay away from humans. Hiss if you have to.

Places to nap

- regardless of the inconvenience you might cause



Hei—Knut here again! Sadly my plans for an exciting fundraising trip have been postponed for a year due to the Covid-19 travel restrictions. I *WILL* be back with more news when things get back to normal—whatever that is! Please watch this space. Knut X

What's in the box, bag, carton?



Tommy

Why like small children, are cats fascinated by boxes and bags? - in fact anywhere other than all the lovely baskets and beds provided as resting places. They will seek out alternative less cosy perches.



Riley





On top of mowers or generators.

Can you work out how many cats in the bottom picture?

Sometimes only by counting the ears can you determine how many cats there are.



Update on Peanut

Peanut spent time in foster care, and became a firm favourite before being rehomed. He is a beautiful boy with the softest of fur coats and a great one for lap sprawling.

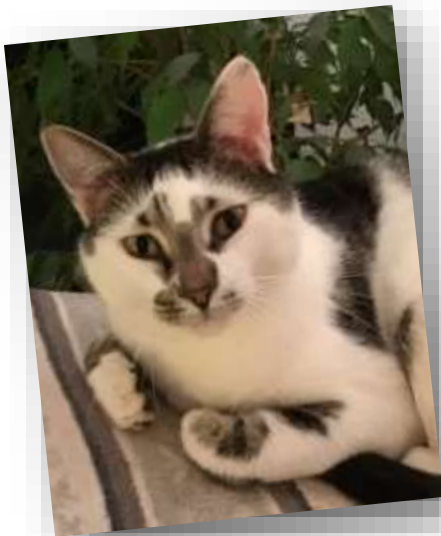
Before lockdown, concerns about his health resulted in needing to visit the vets. However nothing conclusive was found, and now of course any further tests can't be made. So we are happy to report, no weight loss, nor loss of appetite and he continues to enjoy the great outdoors in his custom built enclosure.



Photogenic cats or are they just natural posers?



Charlie above
Riley below



Zodic above
Benny below



Our new Foster Pens

With our new foster pens close to completion in March, we could have hoped to hold a 'Grand Opening' in time to include in the Summer Felines - then circumstances beyond anyone's control intervened.

However, even without cats in care we can show some pictures of the new foster pens. Hopefully by the time we are full of cats looking for new homes, the mud patch that was the little outside area at the front, will have been turned into the planned wildlife garden. There will be nectar plants for bees & butterflies, and room for compostable waste.

Bird feeders are already in place and attracting all sorts of wild life. Branch co-ordinator David has put up a poster inside the kitchen area of the pens, identifying the birds that might be seen on a visit.

The bird feeders will provide live entertainment for our residents as well as an avian education to all volunteers who come to look after them, or to help socialise the cats before a forever home is found.

The pens themselves are inside a secure fenced area. Access is via a padlock requiring a number code. The larger site includes the Branch's store and also accommodates storage/work facilities for other organisations. There is a separate building with a communal kitchen with loos that also houses the washing machine for the Branch's use. Plus plenty of parking near our pens.

We shall need volunteers to clean and feed the residents of the 5 pens twice a day, together with anyone who feels more comfortable taking on a socialising role. So please get in touch with the Branch to offer your help, a regular slot, however infrequent, will be much valued. Full training will be provided.

enquiries@taunton.cats.org.uk

Phone 03452 602397 (local rate)

Before (in February) and after (in May).



Construction began at the end of 2019—cold and wet!

Garden area outside our pens.

It was something of a muddy patch after all the rain in February.

Now in May in need of a hair cut, no doubt like many of us.



Plenty of evidence that birds are visiting even if our cats are missing at the moment.



The outside garden is less of a mud patch now since we've had a couple of months of sunshine.

Access is via a central door, also with a coded padlock. The essential safety corridor within to access the pens.

Inside it is light and airy with the 5 individual pens in a row and the kitchen/work area at one end.





Inside sleeping
area

Each pen has a cosy sleeping area with a heater, plus an internal door that can be closed when cold.

In the outside area there is a shelf and room for the cat forts that provide additional resting and climbing opportunities.

Sides between pens are opaque to reduce stress - no longer wire, but in a material now much easier to clean between residents.



With a well stocked kitchen/work area at one end with everything for cats & humans.

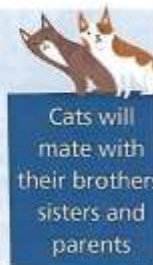


Why should I neuter my cat?

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



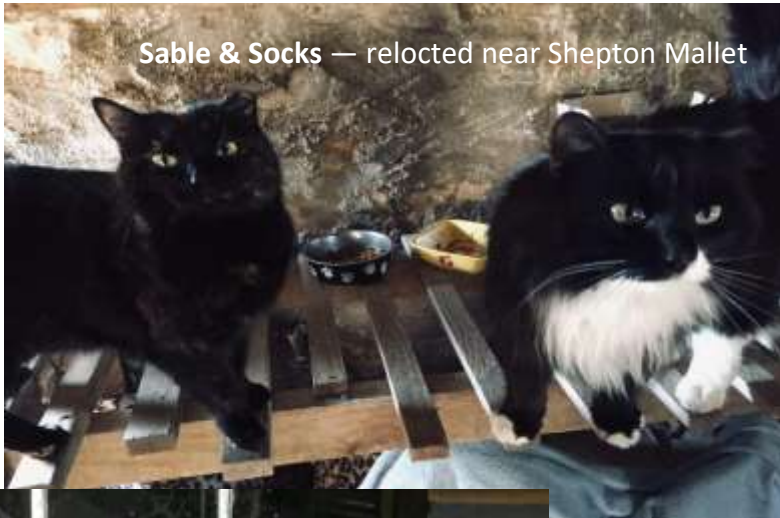
Did you know?



