



# FELINES

Taunton & Wellington Branch Newsletter  
Spring 2017 (No. 117)



## In this Issue:

- Children and pets
- Commando cat Daisy - May
- Crafty business!
- Fundraising news and ideas
- Successes at the Taunton Homing & Information Centre





Hello Readers,

Another year, another Felines Newsletter!

With Christmas and New Year just a distant memory, we look forward to another busy and successful year for the Branch. Last year we successfully rehomed 103 cats and kittens and as always we are delighted to hear from their adopters, news of how they have settled in and taken over the lives of those that share their homes with them. Stories from some of these lucky felines appear in this issue.

We also helped with the neutering of 358 cats by providing vouchers towards the costs for those eligible members of the public who come to us for assistance. Please remember that if



owners are in receipt of means tested benefits, we may be able to help with the cost of this essential treatment.

**So far this year, the kitten 'season'** has not started—we are just holding our breath as by the time this newsletter goes to press, we could well be taking in unwanted litters to prepare them for adoption.

Rehoming through the new Taunton Homing & Information Centre located at Blackdown Garden Centre has been fantastic and many of the cats have been those who could so easily have been passed by due to age, or other issues that render them more difficult to home. See more in later pages about just a few of these lucky cats.

And finally, we trapped and returned/relocated 41 ferals during 2016

**Please email any stories, pictures or events you'd like to feature in**

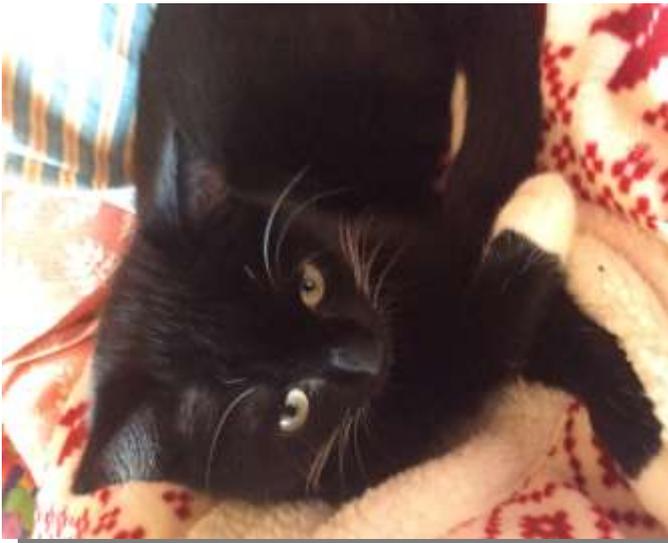
Felines at: [tandwcats@gmail.com](mailto:tandwcats@gmail.com) or write to :

Felines FAO: Felines Editor, Cats Protection Shop,  
19 South Street, Wellington TA21 8NR.





I was a bit concerned about my person this morning when she returned home from the shop with four new things to wear. Now, as you know, I am used to her weird colour sense by now, but I did feel that she might be under a bit of an illusion. She had an orange net tiered skirt, a Snow White outfit, a fairy costume complete with wings, and something else in black and pink with a skull on the front. Not a lot different to what she wears every day of course, but the thing is - they were all very SMALL.



I had heard her say she wanted to lose some weight but really, these were all to fit age five years and she hasn't been that age for quite a while now.

So I was quite relieved when she parcelled them all up and posted them to someone called her two Little Princesses.

I was worried for a while that she might try to dress me in them.

Love, Wilfred x

# CRAFTY CROCHET WORKSHOPS . . . . .

Have you heard about our craft workshops?

We have run workshops each month at the Taunton Homeing and Information Centre and so far have enjoyed knitting (toy mice) and crochet (cat blankets) but anything you want to create is possible!

We have some expert tuition and welcome everyone from beginners to the more experienced.

Watch out for posters at our shop in Wellington, at the Centre and on our Facebook page.



Just come along, although a call to the Centre on 01823 667945 is appreciated to gauge an idea of numbers as space may be limited. Also, please bring a chair and any craft materials you might need. Wools and yarns are provided for knitting/crochet work.

