



Annual Review 2020







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

Improving understanding of cats' needs – page 6

Reducing overpopulation of cats – page 10

Finding good homes for cats – page 14

Increasing awareness of our work – page 18

Our impact

Public benefit – page 24

Helping cat owners – page 26

Helping us to get there

Raising vital funds – page 28

Speaking up for cats – page 34

Supporting our people – page 38

This report covers the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020 and was approved by the Trustee on 22 April 2021.



Chief Executive's report

An introduction from James Yeates, Chief Executive

2020 was a tough year. We lost loved ones, colleagues and friends, who we remember and honour. We each faced unprecedented uncertainty, coped with personal challenges and dug even deeper for cats and one another.

Yet through all this, our response was amazing. We helped an enormous number of cats, prioritising those needing our emergency help. We helped thousands of owners to care for their cats through the pandemic compassionately, safely and panic-free. We found new ways to help cats while keeping our volunteers, employees, adopters and members of the public safe. Of course COVID-19 had an impact, but it was minimised by how we adapted.

Although it has not been easy, it has been enormously impressive. I am amazed at how quickly we've managed to adapt as an organisation and as individuals. We did many things in almost completely new ways, and introduced wide-sweeping changes across our hundreds of branches, centres and teams that not only tackled the crisis but also strengthened us for 2021 and beyond.

There will be long-term effects of the pandemic that we'll need to deal with too. Following the disruption to neutering provision at many vet surgeries, we are anticipating an increase in the number of kittens born without loving homes, and the economic recession will increase demand for our services, as financial pressures force cat owners to give up or abandon their pets. As by far the most successful charity at homing cats throughout the UK, so many of them will be entirely dependent on our care.

All of this comes at a time when our own finances are still impacted by the pandemic. We have avoided widespread redundancies through good financial management, a focus on our long-term ability to keep helping cats, and – particularly – thanks to the responses of our amazing supporters, volunteers and employees. This will mean we can keep helping cats even more through the longer-term impacts. Your generosity, commitment and creativity blow me away.

The challenges and responses of 2020 have made me more impressed by Cats Protection, more clear on how essential we are, more awed of how our cat-loving community has pulled together, and more hopeful for the future. We will be there to help cats ever more and even more.

James Yeates



Chairman's report

An introduction from Linda Upson, Chairman

2020 was a year like no other and one that we were all glad to see the back of, but throughout all of the challenges we've faced this year, there has at least been one reliable constant – the joy of cats.

Never before have we needed our feline companions as much as we did in 2020. When we were down they helped cheer us up and when we felt isolated, they provided much-needed comfort and companionship.

This year we conducted our first nationwide survey of cat owners and the majority agreed that their cats help relieve stress and loneliness and that they see their cats as members of the family. You can read more about what the public had to say about cats at www.cats.org.uk/stats

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we did manage to continue with many of our activities, mainly around fostering and caring for cats. This was a welcome diversion, especially for those of us who foster in our own homes, who had the pleasure of cuddling kittens and cats throughout this time.

As soon as we could do so safely we restarted our rehoming of cats, under our new hands-free homing process. We also continued to take cats in to our care, mainly those that were most at risk of harm, including mums and kittens.

Of course some of our activities did have to stop altogether. Many of our national fundraising events and all our local branch events were cancelled and our shops were shut, which impacted on our finances and the morale of the teams, both local and national, who run them. When we can get them up and running again, we will need your support more than ever.

As we look back on a truly unprecedented year, I would like to offer my sympathies to those volunteers, employees and their families who have been directly affected by COVID-19 and I send my condolences to those who have lost loved ones.

Finally, in 2020 we also had two Trustees, Alison Ryan and Trevor Jones, step down from the Board and I would like to thank them both, on behalf of Cats Protection, for their many years of dedicated service. Trustees are also volunteers and give their time willingly and freely to help advance the cause of Cats Protection.

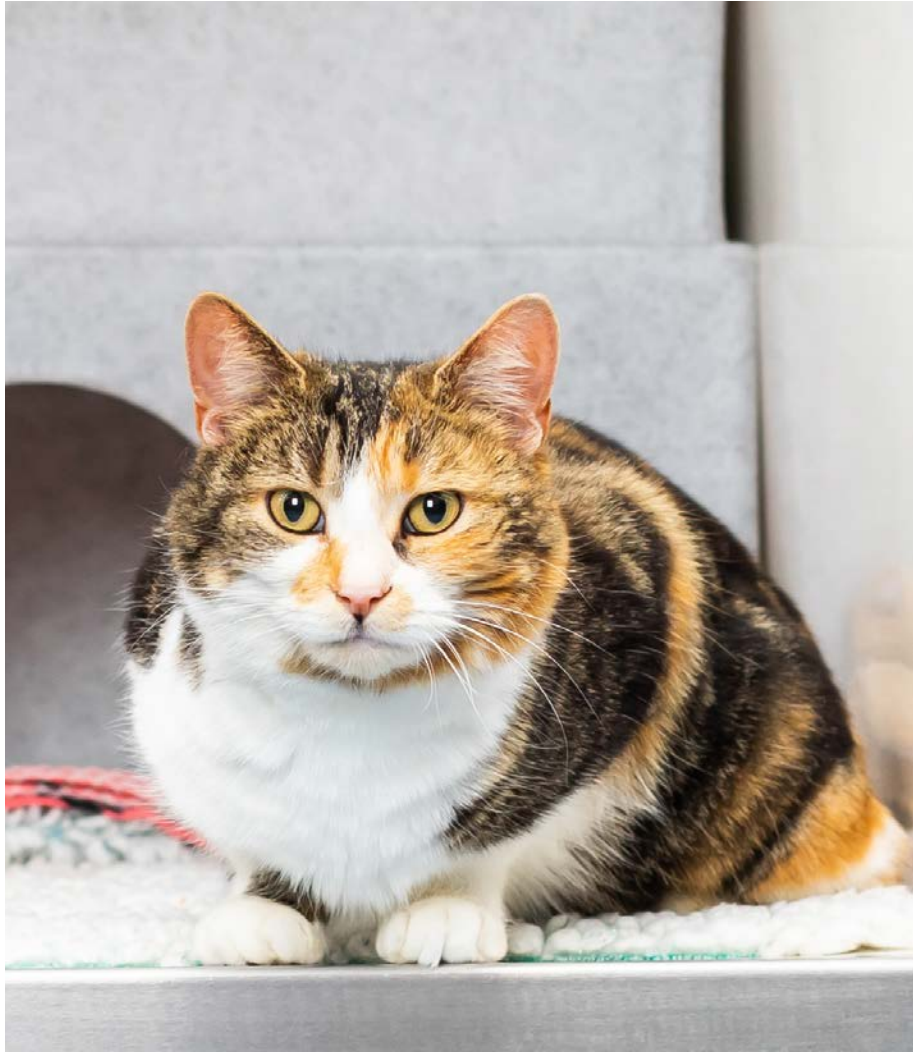
Linda Upson

Improving understanding of cats' needs

Spreading the word about good cat welfare to give all cats a better quality of life

2020 was often a worrying and confusing time for all of us, so as the cat experts we were pleased to be able to offer some clarity and reassurance when it came to caring for our feline friends. We also took the opportunity to encourage people to learn more about cats' needs from the comfort of their own homes, with lots of online resources explaining the reasons behind cats' seemingly curious behaviours.





