



FELINES

Taunton & Wellington Branch Newsletter
Summer 2022 (No. 138)



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Hello and goodbye to two recent guests

Summer

A cute pale tabby kitten, who was a little shy at first, but soon found her feet as well as her voice.

A very vocal little girl, who loved lots of attention. For such a small creature she could jump from her inside window over to the outer pen window, quite a distance - no trouble at all.

However, the back of a pen volunteer was a handy short cut to the ground if you were bending over in front of her.

Summer has now gone off to her forever home and is settling in fast.



Stanley

A lovely tabby boy who enjoyed his food as soon as it was put out. A friendly chap, who liked to be served his tea whilst in bed - breakfast in bed is something we all enjoy - tea is pushing it.

However our guests are always treated as VIPs (very important pussies) whilst with us. So tea in bed it was.

Stanley too has now gone to his new home.



Hello Friends and Readers, Welcome to your Felines Newsletter — Summer 2022

You know summer has arrived when, after days of dry weather, a late Spring Fayre is arranged and it rains all day!. After two long years with no obvious branch activity in the community, giving people a chance to understand our work for Cats Protection, we attended the Friends of Wellington Park Spring Fayre to show the flag to let people know we still existed.

The day dawned wet and stayed that way until late afternoon, but the people of Wellington and the surrounding area still turned out. Our branch mascot, Higgins the cat, spent the day walking round 'high fiving' all the children and generally ensuring no one was in any doubt that the Taunton & Wellington Branch was alive and well and carrying on its work to spread the word about the importance of good cat welfare. (*see Higgins the Cat on page 19*)

A couple of weeks later the Branch set up their stall outside the front of The Mount Veterinary Hospital for a cake sale.

A call went to all Branch members to dig out their cook books and bake for cats. There was an added bonus, as the day provided an opportunity to meet up with other Branch volunteers. In previous non Covid years, Christmas get togethers gave volunteers a chance to meet and put faces to names. Not something we've been able to do for a while. So it was nice to be able to touch base with a few volunteers one didn't often see.

AP

Cover girl, Oreo- What her new owners say!

Oreo is so affectionate, she likes to play at 2am, loves her feather toy, she either sleeps on our bed or on top of the wardrobe.

She eats for England and has a great appetite. Her fur has all grown back from her over-grooming, and now her coat is soft and shines beautifully.

We are so lucky to have this adorable little girl in our lives. She loves the conservatory, watching the birds in the garden and shelves have been put up so that she can see everything that is going on outside, even on wet days when she doesn't want to venture out.

Oreo is a treasure—we love her to bits. Thank you for matching us so well.

D&RP

Can cats smile? Looking at a cat's senses

A cat's senses are adaptations that allow cats to be highly efficient predators sharing 96% of their genes with tigers!

Sight though they have poor near-vision, their ability to see at dawn and dusk is some eight times better than ours. As this is their favourite time to hunt, they are described as crepuscular.

Whiskers: Their sense of touch is enhanced by long whiskers that protrude from their heads and bodies. Cats use their whiskers to feel the space around them and help detect prey. They grow on the cheeks, above lips, eyebrows and on the back of all four legs. With nerve cells at their roots, they are highly sensitive and vital in hunting and sensing the world around them.

Nose: Smells are very important to cats. A cat's sense of smell is the primary way it identifies people and objects. Cats have more than 200 million odour sensors in their noses; humans have just 5 million.

Taste is the weakest of the cat senses, as they have only around 450+ taste buds as opposed to humans with 9,000. However, they are sensitive to bitter or sour tastes so avoid them, an important adaptation when it comes to poisons, and with no sweet gene, can't taste sweet things.

Hearing - However here they have us beaten, when it comes to their incredible hearing skills. In fact, they can hear sounds that even dogs fail to hear. With two satellite dish shaped ears, cats' range of hearing goes up to ultrasonic level- which is superbly high. With 180 degree movement and an ability to pick up high frequencies up to 64kHz they are amazing.

Colours too are much less vivid to cats.- The two colours that do stand out are blue and yellow. Blue as in the shirts Cats Protection provide for employees and volunteers, yellow for their bright badges. This is fine when out and about on cat promotional activities, but not much use when trapping and you are attempting to look like, or hide behind, a tree in order not to be seen. Tabards in sludge brown & green have been made to slip over all the blue & yellow, when out and about during early evening trapping sessions during the lighter evenings. We are testing them to see if it makes a difference.

So can cats smile? - Well they have the muscular ability to make facial expressions that resemble smiling, but it's nothing to do with happiness!

Three recent guests, who didn't stay long.

