Mewsletter Autumn 2020

Stitch in time saves nine – or ninety?

Prevention is always better than cure and nowhere is it more apparent than in the cat rescue business. At Worthing Cat Welfare Trust we rescued, rehabilitated and re-homed 286 felines last year, around a third

of them kittens. Whilst we adore kittens – as anybody in their right mind does - the sheer number born without a ready home to go to generates a huge burden on our charity each year, in both financial and human resource terms.

Continued on page 5



5 becomes 10 becomes 20 then 40!

Chairman's Update

Hello everyone and a very belated Happy New Decade to you all. At long last we are back up to speed with our vital rescue, care and re-homing work. After the depressing months of lock down and slow down, the volume of adoption enquiries picked up surprisingly well and, if anything, we have had a shortage of pusses, rather than a shortage of new homes! Presumably, an equilibrium will return as the backlog of neglected cats manifests itself - as sadly it always does.

This year marks our **25th Anniversary**. Looking back at our humble beginnings, we have come such a long way. During this time we have rescued thousands of cats and kittens, but without your generosity of time, donations and legacies, we couldn't have done it. We are very proud to be *the* independent "cat only" charity in our area and this helps us to make the right decisions quickly to give cats all the help they need.

Continued on page 2



Worthing Cat Welfare Trust - Registered Charity No: 1049596, Registered Address: 141 Downside Avenue, Worthing, W. Sussex BN14 0EY (01903) 873353

Independent Examiner - A. Kelly FCA, Roffe Swayne Chartered Accountants, Woolsack Way, Godalming GU7 1LQ Tel. (01483) 416232 www.roffeswayne.com

Our Trustees and Management Group

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Lost & Found Marketing **Facebook** Website **Shop Manager Abigail**

Julie Stevens Mike Glennon Julie Stevens **Lucy Todd**

Corcoran-Green

(Continued from front page) One of our earliest supporters was Jean Manning, who sadly passed away last year, leaving us with a very generous legacy. So, to honour her memory and also to celebrate our Silver Jubilee, we have launched the neutering and spaying programme mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

On another somewhat sombre note, we have become aware of a spate of cat cruelty cases around the western parts of Worthing, including shootings with air guns. At the beginning of August one poor little cat in the Salvington area was shot in the eye. WCWT is taking a lead role in gathering and coordinating information on such cases and is liaising with the Sussex Police and the RSPCA.

Sandra Collins, Chairman



All well with Penny Wells

We have had Penny for over a year now and every day has been a great pleasure. She is a wonderful example of this breed of cat. Despite only having one eye, she is very affectionate, lets us know what she wants and at what time and tells us when to go to bed, because she likes to make sure we are tucked up before she leaves us to do her own thing during the night. (Continued p.18)

Oh, the fun of finding financial funds!

As we approached the end of our last financial year, my thoughts were focused on how our charity performed during that 12 month period and how that compared to previous periods. This is my second year in the role and what I have learned so far, is that no two years are the same and for many different reasons.

As it should be, the majority of our costs have been directly related to the care and re-homing of our cats, most of which has been inevitably for clinical treatment. Our veterinary costs alone are now running at around £100,000 every year! We have also had a few situations, where support has been given to cats that have required extensive care or major surgery. Dear little *Benji* (reported in the last issue of our newsletter and updated now on page 7) was a prime example of this. Happily, these interventions have resulted in a greatly enhanced quality of life for those cats involved.

Our income surged during the last year through some very generous legacies, which we hope have secured our viability for the next few years. Put into context, without legacies, we could only afford to pay the bills for just over five months of the year, which really brings everything into focus! Fortunately, we have investments as a back-up, which we discussed in our last issue. Although financial markets have fallen, we have already seen steady recovery, because of our prudent approach. Indeed, there may also be an opportunity for worthwhile capital gains in the medium term.



Vet bills about £100,000

We have also been putting our thinking caps on to consider how we can support our local feline community further. As mentioned at the top of page 5, we have set aside some money for a neutering, spaying and micro-chipping programme, the prototype of which will run until the end of November 2020. The board of trustees will continue, of course, to consider other ways, in which our financial and human resources can be deployed for the tangible benefit of our little furry friends.



Christine Jones
Treasurer

Keep an eye on their eyes!

