

SPRING EDITION 2020

# Island Mews



Spring is in  
the air!



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

# WELCOME TO THE SPRING EDITION OF ISLAND MEWS

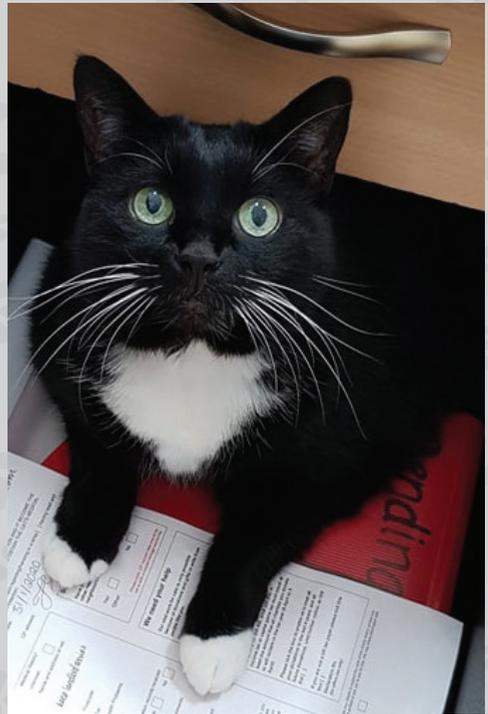
As we put together this spring edition of Island Mews, it was a little hard to keep focused on the positive side of life. However we've decided to try and do our best and give you a little bit of cat-infused happiness to hopefully bring a spring smile to your face.

Like many others, our IOW Centre is finding life quite tough. With the Centre closed, we've been unable to rehome any of our kitties, or take on any of those outside the Centre who desperately need our help. And with all our fundraising events cancelled, we certainly are going to face a few challenges ahead.

But we're a resilient lot; and our team have just been amazing in making sure each and every one of our cats is looked after, socialised and primed and preened ready for when the Centre reopens. We are so blessed to have a strong team here for the cats and each other. I am proud of everyone!

We are also so very thankful to everyone for all your wonderful messages of support. Rest assured, we will do everything possible to get the Centre back to the one that we've worked so hard to build over the last 60 years and one that we all love and cherish.

*Mel, Jo and the CP team*



*Suzie, 15 years old - our new resident cat and part-time receptionist. She can't wait to greet you when the Centre reopens. Read more about her uplifting tale on page 4.*



**Purdy is one of 48 cats currently in our care**

## OUR CATS JUST LOVE AMAZON...

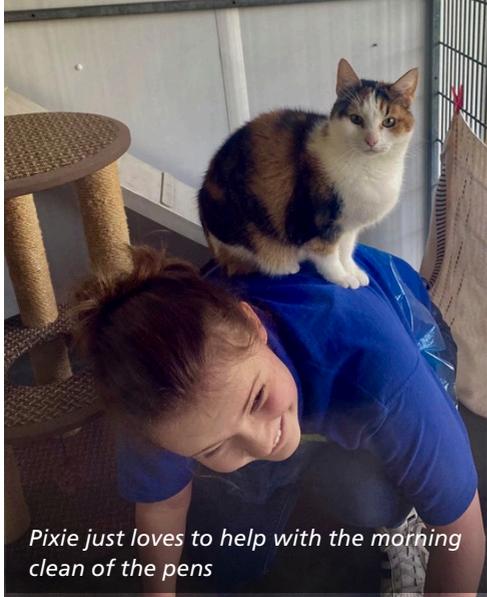
With our funds severely hit, our Amazon wishlist is a lifeline right now for us. It is composed of essential items such as food, litter and toys to keep our cats happy and healthy during their extended stay.

We have been humbled by how many people have donated to us already, but we still have many cats that don't have activity centres that will help them stay happy and mentally stimulated. Any donations, however small, would be so gratefully received.

**Please see back cover for details. Thank you!**

## SO HOW HAVE WE (AND OUR CATS) BEEN COPING?

Our team are ever-resourceful and have put a great action plan in place. Time is put aside every day to ensure all the cats are given time and play to help the days pass, and get them nearer to finding their forever homes.