**OR SIMPLY COME FOR THE CHAT! . . . . .AND THE refreshments!**

The cats are available for viewing too!

A Farewell Message - and Thank You Laura!

Hello Readers,

Just to let you know I am stepping down as Editor of this newsletter.



I have really enjoyed compiling Felines over the past two years and hope you have found it to be a good read. It's been wonderful to write about so many individual cats that have been cared for by our branch and have gone to wonderful loving homes with their purrfect people! Writing for Felines has also taught me much about cat psychology and behaviour, which I have come to find fascinating.

Contrary to the stereotype of caring for cats (cuddling and cooing over fluffy kittens all day), it can be surprisingly hard graft! There is A LOT of cat litter, disinfectant and funny-looking protective wear! Hours can be spent sat willing cunning stray and feral cats to *'please be tempted enough by the pilchards in the trap to walk into it!'* Happily, there is also time for cat socialisation.

For the euphoria of having the nervous cat to *finally* come out of the inside pen and miaow 'hello' at you, when the grumpy cat saunters over to you for strokes and head rubs, having chatty catty conversations – mostly one-sided – with the special cats that tug at your heart, spending half an hour sitting in the sunshine listening to the calming purr of the relaxed cat on your lap, those cats that are diagnosed with a terminal illness but you can ensure their remaining time is peaceful, warm and full of love, and, of course, watching wobbly kittens investigate their pen and play together.

It has been my absolute pleasure to have met and cared for a number of cats myself at a couple of the pen units the branch have had. If you are a cat-lover and have time available, do consider volunteering for Cats Protection Taunton and Wellington branch; I thoroughly recommend it as extraordinarily rewarding work.

I want to thank Ann and David for their invaluable and endless work with cats in the local area, supported by an amazingly enthusiastic group of volunteers who give their time so generously.

Also thanks to Bridgwater and Taunton College Reprographics department for ensuring the high quality of Felines in print.

Finally, Reader, thank you for your continued support of Cats Protection.

Warm wishes,

Laura

# Commando Cat!

On a cold winter's evening in January, we were called to the Guard Room at the Norton Manor Camp of 40 Commando, where a black and white female cat had been visiting and fed by staff on duty.

She was microchipped—always exciting when a scanner ‘beeps’ and the chip number is displayed! - but as so often happens, checking the information of the registered owner on the national database drew a blank as the telephone numbers were not longer active.



We took this friendly girl into care and started the process of trying to trace her owner. This included visiting the registered address, checking phone books, electoral rolls, advertising on our website and Facebook page, but still we could not find anyone who owned her.

We knew that her home had been several miles from Norton Camp, but even people living in that neighbourhood did not know or recall the recorded owner or recognise this lovely cat. The records showed that she was about fifteen years old and in good health although she was a bit grubby having obviously spent some time ‘on the road’.

During her time at the Camp, she had been popular with many of the Marines and with the civilian staff based and working there, and a strong bond had formed, but they recognised that Daisy May as we called her, needed a better lifestyle than could be offered.

A big ‘Thank you’ to all of them, especially Sam and Roger pictured.



Since coming into care, she has had all her vet checks, and has now been adopted to a lovely quiet home where she can spend as much time as she wishes enjoying the comforts of a lap and the sofas!

Her new person says ‘She got us well and truly wound round her paw!’

Great news for Daisy May

# Learning to love.....

We have written before about the need for children to learn that cats and kittens deserve respect and understanding and there is no doubt that this is a two way matter! Adopters with young family members have told us that the introduction of a cat or kitten into the family home has often resulted in a child, previously unsure or nervous around animals, soon gaining the confidence to trust and understand the new arrival as well as becoming confident with other animals as well.



This photo of Bear with his new chum says it all and the words below from his adopter tick all the boxes!

Just look at the delight on her little face. Hopefully both will go on to enjoy and share life's experiences in a positive way.

*Bear has settled in so well, he is a lovely addition to our family and we love having him. He is brilliant with Belle, she was a little rough with him to start with, but after a couple of swipes she has learned what he likes!*

## Calling all Bake Off fans!

We have been given the opportunity to host a fundraising cake stall at County Hall in Taunton—watch our website and Facebook page for more details.

