



# Impact Report

2020 - 2021





# Thank you from our Chief Executive

Since joining the People's Postcode Lottery family in 2018, we have received a fantastic £3.5 million thanks to the ongoing generosity of players. In the last year this funding has been a huge support to us in continuing our vital work to help cats in need, despite the challenges of the pandemic.

In particular, the latest funding has supported our centres through the many operational changes needed to ensure the safety of both our people and the cats in our care. This includes the introduction of our very successful hands-free homing initiative, to allow us to keep finding new homes for cats while also adhering to social distancing measures.

Players have also supported our advocacy work and we have had some fantastic successes in this area, taking us closer to our vision of a world where every cat is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs.

The role that companion animals have played in so many people's lives has certainly been highlighted over the past year. Our pets can bring us so much comfort and happiness, which is even more appreciated during times of stress, sadness and uncertainty. We will continue to champion the unique bond between humans and cats, and help create perfect matches between adopters and the cats in our care.

I would like to say a huge thank you on behalf of everyone at Cats Protection, as well as the thousands of cats and people we've helped with your support. Together, we can continue to create a better world for cats.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James Yeates Chief Executive, Cats Protection

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# What Cats Protection achieved in 2020

Despite the challenges we faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020 Cats Protection:

- helped **126,000** cats and kittens through our national network which includes around 210 volunteer-run branches and 37 centres. That's the equivalent of helping around **345 cats a day**
- rehomed **27,000** cats. 15,000 of those were rehomed through our hands-free homing service
- reunited **1,900** cats with their owners
- helped neuter **109,000** cats and kittens and promoted the benefits of neutering. Cats Protection runs the largest single species neutering programme in the world
- trapped, neutered and returned **11,750** feral cats
- was supported by the amazing efforts of our **10,900** volunteers
- had a presence in many local communities through our network of **109** shops across the UK (as of 31 December 2020)
- gave **500** cat welfare talks to **13,600** adults and children, and our education packs were downloaded over **16,000** times
- released our first **CATS** (Cats and Their Stats) UK report. This involved speaking to over **10,000** people from across the UK, making it the largest and most comprehensive report on cats. This was sent to the government animal welfare teams in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland as well as a number of organisations in the animal sector and received very positive feedback
- held our first annual **Feline Behaviour Conference**, online due to the pandemic, allowing us to share our expertise and insight. **450** people signed up from all over the world and across the animal welfare sector, including vets, vet nurses and charity workers, as well as members of the public
- produced our new manifesto '**The Time is Meow: A cat welfare action plan for Westminster**'. This contains our key asks and is the Advocacy team's policy platform for the year ahead and the remainder of the current Parliament
- handled over **120,000** enquiries from members of the public via our National Information Line, website, email and our social media channels, in addition to the thousands of calls handled locally by our branches
- had **6 million** visits to our branch, centre and national websites
- helped **53** families flee domestic abuse by caring for their cats through our Paws Protect service
- took in and rehomed **145** cats, helping the families of **95** people who had signed up to our Cat Guardians service. The service gives peace of mind to cat owners by promising to take in, care for and rehome people's cats should the owner pass away before them

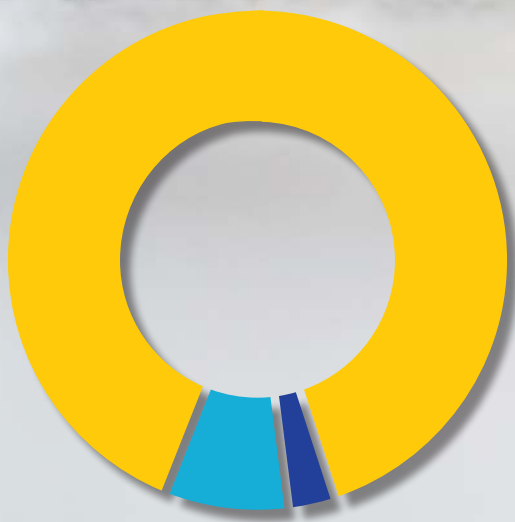


# How have People's Postcode Lottery players helped?

In May and June 2020 we received a total of £1.28m thanks to players. This has supported the vital cat care work at our centres in England, Scotland and Wales as well as our advocacy work.

