No matter how much, or how little time you have to give, your efforts WILL make a difference.

Bobby McGaffney, branch volunteer
I believe in doing what you can, when you can. Don’t wait until you have more time because that day may never come - start making a difference now!

Heather Cook, branch volunteer
Welcome to the team!

Hello and welcome to Cats Protection. This handbook has been produced to help ensure that your experience of volunteering for Cats Protection is an enjoyable and rewarding one.

The importance of volunteers to Cats Protection cannot be overestimated. The valuable work we do for cats across the UK is only made possible through the efforts of volunteers who, like you, willingly give up their time and expertise to make a positive difference to cats’ lives. Working together, our volunteers and staff help thousands of cats every year and raise the vital funds necessary to pay for our work.

Inside this handbook you will find important information about the work of Cats Protection, our vision, values and aims. You will read about the scope of our work, the variety of interesting activities our volunteers are involved in and what you can expect as a Cats Protection volunteer. The handbook also contains a brief description of the policies that affect you and how staff and volunteers across the organisation work together to help cats.

By volunteering for Cats Protection you have joined the UK’s leading feline welfare charity and biggest cat community! Thank you for choosing Cats Protection and welcome to the team!

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“My driving force is to work towards a day when people take responsibility for the moggy. If the branch can help one tiny kitten, one injured cat or neuter one feral then together we have made a difference.”

Gillian McMullen, branch volunteer
Our vision, values and aims

Cats Protection...now
Cats Protection helps more than 235,000 cats and kittens every year and 2011 was a very special year for us as we passed an exciting milestone. Over the past five years, we have helped one million cats through our rehoming, neutering, reuniting and microchipping programmes. It's a huge number and, while we are rightly proud of our achievements, we know more cats need our help.

More needs to be done to keep even more cats safe, well and cared for in the future. That's why we are determined to grow and develop. We have come a long way from our inauguration in 1927. The concern of just a few cat lovers heralded an organisation that has since grown into the UK's largest feline welfare charity.

Today, we actively prevent unplanned litters being born in the first place, so that they do not become the unwanted cats of tomorrow. We do this by working with veterinary practices, other animal welfare organisations and cat owners to promote the benefits of neutering and responsible pet ownership. Our rehoming and neutering programmes are at the heart of our strategy and, together with our work in reuniting lost cats with their owners, ensure those 235,000 cats are given the chance of a better life. Our education programmes help many more cats. This work would be impossible without the dedication and commitment of our people. In fact in 2011 volunteers contributed around 4.5 million hours to fundraise, raise awareness and to carry out three quarters of all our rehoming work. It’s incredible dedication, we’re sure you will agree!

For more than 80 years we have built a strong, united charity that has changed the world in which we work. In order to further develop this strength, we are constantly reviewing our direction and methods, making changes where we could do more to improve the interests of cats and kittens. Our voice for cats is listened to, actively sought out and respected by millions of people. We are interested in the welfare of every cat, at home or abroad and we offer advice and support to numerous organisations working on behalf of cats wherever they may be. Cats Protection has simple and clear objectives to help cats:

• Homing – finding good homes for cats in need
• Neutering – supporting and encouraging the neutering of cats
• Education and information – improving people’s understanding of cats and their care

Our vision is
A world where every cat is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs

It’s an ambitious vision. However, we truly believe it can be achieved because of our passion, our professional approach and simply because cats are one of the UK’s most popular companion pets.
Our values... which underpin everything
They will shine through our work and provide the cornerstones of our charity, enabling us to grow and, as a result, to help more and more cats and kittens every year. Our values are simple:
• We care about cats
• We value and respect our volunteers, supporters and staff
• We are committed to providing a high quality service
• We are open and honest

Our strategy
Cats Protection will continue to help cats by developing and growing in all three of our objectives:
• Homing
• Neutering
• Education and information

This will be achieved by:
• Pulling together as ‘one charity’
• Investing in our branches and in volunteers across the charity, so that we can help even more cats
• Becoming more effective and professional with consistent and high standards

