

Time and Money – Running Fast

Into a new financial year we go – and *financial* is always something at the front of mind for a small charity like ours. Money aside for a moment, we're actually a third of the way through this fearful decade already and one can't decide which runs away with itself faster - time or money!

On the financial front, the good news is that we have found a prospective new Treasurer to continue the excellent work carried out by Christine Jones these last four years and further updates will follow soon.

This issue of *Mewsletter* contains yet another mix of the informative, the happy, the sombre and hopefully the plain interesting! One thing is for sure, the cost of printing has surged since this time last year and what was then costing us £350 is now more like £550. All the more grateful we are to our supportive advertisers, who make this whole newsletter viable.

The scale of our welfare delivery is running at an all time high with an average occupancy of around three dozen cats and kittens across our five main care pen locations and our fosterers. It's wonderful to be able to rise ever more to the challenge, but it comes at a cost. Literally. One is aware that as we move through this decade our funds are eroding steadily and we are going to have to become ever more cost-conscious and innovative in ways to source more finance.



**WCWT Welfare
in Fast Lane**

Mike Glennon – Chairman 2022-23

Trustees* and Management Group

Chairman	Mike Glennon*	Adoptions	Ana Sales*
Treasurer	Christine Jones*		
Secretary	Role vacant	Welfare	Sandra Collins* Germaine Conroy- Schneider*
Administration	Georgina Woolley		Joss Loader* Jackie Riddles* Ana Sales*
Membership	Linda Kenealy		
Purchasing	Georgina Woolley		
Pet Insurance	Cindy Willey	Fostering	Miriam Lopez*
Distribution	Andy Collins*	Marketing	Mike Glennon*
Lost & Found	Germaine Conroy- Schneider*	Website	Lucy Todd
	Roger Arthur*	Justin Herbert*	Andy Petch* Mee Tiltman*

The changing fortunes of an old friend

This time last year we told readers about a sweet little black cat, who made the journey down from London to a new life in Sussex (albeit escorted on the train by one of our colleagues!). Sparky had been rescued from near Victoria station, having been abandoned on a balcony by previous keepers. We re-homed him and things were looking good.

However, life has its ups and downs for cats, as well as humans, and fortunes were about to plummet for Sparky. No sooner re-homed, he had a number of medical issues, which were finally traced back to Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV).



As there was another resident cat in the adopter's household, he had to come back to Worthing Cat Welfare Trust for further resettlement, because FIV is infectious – not rampantly so, but enough to require isolation from other felines. In such cases, we seek to re-home where there are no other cats ...

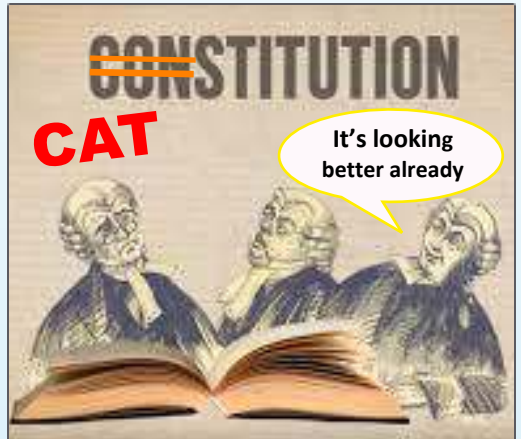
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Time For Constitutional Change

That headline makes it sound like an incredibly monumental event is coming for Worthing Cat Welfare Trust. In actual fact, it isn't really, so we'll explain in just a moment.

Before we do, let us reflect a little upon what a Constitution actually is. It is a long-term statement of the *fundamental* rules by which an organisation – or indeed a country – will be run. On a day to day basis, a country, for example, is run by its Government, which makes laws every week and has effective power to enforce them. Problem is, what if that Government starts getting up to no good? How is Government going to be brought to heel? Waiting maybe another five years for yet another ineffectual election is too vague and may change very little. Does this ring a bell (Big Ben maybe)? This is where a proper Constitution comes in, as it limits what the Government of the day can get up to. Shame we don't really have one here – at least not a properly codified one like our more fortunate cousins across the pond.

Anyway, Worthing Cat Welfare Trust's charity constitution was last revised in 2010 and we have been meaning to carry out some revisions for well over a year. The purpose is not to change the main thrust, but to recognise there was enormous scope to make it more reader friendly and to explain some things in a little more detail and trim out some unnecessary phraseology.



Over and above that, there was the distinct need for streamlining three sections in particular: Objects, Trustee Benefits and Dissolution. To go into these in this short article is hardly practical, so we will be writing to all members soon to announce that there will be an Extraordinary General Meeting – probably some time in June. At that point, our proposals can be explained in detail and everyone will receive a copy of the existing Constitution and our amendment proposals a full three weeks in advance. Watch out for more on this thrilling subject!

New Pen Sponsors Bring More Support

Our gratitude, as always, goes out to our growing team of care pen sponsors, who dig into their pockets for the £60 annual fee (and some cases dig into both pockets!). Here are **new** names since last we wrote:

Valerie &
Stephen Brown

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Campbell

Myles
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Margaret
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New Administrator On Board

Our Administration Coordinator, Lynn Benfield, has had to move on to pastures new and we thank her for the enormous contribution she has made during the last two years. Her work in streamlining our database and microchip handling has been invaluable. Luckily for us, there has been little or no 'paws' in proceedings, though, as the reins are now taken up by Georgina Woolley (who had already been coordinating some of our on-line purchasing activities):

Hello, I'm Georgina - and I've taken on the rather daunting task of being that new volunteer. The database workload comes with a fearsome reputation ... all that cat data! My predecessor, Lynn was a very successful and hard-working individual, who really shaped the Administration function, so that the vital data (cats coming in, cats going out, veterinary costs and our Golden Oldies scheme) made some sort of sense, which can all be used by the charity to work efficiently and therefore assist even more cats. Great!



