



FELINES

Taunton & Wellington Branch Newsletter
Winter 2021 (No. 136)



Christmas? It can all be a bit much for cats

In this edition:

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Some recent arrivals at the homing pens



Butler, a beautiful ten month old little boy

He didn't stay very long with us and was adopted into a lovely family. Some of our residents are reserved almost as soon as they arrive.

Very inquisitive, he liked to watch the birds and at times the squirrels outside, but wasn't happy when a helicopter went overhead a little too low and a little too loud.

Elvis - Sussed out the pen staff. No need to get up, they come and bring playthings to you!



*Hello Friends and Readers,
Welcome to your Felines Newsletter — **Winter 2021***

We are on the rundown to the end of the year, and what a year it has been. Despite all the road blocks placed in the Branch's way because of Covid restrictions and the need to keep in mind the safety of everyone, we have been able to continue the work to look after the cats that come in to our care, with certain adaptations.

Our homing pens continue to play host to a constant stream of cats and kittens, who spend a little or long time with us, before a new home is found for them. Reports back of how they are settling in have been wonderful, and however much we miss them, knowing they are loved and well looked after, makes it all so worthwhile.

With the return of the dark mornings and evenings— the homing pens are a little oasis of light in the gloom. Safely inside, with perhaps the radio playing, you can forget how miserable the weather is, chat to the cats who may reward you with a little 'lap' time to tune out of a bustling world, and tune into the feline one. They truly know how to live in the moment.

Though we haven't been able to run our usual three 'neutering' campaigns this year - our wonderful vets at the Mount agreed to reserve a number of surgery slots for us, to run a campaign this Autumn. Further details later in this issue.

Thank you to the Mount Veterinary Hospital for all their support to our Branch and for sponsoring this edition of Felines.



Settling in — recently rehomed cats from the homing pens



Blossom (left) keeping a 'ear' out for the postman.

Foggy (below) exploring his new garden.

Teddy and **Freddie** (below)
have really settled in.
Freddie (ginger) no longer the shy
boy he was whilst in foster care.





Skeeter, who took a little time to settle into foster care, has really fallen on her paws in her new home. She has a cat climbing and sleeping frame of epic proportions. Lucky Skeeter.

Mila (who was Mo whilst with us) thoroughly 'At Home' totally relaxed in her own special place.



From living in a shed, **Flick** who became Sheba on being rehomed, is now living like the princess she is.

David Forman-Cummings has finally completed his 'virtual' 2280 mile cross-USA trek, travelling the equivalent length of the legendary Route 66 whilst raising £569 for the Branch!

David says -

"My medal arrived! Very bling! Crossing over the 'virtual' finishing line last week on Santa Monica pier was amazing. 2280 miles across the USA in 11 months by various methods (cycling, running and swimming) is something I haven't done before and all in aid of a worthy cause. So roll on the next challenge!"



David's Just Giving page will remain active throughout December, so you can still sponsor him and help raise even more funds

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/david-forman-cummings>

A Family Affair

Or perhaps 'keeping it in the family' would be more accurate. It is often a surprise to many people who contact us, that cats can become parents so early. At four months a female cat, little more than a kitten herself, can become pregnant and a male can be a father at the same age. Brothers and sisters can become mums and dads, just because they shouldn't, doesn't mean they don't. Cats don't abide by the rules of human society.!

There is a myth that every female cat should have at least one litter before spaying - on this basis we would be knee deep in cats.

A spayed cat is a healthier cat. Without motherhood every few months, a female cat will live a much better life and less likely to be affected by some of the diseases and complaints cats can develop. Kittens born to very young mothers may possibly be undersized or may have a mother who abandons them. Mothers that haven't had time to recover from the last litter of kittens, can themselves be less healthy. Young mothers are at greater risk of complications during the delivery of their kittens. Closely related cats can also suffer genetic defects that could impact on their lives.

There is currently no evidence of any negative long term effects of neutering or spaying. All female cats do not have to become mothers, so please get them spayed as soon as they are old enough.

Two beautiful four month old siblings

Dottie (left) and
Dewey (right).

