



# Annual Review 2016



## Trustee's report

Founded in 1927, Cats Protection is the UK's leading feline welfare charity. In 2016 we helped almost 190,000 cats and kittens, including 26,000 feral cats (2015: almost 200,000, including 26,000 ferals) through our national network of over 250 volunteer-run branches and 34 centres. That's the equivalent of helping more than 500 cats a day.

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

### Our values

- Cats and their welfare are at the centre of everything we do
- We never put a healthy cat to sleep
- We value and respect our volunteers, supporters and staff
- We are committed to providing a high-quality service
- We are open and honest

### The five animal welfare needs

It is law that all cat owners must ensure that the five welfare needs are met for their cats: Animal Welfare Acts 2006-11.

- Diet – to have suitable food and fresh water
- Environment – to have a suitable place to live with everything they need
- Health – to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease
- Behaviour – to be able to express normal behaviour
- Company – to have the choice to be apart from other cats

## We have four strategic aims to help us help more cats

- 1** We will significantly increase awareness of Cats Protection and our work.
- 2** As the leading authority on cats we will help people better understand their needs in order to improve the welfare of all cats.
- 3** We will help to reduce overpopulation of cats:
  - through targeted neutering campaigns and education
  - by directing more resources to the promotion of early neutering
  - by doing more research and gathering better data on the impact of our neutering work
- 4** We will home more cats until our work on information, education and neutering reduces the long-term need for homing.

In the longer term our work will ensure that there will be fewer cats needing our help.

## Helping us to get there

- We will significantly grow income and manage our funds to enable us to help more cats, now and in the future
- We will speak up for cats and represent their interests
- We will increase the extent and effectiveness of our collaboration with animal welfare charities and other organisations, for the benefit of cats

This report covers the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2016 and was approved by the Trustee on 6 April 2017.

## Chairman's report

### *An introduction from Heather McCann, Chairman*

This report sets out Cats Protection's highlights of 2016, which build upon our past achievements. We've been continuing to implement our updated strategy, launched in 2015, which sets out our ambition to help more cats than ever before in the years ahead. We're making great progress, but we still have a long way to go to achieve our vision: a world where every cat is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs.

We continue to be ambitious and we achieved a great deal during 2016. We have focused on growing our profile throughout the UK while promoting awareness of cat welfare. Our national campaigns and collaborations with other charities and high profile organisations are helping to bring about change, making the world a better place for cats.

Finding homes for cats in our care remains a priority and our new homing & information centres in Maidstone and Taunton are already enabling us to reach new audiences with high footfall, while the introduction of digital technology in our centres and shops ensures the cats in our care are seen by even more people, increasing the chances of finding them new homes.

Our Community Neutering team has played a key role in developing relationships in targeted areas and educating people about the benefits of neutering and we're collecting more data to analyse changing attitudes towards neutering and the effectiveness of our programmes.

We've had a very successful year in terms of fundraising; our supporters have donated a total of £45.2 million. These generous donations make our work possible and for that I am very grateful. However we are also mindful of the need to fundraise responsibly and ensure that we remain compliant with law and with recognised best practices. Further details are set out later in the report, along with details of how we use our income to help cats.

In September we opened our 100th shop, in Bristol. Our portfolio of shops has grown strongly throughout the year and at 31 December, we had 110 shops in total (2015: 89). We were recognised as Outstanding Charity Retailer of the Year by the Charity Retail Association. We also received the Best Use of Digital Technology in Charity Retail award, for our innovative use of digital screens and tablets in our shops, to promote our rehoming and neutering work.

We continue to strengthen the leadership and governance of our charity and in 2016 we were delighted to welcome Irene Campbell to the Board of Trustees. Irene is a cat lover with a wealth of public sector and voluntary experience; as well as acting as a Trustee for other charities over the past 20 years, she also helped set up a Cats Protection branch in Sussex more than 30 years ago.

As we move into 2017 we will continue to build further successes for cats with the confidence that we have a solid financial base and a strong team of supporters, volunteers and staff.