Introducing my very own personal secretary, Mr. Fluffy

Apart from the administration of the database, I have also been active in a new scheme to save us money on purchasing of specialist foods. We have well over a hundred cats on our Golden Oldies and Supported Cats schemes, many requiring specialist foods as part of their care plan. Examples include renal, urinary, obesity and dental cleansing. Alas, these don't come cheap, often double the price of normal food. Until recently, the owners of these cats had been able just to wander in to veterinary practices and buy the food on our account. That has changed now in that we are ordering products on-line and in larger bulk for those owners and thus saving the charity a considerable amount of money each year.

I'm really delighted to be helping Worthing Cat Welfare Trust in this way and I hope with practise and help from Christine Jones, I'll be up and running with it in no time, so that in the next newsletter I'll have a lot more to tell you!

Georgina Woolley

Rolls Royce Treatment All Cats Deserve

These are my Oriental treasures, a brown spotted tabby called Neelix and his Siamese chocolate tabby sister, Talia. They are 12 and 11 and both are thoroughly spoiled. They just love spending time in the conservatory on their heated beds in the colder months or anywhere else that takes their fancy when it's sunshine time. They also have a huge activity centre to play in with every conceivable feline toy.



Talia and Neelix, the two local bosses, reflect on their hard life

Neelix is very confident and vocal. He will make us jump sometimes by creeping up behind us and “screeching” when he wants our love and attention. Talia on the other hand is a bit more reserved, although - like all Siamese - she has a loud yowl too when she wants something. We couldn't imagine our lives without them.

Despite a few scares over the years, they are both still pretty healthy, although Neelix is a little overweight, as he enjoys his food a bit too much.

He is the fussy one, though, and downs multiple pouches of expensive food, which he then routinely tires of. I think he has tried most premium biscuits and wet foods on the market!

People who don't have animals don't seem to understand how much they enrich our lives and I'm so thankful that we have Neelix and Talia in ours. We also feel very fortunate to be able to give them the cosseted lives that all pets deserve.



Nobody said Paradise wouldn't be exhausting!

Jane Harris

Mum and her four little kittens saved

Last summer we were contacted by a lady in Ashington about a stray mother with small kittens hiding behind her shed and under some decking. Our Lost & Found Officer, Germaine, was joined by Rachel from Manor Cattery in Lancing and they went up there to see if the little family could be brought in to safety. Not an easy assignment, as access was difficult and no mother would welcome strange predators busting in to her nursery. In all it took four separate visits to the location over a two day period. This is where persistence counts!

After enormous effort they reached them and mum (later named Stir Fry) and three of the kittens were captured, though a fourth one managed to slip away – to an almost certain death. Super enormous effort and the last little mite was also enticed into the catch cage, from where his mum was calling him. They were all taken back to Manor Cattery to settle them down and ensure that all the kitties were back into full feeding mode. After that they were transferred to Ashley, one of our home fosterers, who took them through to post-weaning stage. Stir Fry had done her job to perfection and she was the first to go to a secure, loving, new home. Here's conclusion to the story of the four kittens, who were re-homed as two naturally bonded pairs:



Super mum Stir Fry



We adopted **Chilli and Dumpling** (renamed Doofus) in October and they were the last of the kittens to be adopted. From the beginning, Chilli (on the right) was the adventurous one, leading the way for Doofus, who would loyally follow behind. We didn't get to see Doofus for a few days, as he was very nervous, but as Chilli checked everything out, Doofus became more comfortable. Chilli is our climber and plant-eater; she either loves you and wants to cuddle all afternoon or she ignores you completely -

Continued on page 31 ...

When Rescue Really Means RESCUE

A while ago we got a call from Grove Lodge veterinary hospital. They had had a skinny, injured stray brought in from Shoreham with a horrible wound to his head and face. Would we help re-home him if they would tackle the medical work? It was one of those numerous situations for us when *The Answer is Yes, now what's the Question?*

After careful examination, there was no permanent structural damage and the wound was partially stitched, but had to be left open to facilitate further healing. Within a fortnight he was able to be released into our hands for the lengthy recovery period and was cared for by Allison at our East Preston location. There he acquired a new name: **Blake**.



Poor Blake after his surgery

Clearly, adoption was impossible until he had recovered further, as the wound had to be cleaned twice a day. Altogether he spent 76 days with Allison, receiving the careful nursing and observation, which he so desperately needed and he was such a brave little patient. He recovered well and was looking like a new cat. One more vet visit, though, for the essential neutering operation and then he was finally ready for the WCWT shop window and moving on.

Our adoptions team identified an excellent potential home for Blake in Sompting and his poor little life moved on to the next and much happier chapter. **Sara and Stephen**, new owners, take up the story:

We were both drawn to Blake the very first time we saw his sweet little face on Worthing Cat Welfare Trust website adoption page.

We were a bit cautious when we approached him at the East Preston cattery, not wanting to overwhelm him, and he did allow us to pet him, but on his terms.



The long road to recovery

Continued on page 15

New Trustee Ana Sales

Worthing Cat Welfare Board of Trustees was very pleased to welcome new, co-opted trustee, Ana Sales, effective from our 13th January 2023 Trustees Meeting. She replaces outgoing trustee, Richard Bailey.

Whilst she is new to our Board, Ana is hardly a newcomer, as she has been heavily involved in our cat welfare for more than a decade. She is manager at the very popular Alley Cats commercial cattery in Angmering and for the last year or so has been our WCWT in-house Adoptions Coordinator – so seldom a quiet moment.