- When COVID-19 started to become prevalent in the UK, we launched a 'coronavirus hub' on our national website, with lots of up-to-date, vet-approved advice around the topic of cats and coronavirus. This helped to allay people's fears that cats might transmit the virus to people as well as provide information about how lockdown had impacted our services. The hub had around 800,000 visits in 2020
- On social media we hosted Facebook Live sessions with our vets and cat behaviour team, giving the public the chance to get their cat questions answered by the experts
- Our Contact Centre continued to handle enquiries from the public, offering much-needed help, advice and reassurance as national and regional guidelines changed. When we were restricted to only taking in cats in emergency situations, the team

helped prioritise urgent cases and also continued to support some branches with their incoming calls throughout the year. In June we launched a new webchat feature on our national website enabling the public to get instant answers to their queries

- The development of our new Feline Welfare Research Strategy will ensure all research projects we undertake protect the welfare of the cats involved and produce high-quality, ethically-sound research. We will never be involved in any research that is invasive or requires a Home Office licence
- While we are a UK charity, we also make our cat care advice available overseas and have attended a limited number of virtual international animal welfare conferences this year

CATS (Cats and Their Stats) report

To find out more about the lives of cats in the UK, we spoke to 10,000 cat owners and non-cat owners to produce the first ever CATS report. Full of fascinating facts and stats, it's the largest and most comprehensive report on cats ever created, and gives us a new robust insight into the world of cats and their owners. We plan to produce this report every year and use the stats to inform everything we do to help cats. The report has been viewed over 3,000 times online. Read it at www.cats.org.uk/stats

Online education

- Lockdowns meant we could no longer go into schools and community groups to deliver our cat welfare talks, so instead we created our Moggy Modules and Feline Focus education packs, full of fun activities kids can do at home. We also produced educational Facebook Live streams and videos, which had over 48,000 views. We then worked hard to develop engaging and interactive virtual versions of our talks which are now proving very popular with our audiences
- At the beginning of the year we launched our new Understanding Cats' Needs interactive online course, which explores why cats do what they do. It's designed to give an appreciation of cats' needs, how this relates to their behaviour and how owners can provide the best environment for them. The course has been accessed over 9,100 times so far!
- 2020 saw the inaugural Cats Protection Feline Behaviour Conference. Originally planned as an in-person event, it had to be moved online due to lockdown restrictions and featured a full day of informative sessions and engaging Q&As with cat behaviour experts. Over 450 people from all over the world signed up for the event, including veterinary professionals and those working in the animal welfare sector

Working with vets

- Our Veterinary team 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 have improved the digital version of our *CP Clinic* journal for the veterinary profession which features articles about veterinary practice and updates on our own veterinary-related news and policies
- By meeting virtually and more readily with corporate veterinary organisations we've been able to build better relationships and share resources on kitten neutering and shelter medicine to improve cat welfare
- We continue to work closely with veterinary schools and although COVID-19 has meant we've been unable to offer students placements at our National Cat Centre vet clinic this year, we've still been supporting them through virtual lectures instead

Plans for 2021

- Develop and implement our new impact strategy for helping more cats, now and in the future
- Update our *Behaviour Guide* and produce new cat care and feral cat guides to help the public and our own teams better understand these areas of cat welfare
- Build on our relationship with the veterinary profession following the results of our vet survey, improving the ways we communicate with them
- Roll out our Cat Welfare Champions programme, encouraging best welfare practice for more teams within the charity
- Continue to identify and prioritise feline research that is ethically-sound and best supports our goals

In 2020...

We gave 500 cat welfare talks to 13,600 adults and children (2019: 1,500 talks to 41,000 people) and our education packs were downloaded over 16,000 times

We handled over 120,000 enquiries from members of the public (2019: 100,000)





Maddie and Milo's story

Despite only being a kitten herself at nine-months-old, Maddie arrived at our Birmingham Adoption Centre heavily pregnant.

Days later she gave birth to two kittens, Maddox and Micah, but the centre team noticed something wasn't quite right.

Both kittens began showing signs of having cerebellar hypoplasia, a disorder that affects cats' ability to balance and coordinate their limbs. It's usually caused when the mother has a virus that affects the development of the kittens' brains in the womb, but can be prevented by routine vaccinations prior to pregnancy.

While Micah was not held back by his 'wobbliness', his brother Maddox became very poorly alongside the condition and sadly did not survive.

With lots of help from the centre team, Micah grew in confidence and eventually began to adapt to his disability.

Once he was old enough, he found a new home alongside his mother Maddie, and was renamed Milo.

"Maddie and Milo settled really quickly," said their new owner Emma. "Although it took a while for them to come out of their shells their personalities are starting to blossom and it's wonderful to see.

"Maddie is an absolute flirt and has a little thing for Clifford, one of our dogs, and even sleeps with him in his bed. Milo is definitely becoming a cheeky chappy and races round the house like his life depends on it, he barely has his wobble anymore. He is also fascinated by my youngest son Owen and will join in and play with him, especially when the toy tractors are out.

"As a family we are so lucky to have Maddie and Milo be a part of our lives and can't wait for all the fun, cuddles and loves in the years to come."



Reducing overpopulation of cats

Working with others to promote neutering as the best way to prevent unwanted cats

During the COVID-19 lockdowns, many vets had to put all non-emergency operations on hold, including neutering. This obviously had an impact on the number of cats we were able to neuter and we estimated that this could lead to thousands of extra kittens being born in 2020, many of them unwanted and arriving into our care.

To try to prevent a kitten crisis, we continued to provide neutering advice to the public online and over the phone and support communities as best we could while following government guidelines.



Our aims and activities

- After conducting a survey that revealed 77% of people are unaware that a female cat can become pregnant from four months old, we launched our Kitten Alert campaign encouraging owners to keep their unneutered cats indoors to prevent accidental litters. We provided advice via our website, social media and emails, and even featured on BBC's *The One Show*
- Our Neutering Helpline has continued to provide cat owners with neutering advice and offer those on low incomes vouchers towards the cost of neutering, which could be used once their vet was able to perform the operation
- When government guidelines allowed, our volunteers and employees carried out their trap, neuter and return work with feral cats, making sure to follow health and safety advice while dealing with the backlog of cats needing their help
- We are continuing to work with local councils, social housing providers, human welfare organisations and other welfare charities, including the PDSA and RSPCA, to promote and fund cat neutering and help solve the root causes of unneutered cats

- With support from the Cat Population Control Group we published a study in the *Veterinary Record* journal highlighting the neutering practices of vets in the UK, helping us understand how to overcome the barriers to neutering cats at four months old and how we can support this practice. Our website also features a database to help cat owners find vets willing to perform early neutering

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

Cat Watch

Our community project to better understand and support the UK's unowned cat population continues to grow, but has also been impacted by COVID-19 this year.

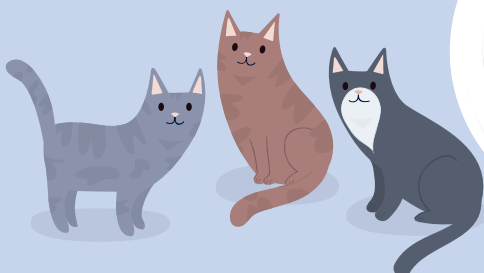
Cat Watch has now expanded into new areas of Nottingham, Liverpool and Luton, with our teams encouraging residents to report stray cats to us so that we can get them neutered and make sure they are receiving the right care. Since the project first launched in 2016, over 3,900 cats have been reported to us in these areas, and as a result we have been able to get over 420 cats neutered and find homes for over 520 stray cats.

These figures would likely have been higher if it were not for the limited access to neutering and restrictions on our services caused by COVID-19, but our teams have done an excellent job of finding new ways to engage with communities online instead of in person and still offer plenty of help and advice where possible.

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

In 2020...

We neutered 109,000 cats and kittens, including around 11,750 feral cats (2019: 150,000, including 19,000 ferals)



Plans for 2021

- Develop training on human behaviour change to enable our neutering teams to make lasting improvements for cat welfare
- Develop a database of potential outdoor homes for feral cats that cannot return to their colonies
- Roll out our trap, neuter and return training to help more of our teams carry out this important work



Damien's story

From having just one unneutered pet cat, a man in Harrow found himself with a house full of 17 moggies during the first COVID-19 lockdown.

