ANNUAL REVIEW 2021



CATS PROTECTION IS THE UK'S LEADING CAT WELFARE CHARITY

OUR VISION IS A WORLD WHERE EVERY CAT IS TREATED WITH KINDNESS AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF ITS NEEDS.

OUR VALUES

Cats and their welfare are at the centre of everything we do

We never put a healthy cat to sleep

We value and respect our volunteers, supporters and employees

We are committed to providing a high-quality service

We are open and honest

OUR AIMS

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OUR IMPACT

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HELPING US TO GET THERE

Raising vital funds – page 26 Financial summary – page 30 Speaking up for cats – page 34 Supporting our people – page 39

This report covers the period 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021 and was approved by the Trustee on 21 April 2022.



CHAIR'S REPORT AN INTRODUCTION FROM ANGELA SWARBRICK, CHAIR

With more of us spending more time at home as a result of the pandemic, it's no surprise that the demand for feline companions increased dramatically. According to our CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2021 report, the number of pet cats in the UK grew by 600,000, meaning there are now roughly 10.8 million cats in homes across the nation.

While we're pleased to see that around a quarter of these cats were adopted from rehoming charities like Cats Protection, 28% were purchased, and this trend for buying cats seems to be on the rise. What's more, over half of all cats purchased are now found online, and this has unfortunately attracted unscrupulous sellers who put profit before cat welfare.

As a charity, we've been contacted by a growing number of people who have been mis-sold kittens who are sick, diseased and often too young to be separated from their mothers. It's absolutely heartbreaking that many of these poor, vulnerable kittens don't make it, and the ones that do rely on the kind teams at our branches and centres to nurse them back to health.

To help protect these helpless kittens, and prevent buyers from being scammed, we provide lots of advice on how to purchase cats safely and we're working with the government to try to stamp out the mis-selling of pets for good.

Helping these cats, and the growing number of cat owners in the UK, is all made possible by our wonderful volunteers who do so much for cat welfare. To ensure their voices were heard as we developed our new strategy, we set up our new volunteer consultative body, Connect, and look forward to shaping the future of the charity with their valued expertise.

In 2022 we're moving forward with a new Chair, Chief Executive and three new Trustees on the Board, who will bring unique talents and perspectives to help us implement our new strategy effectively. Finally, I'd like to say thank you to Linda Upson, who left the role of Chair in early 2022, for her dedication to our organisation's work on cat welfare for the past two decades.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

AN INTRODUCTION FROM DOMINIC SULLIVAN, INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Despite the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cats Protection managed to achieve considerable successes in 2021. We continued to find cats new homes through our hands-free homing scheme (a way of homing cats that minimises the risks of catching or transmitting COVID-19), we launched our second comprehensive CATS report about the nation's felines, and after years of campaigning we were delighted to see the government finally commit to making the microchipping of all owned cats compulsory by law. We are currently considering plans to offer free microchipping to more cat owners on low incomes to help ensure that as many lost cats as possible can be identified and reunited with their owners quickly.

Cats Protection was also instrumental in bringing about changes to the law on commercial sales of kittens in England in 2018 and was behind the introduction of similar legislation and guidance in Wales and Scotland in 2021. However, as our Chair points out, problems with the commercial sale of kittens persist and so we shall continue our efforts to address these problems.

Throughout 2021, a great deal of work was done to develop a new 10-year strategy for the charity. To implement this new strategy we need sufficient finances in reserve to properly invest in our plans over the next decade and so we are incredibly grateful to everyone who has donated, raised funds, volunteered and raised awareness of our cause to help make this possible. We have robust plans in place for how to spend this money effectively and enough capacity to ensure that we can make the most impact that we can on the welfare of cats in the next 10 years and beyond.

The strategy will be launched in 2022 and we shall be sharing our plans with our many volunteers and supporters during the year. In the meantime, we thank you all for your continued support for the great work that Cats Protection does.

IMPROVING UNDERSTANDING OF CATS' NEEDS

SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT GOOD CAT WELFARE TO GIVE ALL CATS A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE

With many more people joining the joyful world of cat ownership this year, it's more important than ever that we provide trusted support and advice on how best to care for cats and meet their needs. 88% of those who acquired a cat for the first time due to COVID-19 are seeking advice about their new pet¹, and so we're here for them and all the other cat owners in the UK.



- To keep cat owners informed about important issues affecting their pets, we've kept our national website updated with vet-approved information. Our 'coronavirus hub' has helped to allay any fears about cat-tohuman transmission and has provided useful advice about our services and keeping cats happy in lockdown. The hub had over 139,000 visits in 2021. We also provided cat owners with trusted advice about an unusual outbreak of feline pancytopenia which hit the headlines this year, supporting those who were concerned about their cat's health
- Our Contact Centre is there to answer any cat queries from members of the public, providing help and reassurance via phone, email, webchat and social media. It also provides support to our branches with their incoming calls when needed so people can always get information about our local services
- As well as delivering virtual talks to schools and community groups about cat welfare, we've returned to giving our incredibly popular face-to-face talks when restrictions have allowed. We also launched a quest lecture programme for those studying Animal Management at college, delivering talks on specific aspects of cat welfare and what Cats Protection does to care for cats. On our education web hub we developed a bundle of fun activities for children about the domestic cat's ancestor, the African wildcat, for our Go Wild at Home series, and also had a video chat with TV presenter and author Dermot O'Leary about his rescue cats who inspired his children's book series
- An update to our *Behaviour Guide* means that people have a useful resource for the most current information about the complex topic of cat behaviour. We also produced our first *Cat Care Guide* for our teams, combining all of our advice and processes into one place to help them look after the cats in our care as effectively as possible

CATS (Cats and Their Stats) report Our second annual CATS report has given us a fascinating insight into the lives of cats across the UK, including how they and their owners have fared during a particularly difficult period. This year's comprehensive survey took place approximately one year after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and reveals useful stats about how many cats were acquired as a result of lockdowns, where people have been getting their cats from, how our pets came to our aid during times of great stress, and much more. We plan to use this information to help us better tailor the support we provide cats and their owners. Read the report at www.cats.org.uk/stats