Brother and sister, and our most recent young arrivals. Both very pretty cats. Dewey has a black nose and Dottie a pretty little pink one.

Dewey is the more active of the two, much less shy, but Dottie is friendly once she feels comfortable with you in her pen.

They are reserved, so they will soon be off to their new homes.



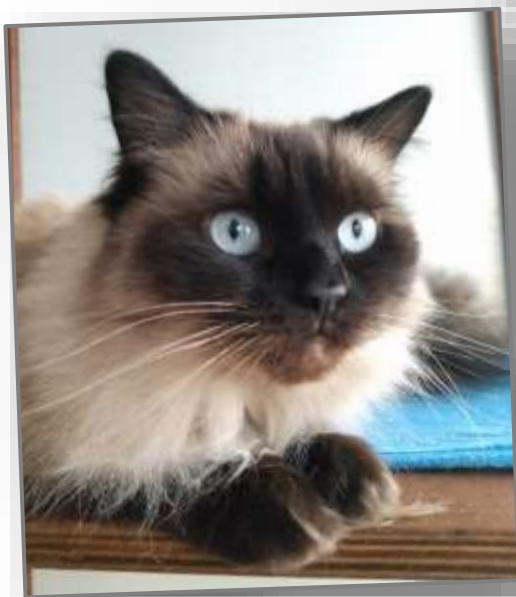
Mum **Lola** has also recently arrived. She needs some quiet time to get over the changes in her life.



Some more of our recent arrivals

Ellie (R) is a very beautiful eight year old girl, *but then all our cats are lovely*, a chocolate orange tortoiseshell girl with a lovely medium length coat of hair. She was very wary of visitors, but could be persuaded out of one of her hidey holes with patience. She did love her coat being brushed.

Sapphire—nearly seven years old, came to us via the Cat Guardians scheme. A very friendly girl who loves a lap to purr on, has now gone to her new home.



Elvis (R) a four year old, almost an all over black cat, with just a handful of white hairs on his chest. A laid back lovely boy.



A Tale of Two Tabbies

Tabby & Smudge were resident in our homing pens at the same time, but in separate pens. Two very distinctive tabbies, but very different boys. Here, they appear of similar size, but in reality Smudge (on the right) was a very BIG BOY. Whilst Tabby (left) was quite a small cat. Superficially very similar, but Smudge's white nose is a give away.

Both with very striking markings, each with white chests and lovely white toes on each paw. Smudge was some four years younger and much more active, but then if you'd had eight teeth removed as had Tabby, would you be rushing about?



They have both now gone on to their new homes and it is reported that they settling in well. Tabby has a sea view, and Smudge lots of wild life to watch.

Review of 2021 ... and beyond

Hello to all our readers! You don't hear directly from me very often but many of you know me, having adopted a cat or kitten from us in the past. I'm Ann (M, as we also have an Ann P), the joint Branch co-ordinator for Taunton and Wellington with my husband, David.

I write this report in mid November, as we are drawing towards the end of not only a calendar year, but also the end of our first year of operating at our foster pens. I thought it would be a good idea to let you know how we've been getting on during what are still quite difficult times – what's new, what trends we are seeing, etc. So this edition of Felines will be slightly different.

We could not have opened our pens at a more challenging time. The first lockdown in March 2020 put an immediate stop to branches taking in cats, carrying out home visits, and allowing members of the public to visit cats in care, as well as our valuable TNR work. Of course, it also meant that vets were virtually unable to open their doors, so most of our routine veterinary work such as neutering had to stop. During those first few months we managed to home just a handful of cats, and things did look bleak.

We had to adopt a procedure called "hands free homing" – more of that later, but it meant that adopters were unable to meet a cat until it was delivered to them. It sounds unlikely, and we had our doubts as to whether it would work, but we were happy to give it a go if it meant we could home needy cats.

Meanwhile, our homing pen unit had been built and was waiting for guests to move in, so it was very frustrating for the waiting volunteers, who just wanted to get on with the job of caring for cats.