We hope to be able to run a neutering campaign later in the year for domestic cats. This will depend very much on the situation with Covid-19.

For information about environmentally friendly rodent control please call 03452 602 397 for more information and the current situation

Some news of feral cats rehomed last year & just before lockdown



Sable & Socks — relocated near Shepton Mallet



Two kittens relocated near Burrowbridge

Sadly all feral relocation is currently on hold at the moment, as are our trap/neuter/return (TNR) activities

Coco & Cookie
relocated to
Musbury



Smokey & Shadow from Travelodge



Smokey has turned out to be a very friendly boy and he is gorgeous! He is a complete foodie so has put on weight - we'll have to watch that a bit!

After being advised he would need to have his teeth looked at once he settled, he has now had three teeth removed and a polish and scale. Hopefully he'll be a lot more comfortable now and he's being a very good boy with his medication.

We didn't see **Shadow** for a few weeks after release but then all of a sudden she started appearing in the evenings. She is still very feral so I don't imagine that will change. But Smokey always seems pleased to see her and we see her at least once daily now popping back for food. They have the end of the catio with the cat tree and also an insulated cat box in there, which they enjoy

I'm pleased to say the rats who were hanging around the chickens have all cleared off now! I imagine that is likely Shadow more than Smokey! So we're really pleased about that as well. I think they enjoy playing in the fields beyond our garden, and when hanging out in the garden they just sit and watch the chickens, who definitely boss the cats around. Smokey is very tolerant of our dog as well even when he gets bouncy. I caught Smokey rubbing up against him and purring!

Lucy's Law came into effect on 6 April

Lucy's Law will mean that kittens can't be sold by a third-party seller such as a pet shop or commercial dealer unless they have bred the animal themselves. Instead, anyone looking to buy or adopt a kitten under six months must either deal directly with the breeder or an animal rehoming centre.

To help the public responsibly find pets the government has launched its '**Petfishing**' campaign. You may have heard of 'catfishing', when someone creates a fictional online persona to lure a person into a relationship. Deceitful pet sellers often use a similar tactic to 'petfish' buyers, mistreating animals and selling them at high volume to line their pockets.

Cats Protection always encourages potential cat owners to consider adopting rather than buying a cat. Teaming up with cat and vet organisations to create a Kitten Checklist, designed to help potential owners ensure they choose a happy and healthy kitten. Please mention to friends and family who are thinking of taking on a kitten or cat. Far better to think of adopting from a reputable homing or branch foster centre such as Minim & Crotchet (below) two of the three 'musical kittens' homed by the Branch in the past.



As reported in The Times last month - cats may have lived with humans for thousands of years longer than previously thought; following hard upon the heels of the first mice.

Archaeologists said the domestication for felines was likely to have started as far back as 45,000 years ago to hunt mice. (Article taken from a report in the *Scientific Reports* journal).

FRIENDS OF THE BRANCH

'Friends of the Branch' is available to anyone who cares about cat welfare in our area. Minimum membership is £7.50 a year.

Please make cheques or postal orders payable to:-

'Cats Protection T&W – Friends of the Branch'

and send to :- Friends of the Branch

51 Yarlington Close, Norton Fitzwarren, Taunton TA2 6RR

Please enrol/re-enrol me as a 'Friend of the Branch'

(One year membership)

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £ (£7.50 minimum)

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) 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 4 years to Cats Protection, ☐

OR If you are not a UK Tax Payer please tick this box ☐

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

If you would prefer to receive Felines by email, please tick this box ☐

Please do not leave your renewal form and subscription at the Homing & Information Centre at Blackdown Garden Centre. This is not a Branch facility, and has different staff on duty each day, so it could be very easy for paperwork to be mislaid, as volunteers may not understand its significance.

*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), or by emailing **preferences@cats.org.uk***

*or write to: **Freepost, Cats Protection, National Cat Centre, Chelwood Gate, Sussex RH17 7TT.***

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



Now I do like to drink out of the garden pond as it tastes better than clean water out of my bowl, I'm sure my fellow felines will agree. I was having a drink yesterday when I spotted something that looked like very tiny fish moving in the water, doing synchronised swimming up and down.



Mrs Person came to see what I was looking at and told me that they were called tadipoddles (I may have got that wrong) and that they would soon grow arms and legs)

Yeah, right, she'll be telling me next that they will turn into frogs.

Love, Wilfred X

Social distancing gone to the dogs!
6 dogs in this lovely group,
Number 6 having a rest behind the others.



Taunton & Wellington Branch



Call **03452 602 397** (local rate)

Email address - **enquiries@taunton.cats.org.uk**

Lost and Found - **lostandfound@taunton.cats.org.uk**

Website - **www.taunton.cats.org.uk**

Taunton & Wellington Branch offers help in the following areas:

TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and TA21



We are on Facebook