As the cats continued to breed, he quickly became overwhelmed with litters of kittens and so called our Harrow Homing Centre for help.

Damien, one of the kittens taken in by the centre, was in a bad way. He wasn't breathing well and after being checked by the vet, it was thought he wouldn't survive.

But Damien proved to be a little fighter, and with lots of love and care from the centre team he made a rapid recovery.

Once he was old enough to be neutered, he soon found a new home with Lyn. She said: "Amazingly, considering his start, Damien is a proper 'cat'. He is now a healthy weight, lively and well with no signs of his bad start.

"He will either be found doing zoomies all around the house, being very active, getting into everything or nudging you for affection and asking to be picked up for snuggles."

With the help of several neighbouring branches and centres, our Harrow team managed to help all 17 cats, getting them healthy, neutered and rehomed to loving new owners.

Finding good homes for cats

Helping cats to find, or stay in, their perfect home no matter how long it takes

To keep our people, cats, and members of the public safe during the first national lockdown we initially had to put all of our rehoming on hold and only take in cats in emergency situations. Small teams of employees and volunteers continued to look after the cats already in our care, keeping them happy, healthy and entertained while adapting to new ways of working in accordance with government guidelines.



Our aims and activities

In May we were able to start rehoming again through our new hands-free homing service, finally finding new owners for those cats who had been waiting with us for longer than usual and freeing up space for more unwanted cats to arrive in our care. During subsequent lockdowns we were able to continue offering this safe new homing service, although once again had to prioritise taking in cats in emergency situations.

- At the beginning of 2020, our relocated Wrexham Centre and brand new Harrow Centre officially opened. Although their star-studded opening events had to be cancelled due to COVID-19, they continued to help unwanted cats throughout the year
- Some of our centres are working with new Cat Action Teams, groups of volunteers carrying out activities such as lost and found cat support and trapping, neutering and returning feral cats in their local area. This has enabled these centres to expand their usual services and get more involved in their communities. The two pilot teams are linked to our St Helens and Harrow centres and we hope to establish more teams if these prove successful

Hands-free homing

With COVID-19 restrictions meaning people were unable to visit our centres and fosterers to meet their potential new pets, we launched our new hands-

free homing service. Adopters can now find their new cat online, meet them virtually via video and then either safely collect them or have them delivered to their door. Throughout the process and beyond they receive expert advice and support from us to make sure they're the perfect match and to help the cat settle in and become part of the family. Launching this new process meant our people had to quickly change their usual ways of working, learning to use new technology and even becoming delivery drivers to get the cats to their new homes. Thanks to their dedication and perseverance, the new scheme has been a huge success and by the end of 2020 over 15,000 cats had found new homes hands-free.

Keeping cats in good homes

Wherever we can, we try to help cats remain in their existing homes so they do not need to come into our care. This includes providing information and advice to worried cat owners to prevent them having to rehome their cat due to issues such as their cat's behaviour, their allergy to cats or a change in their circumstances. This work was more important than ever during 2020, as we had to limit the number of cats we were able to take into care. As providing this advice in person at our centres, shops and events wasn't possible for much of 2020, we focused on giving support online via our website and social media, via email and over the phone to keep cats in the best place they can be, a loving home.

An unexpected lack of finances can also be a reason owners may need to give up their cat, so a small number of our branches have begun working together to trial a Community Kitty scheme. They have been working with agencies, organisations and other charities providing food relief to people, to identify cat owners who are struggling to meet their pets' needs and may feel they need to give them up. This has enabled them to supply cat food and other cat essentials to those unable to afford it, as well as offer support with neutering and information about cat welfare. The scheme is now being explored by other branches to determine local demand.

Promoting microchipping

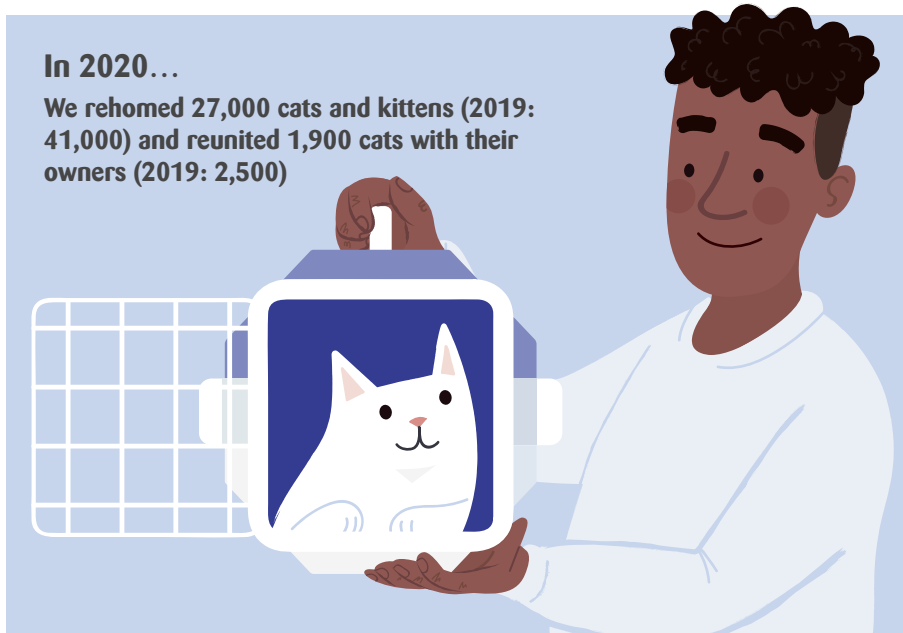
Reuniting lost cats with their owners is made much easier by microchipping, a safe, permanent and low-cost way of identifying owned cats. But despite this, over 2.6 million owned cats in the UK are still not microchipped¹. These unchipped cats may get lost and end up in our care, and we may need to rehome them unnecessarily if we are unable to trace their current owners. To encourage more owners to get their cats chipped, we offer discounted microchipping at the same time as neutering for those on low incomes in some areas of the UK, and we've been campaigning to make cat microchipping compulsory in UK law. Find out more about our Microchips Reunite campaign on page 35.

¹ CATS (Cats and Their Stats) 2020 UK.

Visit www.cats.org.uk/stats

Plans for 2021

- Improve how we support cat owners to prevent cats coming into our care unnecessarily, focusing on allergy advice, housing issues and cat behaviour problems
- Redevelop our Exeter Adoption Centre, upgrading the facilities to ensure the best welfare standards for the cats in our care
- Continue to develop new ways of delivering our services in a safe way for both people and cats as the pandemic continues



In 2020...

We rehomed 27,000 cats and kittens (2019: 41,000) and reunited 1,900 cats with their owners (2019: 2,500)



Ethel's story

At the grand age of 21 (that's 100 in human years) Great Aunt Ethel should have been cosy and safe in a warm home. Instead she was sleeping on an abandoned sofa in a cold Norfolk car park, all alone.

When the team at our Downham Market Adoption Centre received a call about Ethel, they went to rescue her and found a sweet, affectionate cat who had clearly once been well-loved.

A scan of her microchip revealed that she was born in 1999, but her previous owner had died and her chip details had not been updated since.

With no owner to be found, the centre team were worried it would be difficult to find Ethel a new home in which to live out her autumn years, as sadly mature moggies regularly get overlooked for younger cats and kittens.

They put out a plea in the local press and were thrilled to be inundated with offers from kind cat lovers. Ethel soon went to live with Alison, who said: "I can't believe how well Ethel has settled in to her new home. Within an hour we had made friends and she was sat on my lap purring. It already feels as if we have been together for ages.

"I am so pleased I was able to offer her somewhere safe and warm to spend her twilight years. She's a dear little thing - you would never know she is a grand old lady of 21."