## Allocation of funds

This is how we allocated funds received from People's Postcode Lottery in 2020:



**89%**

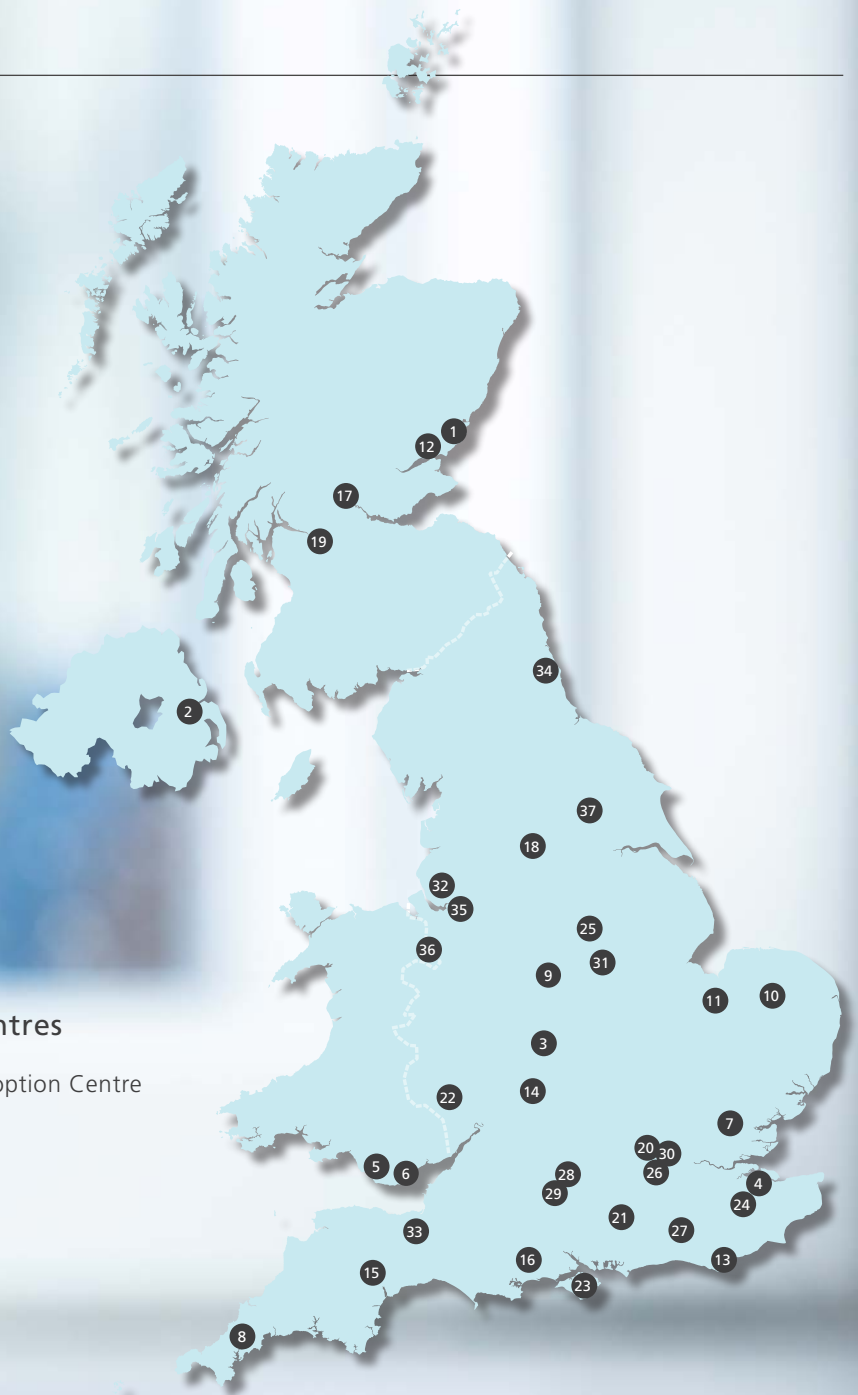
(£1,140,000) Cat care costs

**8%**

(£100,000) Advocacy work

**3%**

(£40,000) Impact reporting and partnership management



## Location of Cats Protection centres

1. Arbroath & Central Angus Branch Adoption Centre
2. Belfast Adoption Centre
3. Birmingham Adoption Centre
4. Bredhurst Adoption Centre
5. Bridgend Adoption Centre
6. Cardiff Homing & Information Centre
7. Chelmsford Branch Adoption Centre
8. Cornwall Adoption Centre
9. Derby Adoption Centre
10. Dereham Adoption Centre
11. Downham Market Adoption Centre
12. Dundee Branch Adoption Centre
13. Eastbourne Adoption Centre
14. Evesham Adoption Centre
15. Exeter Adoption Centre
16. Ferndown Homing Centre
17. Forth Valley Adoption Centre
18. Gildersome Homing Centre
19. Glasgow Adoption Centre
20. Harrow Homing Centre
21. Haslemere Adoption Centre
22. Hereford Adoption Centre
23. Isle of Wight Adoption Centre
24. Maidstone Homing & Information Centre
25. Mansfield Branch Adoption Centre
26. Mitcham Homing Centre
27. National Cat Adoption Centre
28. Newbury Branch Adoption Centre
29. Newbury Homing & Information Centre
30. North London Adoption Centre
31. Nottingham Adoption Centre
32. St Helens Adoption Centre
33. Taunton Homing & Information Centre
34. Tyneside Adoption Centre
35. Warrington Adoption Centre
36. Wrexham Adoption Centre
37. York Adoption Centre

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# Taking good care of cats

Caring for cats in need is at the heart of everything we do at Cats Protection. Cats come to us in a variety of different conditions. However long their stay with us, we provide them with the best possible care until a suitable and loving home is found for them.

At Cats Protection we never put a healthy cat to sleep and while some cats arrive fit and healthy, others require surgery or other treatment to help get them fit to home.