To keep up with the demand of all the hungry cake lovers, we will need lots of cake! If you love baking, please can you make your favourite cake(s) as we have freezer facilities to store them.

Please email or call us if you can help

E: [tandwcats@gmail.com](mailto:tandwcats@gmail.com)

T: 03452 602 397



# Fundraising Update!

## Another year—more fundraising challenges!

Once again, branch volunteer Lou Mitchell , is running the Taunton Half Marathon on Sunday 2 April, to raise funds for the care of cats and kittens fostered by the branch.

Lou has set a target figure to raise and donations can be made safely and simply by visiting her Just Giving webpage using this link

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/LouiseM-CP2017>

Good Luck to Lou  
and Thanks for all  
your support!

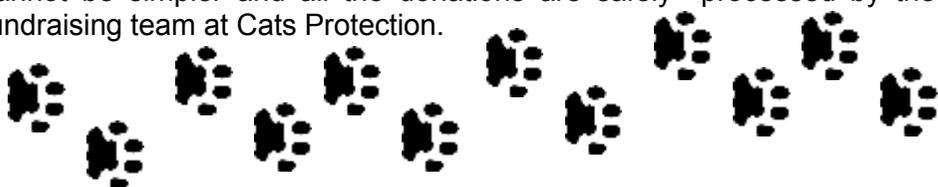
Even if you are reading this  
after the run is over, you  
can still support Lou by  
visiting her Just Giving  
page—it will remain active  
for a few months after the  
event.



Lou with Higgins, our mascot cat after the 2016 run

So, if you want to follow Lou's lead and do something to raise funds, let us know and we can help promote your event. Why not run a coffee morning, a cake sale at work, a sponsored bike ride — whatever you fancy!

By setting up a Just Giving sponsorship page, collecting sponsorship cannot be simpler and all the donations are safely processed by the fundraising team at Cats Protection.





## Taunton & Wellington Branch

# VOLUNTEER FUNDRAISING OFFICER WANTED!



Love cats?

give a little time  
MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Would YOU like to make a difference to the lives of local cats? We are looking for a Volunteer Fundraising Officer to help us raise more money for the large number of cats that come into our care each year. The right person for this role will be enthusiastic, personable, preferably have some experience of fundraising and of course will love cats! Please get in touch for more information.

T: 03452 602 397  
E: [tandwcats@gmail.com](mailto:tandwcats@gmail.com)  
W: [www.taunton.cats.org.uk](http://www.taunton.cats.org.uk)

*Thank you  
xx*

Reg Charity 20844 (England and Wales) and 20027711 (Scotland)



# More Fundraisers!

We have just heard that supporter, David Forman-Cummings has signed up to join the Great West Run in Exeter on 15 October and he is raising funds for the branch with his sponsorship.

Thanks to you David!



## AND...

Our very own Neutering Officer, Evie Leigh has decided to take the plunge as well! She has signed up for a tandem skydive with The Red Devils Army Parachute Regiment team at Salisbury in August!

Watch out for news as to how and where you can sponsor them!



# Smokey's news!

In the last issue of Felines, we reported news of Smokey, a relocated feral farm cat who went to live at the Wyevale Garden Centre, Pen Elm, near Norton Fitzwarren. Smokey was settling well and admitted that he wanted a cuddle or two—so, here is his latest news!!

January—'**Smokey here! I can't believe how well I am doing.** Mum is rubbing and scratching my back and I love it! But I do **think she is happier than me (don't think so!) All the best to the other puddy cats!**

February—'What can I say? You know mum is rubbing my tummy now and can hold me for a few seconds, but then I panic.