1 CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2021 UK. Visit www.cats.org.uk/stats

Working with vets

- A reduction in the capacity of veterinary practices across the UK due to COVID-19, staffing issues and burnout has had an effect on our neutering work and the speed at which we can get cats health checked, vaccinated and ready for rehoming. To look at solutions to this growing problem, we participated in a workforce summit run by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. There has also been a shortage of cat vaccines due to the glass vials being needed for COVID-19 vaccines, but we managed to negotiate with our suppliers to keep the cats in our care safe
- Our second annual Feline Behaviour Conference was held virtually in September, with over 300 vets, vet nurses, behaviourists and people from other animal welfare organisations attending along with some of our own Cats Protection teams. 21% of the attendees were from overseas helping us reach a wide audience. Highlights from the conference include how cat training can make a huge difference in reducing cat stress or accepting medication, showing the use of Nest cameras to understand cat behaviour and how to introduce cats and dogs together
- We delivered virtual presentations and talks to veterinary professionals and other animal welfare organisations to improve their understanding of shelter medicine and feline welfare and to encourage them to work with us. We increased our contact with vet students and we now have 13 Cats Protection student ambassadors at all but one of the UK's vet schools to increase their understanding of Cats Protection and the charity sector. We have delivered over 90 hours of virtual talks to vet and vet nurse students



IN 2021...

We gave 1,000 cat welfare talks to 23,400 adults and children (2020: 500 talks to 13,600 people) and our education packs were downloaded over 4,700 times (2020: 16,000)

We handled over 123,000 enquiries from members of the public (2020: 120,000)

PLANS FOR 2022

- Recruit more feline behaviourists and feline welfare researchers to improve our understanding of cats and to increase our capacity to give much needed advice and support to owners and animal welfare workers
- Develop a cat welfare assessment tool to help us assess the wellbeing of the cats in our care. Hopefully this can be the foundation of a tool for owned cats too
- Develop creative campaigns to get owners to set their cats up for a happier, less stressful life where all their welfare needs are met

- Organise an even bigger and better Feline Behaviour Conference to spread good welfare messages as widely as possible
- Establish a number of major change programmes to support the implementation of our new strategy through ever greater cat welfare



Skirmish's story

Shortly after Boots arrived at our Bridgend Adoption Centre following the death of her owner, the team noticed a lump beneath one of her ears.

An x-ray revealed the lump was in fact a shotgun pellet, and poor Boots had a further 13 of them lodged in her body. It was a miracle she had survived the shooting as some of the pellets had narrowly missed vital organs and her spine.

Vets managed to remove nine of the pellets, with the other five deemed too dangerous to take out, although they won't cause her any further problems.

Once she had recovered from her surgery, Boots went home with her new owner Marieke, who has renamed her Skirmish.

"She is very clingy and has been from day one," said Marieke. "She lies on my desk when I am working. At night, she sleeps on my bed and no matter how I sleep, she always needs to have one paw on my body somewhere.

"She does not seem to have any lasting problems from having been shot although there is a very specific spot on her body that I can't stroke without getting a little hiss. I spend most of my evenings trapped on the sofa with Skirmish making herself at home on my lap. It's blissful."

REDUCING OVERPOPULATION OF CATS

WORKING WITH OTHERS TO PROMOTE NEUTERING AS THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT UNWANTED CATS

Access to neutering has continued to be limited this year due to capacity issues within the veterinary profession. The continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, including reduced staff numbers due to illness and the backlog of appointments postponed during lockdowns, meant that there were fewer operating slots for preventative surgeries such as neutering. The ongoing effect of Brexit reducing the number of European vets working in the UK and poor staff retention rates due to stress have exacerbated these issues. This has of course had an impact on the number of cats we've been able to neuter, meaning that while our neutering figures have increased from 2020, they are still not back to pre-pandemic levels. Nevertheless, we've still been providing the public with as much support as we can to help avoid unwanted litters from being born, and getting cats neutered as and when we can. Approximately 1.3 million owned cats in the UK are not neutered' so we need to continue to spread the message about this important part of responsible cat ownership.

1 CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2021 UK. Visit www.cats.org.uk/stats



- Our Neutering Support team has been helping cat owners understand how to manage their unneutered cats while they wait for vet appointments to become available, and assisting them with finding a nearby vet surgery that is able to perform the operation as soon as possible. For those who have been able to get neutering appointments but need financial support to pay for it, we have continued to offer vouchers towards the cost
- Once COVID-19 guidelines allowed, our Community Neutering teams started to get back out into communities across the nation again, engaging with the public about the importance of neutering, helping to trap, neuter and return feral cats as well as assist with community and stray cats in the area
- We launched our first Feral Guide, a comprehensive document informing people about unsocialised, free-living cats and how to help them in the most compassionate way, mainly through trap, neuter and return programmes
- Getting to the root cause of why cats are not neutered, and encouraging more people to neuter their cats is a collaborative effort, and so we work with local councils, social housing providers, human welfare organisations and other animal charities such as the RSPCA and PDSA to further this cause

 As a founding member of Cat-Kind (formerly known as the Cat Population Control Group), we encourage kitten neutering at four months of age to prevent unwanted litters. We were pleased to see that the number of cats neutered at this age or younger has increased from 22% to 24%¹, but more work still needs to be done to support this practice. For more information, visit www.kind.cats.org.uk

For more information about how we support neutering, visit www.cats.org.uk/neutering

Cat Watch

Our community projects to understand and help with unowned cat populations in areas of Nottingham, Liverpool and Luton were of course affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. With our Cat Watch teams unable to go out and talk to residents about cat welfare and get local feral cats neutered while lockdown restrictions were in place, they found new ways to engage with local residents online, offering help and advice about cat care and neutering. The projects were able to restart in person in August, with a proper relaunch planned for 2022.