Treacle, is a pretty girl who was very frightened at first, but now gaining confidence in her new home



Pablo, with a flag like tail enjoying the spring garden

Thor, an FIV positive boy who has found the perfect indoor home.

See also the back page - at home with a new friend Alaska . (also FIV positive)



Kitten Appeal - we need your help.

Last year, the government put forward plans to prevent pets being smuggled for profit – but the '**Kept Animals Bill**' proposals excluded cats and kittens, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation.

Cats Protection is urging the government to think again. If you haven't done so already, please join the many Cats Protection supporters in asking your MP to ensure cats and kittens are given the same protections as other pets and help stop the kitten smuggling scandal.

Thousands of cat lovers responded, calling on the government to stand up for cats and kittens, but the signs from government aren't positive, so we need to increase the pressure to protect vulnerable cats and kittens.

A survey published by Cats Protection has indicated that as many as 35,000 cats were brought into the UK in 2020/21 but do not appear in official data. They are possibly the victims of smuggling, and there is potential for this problem to get worse.

Prices for cats skyrocketed during the pandemic, making the cat market lucrative for those looking to smuggle in kittens in order to make a quick buck at the expense of cat welfare.

The new rules being proposed will make it much more difficult to smuggle puppies and pregnant dogs into the UK from abroad – but if cats and kittens are excluded from the new regulations unscrupulous pet smugglers are likely to simply switch their focus from puppies to kittens, compromising their welfare.

You can help by sending a quick message to your MP asking them to give a voice to the tens of thousands of helpless cats potentially being put at risk.

Or fill in the form on the Cats Protection website:

cats.org.uk/what-we-do/campaigning

Enter your address details and email and CP will email the form, and having identified your MP, will send a detailed letter directly to them.

Too many kittens are being sold underage and often unwell.

Too young to have been vaccinated or neutered and removed from their mother too early with all the potential problems that can create.

So please help us to put a stop to the dreadful exploitation of felines.

Update on our CP shops

At both our Taunton and Wellington shops, the range of new items for sale has been expanded.

A firm favourite is the 'Simon's Cat' range which remains popular, with cups, stationery and bags available.

With summer in mind we have a large selection of **Foster Grant Sunglasses** and for those who have a sweet tooth we stock '**Bonds of London**' sweets, including the classic favourites of Jelly Beans, Rhubarb and Custard and Sherbet Lemons, to name but a few.



Also we have a collection of **DK wool** which is proving very popular, with an amazing variety of colours to choose from.

So if you are a knitter call in, we'd love to welcome you, and show our range of wools.



We are now collecting used printer ink cartridges, foreign coins and stamps, so if you have any, please drop them in to one of our shops and we can raise even more money for the cats and kittens.



Taunton Shop: - 01823 331390
18 Fore St, Taunton TA1 1JA

Wellington Shop: - 01823 663455
9 South St, Wellington TA21 8NR

An overly early 'Wake up Call'.

Mimi likes to sit on my head and play with my hair whilst Teddy jumps on my chest ... both purring.

Bleary eyed I look at the clock... 4.15am spot on! I dare to move... Instantly Teddy attacks my feet whilst Mimi adopts the position on my chest purring... Teddy jumps down with a thud meowing. Mimi likewise... but her meowing is ten times louder than her son's and then she decides to pluck the new bedroom carpet and Teddy starts with a furball.

Amazingly I am wide awake... scramble for my glasses and get out of bed in a nano second...by now both cats have either decided to try to trip me up or scampered into the kitchen.

I arrive searching under the sink for carpet cleaner and a cloth (for the fur ball) whilst being serenaded because food bowls are empty and they want an early breakfast. After feeding them and cleaning the carpet and washing my hands I go back to bed. I'm wide awake! I toss and turn, start drifting back to sleep when thud ... thud ... 2 pudgy tats on the bed purring away like kettles and pinning me down under my duvet..... I fall asleep.....

I love my Mimi, I love my Teddy... wouldn't be without them, wouldn't have it any other way.

DP



Mimi



Teddy

We are all ears!

Minnow Class (Reception) and Little Herons (Nursery) at North Curry Primary School had a splendid day on Tuesday 14th June celebrating our Cat Day!



We were so lucky to have a visit from David and Ann of the Taunton and Wellington branch of Cats Protection to run our cat workshop.

Minnows and Little Herons were super excited to learn some of the cat secrets and have their party to celebrate the birthday of Katie the post office cat. It was a real treat for us to have David and Ann to see us again as it is always one of our yearly highlights!

David and Ann ran a wonderful education workshop in the morning and taught children the golden secret - the cat slow blink!

