

Felis Catus

Newsletter of the Woking & District Cats Protection

January – June 2023



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Welcome

Welcome to the latest issue of Felis Catus!

January can seem like a chilly and bleak time but curl up with a cuppa, your cat (and maybe a cake!) and read some heart-warming stories of recent adoptions from Woking and District Cats Protection.

While our rehomed kittens (pages 20-22) are undoubtedly cute and entertaining playmates for many families, we also love to spread the word about the attraction of older – or even elderly – cats who have a lot of affection and companionship to give (pages 5-7). Thank you to everyone who has contributed stories and updates about their happy felines, young and old.

The waiting list of cats needing help is always growing, so we were thrilled to end 2022 on a high with a spectacularly successful Christmas Fayre, as our Treasurer reports on page 3, and the pictures show on page 8. This fabulous fundraising goes a long way towards many of the branch's welfare activities, including complex rescue cases such as Billy (page 14), offering free neutering (page 15) and helping feral colonies (page 16).

And finally, it may be winter, but we take a quick look back to the summer when some of our volunteers discovered cats rescues abroad (page 26). As the saying goes, charity begins at home – but it also spreads far and wide with like-minded charities in other countries.

Don't forget to donate to our winter appeal, "Feels like home" – see the inside back cover. Whatever you can afford will help keep cats in care cosy.

Jane

editor@woking.cats.org.uk



Volunteers Matter

Welcome to: Andrew Isaac, Mark Taylor and Tonia Welford.

We are always in need of volunteers – please get in touch if you are interested in joining our lovely team. Please contact us at: info@woking.cats.org.uk or call us on 01483 721700 (mailbox 4).

Cover star: Sassi, adopted in September 2022.

Like what you see?

We also share our news on social media - please follow us!



WokingCatsProtection



@wokingcp



@wokingcatsprotection

Treasurer's annual report

Here we are again at the end of another really busy year for the whole team. With the amazing Christmas Fayre having taken place we can now start looking at our plans and aims for 2023. Having said that, Ruth our fundraising officer has already booked our events for next year, so no pressure!

The Christmas Fayre (see page 8) went way beyond our expectations in footfall as well the amount generated, over £700 up on our previous "best ever" result, not to mention the many very kind and generous donations we received, so thank you.

From my own experience of this year's Christmas fayre I know that Amanda and I didn't even have time to step out from behind our stall and look at anything else on offer. From the minute the doors opened we had to hit the floor running and we certainly did.

Thank you also to our regular monthly donors. You all know who you are, and now you also know how much we appreciate your continued support. I would also like to thank a very special lady for her support in more ways than one.

This year we purchased two new double pens for our fosterers and each will bear a slate plaque dedicated to two of our sadly deceased, long-term volunteers: Janice Aubry who was a fosterer for the branch for many years and Doris MacDonald who helped at many of our fundraising events but was also the face behind our large feral feeding team.

Something our branch gives a very high priority to is our neutering scheme (see page 9). This year we have spent over £24,000 on neutering 408 cats and kittens, 223 females and 185 males.

We are always on the lookout for more to neuter and a team of us can often be found pounding the streets, posting neutering leaflets through many a door. It goes without saying that if you know anyone with an unneutered cat, please pass them our details.

I will close by wishing you all a very happy 2023.

Gill



In Memory...

Branch volunteer Sally remembers her much-loved cats Max and Rosie, and reflects on the joys of adopting a mature moggie, Marmalade.

We lost our cherished cats, Max (15) and Rosie (18) fairly suddenly, within six months of each other in late 2021/early 2022. We had adopted them as kittens from Woking CP. Despite the huge hole in our home and our lives, we decided, after over thirty-five years of always having feline friends, to have a break, take some extended, long-awaited holidays. So much for our "best laid plans". It was not to be.

Recently some news reached me that a dear friend was very ill in hospital, and his cat Marmalade was alone in a relatively new home, with sporadic care.



Rosie



Marmalade



Max

It became clear my friend would not be able to care for his beloved companion and Marmalade needed help as soon as possible. I approached the branch on behalf of my friend and his family. As an ex-Woking CP cat, in an emergency situation, he was extremely fortunate that a space became available and, thanks to great teamwork, he was soon safe with the branch again.

Knowing Marmalade well and realising that at an estimated fourteen years old and with some health issues he would find it hard to find a home, I knew it was probably the last thing I would be able to do for my friend. So Marmalade joined us two weeks after being taken into care and just a few days before my friend passed away.

Marmalade is a tremendous character. He loves to snooze on a sofa—or better still a lap—and enjoys being groomed (also therapeutic for the groomer). However, we've also been pleasantly surprised at how much enjoyment he gets from playing with his catnip mouse and knotty toy.

As a senior moggie he will need more frequent routine checks, but don't we all as we mature? We don't regret for a minute adopting a fourteen-year-old cat. We know it's possible we will be grieving sooner than we'd have hoped, although if we're lucky he may live to his late teens or early twenties.

The joy he brings us and knowing we've helped him and his late owner far outweighs this. Whilst our adoption of Marmalade is tinged with sadness, I want to sing the praises of adopting a mature or senior moggie and providing them with a much-needed forever home.

I deal with the enquiries the branch receives from owners, their family and friends in similar situations or worse. I know only too well these cats desperately need and deserve a chance. Those lucky enough to get help from a good rescue charity are generally in care much longer than their younger counterparts, despite them having some great qualities that make them the perfect pet for some adopters. As a small branch with limited places, we're never able to help as many older cats as we'd like to. If we had more enquiries from prospective adopters willing to take on an older cat, we could potentially do more for them.

So many cat owners feel that their cat has a positive effect on their mental wellbeing, and older cats can make a particularly great companion. If you or a family member or friend are considering adopting a cat, please consider a mature moggie.

Sally 

...and in praise of older cats

Florence & Penny

When their previous adopter sadly died, these two elderly ladies needed a new home to live out their golden years. Happily, they continue to thrive and be adored.

It's been almost a year now since 18-year-old sisters Penny and Florence took us on as their new management team and moved in with us, accompanied by various blankets, catnip-laden toys and other cat paraphernalia. Our elderly cat had gone to kitty heaven in early 2021 and by the autumn we had started to take peeks at the Cats Protection website.

We were looking for older cats who needed a forever home and we spotted sisters Pen and Flo whilst still at the early stage of our search. Coincidentally, though, it turned out that they were in residence down the road from our good friends in Horsell



Florence

and, knowing we were looking for a new cat, they forwarded us photos of the girls and we thought... let's go and meet them and see if we get along.

They'd had a disturbed year up until that point and whilst they were fairly quiet on the evening we met them, they were both very happy to be stroked, to play and to eat a few treats. So that, as they say, was that!