The role of Adoptions Coordinator is truly pivotal within our organisation and includes receiving all incoming adoption applications, allocating home visits across our team of Adoptions Officers and then arranging for enquirers to visit cats at any or all of our five care locations: East Preston, Angmering, Durrington, Findon Valley and also Lancing. Over and above this, there is also oversight of the final sign-off paperwork when we confirm permanent, legal adoption a month after the adopter has taken custody of their new pet. It is at this point that Ana registers the microchips out of WCWT's name and over to the happy new keeper.



Up to 300 adoptions a year makes busy work

There are half a dozen main microchip agencies and it can be a minefield navigating their various on-line procedures. One thing is for sure: this has to be done very carefully, as the data is sacrosanct. One mistake with an owner's e-mail address or telephone number could make the vital microchip virtually useless in action. Given that we re-home between 250 and 300 cats and kittens every year, this all multiplies up into a very substantial workload and like all of us at WCWT, it is all done on a purely voluntary basis. Our geographical range for re-homing stretches from Southwick in the East as far as Bognor in the West and also up into the various villages along the northern edge of the Downs. We are fortunate now in that we have recruited a team of seven Adoptions Officers, so they do not have to travel so far afield. Many hands make light work – but we still need a few more willing souls to cover the outlying places.

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Challenging Times

Everywhere nowadays, prices keep rising exponentially and the veterinary industry is no exception. We remain fiercely independent and are now only one of two remaining independent vet practices in Worthing, the rest having been taken over by corporations. This in itself is our biggest challenge, as these large groups have access to extensive resources and huge buying power. Here at **Cat's Whiskers** we manage everything ourselves, including researching best value veterinary products and basic domestic items, recruiting and training staff and managing our suppliers - all just to keep the clinic open.

Here are just a few of our big challenges: Drug prices have surged over the past 12 months and manufacturing & supply chains have been strained. At the same time, utility costs climb by the month and, less obvious to clients, is the burden of the numerous mandatory inspections required to operate a veterinary practice and there are many insurances required, which all impact upon our financial resources.

We are, of course, taking every measure to survive, including becoming a membership only clinic, which ensures that we have vital, regular income for the business.

Energy efficiency is crucial - as it is for every household right across the country with the current, punitive gas and electricity tariffs, which are unlikely to fall in the foreseeable future. We have also reduced radically our consumption of basic materials, such as paper by going almost entirely digital. We do choose products that are environmentally friendly, though, and even our uniforms are made from eco-sourced material. But it's not just about economising for ourselves, it's about helping clients to save as well. As a unique cat-only clinic, our ethos focuses on preventative healthcare and we advise on ways to prevent longer-term maladies, never hesitating to recommend cheaper sources if they can be found somewhere else.



Drug price inflation at an all time high

Continued on page 34

Wandering the World - Cat Style

Rolling around Fuerteventura recently we came across a fascinating cat story. We had parked in a small cove on the north coast and close by was a camper van, out of which ambled the cutest little cat imaginable. He wandered around the undergrowth for a while and then hopped nonchalantly back into the van. We got chatting to the owners, Alice and Thomas, and here's their absolutely fascinating story:

My husband and I bought an old Russian van in Bulgaria back in late 2021 and did a bit of a restoration for some long term travel. While testing it out by the Black Sea, we suddenly decided to ignore Google maps navigation and we went down some narrow roads. That is when we saw a tiny white kitten on the side of the road. It may be a silly coincidence, but I had had a vivid dream of a white cat looking for a home not long before this. We stopped to check on him (why, out of all the stray cats in Bulgaria, did we stop this time?). The kitten was alive, but very poorly. We estimated that he was about two weeks old, but he was all alone with no sign of a mother around. He was on the verge of dying. Having already stopped to take a closer look, we weren't able just to leave the poor little thing there baking on the roadside, so we took him along with us in the camper van.



The area we were in at that time was very rural and there were no veterinary clinics around, so we did the best we could to get him back to health ourselves. Before we knew it, he was already eating small live fish that Thomas caught for him. We named him Mimo, for "mimoso" in Spanish, which means cute or cuddly. When we got back to civilisation we took him to the vets for a check-up and a pet passport. He was given a few shots, but the lack of maternal milk and proper nutrition during his early days of life

means he has a few health problems, including sadly "Patella Luxation", meaning he has a problem with the joints in his hind legs. But this doesn't stop him from exploring new places, running and jumping. We carried on with our travels to Turkey and took Mimo along with us. This is where he really started to develop and find his place in our little nomad family, taking up most of our Instagram feed (he really is so cute!).

When the 90-day visa was almost finished, we re-entered Bulgaria in early 2022, where we took on a huge project: changing the Russian petrol engine for a Nissan diesel unit (ourselves!). Mimo has always been with us at every step of this project, camping out in a rented garage space. His presence grounded us throughout the harder parts of the project, giving us a reason not to give up and fly home. We had something good going and Mimo reminded us it was worth fighting for.

He is currently enjoying the benefits of van life in the sunny Canaries. It is all he has ever known: to move. And the van is his home, so we are able to let him out freely into new spots in different countries, knowing he won't go far and always comes home to us.

Alice and Thomas

Worthing Cat Burglar Prevails

Cat rescue can be a hazardous business, but that doesn't deter Worthing Cat Welfare Trust. We might get hissed at, clawed or bitten, but we hadn't quite expected the Feline Flying Squad.

Adoptions Officer, Matt Buckland, was out on patrol to round up three stray cats after dark in Durrington recently. He had just caught one of the fugitives and no sooner had the trap door slammed shut when he just happened to notice no fewer than *seven* police officers surrounding him! Matt takes up the story:

It seems that the police had received a call about a man lurking suspiciously behind the bushes. They searched my bag, but not my person - maybe they were too scared of me? Anyway, the cat hissed at them and they seemed satisfied that I was on worthy business, so the Magnificent Seven departed.