Thanks to the Cat Watch projects we can now give the first ground-breaking national estimate of the number of unowned cats living in the UK's towns and cities. Published in the journal Scientific Reports, our evidence-based research shows that there are around a quarter of a million stray and feral cats in the UK's urban areas - that's roughly the human population of Southampton. This is a major step towards understanding the true scale of the unowned cat population, which will help us plan our future efforts to deliver neutering advice and support. This research forms part of a bigger project to create a comprehensive cat population model, showing how many cats of all types - owned, stray, in shelters and feral - there are in the UK. This is a huge undertaking and the first time anything like this has been done for cats in the UK. Already we have had several academic peer-reviewed papers published on each stage of the model's development.

For more information about Cat Watch, visit www.cats.org.uk/cat-watch

1 CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2021 UK. Visit www.cats.org.uk/stats

IN 2021...

We neutered 116,000 cats and kittens, including around 12,000 feral cats (2020: 109,000, including 11,750 ferals)



PLANS FOR 2022

- Undertake a consultation with the veterinary profession to review and improve our subsidised neutering campaigns
- Complete our West Midlands neutering campaign research to show impact and use learnings for future campaigns in order to reach more owners of unneutered cats
- Work with Cat-Kind to disseminate our behaviour change interventions encouraging more vets to neuter at four months and plan a public campaign for launch in 2023
- Expand our Community Neutering team to provide more support in areas of greatest need where there is currently only one Community Neutering Officer



Roman's story

Severely dehydrated and in need of intensive care, stowaway Roman had travelled for nearly a week in the back of a truck delivering furniture from Romania to the UK.

The four-week-old kitten was discovered when warehouse staff unloading the truck in Bedford heard his pitiful cries and they quickly called their colleague Tamsin, who also happens to volunteer for our Bedford & Biggleswade Branch, for help.

Tamsin took Roman to vet Jasmine, who helped give him all the treatment he needed before he was transferred to a quarantine facility for three months, as is procedure for undocumented stowaways.

"I could tell while nursing him back to health that his personality was unique, inquisitive, independent, clever and loud!" said Jasmine. "I fell in love with how strong a character he has despite the difficulties he's faced at such a young age, and once he'd completed his quarantine and came back for his vaccines, I adored how cheeky he was."

Roman had made such an impact on Jasmine that she decided to adopt him, and he's now settled in his new home.

"I knew I'd need to put some work in teaching him boundaries that he hadn't had the chance to learn from his mother and litter mates, but I've enjoyed watching him learn and having fun at every step."



FINDING GOOD HOMES FOR CATS

HELPING CATS TO FIND, OR STAY IN, THEIR PERFECT HOME NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES

The top reason people give for wanting a pet cat is to provide companionship and to reduce stress and feelings of loneliness¹, something that has been particularly valuable during the turmoil of the pandemic. We've been honoured to help create so many feline friendships this year, giving unwanted cats a second chance and new owners someone to love and cherish in difficult times. While the number of cats we rehomed this year increased from 2020, spending a large part of the year still operating under COVID-19 restrictions has meant that our rehoming figures have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. However, thanks to the launch of our successful hands-free homing service in 2020, we were able to continue some rehoming throughout lockdowns, matching cats with their new owners virtually and then arranging a safe collection or delivery of their new pet. When COVID-19 restrictions allowed, we began reopening our centres to the public by appointment only, giving adopters the chance to meet the cats they'd been matched with. Our webpage providing advice about hands-free homing had 152,400 visits in 2021.

- In partnership with Pets at Home, we opened our very first cat adoption lounge in their Hemel Hempstead store, providing their customers with a convenient place to come and talk to us about all things cat as well as meet a few felines looking for new homes. We will be opening a second cat adoption lounge in the Milton Keynes store soon, helping us reach more people with our rehoming and welfare messages
- The development of our existing sites was put on hold in 2020, but work has now resumed to complete the redevelopment of our Exeter Adoption Centre. While the work is underway, the centre team are based at a local cattery working with the community to offer advice and support and develop new ways of meeting the needs of cat owners
- Our first two Cat Action Teams, groups of volunteers carrying out activities such as lost and found cat support and trapping, neutering and returning feral cats in the local area, have proved very successful, enabling the centres they are linked with (St Helens and Harrow) to be more active in their communities. We have now launched a new team in Wrexham and are recruiting volunteers for a Gildersome team too
- In September 2021, Scotland became the first UK jurisdiction to introduce animal welfare establishment legislation, meaning that our Scottish branches and centres need to be

licensed with their local authority to deliver certain activities. We have worked with the Scottish Government and others (including the SSPCA) to help develop the legislation

Keeping cats in good homes

Supporting cat owners to keep their cats despite difficult circumstances has become an increasingly important part of our work. By providing advice and guidance to people considering giving up their pets we've successfully helped over 600 cats and their owners stay together in 2021. Not only does this help keep more cats and owners happy, it also keeps space free in our centres and branches for the cats who need us most, ultimately enabling us to help more cats.

We've been able to help cat owners in several different ways, including assisting those facing personal health issues or experiencing difficulties finding pet-friendly tenancies, or working with them to solve problem cat behaviours that are affecting their bond with their cat. We can also support those experiencing financial issues through our Community Kitty scheme which involves working with local agencies, organisations and other charities providing food relief to people. The scheme is currently operating in 10 areas of the UK, with branches and centres encouraging supporters to donate cat essentials that are then passed on to cat owners who are struggling to meet their pets' needs via community partner organisations. Engaging with communities also enables us to provide support with neutering and other cat

welfare information before people get to the point of considering giving up their cat.

Promoting microchipping

In December 2021, after years of campaigning, we were delighted to hear that the government has committed to making microchipping compulsory for pet cats. There are currently 2.8 million unchipped owned cats in the UK¹ and if they go missing then they may get rehomed unnecessarily because their owners cannot be traced easily. Not only is microchipping the best way of identifying lost cats, but it also means strays need to spend less time in our care while we try to find their owners, freeing up more capacity for us to help other cats in need. To assist cat owners we provide lots of information and advice about microchipping and offer discounted microchipping at the same time as neutering to those on low incomes in some parts of the UK. In 2021 we microchipped over 22,000 cats through this scheme (2020: 18,000). To coincide with the new legislation, which we hope will be introduced towards the end of 2022, we plan to organise a campaign to offer free microchipping much more widely to cat owners on low incomes, including for those whose cats are already neutered. This will predominantly be through participating vet practices. Find out more about our campaign for compulsory microchipping on page 35.