Penny

A few days later they moved in and a very happy year we have all spent together since. With a large, safe garden they have enjoyed exploring their "estate" and they spent a wonderful summer outdoors each day basking in the shade and the sunshine (depending on the temperature). And indoors, they've each laid claim to their own separate warm spots. They never say no to some strokes and attention and their friendly natures have enamoured them to a rapidly-growing fan club of humans who have all been smitten.

Both are a little deaf. Whilst Penny just makes quiet little happy noises when she eats, when Flo talks it's loud. And as she likes to announce everything going on in her little world, it can be loud and often. But we have gradually come to understand most of what she is telling us and usually we are left in no doubt where we fit in the hierarchy of the universe of Pen and Flo—we are here to serve—and long may it continue.

Sara & Richard 

Age is just a number...

Cats are often most companionable in their later years and more appreciative of affection.

Their personalities and idiosyncrasies are known so Woking CP can match you up with the right cat.

No longer bothered about climbing your curtains, they're still happy to climb on your lap!

Homes for senior kitizens...

Bertie & Mini B

A new baby meant that the previous owner of this gorgeous pair had to enlist the help of Cats Protection to find them a new home.

I was considering adopting a younger pair of cats, but Cats Protection recommended a lovely pair of mature cats to me. They are a mother and daughter, 12 and 10 years old. I wasn't sure at first but I was given full details of their histories and once I met them, I was hooked.

They are the most affectionate, friendly, calm, relaxed pair and they have settled into the house so well and quickly. They are amazing company and have added so much to my life.



I would definitely adopt older cats again. They are established in their characters and routine and settle so well.

Celia 

Mac

Hello. I am Mac and I am 13 and three-quarters. When I was 12, I came to live with Penny. Before then I lived with a lady for most of my life until she wasn't able to look after me any more and Cats Protection helped me to find a new home. For a few months, I was with a fosterer who looked after me. When I moved in with Penny I was very shy at first but we quickly got used to each other.



Gradually I stopped hiding when she had visitors. Now I will sit on anyone's lap who will let me! As a mature gentleman, I do like my day to have a routine. Between us, Penny and I have worked out meal times to suit both of us. Sometimes I have a meal from an automatic timer, which I don't mind occasionally. There are days when I feel more hungry than usual and make a little bit of a fuss wanting my food, but usually I am fairly flexible about dinner time.

Penny takes me to the vet for my vaccinations and check-ups. I do grumble about being put in the cat carrier and going in the car, but I am made a fuss of when I get there as well, which I enjoy. At home I like to sit on the patio doorstep, especially if it is warm and sunny, but I don't wander around a lot. My favourite time is the evening. At 8 or 9 pm, I will give Penny a look that means cuddle time. I then stretch out on her lap and get very relaxed and sleepy, which is lovely as I feel safe and secure. I know when my bedtime is, so Penny will turn off the lights, give me a few treats and go to bed herself. I settle down for the night, ready for another day of eating and sleeping and occasionally running round in circles for a few minutes.

However, my most important job is being a companion to Penny and I know that she appreciates this a lot. We are both very pleased that we are able to share our lives and thank Cats Protection for bringing us together.

...in the prime of life

Tabitha & Peggy

Having been brought up with cats who lived to an elderly age, I was used to living with senior cats. So when we decided as a family to give a loving home to an older cat, we searched on the Cats Protection website and found Tabitha.

Tabitha was a 5-year-old tabby and the most gentle and affectionate cat from the first day we met her. Tabitha had survived a very serious illness before we adopted her and it seemed as though she was truly grateful to be with us. Everyone adored Tabitha and when we got our dog, Leia, they were best friends, cuddling up together and running around the garden. She was a very vocal cat, talking to us all the time and sitting next to us on the sofa, but very rarely did she sleep on our laps.



Tabitha

Sadly, Tabitha passed away in 2020 at the age of 12 and although devastated, we felt very blessed to have had her in our lives. We were so pleased we gave her love and warmth in her older years.

Knowing how satisfying it is to give an older cat a loving home, later that year we adopted another senior cat called Peggy. Peggy was 14 when we adopted her. She's a very different character to Tabitha, as she's a lap cat, but she too loves our dog! We're really pleased to be able to give Peggy a home and know she's loved and cared for.



Peggy

If you are considering adopting, please remember that older cats make wonderful pets: they are full of character, have a very calming presence and are ready to give you so much love back. Please don't overlook them!

Julia 

Need to talk to someone?

Cats Protection understands just how much your cat means to you and what you may be going through if your pet is missing, had to be rehomed, nearing the end of their life or recently passed away. We have a large range of resources, information and support to help you at this difficult time, including ways to help celebrate the life of your cat.

If you're experiencing the loss of your cat, you can talk to us. Our volunteer listeners can provide emotional support and practical information.

Please get in touch, we're here and ready to listen:

T: 0800 024 9494 (9am-5pm, Mon-Fri) free and confidential

E: pawstolisten@cats.org.uk

W: www.cats.org.uk/grief



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Fundraising update -



Thank you

The Woking Cats Protection team swung into action once more to organise a fantastic Christmas Fayre at New Haw Community Centre on 12 November.

From the moment the fayre opened, the hall was filled with supporters eager to peruse cat-themed gifts, delicious jams and cakes and try their luck at the chocolate and bottle tombolas.

The fayre had the highest attendance ever, and raised nearly £4400 for cats in need. Huge thanks to all who made it a roaring success. This was only possible once again through the support of our wonderful volunteers.

Thank you



- Christmas Fayre 2022



Thank you

Thank you



Special thanks go to Emily Lockhart for her large donation of Lindt chocolate for our tombola and to Naomi and Ryan for their donation from Hotel Chocolat. They also helped on our tombola stall.

Also deserving particular thanks are the Runnymede Hotel, Ottershaw Christmas Trees and Lynton Vets for their generous raffle donations.

Dates for your 2023 diary:

- 18 February — Quiz Night
- 18 March — Spring Fayre
- 8 July — Black Cherry Fair
- 4 November — Christmas Fayre

Thank you



Whiskery welcomes

Like all branches of Cats Protection, Woking CP makes sure all the cats and kittens in our care are ready for their new homes and that they are well-matched with their adopters. Here are some more of our success stories – happy felines and happy humans!

Cooper

Cooper had a varied life before he found his forever home. He was found as a stray in Maybury and was then adopted through Cats Protection. Unfortunately, his adopter's situation changed but he was sensibly returned to CP for rehoming again.

We had to say goodbye to our darling cat Dickie in November 2021, who was previously from CP Woking. His passing was sudden and we wanted to take some time to grieve for him.