Increasing awareness of our work

Making sure people know to come to us - the cat experts - for all their cat needs

While COVID-19 has prevented us from going out and spreading the word about our work in person, it hasn't stopped us engaging with cat lovers online. We want people to come to us, the UK's leading cat welfare charity, for all things cat, whether they're looking for a new pet, helpful cat care advice or information about how they can help improve cat welfare.





- Our national website is kept up to date with trusted information for cat lovers and is also now home to our relaunched Meow Blog, featuring fascinating cat articles and stories of cats we've helped. Work to develop our individual branch and centre websites is ongoing, so they can better provide local cat care information to the public
- We've continued to send cat advice, fundraising appeals and updates on our work to our supporters via email, with 1.9 million people opening our email communications in 2020 (2019: 1.7 million)
- Our adverts have continued to appear on television and online, raising awareness of the charity and cat welfare to new audiences
- Thousands more people have followed us on social media for fun and informative cat content, engaging with our national pages and our individual branch and centre accounts run by dedicated volunteers
- *The Cat*, our quarterly magazine for supporters, has been revamped with a fresh new look and lots of fascinating news and features to keep cat lovers informed about cat welfare
- Our volunteers and employees have been getting coverage for the charity in both the regional and national press by sharing success stories and important cat welfare information. In 2020 there was a 25% increase in the number of articles published that mentioned the charity, and we were the second highest ranked animal welfare charity in terms of media coverage

Our campaigns...

Here For The Cats

To celebrate our cat companions providing comfort and entertainment during lockdown, we encouraged cat owners to share photos and stories of their kitties using #HereForTheCats. The campaign reached over 2 million people online via social media and was featured by inyourarea.co.uk and dailyrecord.co.uk We also created videos to show how our employees and volunteers were still here for the cats in our centres and branches, encouraging people to donate to our Special Coronavirus Appeal to help fund our work.

Purrfectly Imperfect

Cats with disabilities can often get overlooked for adoption, as people assume they will need lots of extra care. To show that these cats are surprisingly adaptable and just as loving, we created videos and advice pages on our website explaining the care they need and encouraged owners of #PurrfectlyImperfect cats to share their stories on social media. Stories of some of the disabled cats we've rehomed were also featured by dailymail.co.uk and yahoo.com

Alternative Cat Awards

As our National Cat Awards had to be postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions, we hosted an online Alternative Cat Awards instead. We asked the public to send in their best cat videos and our celebrity judges picked the finalists of five categories. It was then up to the public to vote for their People's Purrfect Choice, which was announced online by comedian Bob Mortimer. Coverage featured in over 700 articles including in the *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Star* and the campaign reached 5 million people online.

National Black Cat Day

2020 marked 10 years of National Black Cat Day, so we took the opportunity to celebrate just how much things have changed for black and black-and-white cats in the last decade. It now takes the black cats in our care 10 days less to find new homes than it did in 2011, with fewer people overlooking them in favour of their colourful counterparts. On 27 October we once again encouraged people to share photos of their own black cats, and the #BlackCatDay message reached 3 million people via social media. The campaign was also featured on *BBC Radio 2* and *CBBC Newsround*.

Make Christmas Magical

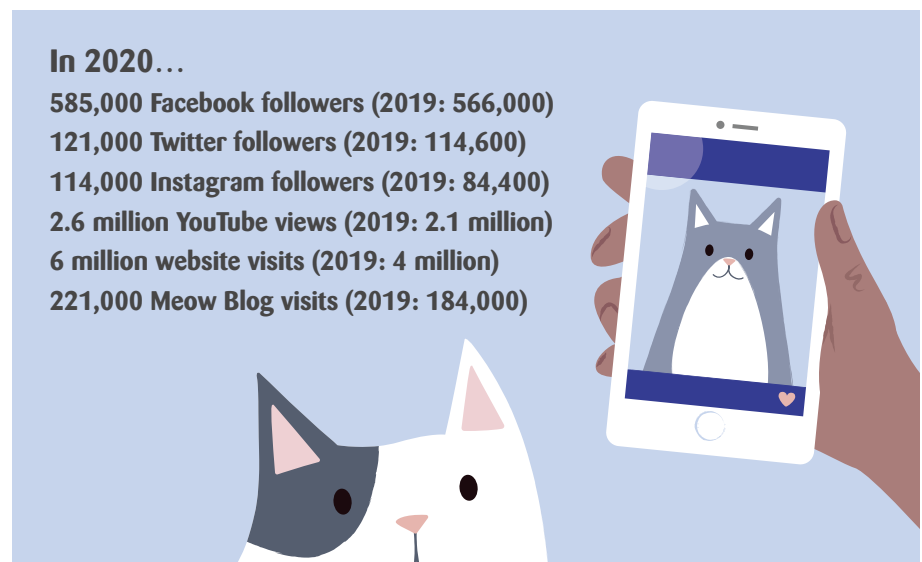
For this year's Christmas animation, we celebrated the magic of microchipping by telling the story of Casper, a cat we reunited with his owners after he went missing for three years. Casper's Magical Journey was created with the help of Aardman Animations and stars the voice of Holly Willoughby as Casper's owner. The film has been watched 520,000 times online and appeared on TV, including on ITV's *This Morning*. Casper also helped us Make Christmas Magical for the cats in our care, as our accompanying appeal raised over £1.2 million.

Plans for 2021

- Continue raising awareness of our work and building our reputation as the UK's leading cat welfare charity
- Carry out another UK-wide survey about cats to influence our work in the future
- Continue to quickly adapt to the changing needs of the public regarding the content about cats they require
- Run engaging and informative campaigns to reach new audiences with our cat welfare messaging

In 2020...

- 585,000 Facebook followers (2019: 566,000)**
- 121,000 Twitter followers (2019: 114,600)**
- 114,000 Instagram followers (2019: 84,400)**
- 2.6 million YouTube views (2019: 2.1 million)**
- 6 million website visits (2019: 4 million)**
- 221,000 Meow Blog visits (2019: 184,000)**





Casper's story

When the team at our Cornwall Adoption Centre scanned five-year-old Casper for a microchip, they were shocked to discover that he was registered to an address 55 miles away in Plymouth.

They quickly phoned his owner Anna to let her know he was safe, and she revealed that he'd in fact been missing for three years!

After receiving the call Anna jumped in the car and made the 110-mile round trip to collect Casper, who has settled back in with the family like he'd never been away.

"It was such an unexpected surprise to hear than not only had he been found but that he was alive and we could collect him and bring him home," said Anna. "We have no idea how he came to be in Truro but he's always been a friendly laid-back cat who explores and roams, loving to make friends with people.

"Before he went missing he was very much loved by the local community and well known for his trips to the local school and for sitting outside the church asking to be stroked as people walked inside.

"I was heartbroken when he didn't come back. I certainly didn't expect to see him again but I'm so glad that not only did we have him microchipped but that we kept our details up-to-date."

Casper was also the star of our heart-warming Christmas animation, which you can watch at www.cats.org.uk/christmas



Cardboard box kittens' story

When the team at our Isle of Wight Adoption Centre noticed a taped-up cardboard box outside the centre gates, they were shocked to open it up and find seven tiny kittens inside.

Believed to be from two different litters, all of the abandoned kittens were too young to be separated from their mothers and were all underweight and dehydrated.