*Heather*

Heather McCann  
6 April 2017



## Chief Executive's report

### *An introduction from Peter Hepburn, Chief Executive*

Our advocacy campaigns are playing a key role in making life better for cats. I've seen the difference we can make by influencing politicians and policy makers; not just in Westminster, but also in the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish parliaments and assemblies and in local government.

During the year we launched our biggest and most ambitious advocacy campaign to date – 'True cost of kittens'. The campaign called for an end to the sale of kittens under eight weeks of age and the closure of the legal loopholes that allow commercial breeding and the sale of cats to occur without a licence. As a result, Government has proposed new regulations which will help to prevent the poor welfare associated with unscrupulous breeders and will also contribute to managing the overall population of cats.

Following a restructure of our executive management team this year, we decided to split the role of Director of Central Services to create two new roles and I was delighted to welcome a new Director of Finance and Strategy, Jill Scarfield, in November and a new Director of Volunteering and Corporate Services, Sue Field, who joined us in early 2017. Jill has previously held roles focused on strategy within local authorities and she brings a wealth of experience in this area, while Sue has come from Girlguiding and has extensive experience of communications, marketing and governance roles. The restructuring of these roles recognises the vital importance of volunteering in our charity and will help support the ongoing implementation of our strategy, with the ultimate aim of helping more cats.

We were also fortunate to recruit Mark Beazley as our new Director of Operations from January 2017. Mark joins us from Dogs Trust Ireland and has extensive experience of the animal welfare charity sector and of working with volunteer groups.

During the year, we were recognised for the skills and commitment of our people: volunteer Nicola Townley, the Co-ordinator of our Cambridge Branch was selected as an Animal Charity Volunteer of the Year finalist at the Petplan® Charity Awards, a fantastic achievement.

Everything we've achieved – and every single cat we've helped in 2016 – is thanks to our devoted supporters, volunteers and staff. Thank you to each and every one of you for your commitment to cats and to the charity. Together, we've given another 190,000 cats a chance of a better life.

*Peter*

Peter Hepburn  
6 April 2017



# Objectives, activities, achievements and performance

## Increasing awareness

We've worked hard to build awareness of Cats Protection and to engage with existing and new supporters nationally as well as throughout local communities.

Our National Cat Awards, sponsored by Purina®, celebrate the achievements of the country's fearless felines and miraculous moggies. The reach of our media coverage increased three-fold compared to our previous event in 2014 (2016 circulation: 461 million vs 2014: 156 million) with highlights in the *Daily Mail*, *Daily Mirror*, *Telegraph* online, *Express* online and on *BBC Newsround*. We had a record number of entries this year, over 1,300, an increase in attendees and an increase in celebrity support. The awards are so popular that we've decided to make them an annual event rather than biennial, as they were previously. The media interest generated by the awards helps to build the profile of the charity and also brings many fundraising benefits, while the high interest from the public gives us confidence that we can sustain an annual event.

National Black Cat Day, our annual celebration of black and black-and-white cats returned on 27 October and received similar levels of public interest. #BlackCatDay was the top UK trend on Twitter all day, with periods of trending in the USA too, and the campaign received media coverage from BBC.co.uk and the *Metro* online. Caspar beat 4,000 other entrants to win our online competition which asked supporters to share photos that best show their black cats' personalities. Owner Jane Scott, of Wallington, Surrey, said she and husband Andrew were delighted Caspar had been chosen as the feline figurehead for black cats. She said: "Caspar is a truly lovely cat – he is very friendly, playful and loves to be around people, so we're thrilled he has been chosen as the face of Black Cat Day 2016."

Our branch, adoption centre and national websites combined were visited by nearly 3.5 million people (2015: 3 million) and our national blog was visited

by 104,000 people (2015: 115,000). Our social media following continued to grow too. By the end of the year 438,000 supporters liked our national Facebook page (2015: 350,000) and 86,000 fans followed our national Twitter account (2015: 70,000).

We began regularly producing engaging online videos to raise awareness of the charity while demonstrating best cat welfare practice. For example, our series of 'Ain't misbehaving' animations help to dispel common behavioural myths, while our 'Feline crafty' series of videos on our YouTube channel show viewers how to make things for their cats such as toys and treats.