One of the more common problems we see at the practice is a cat with a sore eye. Any cat holding one or other eye closed, especially if there is some discharge, should be seen urgently. Even a mild infection can rapidly progress to a sight-threatening problem.

Conjunctivitis (inflammation and infection of the conjunctiva, the pink tissues surrounding the eye) is usually easily treated by antibiotic eye drops, although occasionally it is due to an underlying virus infection, so a vet will want to check the cat's temperature and listen to the chest.



Scratches and other eye trauma may just need antibiotics, but occasionally it may be serious enough to require suturing, or placing a small graft of conjunctiva over the affected region. This can also be performed to treat a severe ulcer or other damage to the clear part of the eye (the cornea). Similarly, tears or cuts to the eyelids, or the nictitating membrane (the 'third' eyelid), need to be sutured as quickly as possible (certainly within 24 hours) to avoid healing with a ridge that could cause ongoing pain and irritation to the eye.



Dr. Julian Hoad

A watery eye may be the result of a trauma or inflammation, but it may also be caused by a blocked tear duct. These little openings, in the upper and the lower eyelids, can become blocked due to infection. It is usually possible to unblock them under sedation or anaesthetic by passing a fine cannula or tube through the duct and flushing it.

We don't often see problems with the lens in cats – although older or diabetic cats may develop cataracts, they are unusual. However, older cats are at risk of high blood pressure – especially if they have underlying kidney problems, and this can lead to tears in the retina and sudden blindness.

In short, if you see a problem with your cat's eye – especially if the eyes look different from normal or different from each other, do not delay: see your vet at the earliest opportunity.

Julian Hoad - Clinical Director Crossways Veterinary Group

(Continued from front page) That is why we are offering one hundred free appointments on our special neutering, spaying and micro-chipping **scheme** to reduce the inevitable numbers, which sooner or later find their way into our hands. If you have an untreated pet and are struggling to find the cash yourself, our partner veterinary practices will carry out the procedure and we'll pick up the bill. All you have to do is pick up the cat and all puss has to do is stop reproducing. Apart from the obvious population benefits, it is also a vital way to reduce the risks to Tom, who wanders around neighbourhoods on the prowl, prone to the very real dangers of busy roads (remember Benji on p.7!). For further details of the scheme, please e-mail us at: enquiries@worthingcatwelfaretrust.org

Lock Down has led to Lost Up

During lock-down we have had an all-time high in missing cats and, sadly, an increase in road traffic accidents too. It has been a sorrowful time for many, but we are forever grateful for all donations received towards our medical costs for some of these poor little victims and also for those cats deliberately harmed in a recent spate of terrible cruelty around the western parts of Worthing. (Continued on page 17 ...)



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Kittens and Spuds for Festive Lunch?

Two beautiful female cats came into our care, Roxy and Snowflake, as their owner had to vacate her flat. We were assured that both had been spayed and the girls settled in very quickly, both friendly and happy, though a little bit skinny.

Well, the skinny didn't last long. After a week or so they had both put on a lot of weight, especially around their little bellies. As they were spayed, it looked like they might have both eaten rugby balls! A trip to the vet, however, confirmed that it wasn't rugby they had been playing, but pregnancy was a certainty. Don't believe everything you are told!



Snowflake had her litter on 23rd December without any fuss or problems. She was a wonderful mum and she had a very helpful sister, who happily washed and cuddled her four nieces and nephews. On Christmas Day *Roxy* gave birth to her first baby, which auntie *Snowflake* promptly washed and carried back to their bed!

Within a few hours three more had successfully emerged, so now I had 10 pusses instead of two – the most amazing and wonderful Christmas present ever! Both mums were such attentive parents and actually shared all the washing and feeding and even shared one large bed together – much like with lionesses, which cooperate fully to make one big, secure pride. Clearly it works, because the vet commented that these eight kittens were the best looked after specimens he'd ever seen!

And now for the bad news: My Christmas dinner. My two attempts at pre-boiling the spuds for subsequent roasting were both sabotaged by my constant midwifery, so we ended up with mushed potatoes, which then became roasted mush, though they tasted just fine. Catchy new recipe?

And the final good news: All ten of these dear little souls were safely and happily re-homed.