Having this loyal band of cat care assistants was why we knew that having stand-alone fostering facilities, where the cats are cared for entirely by volunteers on a rota basis, would work. Our arrangements are not entirely unique within the Charity, but Taunton and Wellington is a pioneering branch with a "can do" attitude, and we were determined to get under way.

The only positive thing about the delay was that our volunteers had the opportunity to carry out the essential online training that had been put in place. Many of them would be lone working, so it was important that they knew what to do, from dealing with an emergency down to hand washing, PPE etc, all of which have become so familiar to us all. And it gave us as Co-ordinators the chance to check and double check our procedures and all of the thousand and one tiny details necessary to make the operation a success. Very little has had to be changed.

Fast forward to 23 November 2020 and finally – we opened our doors and took in our first cats.



**Our first two cats—
Chief (L) and Loki (R)**

Two brothers with very different temperaments and welfare needs



So, after that preamble, where are we one year on, and how have we adapted and coped with what is still a difficult situation with some restrictions? Here are a few facts from the Charity's recently published "Cats Report 2021" whose key findings since their last report show that:

- There has been an increase of approximately 600,000 owned cats in 2021, meaning a total of 10.8 million cats in the UK
- The majority of cats were either adopted from a rescue centre or animal shelter (25%), taken on from a neighbour, friend or family member (19%), or bought (28%)
- Just over half of all purchased cats were found online (52%)
- 1.3 million owned cats in the UK are not neutered
- There are 2.8 million unchipped owned cats in the UK

These are a few brief but sobering facts from this very comprehensive report, and you can access the whole document here: www.cats.org.uk/stats.

One very interesting trend that emerged is that the younger 18-34 age group of owners are significantly less likely to have their cats neutered or microchipped. Limited access to vets during COVID-19 could account for partly skewing the figures, certainly, but this was something we felt we needed to address.

In past years, the Branch has run up to three, one-month, neutering campaigns with three different vets. So when our own Branch vets were able to resume normal routine neutering appointments, we tentatively approached them to ask if they would consider testing the water with a very short campaign. As they had recently taken on two new vets who needed lots of experience of neutering all cats, including young kittens, they agreed.

So we set up an offer running for just two weeks, to have a cat or kitten neutered and microchipped for just £10, whether or not the owner was in receipt of means tested benefits. We were all somewhat overwhelmed by the response – 113 cats neutered or booked in for surgery before the end of November. Roughly a 50/50 divide between males and females, but the interesting thing was that just over half the number were six months old or less. All, therefore, of breeding age, but what would have happened if we had not run this campaign? At the time of writing, the estimated cost of the campaign to the Branch is £6,500.



I should explain at this point for those readers who are not aware that all Branches of Cats Protection are entirely volunteer run. We do not currently receive a neutering grant, so the work we do is paid for from our funds which come either from donations, legacies or from our shops. Sadly, during the pandemic, our two shops have often been closed more often than they have been open.

Once all vets are back to normal in terms of routine neutering, we can look again at our next campaigns but this won't be for a while and will depend on availability of funds at the time.

It is worth mentioning that we never cease to be amazed by the lack of recognition by the general public of the prolific breeding habits of cats. It is by no means unusual for an owner to tell us that they have two kittens, six months old, one male and one female. When told that they need to book them in for neutering as quickly as possible, the response is "Oh, it's alright, they are brother and sister!" They are horrified when they learn that to a cat this doesn't matter a jot.

What's also clear is that many people have absolutely no idea of the true cost of keeping a cat, and don't do any research before they adopt one. They see a cute kitten and think no further, not taking into account regular flea and worming treatment, neutering, vaccinating, microchipping, food, litter – not to mention any non-routine veterinary care needed.

TNR Work

Needless to say, as well as our routine neutering numbers having been down for the year – apart from our brief discounted neutering campaign - so too have our trap/neuter/return figures.

For several months we were unable to carry out any trapping work as we were not permitted to enter properties, farms etc. and it is only within the last few months that we have been able to carefully resume, having first completed a risk assessment for each job. To date this year we have trapped 37 cats – 18 of them returned to site after neutering and 19 relocated to new locations in need of rodent control. Ironically, at present we have had to stop our work again until the vets have dealt with the backlog of cats and kittens from the campaign and can again accept ferals for neutering. We will have plenty to keep them busy.