We developed a new behaviour hub on our national website to make it easy for visitors to find information on their cats' behaviour; and we launched a 'Paws to listen' grief support service. There is a range of resources, information and support on our website for people faced with the loss of their beloved cat, while our free phone line is run by a team of eight volunteer listeners who provide a sympathetic ear to callers struggling to cope with grief due to the loss of their cat.

We've been exploring new ways of making our rehoming advertising as effective as possible. Our TV and radio advertising is successfully sending people to visit our websites to look for cats to adopt and saw the number of enquiries via our online rehoming service, Find-a-cat, rise from 26,511 in 2015 to 30,550 in 2016. In addition to tracking and measuring responses to our campaigns we have carried out customer experience research. The improved data and knowledge gained from our research will help us to improve the numbers of cat adoptions resulting from our advertising.

We've been building partnerships in communities to increase support for our work. In light of the number of incidents involving cats being poisoned or injured in neighbourhoods in 2016, we teamed up with Neighbourhood Watch and the RSPCA to give people advice on what they can do in their area if they suspect that cats are being deliberately targeted.

In 2016 we welcomed three donkeys – Twinkle, Holly and Star – to our head office in Sussex as part of a partnership with The Donkey Sanctuary, based in Sidmouth, Devon. Working alongside other animal charities that share our beliefs, and hope for a better world for all animals, is very important to us and the collaboration allows us both to promote our rehoming schemes and connect us with fresh audiences both at a local and a national level. The Donkey Sanctuary has seven farms across the UK – some of which have already rehomed some of our cats – where there is the potential to have on-site homing facilities for Cats Protection.

We have invested in recruiting and managing new volunteers to develop relationships with media outlets across the UK. Additionally, our community neutering officers have been increasing our activity in areas of need, which will be detailed later in this report.

*Holly and Twinkle have made the National Cat Centre their home*

The Citizens Advertising Takeover Service (CATS) raised more than £23,000 through an online crowd-funded campaign from almost 700 backers, to replace all 68 advertising boards in Clapham Common station for two weeks in September with pictures of cats in care from Cats Protection and Battersea Dogs & Cats Home. The posters were seen by thousands of people and were then auctioned with the proceeds donated to both charities.

We participated in shows and events all over the UK, both nationally and locally. Our new vintage-themed show stand won a silver medal at Your Horse Live Show and a bronze at the RHS Malvern Show. Meanwhile our branches and centres spread the word in their local areas with events ranging from quiz nights to tea parties and open days.



## Improving understanding of cats' needs

In line with our vision, which is a world where every cat is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs, we have continued to educate the public and the veterinary profession on welfare messages so that ultimately fewer cats need our help.

Sadly, cats are a very misunderstood species, even by those that love them. As good welfare is at the heart of everything we do in Cats Protection, we've been working on a welfare strategy to guide all volunteers and staff, whatever their role in the charity, on how to ensure that we are meeting all the welfare needs of the cats in our care. We see it as one of our key responsibilities to help cat owners understand how they can meet these needs for their own cats too. The guidance will be launched in spring 2017.

We continued to work with veterinary schools and the veterinary profession to improve their understanding of cats' needs, particularly in the animal rescue environment. We provided work experience placements for 15 vet students at the National Cat Centre, many of whom submitted reports for our Veterinary Student Awards and we had classes of vet students visiting several of our adoption centres.

The Education team is continuing to recruit, train and support volunteers to give education talks to schools and community groups. Our education officers also ran projects targeting harder-to-reach audiences with our cat welfare messages. In 2016 we gave 1,337 talks to an audience of 41,719 children and adults (2015: 1,142 talks to 35,019 people).

We attended the Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH) 2016 conference, where our veterinary staff discussed feral cat management and collaborative working on relevant panels; and we attended lectures at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) Congress 2016. We delivered a behaviour webinar to PDSA staff and invited vets undertaking work for Cats Protection to attend.