We will:
• Invest in supporting the people who carry out our vital work
• Build a dynamic and go-ahead organisation
• Attract more volunteers, more homes for cats, more funds to pay for food, veterinary care and everything our cats need

We will:
• Become more responsive to the needs of our customers, current and future
• Communicate better what the charity stands for
• Work with other organisations to further the cause of cats and their welfare

Cats Protection...into the future
For every cat we help in the UK, there are many more that we cannot help. To be able to reach out to all the cats and kittens that need us, we must dramatically increase our ability to rehome, neuter and impart information. We cannot ask the cats to wait until we can help them. Their needs are paramount, as is our responsibility to be there for them. The years ahead will bring many new opportunities and challenges. Cats Protection wants everyone to celebrate our achievements to date and also to support us in achieving an even better future. We must be there to help every cat in crisis.

“I volunteer for Cats Protection because every action changes the world for some cat, somewhere.”
Jeanette Greaves, branch volunteer
Cats Protection – where and how we work

The Board of Trustees
The Trustees are the governing body of Cats Protection. They have ultimate responsibility for the charity’s performance, values and ethos and ensure Cats Protection has a clear vision, complies with all legal requirements and has the highest possible standards of governance.

Council
The Council is the advisory body to the Trustees and they are also involved in the election of some Trustees to the Board. Council members are also volunteers and they are elected on the basis of their cat welfare and professional work skills. Election to Council is by application and is selected by CP members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

CEO and Executive Management Team (EMT)

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) works with the Board of Trustees to define strategic objectives for Cats Protection. He is responsible to the Trustees for the effective leadership of Cats Protection and ensures that the strategic objectives are met through management of the Executive Management Team.

Executive Management Team (EMT)
There are six Directors on the Executive Management Team (EMT) who report to the CEO. Their role is to advise and assist the CEO and Trustees, contribute to the development and implementation of Cats Protection's strategy and policies, monitor and report on performance in their respective areas and lead, direct and manage staff and volunteers within the organisation. The EMT is also responsible for promoting and upholding the image and reputation of Cats Protection and continuously review systems, structures, resources and procedures to ensure that CP is an effective organisation.

Branches
Cats Protection has over 250 branches across the UK. These branches are all run by dedicated volunteers, usually from their own homes. Branches take in cats in need and ensure that they receive all the veterinary care and attention that they need to help them get back on their paws before rehoming. Our branches have to raise funds to ensure that their cat care work can continue. They do this through fundraising events and appeals, while more than 60 branches also run their own charity shops. Branches also help to pay for the neutering of thousands of cats every year and help to spread cat welfare messages.

Branches vary in size from just a handful of volunteers to over a hundred. However, in order to be viable, each one must be run by a committee, which as a minimum comprises the Co-ordinator – who effectively runs the branch – Treasurer and Secretary. In addition there will be Fundraisers, Neutering Officers, Homing and Welfare Officers and PR specialists.

Volunteer groups
A variety of volunteer groups are active throughout Cats Protection, all working hard to achieve our vision. These groups are made up of dedicated volunteers who commit their time to a specific area of the charity ie fundraising, carrying out education talks, increasing the service we provide to our customers or neutering cats.
Adoption and homing centres
Our adoption and homing centres are mainly run by paid staff members who look after the cats on site. Adoption centres may consist of indoor or outdoor pens and cat cabins where the public can come and visit the cats in our care. We have 29 adoption centres across the UK. Our dedicated adoption centre staff and volunteers work hard to achieve the charity’s three aims and are often seen as the ‘public face’ of Cats Protection.

The National Cat Centre (NCC)
The NCC is our administrative office providing centralised support to our branches, adoption centres, charity shops, regional staff and volunteers. Staff and volunteers work in various functions including – Central Services, Communications, Fundraising, Legal, Operations and Veterinary.