It takes a certain type of person to be a TNR volunteer, and it isn't for everyone. If you are wondering what's involved, and seriously considering volunteering yourself, then we would be happy to hear from you. You would need plenty of warm clothes (preferably non-rustling) and mustn't mind the thought of standing up to your ankles in slurry in a dark, freezing cow shed for several hours. You can't move for fear of spooking the cats, and you need to be able to "think like a cat" to try and predict what they will do. It's no good thinking you could sit and read a book while you are waiting for your targets to obligingly go into the trap, you need to keep your eyes on them all the time, and keep very quiet.

Having said all that, TNR work is strangely addictive! You either love it or hate it, and the adrenaline rush when the trap goes off is well worth the effort and discomfort. Honestly!



Final adjustments to sleeping arrangements require agility!

Fundraising

Our Branch has been advertising for a fundraising volunteer for a number of years. We are not alone though, many Branches report that finding a suitable fundraising person is difficult. However, it's early days, but we sincerely hope that we have struck gold in the form of a lady who loves organising events, and has even taken part in some of Cats Protection's challenge events, which range from treks to abseiling, skydiving, zipwiring – both in the UK and abroad. Our new volunteer is hoping to be able to undertake an Alps Trek next year – more on that from her in future editions.

Lost and Found

Recording lost and found cats is a very important service that we offer. We have a team of two volunteers – one dealing with lost cats and one with found. They meet regularly to update the lists, recording them on our website and Facebook pages. In the case of missing cats, owners are always asked to notify us when their cat returns home, but sadly they rarely do so. Most of our volunteers have more than one role, and some of them have paid jobs too, so it is particularly frustrating to spend time following up a missing cat, only to find that Tiddles returned home the day after he was reported missing!

Pen Sponsorship

You may recall that last year we stopped requesting subscriptions for membership of Friends of the Branch. Instead, we suggested either a donation – leaving it up to the individual to decide how much to donate and how often – or alternatively, sponsorship of one of our homing pens.



The interior of one of the pen cabins

We now have several sponsors. We have a plaque made with their chosen wording, and at the end of the year we send a report with information about each cat that has occupied 'their' pen. This helps people to feel connected to individual cats, knowing that they have supported them while they have been in our care.

If you would like to support us in this way, please get in touch. See our contact details at the end of this review.

Felines

When someone adopts from us, they will receive four editions of Felines, and at the end of that year we will write and ask if they would like to stay on the mailing list (with the option to receive the magazine via email), in which case they may wish to make a donation. If we don't hear from them, we remove them from the mailing list, so we try to keep the printing and postage costs to a minimum. We do love receiving feedback from adopters. Mostly this comes from owners who have taken on a cat recently, but it's particularly rewarding to hear from people who may have adopted a few years ago and want to update us about their much loved pet.

Other Services

Now seems to be a good time to mention two valuable services that Cats Protection is able to provide to any cat owner ...

Cat Guardians – Our free Cat Guardians service can give you complete peace of mind. Should you pass away, we'll take your cat into Cats Protection's care until we can find them a new loving home.

<https://www.cats.org.uk/what-we-do/catguardians> will give you all the information you need, but if you don't have internet access, get in touch with our Branch – contact details are at the end of this review.

Paws to Listen grief support service - We understand just how much your cat means to you and what you may be going through if your pet is missing, had to be rehomed, is nearing the end of their life or they have recently passed away. Cats Protection has produced a range of resources, information and support to help you at this very difficult time. You may also wish to look at the ways we can help you celebrate the life of your cat. <https://www.cats.org.uk/what-we-do/grief> Again, get in touch with the branch if you cannot access the information directly.

And to remind you of a couple of others

Recycling of Cat Food Pouches – I'm sure that many pet owners share our reluctance to throw away all those empty food pouches which just go to landfill. Thankfully, you can now send them for recycling. Our Neutering Officer has done a survey of the major supermarkets in Taunton and Wellington – all of whom state that they are doing their bit to recycle soft plastics – and has found that Sainsburys at Hankridge Farm and the Co-op in Wellington are most supportive so well done to them.