We also participated in the International Companion Animal Welfare Conference (ICAWC) in Dubrovnik. Dr Maggie Roberts presented on shelter medicine and was on the 'Ask the vet' panel and Behaviour Manager Nicky Trevorow presented on feline desensitisation, a gradual process to increase a cat's confidence so they feel less threatened by things such as fireworks or a trip to the vets. Nicky was also on the 'Ask the behaviourist' panel. Cats Protection provided equipment such as traps and transfer baskets alongside SNIP International, a UK charity that promotes neutering overseas, to help groups who don't have access to these resources.

It's vital that we engage with decision makers, so together with other rescues we presented a report about 'Breeding and Sale of Cats' to the Animal Health and Welfare Board England, a group made up of experts in different species that advise the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) – further details are set out later in this report.

It's important that we deliver consistent messaging when members of the public contact us with questions about cat care, adopting a cat or the work of the charity. We developed our customer service framework and enlisted sophisticated scripting technology to give reliable, up-to-date information about cat care to share with the public. The national Helpline (03000 12 12 12) will be renamed the Contact Centre in early 2017. The change in name reflects the planned growth of the service to provide a central point where all customer contacts are managed across multiple channels. We are working towards offering the service to centres and branches from 2017. We currently have four contact centre co-ordinators and 52 home-based volunteers, with a further recruitment campaign starting in early 2017.

We continued to educate the public on cats' needs by answering owners' queries in Q&A sessions on social media and in Facebook Live real-time videos; and we teamed up with *Simon's Cat* on their series of videos called *Simon's Cat Logic* to explain the cats' behaviours in the short films. A new series of advertisements allowed us to deliver basic messages about welfare to demographic groups and geographical areas where people may not yet have come across important issues such as neutering, microchipping and the management of multi-cat households.



## Reducing overpopulation of cats

We remain committed to neutering cats as one of the most effective ways of preventing unplanned litters becoming the abandoned pets of the future. In 2016 we neutered 152,000 cats and kittens including 20,000 ferals (2015: 159,000 including 19,000 ferals).

A key strand of our neutering work in 2016 has been in the progress of our community neutering officers, whose work involves building strong relationships with harder-to-reach audiences within targeted urban areas with high deprivation. Engaging with audiences in this way takes more investment of staff and volunteer time before an outcome is achieved. This, in part, explains the small reduction in the total number of cats neutered in 2016 compared to 2015. However, the cat welfare benefit cannot be underestimated.

We're also teaming up with other charities and local authorities to deliver vital cat welfare messages, which is more challenging and time-intensive but has a greater long-term impact. It's important that

cat owners know that kittens can reach sexual maturity and become pregnant from four months, for example, and that there are no health or welfare benefits in allowing a cat to have a litter of kittens before she is neutered.

In the East Midlands, we collaborated with the RSPCA, Blagreaves Veterinary Centre in Derby, the University of Nottingham's School of Veterinary Medicine and Science and Derby Homes (a management agent for Derby City Council) to reach owned and unowned cats. Twenty-five volunteers helped us to knock on 3,500 doors which resulted in the neutering of over 100 cats and 50 dogs for free. Derby Adoption Centre worked hard to foster relationships with the local council so they can work with tenants and landlords, teach responsible pet ownership and encourage owners to neuter their cats. We also produced a series of leaflets for the council to use, to continue promoting the importance of neutering.

**Community Neutering Officer**  
*Sarah Reid helped Jack and Christine Radcliffe get their cats neutered*



We continued a Swansea campaign with the Llys Nini branch of the RSPCA which allowed eligible owners to get their cat neutered, microchipped and flea/worm-treated for just £5. In addition to this, for two weeks in August we ran another project in Swansea to engage harder-to-reach cat owners who may not have access to transport to take their cat to the vet. We collaborated with Dogs Trust, Vets4Pets and a number of other charities and agencies to offer free pet health-checks, neutering, microchipping, de-fleaing and worming treatment and free transport to the vets.

We helped Jack and Christine Radcliffe in Edinburgh, who were referred to our Community Neutering team by a local housing association. Their nine-year-old cat Tigger had already had multiple litters but they didn't have the money or transport to get her neutered. "We really wanted to get Tigger done, she'd already had four litters and we were worried about her surviving if she had any more," they said.