1 CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2021 UK. Visit www.cats.org.uk/stats

IN 2021...



PLANS FOR 2022

- Introduce new initiatives, activities and services to help keep cats in good homes, including the expansion of our Paws Protect service
- Continue to focus on ensuring that the cats in our care have the best welfare experience while they wait to find their new homes
- Introduce new Cat Action Teams, branches and other services to meet the needs of cats and cat owners
- Work with the UK government and the devolved administrations in Wales and Northern Ireland as they follow Scotland's lead towards animal welfare establishment legislation



Paddington's story

At just four weeks old, Paddington and his siblings were cruelly dumped in a plastic box on the doorstep of one of our volunteers.

They were placed in the care of Diane, a fosterer for our Gildersome Homing Centre, and she soon helped them grow in confidence until they were old enough to find new homes.

Paddington proved the perfect match for Leonie, whose children, 12-year-old Drew and eight-year-old Megan, had been desperate to get a kitten for years.

"We decided to adopt rather than to buy as we recognised the need for loving homes for cats and kittens in need," said Leonie. "It makes me sad to think how differently things could have turned out for Paddington and his litter, but I'm so grateful that Cats Protection was there to take care of him, and all the other cats they help.

"Paddington has very much settled in and is part of our family now. He loves a fuss from his favourite humans. Drew and Megan both adore him and treat him as the big softy he is.

"I still have contact with Diane from Cats Protection, she has just been wonderful. She is a fountain of knowledge and offers sensible, practical advice with a twist of humour! I have felt very supported throughout the adoption process and beyond."

INCREASING AWARENESS OF OUR WORK

MAKING SURE PEOPLE KNOW TO COME TO US – THE CAT EXPERTS – FOR ALL THEIR CAT NEEDS

As the UK's leading cat welfare charity, we help more cats than any other national organisation. That's why we want people to know that if they're looking to help cats in need, adopt a new feline friend, or find advice about caring for their moggy, we're the ones to come to. By reaching the growing number of cat lovers across the nation, we can be here for even more cats and improve their welfare.



- Whether you're looking for cat care information or fundraising inspiration, our national website has all of the expert advice you need.
 We've been working on the search engine optimisation of the site to help people find our trusted advice and services more easily and the project to develop our individual branch and centre websites is fully underway, with support from the dedicated volunteers who update them
- Supporters have been receiving helpful cat advice, appeals and updates about our services into their inboxes, and can now sign up for these emails via our website homepage. 1.9 million people opened our email communications in 2021 (2020: 1.9 million)
- We've been reaching new catloving audiences with our adverts on television and online, raising awareness of how people can support our work
- On social media we've continued to create content to entertain and inform our thousands of followers, and have also been working with more influencers and celebrities to help us reach an even bigger online audience. This year we launched our official TikTok account (@cats_protection) and our fun videos promoting good cat welfare have already had over 3.7 million views. The regional social media pages run by our enthusiastic volunteers continue to help raise awareness of our work and we've been providing extra support and guidance to the teams that run them



- Success stories about our work and topical cat welfare information have been appearing in the national and regional press throughout the year, thanks to the hard work of our employees and volunteers. In 2021 there was a 40% increase in the visibility of published articles that mentioned the charity, with over 10,000 articles published
- When COVID-19 restrictions have allowed, our teams having been attending conferences, local shows, fairs and open days to speak to the public about how we help cats and how they can support us

Our campaigns...

The Purrfect Home

To help cat owners decorate their homes in a stylish but cat-friendly way, we worked with interior design influencers on social media to provide inspiration for creating #ThePurrfectHome. This helped us promote our Cat Care Collection of essential cat products and spread the word about how to provide the perfect environment for cats. We reached over 1 million people on social media, and our content was shared by influencers with over 500k followers, helping us gain new audiences on Instagram.

Mature Moggies Day

Sadly, older cats take over three times longer to find new homes than the kittens in our care, so to show that senior 'kitizens' don't deserve to be overlooked, we launched our first #MatureMoggiesDay on 16 June. Throughout the month we shared stories and advice about older cats and on the day encouraged supporters to celebrate their mature moggies. The campaign gained support from TV presenter Dermot O'Leary, reached over 1.9 million people on social media and was featured in *The Sun, Sunday Mirror* and *Daily Star*.

Virtual Cat Awards

Due to the uncertainty around COVID-19 we weren't able to host our National Cat Awards in person again this year, so instead we went virtual. The finalists and winners were announced in videos online by our celebrity judges, including Bob Mortimer, Russell Kane, Tuppence Middleton and Deborah Meaden, with Minty from Wales chosen as the National Cat of the Year for helping six-yearold Connor cope with his learning difficulties. The awards reached over 1.9 million people on social media and were featured in over 500 articles in the press.

Eight Precious Weeks

According to our CATS 2021 report, just over half of all cats purchased are found online, and the anonymity some sites provide has attracted unscrupulous sellers who put profit before cat welfare. To raise awareness of the issue of kitten mis-selling and raise funds to help us look after vulnerable kittens, our #EightPreciousWeeks campaign highlighted that kittens should not be separated from their mother before they are eight weeks old. The campaign video has had over 8 million views and the campaign was featured by The Independent online and several regional BBC radio stations. It also raised over £470,000 for our work.

IN 2021...

608,000 Facebook followers (2020: 585,000)

124,000 Twitter followers (2020: 121,000)

130,000 Instagram followers (2020: 114,000)

8,000 TikTok followers

1.5 million YouTube views (2020: 2.6 million)

7 million website visits (2020: 6 million)

798,000 Meow Blog visits (2020: 221,000)

PLANS FOR 2022

- Launch a welfare campaign designed to improve the lives of all owned cats and to build engagement and relationships with cat owners in order to positively impact on cat welfare
- Launch a brand campaign to raise brand awareness with new and existing cat owners and drive engagement levels
- Reinstate the live National Cat Awards event in August 2022, COVID-19 regulations permitting, for our annual celebration of the companionship of cats
- Continue to raise awareness and tackle the issue of kitten mis-selling
- Establish a greater customer focus, including through the use of our own brand



Margot's story

Mischief had been advertised for sale on a local website as a 10-week-old kitten, but when her new family bought her home, they realised something wasn't quite right.