*Pixie just loves to help with the morning clean of the pens*

The cattery has been split into two zones so the two Cat Carers are dedicated to their own 'cat masters'. This also ensures the staff are safely self-isolating at work.

We maintain contact through walkie-talkies and our cats endeavour to keep us entertained, like Ruby here, with the occasional sing-song.



It's amazing how we can reinvent the wheel and adapt the Centre in desperate times. Our reception team, our Volunteer Team Leader and our self-isolated Cat Care Assistants are also working hard to keep up our profile in the media and keep our cats centre stage. We keep reassuring our kitties that sometime soon there will be a queue of people around the Centre to offer them homes.

And the cats? Well they seem to be coping just fine.



*More catnip anyone?*

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR FOSTERERS

A massive thank you to our fostering team caring for our remote cats. You are making it all possible for the Centre to operate. We currently have a record 21 cats in foster homes around the island, which has greatly relieved the burden on our in-Centre staff.



*Mr Nibbler, (also featured on the cover) one of our foster cats enjoying home life*

# MEET SUZIE – OUR NEW RESIDENT CAT



*Here's Suzie trying to lay claim to all these Amazon wish list goodies that just arrived*

**It was only a few months ago that Suzie's life was very different and we are so proud of how far she has come. Zan, (pictured below) tells Suzie's story and how she ended up residing with us here at the Centre.**

Suzie originally was taken into care by Gosport Cats Protection. Her owner sadly had gone into care, leaving her on her own. Everything Suzie knew was all gone (even the furniture) - it was just a very sad and scared kitty left behind.

Gosport Cats Protection took Suzie in but she struggled to adapt to her new environment. As months went by, Suzie grew more grumpy and frustrated with her situation and, as you can imagine, there wasn't a line of people wanting to take on a troubled 15-year-old cat. Suzie had been in care over 4 months and things weren't improving- something had to change.

## **Suzie catches the ferry to the IOW**

In October Gosport called us, hoping a change of scene may help - so over to the Isle of Wight Suzie came. She soon settled in to her new pen and a plan was put in place to socialise her.

We started off small, with just one person spending time with her, hoping we could introduce more people to Suzie as she improved. She began to enjoy playing with

her feather toy (when she felt like it of course) and it was lovely to see small moments when she enjoyed life. Although she showed some progress, she still was not thriving and no one came to give her a home. So in December we decided to offer her a trial as our very own resident cat.

Amazingly, Suzie settled in with us almost immediately; we couldn't believe the difference in her. She soon had her favourite places to snooze and although she can still be uncertain about new things and people, she loves company and will often have a big purr waiting for you. She is very chatty too - always has something to say on the matter. She is such a

unique character and it's been wonderful to see her enjoy life at last.

She brightens up each morning when we see her. She will always be a bit of a grump but we love her quirky ways all the same.



## SAUSAGE & MASH

It all started with a call from Cats Protection IOW, after two kittens aged about two weeks old were found in Newport without their mum. I went to the Adoption Centre to collect them - two tiny black kittens who became known as Sausage & Mash.



To ensure that they remained warm they were wrapped in a blanket, with the all-important heat pad. I took them home and started a two-hourly feeding regime of bottles filled with kitten milk.

In the early few weeks there were some very worrying times when they wouldn't feed and became very lethargic. With intensive nursing, plus visits to the vets, they eventually became stronger and got the hang of the bottle. They came to know me as their mum and would get very excited when I appeared with their feeds. They quickly went from strength to strength and as we slowly moved to solid foods they started to grow rapidly.

They began investigating their new surroundings and playing with their many toys. They were like 'whirlwinds' flying around the furniture, wearing themselves out before falling asleep.

We all have busy lives and kittens of this age (with their constant needs) have to fit in with our lifestyle. So Sausage & Mash soon became regular travellers on Red Funnel ferries when visiting my elderly mother who suffers from Alzheimers. I am a strong believer that animals of all types identify with human illness and it was lovely to see the kittens settle down on the lap of my mum and for her to be amazed by them. They even spent a week away at Christmas when we spent the festive period surrounded by the family. Having experienced so many things in their short lives, they became very confident kittens, not scared of anything.