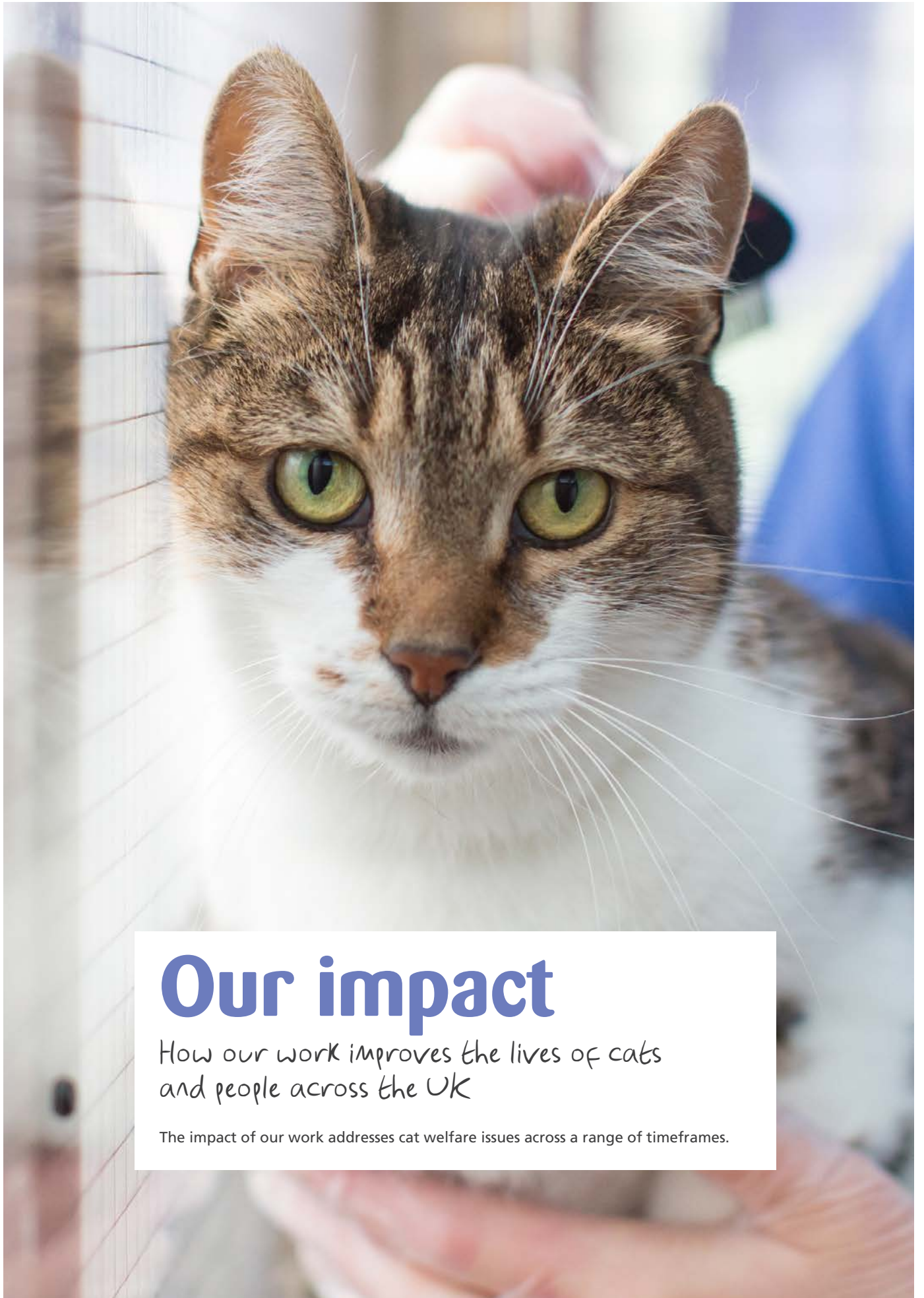
The centre team took them in and gave them round-the-clock care, hand-feeding them every few hours to help build up their strength.

Despite a few worrying vet visits, all of that love and care worked and the kittens grew up to be happy and healthy and find new homes.

Rebecca, who adopted two of the kittens, said: "My husband, Martin, and son, Leon, and I were very pleased to hear that Cats Protection had introduced hands-free homing during these strange times. Leon named the coffee-coloured girl Mistie and the beige-and-white tabby boy Cosmo. They were very confident and grounded from day one and are a joy to have!"

Rowan, who adopted Moses, said: "Moses joined our family in July and very quickly showed that he was as curious, playful, affectionate and chatty as we'd been told. We love him, and we think he quite likes us too!"

Kitten Trevor was adopted by Pete, who said: "Since the first day he arrived Trevor, or Trev as he is known, ruled the house. The boy is a prince and that is how he acts. He is our first real pet and everyone loves him."



Our impact

How our work 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 over 200,000 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 over 700,000 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, we have delivered over 6,000 educational talks

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, 23% of UK households have at least one pet cat, with an estimated owned cat population of 10.2 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 7
- providing our Paws Protect, Paws to Listen and Cat Guardians services. Find out more on page 27
- providing advice to governments on animal welfare legislation. Find out more on page 35
- providing volunteering opportunities for those who wish to support our work, including through the Duke of Edinburgh programme

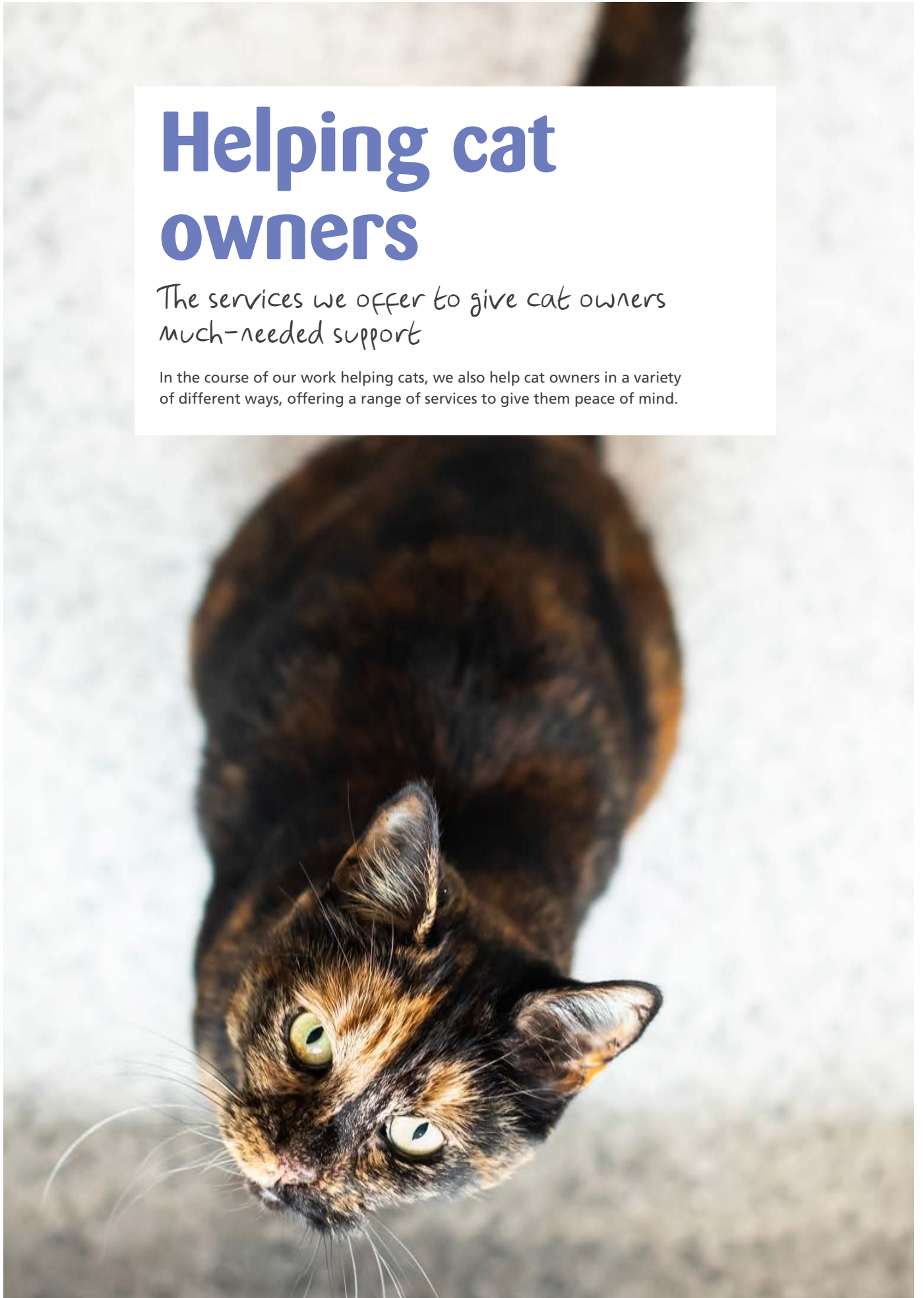
The Directors of the Corporate Trustee have given careful consideration to, and complied with, the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. This is reflected in the review of the activities undertaken by the charity contained in this report.