We both volunteer for Woking CP as cat socialisers where we get our cuddle fixes when we visit the fosterers' pens. Although you love all the cats, sometimes there is one that melts your heart that bit more! On this occasion it was a cat named Pepper. We went away for a week and had decided that if she was still there on our return we would look to adopt her ourselves. However, as it turned out, we were pleased to hear that she had found a new home (see page 12).

A little while later Kim, the Welfare Team Leader, contacted us to say that she had a lovely cat named Cooper. We knew as soon as we met him, our fates were sealed. Although he was still a bit shy and nervous we decided we would love to adopt him.



We kept him indoors for six weeks, gradually letting him out with us in the garden. He now goes out on his own but still stays around the garden and is eyeing up the fence into the neighbouring garden.

When Cooper came to us he was on a strict diet, since he was 6.3kg. Despite being meticulous about his daily allowance he still wasn't slimming down! After speaking to the cat food manufacturers, we were advised that the weight loss allowance should be decreased further. I explained this to Cooper and although he wasn't very happy about it, we are pleased to say at his latest weigh-in he was 5.6 kg so we are on the right track at last.



He has quickly become one of the family and straight from the start let us know by scratching and throwing himself at the closed bedroom door that he wanted in! We gave in and it's lovely to see him follow us up when it is time for bed.

This is the youngest cat we have had, our previous two having reached 24 and 21, so we are looking forward to lots of happy years with darling Cooper who is around three years old.

Thank you, Woking CP, for finding Cooper and letting us adopt him.

Sylvia & Tony 

Whiskery welcomes

Jasper

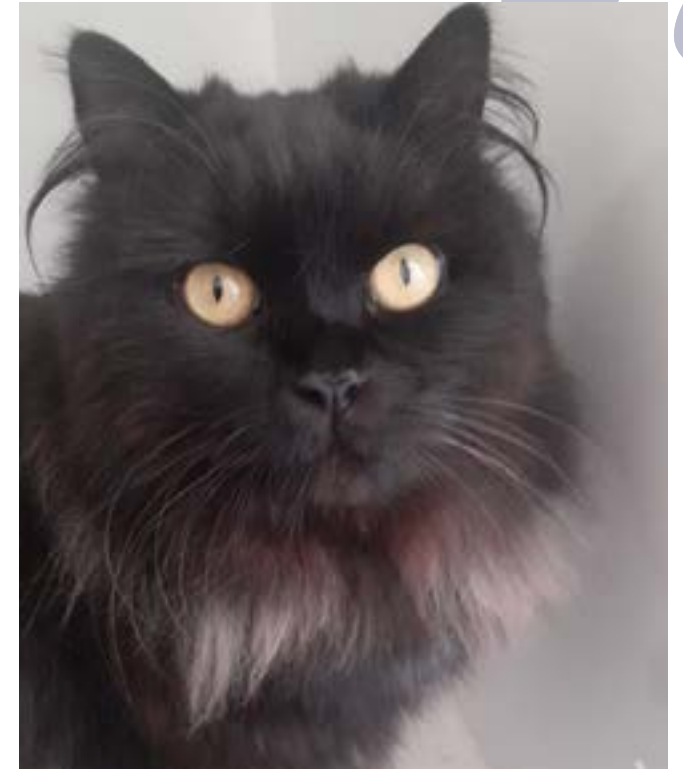
Jasper's previous owner surrendered him to be rehomed when their relationship broke down and he was found living in a neighbour's garden.

Five months after the loss of my previous cat, I decided I was ready to adopt a new fluffy friend, and offer a rescue cat a loving home. I started looking at local rehoming centres, but couldn't find the right cat for me, so I started looking a bit further afield.

I noticed Jasper on the Woking Cats Protection website, as he was a domestic long-hair and, having had long-haired cats previously, he really caught my attention so I registered my interest straightaway.

A lovely lady called Jenny phoned me to chat about Jasper and my suitability. I was then able to chat to Kim, Jasper's foster carer who offered to introduce me to Jasper. He purred, enjoyed being brushed and I loved him straightaway. I agreed to adopt Jasper: we were a match made in heaven!

Now Jasper has spent a few weeks living in his new home with me, he knows my voice already, sits on my lap and is so happy. He has his favourite toys and is great company.



I can't believe how lucky I am to have him - I love him so much. My thanks to Jenny and Kim at Woking Cats Protection for pairing Jasper with me, and for all their hard work as volunteers.

Jeannette 

Willow

My name is Willow and I am three years old. I came to live in my forever home a few months ago and settled in so quickly. When I moved in one of the things I brought with me was a feather stick to play with. I loved it so much I broke it so my humans have bought me another one with even more feathers!



During the day I like to sleep on my humans' beds. I have three to choose from. In the evening I like to sit in my cat bed which is in front of the fireplace in the lounge. I watch TV with my human and it's nice because I can keep them company. I love cuddles, fuss and being spoilt.

Recently I mastered the art of going in and out of the cat flap. It's great as I have a lovely safe garden to explore. The leaves are falling off the oak tree at the bottom of the garden and it's great fun to try and catch them.

I'm so happy and my humans love me very much. Thank you to Cats Protection and Mary for taking care of me until I went to my forever home.



Whiskery welcomes

Prince

Prince had to find a new home when his previous owner moved into new accommodation that did not allow pets.

We had been looking for a furry companion for quite a while as sadly our previous cat had passed away last autumn. Having a young child meant it took us a while to find a suitable cat who would be happy living with a small human. We were looking for many months until we saw Prince on the Woking Cats Protection website. We instantly fell in love with his quirky little nose and cheeky eyes and wanted to meet him in catperson.

His carer Kim met us in her home and we introduced our son as well as ourselves to the lovely Prince. He was such a gentle character and didn't seem to mind being handled by a 5-year-old. Three days later he moved in with us. He has full access to the outdoors and a garden, and he has already made friends with one of our neighbour's cats. He caught a full-grown frog from our pond the other day, which we must admit was quite the sight!



We hope he will live with us a very long time and enjoy our fireplace in the winter and the garden in the summer. Big thanks go to Cats Protection who offered us the opportunity to adopt as a family with a younger child and their ongoing support and kindness towards the furry as well as the human friends.

Dawn, Julia & Kai 

Pepper

Pepper came from a large family of people and pets. They made the sensible decision to ask CP to rehome Pepper for her own wellbeing.



We first saw Pepper on the Woking CP website in June 2022 and picked her out as the cat we wanted to meet the most. We made contact with Alison, who was lovely throughout the process and we went to meet Pepper shortly after. As soon as we met her, she was out of her pen rolling around the floor in front of us and had clearly decided to adopt us!