They called our Lichfield & Tamworth Branch for help and transferred her into their care, where it became clear she was nearer four or five weeks old, far too young to be separated from her mother.

The seller had also handed her over with a tin of adult cat food and a packet of cat biscuits, which would surely have made the tiny kitten choke if she'd eaten them.

Volunteers at the branch spent months nursing the frail kitten back to health, until eventually she was old enough and well enough to be adopted by Anton, who renamed her Margot.

"Margot is fairly confident and easily makes friends when treats are involved!" said Anton. "She gives lots of fuss and head boops, but when she's had enough, she lets us know about it and tears away!

"Recently, we've started to let her out as she'll sit and stare out the windows, mewing and trilling at the birds for hours! She hasn't gone any further than the bottom of the garden just yet and stays close to us or our dog, Tula."

OUR IMPROVES THE LIVES OF CATS AND PEOPLE ACROSS THE UK

The impact of our work addresses cat welfare issues across a range of timeframes.



- Our rehoming addresses the immediate issue of helping cats in need. In the last five years, we have rehomed and reunited around 193,500 cats
- In the medium term, our neutering work will help control the population of cats so there are fewer unwanted cats. In the last five years, we have helped to neuter around 670,000 cats, preventing millions of unwanted litters
- Our information work aims to have the long-term impact of changing attitudes and behaviours within society so that people take a more responsible view of cat ownership and welfare. In the last five years, our websites have been visited over 25 million times and we currently have a combined total of over 870,000 followers on social media

Public benefit

We believe that our vision of a world in which every cat is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs benefits society as a whole. Cats play a huge part in the lives of millions of people in the UK. According to our research, 26% of UK households have at least one pet cat, with an estimated owned cat population of 10.8 million cats¹. By supporting cats, we are providing a benefit to owners, carers and other people who come into contact with cats.

We provide public benefit by:

- helping to control the incidence and spread of disease and suffering in cat populations through vaccination, neutering, and education, benefitting both human and animal health
- assisting those on low incomes with the cost of neutering and microchipping through our voucher scheme and community work
- assisting local housing authorities and local communities by taking in and rehoming stray, lost or abandoned cats, cats from multi-cat households and by controlling feral populations
- enhancing the quality of life for people in care homes both by homing cats into care homes and encouraging care homes to welcome residents' own cats

- giving vet students practical experience as part of and beyond their formal training
- commissioning, undertaking and disseminating research into matters affecting cats and the human population
- providing information to the public and animal professionals to increase awareness of cat welfare. Find out more on page 6
- providing our Paws Protect, Paws to Listen and Cat Guardians services.
 Find out more on page 25
- providing advice to governments on animal welfare legislation. Find out more on page 36
- providing volunteering opportunities for those who wish to support our work, including through the Duke of Edinburgh programme

The Trustees of Cats Protection have given careful consideration to, and complied with, the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. This is reflected in the review of the activities undertaken by the charity contained in this report.

1 CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 UK. Visit www.cats.org.uk/stats

HELPING CAT OWNERS THE SERVICES WE OFFER TO GIVE CAT

OWNERS MUCH-NEEDED SUPPORT

In the course of our work helping cats, we also help cat owners in a variety of different ways, offering a range of services to help give them peace of mind.



Paws Protect

As a specialist temporary fostering service, Paws Protect offers a lifeline for people experiencing domestic abuse. Many survivors say they wouldn't leave a perpetrator for fear of what would happen to their beloved cat, so Paws Protect supports families to leave for safety knowing their cats will be well cared for until they are able to be reunited. Despite the lockdown measures at the start of the year, Paws Protect has been continuing to operate with additional COVID-19 protocols in place to protect all involved. The specialist team is able to offer a safe, confidential foster placement, providing owners with regular updates about their cats until a happy reunion can be arranged. The year has been busy for the Women's Aid member service, and we are proud to have reunited 78 cats with their loving families in 2021.

For more information, visit www.cats.org.uk/paws-protect

Cat Guardians

Our cats are part of the family, so it's natural to wonder what would happen to them if you are no longer around to care for them. That's why we have our free Cat Guardians service, offering cat owners reassurance that should they pass away before their cat, we'll take care of their feline friend until we can find them a loving new home. Owners are encouraged to tell us as much about their cats as possible, so we can match them to the perfect new home that suits their unique personality. Nena Saunders is signed up to the service and said: "When my adoption pack came there was a leaflet regarding Cat Guardians enclosed, so I registered straight away as it gives me peace of mind, if anything should happen to me, knowing Pumpkin will be looked after or go on to a loving home."

For more information, visit www.cats.org.uk/catguardians

Paws to Listen

We feel the loss of our beloved feline companions deeply. Coping with bereavement is never easy but we know that it has been particularly difficult over recent times. Our free and confidential Paws to Listen grief support service provides emotional support and practical information for those struggling to cope with the loss of a cat. Our compassionate volunteer team support those who may be bereaved; face difficult decisions regarding their cat's quality of life or rehoming; or are anxiously waiting for a missing cat. We have continued to expand our dedicated team of volunteer listeners, and this year we have supported more people by telephone and email than ever before. In the coming year, we plan to introduce a support group on social media to further complement the service and support even more cat lovers.

For more information, visit www.cats.org.uk/grief



RAISING VITAL FUNDS

THE KIND DONATIONS FROM CAT LOVERS THAT ENABLE US TO CARRY OUT OUR VITAL WORK

Starting 2021 in another national lockdown meant we saw further impact to our income this year, with many fundraising events postponed and our charity shops having to temporarily close their doors again. However, thanks to the generosity of our wonderful supporters we have still received the funds we need to be able to continue caring for cats, now and into the future. There are lots of ways cat lovers can support us, and we're incredibly grateful for every kind gift we receive.