Worthing cats can sleep safely now

Could have been worse. Having seven police officers coming at you is one thing, but it could have been seven police dogs!

Matt Buckland



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Blake on the mend - Continued from page 8

He did bat at us the first time we met him to show us he had had enough of the two new strangers, but this did not sway us from adopting him, as we understood he had learnt to survive on his own when he was a stray.

We were informed that he had been knocked down by a car and taken to the vets by a kindly Good Samaritan, where he was treated for his injuries. Eventually, he was transferred over to Allison at East Preston while he waited to be adopted. It had taken about three months of care and recuperation and we were the first people to visit him!

We came back that weekend and took him home. We were very pleasantly surprised at how quickly he settled in once we had given him space and safe places to hide away until he was a bit more confident with his surroundings.



Fixed and ready for a new life



Now, his mischievous and loving personality shines through when he jumps on our shoe-laces as soon as we walk through the door, or wakes us up with meows and purrs when he thinks we've been lying in too long and wants some company. His coat is much fluffier and silkier now that he is relaxed and happier and he knows he's not alone any more - he has a home and a family who love him very much.

Sara and Stephen

Lost Ginger Tom Finds Brand New Life

This delightful, homeless ginger cat passed through Worthing Cat Welfare Trust on his way to a new life. We tried to find his owners, but without microchipping this was impossible and so we found him his forever home. New owner Angie takes up the story:

I was first made aware of my beautiful Ozzy by my hairdresser, who had a client in Worthing and this cat kept hanging around her home. Subsequently, Worthing Cat Welfare Trust collected him to investigate. My hairdresser kept telling me that this cat “has your name written all over him” and would be perfect for me if unclaimed. So I registered an interest and then forgot all about it until I got a call about a month later, as extensive searches had proved fruitless.



Unchipped Fugitive Tom

After being home-checked, I collected the little fellow and drove back home to Crawley during a massive thunderstorm, but I chatted to him the whole way home to reassure him. Unsurprisingly, he was very nervous at first and ran straight behind the sofa and refused to come out! I gave him lots of time and space to explore his new surroundings, talking gently and avoiding loud noises and sudden movements. It took a long time to win him over, but little by little I was able to pet his head and rub his cheeks (definitely his favourite!). I kept him indoors until he was fully vaccinated and used to me and the house.

He is not really a fan of toys, despite me buying up the whole pet shop, but definitely a hunter - perhaps because he lived outside for a while. When I first let him out into the garden, I was far more nervous than he was - would he disappear? No worries - he was absolutely fine and he now goes in and out of the cat flap. Ozzy now spends hours sleeping on me or on blankets on the sofa doing his “paddy paws” (kneading) and letting me brush him. He is very vocal, always letting me know if he is hungry or wants attention even if I'm holding a mug of tea!

He now considers my garden his very own territory and can sometimes be found lurking under a bush, glaring and bristling at other cats sitting on the fence - an hilarious stand-off that seems to go on for hours!

I absolutely adore him, and am so glad he is all mine. He has dove-tailed beautifully into my life and I just couldn't be without him now.

Angie Donnelly



Postscript – Months later the original owner finally emerged, nearly a year after Ozzy went missing. They were digging through old Facebook postings and there was the little fugitive himself! All was happily reconciled, though, in that they were relieved that he had been re-homed safely and was having a happy life. All's well that ends well, though it does show the vital importance of microchipping!



5 years away - 2 new nieces



No winter blues here!

It was five years since I last went home to see my family back in Malaysia. Covid hysteria at varying levels kept postponing my original 2020 air ticket right up until this February. Made it this time though! When you've been away a while, family are always keen to introduce the latest additions to the family and this time there was a welcome feline element. My younger sister has adopted two cats, Gie Gie (shown left) and Mei Mei, who simply love their tropical home!

Mae Tiltman

Is Nothing Sacred?

This wonderful picture snapped at a local church during the Christmas holidays takes some beating. Some bleating even.

Surely, some things must be sacred? Well, apparently not. I mean, using a Nativity display for an idle doze. Honestly!

The Monty Python sketch about Michelangelo and Pope comes to mind. *Didn't say anything about felines at the Lord's Birth!*

Sometimes it seems that cats are a law unto themselves. They walk all over you in the middle of the night, they nick food from your plate and then they trample your keyboard and make your laptop go berserk.



Three Wise Men - and a wiser cat!



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Huge Value of Home Fostering

After we lost our cat we weren't ready to have another forever kitty straight away. We decided something good should come of our loss, though, so I applied to foster with Worthing Cat Welfare. Our first case was Bella, a little old lady whose world had been turned upside-down. Although a very pretty thing, she was so traumatised by losing the life she'd had, that she would hide and hiss at anyone that came near. Clearly, she wasn't going to be adopted in that state.

Bella came to us and for the first week all we saw of her was a pair of eyes from under the bed. After a while, though, she gradually started to venture out and sit near us in 'her' room. Then one night she suddenly appeared in the living room! Progress from there was much faster and within days she was snuggled up on the sofa with us.

At that point she was ready to go to her forever home. Although it was hard to say goodbye, seeing the transformation in her, from a terrified, unadoptable, hissing ball of fur into a loving, playful and hilarious little personality was one of the most rewarding things that I have ever done in my life.

I know we did a lot for her and have enabled her to move on to the next stage in her life, but at the same time, we also got a huge amount back from her. So much so, that as soon as she went, I was asking for the next little foster patient to be handed over!



