

Felis Catus

Newsletter of the Woking & District Cats Protection

July - Dec 2020



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Welcome

Welcome to our second edition of Felis Catus 2020. We have another packed edition of interesting articles, news, updates and useful advice for all our friends and fellow cat lovers out there.

It has been a difficult few months for everyone due to the coronavirus and we sincerely hope that you are all well and taking good care of yourselves and your feline friends. Due to government advice we, like much of the country, had to stop a lot of our work over the last few months. We were unable to rehome any of our cats or take in new ones due to social distancing. This meant that our fosterers have needed to keep the cats in their care during this situation and we are very proud of the amazing work that they have done, on a daily basis, to ensure the happiness and well-being of all our furry friends.

Helen, our Acting Co-ordinator, and Pauline, our Welfare Officer have been in regular contact with head office, working through ways to restart services as soon as possible, including introducing hands-free adoption. As a result we were given the green light to start hands-free adoption from the 19th June 2020. Our lovely cats, Nim, Bruno and Valerie being the first to be rehomed.

Our volunteers have been fantastic, keeping each other amused and sane on our WhatsApp groups and always being there for anyone and everyone. The togetherness of our little community has been truly inspiring and the total dedication to the cats in our care and our own "special" friends has been great to witness from everyone.

Looking forward, we are united and confident that together we will get through this present situation. There are many cats in need of all our help out there and we aim to help them as soon as we can with renewed energy and a closer bond between us.

Volunteers Matter

Welcome to: Ben Cook, Rachel Stevens, Julie Jones and Amanda Benstead.

Farewell to: Catherine Orezzi, Holly Smith and Fiona Reid

Thank You to: Natalie Caamano, for her help in creating this edition of the newsletter and the previous one. We think you will all agree she has done an awesome job!

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).

Dates for your Diary! To be confirmed... please check website nearer the time.

6th September	RSPCA Millbrook Gala Day
7th November	Christmas Fayre, 10.30am - 2pm New Haw Community Centre

Like what you see?

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



WokingCatsProtection



@wokingcp



@wokingcatsprotection

In memory of... Henry



"Lord" Henry entered our lives in March 2004. We adopted our 3 legged wonder from Woking Cats Protection and he brought us a whirlwind of love, despite the fact he never wanted cuddles or to sit on our laps. He did come very close and after almost 3 years he started purring for the first time. Because of his size Henry could not jump very high - our large enclosed garden was safe and all he needed.

He was always the talking point when visitors arrived, there was never a dull moment. At night he slept on a blanket by the side of our bed and did not move until Nancy got up in the morning. No begging for food, play or to go outside. Bless him. He'd landed on all 3 paws in our household.

Henry had been with us for almost 6 years and was 16 when one evening he went upstairs to his usual place on the landing and went to sleep forever.

Whilst we are so very sad, man, what a wonderful way to move onto his next life! No vets or euthanasia. And Nancy was able to cuddle him one and only time without a struggle and he rested for the last time on the floor, peacefully, by the side of our bed.

Yes, this will bring tears to eyes when you read this. Be sad like we are but think his final years of reign were the best.

Nancy & John



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 & confidential
w: www.cats.org.uk/grief



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Return of the Runnymede Rabble...

You will remember reading in our previous edition about the rescue of a mum and four kittens at the Runnymede Hotel, Egham - Well, look at them now!!



Pippin (mummy Rose)

When we bought our first house together in July the first item on our to-do list was to get a cat. Both our families have cats from the Cats Protection so we knew that would be our first port of call. We spent a number of weeks scouring the pages of the local branches, when suddenly one evening a very pretty cat called Rose popped up. We went to meet her and although a little timid, she allowed us some strokes and we knew she would be a good fit for us. We spent several days going back and forth on names but finally settled on Pippin.

That timid little cat had only been with us for an hour before she ventured out from under the wardrobe for some fuss. Since then she has become very confident, and demands a bellyrub and ear tickle every morning before her breakfast – you'll know she's had enough when she starts nibbling your fingers!

Pippin made it clear that she was done with being cooped up inside after two weeks when, during a visit from our family, she escaped out of the bathroom window! After a very stressful hour searching the neighbours gardens she came sauntering back in and now happily lets herself in and out of her catflap. She did try and apologise a week later with the gift of a garden bird at 1am!

Pippin loves to follow us around the house when we are at home and insists on 'helping' with any job, even building flatpack furniture. She now has a basket full of toys, her favourite being her laserpen which will have her racing around the living room at top speed. She is also a bit of a thief – her morning cuddles in bed are just a ruse to try and steal earplugs and anything else that interests her from the bedside table!

Since coming to live with us Pippin has figured out all of the cosiest spots in the house and can usually be found snuggled on a blanket or curled up in a sunny spot. However she does love to be outside and we find lots of entertainment watching her 'hunting' in the grass or peering down at next door's dog from their shed.

Pippin is growing in confidence every week and we are delighted that she is now starting to become a lap cat. She really is the perfect cat for us and we are very grateful to the Cats Protection Woking for introducing us!

Vicki & Jim



Lyra (Mollie)

Lyra is doing great! We love her and she has settled in really well!

She is not very keen to be picked up but is very affectionate and loves having company. She's incredibly chatty and cute and she has been a wonderful addition to our family.

She still loves to be brushed while she's eating bless her!

Lyra has her little routine going and loves when the boys are back from school to give her cuddles and play with her. Lyra brought us so much joy with her lively and yet docile character!

We couldn't love her more if we tried!

Thank you Woking Cats Protection for all the work you do.

We are so grateful we found you and you found us Lyra!

Abi



Alfie (Riley)

As one of the 4 Runnymede kittens Alfie had a sudden and unexpected launch into the world. He was the weakest amongst his siblings with a condition called Cerebella Hypoplasia, affecting his coordination, spacial awareness and fine motor skills. For this reason, the vet and Woking Cats Protection insisted that for his safety he must be a house cat.

We had been thinking of rescuing a cat for some time but were nervous of our road and it felt cruel to keep a cat inside who could be out in their natural environment. As Alfie had to be inside it worked well for us too.