It costs an average of £600 to look after one cat throughout their time with us, so this funding helped us care for around 1,900 cats, giving them the best possible quality of life until they were adopted.

For any cat, coming into a rescue environment can be incredibly stressful. By meeting each cat's individual needs to the best of our ability, we reduce the stress caused to them during their stay. We also ensure that even harder to home cats are shown at their best, making them more appealing to potential owners and therefore reducing their time spent in care, as well as increasing our capacity to help more cats.

Cats receive daily care, environmental enrichment and regular assessment of their physical and behavioural needs. They also receive, as a minimum, veterinary examination, vaccinations, parasite control (including flea and worming treatment), neutering (where appropriate) and microchipping (if old enough).



## Player support helped us care for **1,900 cats**



We cater to each cat's physical and emotional needs to the best of our ability during their time in care to help get them ready for adoption, ensuring that we meet their five basic welfare needs:

- the need for a suitable diet
- the need for a suitable environment
- the need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- the need to be housed with, or apart from, other animals
- the need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

We strive to ensure that every cat leaves us in the best possible condition, meaning that new owners can adopt with confidence, with any pre-existing health conditions made clear.

Through a careful matching process, we help to create lifelong companion animal bonds between cats and people and reduce the likelihood of cats being returned to us after adoption. We know that for many people, pets are an integral part of the family. We aim to find matches that benefit both the adopter and the cat so they can enjoy a lifetime of love together.