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 give them peace of mind.



Paws Protect

In a year when those experiencing domestic abuse have faced more difficulty than ever getting access to support services, we're proud to have been able to continue offering our Paws Protect temporary fostering service. Owning a pet can be a barrier to people fleeing abusive situations, and so we offer to care for their beloved cat until they can be safely reunited. Our team has been able to adapt their working practices in-line with COVID-19 restrictions to ensure the safety of all the owners, volunteers, employees and of course cats involved. We have seen a reduction in the number of referrals and cats coming into care since March, due to limitations in refuge space and move-on accommodation and a reduction in opportunity for survivors to leave abusive situations. However, we have still been able to create happy, safe reunions for 87 cats this year. For more information, visit www.cats.org.uk/paws-protect

Cat Guardians

For cat owners who are concerned about who will care for their cat when they pass away, we offer our free Cat Guardians service. This gives them peace of mind that, in the event of their death, we promise to take care of their cat for as long as it takes to find them a suitable new home. We encourage those registered with the service to give us as much detail as possible about their cat's likes and dislikes, so that we can match them with their ideal new family. One cat lover said: "I signed up to the Cat Guardians service so that in case anything happened to us, our cats would be taken care of. It's such a hard thing to think about but I needed to make sure that arrangements were in place should anything happen." For more information, visit www.cats.org.uk/catguardians

Paws to Listen

Losing a beloved pet is always heartbreaking but this year that pain and grief has been intensified for many by the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. From not being able to be with their cat while they were put to sleep, to feeling isolated and alone as they grieve, it has been a particularly difficult time to lose a feline friend. Our free and confidential Paws to Listen grief support service has been there for so many people during this time, providing a sympathetic ear and useful resources for those struggling to cope with the loss of a cat. At the start of 2020 we expanded our team of volunteer listeners, and have seen a steady increase in the number of people getting in touch via email as well as over the phone. Our next step is to look into launching a live webchat function. For more information, visit www.cats.org.uk/grief

In 2020...

Paws Protect helped 53 families flee domestic abuse safely (2019: 75)

Cat Guardians took in and rehomed 145 cats, helping 95 supporters (2019: 130 cats from 84 supporters)



Raising vital funds

The kind donations from cat lovers that enable us to carry out our vital work

2020 has been a challenging year for most charities, with lockdown restrictions causing a significant drop in income. It has been no different for us, with fundraising events cancelled and our charity shops forced to close we have not been able to raise as much money as we'd hoped. While we have been making use of government support and making savings wherever possible, we're also more grateful than ever for the cat lovers who have kindly supported us through these difficult times. Your creative fundraising and generous donations have enabled us to continue helping unwanted cats and kittens across the UK and given us hope for the future of the charity.





Donations

- To recoup some of our losses we launched a Special Coronavirus Appeal which raised £1 million to help us continue our work
- While face-to-face fundraising was on hold, we made sure supporters could donate via our website and national Facebook and Instagram pages. As lockdown restrictions eased we made sure our fundraisers followed government guidelines while out meeting cat lovers

Cat Sponsorship and Membership

- Our Cat Sponsorship scheme gives supporters regular updates about the cats in their sponsor pens in return for their kind donations and raised £5.8 million this year
- Over 20,000 Cats Protection Members get benefits including a free subscription to *The Cat* magazine, a pin badge and access to the 24-hour Vetfone™ helpline for support with cat health advice from qualified vet nurses

Cat Champions

From cake sales to the London Marathon, so many fundraising events had to be cancelled or postponed this year, resulting in a significant drop in our income. To try to offset this loss, we created lots of new online fundraising alternatives and were truly blown away by how many Cat Champions got involved and even thought up their own creative ways to raise money from home. We were there to support them every step of the way and are truly grateful for their dedication during a very difficult year. They got involved in the nationwide 2.6 Challenge, taking on a sponsored activity based around the number 2.6; our Pawsome Afternoon Tea moved online, with a baking competition judged by *The Great British Bake Off* finalist Kim-Joy; cat lovers walked, ran or cycled in our Nine Mile Challenge and hosted virtual Black Cat Quizzes for their family and friends; gamers also got involved in Pawsome Players, live-streaming their gaming to raise money for cats.

Lottery and raffle

- Our Weekly Lottery gives players the chance to win one of 300 cash prizes every week and in 2020 players generated £5.6 million for our cause (2019: £4.15 million)
- Players in our quarterly raffles have the chance to win one of 500 cash prizes each time while also helping cats and kittens

Legacies and high value giving

- Nearly half of everything we do is funded by gifts in Wills, so we are very grateful to all those who helped us raise £33.3 million through these special gifts in 2020 (2019: £35.4 million)
- Our incredibly generous major donors and funders continue to make a significant difference to the lives of cats and kittens across the UK



Plans for 2021

- Develop and implement our new income generation strategy to provide the income we need to deliver the charity's aims
- Continue to strive to improve the experience and satisfaction of our supporters. Without them our work would not be possible
- Develop and test new fundraising products and channels

Retail

When lockdown began in March we sadly had to close our 109 shops (2019: 131) and were only able to gradually begin opening them again in July. With extra health and safety measures in place to keep our volunteers and customers safe, we were thrilled to start receiving and selling donated items again, but then had to close our shops for the second lockdown in November. These closures obviously had a big impact on our income, but we still managed to generate £6.6 million in 2020 (2019: £9.5 million). As well as raising vital funds, our shops also help to raise awareness of our work and provide the public with cat advice and support.

We've also been exploring ways to sell new and donated goods online, setting up some of our charity shops on eBay to help customers buy their items from home. In November we launched our brand new Cats Protection branded Cat Care Collection, featuring lots of stylish and practical products for cats. All profits from the sale of these items go directly towards helping the cats in our care.

People's Postcode Lottery

Thanks to players of People's Postcode Lottery, we have received an amazing £3.5 million since 2018. At the end of 2019 we received £1.2 million, which in 2020 has been used to fund cat care assistant and volunteer team leader roles at our centres, 10,000 microchips for the cats in our care, plus two roles in our Behaviour team, helping them provide cat behaviour advice to the public as well as our own centres and branches. This year we received a further £1.28 million which is helping to cover the cat care costs in our centres in 2020 and 2021, as well as funding our work speaking up for cats with politicians and decision makers to create a better world for our feline friends. This funding will make a huge difference for cats and so we are very grateful to players of People's Postcode Lottery for their support.

Thanks to our partners

Funds and support from our corporate partners have been more important than ever this year to help us continue our work with cats and so we are incredibly grateful for the generous support we have received.

- Ceva
- Petplan®
- Pets at Home and Support Adoption For Pets
- PURINA®
- Shark®
- *Simon's Cat*
- Sure Petcare

Thank you to the many others who support our work through corporate partnerships. For more information about our partners please visit www.cats.org.uk/corporatepartners



Hallie's bike ride

Self-confessed crazy cat lady Hallie decided to take on an equally crazy cycling challenge to raise money for her favourite animals.

Eight-year-old Hallie rode her bike from Eastbourne to Heathfield and back, covering a distance of 48km in just five hours and 36 minutes.

