



The Cat's Whiskers



Stewartry & District Branch
Spring Newsletter 2012

Spring is in the air and we are getting ready for another busy year with Cats Protection. It won't be long before we are hearing the pitter patter of tiny furry feet again. Kitten season used to be Spring and Summer but we seem to get kittens born at any time of year now. Last year we helped with the costs of neutering 235 cats and kittens but the number of kittens we take in each year never seems to reduce. Cats Protection continues to promote the neutering of domestic and feral cats and we can help out with the cost of neutering if the cat's owner is on benefits or has a low income.

Because we are part of a large charity, Sheila, our co-ordinator, has the onerous task of completing a lot of the paperwork that is required by Head Office. Although our branch is very small, this takes a fair amount of her time and she keeps the other volunteers updated with any new information/requirements that come from HO. She has compiled some statistics for last year, some of which are shown below, more can be found on our website.

Cats/kittens homed 55
Cats neutered 235

Home visits 49
Cats/kittens treated at vet 118

Vet bills £10395
Fostering costs £2257
Travel/van costs £1600
Event costs & goods for resale £1167

Donations £2484
Subscriptions £763
Grant from HO £6000
Adoption Fees £1250
Events Income £5631

Vet bills continue to be our biggest expense as Cats Protection have Minimum Veterinary Standards which means that all cats/kittens coming into our care need to be vet checked. Stray and feral cats are blood tested for Fiv/Felv and all cats are treated for fleas/worms, vaccinated against cat flu and neutered when old enough. Some cats will need additional veterinary treatment for injuries or health problems.

BENNY is looking for a new home



Benny is a gorgeous young cat. He is now 9 months old and has been with us since he was a young kitten. Whilst all the other kittens found new homes, poor Benny has been sadly overlooked. He was a bit shy to start with but has gained confidence and loves to play. He is very affectionate and likes to sit on your lap. He is neutered, vaccinated and microchipped. Could **you** give him a new home?

A little bit of Magic



One day in January I received a call from a member of the public who had found a black kitten sitting by the garden bonfire. When it saw her it hissed and ran down a rabbit hole. The lady said it was about 6 months old and frightened of people and in view of this I said that it was probably feral and all I could do would be to trap it and get it blood tested and neutered and return it to the area. However she rang back the next day to say the kitten had appeared at the window miaowing to come in. She had let it in and he was friendly and hungry and smaller than she had initially thought. We got him to the vet where he was checked over and found to be fine and I went to pick him up.

Magic, as I called him, was a lovely boy, very affectionate and he settled into my house immediately, curled up in the radiator bed as though he had always been there. I couldn't understand why someone had abandoned him or if he was lost, why had no-one reported him missing. The lady who found him, put up posters in the area and we put his details on our website. A week later we got a call from a man who had seen the poster and he said he thought it was his kitten. His kitten, Jet, had escaped from the house after returning from the vet. His brother, Ash, was really missing him and he had been lost for over 2 weeks. What was amazing was that he was found over 20 miles from home. Both his owners regularly travelled to Thornhill, near where he turned up, so it seems likely he had got in one of their vehicles and then gone a few miles on foot to where he was found.

Magic wasn't microchipped so we asked the people to send a photo to identify him and they came to see him later in the day and initially the lady was unsure as he was bigger than she remembered but her partner knew it was definitely Jet. They couldn't believe they had got him back and after taking him home, rang me to say that he had hissed at Ash and chased him but were now sleeping together. A story with a happy ending but had he been microchipped we could have returned him to his owners straight away. His owners are planning to get him chipped when he is neutered.

Microchip Your Cat (why you should!)

Microchipping of animals has been carried out for some years but it is only in the last few years that our branch started microchipping all the cats in our care. 3 of our brave volunteers attended a microchipping course at Cats Protection Glasgow Adoption Centre. It is a permanent way of identifying your pet and if your cat gets lost or gets in a vehicle and ends up miles from home (as one of mine did, but that's a story for another day) then if it gets taken to a vet or picked up by an animal rescue organisation, it will be scanned for a chip and can be returned to the owner. It is a quick and straightforward procedure and involves the microchip being inserted under the skin between the shoulder blades with a special tool. The chip is about the size of a grain of rice and insertion of the chip should cause no more than minor discomfort to the cat.