The pouches need to be washed thoroughly – if you can't get the last bit of food out, cut the pouch vertically and open it out, wash it and then put it to dry – we place ours on a teatowel draped over a radiator. If you have a large number to recycle which won't fit in the in store bin, just ask a member of staff for help.

Flowers – many flowers and pot plants are poisonous to cats, but it still surprises us how many people are not aware that lilies can be lethal, and of course they are one of the most commonly bought plants in cut flower form. A cat brushing against the pollen and then licking its fur can go into kidney failure very quickly, although all parts of the plant are poisonous. The Charity's Advocacy Department has worked tirelessly to get supermarkets



to put clear warning notices on their cut flowers and potted plants, but still accidents happen, so we make no apologies for repeating this information here.

Retail Shops

Our two shops, in Wellington and Taunton, are managed by Cats Protection's retail division and not by the Branch. The pandemic has caused problems for both of them of course, with essential closures for much of the time during lockdowns. We suggest that if you have goods that you wish to donate, you telephone first and speak to a person rather than a machine. They will be able to confirm whether they are accepting goods at that time and, if so, how much. Wellington in particular has limited storage space, and both shops have been affected by absence due to illness. You will find the contact details at the end of this review.

Trends

There has been much evidence of mis-selling of kittens on the internet during the lockdowns, with people willing to pay up to £400 for a kitten which they are told is eight weeks old, only to find that it is much younger and should not have been taken away from its mother. Most of these kittens have had nothing done in the way of flea and worm treatment, vaccinations etc. and many have cat 'flu. Our Charity's winter campaign this year is entitled "Eight Precious Weeks" and highlights the need for kittens to be with their mothers for that time, to learn from them, and gain immunity as well as social skills.

With the demand for cats and kittens outstripping supply during the early months of the lockdown, we built up a healthy waiting list of potential adopters. Each person is asked to complete a homing questionnaire, detailing their home and family, other animals, any daily absence from home etc. and our Welfare Officer then has a telephone conversation with each person. As we are still not permitted to invite members of the public to our pens to meet cats, a likely match is identified and the enquirer is sent photographs and videos of the cat, and a full clinical history. We hide nothing – everything, good and bad, is declared. When hands free homing was first suggested I think we were all quite sceptical, but it really works. To date we haven't needed to take a single cat back into our care.

Over the past year, we have taken in fewer kittens but a higher percentage of older cats. Nearly half of our intake has been cats whose owners have gone into care or sadly have passed away. Two cats have come under the Cat Guardians scheme, and we were able to liaise with these owners or their relatives before it was time to take the cats in, to find out about their personality, likes and dislikes etc. and what their owners' wishes were for their rehoming and future.

It follows that older cats tend to have need of more veterinary care, and we have had a number of cats requiring quite extensive dental work. Dental treatment is one of the most common veterinary requirements for cats. If your cat has a health check at least once or preferably twice a year, then their teeth will be examined. Unfortunately, as a cat isn't likely to voluntarily smile at you to show their teeth, this is frequently overlooked by owners, and it simply doesn't occur to people that it's necessary. Prevention is better than cure. We have had a number of cats who must have been very uncomfortable and had difficulty in eating due to diseased teeth and gums. Dental treatment is expensive, and this has formed a large part of our veterinary expenditure over the year.



*Seventeen year old **Barry** had a major dental — six teeth extracted, but has really landed on his paws in his new home*

So there you have it – a brief outline of what our volunteers do. Of course, there is much more than this. As Branch Co-ordinators, our role has changed over the past year and we are less involved in the physical work of cat care. We're getting on a bit now! We also stopped fostering, as getting down on hands and knees to clean the pen was no longer possible without a plan as to how to get back up again. We are now doing exactly what co-ordinators should do – keeping the plates spinning, liaising between the branch and the main Charity, with other branches, looking at the overall picture, taking note of upcoming trends or changes to legislation, and supporting our committee and other volunteers. We have great support from our Branch Development Manager, who takes our more off-the-wall suggestions in her stride. I do still hand rear newborn kittens when required though, as I still find getting up every two hours day and night enjoyable!