Her kind sponsors helped her raise an incredible £245 for Cats Protection, which will ensure lots of cats and kitten receive the care they need.

Hallie said: "I have loved cats since the day I was born. My first cat was called Mr Harry Cat, he was a ginger tabby. He used to follow me everywhere and follow me when I rode my scooter around my street. I even have a book about him.

"I now have a tabby cat called Bonnie and a black-and-white cat called Mallie. They often sleep on my bed.

"I love cats so much my mummy calls me the crazy cat lady. I have cat bedding, cushions, clothes, ornaments and many more cat things.

"I am doing this cycle so I can raise money for Cats Protection because I love cats and I want to help them as much as I can."

Financial summary

Our total income in 2020 was £72 million, a decrease of £1.2 million from 2019.

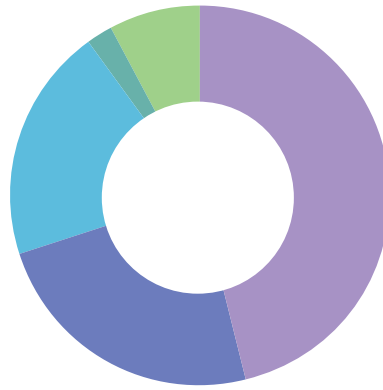
- Legacy income decreased by £2m as 2019 had been an exceptional year
- Donation income increased by £2.4m due to recruiting new donors and the success of our Special Coronavirus Appeal
- Our retail income reduced by £3.9m as many of our shops had to close
- Income from fundraising events rose by £1.8m thanks to an increase in players of our raffles and Weekly Lottery

Our total expenditure also decreased to £66.5 million, a reduction of £4.8 million from 2019.

- As we were able to take fewer cats into our care, we spent £2.1m less on rehoming
- With many vet services disrupted, we spent £1.3m less on reducing the overpopulation of cats through neutering
- We spent £0.1m less on providing cat welfare information to the public, as much of this support moved online
- We spent £1.3m less on generating more income for the charity, due to the closure of our shops

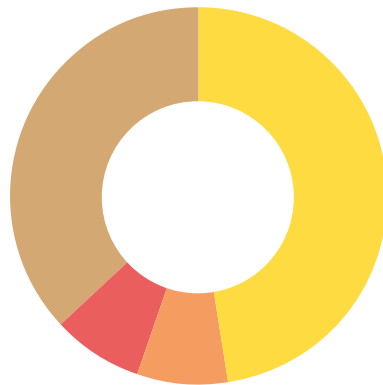
A summary of our income and expenditure for 2020 is presented in the charts opposite. These figures are based on those included in the full, audited and unqualified accounts for the year ended 31 December 2020. For the full 2020 Annual Report & Accounts visit www.cats.org.uk/annual-review or get in touch using the details on page 42.

Where our £72m income came from



| | |
|--------|--------------------|
| £33.3m | – Legacies |
| £17.3m | – Donations |
| £14.2m | – Events and shops |
| £1.7m | – Rehoming fees |
| £5.5m | – Other |

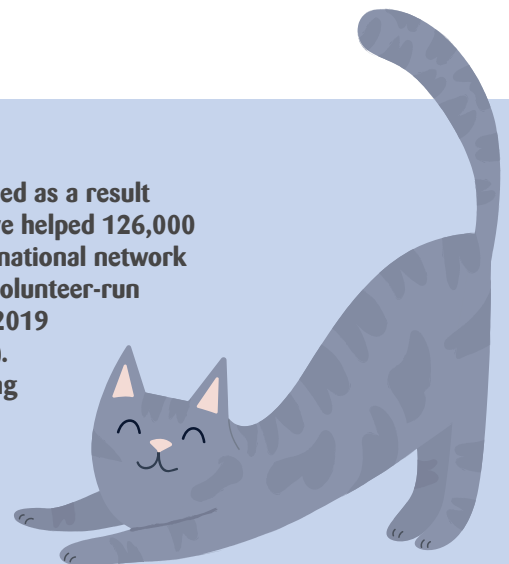
How we spent £66.5m



| | |
|--------|-----------------------------------|
| £31.7m | – Rehoming |
| £5.2m | – Reducing overpopulation of cats |
| £5.1m | – Information |
| £24.5m | – Raising funds |

In 2020...

Despite the challenges we faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we helped 126,000 cats and kittens through our national network which includes around 210 volunteer-run branches and 37 centres (in 2019 we helped over 191,000 cats). That's the equivalent of helping around 345 cats a day.

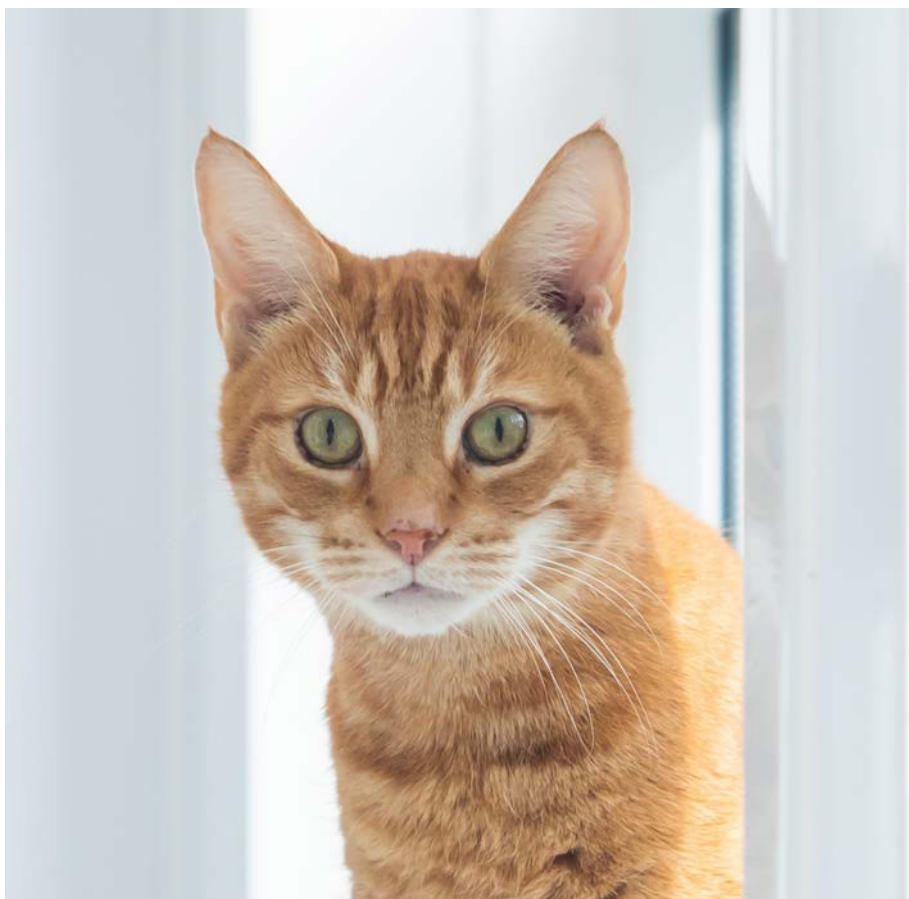


Speaking up for cats

*How we bring about positive change
for cats and their owners*

Although much of their work had to move online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our Advocacy & Government Relations team continued to influence politicians and decision makers to improve cat welfare across the UK.





The Time is Meow

Central to our engagement at Westminster was the launch of our new manifesto 'The Time is Meow: A cat welfare action plan for Westminster'. The document covers 12 priority policy areas to improve cat welfare, including control of the unplanned use of fireworks, regulating cat breeding, ensuring pet-friendly tenancies, tackling unscrupulous online sellers and banning snares. The Time is Meow is the policy platform for all our engagement at Westminster and has already been used in numerous debates and Parliamentary questions.