He arrived at our house in October very timid and shy. We had prepared a room for him which looked completely overwhelming when he climbed out of his cage. Hiding in corners for the first day, not sure of anything at all. The next day was England v New Zealand in the Rugby World Cup. It didn't take long for him to come down and watch the game with us, albeit on mute!

Alfie has now been with us for 4 months and has a wonderfully curious nature, not to mention a cheeky streak. I had longed for a cat since being on holiday in a farmhouse in the Lake District when I was 4 years old. I adopted a kitten for 2 weeks and was bereft when we had to leave it. I've only waited 45 years for Alfie but it was worth it. He's incredibly affectionate and follows us around the house not wanting to miss out on anything. His condition hasn't shown any real signs that trouble him, he just every so often tilts his head, but he's probably simply thinking cat thoughts 'isn't it time to play stick!'.

Jane & Emma



Maddie & Maisie

Maddie and Maisie settled in well. We must thank Kim for looking after them so well and bringing some of their toys and blankets to help them adapt to their new home.

The two sisters continue to get on really well, and both are very affectionate cats but differ considerably in personality. When they first arrived, they huddled together on a chair in the conservatory, taking advantage of the shelter offered by the table above them. However, it didn't take long for Maddie to settle in. Within an hour, she started to play with the streamer left by Kim and, after that, went from strength-to-strength, within a week making friends with Ineta our cleaner and generally now rubbing round their legs and demanding attention from anyone who visits. Maddie now generally expects a serious amount of attention. Indeed, she is making typing this more of a challenge at the present moment by a combination of walking on the delete button and resting two paws and her chin on my forearm.



Maisie remains shyer. It took a full 24-hours before she started to play with the streamer, but since then has turned into something of a hunter, specializing in nutshells which she takes delight in removing from kitchen bowls and batting up and down the hall and the less said about the Christmas tree baubles, the better. However, despite being the shyer of the two, Maisie shows signs of being in charge, generally dictating which cat is allowed to sit on whose knee, so that, in the evenings, Rachael and I often have one lap cat each.

The two are still good friends, and often the only way to tell if there is one cat or two in the middle of the bed is to count how many heads belong to the occupying "cat lump". The one significant moment of discord between the sisters was when Maddie was first let out last month. One disadvantage of having a fluffy tail is that it can pick up the smells (and possibly worse) left behind by visiting cats. Maddie's tail clearly did this with the result that Maisie hissed at her for two days before the situation was rescued by some shampoo and a good soaping in the kitchen sink. That seems to have restored harmony.

We are really delighted that we have the two sisters. They do amuse one another and generally cooperate in any mischief to be had. If one finds something of interest, you can guarantee that the other will join in, usually within a matter of seconds. Boxes remain a constant source of pleasure though they have grown immensely in the few months that we have had them, and it is no longer as easy for them to fit two cats into a single box, a game they enjoyed immensely for their first month or two. And it has been a nightmare changing the duvet cover since they think this is a great game best played with one cat inside the duvet and the other carrying out mock attacks through the duvet cover.

However, they have scared us at times. Unlike other cats we have had, they don't complain vocally if they get shut in somewhere unexpected and since they are both very curious and experts at sneaking into such places, we have had to search for and rescue cats from locked back bedrooms, the airing cupboard (scary), and hall and kitchen cupboards, not to mention the conservatory roof, the latter the result of a briefly open bathroom window with no cat in sight or so we thought.

But despite their adventures, both are thriving as I hope you can see from the pictures and thanks again to Cats Protection for rescuing and domesticating them.

John & Rachael

Lucy's Law comes into effect...

The New Law & What it involves?

Cats Protection has welcomed a new law which now bans the commercial sale of kittens by a third party and helps stamp out backstreet traders.

The legislation dubbed 'Lucy's Law' came into force on 6 April, making it illegal for kittens to be commercially sold by anyone other than the breeder.

The move means kittens can no longer be passed on to pet shops or commercial dealers to sell, and buyers must instead deal directly with a breeder or animal rehoming centre.

Cats Protection's Head of Advocacy & Government Relations Jacqui Cuff said:

"Cats Protection regularly hears harrowing stories of kittens which have been sold by third party sellers – individuals who acquire kittens for sale with the sole interest of making a profit.

Kittens sold in this way are frequently separated from their mothers far too young and may have been bred in poor conditions which leave them sick, diseased or under-socialised. Their new owners may be left with hefty veterinary bills or with a cat which is not used to being around people and won't make a good pet.

Putting a stop to third party sales is a step in the right direction to improving the welfare of breeding cats and their kittens. But there is still more to be done, and Cats Protection would like the Government to go further by introducing regulation of cat breeding, ensuring that breeders are subject to licensing and inspection."

Kittens should remain with their mother until they are at least eight weeks old. Kittens separated before this are at greater risk of becoming sick and developing life-threatening illnesses.

As well as the risks to their physical health, kittens sold before eight weeks of age will have likely missed out on key experiences in their socialisation period, where kittens learn about the world around them. Positive experiences of people and a home-like environment during the first two months of life is essential if a kitten is to become a well-adjusted, confident pet. Missing out of these early experiences – or having a negative experience of people – may result in a kitten becoming fearful of people and unsuitable for life as a pet.



Jacqui added: "It is tragic when we hear stories of sick kittens, some of whom don't survive, being bred and sold. Sadly, it has become all too common that commercial dealers put profit before the welfare of the animals they are handling.

"Not only will this new law help tackle the problem of these unscrupulous dealers, it will also reduce the number of people motivated to breed from their own pets to supply pet shops with kittens in return for financial benefit."

*The Advocacy Dept.
Cats Protection National Cats Centre*



Through a Child's eye...



Megan (with Maddie)

- Her Favourite Toy: Mousey
 - Her Favourite Activities: Rolling over, Snoring & twitching in her sleep, Eating too much (once she was on 4 meals a day! The vets said she should though as she was very thin at that time), Playing, climbing and sleeping, Finding weird positions & places to sleep
 - Her Favourite food: All of them, but especially Sheba
- Megan has settled in very well here.