Volunteering for Cats Protection has given me the opportunity to make a real difference to lives, not only for the cats that we rescue but also to the people that we meet along the way,

Julie Seymour, branch volunteer
What we do: Homing

One of our main objectives is to find a happy home for every cat. We have over 6,200 cats and kittens in our care at any one time, all looking for the perfect home. All of our cats have been treated to our minimum veterinary standards, meaning that they have been examined by a veterinary surgeon, been vaccinated against flu and enteritis, treated against fleas, roundworm and tapeworm and any sick cats have been blood tested for FIV and FeLV. If the cat has not been neutered before or during its time in our care, we will normally ensure owners have done this after adoption.

We also reunite lost cats with their owners and 2011 was another success for us as we rehomed and reunited around 48,000 cats – that’s nearly 1,000 a week!

We are particularly proud to introduce Patch to you. The grey-and-white tom was rehomed on New Year’s Eve, 2011 and has been nominated as our symbolic one millionth cat helped over the past five years. Patch got his new start thanks to the combined efforts of two branches. In November, West Cumbria Branch Co-ordinator Frances Morton turned to her friend Elaine Morley at Carlisle & District Branch for help with rehoming Patch and his three siblings. Patch’s siblings were rehomed before him but luckily he was spotted by Amanda Harrison of Annan, Dumfries.

Another of the cats CP helped in 2011 swapped city streets for country living and got an important new role thanks to our Birmingham Adoption Centre. Tabby-and-white Freddie was bought to the centre in July after he was found wandering the city’s streets. In November, he was appointed chief mouser at the National Trust’s Packwood House in Warwickshire and has taken to his rodent reduction role with relish.

As a Fosterer I derive a great deal of pleasure in knowing that what I do makes a huge difference to the present and future welfare of the cats and kittens that come into my care and seeing them go to lovely new homes is one of the greatest rewards of all.

Mary Wood, branch volunteer

“Patch is getting on really well. He's a happy, active cat and very loving.”

Patch’s new owner
Amanda Harrison
What we do: Neutering

Our neutering programmes have grown as we look to reduce the numbers of unwanted cats and kittens in the UK. In fact, according to research from the University of Bristol, we were responsible for funding over 20 per cent of all cat neutering carried out in the UK in 2011. We also run the largest single companion animal neutering programme in the world.

2011 was another massive year for us in which we neutered 191,000 cats and kittens across the UK. Once again our fantastic branches worked extremely hard in their local communities to support neutering programmes and to educate people about the benefits to cats of neutering. More than 50 per cent of neutering was carried out by our branches, 15 per cent by our adoption centres, while the remaining 35 per cent was carried out by the neutering team at the National Cat Centre and through partnerships with other charities. Our 10 most successful branches neutered a total of 18,232 cats and kittens between them.

Bridgend Adoption Centre was one of many CP teams that helped to improve the lives of feral cats. Staff member Katie Edwards devoted hours of her free time to trapping and taking for neutering more than 50 feral cats living on a residential estate. Many of the cats were underweight, others had flu-like symptoms, there were several litters of kittens and some of the estate’s residents were not pleased by the cats’ presence. With less competition for food, the neutered and released feral cats are now looking much healthier.

“I volunteer as a trapper because it is so rewarding when you trap a mother cat you have been trying to catch for months. You know that at last that colony will not grow any bigger and the people feeding them will be able to cope so much better without the worry of more kittens arriving all the time.”

Sue John, AC volunteer

The residents are more accepting of the cats now there’s not litter after litter of kittens. People are much friendlier towards them.”

Katie Edwards, staff member, Bridgend Adoption Centre

We want to be able to reach more communities and to neuter more cats wherever we can. That’s why our work with other animal charities is so important. We can share costs and resources, making our neutering schemes more viable and cost effective. In total around 30,000 cats were neutered through our joint schemes.

We also continued to work with animal welfare and housing staff in over 70 local authorities, building on the foundations established in previous years, with the National Dog Wardens’ Association choosing to hold their annual conference at the National Cat Centre – who says cats and dogs can’t get along?!
What we do: Education and information

Educating cat owners and future cat owners about cat welfare is supremely important to us. It’s not just about ensuring cats are well looked after. Our education programmes aim to ensure youngsters in particular grow up understanding animals and how to meet their needs and ultimately learn to respect them. While the younger generation is key to these aims we make sure adult groups are included in our objectives too.