Soon after Christmas it was clear that they were ready for rehoming, so it was off to the vets again for the important health checks and first vaccinations before being made available for adoption.

Shortly after this, a lovely family came into the Centre looking for two kittens. They fell in love with Sausage & Mash and decided to give them a new home. Sausage & Mash are now living, what will no doubt be, a happy life with them.



## OTIS FINALLY FINDS HIS FOREVER HOME



*A very depressed Otis before his operation*

**Meet handsome Otis who is only 3 years old. His story starts with us way back in August 2019, when he came to us as his owner could no longer keep him. It seems so long ago, but sadly it's been one thing after another for our loving lad.**

When Otis first arrived we noticed he seemed a little lethargic for such a strong, young chap. It came to light that Otis had an extremely heavy parasite infection. We started treatment right away and hoped he would be fit to find a loving home in a few days' time.

For Otis, that was just the start of his problems. We noticed that his eye wasn't quite right and he was quickly seen by our vets. Otis started a course of medication to restore his eye to health. Unfortunately, treatment didn't seem to be improving his eye and things were about to get a whole lot worse for our boy.

In October, Otis developed symptoms of cat flu, a condition that often lies dormant in cats and can cause significant eye issues.

This was a real set-back for his recovery and his eye inflammation was still unresponsive to treatment. He was wearing a cone at all times to aid the healing of his eye. As you can imagine, his morale was at an all-time low.

We hoped a change of medication may bring some hope, but the inflammation continued and the eye condition began to worsen despite treatment.

Following further advice from the vets, Otis started a new treatment plan, but after several weeks of multiple medications daily his eye was still not responding and poor Otis's fighting spirit was beginning to fade. It was decided that it was in Otis's best interest to have the offending eye removed.

Thanks to all our amazing supporters, we managed to raise an incredible £1,000 to cover the operation. It was worth every penny. After the procedure, he was a different cat, playful, affectionate and curious about everything.

Poor Otis has had such a terrible journey, but fortunately we have a very happy ending. Otis finally went to his amazing new home in January. It has been quite the journey and we wish him nothing but health and happiness.



*One last hug from our team, before going to his new forever home*

### OUR LITTLE PRINCESS: A SPECIAL-NEEDS CAT

**We have a very special lady who is looking for that extra special person.**

Princess is a very unique cat who has lost a couple of her nine lives over the years.

Princess was electrocuted when she was just a curious little eight-week-old kitten, playing with a cable. Thankfully she survived, but as a result, she struggles with a few things in life and needs a little extra help from us humans. She may be a little different from other cats but she is a wonderful little character and has many adorable little quirks.

It's very sad, that at 14 years old, after all her struggles, she finds herself homeless.

We really hope that somebody will come forward to adopt this little lady who deserves a loving home so much.

She is currently in foster care but has been signed off fit and healthy by our vet to find a new home as soon as the Centre reopens.



*14-year-old Princess – still looking for her forever home*



### NEVER TOO OLD TO FIND LOVE

It always breaks our hearts when we get the older cats in since they so often get overlooked by visitors.

Sadly poor Pebbles was one of them, having found herself homeless at 19 years old. We all fell in love with this beautiful gentle girl and were just over the moon when, despite a couple of set-backs on the way, she eventually found her forever home.

We wish Pebbles and her new family many years of happiness together.

**When adopting a cat, please do spare a thought for our older cats. They tend to be calmer, easier to look after, understand household 'etiquette' and seek little more than a warm lap, regular food and love.**

# HEARTWARMING TAILS

## IN MEMORY OF BUSY BEE'S SUSIE

Many of you will have heard that Susie, a resident at the Busy Bee Garden Centre, died in January at the grand old age of 25. Susie has been a part of the Busy Bee family for over 20 years when she turned up one day looking for a home. She soon became a huge part of their lives, greeting customers every day. Sadly her health deteriorated and she was put to rest very peacefully in the comfort of her home – the garden centre she loved. To celebrate her life, Busy Bee held a get-together at their Centre and, thanks to the generosity of everyone who attended, raised an incredible £782.48 for the Isle of Wight Cats Protection Adoption Centre. A huge thank you to everyone – and especially Susie, whose memory lives on.