Allison Pyett

An update on dear Benji

You'll doubtless remember the piece we carried in the last newsletter about *Benji*, the gorgeous ginger victim of a horrible road traffic accident.

Well, he now goes from strength to strength since joining his new, forever home on the edge of the South Downs. Latest news is that he's climbing

trees and running around just like brand new.

All the care, support and kindness that flows in through our charity has meant this dear young cat on the threshold of adulthood now has the prospect of a long, happy life, rather than being sorrowfully written off. It reminds us all of the sacred value of what we do here at **Worthing Cat Welfare Trust** - and indeed the funds we must find to do it all.



Cilla and Jack - no easy catch

We got Mary and Bruce (now Cilla and Jack) from the Trust four years ago when they were just two years old. When they arrived, we were told to keep them locked in for two weeks, which we attempted to do.

Alas, on the third day the upstairs bathroom window was left open and they were gone! Catching them proved difficult, as all black cats look similar and there are a lot of them locally. We saw two in the garden near our shed, so we came up with a plan. I installed a video camera in the shed, filled shed with food and then held the door open from the house with a long piece of string. My wife Lesley watched the video camera and whenever a black cat was sighted entering, I let the shed door shut and went down to retrieve our catch.



Cilla

We caught lots of black cats, most not ours and one even put me in A&E for Tetanus! Anyway, eventually we succeeded. Jack has turned into a laid back gentleman, though Cilla is still a bit nervous and spends half her day crying to come in and refusing to use the cat flap - and then refusing to come in when we open the door! Then we find her asleep on our bed. So, all in all, they have fitted in rather well around here!



Jack

Stephen Jones

Essential Vehicle Replacement

You may remember the piece we included in the last issue of *Mewsletter* about our rather decaying Citroen van and the need for a reliable replacement. After a careful scan of commercial vehicles available locally, we ended up choosing a three year-old Ford Tourneo diesel with about 34,000 miles on the clock. It was in good condition and coming with a three month guarantee, we were confident enough to part with our hard-earned £15,250 (minus £500 trade-in for the Citroen). It is noticeable how far technology has marched on in the last decade - even with something as banal as commercial vans. When you sit behind the wheel, it's a bit like comparing a biplane with a jet and, fingers crossed, it's still flying nicely.



Andy Collins explains, "It is quite a bit bigger than the old Citroen, which is useful for collecting larger items donated for our shop and also for when we lug our display equipment to the various local community events, though there has been a strange dearth of such gatherings of late! Hopefully that will be a lot different next year."

As you can see in the photo, the van is sign-written in the same WCWT design as before, though we will soon have some very welcome sponsorship stickers to add to it! One of our very active supporters, Shayne Cuthbert, owns Alverstone Autos in Lancing and from now on he will be providing ongoing servicing and maintenance for our van at greatly subsidised prices.

On 1st September our new little toy went in for its first major service and MOT, but unlike with a much older vehicle, there's not quite the same sense of financial apprehension when you go to pay!

Sandra's only gripe is that the passenger side doesn't have a heated seat, so come the cold depths of winter, Andy will be sitting there in smug luxury, while she shivers in frosty austerity!

Our Shop - floods, flu and fighting back

Well, what can we say? It's been a very challenging 10 months for our little shop in South Street, Tarring. Following the two serious floods from the dental surgery above, which forced us to close for 5 weeks, our beautifully refurbished shop had only been open for a matter of weeks before the Covid-19 pandemic arrived!

Like all non-essential shops, we had to shut once again. We have been left wondering what's coming next. Well, at the time of writing, we can guarantee (barring any other bizarre events!) that we will re-open the second week of September. We have spent a lot of time making sure our shop is safe for our customers and volunteers and we are all looking forward to seeing everyone again and bringing in much needed income for the charity. As you will appreciate, the shopping experience, like in all other shops, will be a bit different from how it was previously. We are asking everyone to wear a mask or face covering and there will be a maximum of two customers in the shop at any one time.

Our shop exists to feed little chaps just like him!



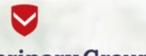


Water Water - Flood Damage Ahoy!