Have to say that mum is very patient and calm with me and I think I rather like her, lol. But now for the bigger bit—three other humans have made a fuss of me :O



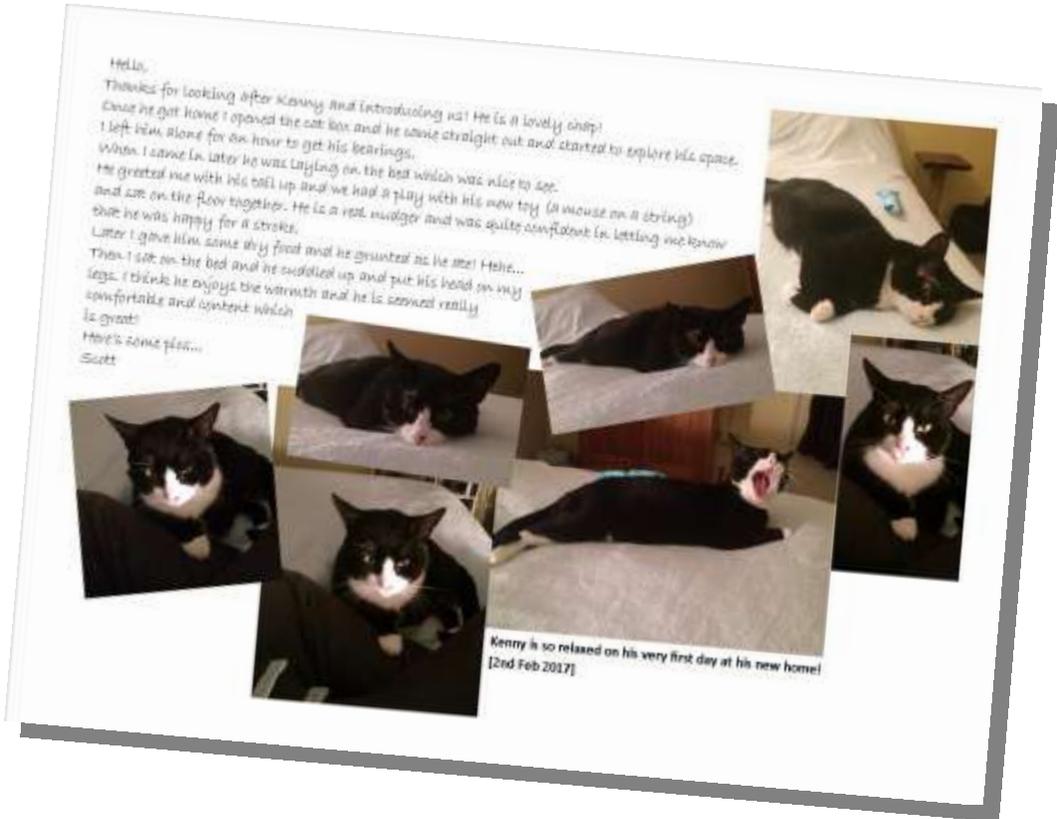
Great stuff Smokey—keep it up! When we saw you last, you were even getting round to speaking to the customers!

You might be lucky enough to meet Smokey at Wyevale.

Keep your eyes peeled!

# Charismatic Kenny!

Kenny came to us with a nasty facial wound after a fight with another neighbourhood cat. Following treatment, it took a while for things to heal and he had a rather 'surprised' expression due to the scarring. He found a new home after displaying his charms at the Taunton Homing and Information Centre and here is a message from his new and delighted owner!



## Donations for our shop

If you have goods to donate to our shop but have difficulty parking outside, you can leave your donations at the Taunton Homing and Information Centre at Blackdown Garden Centre, where there is plenty of free parking.

Donations can be stored there and we will deliver when space is available at the shop.



## Taunton & Wellington Branch

Call 03452 602 397 (standard rate)

Email [tandwcats@gmail.com](mailto:tandwcats@gmail.com)

Website [www.taunton.cats.org.uk](http://www.taunton.cats.org.uk)

Taunton & Wellington Branch offers help in the following areas: TA1, TA2, TA3, TA4, and TA21.

We are on Facebook and Twitter!