Pepper hasn't looked back since. Within a few days she began to find her paws and began exploring her new home. Pepper is the most adorable, loving and gentle cat you could wish to meet. She is extremely chatty and leaves you in no doubt as to what she wants, especially at breakfast and dinner time when she will patiently sit at her placemat waiting to be served. She enjoys playing in the garden although we aren't sure if the local wildlife is as thrilled to see her! Pepper has settled in with us so quickly and she is a huge part of the family. She is an absolute joy and has brought so much love and laughter with her since she came to live with us.

Lee 

Whiskery welcomes

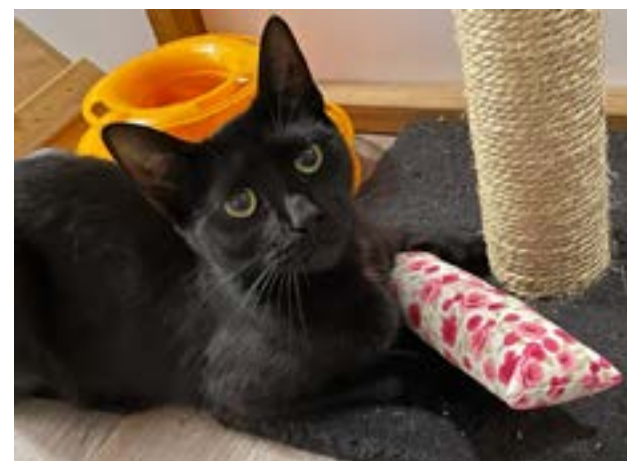
Nahla

Nahla and her two kittens arrived in care when their owner could no longer look after them.

Beautiful Nahla came into our lives just over a month ago. She is a 19-month-old bundle of playfulness, fun and affection and we love her.

As a family (Nikki, Phil and our 2 boys, Finn 17 and Dylan 12) we had not had a cat before, but Dylan was really keen to have one. We decided to adopt a cat that needed a home and we didn't mind about colour or gender, but we did want a friendly, affectionate cat.

Once the decision to adopt was made Nahla came into our lives very quickly. We registered with Woking Cats Protection and met Nahla a few days later. Dylan instantly bonded with her. We had to wait a week or so for all the checks to be done but then she came home to us. Nahla was the first cat we met but what an amazing cat she is!



Nahla settled in reasonably quickly. She found her safe place in a corner behind the TV and spent a large part of her first week there, but four weeks later she confidently roams the house and has several favourite snooze spots.

She loves company and will follow us around the house and although she does not like to sit on a lap yet, she snuggles up as closely as possible. Her very favourite thing is to be brushed and often nudges the brush to give us a hint to groom her.

She loves sitting with Dylan when he plays on his Xbox and she really enjoys chasing ping pong balls that Finn throws for her. She knows exactly where her food is kept and often leads us to the cupboard door when it's mealtime, meowing all the way. Her only frustration is that she is obviously desperate to go outside but that is a few weeks off yet.

Nahla's first trip to the vets with us went fantastically well, surprising everyone, including the vet. She was not frightened and took it all in her stride. Once out of her carrying cage she calmly sat in the weighing scales, purring away, and didn't flinch when she had her follow-up jab. One very cool cat.

We cannot believe how lucky we are to have such an amazing cat and owe huge thanks to Woking CP, and in particular to Kim. We are very impressed with the professionalism, thoroughness of the information, help and support, particularly vital as Nahla is our first cat.

Nikki 

Thank You...Thank You...Thank You...Thank You

Vanda and Dave Ashbolt for their continuing help with storage.

Sam and her team at Pinewood Cattery for fundraising support.

Thank You...Thank You...Thank You...Thank You

Billy: a cat in need

Billy was first reported to us in December 2021. He was a stray, living in a local area with a high population of cats. He'd been around since the summer and his condition was deteriorating. No foster spaces were available at the time so he had to be placed on our waiting list with a plan to take him in as soon as we could.

Unfortunately, before we had a chance to take him in, the finder contacted us again to let us know that he was now in a very bad state: his coat was matted and dirty, he had lost weight and was bleeding from his mouth. We collected him straightaway, and he was taken to Lynton Vets for a full health assessment. He was already neutered but was not microchipped and he was very fearful.

Thomas Johnson, Clinical Director, takes up the story: "When I first saw Billy he was very underweight and looking very sorry for himself. His mouth was so painful from inflammation and infection that he couldn't eat. He also had a heart murmur and blood tests showed that he was anaemic. We were really worried that the problems



From this...

in his mouth were so bad that he wouldn't recover. We started him on antibiotics and painkillers and he started to eat a bit on his own. Ten days after he came into us, we anaesthetised him to fully assess his mouth and found that he needed to have fourteen teeth extracted, which was done that day.

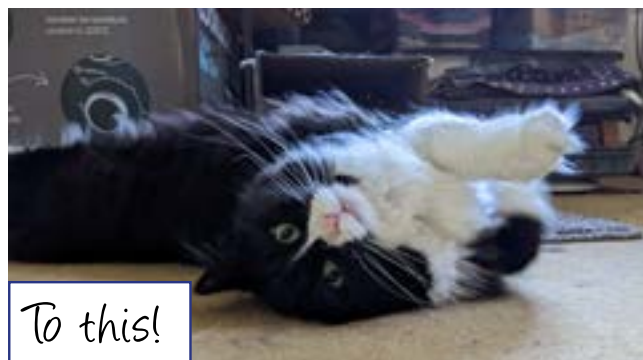
"It took several months for the inflammation in his mouth to settle down, and he stayed on pain relief for most of that time, but he was eating well, putting on weight and was a much happier

cat. His anaemia resolved and his heart murmur disappeared as well. We were really pleased to see him make such a good recovery."



To this...

Very, very slowly his personality began to emerge. He was the sweetest boy without a hint of aggression, who desperately wanted to be loved if he could just overcome his nervousness. As time went on he decided that during the day he liked to snooze and survey his kingdom from his high bed and then in the evening he would come to life. He started to play and interact more and more. He loved having his beautiful, long fur brushed and would even spend short periods of time sitting on his fosterer Cheryl's lap. After many months, Billy was finally ready to go on our website for rehoming.



To this!

Neutering comes free with Woking CP

Nine of the UK's animal welfare charities will join forces on 22 February 2023 to promote World Spay Day. Woking Cats Protection believes that getting your cat neutered is an essential part of responsible cat ownership, and is currently offering vouchers to families so they can get their cats neutered free of charge.

Woking Cat's Protection volunteer Alison Keeley urges people to take advantage of the free neuter scheme, especially since so many families are feeling the pinch due to the cost-of-living crisis.

"We desperately need to reduce the number of kittens being born. The waiting list for unwanted cats and strays to be taken into our care is rapidly growing – and obviously all these cats were kittens once."