We have also installed plastic screens and there will be alcohol gel (rum, gin or whisky flavour) in plentiful supply, together with surface cleaners, which will be used regularly throughout the day. I'm sure you will understand that we will not be able to accept donations every day of the week, as all donations have to quarantine for 72 hours minimum before being touched by our volunteers and, of course, we have limited storage space.

To avoid disappointment, please call **07594 184432** to check if we can accept your donations that day. We thank you for your kindness and patience during these difficult times and are so happy to be able to welcome you back to our shop.

Abigail Corcoran-Green



Arun Veterinary Group

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Keep Pussy away from Lily!

Danger lurks everywhere for all of us, but one of the most alarming and surprising - if you are a cat owner - might be right under your nose – but make sure it's not under pussy's nose!

This inquisitive little fellow, *Squid*, likes visiting neighbouring homes and gardens and recently his owner was surprised to receive this picture showing the aftermath of him 'investigating' somebody's flower beds! Unfortunately for this cheeky boy, the flowers included lilies, which are incredibly feline toxic. All parts of the flower are poisonous and cats can suffer fatal kidney failure from nibbling a leaf, licking pollen off their coat or even drinking water from a vase containing cut flowers.

Luckily *Squid's* owner was aware of this and rushed him straight in to us for treatment. The lily pollen was washed from his face and paws and charcoal was given to prevent absorption of any he had already swallowed. He was then hospitalised at our 24-hour site in nearby Storrington for several days, having intravenous fluids to ensure his kidneys were supported and regular blood tests to monitor kidney function and to ensure it didn't become compromised.

Thankfully, due to *Squid's* owner's awareness of this toxicity and prompt veterinary care he suffered no ill effects. Hopefully he will explore more carefully in future and stick to daisies!



Squid the gardener



Lilies - pretty, but deadly

Anyway, the next time a loved-one presents you lovingly with a magnificent bouquet of flowers, make very sure you spot any lilies – and likewise check out your flower beds and pond areas now while you think about it!

Colleen Colver MRCVS
Arun Veterinary Group
Veterinary Surgeon

Willow - our Wild One

Readers will remember the piece in the last issue of Mewsletter, concerning the tabby feral stray, *Willow*, who had her kittens in one of our pens while she was in our care. She was very hostile, literally sat on top of the kitties and wouldn't even let me count how many she had!

In the end there were four: three girls and a boy, all of whom were as sweet as pie. Not surprisingly, they were all easy to find lovely homes for. As for *Willow* herself, after her spaying, the plan was to keep her on board until the weather mellowed, so that we could release her back into the area where she had established her previous territory. After time in our care, she gradually stopped spitting at me and, with the odd *Dreamies* bribe, she would come to within a foot of me, albeit very warily.



Willow - more and more mellow

Realising I had got as far with her as I was going to, we then transferred her to the home of one of our volunteer fosterers, Allison Pyett (featured elsewhere in this issue). When she came to collect *Willow*, she simply walked up to puss, who was sitting on the scratch-post, and immediately stroked her head and ears. Utter disbelief all round!

Willow meowed, seemingly too taken aback to protest further, thus justifying Allison's reputation as our in-house "cat whisperer".

Things went from good to better and *Willow* became a much calmer little soul all round. In the end, Allison could stroke her and even give her a good cuddle. We started to realise that Willow must have once been a family pet, who went stray and seemingly feral as a result of her life experiences. Her old self was still in there somewhere!

Her happy story continued further in the Spring when she was formally adopted by a very kind and patient gentleman, who had plenty of previous experience of successfully rehabilitating traumatised cats.

Sandra Collins

The Feral Cat Poem by Caroline Draper

For the feral who struggled And the feral who passed And those who cried For those who came last

If you see that cat
Who yowls with no shame
He's probably hungry
With humans to blame

Feed the poor soul And consider his plight He's all alone On a freezing cold night



Give him some food And some water too Shelter is good He will stick like glue

Give him some love And do not walk by On a frosty morning Or he'll be gone to the sky

He may be a stray And lost his way home Scan for a chip Don't leave him alone

He and his friends Should never be left Don't turn your back And hope for the best

This animal needs Your help today Not tomorrow, nor after And do not delay

If you start to feed
The poor little mogs
Think about all
For they be gone to
the Gods

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CAT'S WHISKERS

Here at Cat's Whiskers we are not just cat specialists! We also specialise in cat owners, cat lovers and everyone who cares about these wonderful little creatures. We offer the highest level of customer care to *all* of our clients - two-legged and four - we've even had three-legged!