[www.facebook.com/cpTauntonandWellington](http://www.facebook.com/cpTauntonandWellington)



[www.twitter.com/CPTaunton](http://www.twitter.com/CPTaunton)

The three amigos—Freyja, Thor & Odin

They continue to be completely adorable little rascals. They are still usually all together and Freyja likes to be with one or the other but is seldom alone. They go in and out as they please during the day and have fun running around the garden. Freyja has stood up to the large cat from two doors along who walks through our garden every day and sometimes stares rather menacingly through the cat flap! To date we have had one dead shrew and a rather dazed one which I rescued from Freyja who was very pleased with herself.

I overhear my husband telling people how lovely they are and how 'generous natured'. The other evening I caught him giving one of them a little kiss on the head! My sister-in-law stayed with us over Christmas. She's not an animal lover and has all sorts of allergies. To start with she wore gloves and said she couldn't possibly touch them. By the end of her stay, they were sitting on her lap in the evenings (of course!) and she was threatening to take one home with her!

They win everyone over - even the non cat lovers!

We certainly consider ourselves very fortunate to have ended up with our three and I am always singing the praises of the Cats Protection. RM





# Cats Protection Shop

19 South Street, Wellington, Somerset TA21 8NR

**01823 663455**

[wellington.shopmanager@cats.org.uk](mailto:wellington.shopmanager@cats.org.uk)

Firstly I'd like to thank all our customers and donors who have supported us since our opening. We are now into our 3rd year of trading and are still going from strength to strength and have really appreciated the support and wonderful comments we have received about our shop.

We had our change over to Spring/Summer on 28th February, so if you are in need of a new summer wardrobe pop in and see what bargains you can find. We also have a good range of books and bric-a-brac, men's clothes and kids clothes and toys to tempt you.

All donations are gratefully received so if you are turning out your wardrobe or getting rid of unwanted Christmas presents then please think of us. We are not able to accept electrical items.

*Christie*

Shop Manager



*All money raised in the shop goes to help cats and kittens in our Branch area*



# Mount Veterinary Hospital, Wellington



**This issue of Felines is generously sponsored by the Mount Veterinary Hospital**

## News!

SIX decades after setting up in Wellington, Mount Vets is moving out of the High Street to new premises being built near Cades Farm.



The new hospital will be sited on about 1.75 acres of land and the building will have separate entrances and areas inside for the farm and small animal parts of the practice.

The small animal section will include four consultation rooms and two operating theatres – the existing premises only has one.

It will also have a designated dental suite, about treble the number of kennel spaces for cats and dogs, and separate x-ray and ultrasound areas. A better isolation unit will be sited away from the main hospital to allow barrier nursing of infectious animals and more car parking spaces will be available.

The small premises in Lancer Court with consultation room and retail area will remain after the move to the new hospital so clients can buy medication or see a vet if they cannot make it to the main building.

For more on the new veterinary hospital visit Mount Vets' blog at [www.mountvets.wordpress.com](http://www.mountvets.wordpress.com) and its Facebook page, [mountveterinaryhospital](https://www.facebook.com/mountveterinaryhospital)



## The advance of the ferals!

A farm contacted us just before Christmas as they had a small colony of feral cats which they wanted relocated off their premises. We found suitable new homes and set the process of trapping, neutering and relocation in motion.

On several chilly winter evenings, our trapping team spent many hours trying to lure a group into baited traps in order to take them to the vet to be neutered and to then relocate them.

As the time went by, it became apparent that one large tabby fellow had made his mind up that he really didn't want to move, so he decided that the better option was to go into the farm kitchen and stake his claim!

As with most cats, he worked his charm and as can be seen from the photo, he now has his paws well 'under the table' or more precisely 'on the sofa'.

We are saying nothing!!

Two of the others have also stayed at the farm, both girls, and they too have now wound their 'owner' around their paws. They turn up regularly for their meals but most of their time is spent earning their keep as rodent control specialists on and around the farm.

The remaining three from the group have been moved to a really rural location on Exmoor and are enjoying a lifestyle of warm, cosy hay barns, mousing and freedom to explore in the nearby woods.

# Taunton Homing and Information Centre

Since opening to the public in August 2016, the Homing & Information Centre has proved to be a huge success.