Legacies and in-memory giving

Against the challenging backdrop of COVID-19, it continues to feel more poignant and powerful than ever that so much of our work is made possible by individuals remembering us in their Wills or giving in memory of a loved one. This year saw us informed of more legacy gifts than any year in our history, and nearly half of everything we do continues to be funded by gifts in Wills. We are incredibly grateful to all those who helped us raise £35.1 million through these special gifts in 2021 (2020: £33.3 million).

Similarly, an incredible £453k was raised in loving memory and celebration of people and cats in 2021 (2020: £470k). During a time where it has often been so difficult to honour those we have lost, the support and emotion we've experienced from those individuals has regularly moved us. Our most heartfelt thanks to these supporters, and our sincere thoughts are with everyone who has been affected by the loss of a loved one in 2021.

Regular giving

Together, Cats Protection Members, Sponsors, Weekly Lottery players and other regular donors raised £14.9 million for our work this year (2020: £14 million), our second largest source of income. In return for their support they receive regular updates about our work and lots of other benefits. This consistent support is crucial in helping us plan for the future, so we can help many more cats in the years to come.

- Our Cat Sponsors receive regular updates about the cats in their sponsor pens in return for their kind donations and raised £5.6 million in 2021 (2020: £5.4 million)
- Over 23,000 Cats Protection Members get benefits including a free subscription to *The Cat* magazine, a pin badge and access to advice from qualified vet nurses via the 24-hour Vetfone[™] helpline
- Our Weekly Lottery players have the chance to win one of 500 cash prizes every week when they buy a ticket, and generated £6.2 million for us in 2021 (2020: £5.6 million)

Donations and raffles

Individual one-off gifts, either in response to our appeals, raffles or other activity, give cat lovers the flexibility to support our work without an ongoing obligation. In 2021 over, 39,000 generous supporters contributed to our appeals in this way, raising an incredible £1.5 million for the cats in our care. Entering our quarterly raffles gives players the chance to win one of 1,000 cash prizes in each draw and they raised £2.2 million to help us provide vital care for cats and kittens in 2021 (2020: £1.7 million)

Cat Champions

With in-person events still disrupted for much of the year, our supporters have continued to be wonderfully creative with their fundraising activities. From virtual balloon races to online photo competitions, we are in awe of the many ways they've shown their kindness for cats from home. We have been offering our Cat Champions lots of support to help them reach their fundraising goals and are grateful for every penny they have worked so hard to raise. When COVID-19 restrictions allowed, we returned to hosting community events and it was great to see the smiling faces of so many generous cat lovers again.

As well as our regular fundraising events, such as Pawsome Afternoon Tea and the Nine Mile Challenge, we also launched our Craft for Cats event this year, which proved to be a roaring success. Thousands of keen crafters signed up for our live online tutorials showing how to create felted kitties, raising £102,000 by taking part.

Retail

Although we started 2021 in lockdown again, with all of our 107 shops (2020: 109) temporarily closed, we were thrilled to reopen our doors again in April. The support from our customers and donors has been fantastic and although the closure at the start of the year had a big impact on our income, we still managed to generate £8.3 million in 2021 (2020: £6.6 million). All of our shops now offer a customer loyalty card, helping customers show support and save money at the same time. As well as raising vital funds, our shops also help to raise awareness of our work and provide the public with cat advice.

We've continued to explore exciting ways to sell new and donated goods. Our new clothing range launched online, with t-shirts, hoodies and tote bags featuring cute cat-themed designs. We expanded the number of shops selling items on eBay and relaunched our Cat Care Collection, a range of essential vetapproved products designed specifically for our feline friends. All profits from the sale of these items go directly towards helping cats in our care.

People's Postcode Lottery

Thanks to players of People's Postcode Lottery, we have received an amazing £4.8 million since 2018. During 2021 we were awarded £1.28 million by Postcode Animal Trust which is currently helping to cover the cat care costs in our centres as well as supporting our Paws to Listen grief support service and our advocacy work speaking up for cats. Funding is also helping us monitor performance and drive improvement throughout Cats Protection, ultimately enabling us to have greater impact for cats and people. We are incredibly grateful to players of People's Postcode Lottery for their support, which will make a huge difference for both cats and the people who love them.

Thanks to our partners

Funds and support from our corporate partners, major donors and trust funders have been incredibly important this year to help us make a difference to the lives of cats and kittens across the UK and so we are hugely grateful for the generous support we have received.

Thank you to the following companies that support our work along with many others:

- Ceva
- Petplan[®]
- Pets at Home and The Pets at Home Foundation
- PURINA[®]
- Shark[®]
- Simon's Cat
- Sure Petcare

For more information about our partners, please visit www.cats.org.uk/corporatepartners

Plans for 2022

- Focus on getting to know and retaining our supporters so we can anticipate what they need, and continue to develop our relationships with them to provide a great experience for all those who choose to support us
- Attract new supporters by creating new ways of interacting with Cats Protection fundraising and retail products for people who love cats
- Take a more innovative approach when designing or improving our fundraising offers to ensure they are sustainable, fundable and scalable
- Cultivate and nurture long-lasting and successful partnerships with organisations that share our mission and values

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

OUR TOTAL INCOME IN 2021 WAS £78.2M, AN INCREASE OF £6.3M FROM 2020.

This growth in funds has meant we have increased our expenditure from $\pounds 66.5m$ in 2020 to $\pounds 70.7m$ in 2021.

A summary of our income and expenditure for 2021 is presented in the charts opposite. These figures are based on those in the full audited and unqualified accounts for the year ended 21 December 2021. For the full 2021 Annual Report & Accounts visit **www.cats.org.uk/annual-review** or get in touch using the details on page 43.





Where our £78.2m income came from

£36.2m	Leg
£19.7m	Do
£14.9m	Eve
£5.5m	Ot
£1.9m	Re

Legacies Donations Events and shops Other Rehoming fees

How we spent £70.7m



IN 2021...

Despite the challenges we faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we helped 137,000 cats and kittens, including 16,750 feral cats, through our national network of around 210 volunteer-run branches and 34 centres (in 2020 we helped 126,000 cats). That's the equivalent of helping around 375 cats a day.