Kirstin Hill

Bella transformed

Postscript - Bella is now in the loving, forever hands of Julie Cassey in West Worthing and goes under the name of Dolly! After a few days of grumpy hiding away, she came out of herself and has mellowed into the playful little darling she really is. Ping-pong ball chasing in the middle of the night is one of her many endearing foibles! As always, patience is the key to handling nervous cats and dear Bella (sorry, Dolly!) has had that from the moment she came in to Worthing Cat Welfare Trust.



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When Patience Pays Premium

After moving into our first home together, my partner and I were desperate to add a fur baby (or two) to the household. As massive animal lovers and growing up with many pets, it was the final step in making our new house a real home. After reaching out to Worthing Cat Welfare Trust, we were soon visited for the usual careful home check and then went viewing. We fell in love instantly with Pip and Leo (formerly known as Tommy and Savannah).

Soon after they arrived home with us, we had a quick reality check when realising it wasn't going to be 'purrfect' right away. The first 2-3 weeks were really hard: we had several sleepless nights, lots of mess to clear up from naughty antics and a bit of doubt creeping in. We called the trust for advice and support and after a lot of patience, the cats finally were bonded enough to go outside. This changed their behaviour drastically and they were no longer destroying our lovely new home - it was almost overnight that we had two really well-behaved cats. The therapy of freedom!



Leo watching the birdies



Pip when resident at WCWT

If I am honest, I think that if we weren't such great animal lovers and had a massive amount of patience, I doubt we would have got through to week three, but I couldn't be happier that we did.

We must not forget the unsettled life these cats had had recently before coming to us. They just need time, love and lots of treats. But I can promise you it's well worth it. This is definitely now Pip and Leo's house and we, the servants, just lodge here!

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Cats. How Big Do You Want 'Em?

Always wanted to see some really big cats and we don't mean Maine Coons and Norwegian Forest Cats. We mean 500-pounders and for that you have to head for Africa for lions or India for tigers. We'd done the latter a few years ago and so over the winter we headed for Cape Town. Three years of Tesco vouchers and Virgin Atlantic Air Miles meant that it was actually a very cheap journey and once you get to South Africa things are cheap – really cheap. A constantly sliding Rand has meant that this is a place, where even Sterling paupers like us can feel smug.

When people tell you they have been on a tour of South Africa, invariably they have done it on a grand scale: helicopter tours around Table Mountain, then the famous luxury Blue Train overnight across this massive country (twice the size of France), Safari in Kruger National Park and all followed by a nice little flight up to see Victoria Falls further north. Well, we don't do Grand. We do it our way. Got off our economy flight and hopped straight into a delightful little Suzuki hire car and off we went. This was the test of courage, which we had been shirking for a number of years. Everyone we had spoken to had told us of the horrendous dangers of travelling unescorted around South Africa. You won't get further than a hundred kilometres before you are car-jacked, you'll get mugged on the streets, people will stick their tongues out at you and other nightmare scenarios.



Sweet little lap cat

In all honesty, the reality was wholly different – provided that one is circumspect and canny (something also quite relevant when wandering around Tottenham or Brixton after dark). We found excellent roads (unlike West Sussex), but you need to keep to the main highways and not wander off into bandit country. Traffic was sparse (unlike the UK), lodgings excellent and great food. Scenery gorgeous and November weather lovely. We visited a small game reserve near Port Elizabeth, where we had been promised the Big Five, one of which being lions, of course. After maybe a hundred kilometres bumping along rough shale tracks

we saw plenty of elephants, zebra, antelope, other tourists and wart hogs, but not a feline in sight! In fairness though, at a mere £20 entry per car it was super value, lions or no lions. Maybe lions cost extra.

What did surprise us in a positive way was how many pet cats you see around South Africa and how they seem to be well looked after. Every guest house we stayed at had a resident or two (which were soon enticed into our chalet for a pamper). We queried with owners whether it wasn't too dangerous to let them wander around. As Brits, we assume that cobras and scorpions maraud in every bush, but in urban and suburban areas this is bit of fallacy.

One of the most delightful scenes we remember was a service area on the Garden Route highway, where we ambled around the back of the main restaurant area to a viewing platform overlooking the Storm River gorge. Two very friendly resident cats ambled over to us to say hello. The little Tortoiseshell female was particularly friendly and was more than happy to be picked up. The managers at the service area had built the cats a little house under the decking with comfy beds and plenty of food. A Feline paradise to be sure.



Nice Cat. Silly Hat!



Birds even friendlier and hat even sillier

On our long haul back towards Cape Town we stopped in the famous Wine Country around the towns of Paarl and Stellenbosch, names one has so often seen on a bottle label. It all feels rather Mediterranean around there and the vineyards a cross between Bordeaux and the Napa Valley in California.

On our last two nights we enjoyed a very comfortable stay with a cat-loving couple, who run Beulah Lodge, a charming guest house on the northern edge of Cape Town.

Deja Houdini Vu For Fosterer

Sometimes in life you get a sudden feeling that you've been somewhere before. A situation maybe with an uncanny resemblance to an earlier event. That is the theme underpinning this little story.

Back in early winter a pair of us went to collect two cats in Worthing town centre, whose owner could no longer care for them. The sad reality was that the poor lady was in the advanced stage of a terminal illness and a more heart-rending scene one can hardly recall. We managed to get the two little souls into their cat carriers for a tearful last goodbye and then we loaded them with their toys and facilities into our car and off we went.



Ollie - well behaved one

Because these two cats – curiously named Scar and Rampage (later Stan and Ollie) – were so timid we had decided to take them direct to one of our excellent fosterers in Shoreham. Ben had been the long term fosterer of another similar pair of brothers featured on page 33 of our Autumn 2022 edition. So, time to go around again. With very timid and disorientated cats, progress can be slow, but steadily Ben won their trust and they adjusted to the fact that their old life was gone, but a new one might just be possible. Things were going well and after four months we really felt that a permanent adoption was viable at last.