She is VERY fluffy now and loves the garden. She has made some bigger and smaller friends including the squirrels.

Although Megan knows not to, she occasionally runs up the stairs or sleeps on the sofa.

She is energetic and will run up and down the garden like a dog with us, play with balls and chase long grass and sticks like a loony!

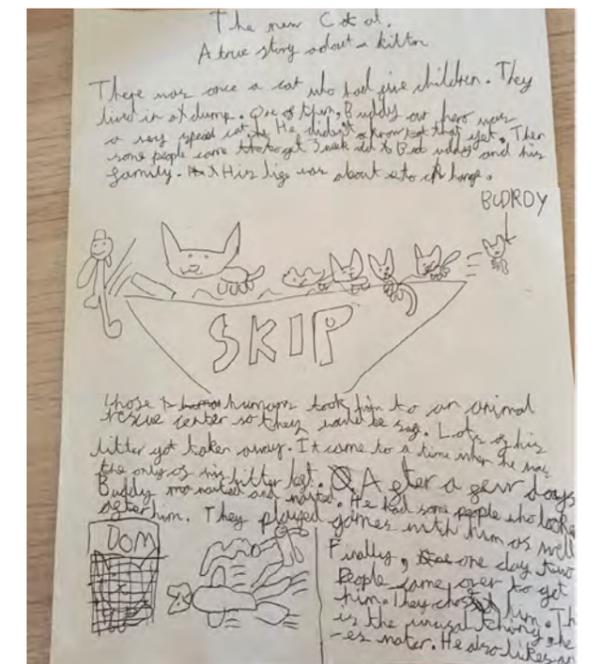
Whatever she does, whether its being naughty, affectionate, loving, or bouncy, we will always be glad to have her in our house and are so happy that she came to live with us.

Ester, David, Bethany & Maddie



Buddy

Here is Buddy's story, as told by his new owner's grandson, Sonny.



The New Cat - A true story about a kitten

(Written and illustrated by Sonny McNeil, age 7yrs 11mths)

There was once a mother cat who had five children. They lived in a dump. One of them, Buddy, our hero was a very special cat. He didn't know that yet!

Ten some people came to get the 3 week Buddy and his family. His life was about to change.

Those humans took him to an animal rescue centre (Cats Protection, Woking) so they would be safe. Lots of his litter got taken away. It came to a time when he was the only one left. After a few days, Buddy waited and waited. He had some people who looked after him. They played with him as well.

Finally, one day two people came over to get him. They chose him! The unusual thing about Buddy is that he likes to play with water! He also likes any food that falls on the floor. The End!

Event Updates...



Our 8th annual quiz night took place on 8th February at the New Haw Community Centre, with 20 teams competing, raising an amazing £2174.85.

Paolo Orezzi was quiz master, with Mark Lancaster providing technical support. During the evening there was a photo presentation highlighting the many cats that the branch has found new homes for throughout the past year. This gave everyone an excellent view of the important work that we do within our branch.

There was also an auction, raffle and head and tails game. Congratulations to the winning team Kitty Kitty Bang Bang who retained their title from last year.

Thank you to everyone that supported the event, to Carmela Amaddio, The Runnymede Hotel, Gill Parker and Lynton Vets who donated prizes. A special mention to Fiona Bishop for the cakes for the winning team and to Cheryl Payne for the decorated wooden spoons for the losers.

Sadly, Paolo has decided to retire from his role as Quiz Master - a huge thank you to him for the last 8 years - he will certainly be a hard act to follow.



Spring Fayre Cancelled...

Back in March the Committee made the decision to cancel the Spring Fayre, due to advice given regarding the spread of the Coronavirus.

Thanks to the generosity of our volunteers, we had a mountain of chocolate and Easter eggs donated for our infamous chocolate tombola stall.

We needed to act quickly, so donating it to other charities seemed the perfect solution. It was distributed to Woking Foodbank, Eagle Radio Easter Egg appeal, Your Sanctuary and a local church.



Thank You's...to the Woking Branch



In January, Farnham and Wey Valley merged with Camberley and Districts to form the Farnham, Camberley and Districts Branch. To enable us to cover this large area, from Bagshot down to Alton successfully, we needed to expand our welfare team and were in need of another van. When Woking Branch announced they were replacing their van and wanted it to go to a worthy branch, we asked to be considered.

At the beginning of March, we were delighted to take receipt of the van. In return we gave them a donation which they passed onto a less fortunate branch. The van will make a major difference to our branch and to the number of cats and kittens we can help.

Prior to lockdown, we had already made good use of the van in trap, neuter & return work, stocking up our fosterers with supplies and also rescuing 2 mums and kittens that needed our help. We have now loaned the van to Mitcham Adoption Centre, to help out with the virtual homing operation until we are able to recommence normal activities.

Thank you from all the cats, kittens and volunteers at our branch.

Farnham, Camberley & Districts Branch

Earlier this year we took receipt of our new van. We'd been left a legacy from one of our lovely long-term supporters and the committee decided that although the current van was far from it's sell by date, we would upgrade to a van more suitable to the task.

Our headquarters run a scheme with Peugeot that offers branches a considerable discount on new vans with extras like Bluetooth and satnav thrown in.

To make it safer for our welfare team we also have the addition of door openings both sides of the van, so whichever way the van is parked our volunteer doesn't have to go into the traffic to take the cat basket out of the van or put it in.

Our previous van was donated to a local branch in need and has been put to good use; in return we received a very nice donation.

We hope our benefactor would approve and be happy with our purchase, we certainly are!