Cats Protection was running a £5 neutering campaign in the area, which covered the cost of Tigger's operation. When Community Neutering Officer Sarah Reid arrived at their home to collect Tigger, she discovered Jack and Christine also had two unneutered male cats, 11-year-old Sam and four-month-old kitten Smokie, so she took them to the vets to be neutered too. They hadn't realised cats could be neutered from four months of age – this important procedure will prevent Smokie from potentially contributing to the number of unwanted cats in the UK. Jack and Christine added: "It's really worth it, no more kittens for the females! Cats Protection helped us and helped our cats."

Meanwhile, in the Salford area we teamed up with Dogs Trust and a local arts organisation to run free community art projects. We invited young people to paint wooden silhouettes of cats and dogs which were then put on display around the local area. During the events we promoted messages about responsible pet ownership and the benefits of neutering. In total, we neutered 38,000 cats through joint charity schemes in 2016 (2015: 33,000).

Our volunteer-led trap, neuter and return or relocate (TNR) programmes help control feral and

community cats. Feral cats are not socialised to people or the domestic environment, so remain fearful of humans and behave like wild animals. Our Wharfe Valley Branch, for example, successfully trapped, neutered and returned a feral colony living at a nearby car parts garage. To support our branches' and centres' neutering initiatives, we produced a series of adaptable branded resources to promote the benefits of neutering to the public in their local area.

To get a better idea of how many stray and feral cats there are in the UK, we carried out extensive research work in undertaking a cat census. We launched a mobile phone app to help us track homeless cats as part of the UK's first ever in-depth study of the stray population. The app was developed by the University of Edinburgh and the pilot scheme was launched at the beginning of September in Bulwell, Nottingham as we receive many reports of stray cats in that area. We held a number of events and a Facebook group was also developed so that members of the public could give us information about strays. We delivered questionnaires and surveys to understand the knowledge and attitudes towards neutering before the launch of the project; and will repeat them after the project to assess its effect in changing attitudes and behaviour. Four hundred stray cats have been reported to us and we currently know of around 50 streets in Bulwell that need help with neutering. In 2017 we'll evaluate the success of the project to inform us on the potential for further work.

As one of nine animal welfare members of the Cat Population Control Group (CPCG), we are able to work alongside other charities to maximise the impact of neutering. Since its creation in 2013, the group reports a year-on-year rise in the neutering rate of UK cats (from 86% in 2012 to 93% in 2016). We were delighted when the group was awarded the accolade of Charity Partnership of the Year in the Third Sector Awards for 2016. As part of this group we launched the Kitten Neutering Database (KiND), a resource for vets that supports our recommendation of routinely neutering cats from four months of age. There are now 1,422 vets that are members of KiND (2015: 1,322).

## Rehoming cats

Finding loving new homes for cats in our care remains a key part of our strategy and in 2016 we rehomed 43,000 cats (2015: 44,000) and reunited a further 3,000 cats with their owners (2015: 3,000). Our adoption centres found homes for over 1,000 more cats in 2016 than in 2015 following investment in the redevelopment of existing centres and the opening of new ones. However, we did experience a decrease in homing through our branch network, where 1,500 fewer cats were homed in 2016 than in 2015. Work to understand and address the reasons for this decrease is ongoing.

We refurbished and reopened adoption centres in Bredhurst, Haslemere and Newbury, while work to refurbish our Dereham Adoption Centre is planned to begin in 2017. In addition to this, we appointed developers to build a new adoption centre in Tyneside with work beginning in January 2017 and we hope to relocate our Wrexham Adoption Centre in the next 18 months.

As well as improving and developing our centres, we are growing our volunteer-run branch network, with seven new branches established in 2016. We invested in branch development specialists who have been establishing new branches, speeding up the creation process and helping new branches overcome any local teething problems. This will enable our branches to rehome more cats in future years. We celebrate our well-established branches too: our Stafford & District, Inverurie & Alford and Worthing & District branches all celebrated their 30th birthdays in 2016.