In 2012, we distributed thousands of education packs and teaching materials to schools and colleges across the UK. We also gave around 300 talks reaching more than 10,000 people in the process. Our adoption centres often open their doors to Beaver and Brownie groups offering the chance for them to see our work up close and to learn more about cats and their needs.

“I have been volunteering for Cats Protection for the last year and it has been an amazing experience. I love cats and I wanted to give something back to them and help out in any way I could. That was why I chose to be involved in the education aspect of this magnificent charity.”

Valeria Higgins, Education volunteer

Raising awareness of our work is vital if we are to reach out to as many cats as possible. Our National Helpline service was as busy as ever handling more than 40,000 calls and emails each year.

The local and national media remains a very important outlet for us to spread news about our work and our objectives. In 2012 the total circulation from 8,007 articles in the UK media about or mentioning CP, reached a huge 1,004,006,106. If we had to pay for that level of coverage as advertising it would have cost us over £6m!

Highlights of our media coverage included our National Cat Awards. This was our most successful yet with coverage on BBC Breakfast as well as in numerous local newspapers and regional tv and radio. As figures for unwanted cats reached an all-time high for Cats Protection, news stories appealing for help were achieved in The Independent, The Times and The Daily Mail, in addition to many local newspapers.

We also attended a number of shows and events across the UK, including Crufts and the London Pet Show. All of these allowed us to talk to potential adopters, volunteers and donors and to explain face-to-face the work we do for cats. These events also give us a chance to promote our popular supporter magazine, The Cat.

The internet is, of course, a hugely important medium for us and we received more than 2.3m unique web hits in 2012. Our online blog, Meow, has proved a very popular site and it is where we can tell everyone about the CP success stories from around the UK. Our social media presence grows each year with nearly 100,000 followers on Facebook and over 20,000 on Twitter. They are proving to be a fantastic way to keep in real-time touch with our supporters, enabling us to interact daily and get our messages out there in a fun and informal way.

“It is fab to be part of a team which creates so many happy endings.”

Julia Dallosso, branch volunteer
What we do: Fundraising and retail

Fundraising is extremely important, as Cats Protection receives no government or lottery funding both staff and volunteers work hard to grow the charity’s income so that more funds are available to spend on our work with cats. Raising funds to help us continue our work with cats has perhaps never been so important. It’s a challenge that many of our branches and centres meet head on with increasingly innovative campaigns.

Two courageous Cat Care Assistants leapt from a plane at 13,000ft, raising almost £1,000 for Birmingham Adoption Centre. Laura Middlemast and Julie Styler saw their 15 November sponsored tandem parachute jump as a great way to combine their shared ambition with fundraising for CP.

Other branches raised money in more traditional but just as effective ways. Among these was Croydon Branch, which made a net profit of £3,500 from its Grand Auction in November.

Nationally, the generosity of our legacy pledgers continues to be an extremely important fundraising stream for us with more than £19m of our income generated through gifts in wills. We also continued to work closely with our corporate partners, including Purina, Petplan and Pets At Home to raise funds and awareness of our work with cats.

2011 was also an important year for our retail teams and a number of shops were set up, aimed at raising our profile on local high streets, raising funds and assisting with the development of new branches. In fact, our new shop in Leeds raised £5,000 in its very first week.

Our Fundraising team organises a range of fundraising activities - including challenge events. They manage the charity's monthly givers, legacy pledgers, members and one-off donors and record information relating to these supporters in our database. They also offer a range of services to branches, volunteer groups and adoption centres such as giving fundraising advice and practical support through our Regional Fundraisers.