Microchips Reunite campaign

Thanks to the help of our amazing supporters, we're very hopeful that the microchipping of owned cats will soon be made compulsory by law, just as it is for dogs. At the end of 2019 the government held a call for evidence on cat microchipping which had an overwhelmingly positive response. When the COVID-19 pandemic stalled the progress on this issue we were keen to get the topic back on the political agenda and so asked our supporters to contact their MPs and encourage them to attend our virtual event on microchipping. Nearly 5,000 emails were sent to MPs and as a result over 50 signed up to attend our event, including the Minister of State for Animal Welfare Zac Goldsmith. Following the event, the government launched a consultation on proposals on cat microchipping and we are optimistic that this will result in a change in the law.

Other advocacy work across the UK

- We had over 70 virtual meetings with politicians across the UK to discuss Cats Protection's priorities, prioritising engagement with the new intake of MPs following the 2019 General Election
- Our Chief Executive James Yeates was appointed as a member of the Animal Welfare Committee, an expert panel advising the government on important animal welfare issues
- We supported the government's Petfished campaign, which aims to educate people about the dangers of buying pets online and how to spot the signs of a deceitful seller
- As one of the founding members of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Cats (APGOCATS), we co-authored a major report on how cats can help tackle loneliness which was praised by Baroness Barran MBE, the responsible government minister

In 2020...

99% (641 of 650) of MPs were contacted by our supporters about cat microchipping
1,500 reports were made by our volunteers to Facebook relating to adverts associated with cat and kitten sales
24 MPs signed a motion celebrating our work during the pandemic



Plans for 2021

- Continue promoting our Microchips Reunite campaign to ensure a change in the law
 - Hold a round table discussion with housing and government representatives to ensure more pet-friendly rented housing
 - Press for a committee enquiry into the impact COVID-19 has had on the animal welfare sector
 - Ensure that regulations to license animal welfare establishments and cat breeding and selling is passed in Scotland
 - Press for the compulsory microchipping of owned cats in Wales
 - Encourage improvements to the pet passport scheme for cats entering the UK after its exit from the European Union
- We set up a group of volunteers to find and report adverts for cats for sale on Facebook, which are against the social media platform's guidelines
 - We put together a video of politicians being interrupted by their cats on video calls and shared it on social media. The video has been viewed 55,000 times and you can watch it at bit.ly/pawlitical-interruptions
 - As a member of the Companion Animal Welfare Group Wales (CAWGW) we launched a joint manifesto ahead of the 2021 Welsh Senedd election and met with key members of the Welsh Senedd and Welsh Government to promote it
 - We responded to a consultation on banning third-party kitten sales in Wales and are delighted that the Welsh Government will be introducing a ban on the sale of kittens under six months by anyone other than the breeder
- We started working with the Scottish Government to develop regulations on cat breeding and animal welfare organisations in Scotland
 - Working with the More for Scotland's Animals coalition we presented a joint agenda ahead of the 2021 Scottish Parliament election calling for a ban on snares, inclusion of animal welfare in the curriculum and more pet-friendly tenancies
 - As one of the founding members of the Northern Ireland Companion Animal Welfare Group we are working with the Northern Ireland Assembly on companion animal welfare issues such as the selling of pets

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



Hope's story

Three-year-old Hope was suffering unimaginable pain when she was found covered in blood, sheltering in a shed in Hampshire. She had been cruelly shot three times with an air gun, leaving her unable to walk because of her injuries.

She arrived in the care of our Southampton Branch, where it was discovered that poor Hope was also pregnant when she'd been viciously attacked.

Thankfully she managed to give birth to four healthy kittens just days after receiving surgery to remove one of the air gun pellets still lodged in her body.

Hope needed lots of veterinary assistance to get through her terrible ordeal, and so the branch put out an appeal to the public to help cover her vet bills. They were incredibly grateful to raise over £5,000 from kind supporters, ensuring they could keep helping more cats like Hope.

Once fully recovered, Hope found a new home with Debbie. She said: "She is adorable. I work long hours in the NHS and she sits on the windowsill waiting for me to come home. Literally her tail goes straight up, she purrs, kneads her paws and runs to the door every time I walk through it. Hope is just the perfect little cat for me. Fun, feisty, but enjoys a fuss."

Cats Protection is calling for the government to introduce the licensing of air guns in England and Wales, to prevent cats like Hope being cruelly shot. To sign our petition visit www.cats.org.uk/airgunspetition



Supporting our people

Making sure our volunteers and employees have everything they need to help cats

2020 was an incredibly challenging year for our people. We had to adapt our ways of working and volunteering at speed and many were unable to carry out their roles as they had previously.



Helping us to get there

We supported them through furloughing and redeployments, changes in our practice and rapidly changing health and safety guidance and protocols, responding to the government guidance as the pandemic continued.

We quickly moved our support online, finding new ways of engaging with our people and bringing them (and often their cats) together virtually from across the UK. We supported their wellbeing through sharing resources and regular communication, connecting via a parents' group, our employee forum, our learning programme, our pride network and virtual get-togethers. Tailored support was also provided to those experiencing bereavement.

While in-person training had to be cancelled, we provided plenty of online workshops to help our people develop their skills. This included new cat welfare workshops, enabling volunteers and employees to share and discuss good

cat welfare practice to benefit the cats in our care, and new customer service training to help those in our centres and shops provide the best possible experience for our supporters. The use of our online courses increased by 400% in 2020, with over 14,000 online courses completed by the end of the year.

Although the number of people volunteering for us fell in 2020, the determination of our dedicated teams did not falter. People had so many demands on their time and of course we had to stop some of our activity, but we hope in 2021 we can welcome back those that have taken a break and start growing our team of cat lovers again.

Plans for 2021

- Build on our values and culture to ensure we have more impact on cats in the future, support our volunteer managers in creating rewarding and safe volunteer experiences and help our employee managers to support and develop their teams to do their best for cats, whatever their role
- Continue to work collaboratively across the charity, developing even more engaging and impactful learning. In particular, increasing training and induction support to volunteers, focus on customer impact, understanding of cats and their needs and strengthening management and leadership development across the charity
- Continue to increase the support and development for our people, taking what we've learned in 2020 and building on what's made us stronger as a charity

In 2020...

Our team of 10,900 dedicated volunteers provided much-needed support to cats across the UK





Debbie's deliveries

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, some of our volunteers had to quickly adapt to new ways of helping cats in 2020, and for some that meant becoming cat delivery drivers.

As part of our new hands-free homing scheme, we began delivering cats to their new homes as adopters couldn't visit our centres and fosterers, and volunteer Debbie Eyre signed up for this new role.

Debbie said: "Cats are such wonderful companions and I cannot imagine life without them. I love being involved with this new process; everyone has been so happy to receive their new cat. I can sometimes hear the cat in the back of the van and I like to talk to them and let them know they are nearly home."

"I arrived at one house and the owner was watching through the upstairs window, waiting for me to arrive. At another, I arrived at the same time as a lorry delivering a Hoover – I felt quite sorry for the delivery man as they basically ignored him."

In normal times, Debbie volunteers at our National Cat Adoption Centre in Sussex, overseeing paperwork for new admissions and adoptions. She said: "I cannot wait to get back to my usual role so I can learn how the cats I delivered are getting on. When you have direct contact with a cat you always want to know more afterwards. It's nice to see all the cats and watch their progress and it's wonderful to be part of an amazing charity and get to know everyone too."



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](https://www.facebook.com/CatsProtection)

Twitter: [@CatsProtection](https://twitter.com/CatsProtection)

Instagram: [@CatsProtection](https://www.instagram.com/CatsProtection)

YouTube: [/CatsProtectionUK](https://www.youtube.com/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





Reg Charity
203644 (England and Wales)
SC037711 (Scotland)
COM_6105 CODE - 70380