Gill
Treasurer, Woking Cats Protection



Our Amazing Alison

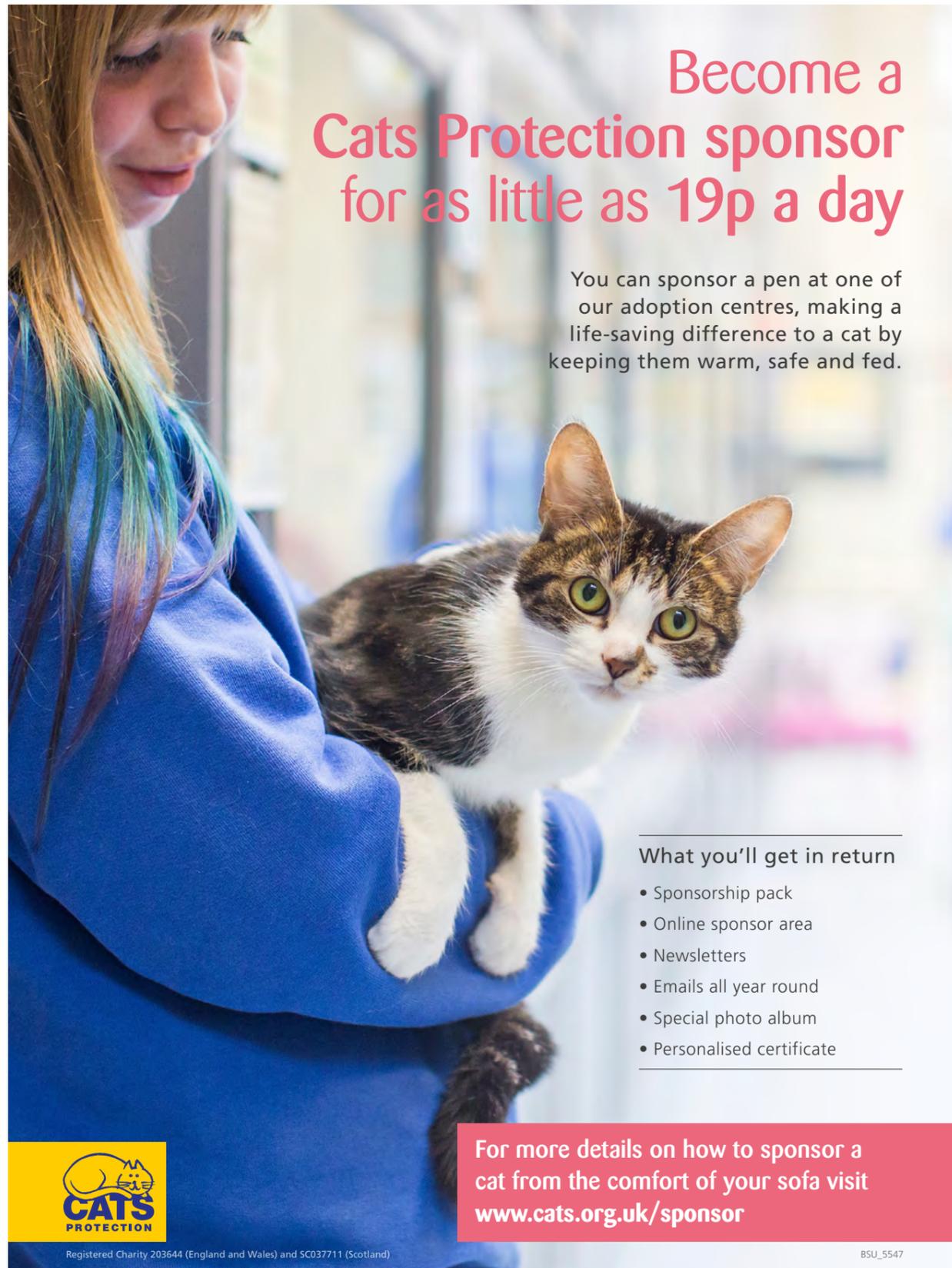
A huge thank you to Alison, one of our long-term fosterers, who found herself very busy during lockdown as she put her creative talents into action when she started making a few material face masks for friends and neighbours and asked for donations to be made to our branch.

Word got around and before Alison knew it the demand had grown and she was working hard fulfilling requests. At the time of going to press Alison had made 261 masks and raised £1179 in donations. An incredible amount and an incredible achievement.

Alison also joined the 'Horsell Scrubbers', a group of volunteers making scrubs, masks, hats and bags for the NHS.

Well done Alison

Ways to Support Us...



Become a Cats Protection sponsor for as little as 19p a day

You can sponsor a pen at one of our adoption centres, making a life-saving difference to a cat by keeping them warm, safe and fed.

What you'll get in return

- Sponsorship pack
- Online sponsor area
- Newsletters
- Emails all year round
- Special photo album
- Personalised certificate

For more details on how to sponsor a cat from the comfort of your sofa visit www.cats.org.uk/sponsor

CATS PROTECTION
Registered Charity 203644 (England and Wales) and 5C037711 (Scotland) BSU_5547

You can even nominate our branch to receive the cat sponsor donations.

VIP Club



Did you know that a great way to support us is by joining the Pets At Home VIP Club and selecting Cats Protection - Woking & District branch as your Lifelines Charity?

Every time you shop and swipe your VIP Club you will be helping us.

The benefits from Lifelines help us immensely and enable us to purchase essentials like food, litter and toys for the cats and kittens in our care, so if you are not already a member or haven't selected a Lifelines Charity, please consider doing so, it doesn't cost you anything.

Here's a selection of some the things we were able to purchase recently thanks to the Lifelines scheme.

Pets At Home kindly added an additional £400 to our most recent Lifeline voucher, knowing that fundraising would be difficult for us during the Covid 19 situation.



Our Coronavirus Appeal

Thank you for your donations to our #HereForTheCats campaign.

As we cannot hold our usual fundraising events we are unable to generate any income, therefore, donations to this appeal are vital for us.