I started this review as a means of thanking the members of our team but it has evolved into something more than that. We are not a Branch that's in the habit of telling everyone how wonderful we are. We just quietly get on with the things we need to do to make life easier and more comfortable for the cats in our care. Their welfare always comes first. But I hope this has given you some insight into some of our roles.

I would like to thank our Welfare team for always seeming to be in several places at once, admitting and homing cats, communicating with potential relinquishers and owners, taking cats to the vet, administering medication, collecting donated food from the supermarkets and distributing it to the 70+ feral cats that we feed. They will no doubt remind me of the things I haven't mentioned!

Our Treasurer, for keeping us financially on the straight and narrow and placing and receiving orders for the countless items needed to keep things ticking over. Our TNR team for their dedication and long hours spent thinking about sitting by a warm fireside. Our Neutering officer for dealing with the public's requests and writing out all those neutering vouchers. Our Lost and Found team for their care and time spent in posting details of lost/found cats on our website and Facebook page. Our Editor of Felines for her patience when we don't respond to her as quickly as she would like. And of course to our cat care assistants, some of whom have become mentors and trainers when new volunteers come on board.

Thank you to a great team. You're all wonderful.

We do appreciate the support of all the vets in Taunton and Wellington who participate in our neutering schemes and deal with the admin for those vouchers. And our Branch vets who deal with all our veterinary work. We are so fortunate to have you close by.

I must mention you, too. If you are reading this it means you have either adopted a cat from us, or you are a long term supporter, or you sponsor one of our pens. Whatever you do, thank you!

This is beginning to sound like an Oscar speech, so just one more thank you – to Wilfred, our Branch mascot, whose little blogs on our Facebook page have without a doubt increased our number of followers. His first post was when he was three weeks old and very poorly. He is now seven and a quarter, and just as cheeky as ever.

Many thanks if you have stayed with us this far. We hope you all have a Happy and Peaceful Christmas.

Ann (M)

Contact details -

Branch—03452 602 397 (Local rate)

Email—enquiries@taunton.cats.org.uk

Taunton shop—01823 331309

Wellington shop—01823 663455

Finally—Thank you to our supporters who have generously donated food to us via the collection bins in Sainsburys and Asda as well as those in our two shops, referred to earlier in this report. Here are some figures from the two supermarket collections for the past twelve months -

- Tins 2,470
- Pouches 11,912
- Biscuits 538 boxes/packs
- Treats 147 packs



Trapping, Neutering, Returning and Relocating in the wet

We knew we'd been lucky, and it couldn't last. All our trapping outings in the previous 4 months had been very straight forward. We prearranged what time we'd turn up having primed the temporary cat carers about feeding times and location. Having loaned them a large family trap, the cats in question had had time to get used to coming and going in and out of the trap for food, all we had to do, was arrive, attach the string that allowed us to close the access and keep out of sight. The cats had all appeared on time and dutifully did as was required.

We pulled the string – good to go. Individual cats were decanted into carry baskets to transport to the vets, who were keeping surgery slots for us the next morning. Good luck couldn't last and it didn't. An evening outing in August, when we naively expected, being high summer, that it would be dry & warm – was neither. Forecast were showers with sunny spells – no one told the sun. We had the heavy rain for nearly 3 hours after we arrived then the rain tailed off and there was a hint of sun, not that it reached us huddled in the shadow of the Blackdown Hills.

After the first hour a lonely kitten had appeared. We were desperate to catch the mum, plus the other kitten. We had a relocation organised for the following day, so we didn't want just the one kitten. Indeed as time went on, we decided if the other kitten or the mum didn't turn up, we'd release the sole kitten, as it is not good practise to relocate one on its own, despite being old enough now to fend for its self or indeed, if female, might even be pregnant. We weren't comfortable just relocating him or her by themselves, whilst hoping we'd be successful catching the others in the next day or two.