In 2021 a record number of cats were added to the waiting list – around 180 – and 2022 looks like it will exceed this total. Unwanted litters make up some of this number, together with cats who are given up because their owners' circumstances change.

Nicola Tewkesbury, who adopted Bonnie and Bee in July, took advantage of the scheme and was given vouchers to get her new pets neutered.

She said: "Having adopted two kittens, the cost of neutering was going to be high, however we felt strongly that it wasn't fair to bring more kittens into the world and have the worry of finding them forever homes.

"Woking Cats Protection helped us by providing us with a voucher for this cost. They kept in constant touch with us and were very helpful when the time came to book them in."

Ideally cats should be neutered at the age of around four months, which ensures they stay happy and healthy and keeps vet bills down for pet owners. Cats who haven't been neutered can suffer from a number of cancers and infections.



Spaying a female cat before first heat helps prevent urine infections, mammary tumours and uterine cancer. For males, neutering will lower the risk of prostate cancer and eliminate the risk of testicular cancer.

Cats who have been neutered are less likely to spray, get into fights and they tend to wander less.

Kim Dibben, who also took advantage of the free neutering scheme, added that her cat hadn't strayed too far from home since he was neutered. She said: "Thank you very much Woking Cat's Protection for sorting out the neutering of our fur baby. Since his op, he seems to stay much closer to home."

Our volunteers are raising awareness of the scheme, distributing leaflets in the Woking area to help any cat owner who might be considering neutering but not be able to afford it.

Be quick: limited offer!

The neutering voucher process will be changing in spring, so if you need your cat neutered, or know someone else in a similar position, please contact the branch as soon as possible.

If you're feeling a bit unsure of the process, we will happily talk you through it to put your mind at ease. For more information please email: info@woking.cats.org.uk, or call 01483 721700 and leave a message in mailbox 4.

Crowd control: helping feral cats...

When a member of the public raised a concern about feral cats on a local industrial park, Woking CP got involved to see what could be done to help.

Initially it was unclear how many cats were living free among the industrial units, but workers there confirmed that there were both adults and kittens and, not surprisingly, the population seemed to be growing.



An industrial park is not the best place for feral cats – machinery and vehicles pose numerous dangers – but as the location was next to rural land, the cats had plenty of opportunity to catch their own food, supplemented regularly with cat food kindly put out by the workers. Rehoming cats who have had little human contact is a difficult task, and not in the best interests of the animal, so the strategy is to trap, neuter and return the cats to the original



territory. Then the population won't continue to expand. As we reported in the last issue of Felis Catus, sometimes free-living cats need to be relocated, but these were to be returned.

With the cooperation of some of those working on the industrial park, CP experienced trapper Pauline was able to capture seven adults and three kittens over the course of two days.



Then it was over to Lynton Vets in Woking and Vets for Pets in Staines to give the adults a full health check: they were flea-treated, wormed, vaccinated against feline flu and enteritis, neutered and blood-tested for FIV and feline leukemia.



...by "trap, neuter and return"

While they were anaesthetised for the neutering procedure, the tip of their left ear was removed. This heals very quickly and provides an obvious sign that the cat has been neutered, so they won't be unnecessarily trapped again to check.



Trapping feral cats to get them to the vets can be quite difficult and time-consuming, but luckily the operation went smoothly and the adults were quickly re-released back to the industrial park. Huge thanks to both Lynton Vets and Vets for Pets for their help in treating the cats.



Confinement of feral cats can be very stressful for them, as they are likely to be fearful of human contact. Therefore it is important to keep their time in care to a minimum – just enough for them to start recovering from their procedure and, of course, with proper pain relief.

Meanwhile, the three kittens were assessed for future suitability for rehoming. It is extremely difficult to socialise kittens who have had no human contact after they are weaned and they are unlikely to become friendly, domestic pets.



However, as these were still young enough to adjust to being handled and they were making good progress, it was decided that they would stay in care.

They are currently settling into Haslemere Adoption Centre and once they are more confident and secure, they will be found the best possible forever homes.

If you'd like to know more about feral cats, see the guide at: <https://www.cats.org.uk/help-and-advice/lost-found-and-feral-cats/feral-cat>



Lucky Roxy becomes Clover

As we reported in the last issue of Felis Catus, Roxy was a victim of the internet trade in kittens. Too young to leave her mother, she was only around six weeks old when she was sold to an unsuspecting owner who had to hand her over to Cats Protection when they realised she was ill and needed specialist care. Thankfully, she was then in safe hands with fosterer Cheryl, who takes up the story...

I collected the little black and white kitten from the emergency vets on 9 April. She was just a tiny scrap and was really not in a good way. She was diagnosed with cat flu and was struggling to keep her food down. I spent many hours that weekend just cuddling her and wondering if she was going to make it. The Welfare Team were a fantastic support over this time with lots of advice and encouragement.

Despite being weak and very poorly, it was obvious even then that she had a real fighting spirit. There were many setbacks along the way, but she slowly grew into the most stunning, energetic bundle of fun!



From this...



To this...



To this!

After a little holiday at Welfare Team Leader "Auntie" Kim's, where she developed a lovely friendship with Kim's granddaughter Roxy, we decided it was time for a fresh start. I named her Roxy and shortly after she went on the website for adoption there were several enquiries, including from Aneta who contacted us after she'd spotted Roxy's picture.

Within a few days we arranged a meeting, which turned out to be rather remarkable. Roxy had been with me a long time and had got extremely good at making speedy escapes from her room, followed by some crazy tearing around trying not to get caught and often being rather naughty when she met someone new! But that was not the case when Aneta, Mark and Domi came to visit.

Roxy was surprisingly calm and seemed eager to get to know her potential new family, going to each one of them for attention. I think Roxy and this lovely family decided there and then that they all wanted to be together.

Very soon afterwards Roxy moved to her new home. It was a day tinged with sadness for me because Roxy and I had been through a lot together and I knew I was going to miss my lovable little lunatic. At the same time I was really happy, as I was absolutely certain that this was the right home for her and somewhere she would be really loved.

Well, what a great decision that was! Roxy became Clover (as in lucky) and settled so quickly. Within a few days Aneta was sending me beautiful photos of Clover chilling on the windowsill or stretched out on the sofa demanding strokes.

This has been such a fantastic success story for Woking CP, for Clover and her lovely new family. Sometimes we worried that we wouldn't find the right home for Clover – but the right family is always out there, we just needed to be patient. I couldn't be happier and clearly neither could Clover! I look forward to hearing about her wonderful new life long into the future.

Cheryl 

The time is meow!