All children had a go using the microchip scanner which was particularly pertinent as the rule, making it compulsory for all cats to be chipped, is coming in soon. We have noticed that fleas and ticks are on the rise, so children were entranced by David's special friend, the cuddly toy flea! We had a fantastic cat party in the afternoon with a mouth-watering selection of treats!

We need to start training children at a young age to love, respect and value animals. So, thank you to David and Ann for making our Cat Day a memorable and special day. Seeing everyone wearing their giant cat ear hats always makes us and the village smile!

Miaow!

AC and MT

SHEBA -From Rags to Riches - From Shed to Chateau

Sheba came to Cats Protection much underweight, having been living in a garden shed for much of her first three years of life. Named by us as Flick because of her tail movements, she was nurtured back to good health by our branch where she reached a more desirable weight of 2.6kgs.



In April 2021 she moved in with her new loving owners who she quickly adopted only 40 minutes after arrival, and was renamed Sheba. Spending the first four weeks within her new home, she quickly became used to the homely environment around her. On opening her cat flap for the first time the big adventure really began – stepping out into a big wide rural part of Somerset. With her confidence quickly growing she soon visited neighbours' gardens and surrounding fields. She also loved to sit close by her owners watching them gardening – then

would suddenly dart off at full speed chasing a leaf blown by the wind.

Whereas (it is claimed) the Queen of Sheba arrived in Jerusalem with gifts of precious stones, spices and gold for Solomon, our Sheba brings plenty of shrews, mice and the like which are regularly deposited indoors on the carpet as gifts. In the mornings, when her breakfast is served, three taps on her food bowl announces her meal is ready which sees her scurrying when in earshot to feast on her favourite jellied fish meals. Then it's time for the big sleep of the day, usually on the owners' bed in winter or outside under a bush when the weather is suitable. Indoors, she is the most loving of creatures, very much a lap cat. She also loves to roll over on her back and have her tummy rubbed – no nasty claws encountered. When the doorbell rings she likes to go to the front door to see who is visiting her domain and with tail up will walk around their legs if they enter her home. After eight months in her new home Sheba now weighs 3.5 kgs. Sheba – a purr-fect companion.

J&LC

Happy cats in their new homes—Thank you to all our adopters

Zip Zip



Willow



Socksy



Foxy



Jersey



Tiggy



Acquiring new skills!

What cats get up to after they leave us.

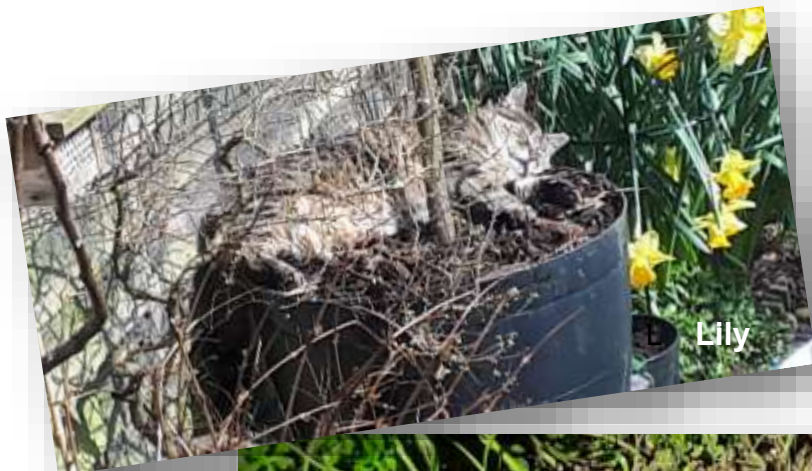
Kiwi (right) has taken up basket weaving.

A tricky skill as the canes keep moving around, but she's getting the better of them, and will soon have them subdued.

Whilst **Storm** (below) is not quite sure gardening is for her - these seedlings are taking a very long time to do anything.

'I might just go outside and chase a few butterflies'.





Lily



Foggy

Whatever you may think — **Lily, Foggy & Bennie** are gardening.
Warming up the soil is gardening.
So Lily, Foggy & Bennie are gardening, not dozing.



Bennie

FRIENDS OF THE BRANCH

'Friends of the Branch' is available to anyone who cares about cat welfare in our area. Membership is free, but we welcome a donation towards the printing costs of 'Felines'.

You can either donate by cheque or postal order 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' for one year.

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £.....

OR donate by BACS payment to sort code: 20-42-66

Account number 90478105 Cats Protection Taunton & Wellington
mentioning Friends of the Branch as a reference.

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 ☐

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

*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.



Ha ha! I won! I have been locked in a battle of wills with Mrs. Person for the last three days. She told me, very nicely, that I would not be getting chicken so often and that I would need to eat what all the other cats eat.