We found two very kind folks in Littlehampton, Sarah and Wayne - with extensive experience of caring for sensitive cats. The Big Day came and Stan and Ollie were collected from Ben's house and taken over to their new abode.



Stan - the much naughtier one



Now the drama begins and it's another tale of escapology. Just as Hobbes contrived to break out in the last issue, it was now Stan's turn for fame and he actually busted out of a locked cat flap! The most worrying thing was that this happened within 12 hours of his arrival, so he had absolutely no bonding with his new owners, nor the household at large. Once out in the open he would have become totally confused and wandered off in any direction with small chance of coming back.

The Worthing Cat Welfare panic button was promptly hit and we delivered one of our special catch cages to the home and gave careful and cunning instructions for outwitting fugitives. Ben went round to help. The usual Social Networking channels were activated and we produced 100 poster leaflets, which Sarah and Wayne distributed, knocking at every door and gaining as much cooperation as possible from neighbours.

But, quite frankly, the odds didn't look good. Bagging cats with a catch cage isn't actually difficult - you can catch loads of them. The problem is they'll probably be the wrong ones and that is why these cages have to be constantly monitored to ensure that no cat (or badger, fox or seagull!) remains in there for any period of time. Wayne managed to catch various neighbours' cats!

And then the Miracle! The sound of the trap door crashing shut yet again and who was sitting there? Yes, Stan in person. So, Deja Vu - yet another seemingly hopeless case happily resolved. We all slept a lot better that night – including Stan, who was put under close house arrest and the cat flap securely taped up.



Ollie glad to see Stan safely home

Most poignant touch perhaps was Ollie's sheer relief and delight on the return of his prodigal brother!



For **WCWT Postscript** to this story, please turn to page 26.

WCWT Postscript to p.25 – What these two stories clearly highlight is the utter need to keep newcomers under tight household security during those vital early weeks. Every year we experience early escapees, despite the careful briefings we give to adopters. Eternal fact is, though, that cats are smart and can outwit us when our guard is down. What we are doing now is to hand out copies of this new leaflet to all new adopters as a reminder that they are under constant surveillance by Houdini.

KEEP THAT CAT IN

Collecting your newly adopted cat is a pure joy. It's exciting to have a new member of the household to care for and to enjoy all the love and devotion a cat can give to you and your family. But it can all go horribly wrong at the outset. Newly arrived cats **MUST** be kept under tight indoor security for three to four weeks after arrival. If they get out, they won't know where they are, will wander off, get lost and in some cases never be seen again.

Every year a small, but worrying, number of our cats go missing within the first few days, because of a careless moment. Cats are natural escapologists and they'll soon spot any way out: open windows, doors ajar, open chimneys and even locked cat flaps.

The stress this causes for cat, adopter and our charity is enormous. Please observe our advice and make your home fully cat-secure before bringing one home and brief all members of your household.



Worthing Cat Welfare Trust



What cats do best!

Continued from page 21

Pip and Leo both have so much character - if they aren't chatting away, they are playing with lots of their toys, visiting all the neighbours' gardens, drinking milk right out our glasses or bringing worms to the back door.

We really are besotted with them and we just cannot thank WCWT enough for everything.

Daisy Tanner

Remembering Dear Past Friends

We continue to enjoy support from member, Jean Cook, who helped us rescue a delightful ginger cat up in Henfield a while ago. It's a good time to cast our minds back to the enormous support we also had from her mother and sister. Jean writes:

When your surname is Tibbles, it's appropriate that your life revolves around cats. My mother, Violet, and sister, Valerie, were avid supporters of the Trust, often baking cakes, collecting bric-a-brac and helping at tombola stalls at various fundraising events. They also did regular stints at the charity's shop and that was their routine for many years until their sad and sudden demise back in 2013.

At the time they had six cats indoors and a few ferals outside, ranging from 2-year old Daisy to Blackie about 18 years. There were also 16-year old triplets born one stormy night from a bedraggled little tortoiseshell (later named Gemma), who just turned up on the doorstep and all were kept. Without the support of Jackie Riddles and Worthing Cat Welfare Trust, I could not have coped with the grief and the worry of what to do next!



Violet with Gemma

All the cats were understandably at a loss to understand where their humans had gone and behaved accordingly, refusing to eat, dashing in and out of the cat flap, scenting etc.,. I was trying to remember who preferred to eat what: Mitzi liked chicken, while Bambi had tinned meat, Mickey wouldn't eat at all (he was very much Valerie's boy) and Charlie decided that under the stairs made a good private toilet!

Like humans, cats and dogs feel grief for their departed owners – despite people saying that they will be fine as long as they are fed. Jackie's plan of action was to take two cats at a time, so those left had company until the last pair were adopted too. Not as easy as it sounds, as none of them wanted to leave, but patience prevailed and, bless her, she managed them all so well.



Violet and Valerie

Jean Cook

Sparky's changing fortunes - continued from page 2

and also there has to be ongoing confinement to the house for fear of chance onward transmission to neighbouring cats. Provided that these stipulations are met, then there is no reason why a cat can't have a good quality of life. In poor Sparky's case, however, the main side effect of the FIV is that his eyes are subject to high internal pressure, which requires daily eye drops and he has had to have a number of visits to a specialist veterinary practice in Havant over in Hampshire.

Throughout his illness, Sandra and Andy Collins were his constant carers and vet runners. There had been a very real danger that one of Sparky's eyes would have to be removed, but mercifully his treatment regime has been working and this won't need to be. He's not out of the woods yet, though, and ongoing treatment will be needed, but he has a good chance and he is a wonderfully laid back little patient.