In a year which has seen a challenging political landscape, Cats Protection's Advocacy and Government Relations team has continued to speak up for cats whenever the opportunity has presented itself. The team has expanded to increase the amount of campaigning, and particularly online campaigning, that the charity does. Jade Emery, the new Campaigns and Advocacy Officer, tells us more.



What does your role involve?

Among other things, my role involves putting together online actions where supporters can simply enter details such as their name and postcode, and then an email is generated that can quickly and easily be sent to the supporter's MP or other decision-makers to show how important cats are!

While we know it's important not to exclude people who maybe aren't as comfortable with technology or perhaps don't have access, having campaign actions people can take quickly online means we can reach a huge audience of cat lovers, who can take a few minutes out of their day but still make a real difference. We also put together petitions and use our social media to stand up for cats.



Which campaigns are especially important to you?

As a renter, I'm really passionate about our Purrfect Landlords campaign. I'm lucky enough to have a landlord who is happy with me having my cat in the property – but we know from our research (and the fact that our branches and centres take in so many cats because of accommodation issues) this isn't the case for so many. I think we have a great opportunity to change this and make things fairer for all renters and their cats and stop them being needlessly separated.



How do you think the future of campaigning will look?

Tough question! I think we're going to see more collaboration in the animal welfare sector to try and achieve better results for animals. I also think with the increase and changes we've seen in technology since the pandemic, more people are keen to get involved from a distance digitally, whether that means taking an action online or attending a virtual event to learn about key issues. I think this creates great opportunities to achieve huge campaign wins.



Tell us about your own cat!

My cat is a sweet little girl named Impa! She was extremely shy when we adopted her, But, after lots of patience and gentle encouragement that soon changed. She is now an adventurous, loving and very communicative cat who loves her Dreamies and isn't afraid to ask!



Help us speak up for cats

If you are interested in helping our advocacy work – perhaps by letter-writing, sharing campaigns online or even gathering evidence, please get in contact with us.



Please email: advocacy@cats.org.uk
Follow us on Twitter: [@CPAdvocacy](https://twitter.com/CPAdvocacy)



Kitten cuties

Vinny

One of three kittens from an unwanted litter, Vinny has made himself at home with his new family.

We contacted Cats Protection at the beginning of the summer as we wanted to adopt a kitten ideally after the summer holidays. We were over the moon in September when we had a phone call to say they had a young male kitten in need of a home.

On our initial visit, Vinny was very shy and timid, huddled in a corner with his brothers.



He was reluctant to let us stroke him so we anticipated that it might take a little bit of time for him to settle into our home – we really were wrong!

The day he was delivered to us he really exceeded our expectations in how friendly and affectionate he was. Whilst slightly nervous of our 5-year-old son at first, this wasn't an issue for long – a lot of play time built up his confidence and very quickly he started to interact with us. He loves being in our company and is getting along great with our son (who adores him).

When we are working from home he likes to nap on our laps, occasionally popping up on a video call. Woking CP were brilliant in supporting us through the adoption process and following up afterwards. The work they do for the welfare of cats is excellent and we hope that Vinny will have a long and happy life with us, as a result of having such a caring start in life.

Emily 

Lily & Luna

Lily and Luna came from a litter that was given to CP for rehoming.

We'd been asking Mum and Dad for a kitten for ages and then they surprise us and tell us that we are getting two! We were so excited to adopt Lily and Luna, from Cats Protection Woking and we counted down the days until Kim from CP dropped them off. We went to the pet store and chose beds, toys, scratching posts, bowls and a cat tower in preparation for their arrival, so exciting!

They have settled into our family so well, we can't imagine life without them. They are super cute and love to play with their toys, they zoom around so fast and love to chase a ball. Lily loves to snuggle on your lap purring very loudly! Luna loves to snooze on the chair in the window sunbathing, when she's not racing around trilling!



Thank you, Cats Protection, for making the whole adoption process very simple and thank you for our fur babies who we love a lot!

Holly, 13 & Harry, 11 

Kitten cuties

Suzi & Simone

This pair of youngsters were passed to CP to ensure they found a suitable home to keep them forever.

Our family had been searching for a suitable feline match for a little while when we found the gorgeous Suzie and Simone on the Woking Cats Protection website. Described as confident and playful kittens, who enjoyed their food and loved people, they sounded like the perfect match and we couldn't wait to meet them!

Following the necessary screening, we arranged to meet "the girls" at their foster home and fell in love immediately. We were thrilled to be chosen to provide Suzie and Simone's furever home and excitedly began preparing all the things that they would need upon their arrival. That day soon came and in no time Suzie and Simone began exploring their new home.

Already firmly bonded with each other, they quickly bonded with us all too and love to be around people. Whether they are being playful together (or chasing up the curtains!) or having a quiet snooze in a sunny spot or on our laps, they are never far away from the centre of the household and are usually the focus of our attention.



We look forward to many years and adventures ahead, especially when Suzie and Simone begin to explore outside – which they seem keen to do, as they have been keeping watchful eyes on the garden wildlife from their favourite windowsill spots!

We already couldn't be without our lovely girls and feel so lucky to have them. Thank you, Cats Protection, for all your wonderful work and for finding us the perfect match.

Liz 

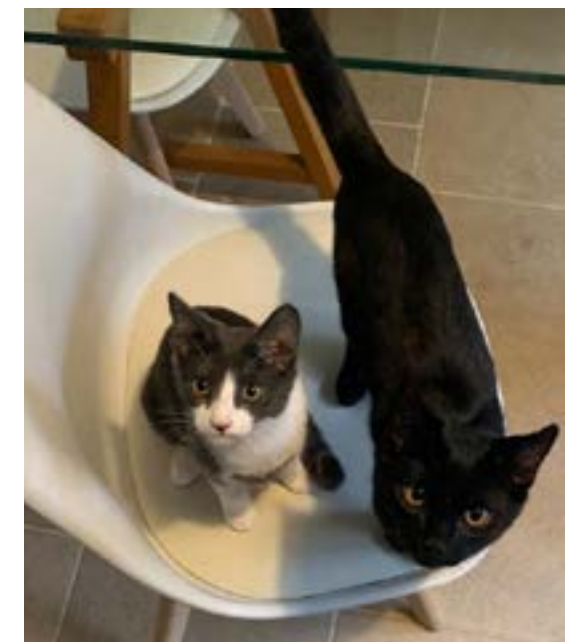
Maisie & Barney

Siblings to Lily and Luna, Maisie and Barney were looking for a home to grow up in together.

We adopted Maisie and Barney in August this year, after our tabby cat sadly passed away. We knew the moment we saw them that they were going to be ours. The process was incredibly easy with Cats Protection and the support they gave us in the beginning few weeks was extremely helpful.