“I couldn’t hear anything; I could just see the view. Words can’t explain it, it was just brilliant.”
Julie Styler, Cat Care Assistant, Birmingham Adoption Centre
What we do: Volunteer projects and other ways to help

Volunteers are involved in other areas of the charity bringing their time and expertise to help cats. Here are just some examples of the great things they do:

Health & Safety volunteers
The diverse nature of the work carried out by Cats Protection’s volunteers can pose many risks and expose them to a variety of hazards. Working closely with branches and other volunteer groups in their region, Health & Safety volunteers raise awareness of health and safety, assess risks in accordance with CP guidelines and work with others to keep us and our cats safe.

Way-Finders volunteers
Many of our adoption centres are “off the beaten track” and suffer from a lack of clear sign-posting from major routes and/or centres of population and unfortunately this can have a direct impact on attracting people to home our cats. Way-Finders volunteers meet these challenges head on either by petitioning county councils or other relevant authorities to erect roadside signs or by seeking planning permission to erect signs on private land.

Administrative volunteers
Our busy National Helpline and Neutering teams receive approximately 150-200 calls each day. Volunteers play a key role in the teams to support a wide variety of administrative activities, maximising efficiency and providing great customer service. Within our Purchasing Department, volunteers also play an important role liaising with volunteers, colleagues and other departments reviewing customer service levels and investigating opportunities to improve current processes.

Veterinary research volunteers
We know a lot about cats but are always keen to know more! Working with the Veterinary team, these volunteers help to further the charity’s knowledge of cat care and build on homing, neutering and education strategies. Volunteers worked directly with our cats; cleaning, feeding, grooming, socialising, desensitising cats, as well as liaising with other volunteers, vets and potential owners. All of which helps us to understand our feline friends even more.

Volunteering research volunteer
A professional research volunteer has been working with the Volunteering Development team in the development of a national recognition policy for the charity. The volunteer’s skills, expertise, time and commitment has helped influence decision making and has given our volunteers a voice on how they would like to see volunteer reward and recognition move forward within the charity.

“We feel our volunteering helps go towards finding a loving home for another homeless cat.”
Helen and John Mole, AC volunteers
Volunteering expectations

Volunteering is a partnership and we are committed to creating the best possible environment for volunteers to share their skills, knowledge and experiences, as well as ensuring that every volunteer is valued and recognised for their time and expertise. We embrace our mutual hopes and expectations detailed below which ensures that your and other volunteers’ experiences within Cats Protection are positive and enjoyable.

What you can expect from Cats Protection:
• To agree tasks and roles
• To provide induction, support, guidance and training
• To ensure that you know who you are responsible to and who should provide you with support should you face any problems
• To ensure that you and all others working and dealing with Cats Protection are treated with respect in line with Cats Protection’s commitment to equal opportunity and diversity
• To ensure a safe working environment and providing appropriate and reasonable insurance for you while volunteering with Cats Protection
• To accept what you have to offer and to support you in saying ‘no’ when necessary
• To encourage you to take on new challenges when they are available and you are ready to do so
• To provide opportunities to contribute to the future development of the charity, by sharing ideas and experiences
• To make a real difference to cats across the UK

What we expect from you:
• To carry out agreed tasks detailed in your role description
• To embrace our values; we care about cats, we value and respect our volunteers, supporters and staff, we are committed to providing a high quality service and we are open and honest
• To attend and fully participate in support and training sessions which are appropriate to your role
• To raise any concerns at the earliest opportunity
• To encourage others to feel welcome, work with other volunteers and employees as a team and to treat everyone with respect in line with Cats Protection’s commitment to equal opportunity and diversity
• Not to exceed any authority given to you
• Communicate with Cats Protection, openly, honestly and respectfully
• To comply with Cats Protection policies, procedures and guidelines
• To give us as much notice as possible should you be unable to attend or carry out your volunteer role or if you decide to end your volunteering commitment with us

Thank you

Cats Protection, Volunteer handbook
What volunteers mean to Cats Protection and our Volunteer Policy

Introduction
With the support of volunteers, Cats Protection can achieve its vision of a world where every cat is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs. The purpose of this policy is to set the broad principles for volunteering within Cats Protection. These principles and values should be applied by all staff and volunteers within the charity.