Laid back patient - as always

Obviously, it is very difficult to find permanent homes for cats with existing medical issues and so he was based with Sandra for a while, pending the long search for his forever home. Happily, a willing and very kind fosterer/adopter then emerged for Sparky: Tracey Whitehead. She explains: Sparky arrived in my home on the 13th day of a month and also being a Black Cat, the word *Unlucky* might come to mind, but not in our case!

I was a bit sceptical at first, as he has to have eye drops administered daily for the foreseeable future. We renamed him **Jack** and for the first couple of weeks he hid behind the sofa, only coming out to use his litter tray and to eat. Fast forward the months, though, and he's now sleeping on my bed and has his evening cuddles on the sofa.

He is still a bit jumpy with us walking around, but overall, I think he is settling in quite well, playing with toys and he has finally started to make use of his cat tree.

Tracey Whitehead

More Arm's Length Adoptions

Last issue we wrote about those occasions when an owner can no longer keep a particular cat, but the situation is not an urgent one. You may recall Alfie on page 25, who moved over from Littlehampton to a wonderful new life here in Worthing. Job done.

When animal charities are bursting at the seams and there is no space to billet more arrivals, our stance is not to turn them away, but to do all that we can to facilitate a solution. Here is another success story - **Freya**.

The owner was going in to care and her daughter, Rowena, couldn't take Freya in, as there were numerous other pets in her home.



Freya soon re-homed

Our marketing machine swung in to action and we received an enquiry from Carole in Shoreham. Happily, our home check verified this might be an ideal match and so "negotiations" between Rowena and Carole proceeded with WCWT in the background. Freya duly moved to her new home and settled in beautifully. Lovely, warm comfortable bungalow, a discreet rear garden giving on to allotments and a happy, loving new owner. The great bonus for us too is that this rescue mission did not cost us a penny, thus saving money for the countless other pressures on our precious funding.

and a few words from Carole, Freya's new guardian ...

I absolutely adore Freya. She has settled in so well and I feel it is a match made in heaven! She is now registered with the Sureflap microchip cat flap and she comes and goes as she pleases, but I lock it at night. She loves pottering in the garden and the allotments behind. She is very playful, eats well, and loves being brushed. Quite a few of my friends have been to the house to meet her in recent weeks and she didn't let me down, coming out to say "hello" to everyone! Thank you, Worthing Cat Welfare Trust, so very much for pairing us up. I keep in regular contact with Rowena and husband Ray, and have sent lots of photos, so that they can show Elaine, her mum, about the adoption and put her mind at rest that Freya is loved and cared for.

Tyler's Adventures and Misadventures

In our continuous effort to move cats promptly into good new homes, we roam far and wide across Sussex. The only limiting factor is having volunteers to drive longer distances when home-checking adopters. Happily, we have these kind people, who don't even claim a penny for travel from the charity. In the last couple of years we have placed excellent adoptions in Chichester, Crawley, Brighton, Lewes, Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill to name a few. Here's a story from Ardingly:



It's been over a year now that Tyler has been with us and what a character he is. Within the first six weeks of having him, he found the roof of our bungalow, didn't quite know how to get down and fell. He broke his 'toes' and ended up having pins fitted and had to spend six whole weeks in a rest cage, poor fellow. But all's well that mends well.

He loves being outside and for a big cat he is very nimble, so how he managed to fall is odd. He is a bit of a little Lord Fauntleroy and a sulker and likes to growl if things don't go his way.

He is a bit thick and sleeps on the outside of his bed, resting his head on the side, but will sulk in it with his back to you if he gets told off! He sometimes likes to sleep in the middle of the floor. He has a purr like a traction engine and you hear him before you see him. He is also ruled by his belly! 5.5kgs says it all. When he comes in through the cat flap he calls to you to let you know he's home. It sounds like Hello. Oh, how we adore him!



Trisha and Tom Whitehead

Cage Rest Recovery

Stir Fry's Kittens - *Continued from page 7*

life with Chilli is on her terms. On the other hand, Doofus is far more cautious. He has slowly relaxed and it is only now that he enjoys some tummy rubs and attention. He isn't yet what you'd call a 'lap cat', but will come to curl up by your feet instead. Both are still getting used to strangers in the house and prefer to cuddle together under the bed, but quickly come back out as soon as they realise their space is back. I am really glad we got two, they are always either playing or snuggling together.

Hayley Glassock

Here is how the other pair of kittens have fared. A similar joyous story for kitties and loving new owners, Catherine and Harry.

We adopted **Bean and Noodle** from the amazing team at Worthing Cat Welfare Trust back in the Autumn. For us the two kittens stood out the moment we met them and we knew that they would be the perfect additions for the home we had only just recently moved into ourselves.

On the day we collected them they were understandably nervous in their new surroundings, but they quickly made themselves right at home!

Noodle often acts as the "big brother" to Bean, making sure that she is safe and sound, but as they've started exploring outside around the back garden, their personalities have come into their own as they grow into adult cats. Noodle loves playing in the garden for hours, but can equally choose to curl up on the sofa for the entire afternoon.



Bean likes to spend time outside too and has taken a liking to bringing us gifts in the form of leaves, twigs and feathers from the garden! She will also find any place near a radiator to get her afternoon nap in!

Catherine & Harry

Continued from page 23

Lucky owners, Cami and Rory are ably assisted by two resident cats, **Ollie** and **Roxy**, who oversee domestic proceedings and keep a careful eye on their guests. The high level of feline service included daily visits to our room to make sure we were happy and to see if there were any treats or cuddles on offer.