Getting ready to call it a day, wet, very wet by now, despite sheltering under some trees, we'd been dripped on for several hours, our shoes were leaking and we were feeling not just a little depressed. Lo, mum and sibling suddenly appeared. Making up for keeping us waiting so long, they both went into the family trap together. We went from depressed and cold to high elation, wet feet forgotten, we'd dry out later.

Dad was nowhere to be seen. Three out of four good enough. We had hoped the father would continue to frequent the garden over the next couple of days, and if so, we would be back to reunite him with the rest of the family. However, with the older female gone, he has not been seen, so obviously he decided to move on.

The following morning an early call from the vets had more decisions to be made. Mum, was not well, with breathing problems due to an abscess in her

throat, and in the very early stages of pregnancy again, so there were real concerns about her future health. Illnesses in feral cats are very difficult to deal with. It is impossible to monitor a released feral cat. So we were faced with either agreeing to put her sleep, to prevent a lingering death in the wild, or hope she made it through the operation to spay which, with a long lasting antibiotic administered, would give her the best chance of a long healthy life. As relocated cats spend up to 4 weeks in a temporary enclosure acclimatizing to their new surrounding's smells and noises, she could be monitored safely – so with fingers crossed, this course was agreed.

This particular family group had frequented a large domestic garden for some time. The owners, though willing to feed them, and had indeed become quite attached to the little family, were very concerned when a tom cat joined them. Quite rightly they knew what came next and though sad to see them go, knew they couldn't stay. In the end had we not picked up the mum and the two surviving kittens of an original litter of four, she could have had a nasty lingering death and, unneutered, the kittens a less healthy life. One kitten was indeed female - enough said.

One kitten then developed a runny eye, which was treated by our vets, and with a further monitoring needed, ended up spending several days there. Luckily farmers are used to dealing with and getting treatment for their animals, so were prepared to make any necessary vet visits.

It is not always easy to make decisions of life and death for an animal. We just hope we make the right ones, however difficult. For the above family, they have gone to a lovely rural location, away from dangerous roads, with room to roam, shelter and food provided. A good outcome.

A week later we were back on the Blackdowns, this time on top of the world with a breathtaking view of Wellington in the distance below. Cold, but not wet. Another wait, another 'will they all turn up'. First one kitten obliged us, then sometime later a second one, and almost immediately mum appeared - bonus. We had thought with the noise of the trap going off twice, she'd be scared away but she was obviously hungry enough to risk it. To appear so quickly was rare, we could hardly believe our luck.

After being given the all clear by the vets and neutered the next day, mum was returned to the house with the view, and her kittens have been relocated to another farm some distance away.

Two successful outings, two hopefully successful long term outcomes.

Ann (P)



Hello my friends. For this issue I have been given a very important job to do , which is exciting.

Rupert and I would like to thank all of our readers and supporters for their continued support this year, and to wish you a very Happy and Peaceful Christmas.



Personally, we cats are enjoying having more time with our humans being at home, and we know we have helped you to get through some difficult times by our diverting behaviour!

I now pledge to continue being exasperating throughout the coming New Year. After all, I am a cat—therefore I am entitled!

Love, Wilfred X

Visitors to the Homing Pen Garden - not always our feathered friends!



Pen occupants often spend a lot of their waking time watching the visitors to our garden.

Not always of the *feathered variety* though. Like Ratty, a garden visitor earlier in the year, squirrels are also a member of the order 'Rodentia' and sometimes known as tree rats. It is no wonder our bird food disappears so fast with all the extra wildlife we attract!

Live cinema for our cats.

Mo (above) was fascinated.

(Thanks to pen cat carer EL who snapped the squirrel raiding the bird feeders one afternoon).

Do you remember Buddy and Holly?



Buddy and **Holly** were two ferals who we supported at the Hankridge Farm area near the cinema a few years ago. These two were obviously 'bonded' and eventually were relocated to a stable-yard where they really earn their keep with rodent control and have decided to become very friendly.



Taunton & Wellington Branch

Tel — **03452 602 397** (standard rate)

Email — **enquiries@taunton.cats.org.uk**

For lost and found please email -

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.



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