PLANS FOR 2022

- Deliver planned capital construction projects and complete work on our estate strategy. This will help to maximise the effect and efficiency of our work for cats and continue to help ensure that we comply with all legislation and regulation affecting our activities to help cat
- Design and implement a performance measurement framework to ensure that our progress against the new strategy can be accurately communicated, enabling informed decisions across the organisation
- Procure a modern finance system that will help streamline processes and create better visibility of the charity's spend, allowing for real-time analysis and business-focused decision making
- Continue our work to strengthen our cybersecurity, while developing new and innovative capabilities for our volunteers and employees, focusing on the technology that will enable our new 10-year strategy to be realised



Joss' epic running challenge

Rather than using the excuse of cold weather and another lockdown to hibernate indoors, eight-year-old Joss Tyson set himself the challenge of running every day in January 2021, all to raise money for cats in need.

Having got the family cat Margherita from a local rescue centre, Joss was inspired to combine his love of running around his hometown of Ambleside with his desire to help unwanted cats, initially setting himself a fundraising target of £50.

However, as the donations rolled in, he smashed his target on day one, and by the end of the month had raised an amazing \pm 1,600. Joss completed his challenge while juggling home schooling and didn't let freezing temperatures or snow deter him from lacing up his running shoes.

"I'm not worried about the cold or wet weather," said Joss. "I just want to help cats! I run for my local running club, Ambleside AC, in all kinds of weather so I am used to it."



Jean-Louis' 10,000Km bike ride

Along with many others, Jean-Louis Button struggled with his mental health during lockdown, but at just the right moment, stray cat Jess walked into his life.

Jean-Louis said: "Over eight or nine weeks we became incredibly close companions for one another and because of the amount of love, happiness and comfort she brought me, I felt the desire to give back. I honestly don't know how I would have coped without Jess's loving company! I didn't rescue a cat, a cat rescued me!"

Although Jean-Louis was not in a position to adopt Jess, he wanted to support his local Swansea Branch who took her in and found her a new home. He set himself the challenge of cycling 10,000km around the UK coastline between June and September, raising £2,000 to split between the Swansea Branch and two other charities close to his heart.

"The ride itself was full of ups and downs, literally and figuratively!" added Jean-Louis. "But knowing that my pain and suffering was helping to support even more cats like Jess to be looked after and cared for when no one else can, gave me all the strength and determination that I needed to keep pushing those pedals."

SPEAKING UP FOR CATS

HOW WE BRING ABOUT POSITIVE CHANGE FOR CATS AND THEIR OWNERS

Our Advocacy & Government Relations team has continued to meet virtually, or in person when COVID-19 restrictions have allowed, with politicians and decision makers to make sure cat welfare is not forgotten in their work.

Microchips Reunite

Our campaign to make cat microchipping compulsory achieved huge success in 2021, thanks to the efforts of our dedicated supporters. At the beginning of the year, the Westminster Government ran a 12-week consultation on introducing the compulsory microchipping of pet cats in England, and we encouraged cat lovers to respond. We were blown away by the enthusiasm they showed, as an astonishing 22,000 emails were sent to the government via our website, which accounted for 65% of the total number of responses the government received. Our petition supporting compulsory microchipping also now has over 40,000 signatures.

In December we were delighted that the government announced that it intends to introduce regulations to make microchipping of owned cats compulsory in England in 2022. 99% of respondents to the government consultation expressed support for these measures. This will be a huge benefit for cat welfare, helping to reunite more lost and stolen cats with their owners. We will be campaigning for similar regulations in the devolved nations.



Stop a Kitten Smuggling Scandal

In September the government announced proposals to tighten the regulations for the commercial import and non-commercial movement of dogs from abroad, but this did not include cats. Without changes to the pet travel arrangements for cats and kittens, we are concerned that there is a risk that unscrupulous pet smugglers may switch their focus from puppies to kittens, compromising their welfare. In response we launched our Stop a Kitten Smuggling Scandal campaign which received an amazing response from our supporters; 14,000 emails were sent to the government asking them to protect kittens from trafficking, trauma and tragedy.

Cats Protection's Director of Veterinary Services Dr Maggie Roberts was invited to give oral evidence to the MPs on the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) committee on the welfare issues for cats and kittens that are moved across borders and how they could be better protected under new laws following the UK's departure from the European Union. The committee supported our calls for cats to be given the same protections as dogs.

Purrfect Landlords

Our campaign calling for more catfriendly tenancies to allow more people to rent with cats had a brilliant breakthrough this year. In 2021 the Westminster Government recognised the importance of pets and **published a new model tenancy agreement for landlords which includes a default clause allowing pets**, unless the landlord has a valid reason for pets not to be in the property.

In March, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Cats (APGOCATS), of which we are a founding member, held a roundtable on pet ownership and the rental market. We were delighted that over 25 representatives attended bringing together animal charities, housing charities, landlords and politicians. We are now talking directly to the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to promote the model tenancy agreement and the use of pet CVs for renters.

Other advocacy work across the UK

- In September we worked closely with the Scottish Government on new licensing laws which include regulation of cat breeding, animal welfare establishments and pet selling. Now, anyone breeding three or more litters of kittens in any 12-month period in Scotland must be licensed and the breeding of cats with extreme traits that can lead to health conditions is not permitted
- Both the Welsh and Scottish Governments have now introduced a ban on the sale of kittens by anyone other than the breeder. Since September 2021 sellers can no longer sell kittens commercially (in Wales under six months and in Scotland under 12 months) unless they have bred them. Commercial third-party sales of kittens under six months have been prohibited in England since 2018, now our focus is to press for this in Northern Ireland
- In November we were delighted that the Welsh Government introduced an Action Plan for Animal Welfare and committed to bringing forward legislation to license animal rescue centres and sanctuaries and ban snares and glue traps – we are pressing the rest of the UK for a similar ban on snares and glue traps