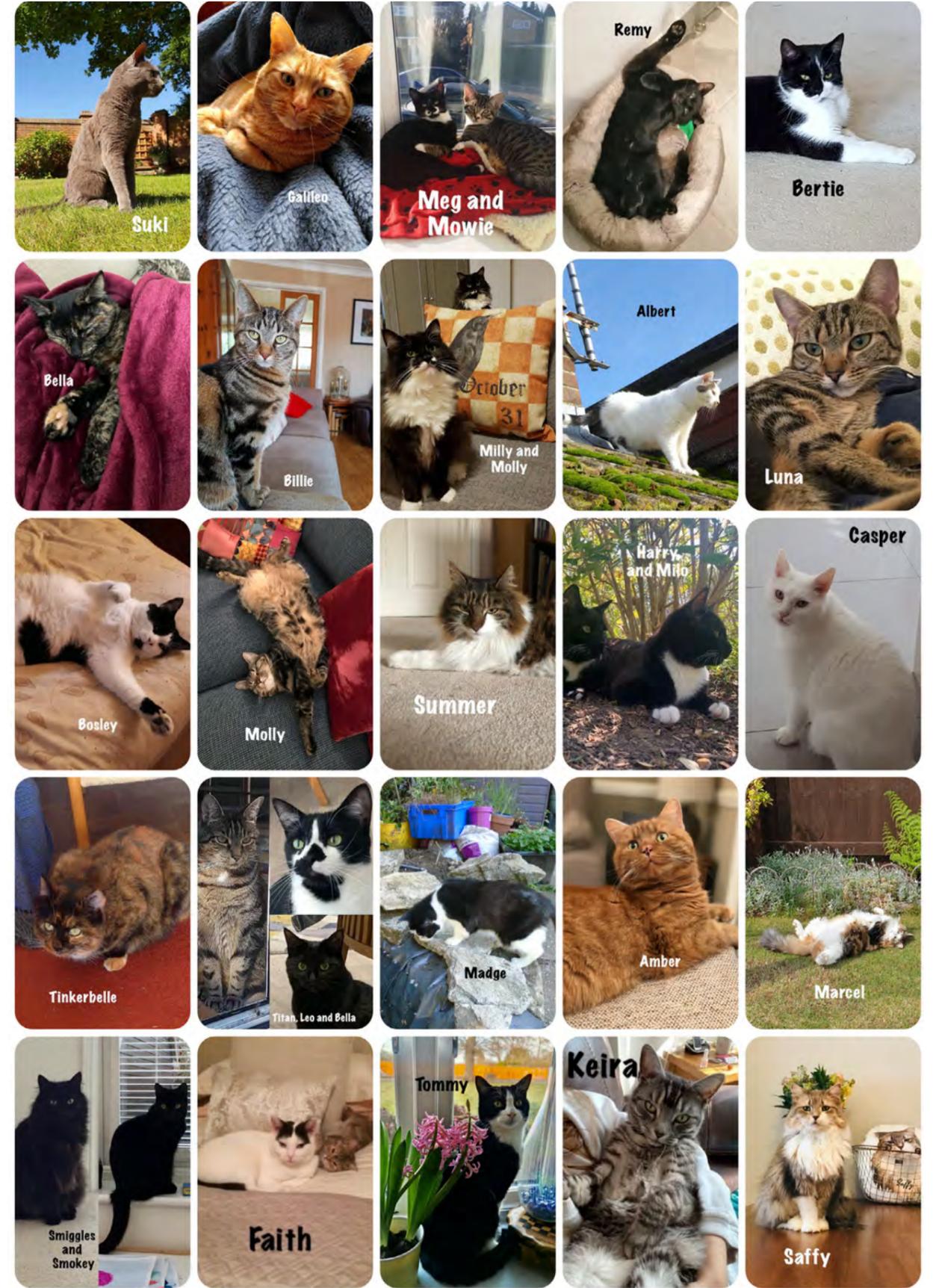
Just visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/woking-district-branch

Thanks again for your support!



Thank you... to all our Adopters,

who shared their updates during lockdown



Reuniting you & your cat!

The importance of checking a microchip

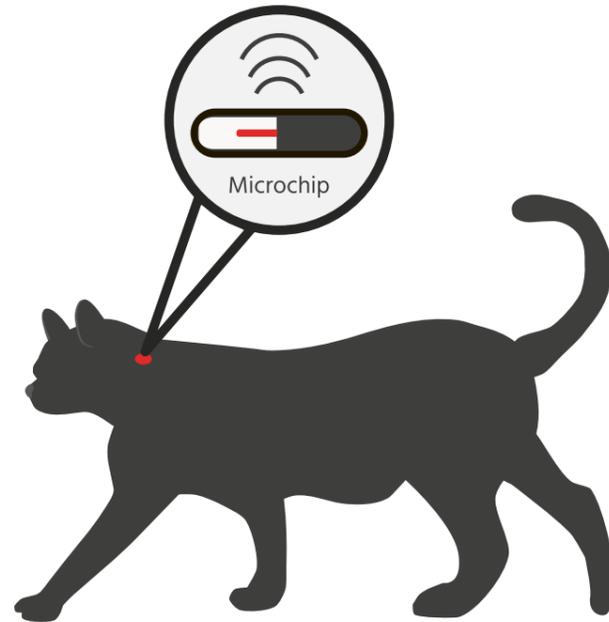
Microchipping offers cats a safe and permanent method of identification and increases the chances of a lost cat being safely reunited with their owner.

Each microchip has a unique 15 digit number linked to a database holding your contact details, allowing you to be quickly traced if your cat strays and is scanned for a microchip.

You will be sent registration documents following the microchipping procedure, usually within a couple of weeks of it taking place. If you don't receive these, double-check with the person who microchipped your cat. Keep your registration documents and cats microchip number safe.

Updating contact details is an owner's responsibility and is a vital part of the microchips value - enabling you to be reunited with your cat should it stray or become lost.

Whilst movement of chips or chip failure are extremely rare, it is advisable to have your cats microchip scanned whilst having its annual check-up at the vets, for peace of mind to know that the microchip is still working.



Stripes (Tommy)



Please note, unchipped stray cats are held for a statutory 14 days before they can be rehomed.

On the 11th September our beloved cat Stripes disappeared from our home in Chobham. We searched and searched and put posters up as did several very kind people in Chobham.

We had all but given up hope when on Thursday 19th December I just happened to look by complete coincidence on the Woking Cats Protection website.

Miraculously there was a cat identical to ours going by the name of Tommy. We left messages that evening and the next day were contacted by Pauline from Cats Protection.

Tommy had been found 2 weeks prior in a warehouse on an industrial park in Chobham and had been taken into their care and was being looked after by foster carer, Kim.