We've been looking at new rehoming models and installing digital technology throughout our adoption centres, homing & information centres and shops to help rehome more cats. We launched a 'Cat Cam' in our National Cat Adoption Centre whereby two tiny cameras installed in a cat pen record and stream live footage to our national website daily to show what life is really like for cats in our care. In addition, a touchscreen was piloted in our Visitor Centre in Sussex to allow visitors to see cats in our care available for adoption – making those cats accessible to people who may not otherwise see them. The device also connects to our websites, providing an array of cat care advice and information.

We helped a couple of kittens called Charlie and Arthur to find an unusual new home in January 2016. They were adopted by a Guide Dogs training school in Angus, Scotland. Following discussions with our Arbroath & Carnoustie and Forth Valley branches, the confident pair of kittens were homed to help to train guide dogs to become familiar and calm around cats.

Sharyn Wood, Co-ordinator for Cats Protection's Arbroath & Carnoustie Branch, said: "It was an unusual request but Arthur and Charlie are such cheeky boys we were sure they would be ideal. As many of us know, dogs and cats can live in harmony if the right training is in place so this is a great idea."

The pair has settled into their new surroundings very well.

Our Mitcham Homing Centre opened in July 2015 and rehomed 560 cats in 2016. One of those cats was Gus, a gorgeous three-year-old black-and-white cat who was adopted by George Eustice, the Minister of State at DEFRA, and his wife. The Minister was full of praise for the volunteers and staff there. The strong performance of our Mitcham Homing Centre gives us confidence that this construction model – using internal flexible building structures that can be moved if required – will be successful for use elsewhere.

We identified further opportunities for partnerships to help our homing work, opening a homing & information centre at a shopping village in Maidstone, which is partnered with our Bredhurst Adoption Centre, and a further centre in Taunton. The Taunton Homing & Information Centre is located at a garden centre and takes cats which are ready to home from our Exeter Adoption Centre. Potential partnerships with other garden centres are being established too. Our homing & information centres have custom-built cat pens and focus on finding homes for cats that are ready to go to a new home, benefiting from the footfall of busy shopping sites. They also play a vital role in offering advice and information to the many shoppers who pop in while passing.

*Arthur, pictured, and his brother Charlie are thriving at their new home with Guide Dogs*



*We helped to reunite  
Chloe with her relieved  
owners*



We are always trying to reduce the length of time that cats in our care stay with us and get them into homes more quickly. This not only decreases the cats' stress but it also means we're able to help another cat sooner. Find-a-cat, our online rehoming service and the development of our homing & information centres in places with higher footfall such as garden centres, help our cats which are ready for adoption to be seen by more people.

Unfortunately, a number of our branches were affected by the severe flooding in the north of the UK in early 2016. No cats were harmed but the water caused a lot of damage, which affected the branches' ability to rehome. We helped other rescues by taking cats to safety elsewhere across the Cats Protection network. Liz Robinson, the Co-ordinator of our Deeside Branch was a pillar of the community and was invited to a Royal Garden Party for her work in the local area during the floods and for her charity work.

Volunteers like Liz are essential to our vision and in 2016 we worked to make our volunteer recruitment more targeted towards specific roles. We continue to look for new ways to involve people in fostering in particular, to ensure that we can find new homes for more cats.

Our Cat Guardians service saw 1,619 people register in 2016 (2015: 1,330), giving them the peace of mind that should they pass away before their cat, we will find the cat a loving new home. This service underpins our promise: we never put a healthy cat to sleep.

As well as rehoming cats, we reunite lost ones with their owners, so that they don't need rehoming. We conducted a survey of 2,000 cat owners which revealed that less than a third of pet cats are microchipped and one in four have no identification at all, so when compulsory microchipping was brought in for dogs, we emphasised how important microchipping of cats is too, as it's the most effective way of identifying a lost pet.