Maisie and Barney have brought so much joy to our household and our kids just adore having them around. We would always recommend Cats Protection. It's great knowing that we've given these two little beautiful cats a loving and caring home.

Stephanie 



Leo makes a house a home

This little ginger chap had been one of an unwanted litter from an elderly couple who struggled with multiple cats and kittens in their home.

Leo came bounding into our lives last August and we cannot now imagine our lives without him! We moved to the Woking area in January 2022, having just bought our first house. Once the decorating and furniture had been sorted, there was only one more essential item that was needed to make our house a home – a kitten! I have always been a cat lover and had four different rescue cats as a child in my family home, so this was to be my first cat as an adult owner.

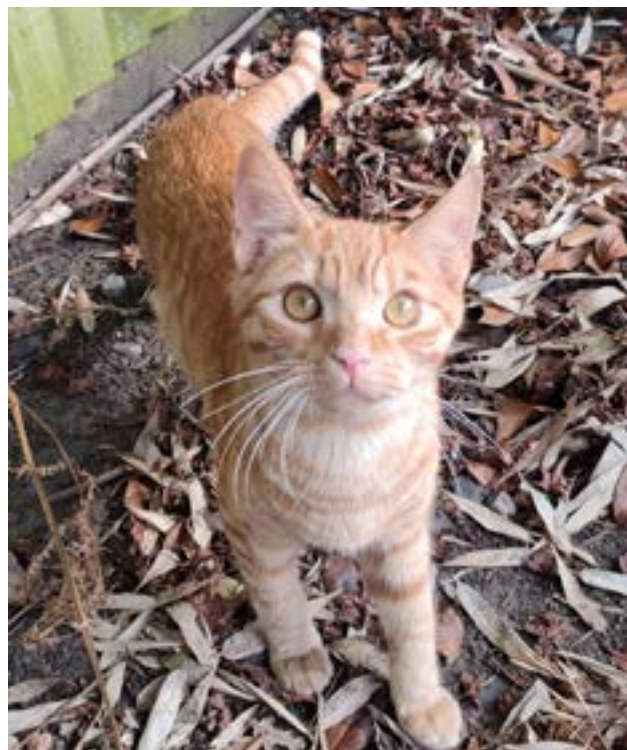
I reached out to Cats Protection earlier in the year to express my interest in adoption. I specifically wanted a kitten or juvenile cat who I could play with and nurture from a young age. When we were ready to adopt, I contacted them again. They told me that they didn't have any kittens but would contact me if any became available. Within 24 hours, they told me that three kittens had come into their care. The next day, I went to meet them.

Leo was a five-month-old ginger male who captured my heart instantly. He was ginger all over with beautiful striped markings. He was confident, friendly, purring, rolling around in my lap and climbing all over me! He had clearly taken a shine to me, and I knew he was the kitten for me.



Leo came home to us on 15 August 2022. His first moments were spent exploring his new playroom (aka the spare bedroom!) and purring very loudly – I do not think he stopped purring all day! I was worried that he might be frightened and take some time to settle but he was instantly very happy with us in our home. I spent the whole afternoon playing with him and then he lay on me for a nap. Even since we first met him, he has been a cuddly lap cat.

We kept Leo in his room for the first couple of days, but he was so eager to explore the house – he kept escaping from his room! Since then, some of Leo's favourite hobbies involve sprinting through his tunnel, playing football with paper balls, playing with his ball run, running up and down the stairs, chasing sticks and dried palm leaves from the garden, cuddling on my partner's lap whilst he's working from home, and having long evening naps cuddled up with me on my dressing gown.



Leo is now about eight months old and has started to explore the garden. Given his confident and adventurous nature, he loves being outside especially in autumn and chasing the leaves blowing in the wind. He has also discovered how to climb the tallest tree in the garden and how to jump into the neighbour's garden, so he still requires supervision and likes to keep us on our toes!

Leo makes us immensely happy every day. He is so sweet, loving, friendly and playful and I look forward to returning home to him every day after work. I would like to say a big thank you to CP, and specifically Alison, for their seamless and professional adoption process and continued support in the first few weeks.

Emma 

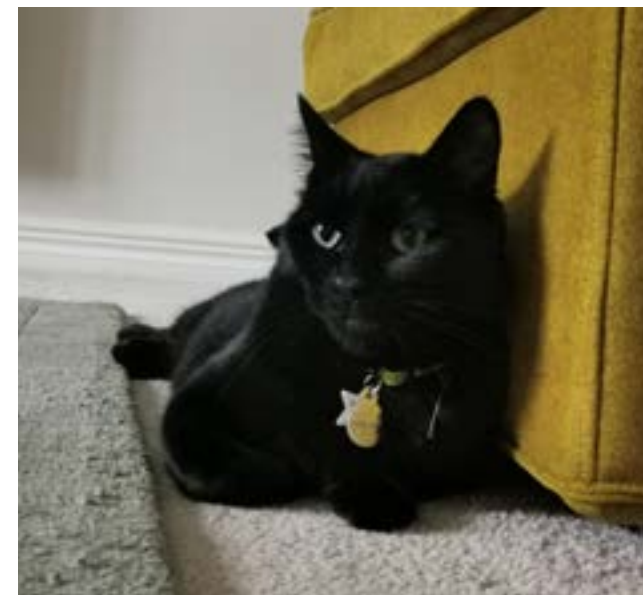
Merlin the stray settles in

Merlin was a stray who had been hanging around for 10 months and took a while to realise he had landed on his paws when he was taken into care by Woking CP.

We adopted Merlin back in April when he was nervous, scared and didn't really understand what it meant to be loved. We would go to stroke him and he would hide, but you could tell he so desperately wanted to be loved. He'd sit watching from the corner, occasionally forgetting his fear and leaping out to chase a ball but then realising he was being watched and retreating back to his corner.

It took a week or so for him to build up the confidence to leave the room we'd first put him in. You could tell it was overwhelming as he would creep out and then rush back in! We kept very still during these brave escapades so as to not spook him.

A week and a half later we fed him some cat milk. It seemed that this was the most delicious thing he had ever tasted. Moments after finishing he sat on the stairs and meowed with such volume. It really filled me with joy.



He seems to enjoy using his voice now, especially in the summer months with the early sunrise. When he meows we know he wants two things: breakfast and his toy balls!

We have to put his toy balls away at night otherwise he spends the whole night bashing them across the hard wooden floor and into the skirting boards. He has other soft toys to play with during the night, yet it seems that the hard balls are his preferred toys and he even has his favourite ball rattle.