I met Pauline and Kim at the vets in Horsell and miraculously the cat was none other than Stripes whose chip had somehow failed!

It truly was a Christmas miracle to be reunited with our lovely cat and I cannot thank the Cats Protection enough. They had rechipped him and advised me to get him scanned every time he goes for jabs.

It really was a Christmas miracle and an example to never give up hope.

I wish you a very happy 2020.

Katie & Stripes' family

Cats and Sunburn...

Please remember to protect your cat from being exposed in the sun as they may be at risk of developing sunburn and skin cancer.

Cats with white or pale ears or noses are particularly susceptible to the sun's harmful rays - with some needing drastic surgery to repair sun damaged skin, usually around the ears.

If cats with pale ears are exposed to too much sun this can increase the risk of squamous cell carcinoma which is a skin cancer that occurs when the skin becomes damaged from overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays.

Jess, pictured in the middle, came into our care and after having biopsies taken was found to have this skin cancer, so sadly she had to have her ears removed. She has now gone to a lovely new home.

The simplest way to protect your cat is by keeping them indoors during the hottest part of the day, particularly in the summer. Also, be aware if your cat likes to sleep on window sills they can still burn and be affected by the sun.

Please speak to your vet about a suitable cat friendly sunscreen.

DO NOT use human sunscreen on your cat as it could be toxic and make them very unwell.



Summer advice

Provide plenty of shade both inside and out. From sheltered plant pots to cardboard boxes, these items offer makeshift sunshades for outdoor-loving moggies.

Think about planting shrubs or using cat hides and boxes in the garden. These help your cat hide away from the sun's potentially harmful rays.

Keeping your cat cool

Keeping your cat cool inside your home is important too. Place fans around the house to keep the air circulating, remembering not to point the fan directly at your cat.

Another handy tip is to freeze a bottle of water, wrap it in a towel or pillowcase and place it somewhere your cat goes regularly. This stops them from feeling overheated during hotter spells.

Remember to ensure that your cat can get away from the bottle if they chose to, and make sure the bottle does not leak!



To stay up-to-date with more Seasonal tips & advice, follow us!



More fortunate feline updates...



Amber

On 12th January 2019 my hubby and I had to make the decision we all dread, we had no choice but to take our 16 year old cat Sweep to the vet late on that Saturday night. She had had a number of small strokes, was no longer eating, couldn't move around and wasn't able to look after herself. She was frail. My husband made the trip to the vet on his own, I couldn't face going.

When he came home we cried together, we were absolutely heartbroken, she had been our life for 14 years. We made the decision that, in time, we would get another cat but not at that moment in time as, the day before, my hubby had lost a very close relative and we knew we would need to travel to Devon for the funeral.

I suffer from severe depression and chronic anxiety and have been unable to work for several years. Sweep had been my companion and I was finding the house so empty and lonely during the day when hubby was at work. On the Tuesday night I turned to him and told him how I felt and that night I picked up my laptop and typed in "Cats Protection" to start the search for our new pet.

I can't tell you how long I was looking, a couple of minutes maybe, if that, and there she was, this little ginger face with freckles on her nose was staring back at me. I read the description of Amber to the hubby, she herself had been through an awful lot and had some issues, but somehow I knew that we could help each other heal.

Enquiries were made, a telephone conversation with Pauline the following day and a visit to Kim, her foster Mum, the Saturday after, I just knew it was meant to be, we were rescuing each other.

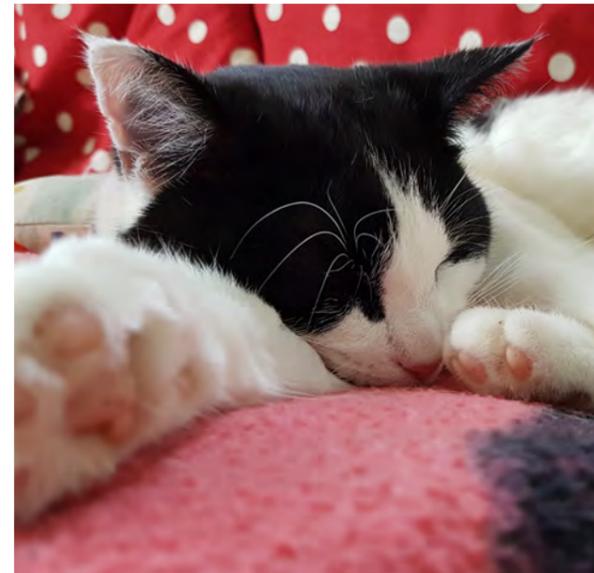
On Wednesday 23rd January she came home, and there have been no signs of the issues that were discussed and she is truly Queen of her castle and all she surveys.



She loves to be brushed by hubby, jumping on her favourite arm of the sofa when he walks in at night looking at him in anticipation with the most gorgeous smile on her face. As to me, I'm Mummy, she's never far from my side and when she is, she always comes back after a short space of time to make sure I'm still here and that I'm alright. She makes the most gorgeous grumbling noises which, when I first heard, I thought was my stomach!!!

And the funniest thing is, she makes little meow noises when she's about to jump up on the fence, just telling it she's coming. She's beautiful, loving, funny, cuddly, sappy, a diva and kneads for England. We love her to the moon and back and we most definitely helped heal each others hearts. By the way, the pillow on the sofa is hers, originally put there for me last summer after I had a fall and broke my ankle but gradually taken over by Amber. Don't worry, the pillow case has been washed - LOL"

Sonia



Bean

We'd never really thought about having a cat, as Jo had always been allergic as a child. But seeing James (15) and Daisy (13) with their grandparents' cats (they adore them), and noticing that Jo's sneezing seemed to have got less in recent years, we decided to adopt a rescue cat. During December we started to look on different websites, thinking that the ideal time for a new cat would be the middle of the Christmas holidays – after our visiting family had left, but with time to spend at home before school and work started again.