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## Direct impacts

- Cats are ready to home more quickly so time spent in shelter environment is kept to a minimum **CAPACITY**
- Increased number of cats helped due to speedier homing **CAPACITY**
- Improved quality of life for cats in care **CAPABILITY**
- Hard to home cats are shown at their best, meaning they have the best opportunity of being adopted **CAPACITY**
- Each cat starts their new life in the best possible health **CAPABILITY**





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## Enabled impacts

- New owners can adopt with confidence that their cat is in the best possible health, with any pre-existing conditions made clear **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- Cat owners see that microchipping, vaccinating and neutering are the norm **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- Many of our insights around meeting cats' needs are shared with the general public, including online and print materials, social media and the Understanding Cats' Needs course on our website **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- A higher proportion of the cat population is microchipped so reuniting lost cats and their owners becomes easier, leading to more successful and happy reunions **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- Lifelong companion animal bonds are formed between cats and adopters **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- Careful matching of cats and potential owners means less likelihood of relinquishment back to Cats Protection after adoption **ECONOMIC IMPACT**
- Neutering means less likelihood of unwanted kittens ending up as strays or ferals **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**
- Positive experience of homing a rescue animal, rather than buying from an unknown source, helps the reputation of Cats Protection and other rescue charities **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- High standards and working practices shared with other feline welfare organisations, leading to efficiencies and best use of resources **ECONOMIC IMPACT, COLLABORATION**



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## Sunburnt Fluff gets vital surgery

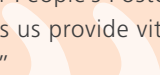


Fifteen-year-old Fluff was brought to our Bridgend Adoption Centre after his owner could no longer care for him. Fluff had suffered significant burns to the tips of his ears, caused by the sun's rays. This meant that he had to have his ear tips removed by a vet to prevent the spread of skin cancer.

Fluff bounced back well from his operation, and he loved human contact, being groomed and playing with ping pong balls. He now has a happy home in Cwmbran, Wales with Jo Griffiths and her family.

Jo said: "Fluff has been the perfect addition to our family. He is such a lovely boy and so affectionate, he greets us when we come home, and he knows which one is the soft touch for a sneaky treat. He is so amazing! His personality has really come out now so we get cwtches and kisses, and he talks to us too. We're so happy that Cats Protection were able to get him the help he needed so we could give him a happy new home."

Bridgend Adoption Centre Manager Sue Dobbs commented: "We are delighted that we were able to give Fluff a second chance and are so pleased to hear he's settled well in his new home. We'd like to say a big thank you to players of People's Postcode Lottery whose generous support helps us provide vital treatment and care for cats like Fluff."



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## Podgy puss Paisley sheds the pounds

One cat that had to be put on a weight-loss regime when she arrived at our National Cat Adoption Centre was Paisley. The five-year-old weighed 10.75 kgs – twice her recommended weight – when she was brought to us last year. She was put on a specially-prescribed diet and matched with an adopter, James Frankland, who was prepared to help her continue her weight-loss journey.

“I felt so sorry for Paisley when I first met her,” said James. “She was so large she couldn’t move properly or reach around to groom herself. I have a deep love of cats and was determined to help her reach a healthy weight.

“Initially she was following a vet-prescribed diet and I later moved her to normal cat food while sticking to responsible portion sizes. Paisley begged for food most days so I usually bought her off with a catnip toy or a bit more play to help her get more exercise.

“She is now getting used to normal sizes of cat food and has lost more than three kilos. Although she is still two kilos from her ideal weight, she’s already so much more agile and lively. I have no doubt it’s extended her lifespan.”



*Image top: Paisley before.*

*Image bottom: Paisley (left) with new housemate Papillion, credit James Frankland*

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## Hobbes is the ideal companion for widower

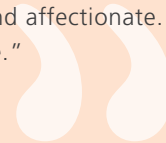


Tabby-and-white boy Hobbes was cared for by our Harrow Homing Centre and matched perfectly with loving new owners during lockdown. His story perfectly illustrates the huge benefits cats and humans can bring to each other's lives, particularly during tough times.

His new owner commented: "Hobbes has changed my dad's life. He lost my mum after a very happy 69-year marriage this Christmas to COVID, which was heart-breaking. Dad was low, didn't get up in the mornings and was very lost.

"Hobbes was an experiment to see if Dad might regain a sense of the present, and he has done an astounding job. He is both affectionate and demanding enough to give Dad a routine. Hobbes has absolutely focussed on Dad as his main and only carer and is not fussed about the rest of us in the family – which Dad loves.

"Hobbes has been the perfect cat – litter trained, confident and affectionate. He has literally transformed my dad's life."