Only specialists can be really special

Owners are treated like friends and cats are treated as if they were our very own pets. We give extensive feedback after every consultation and are always just a phone call away with specific advice to reassure owners further. From what our clients say, that simply isn't the case everywhere. We strive to make this not just a caring profession, but also a craft in customer care. Please be in touch some time soon and see for yourself.









Just a whisker away from Veterinary Practice of the Year



Veterinary Clinic 125 South Farm Road, Worthing (01903) 830577

Just a Whisker away from the Oscar!

What a 2020 we've had here at Cat's Whiskers! Back in March we discovered we had made it to the finals of the **Petplan** veterinary awards - the veterinary Oscars. Nominated by clients, we made the final three in the Veterinary Practice of the Year category. We were invited to the ceremony up in Birmingham, but inevitably that was then moved on-line, so we had our own socially-distanced party here at the clinic!

Meanwhile, we have adapted to staying fit and healthy, so we can carry on caring for our wonderful cats. This has meant working in PPE and much workplace restructuring. One big change is owners not accompanying their cats into the consultation room now, as we just can't maintain a safe distance to avoid possible contagion.

We have also been conducting video consultations with owners and their cats in their homes (and had a few guided house tours while owners track down fugitives under beds, on top of cupboards or behind sofas - so, clearly, it's not just the sight of a cat carrier that sends puss horizon bound!) When cats come into the clinic, we offer video calls to owners outside waiting in their cars, so they are still very much part of the consultation process, although some cats are a bit confused trying to work out where naughty owner is hiding! In the boot maybe?

Early in the pandemic we started a food and medication home delivery service for owners shielding at home. This proved very popular and we are looking now at ways to continue this. We also enlisted the help of our fabulous volunteers, who collect and bring cats in to the clinic, which has been very valuable for our elderly and vulnerable clients.

We have also had to consider what risk Covid19 poses to cats. Thankfully, there have been very few feline cases and those infected made a full recovery. There have been no confirmed cases of cat to human transmission, but we strongly recommend that anyone infected avoids handling pets and maintains the usual distancing and hygiene protocols. Despite our extra burdens, the team are all smiling still and desperate to help all cats in need. Surely, it's the purrfect antidote to a horrible pandemic era.

Dr. Amanda Nicholls

Amazingly easy to raise more money

Hello everyone. I'm Lynn Benfield, happy 'mum' to four WCWT cats, eight rescue guinea pigs - and a regular volunteer at our charity shop in Tarring, working alongside a great team of enthusiastic helpers.

In the strange times we're all living in now, on-line shopping has become the new 'norm' for many of us, whether for essential items, or little luxuries which make us feel better. Did you realise that every time you shop on-line, you could be helping to raise money for WCWT without leaving the comfort of your home?

If you shop on-line with a number of different retailers, you can very easily support WCWT through easyfundraising.org, the UK's biggest charity fundraising site. It's easy to use, free to join and 4,000 well known on-line retailers guarantee to make a donation to WCWT when you shop with them: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/caus es/wcwt will take you direct to our page to get you started.





Poppy takes Lynn shopping

You could also visit *AmazonSmile*, which is Amazon's own charity website and that automatically donates 0.5% of your eligible purchases direct to our WCWT. Go to smile.amazon.co.uk for more details. When you make your first visit, select Worthing Cat Welfare Trust from the drop-down list of charities. You can then also choose to add a shortcut to make it even easier to shop again in the future.

Lynn Benfield

Pen Sponsorship Surges On

Sponsorship of care pens all across our virtual sanctuary locations continues to attract plenty of interest and we are extremely grateful for the ongoing support from our existing sponsors.