On 20 December, Daisy found Bean on the Woking Cats Protection website. She looked like a good fit for us – 8 months old, a bit timid and needing a quiet house with older rather than younger children. We filled in the online form and had a call the next day. When we visited her at Alison's foster home, we all loved Bean straight away. She was nervous but after a little while, she let us stroke her and even rolled over to show us her furry white tummy.

A week later, on Sunday 29th, Alison brought Bean to our house, where she immediately bolted behind the sofa! But it only took her a couple of hours to emerge and by the end of the day, she was settling in well and even sat on James' lap. Over the next few days, Bean gradually explored the rest of the house, developing a liking for naps on Daisy's bed, and in February, she braved the garden. As spring has come, she's spent more time outside but prefers it if one of us is outside with her. She's playful and fun (ping pong balls are her favourite), and she chats to us with miaows and funny chirping noises – we certainly know about it when it's time for food!

As we write this, coronavirus is in full flow and with social distancing stopping us seeing friends and family, we feel extra happy to have Bean in our lives.

Jo, Simon, James & Daisy



From Rags...



I remember the first time I saw Ollie out on the road – my heart skipped a beat because he looked so much like one of my cats Henry; and no way should Henry be out and about because my garden is cat proofed.

After having another look I soon realised that this was a different cat so breathed a sigh of relief and continued with my day. But once I'd noticed him it was difficult to not keep an eye open for him especially as he seemed to be outside a lot in all sorts of weather. This went on for a few years and then I noticed that his condition was getting noticeably worse.

I am lucky in that I have hedgehogs regularly visiting my garden, and more than once I noticed that Ollie was eating their food as well as the scraps of cat food that I'd put out for the hedgehogs, a good thing really as that meant I was able to keep an eye on him.

However, towards the end of 2018 he looked in bit of a state so I started making enquiries to find out about a possible owner. Sadly what I was able to establish was that Ollie was an unwanted cat; he once had a home (not far from me) but the family then got dogs and there just wasn't room for Ollie anymore; so he was left to fend for himself.

I created shelter for him in my garden and I was in touch with neighbours who confirmed Ollie was often found in their back garden trying to find shelter and at this point I knew he needed more help. I started regularly feeding him proper cat food, trying to gain his trust but he'd sit quite a way away whilst I put the food out and couldn't come close to me (at this point I didn't know if he was male or female, so just called him Little One...) I'd call him and he'd come for his food, but always kept his distance.

A few weeks later, I knew I needed to come up with plan B to get him the help he needed and contacted Cats Protection to ask about borrowing a trap. At this point I knew Ollie needed vet care; his fur was in a terrible condition and he just needed help!

We had to try two different traps – the first he just was too clever for and managed to get out before it closed in on him; so I asked for a longer one. Within a few days I heard the all familiar clang and as always went to look and there he was - I finally had managed to get him!!!

I'll never forget that day – it was the start of a new life for him.

Originally my plan was to get him to the vet for a check over and neuter if needed and then I'd bring him back and see if I could integrate him with my gang; but a few weeks before I managed to trap him I found out that one of my cats (Eli) was a Calici carrier so I couldn't risk either Eli's health (in case Ollie tested FIV positive – he didn't!!!!) but equally important; I knew Ollie wasn't vaccinated so I'd potentially be exposing him to the Calici virus which wouldn't be fair on him; he'd had enough to deal with in his life.

So the plan then was to look at doing TNR (trap, neuter, return) because he'd always have shelter and food with me and a number of neighbours. But once he was at the vet the extent of his condition became apparent the choice was taken from us all. There was no way we could do a TNR - his fur was so badly matted that needed all his fur shaved off; the skin underneath was in a dire state because of the horrendous matting and anyway March and April 2019 turned out to be bitter cold months.

He also had a huge wound on his ear from an abscess that had burst and that needed treatment. That day Woking Cats Protection moved heaven and earth to make a space for him and I'll never ever forget what they did for Ollie – without them and their help he'd not be here today.

Ollie stayed at the vet for a few days and then went to a foster carer; it took a while to find the right home for him because he was just so scared and nervous and didn't trust people. But Woking Cats Protection worked absolute wonders with him; they gave him the time and space he needed to come round, and come round he did.

He now has the life he deserves to have and I'll be eternally grateful to everyone at Woking Cats Protection for what they did for him – the medical care, foster care and then the ultimate goal - finding that purrfect right home for him.

Ollie will always have a very special place in my heart and I often wish that there could have been a way for him to live with me, but it just wasn't to be.

Ria

to Riches!



We had to say good bye to our lovely cat Jack in September 2019. The year before we had also had lost his friend, Morgan, who arrived with Jack 12 years ago.

We (well my husband) had decided that we wouldn't get another cat for the time being. As I've always had cats in my life, I only lasted a couple of months before I was looking at cat rescue sites for a perspective addition to our household!

I saw Ollie on the Woking Cats Protection website. The blurb said he had been through some very difficult and traumatic times which made him cautious with strangers but especially with men. He looked so handsome and cute and I thought we could give Ollie a good home so completed the online form.

We went to meet Ollie in mid-December at his foster home and his foster mum Cheryl explained that he would need a lot of patience and that it was thought he had been severely abused, left his abusive home and took his chances living rough. Also, Cheryl told us that he had recently been rehomed but had been returned to CP after 2 weeks so had also had this upheaval to deal with. Ollie was lovely, although obviously wary of us but happy for us to stroke him and showed us with some purrs. We confirmed to Cheryl that we wanted to adopt him that evening. It was so obvious from what Cheryl had told us about his background that he needed a stable forever home.

We had a bit of a wait before Ollie arrived but he finally arrived with us on 31 December with Cheryl and Pauline. I had his room ready, my home working office, and spent most of my time with him over the next few days. Initially, he hid under my desk but he then started to come out to see what I was doing and started coming up to me for cuddles. He still hid under the desk though when my husband came into the room.

After a few days, I left the door to his 'safe' room for him to explore the rest of the house. He didn't go far - only the upstairs rooms and would spend a lot of his time sleeping on the landing. If my husband approached him he would run and hide under our bed.