## MAURICE, OUR LONG-STAY PUSS, FINDS A HOME AT LAST

Remember our very dapper Maurice from the last newsletter? Well we are delighted to tell you that he has finally selected the lucky people who he wanted to live with.

It took some time, but it was worth the wait. Here he is chilling out, centre stage on the coffee table. We always said that Maurice (renamed Maurry) would rule the house. His new family told us that he is really enjoying exploring the garden, and has territory-marked all the flower beds. He loves sleeping on the windowsill in the sun, and is very affectionate, loves to be around them playing or sleeping. He seems very happy!



*Maurice chilling out on the coffee table*



*Victoria, the biggest ginger cat you'll find on the Island*

## VICTORIA AND BEA TURNING HEADS ON THE ISLAND

We are always delighted when cats of any kind get promoted on the island. So we were particularly thrilled by the news of a giant marmalade ginger cat prowling the streets of East Cowes. Walk past Weaver Brothers Independent Funeral Directors on Link Road and you'll spot the rather striking image of a cat gazing at a bumble bee.

Renowned artist Tony Trowbridge was commissioned by Weaver Brothers who were inspired by other murals in the area to spray paint this 'pawtrait' onto their new office's external wall. Why a cat you might ask? Well a cat image was chosen simply because the Weaver family love cats.

After an island-wide competition and poll were held, this very regal cat was named Victoria.

The bumble bee on the mural was named 'Bea' (which was one of Queen Victoria's daughters,

so seems a fitting name). Tony Trowbridge is now going to paint the names on the mural. A truly unique piece of art.

Our team at Cats Protection would like to say a huge thank you to Weaver Brothers for not only choosing a cat to grace their premises, but also for visiting our very own Amazon wishlist and making a huge donation of much needed, and very much appreciated cat toys, brushes, litter trays and much more.

**If you would like to donate a toy to our cats, please consider visiting our Amazon wish list. We really want to keep our cats happy and stimulated during their extended stay at the Centre. One little toy could make all the difference.**

**Please take a look at our back page for more details.**



### THE SUN FINALLY SHINES FOR SID

Following the loss of our great outdoor cat, Gaffa, who had lived with us for many years, we wanted to give a home to another cat in need.

We first saw Sid on the Cats Protection Website, a big handsome ginger boy. We went to see him and found that he was very frightened and unhappy. He had been nicknamed hissing Sid as he would hiss at you from under his fort in his pen and we found that he very much lived up to this name.

Having spent my working life around animals and having witnessed first-hand how cruel people can be when an animal is no longer wanted, it very quickly became clear to me that with patience and time, Sid would come to trust us and would become a much happier cat.

We visited him many times over the next few days so that he could get used to us and during this time the adoption paperwork and home visit were completed by the Cats Protection team.

#### From hisses to head rubs...

Sid changed quickly and soon came out and had a few head rubs. He decided that he would let us know who was in charge and we suffered the 'war wounds' that come from a cat that likes to take the occasional swipe at you, but soon this passed as well.

As Sid was an 'outdoor' cat we timed it so that we could be around a lot for the first weeks that he came to live with us.

He took up home in a log cabin in our garden and after a few days of hiding away, could be seen taking in the outside world from the window. Over time, he further came out of himself and a few weeks later he was given the freedom of a large garden to go off on his adventures.

He has been with us for over a year now and although still nervous of visitors, is completely settled around us and our other animals.

Sid remains an outside boy where he is at his happiest and now has many different houses and beds around the garden. He has his own cat house and loves the greenhouse and the shed.

He does come into the conservatory for a snooze, and being more trusting now, likes a lap to sit on and enjoys the occasional cuddle - but always on his own terms of course. He always follows us around the garden and enjoys a nice bit of sunbathing, when the sun is out.

Thank you for letting us adopt Sid, he is such a little treasure and it's good to be able to offer him a loving home that he deserves.

# VOLUNTEERING FOR CATS PROTECTION – FAQs

We always have a great line up of fundraising events planned for each year. Sadly, these have been put on hold for now, but when we finally get going again, we will be on the lookout for new people to join our fundraising team - so do watch our Facebook page and website. In the meantime, here's Janine, one of our volunteers, to tell you more about what the role involves.