Our volunteering values
We recognise and appreciate the distinct contribution volunteers make to Cats Protection. Through our volunteers, we are able to reach out across the UK to rehome and neuter cats and to educate people on responsible cat ownership. We value their passion for cats, the different perspectives and breadth of experience they bring to the organisation and the distinctive and complementary role they play alongside paid staff.

Cats Protection benefits from the skills, experience and enthusiasm of volunteers and we believe that volunteers should be able to gain personal benefits from the experience too. We are committed to managing volunteers in a way that ensures the needs of both the volunteer and the organisation are met.

Cats Protection strives to create a diverse and inclusive organisation; we are committed to ensuring equality of access to high-quality volunteer opportunities and equality of treatment of volunteers in all our policies and procedures.

Recruitment and selection
Equality and diversity
Attracting new volunteers to Cats Protection is vital for the future of the organisation and to do this successfully we must demonstrate fair, transparent and inclusive recruitment processes. We value equality and diversity and aspire to reflect this in our recruitment procedures and volunteer management principles.

Recruitment and selection
The charity welcomes volunteers of all ages. We do not specify an upper age limit as we recognise the valuable contribution made by older volunteers in terms of knowledge and experience.

Young volunteers can bring fresh perspectives and enthusiasm to the charity while gaining valuable skills and experience. Young volunteers must be at least 14 years old and must have the written consent of a parent or guardian. Children under the age of 14 are welcome to volunteer with Cats Protection if they are involved in a family volunteering role.

All volunteers will be asked to complete an application or registration form, provide details of referees, consent to further checks (if applicable) and have an informal interview to match their preferences, skills and suitability with available volunteer roles.

It is important to us that all volunteers feel comfortable and confident in their roles. To achieve this all volunteers will receive a role description, know who to go to if they have any concerns, problems or questions and receive a full induction into their role and the charity.

Our expectations
Cats Protection places great importance on clarifying and communicating the expectations of the volunteer and of the organisation. Our values, what we expect from you and what you can expect from Cats Protection are detailed in our Volunteer Agreement and Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Keeping you involved and motivated
Expenses
Cats Protection believes that volunteers should not be out of pocket through volunteering. Agreed expenses should be reimbursed in line with the volunteer expenses policy.

Support and supervision
Providing support and supervision to our volunteers is very important, so all staff and volunteers who manage other volunteers will be approachable and happy to discuss and review a volunteer’s needs and abilities.

Learning and development
Induction and ongoing training will be offered as appropriate to the voluntary role and the needs of the individual. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to develop their skills wherever possible.

When things go wrong
If problems occur Cats Protection aims to identify and solve them at the earliest possible stage. The problem-solving procedures for volunteers and volunteer managers exist to help deal with complaints and problems quickly, fairly and consistently.

Listening to our volunteers
Cats Protection endeavours to listen to the views of our volunteers and involve them when appropriate in the development of the charity. The volunteer consultation policy outlines how we may do this.

Saying thank you
Saying thank you and recognising the value of our volunteers is vital, our recognition policy and strategy is just one way we demonstrate this.

Keeping you and information about you safe
Insurance
Registered volunteers are covered by Cats Protection’s public and employer’s liability insurance. Please contact your personal car insurance provider if you drive your car while volunteering for us.

Health and safety
The charity is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all volunteers. All
volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and responsible manner and not to act in a way that may put themselves or others at risk of injury. It is the responsibility of all volunteers to report any accident/incident or dangerous circumstance or occurrence to the Health & Safety Manager, irrespective of whether any person has been injured.

Data protection
Personal information recorded about volunteers is stored and maintained with appropriate safeguards for confidentiality. The charity abides by all provisions of the Data Protection Act of 1998. Volunteers who collect or administer any personal data on our supporters/other volunteers will also be required by law to comply with the provisions of that Act.

Confidentiality
Volunteers have a personal responsibility to protect and maintain confidentiality of the charity, suppliers, customers and client information.