Recently Merlin has been out in the garden, albeit hesitantly. He mainly sits in a flower bed but has jumped over the fence to sit on our neighbour's shed. Once, another black cat came into our garden and he had quite a fright. We had more of a fright because we couldn't tell which black cat was ours! That night he spent the whole evening chatting to us about it: "meow, meow, meow!"

It's now month two and he has started to venture up and settle on the sofa. He loves a stroke with his little pink brush, especially his cheeks. We're hoping that his confidence will grow even more and



eventually he'll be comfortable enough to sit on our laps. I'm hopeful in time that we may even be able to pick him up for a cuddle.

Adopting a stray cat requires a lot of patience, love and determination. It can be frustrating at times, especially when one day they are doing so well and then the next they seem to regress. But it is such a privilege, and it has brought us so much happiness.

A big thank you to Cheryl at Woking Cats Protection. Cheryl had fostered Merlin and is a big contributor to his success story. Thank you for all the hard work you do and for giving Merlin the best start to his new life with us.

Jessica & Emily 

More happy-ever-afters

Trevor

In the last issue of Felis Catus we reported on the case of Trevor, an injured stray who was trapped and taken into care. The good news is, he has now found his forever home and is a very fortunate cat indeed.

We had been looking for a furry companion for quite a while, as our previous cat had sadly passed away. We contacted several rescue organisations without success so when we saw Trevor on Woking Cats Protection website we did not expect a response to our email. However, Jenny contacted us and put us in touch with Kim who explained Trevor's background and then carried out a virtual home check.

Trevor's fosterer, Mary, met us in her home and we got to spend time with Trevor. It was love at first sight and a week later we welcomed him into our home. He has settled in very well and now likes to explore the garden. Unfortunately he got into a fight with a neighbourhood tom cat which meant an overnight stay at the vet but he is now on the road to recovery.



Thankfully, he has had no issues with the leg injury he had when he was originally rescued by Woking Cats Protection. He has now turned into a real lap cat who enjoys all his creature comforts.

Elaine & Dave 

Frank

Frank was a stray who had been hanging around for a while before being reported to Woking CP. When he came into our care he was in poor condition – thin and covered in ticks – but just look at him now!



We have had the wonderful Frank for a whole year now and what a transformation! Frank was very unsure as he settled into his new home and shied away from physical contact, especially on his back. He also disliked feet anywhere near him. This all seemed to indicate that Frank had been kicked or hit so we as a family changed our strategy towards him, to avoid any memories of his past. With much patience and understanding, Frank began to trust us and allowed us to gently stroke him, as long as he could see where the hand was doing the stroking.

A year on, he is a bouncy, happy, trusting cat, loved by the whole family. This change would not have been possible without the support and advice from his fosterer Cheryl, who was always there with good ideas to help Frank. I am forever grateful that I stumbled across Frank's profile a year ago and that this gentle "big wuss" of a cat has indeed put wandering the streets behind him as he gently purrs on my lap every morning to wake me up!

Tessa 

Keep the playtimes going after you've gone

We know your cat means the world to you, which is why Cats Protection promises to be there for them after you're gone.

By registering with our free Cat Guardians service you can be assured that, after you pass away, our caring teams will look after your cat until we find them a loving new home.

Find out more about how Cat Guardians could bring you real peace of mind – request your FREE leaflet and register today.

We promise to never put a healthy cat to sleep.



Find out more and register at cats.org.uk/catguardians

Or contact the team at catguardians@cats.org.uk or 01825 741 291



Cats Protection on holiday

As we all know, the UK is a nation of animal lovers and at Woking CP we are always grateful for the amazing support we have for the work we do. However, our volunteers find it hard to leave their work at home even when they go on holiday – last summer several of them checked out cat charities in other countries and were pleased to report that support for stray and unwanted felines is also thriving abroad.

Welfare Team Leader Kim went to Malta and spent some time at the Independence Garden, Sliema.

"A team of local residents take care of the stray cats of Independence Gardens. They work with Sliema local council and have provided shelters in an area of the gardens for the cats. Some of the volunteers have been taking care of the cat colony for 30 years, ensuring the cats are fed and receive vet treatment. We took donations of cat food which we purchased from a local supermarket. If you are on holiday, please look up to see if there are any local rescues you can help - it makes your holiday much more worthwhile plus you get a lovely cat fix at the same time!"



CP supporters John and Sarah were delighted to see that in Kotor, Montenegro, the local cat population is looked after by locals who leave out biscuits and water for them.

"Being a sea port, these are descendants of the cats who stepped off the trading vessels years ago and are appreciated as they keep the rat population down.

"But the legacy of these cats does not end there. In 1979 a devastating earthquake hit Montenegro. It is said that in the days before the quake struck, the cats started to make haunting crying sounds. This noise escalated until the local population, so unnerved by the sounds, started to evacuate. When the earthquake finally struck it left 450 surrounding villages crumbled to the ground, destroying part of the ancient city of Kotor. It took 10 years to rebuild and left a local population thankful for the warning from the cats of Kotor Bay.

"A museum in honour of the cats in Kotor houses some wonderful artefacts and sponsors the care and wellbeing of the local cat population."

Steve looks after the enquiries for Woking CP. He visited a cat sanctuary at Tala, Cyprus.

"It's an amazing place run by volunteers with at least 100 cats roaming freely in a fenced area with shelters and food stations in abundance. The cats are mostly friendly but the sad thing is that they may never be adopted and end their lives in the sanctuary. If you visit Cyprus, I can recommend a visit to make a fuss of some wonderful cats. Be sure to take as much cat food as you can afford."



A cat café in Orlando was an essential part of Branch Secretary Helen's visit to Florida.

"The café is a lovely place to meet cats available for adoption and, like Woking CP, they try to ensure each cat and adoptive family are well-matched."



Please donate to our winter appeal



Cats Protection's waiting list is longer than ever, and many more cats are being abandoned due to the cost-of-living crisis. This winter, we need you to help us make our pens feel like home for cats and kittens in Woking and the surrounding area. Your donation will help fill at cat's pen with nutritious food, bedding, blankets and toys – everything they need until their forever home comes along.

Please scan this QR code or go to:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/winterappeal2022-wokingdistrictbranch>



Contact us

Call us on 01483 721700 and leave us a message:

Mailbox 1 - If you would like to adopt a cat

Mailbox 2 - If you need to rehome your cat

Mailbox 3 - Lost & Found

Mailbox 4 - Neutering and all other enquiries

Alternatively, email us at: info@woking.cats.org.uk

Please note that articles that give out facts are written using the most accurate information available at the time of publishing. Views expressed are individual and not necessarily the view of the charity and its supporters. We cannot be held responsible for any incorrect information inadvertently published. Charity Number 203644 / SC037711

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Please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/347a7sur> if you have any questions about how we use your data.