After a couple of weeks I took his litter tray and food bowl downstairs. He was reluctant to go downstairs initially but followed me cautiously down stairs for his breakfast

in the morning and then would rush back upstairs to the landing or hide under our bed. It was great when one morning, probably a month later, when he went ahead of me downstairs for his breakfast and started staying with me after eating and following me around. Around this time he also started sleeping on our bed next to me at night rather than under the bed. It really felt that he was becoming more relaxed and confident in his forever home surroundings. Although he was still really wary of my husband.

Around early February Ollie started to show his playful side, pouncing on the various toys and golf balls I left out for him. I had also brought a dangly toy on a stick for him for his arrival. He was interested in playing with the toy but very wary of the stick. I wondered if the abuse he had suffered in his previous life had involved being beaten with a stick. He would also cower if we happened to raise our arms, as if he had also been regularly hit.

During March we discovered that Ollie had square eyes!

He began watching the telly intently. He watches everything, from the news to films but of course his favourite subject is wildlife programmes when he tries to get inside the telly. He also started to go up to my husband and letting him stroke him. This was really a major breakthrough. I have a theory that the calm male voices on the TV news programmes have helped to accustom him to non-aggressive male voices. Who knows?!

So it's now 6 months on since Ollie arrived and I think he has really settled in. He is now really comfortable with my husband and Ollie is not backward in coming forward about reminding him that it's time for his evening feed! He's also really happy to play with his dangly toy on a stick without flinching. He strides around the house as if he owns it (which of course he does!). We've recently started to let Ollie out into the garden under supervision. He's met next doors cat – this didn't go well! Luckily the neighbours were understanding!

It's been so rewarding to see the growth in Ollie's confidence since he came to live with us. For sure, he's not a lap cat but does so like being close to us in the same room. I think we will get to see a lot more of Ollie's character as time goes by. #olliesinhisforeverhome

Elaine

Vacancies

Branch Co-ordinator

Our volunteer co-ordinators lead their local team by supporting and managing volunteers within their group, maintaining communications with both volunteers and staff. The role includes:

- Liaising with your Branch Development Manager (BDM) to plan activity
- Making sure the team observes charity best practice and compliance
- Leading the team to follow Cats Protection's policies, procedures and guidelines
- Supporting and guiding other volunteers in their roles

We're looking for someone with:

- Strong interpersonal, leadership and people management skills
- Experience of promoting a positive team environment
- Confidence and experience of ensuring policies, procedures and processes are met
- Good communication skills with individuals and groups at all levels
- Organisational skills and the ability to prioritise and delegate
- Ability to think and plan ahead
- Good IT skills

Welfare Team Leader

Our welfare team leaders have the important role of co-ordinating, encouraging and supporting teams of volunteer fosterers and cat care volunteers. They help make sure other volunteers with direct cat care roles are happy and confident and provide advice and guidance when needed. While full training will be given, duties include:

- Co-ordination and support of cat care volunteers and fosterers
- Make sure Cats Protection's quality of care is provided to all cats
- Observe policies, procedures, minimum veterinary and cat care standards:
- Keep up to date records of cats in care and helping match cats to new homes

We're looking for an individual who has:

- Basic knowledge of cats and cat care
- Good interpersonal and communication skills
- Record keeping and administration skills
- A well organised and practical approach
- The ability to deal with sensitive situations
- The capability to bring out the best in others

Newsletter Editor

Our newsletter editor volunteers tap into the nations love for cats, which helps raise our profile across the UK. They source, capture and share exciting photos, images and stories relevant to the varied and exciting things we do at Cats Protection to help our feline friends, with the aim to help raise funds, promote adoption and neutering and encourage people to learn about feline welfare. The role includes:

- Sourcing articles and pictures (with relevant permissions)
- Editing newsletters alongside others
- Meeting deadline submissions
- Ensuring content complies with policies and guidelines
- Organising the printing and distribution of newsletters

We're looking for someone with:

- Good organisational skills
- Creativity
- Excellent written communication skills
- Willingness to be part of a team
- Good IT skills - editorial and photo editing skills
- Editorial experience would also be an advantage

Volunteer Website Editor

Our volunteer website editors promote the activities of our local volunteer groups and teams by helping keep their websites relevant, exciting and engaging for members of the public. It can include:

- Sourcing news and information for websites
- Communicating with others across Cats Protection
- Sourcing and updating information around rehoming, welfare, fundraising and volunteer recruitment
- Regularly updating and posting on your group's website

We're looking for someone with:

- Good interpersonal skills
- The ability to communicate well with a range of people
- Willingness to be part of a team
- Good IT skills
- Editorial and photo editing skills

To find out more about these roles and volunteering for the branch, please contact us at info@woking.cats.org.uk or call us on 01483 721700 (mailbox 4).



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Gifts in Wills

It is thanks to the wonderful kindness of supporters who remember Woking Cats Protection in their wills that we are able to carry out much of the day-to-day work that we do. These donations and gifts fund over 50% of all the work we do to rehome cats to wonderful new families and are vital to our foremost mantra:

"No healthy cat will ever be put to sleep"

We rely on gifts in wills to follow this goal and provide abandoned and unwanted cats with a new start and we are incredibly grateful for every gift we receive, regardless of the size. Even little gifts can provide food, a warm bed and veterinary attention to a cat in need, all very important steps to getting our cats into their loving new forever homes. We've been able to refurbish our pens, buy new carriers and even provide ourselves with a van to transport us to our next cases with previous donations. We continue to offer our free neutering programme, and it continues to be successful, all through the generosity of people remembering us in their will.

For more information on what gifting is, please visit:

cats.org.uk/get-involved/support-us/gifts-in-wills

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



If you would like to donate some items to our branch, but are unsure as to what we need, you can try taking a look at our wishlist!

<https://amzn.to/2WXA12w>

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If you'd prefer not to receive information by post, or wish to change the ways we contact you, please contact Support Services by telephoning 0800 160 1012 Monday to Friday during office hours (9am - 5pm), emailing preferences@cats.org.uk or writing to us at Freepost RTJK-TJKK-GREZ, Supporter Services, Cats Protection, National Cat Centre, Chelwood Gate, RH17 7TT.

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