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## Chilli's close call with collar injury

When kind-hearted locals in the Ashington area contacted volunteers at our East Northumberland Branch about a limping cat with a collar trapped round her neck and front leg, the volunteers sprung into action. They got her to the vet for immediate treatment, likely saving her leg from amputation.

Now named Chilli, the sweet-natured stray was then taken to our Tyneside Adoption Centre. As the wound was not healing, a decision was made to operate on her as we never put a healthy cat to sleep and, given the right treatment and care, Chilli had every chance of making a good recovery.

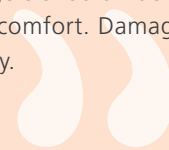
Adoption Centre Manager Emzi Frater said: "The branch fosterers made sure to get Chilli the immediate help she needed but with axillary (armpit) wounds like this they are in such an awkward place they can struggle to ever fully heal. Surgical intervention gave her the best chance to get rid of necrotic tissue and allow her to live a normal life again.

"The treatment and recovery was hard for Chilli but she kept her lovely temperament throughout – in fact that's how she got her name, she was just so chilled out, despite what a difficult time she's had."

Chilli's collar, her friendly nature and the fact that she'd been neutered, suggested that she was someone's pet. Sadly, however, she was not microchipped and repeated appeals on websites and social media to find her owners proved unsuccessful. Happily, having made a full recovery, Chilli was adopted into a loving new home.



We believe that all owned cats should be identified in order to trace their owner should they become lost or injured. We recommend microchipping as it is a safe and permanent method of identification. If an owner also chooses to use a collar we advise that only a 'quick release' or snap-opening collar is used – not an elasticated one – to reduce the chance of it getting caught and causing injury or death to the cat. When fitting a collar, two fingers should fit snugly underneath it to ensure safety and comfort. Damaged collars should be replaced immediately.





# Advocating for cats

Despite being one of the nation's favourite pets, sadly, many cats continue to be victims of cruelty, neglect or poor welfare. Our Advocacy team speaks up for cats and campaigns for change across the UK, working with and influencing politicians and decision makers to create a better world for cats.

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All advocacy campaigns are driven by issues of cat welfare, but often also have benefits for cat owners or potential cat owners, such as our Purrfect Landlords campaign which aims to get more landlords to allow pets.

Our priority issues include compulsory microchipping of owned cats, licensing of cat breeding, air gun licensing, strengthened legislation around fireworks, a ban on snares, pet-safe stickers on flowers which are non-toxic to cats, the scanning of feline victims of road traffic accidents and how cats can help people overcome loneliness.

As animal welfare is a devolved issue the Advocacy team works with each government individually across the UK. In England we have been instrumental in achieving a government ban on the commercial sale of kittens under eight weeks, a ban on the commercial third-party sale of kittens under six months and an increase in the maximum prison sentence for crimes against animals.

Most recently, we have secured a government commitment to introduce compulsory microchipping for owned cats under The Action Plan for Animal Welfare, launched on 12 May. We will continue working with the government on the delivery of this commitment.

In 2020, nearly **5,000** emails were sent to MPs by Cats Protection supporters calling for the compulsory microchipping of pet cats.

**99%** (641 of 650) of MPs were contacted on this issue.

It is estimated there are **10.2 million** owned cats in the UK – 2.6 million (26%) of which are not microchipped, according to Cats Protection's CATS (Cats and Their Stats) report 2020.

We held an APGOCATS (All-Party Parliamentary Group on Cats) meeting in March about our Purrfect Landlords campaign to encourage more landlords to allow tenants to have cats. Since our campaign launched the government has introduced a new Model Tenancy Agreement for landlords which means consent for pets will be the default position for any landlord that uses this.

In Scotland we worked with the Scottish Government to develop the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (Scotland) Regulations of 2021. These new regulations will license commercial cat breeding to ensure good welfare, prohibit the commercial sale of kittens under eight weeks, prohibit the commercial sale of kittens which were not bred by the licence holder and regulate welfare establishments and homing organisations.

In Wales we are part of the Companion Animal Welfare Group Wales (CAWGW), which created a new manifesto for the Welsh Senedd to improve the welfare of cats in Wales.