Tabby-and-white puss Chloe went missing in 2010 after jumping from a pet carrier in Caerphilly where she had been taken for a routine vet appointment by her owner Rebecca Lee. After living as a stray and being cared for by an elderly woman just over

a mile away, Chloe was eventually handed into Cats Protection's Bridgend Adoption Centre where a quick scan of her microchip meant she could finally be reunited with her family. Rebecca, who believed Chloe had died in a road accident, was overjoyed to hear that Chloe was alive and well. Although Rebecca did try to take Chloe home with her, she has another cat now and unfortunately the introductions didn't go well so Rebecca's father Brian has taken Chloe into his family home. Brian Lee said: "It was amazing to see Chloe again; she seemed to recognise us straight away. I'd say definitely get your cat microchipped and keep all the details up-to-date."



# Helping us to get there

## Growing income and managing funds

Cats Protection is in a strong financial position. Our fundraising vision is to make supporting the charity the natural thing for a cat lover to do, which will help us to help thousands of needy cats and kittens. We're incredibly grateful to our supporters who have been very generous in 2016.

In 2016 1,235 people left a gift to Cats Protection in their will (2015: 1,221). These special gifts fund more than half of everything we do, so they are vital for continuing our work to help unwanted cats and kittens. A total of 125,000 cat lovers regularly donate to us by Direct Debit (2015: 100,000) and 47,000 people sponsor cat pens (2015: 40,000). Every single supporter is helping us to secure funds to help cats for many years to come. Our weekly lottery is our largest gaming programme to date: it has generated £3.6 million in the three years it's been running and we now have over 40,000 entries (2015: 25,000). We are also very grateful for the donation of a large property in Dorset which has been donated to us by way of a lifetime gift from a supporter in 2016.

We developed a 'Supporter Promise' which we now include in communications with our donors. This provides certain guarantees to supporters, including a promise that the charity will not swap, sell or share their information.

We've been using new technology to build local fundraising capacity by offering our supporters the ability to donate via tablet devices that are installed in our centres and shops. We've also tested contactless collection boxes in shops, centres and at events to make donations even easier.

Our portfolio of shops is going from strength to strength and in September we opened our 100th shop, in Bristol. As at 31 December, we had 110 shops in total (2015: 89). Our new shop in Erdington, North Birmingham, saw our most successful shop opening yet, taking a huge £3,000 in its opening weekend.

We've been opening shops in clusters that support each other so they can share resources and strengthen our brand presence on the high street. Our first Boutique store, Cattitude, in Bewdley opened at the end of 2015 and in September we converted our Ealing shop into a boutique in line with our goal to roll out the Cattitude concept to 10 national shops by 2020. In December we opened our first Supawstore in Tottenhill, Norfolk which is a large site stocking furniture, household items, clothing and new goods. All funds raised in the shop will go to the nearby Downham Market Adoption Centre.

### ***Our first Supawstore opened in December***



We were thrilled when Cats Protection was named as the Outstanding Charity Retailer of the Year at the Charity Retail Association Conference. The award recognises the successful initiatives that we introduced in 2015, specifically our new shop design and brand and the establishing of flagship shops and training hubs. Our shop volunteers and staff played a big part in securing this award. We also took the award for Best Use of Digital Technology in Charity Retail, in recognition of our innovative use of digital screens and tablets in our shops, which allow our shops to play an increasing role in rehoming and the promotion of neutering. We worked with our suppliers to develop a range of stationery and everyday greeting cards that is now being sold in over 200 retail outlets such as garden centres and supermarkets. This offers us an additional way to generate income and engage with new audiences.

We work closely with pet insurance company Petplan®, which provides Cats Protection adopters with four weeks' free insurance cover when they rehome their new cat. Adopters have the opportunity to continue their cover and support Cats Protection at the same time, through the commission we receive on new policies and renewals. On average each year we receive £500,000 through this partnership. Thank you also to Ceva, who continues to support us through sales of their Feliway® diffuser and to marketing agency DMS who sponsored our Christmas parliamentary reception.

Funds and support from our corporate partners are vital for us to continue our work with cats and we are very grateful for the generous support we received in 2016. Our fourth three-day fundraising weekend with Support Adoption For Pets took place across all 400+ Pets at Home stores in June and raised over £43,500 from in-store fundraising mechanisms and branch fundraising activities. We'd like to also extend our thanks to *Simon's Cat*, who donated a design for pin badges which, together with till donations, raised funds in Pets at Home stores. This took the total proceeds raised from these events to over £165,000. During 2016, we received £13,000 in grants for central and branch development projects from Support Adoption For Pets, for which we are very appreciative. Our branches and adoption centres also received over £54,000 in donations from bi-annual fundraising drives.