We are occasionally able to reunite a stray cat with its owner but many of the cats we take in are not microchipped and have not been reported missing so we have to find new homes for them. Another good reason for microchipping is that it will help prove ownership if there is a dispute over who the cat belongs to.

Food Collection Bins

Over the Christmas and New Year period we had cat food collection bins in several supermarkets in Castle Douglas. We collected a good amount of food and would like to thank everyone who helped feed the cats in our care.

Tesco Collection Days

We have already had our first fundraiser of the year. In February we were at the Tesco store in Castle Douglas for 2 days. Every year Tesco allocate us 2 days to fund raise and as well as collecting donations, we had an information table with leaflets etc and pictures of the cats needing homes. These drew a lot of attention but sadly didn't result in a new home for any of the cats. We raised £165.00 over the 2 days and are grateful to Tesco for the opportunity to promote our branch.

New Website

Our branch has had a website for some years which is linked to the main Cats Protection website. It is a great way of promoting the branch, advertising our events etc and showing pictures of the cats that need new homes. Last year, the IT department at Head Office developed a new website and Sheila spent many hours transferring all the information from the old to the new site. It has been up and running for several months and now that we have got to grips with it, it seems to be working well -apart from the occasional gremlin which the IT manager sorts out. We can easily update the info on the site and there is an option for the public to donate online.

Kandi

Kandi, the tabby cat that has featured in our past 3 newsletters, finally found a home with a lovely lady, just before Christmas. Kandi came into our care with an unexplained wound/sore on her back and it took many months to heal. She is now happily settled in her new home.

Charity Shop April 19 – 21

We have booked McKenzies wee shop in Dalbeattie again for 3 days in April. We always do well with the shop, thanks to the generosity of people donating and buying items. If you are having a spring clear out, we would be very grateful for items to sell. Anything from paperback books to kitchen things, china, toys, etc etc. Please bring along to the shop on the above dates. 10am – 4pm or we may be able to collect.

EVENTS 2012

24 March	Coffee Morning in Dalbeattie Town Hall 10 – 12 noon
19 – 21 April	3 day charity shop in McKenzies shop, Dalbeattie 10 – 4pm
May/June (dates unknown yet)	Childrens Fair & Medieval Fayre Kirkcudbright
28 July	Coffee Morning in Dalbeattie Town Hall 10 – 12 noon
1 December	Coffee Morning in Dalbeattie Town Hall 10 – 12 noon

THESE CATS ARE LOOKING FOR A NEW HOME



Mika – 1 yr old male



Suki – 1 yr old female



Mungo – 6 mth male

We have lots of cats looking for new homes. If you could offer a loving home please contact us on 01557 339233 to arrange a home visit. Please note we have an adoption fee of £25 per cat. More details about the cats can be found on our website www.stewartry.cats.org.uk

Quiz

One of our supporters is running a cat themed anagram quiz again. If you would like to enter, send an SAE and 50p to Jaci Agnew, 18 Millflats, Kirkcudbright, DG6 4ER. Also available in local shops and at our events. Entries close 12 September 2012.

Volunteers

We are looking for more hands on help with the branch as there are only a few of us to do all the day to day things. If you would like to get involved please get in touch. We are particularly looking for a Welfare Officer and fosterers for adult cats or kittens. Also a handy person that could do occasional repairs to our cat pens.

Subscriptions

If you haven't already paid your subscription for 2012, please send a cheque for £7 to:

Stewartry & District Cats Protection
PO Box 7470
Castle Douglas DG7 1YE

We rely on donations to continue our work for the cats in our area and your support is greatly appreciated. To keep costs down we will not send a receipt unless requested.

Newsletters

If you would like to receive your newsletters via email please let us know at

stewartrycats@gmail.com

This means that more of your subscription will go towards helping our cats. Thankyou.

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