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## Direct impacts

- When microchipping is made compulsory for owned cats, fewer stray cats will need to be found new homes because they can't be identified and reunited with their owners **CAPACITY**
- If more housing providers allow cats, charities like Cats Protection will have to take in fewer cats owing to landlord issues and will be able to home more cats into rented accommodation **CAPACITY**
- If cat breeding is regulated fewer kittens will be bred in poor health for commercial gain which will reduce the number of sick cats and kittens relinquished to Cats Protection by purchasers unable to cope **CAPABILITY**
- The above will all contribute to Cats Protection having more space available to take in cats that are genuinely in need of rehoming **CAPACITY**
- Ultimately if fewer cats end up in our care, we can direct our resources to other activities to improve cat welfare **CAPABILITY**





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## Enabled impacts



- More people will be aware of the importance of microchipping **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- More cats will be microchipped, leading to more happy reunions **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- More owners will know what has happened to their cat should they be killed or injured, eg in a road traffic accident **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- Fewer people will have to give up cats due to landlord issues **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- A change in the law raising the maximum penalty for animal abusers will recognise the value of cats (and all animals) and promote humane behaviour **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- Air gun licensing will help reduce the number of air guns in circulation and prevent incidents of cruel shootings of cats **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- The value of companion animals in helping with loneliness and general wellbeing will be recognised **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- More people will be aware of the need to do pre-purchase checks before buying a kitten online and will ask questions of the breeder **SOCIAL IMPACT**
- More people will be able to enjoy the benefits of pet ownership if housing providers have pet-friendly terms **SOCIAL IMPACT**

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## The power of the microchip: Jess reunited at last

A missing black cat called Jess was reunited with his delighted family thanks to his microchip, after disappearing almost 14 years previously.

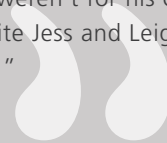


Jess, who is now 17-years-old, vanished from a family friend's home in May 2007. He had been staying there while his owners had to move into temporary accommodation that did not accept pets while they waited to move house. Unfortunately, despite a neighbour spotting Jess back at their old neighbourhood, his owners were unable to catch him and thought he was lost forever.

In fact, the adventurous moggy found a new home not far away, in the grounds of the Ryde House Group, which cares for individuals with learning disabilities and/or autism. Residents there kept him well-fed and affectionately named him Tibby, but when Jess began showing his age, staff decided he should have a home of his own and took him to Cats Protection. Once there he was scanned for a microchip and luckily owner Leigh Bateman had kept her details up-to-date, meaning she and Jess were reunited after just one phone call.

Leigh said: "We were so surprised to get the call and we're so pleased to have him home. He's enjoying a room of his own with plenty of food, warm blankets and all he could need. I truly can't believe he's back with us after all these years."

Jo Morrison, Deputy Manager at Cats Protection's Isle of Wight Adoption Centre, added: "Wow, the power of the microchip! Jess's story just goes to show why we microchip all cats before they leave our care at Cats Protection. We might never have known Jess had owners who missed him if it weren't for his chip. It was wonderful to be able to reunite Jess and Leigh and for him to go home to his family."



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## Heart-breaking loss illustrates need for air gun licensing