At the time of writing, 23 cats from the Branch have been adopted and moved to their lovely new homes. Because the cats themselves cannot see, hear or smell each other—there is an ventilation system that changes the air in their 'pens' eight times every hour— they settle quickly and enjoy a lifestyle much akin to a home environment,. Visitors are able to view them through the double glazed windows, and thus there is a greater immediacy leading to the adoption process.

This style of adoption facility is relatively new to Cats Protection with only four such facilities across the UK so far, but we have seen a huge change in what we are able to achieve to help the cats that we care for within the branch.

In recent months, when there have been few kittens in care, we have fostered several older cats and some with issues that hitherto have made them difficult to bring to public attention. One such case was Suki., an elderly 'lady', mostly white with tabby patches, who came to us following the death of her owner and unfortunately suffering from cancerous lesions on one of her white ears (a relatively common complaint for white cats if not treated with strong sunblock cream on their earlobes) and who could not longer be cared for by the relatives of her owner. She underwent surgery to remove the growth on her ear and the vet also 'trimmed' the other lobe to match, thus reducing the obvious surgery. Suki stayed with us in one of our regular foster pens whilst she recovered and then transferred to the Homing Centre, where within a few days was spotted by a visitor who had recently lost her previous cat who had suffered the same condition. She ticked all the boxes for this adopter who was so delighted to offer a home to Suki and thus we experienced a very happy ending to a tale where a cat could have languished beyond the gaze of a potential home.

## **Here is another success story -**

**QUEENIE** arrived at Cats Protection Exeter Axhayes Adoption Centre in late 2015. She was a beautiful long-haired white cat –who could resist her elegance and charm?! Queenie was checked over by a vet and was in good health.

However, she had unfortunately had a sheltered existence in her early life and now as a seven-year-old cat, she was nervous of everything and would show aggression to her carers and potential adopters. Many visitors to the adoption centre would fall for her good looks and on three occasions



Queenie was rehomed to new owners after being provided with full details on her temperament and behaviour – and on the basis that her new owners wanted to work with her to try and resolve some of her issues. Unfortunately Queenie was returned to us on all three of those occasions when her new adopters were unable to cope with her behaviour.

I met her in June 2016 and like many others I grew intrigued and endeared by her shiny white coat, beautiful hazel eyes and affectionate blinking. She was not as straightforward as I thought and after hearing many stories of her early days at the centre I decided to take her on as my project cat. Initially she would hiss

and spit and grumble at my presence but as I sat quietly distancing myself from her in her pen reading away she gradually became accustomed to my presence. A real breakthrough was when she fell asleep on my lap. After her third failed rehoming, I was truly curious to see what this wolf in sheep's clothing was like in a home. So I decided to take her home to foster her temporarily. The cat was not the only curious creature! On day one our spare room was set up in line with Cats Protection's fostering guidelines to provide Queenie with the right environment for her needs while she was being fostered.

The room was intended to be her safe space. Queenie grumbled like a gremlin as I entered the room but was able to hide away if she needed to. The grumbling subsided on the second day and by day three I was able to spend lots of time in the same room with her as she purred herself to sleep. She would also give me a gentle headbutt now and then! All Queenie needed was a loving owner who saw not only her stunning exterior but her true inner beauty and who could dedicate some time to help her overcome her issues.

(Continued over..)

When Queenie had become more confident she was moved to our Homing & Information Centre in Taunton. Luckily an amazing homing opportunity came up and her new owner came to meet her with a Golden Retriever called Millie. We spent lots of time ensuring their bond and that her new owner understood Queenie's background and needs. Finally Queenie went home with a great family. Although there were some 'teething issues' in homing Queenie, spending some time with a fosterer who was able to work with her helped her settle and change her behaviour so that she was then able to be rehomed again. Queenie has now begun her new adventure in her new home. I often get updates from her new owner too, the progress she has made is in incredible, stories include opening the door to a miaowing Queenie presenting the family with a mouse and Queenie and Millie the dog asleep on the bed together.

Roz Buckley  
Cat Care Assistant at Taunton Homing & Information Centre



Queenie  
learning to  
meet Millie the  
Golden  
Retriever at  
the Homing  
Centre