So, did we get our money's worth in South Africa? In terms of Big Cats maybe not, though in fairness had we splashed out and made it up to the much larger Kruger National Park, we would have been knee deep in them! In every other regard it was an absolutely brilliant trip. We would recommend it to anyone who is willing to be a bit courageous and to go for it. You might even see a lion!

Mike Glennon



Cami with helper Roxy



Rory assisted by Ollie

HELP NEEDED

8th July
Ferring Fair

23rd September
Angmering Revealed

18th August
Tarring Picnic
in the Park

November
Grand Jumble
Sale

9th September
Sheep Fair
at Findon

10th December
Xmas Fair
Field Place

lynne@worthingcatwelfaretrust.org





Cat Rescue Shelter in the Sun

As part of the Feline Behaviour Diploma course I am currently completing, my class visited Canópolis, an animal shelter and sanctuary on the outskirts of Barcelona in the Garraf Natural Park. It occupies 3.5-hectares, where about 150 animals live in “semi-liberty” while awaiting adoption. Both dogs and cats live in an open environment, are fed with natural diets and treated with a combination of conventional medicine and natural therapies.

The Trifolium Foundation is a unique and pioneering project that seeks innovative ways to increase animal welfare. It was founded in 1996 by Gemma Knowles, an English woman raised in Madrid, with degrees in finance and psychology, as well as various other qualifications in natural therapies.



When Gemma and her husband started managing the Canópolis shelter in 1998, they inherited a hard working team of volunteers, but poor infrastructure. There were then 52 pens and the installation didn't even have an electricity supply or running water. During the first few years their main goal was to upgrade the infrastructure and the refuge is now carefully integrated within the natural surroundings in a harmonious way, making good use of recycled rainwater and solar energy.

Right from the beginning, Gemma had a traditional approach in mind and wanted to install more pens in the shelter, but after observing the mental health issues that occurred in animals while they were living in pens, she decided to innovate and let the dogs occupy certain areas of the site where they could run free.



Continued overleaf



Shelter in Sun

The cats occupy a part of the land, which is fully cat-proofed and there they have small summer houses, where the new cats live for a few days until they are introduced to the broader environment.

This gives the cats sufficient time to see each other before they start to roam around freely and there is plenty of space for every cat to live their life based on how they feel. This may be to engage and to socialise with the other cats and volunteers or otherwise they might prefer to keep just to themselves and spend their days lying in the sun away from everyone.



This is a great way for the adoption team to assess what type of home would be more suitable for each cat. Some of these cats have always lived in a home and they miss terribly having their own humans and their own sofa to doze on. On the other hand, others find being close to humans overwhelming and are actually quite happy living in nature with the freedom that the shelter provides them with – if necessary to live there until the end of their days.

Challenging Times

continued from page 11

Miriam Lopez
Fostering Coordinator

One of the most effective ways to spread all of the routine veterinary costs, of course, is our **Annual Membership Plan**, which has been taken up extensively. Overall, we and our very valued clients are facing some challenging times, but I firmly believe that we share the same high commitment to our cats and we must work together to do anything and everything we can for them.

Dr. Amanda Nicholls MRCVS

Dogs Jump to Help Cats

Well, not quite, but you know what it's like when you're looking for punchy headlines.

Our thanks go out to our staunch supporter, Ruth Allen, who found a novel way to raise money for Worthing Cat Welfare Trust. She has knitted a range of dog jumpers and managed to find a good few customers.

Fundraising is a constant headache for us and we would be grateful if any members can join our fundraising circle. We have a number of events across the year, where your help would be appreciated (see p. 32).



What all the smart dogs are wearing this season

Do You Have Any Other Pets, Madam?



A routine question for all our potential adopters, because incumbent pets are sometimes quite territorial and newcomers might make life very difficult for all concerned. Cats with cats and cats with dogs doesn't always work, though you will remember the lovely stories in recent issues from Clare Bartlett and her feline/canine trio!

On an application form recently, we couldn't help noticing that a lady also had a python in the home! Strangely enough, this set off the odd alarm bell ringing. Whilst pythons vary in size between the various species, the prospect of one of our cats sharing a home with this companion was a bit worrying. In truth, there are types of snake, which are harmless to cats and smaller specimens of others (provided not poisonous, of course) may not be a threat either. Question is, of course, how big might that 3ft Boa be in five years' time? On balance, therefore, our consensus is *not* to re-home cats alongside snakes. There may be a tinge of the irrational here, but we just can't see our way around it.

Took Me Back to Childhood Days

It's not often that I go to the cinema these days, because getting around is a bit more difficult than it once was. When I saw there was another **Puss in Boots** film in Worthing, though, I made the extra effort. It's certainly a cheap afternoon out on Mondays at £3.50!



It took me back to younger days and I remember going to see **Puss in Boots** in pantomime at the Hippodrome over in Brighton. What a lovely place that was in its time, though now in sad decay. When I was a teenager I even saw Cat Stevens there, but I missed out on The Beatles, as they were all sold out when I got there. Catastrophe. I don't know

if it's just time that makes things seem so different, but I have to say that the 1960 pantomime was better than the new film – and at 2s 6d was even better value. I can't complain about bus prices, though. My free travel is even cheaper than 1960!

Catrina Koshka



Our Food Donation Points:

Gatleys 2 Mill Lane, Storrington
Exotic Pets 36 High Street, Littlehampton
East Worthing Community Centre Pages Lane
Strand Pet Supplies 17 Strand Parade, Goring
Donate Page on worthingcatwelfaretrust.org

Reg. Charity No: 1049596, 141 Downside Avenue, Worthing BN14 0EY

Worthing Cat Welfare Trust

General: 07544 226034 Lost & Found: 07340 986609

Rescue: 07818 824407 Adoptions: 07354 442937

www.facebook.com/wcwt1 www.worthingcatwelfaretrust.org