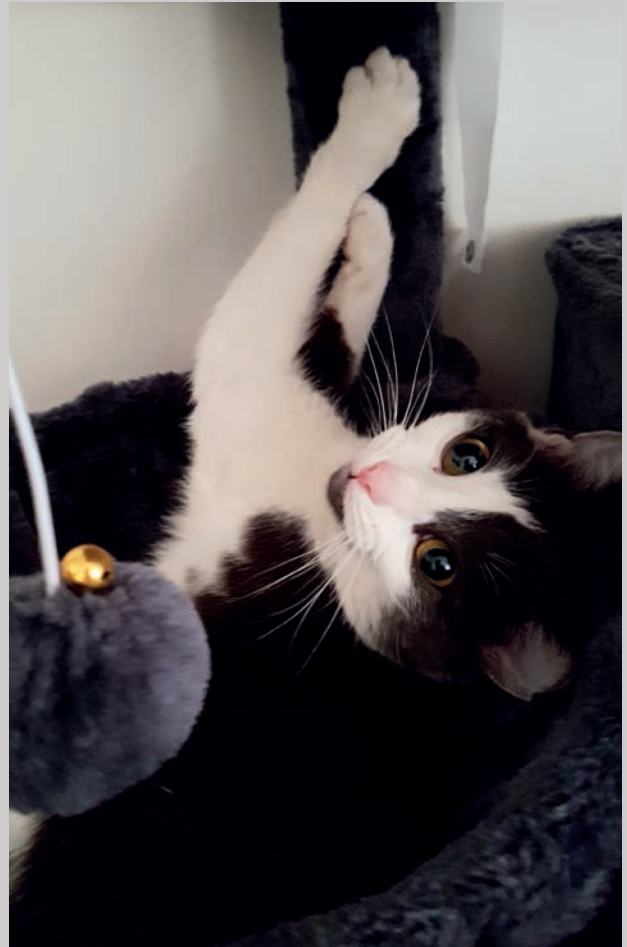
In spring this year, Cats Protection renewed its call for the government to license air guns, as our research shows an increase of nearly 50% in the number of air gun attacks on cats in the spring and summer compared to the rest of the year.

Katherine Brown's much-loved cat Alaska died shortly after being shot by an air gun near her home in Bristol last August.

She said: "It was the most traumatic experience which I wouldn't wish on any animal. Alaska was a lovely, friendly young cat and was out near our home on a sunny afternoon. When she staggered into the garden, we could see straight away she was hurt and rushed her to a vet, but she died 20 minutes later.

"Until this happened, I had no idea that anyone over the age of 18 could purchase an air gun without the need for a licence. You just assume there must be some kind of restriction over these lethal weapons that can inflict such injuries. Not only was it devastating to lose Alaska in such a horrific way, it's really worrying that there are people around who use weapons like this in such a nasty and reckless manner."

Air gun attacks can leave cats with significant, life-changing injuries. It is not uncommon for them to lose their sight or need to have a limb amputated. Tragically, many cats do not survive their injuries. The misuse of air guns is also a concern for the wider community and the safety of everyone in local neighbourhoods.



Cats Protection's Senior Advocacy & Government Relations Officer Madison Rogers comments: "Many people are shocked to learn that these lethal weapons can be owned by anyone aged over 18 in England and Wales. This is in contrast with Scotland and Northern Ireland, which both have sensible, modern laws in place that require licensing of air guns. Legislation on air gun ownership is now well overdue in England and Wales. Cats Protection will continue to raise our concern that unlicensed access to air guns is resulting in countless cats and other animals being shot, injured and killed."

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## Cat CV impresses letting agency

Our CATS report 2020 showed that an estimated one million households across the UK would like to have a cat, but can't due to the fact they are in a rental property. This is why we created an online Cat CV template that people can use to help persuade more landlords to allow tenants to have cats.

Caroline Sherlock created a CV for her three rescue cats – Susie, Tia Maria and Sadie – when she was looking for a short-term rental while her own home was being renovated.

She explained: "I wanted to rent a property for just a few months, but it was so hard to find properties that allowed cats. There were lots of adverts for rented properties on websites, but when I ticked the 'allows pets' filter, I was left with barely any. I spent hours and hours searching and it was a very stressful experience.

"I found the Cats Protection Cat CV template and drafted one for the three cats, including details of their microchips, flea and worming treatment and their background. Then when I found a property I liked, even though it didn't mention allowing pets, I sent it to the letting agent. He thought it was a great idea and I think it really tipped the balance in my favour as it showed I was a responsible cat owner. I got the property and my cats didn't cause any problems.

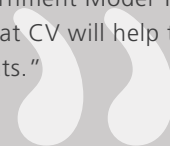
"Cats are fantastic pets, and mine bring me so much happiness and companionship. It's tragic that so many people can't have a cat because they live in rented housing, especially during these difficult days when we're all at home and missing family, friends and work colleagues. I really hope the Cat CV will help more people find suitable rented housing and help landlords take a more open-minded view towards allowing cats."