In this issue we welcome newcomers: Louisa Booker; Val and Stephen Brown; Shayne and Kirsty Cuthbert; Gail Fullilove (also an adopter); Catharine Gleadow; Gwyn Rowe; Millie Roberts; Lucy Todd (our in-house website coordinator); Craig Lambert and Ruth Darling. That now takes our 2020 tally to 15 current sponsorships, bringing in an extra £450 of valuable revenue towards ever-rising overheads. There are plenty more pens still up for sponsorship and so if any of our readers



Louisa Booker with pen guest

are interested, we ask £30 per annum or a monthly £2.50 standing order. Sponsors are invited to come along and meet their occupants, receive a certificate and a mention in the newsletter. They are also automatically enrolled as members of Worthing Cat Welfare Trust for the year.

Lost Up (*Continued from p.5*) We have also had several cases of cats being found after long periods, which highlights the huge value of microchipping. However, there are cases, where microchips have moved around underneath the fur and even exited the body completely, so it's very important

not to dismiss viewing a *found* cat if you think it might be yours, just because it has been listed 'not' micro-chipped.

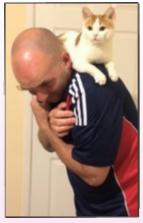


I have great news about *Pickles* (photo on left), who was severely injured in a road traffic accident and now has metal screws securing his pelvic bones together. With intensive care, he is improving daily and can now sit up and manage his own toileting. This is great news, as it means no nerve damage occurred during his operation. He will be ready soon to return home to his elderly owner, who is really missing his only little companion. A lovely ending to a tragic accident and one that is only possible, because of all your kind donations.

Julie Stevens

Saving Cyprus Pusses

Having spent a lot of time holidaying in Cyprus - and both of us cat lovers - we found a sanctuary near to where we stay, which can have an overwhelming five hundred cats at any one time.



Giving Demi the warm shoulder

As many people may be aware, Cyprus does have a bit of an issue with stray and feral cats. On one of our first visits, one of the residents, a white and ginger puss followed our every move, and actually climbed upon me and sat on my shoulders several times. And that was that, she had chosen us!

We asked about possible adoption and about six weeks later Demi arrived safe and sound here in Lancing. Since then, we have adopted two more, Clio and Orion. They are simply the most affectionate cats we have ever had.



Kirsty with Clio and Orion



Orion usually surrenders without a fight

Shayne and Kirsty Cuthbert



Penny cuddles Arthur

(Continued from p.2) During the day she loves to have us as company when she is not sleeping and is always to be found on a piece of newspaper or magazine. In return for her company she gets good food, a daily brushing and "treats" (Catnip) three times a day and has the run of the bungalow. At every opportunity she likes to sunbathe by our patio doors and seems to be a very happy and fit cat. Thank you Jackie Riddles for introducing her to us.

Maureen and Arthur Wells

Majorca's Monastic Moggies

Perched on a small mountain top in south-east Majorca is the intriguing monastery and sanctuary of San Salvador. Part of it has been converted to a surprisingly affordable hotel, worth considering if you

want to avoid the chaos of Magaluf!

In this peaceful, traffic-free spot lives a small and prospering pride of felines, including a particularly knowing little tabby chap. He sits patiently in the shade right next to the fountain, cadging the odd free drink of spring water from the tourists.



I couldn't quite work it out until he showed me which button to push and how to catch the water in the drinking vessel. He slurped away happily until I went off to slurp a nice cold San Miguel in the café. Everyone content. Oh, when will holidays ever come again?

Mike Glennon





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Old Bedding = Cat Bedding = Funds

Our huge thanks to Sally Glover for the wonderful work she has been doing to raise funds for WCWT. Inevitably, our charity shop receives many donated duvets, which we can't actually sell or even pass on for re-cycling, alas. Sally has been working these into very professional and attractive items of cat bedding, which are sold for £5 through *Cat's Whiskers* in South Farm Road, all of which is trickling nicely into our collection box at the practice!



Waste not, want not



Anticipating our usual vast AGM turnout of members, for the 2020 extravaganza we had booked the Assembly Rooms in the town centre, complete with additional seating and coaches were being planned from all corners of the greater Worthing area. A warm-up comedian, jazz band and prominent guest speakers were also booked. Due to the Covid saga, however, that is all postponed. Please await updates. Will be worth waiting for.

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Exotic Pets 36 High Street Littlehampton
East Worthing Community Centre Pages Lane
Our Own Charity Shop 31 South Street, Tarring
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Worthing Cat Welfare Trust

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Re-Homing: 01903 883179 / 07818 824407

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