## What does your role involve?

Obviously we want to sell as much as possible in order to raise money. But we have such a great range of Cats Protection goodies, including all the Simon's Cat range which people love, that 'selling' is quite easy.

I see my main role however as being an advocate for Cats Protection Isle of Wight, trying to enthuse visitors about the charity and especially all the wonderful cats looking for homes.

## Do you work as part of a team?

Normally there are at least two of us manning the stand at any one time. We share the responsibility, and of course, the success of the day. We're also part of the wider volunteer team, so you always feel part of a family, with regular social get-togethers and access to some super training – so your knowledge of cats and their welfare will increase dramatically.

## How much time do you have to commit?

It's entirely up to you. Basically you decide which events you'd like to help with, and how much time you want to give. It's that simple.

## Do you need to be a people person?

The most important thing is to be welcoming. I always want our stand to be the most welcoming stand around – that way, you get the most visitors. Many people love to stop and chat and are really interested in the work we do. They also love to talk about their own cats, many of whom were rehomed from Cats Protection. It's always so nice to see our adopted cats living with such lovely people.

## What happens at a typical event?

We always get a good briefing so we come prepared and know what to expect. At the start of the day we'll take everything to the venue and set up the stand, working out the best way to display all the goods. Then the rest of the time is spent selling our goodies or talking to visitors. There's usually a group of us on the day so we operate a rota, which gives us plenty of time to take breaks.

## Do you get the opportunity to meet the cats?

Absolutely. Nothing beats someone talking enthusiastically about the kitties. You'll get a great welcome from the team (and the cats!) at the Centre. You'll also get to know a lot about the cattery itself, the adoption process and fostering – the more you know, the more you'll be able to enthuse others.

## What gives you the greatest buzz from this role?

Raising lots of money for our cats in need is great, but the best bit is persuading people to visit our cattery and adopt a cat, especially one of our long-stays.

You know, even on those days when only a few people turn up, and you don't make much money, or when the weather is bad, you still feel a sense of pride and achievement at flying the flag for Cats Protection Isle of Wight and raising our profile. And you know you've made a big difference. That's what counts.

# KEEP UP-TO-DATE WITH OUR NEWS

Sadly, we have had to postpone all our events due to the Coronavirus. However please keep an eye on the NEWS SECTION of our website and our FACEBOOK page, where we'll be posting all the latest news about our Centre plus some great videos of our cats.

Thank you to all those supporting us right now; toys are arriving for the cats to keep them entertained, which is amazing!

Just a polite reminder, we can't take in charity shop items at present so please hold off until everything is back to running normally.

The best way to support us right now from the comfort of your own home is via our Amazon wish list, Easy Fundraising (see right) or a flutter on our very own lottery (see below).

In the meantime, we hope you all keep safe and well, and look forward to seeing you soon.

## Is your cat trying to tell you something?



Easy Fundraising is FREE to use. You do your usual online shop and the retailer donates a percentage of your purchase to a charity of your choice – which could be us here at Cats Protection Isle of Wight!

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/iowcp](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/iowcp)

## Play the Cats Protection Weekly Lottery..

...and help protect the safety, health and wellbeing of cats in our care.

Only £1 a week (paid monthly by Direct Debit). To find out more visit: [www.cats.org.uk/lottery](http://www.cats.org.uk/lottery)

Please choose Cats Protection Isle of Wight to ensure that you are supporting your local branch.

Weekly Lottery



## Amazon wish list

We use lots of food, litter, toys and equipment for the cats in our care. If you would like to purchase an item to support our cats, visit our Amazon wish list.

Just [click here](#) to go straight to the kitty wish list or visit our Support Us page on our website

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

amazon wishlist

## Sign up to our newsletter

We will now be featuring each issue of our newsletter on our website. However, if you'd prefer to get the latest issue hot-off-the-press, delivered direct to your inbox, please do subscribe. Just phone or email Reception for a sign-up form and return it to us, and we'll do the rest. You'll receive four issues of cat-infused happiness per year, completely free of charge (for an emailed version). If you prefer a printed copy by post, we do ask for a small contribution of £8 per year to cover the cost of printing and postage.

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