Computer security, email and internet
Volunteers have a personal responsibility to ensure they do not commit any criminal offences or breach any laws including data protection legislation in their use of IT systems.

Intellectual property
Both volunteers and the organisation agree that the intellectual property rights of original work produced by volunteers automatically transfers to the organisation.

Full details on all Cats Protection volunteering policies and procedures can be found in the Volunteering pages of CatNav.

Thank you
Our history

Cats Protection has been making a positive difference to cats’ lives for over 80 years, building up a wealth of knowledge about feline welfare. We now have over 250 volunteer-run branches and 30 adoption/homing centres and continue to grow to meet the increasing demands placed upon us.

1927 - During the 1920s cats were not seen as the companion animals they are today. Rather than pets, most were thought of as nothing more than pests. On 16 May 1927, a meeting of like-minded people was held at Caxton Hall, London under the chairmanship of Miss Jessey Wade at which it was resolved “that a society be formed to be devoted exclusively to promoting the interests of cats and that its name be The Cats Protection League”.

1928 - The League set out to be an educational body, but it soon became apparent that this would have to be complemented by practical action in order to succeed.

1935 - In 1935 The Cats Protection League received, through a legacy gift, Prestbury Lodge in Slough. This became the first designated Headquarters. Sheds and later cat houses were added to the garden to provide space for cat care and rooms in the main house were adapted for the care of sick and injured animals.

1940 - The increased difficulty in funding clinical and rescue work during the war years led to the introduction of The Tailwavers Scheme. This fundraising appeal was introduced by The Cats Protection League in June 1940 “to help relieve suffering amongst bombed-out and starving cats in the blitzed areas”.

1950 - The Cats Protection League’s main aim during this time was to establish shelters to provide ‘a temporary refuge’ for cats in need but the financial outlay for this was great. Then in 1950 it received a legacy specifically for that purpose. A country property in Haslemere, Surrey was chosen. During the post-war decades The Cats Protection League was actively seeking changes in legislation, so that the plight of cats and other animals might be improved.

1977 - In 1977 the charity launched a serious drive for increased membership, advertising in national newspapers and periodicals. Over 1,000 members were recruited in a few months, bringing the total to over 10,000. From 1980 membership cards were issued.
1987 - In 1987 The Cats Protection League celebrated its 60th Anniversary. A campaign in the national press recruited 6,000 new members but the main birthday project was the publication of A Passion for Cats, a compendium of original writing on many aspects of the care and history of the animal and of the charity’s work.

1990 - One of the charity’s main objectives has always been to inform the public about the care of cats and kittens and in 1990 a new audience was targeted – school pupils. The Cats Protection League produced its first teaching pack for use in schools by children aged 5–11 years. This was distributed free to teachers and was a huge success: demand greatly exceeded expectation.

1994 - The charity, moving with the times, introduced microchipping into all its shelters – now known as adoption centres – in 1994. Every cat that the shelters rehomed was microchipped, neutered and vaccinated, in line with rigid standards of cat care and hygiene.

1998 - The charity changed its name from The Cats Protection League to the shorter and more modern sounding Cats Protection. A new logo and brand identity was launched to reflect the name change.

2004 - The National Cat Centre (NCC), located near Ashdown Forest, Sussex between East Grinstead and Haywards Health, became home to a 202-pen adoption centre, a veterinary facility and the charity’s administrative operations.

2007 - Cats Protection became the oldest and largest feline welfare charity in the UK, helping over 140,000 cats and kittens every year. Much of this great work was done by Cats Protection’s 5,500 active volunteers, who helped run our 252 branches nationwide. This year was a very special one for Cats Protection; it marked our 80th anniversary and saw us as a strong, united charity.

2010 - CP’s first ever dedicated homing centre in Ferndown, Dorset, opened.

2011 - We helped our one millionth cat!

“Volunteering for Cats Protection is rewarding and you really feel like you are making a difference to cats’ lives.”

Stacey Eyres, branch volunteer
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Thank you

Reg Charity 203644 (England and Wales)
and SC037711 (Scotland)