Recent changes to the government's Model Tenancy Agreement means consent for pets will be the default position, and landlords using it will have to object in writing within 28 days of a written pet request from a tenant and provide a good reason.

Cats Protection's Head of Advocacy & Government Relations Jacqui Cuff said: "Cats Protection is delighted that the government has recently updated the Model Tenancy Agreement to make it easier for tenants to enjoy the companionship of a pet. However, this change will only have an impact if a landlord opts to use the Model Tenancy Agreement – the use of which is entirely voluntary, there is no legal requirement for landlords to use it.

"For those renters who are dealing with a landlord who does not use the government Model Tenancy Agreement, we hope our Cat CV will help them make a good case for allowing cats."



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# Call for pet-safe stickers on cut flowers

After Emma Clarke's beloved cat Marie passed away in December 2020 as a result of lily poisoning, she decided to support our call for the rollout of pet-safe stickers on cut flowers and house plants to avoid more unnecessary deaths. Marie sadly died from acute kidney failure after coming into contact with lilies.

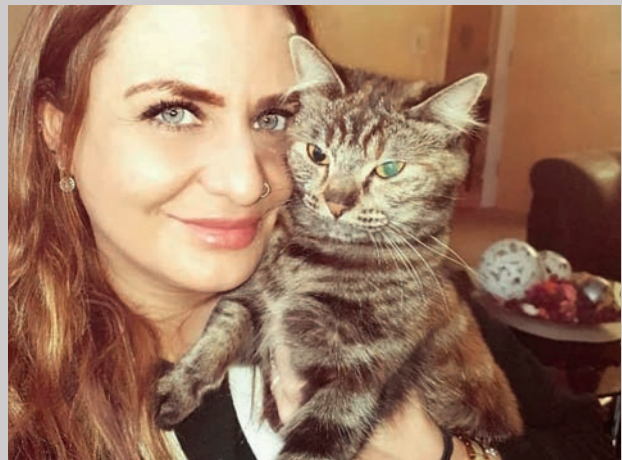
Emma explained: "The flowers were on the table and I saw Marie nibbling them a few times but didn't think anything of it. Within a week or so, I noticed she was sleepier than usual. Then she started vomiting but I put this down to a recent change of food. Around four days later, she started going downhill quite fast – she was really lifeless and didn't even react when the vacuum cleaner came near her, so I knew something was seriously wrong.

"I feel desperately sad but also very guilty that I didn't know. I think bouquets should come with warnings and there should be advice given at the point of purchase. If any good can come out of this sadness, it will be making more people aware."

A YouGov survey<sup>1</sup> commissioned by Cats Protection revealed that:

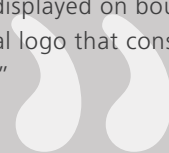
- around six in 10 UK adults were not aware lilies are fatal to cats if they ingest them
- when choosing to buy flowers, nine in 10 people did not say they would consider whether they're toxic to pets
- half the people surveyed said they would be more likely to buy flowers if they had a pet-safe warning attached

Cats Protection believes that a lack of clear labelling means many owners are unwittingly exposing their cats to a potentially fatal reaction simply by purchasing a bunch of flowers.



"Despite our campaigning on the issue, we're really alarmed that lots of people still don't know that certain flowers and plants can kill," commented Jacqui Cuff, Cats Protection's Head of Advocacy & Government Relations.

"This is why we're calling on all retailers of cut flowers and house plants, especially online, to consider pet-safe stickers so consumers can have peace of mind that their cats won't come to any harm. We think mandatory stickers should be clearly displayed on bouquet packaging, with a universal logo that consumers can easily recognise and trust."



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<sup>1</sup> Figures from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,064 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 24-25 February 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all UK adults (aged 18+).



## Thank you!

Support from People's Postcode Lottery players allows us to continue to be here for cats in need, even during the most trying of times. We'd like to say a huge thank you to players, who help us carry out our vital cat care work and campaign to make the world a better place for cats and those who love them.