Now, I don't mind ready meals, and I do eat them from time to time, but there is nothing better than having something cooked just for you, is there?

So I have been following her around, getting under her feet, sucking in my cheeks and very politely refusing everything I have been given, even when she ran round the garden after me with it.



Today, she gave in, and has cooked some chicken for me. However, I couldn't capitulate just like that could I? I had to look at it as if it had been around for several fortnights and then flick my tail and walk away and sit down with my back to it. I left it a while, but have now returned and eaten some and it was lovely.

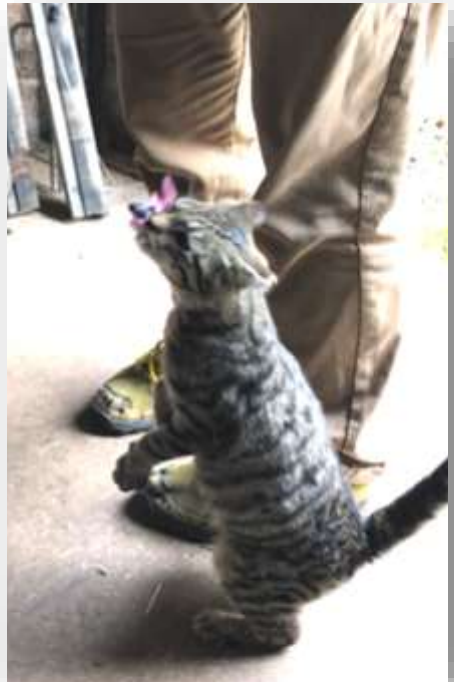
Success and score one to me I believe!

Love, Wilfred x

Not so feral, feral follow ups

We always hope, but never expect, to see the feral cats we've relocated after neutering. For the most part to be told by their new carers they are sure they are about, as they occasionally catch sight of them, is as much as we can hope for, and that they are happy and safe in their new home.

So two recent 'pick ups' of the holding pens they'd spent time in acclimatising to their new home were a special treat when we saw both pairs of feral cats we'd relocated on the Quantocks, some weeks before.



Above, **Tommy**, the male of a Female/male pair is now bold enough to play with his carer and a feather toy **Molly** did not venture too near whilst we were there but we were able to see her (*opposite page, above right*) - Lovely!

Left, two female cats, again out and about whilst we were collecting up our equipment. Lots of space to roam about in, and relaxed enough to pose for photographs.

Two successful relocations where they were all being well looked after and enjoying life. Great news!

Just as for domestic cats, you can buy or provide custom made sleeping boxes and they will prefer something else.

Ferals **Molly** and **Tommy** set up home in a much used wheelbarrow full of straw, despite having a lovely warm enclosed bedding shelter made for them in a dry barn, not far from the wheelbarrow,. At some stage the wheelbarrow will be needed so maybe the original sleeping box will get used in time.



Tom, (*the not so feral*) fluffy black & white on the left.

Teddy, black-and white at the rear, and **Freddie**, ginger, at the front.

Three boys at ease together.



Below is **Tom**, a ‘feral’ cat we relocated to a lovely place with lots of open land, water, and a big barn for him to take up residence.

(Not that he used it, we were told he preferred to perch on top of the log store).

Some time later two domestic cats were adopted to the same owners—**Freddie** and **Teddy**, but with no expectation that they would ever become a threesome.

How wrong we were!

It wasn’t long before Tom joined up with Teddy and Freddie. He wasn’t going to miss out on a having his coat brushed.

Lovely to see them happily sharing a rug outside.

Cake sale at the Mount Veterinary Hospital

The day dawned fine and stayed that way until later afternoon when the heavens opened and strong winds threatened our gazebo.

Not withstanding a wet end, we had a great day, met lots of people including some with appointments with cats they had adopted in the past. Always lovely to see them.

Thank you to everyone who made cakes, bought cakes, or just stopped by to say hello.



This delicious vegan Biscoff cake proved very popular!



A big 'Thank You' to Mount Vets - for all they do to support our Branch and for sponsoring this edition of Felines.



Showing the flag with Higgins the cat



Higgins the cat (AKA *Lauren*) with mum *Evie* (a branch volunteer) on one of their circuits of Wellington Park during a rather wet Friends of Wellington Park Spring Fayre

Higgins with Branch volunteers at our base in the Park.

No one could confuse our gazebo - colourful and bright on a dull weather day.

Thank you all the generous donors who visited us to support the Branch!





Thor (above) & **Alaska** below), two FIV positive cats living at peace with one another.



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 postcode areas: TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and TA21.



We are on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/cpTauntonandWellington