- In a meeting with the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands we pressed for stricter pet travel regulations and for the Scottish Government to promote pet friendly rentals
- As a member of the More for Scotland's Animals (MFSA) coalition we ran a campaign ahead of the 2021 Scottish election in May asking all prospective MSPs to pledge to do more for Scotland's animals. 176 MSP candidates and 40 elected MSPs signed the MFSA pledge – that's 31% of elected MSPs
- As a founding member of the **Companion Animal Welfare Group** Wales (CAWGW) we helped develop and launch a joint manifesto for companion animals ahead of the Senedd Elections in 2021 and held a round table with senior Assembly Members. As a result, CAWGW was invited to give evidence to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee where we outlined priority areas to improve the welfare of companion animals in Wales, including regulation of animal welfare establishments and introducing compulsory microchipping for pet cats

For more information about how we're speaking up for cats, visit www.cats.org.uk/campaigning

PLANS FOR 2022

- Tackle the ongoing mis-selling of sick and underage kittens, particularly through online sites
- Launch a petition calling for cat breeding to be regulated across the UK and not restricted to Scotland
- Relaunch our campaign work to get more landlords to consider allowing pets
- Work on a joint manifesto for companion animals as part of the Northern Ireland Companion Animal Welfare Group



Scarab's story

When Scarab was locked out of his home by a faulty cat flap in September 2020, his owner Jayne was beside herself with worry when her little companion didn't return.

She did everything she could to find him, looking for him at all hours, putting up posters, and making sure his microchip details were up to date.

Then, 11 months later, she got the call she'd been hoping for. Our Cornwall Adoption Centre had picked up Scarab after a lady found him wandering the streets, and a quick scan of his chip had revealed Jayne's details.

"I was shocked and don't remember much of the call," said Jayne. "I burst into tears and arranged to collect him right away. I'm so grateful to everyone at the centre and to the lady who found him. He was only two streets away from me and may even have been there all the time I was looking for him.

"Luckily, he remembers me and still knows how to high-five, a trick that I taught him before he went missing. I'm so glad I had him microchipped, I might never have seen him again otherwise."



SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE

MAKING SURE OUR VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES HAVE EVERYTHING THEY NEED TO HELP CATS

2021 continued to be a somewhat turbulent time for our people, with various COVID-19 restrictions causing disruption to our usual ways of working. We have endeavoured to provide as much support as possible to our volunteers and employees as they adapt to new ways of carrying out their roles, enabling them to have an important impact on cats and people across the UK.

The safety and wellbeing of our people has been our main concern as our volunteers have gone back out into their communities and many of our employees have been trialing hybrid working. We continue to ensure we have the right measures in place to help them feel confident in delivering their roles.

By embracing technology we have been able to connect with each other like never before to share experiences and expertise as well as improve our systems and processes to ensure continuous improvement in the ways we deliver our services. We recognise the importance of engaging with our people and celebrating everything we do for cats. As part of this focus we have introduced our volunteer consultative body, Connect, and continue to support our Employee Forum, to ensure their voices were at the centre of our decision making as we developed our new 10-year strategy.

Learning and development for our people has expanded dramatically as we've embraced new digital opportunities over the past year. Developing knowledge and skills benefits and engages our employees and volunteers, and most importantly directly delivers impact for our cats.

This year over 80 branches and 400 individuals participated in our cat welfare workshops and our offer for people development training increased by 100%, teaching new skills in resilience and wellbeing, remote working and personal development. We also hosted sessions supporting people management, and over 400 learners participated in our 'Welcome to Cats Protection' induction module this year. The reach of our online learning peaked during lockdown when course completions were up more than 400%. Post-lockdown, despite individuals returning to their usual activities, we still saw an increase in 2021 of over 40% compared to 2019, with our people accessing more content than before.

There was another slight drop in the number of people volunteering with us in 2021, likely due to the continuing disruption of the pandemic, but we hope to see our cat-loving community grow again in the future. Without the time, skills and expertise of our kind volunteers we wouldn't be able to help so many cats and kittens in need, so we are incredibly grateful for their dedication.

IN 2021...

Our team of over 10,000 dedicated volunteers provided much-needed support to cats across the UK



PLANS FOR 2022

- Focus on the wellbeing of our people so that we can continue to do the very best for cats
- Implement systems to support our volunteers in their roles, and help them develop their learning
- Develop our safeguarding approach to ensure our people and customers are safe
- Build engagement with our new 10-year strategy to ensure it can be properly implemented across the organisation
- Develop Cats Protection as an efficient organisation with effective processes, structures, values and culture, and begin to move towards carbon neutrality



David's dedication

David Moulden started volunteering as a cat carer at our Bridgend Adoption Centre in November 2019, but when COVID-19 restrictions meant his role was put on hold, he was determined to find other ways to help the cats.

He set himself several ambitious fundraising challenges, not only climbing two Welsh mountains, but also completing four-and-a-half marathons, four of which he ran in just one month, to raise over $\pounds1,500$ for the centre.

"I wanted to pick difficult challenges," said David. "Things that would really stretch me so that I felt I'd truly earned people's donations and tried things that other people might be less likely to do. People are so generous and give really remarkable amounts so I wanted to really push myself."

As a result of his incredible efforts, David was awarded a special commendation at the Petplan & ADCH Animal Charity Awards, leading to a further donation of £250 from the Petplan Charitable Trust to the Bridgend Centre.

"It's never been about me," added David. "The cats and work of the centre have always been my focus. Everybody at the centre is so hard-working and supportive, I was really shocked, surprised and humbled to receive the letter telling me I'd been commended. But it was a lovely surprise."



GET INVOLVED

There are lots of ways you can help us to help cats, from adopting a moggy of your own, making a kind donation, joining our team of wonderful volunteers or spreading the word about good cat welfare! Find more information on how you can support us at www.cats.org.uk/support-us

Thank you, on behalf of the cats!

FIND US ONLINE

www.cats.org.uk

Facebook: /CatsProtection

Twitter: @CatsProtection

Instagram: @CatsProtection

TikTok: @Cats_Protection

YouTube: /CatsProtectionUK

GET IN TOUCH

Email us: info@cats.org.uk

Phone us: 03000 12 12 12

Write to us: Cats Protection, National Cat Centre, Lewes Road, Chelwood Gate, Haywards Heath, RH17 7TT

Find your nearest branch, centre and shop at www.cats.org.uk/find-us



www.cats.org.uk

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