We'd also like to thank Pets at Home's Very Important Pets Club (VIP Club), whose continued support has to date raised over £235,000 for us.

A huge amount of our fundraising takes place through our branches, who hold many local activities and events throughout the year, raising essential funds to support cat work in their areas. We're also very grateful to all of our supporters who took part in fundraising events for us. Our varied challenge events programme consisted of 40 international, national and regional events. Nineteen people raised over £38,000 for branches and centres by taking part in a challenge event in Zambia; while a further 11 supporters raised over £12,000 by running the 2016 London Marathon.

Jacquie and David Lowe are volunteers and supporters who have raised a huge £40,000 for the Milton Keynes Branch by running car boot sales over 13 years. "We generally do car boots from March to October, as outside these times it does get too dark and cold," Jacquie said. "We keep up the fundraising during the winter by selling items on Facebook and Gumtree." Branch Co-ordinator Aimee Purnell said: "Their dedication and commitment to raise such a staggering amount of money is unquestionable. They have helped so many cats and kittens receive life-saving treatment, the best care possible and starting them off on the right foot to their wonderful new homes."

*Right:  
Jacquie and David Lowe  
regularly do car boot sales to  
raise money for the Milton  
Keynes Branch*



## How we ensure we fundraise responsibly

Cats Protection receives no government funding and is reliant on voluntary support. In order to provide the funds required for a large charity like Cats Protection to do its work, we fundraise in a number of different ways, which can be summarised as follows:

- we recruit new donors and develop relationships with them
- we raise money from trusts, foundations, companies and major donors
- we raise money through our network of shops, which sell mainly donated goods and we raise money from the sale of new goods through our website and catalogue
- we raise money through local community fundraising
- we ask our supporters and potential supporters to consider including a gift to the charity in their will

In 2016, we worked with three face-to-face fundraising agencies to recruit new monthly supporters for the charity at 'private site' venues, such as shopping centres and shows, across the UK. The agencies are The Professional Fundraiser, Unique Fundraising and DMD Solutions, all of whom make follow-up calls to new supporters to check they were happy with the way in which they were recruited. Asking people to sign up to regular giving is hugely important as it creates a long-term relationship where the supporter can see over time the very real difference that their gifts are making and we can count on the income for a long period. Working with fundraising agencies helps us to recruit cat lovers to become sponsors or take part in our weekly lottery. By using agencies, we are able to vary the level of activity depending on our requirements, which is much more cost-effective than carrying out the work in-house. This means that more money can go directly towards caring for cats in need of our help.

We also worked with four agencies who recruited donors to support the charity through their payroll, the give as you earn scheme. The agencies are The Payroll Giving Team, Payroll Giving In Action, StC Payroll Giving and Hands on Payroll Giving.

As members of the Fundraising Regulator, we and the agencies we work with follow the Code of Fundraising Practice, which can be found at [www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice](http://www.fundraisingregulator.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice). The face-to-face fundraising agencies also abide by the Institute of Fundraising's code of conduct for face-to-face fundraising, which can be viewed at [www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice/guidance/face-to-face-fundraising-guidance](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/code-of-fundraising-practice/guidance/face-to-face-fundraising-guidance). There have been no reported breaches of these standards.

An audit of our fundraising and our supporter processes was carried out by our internal auditors haysmacintyre during 2016. The findings were, in the main, very positive and their recommendations are being implemented. We also survey our supporters annually and act on the feedback that we receive. Within the survey we ask a series of questions to check supporters' satisfaction with the service we provide, the communications they receive and the trust they have that the charity spends their money wisely. Scores for each of the questions we asked in 2016 were very high indeed and importantly, improved for the third year running.

We have a number of controls in place to try to ensure that the trust and confidence of the public and potential donors are maintained. We have contracts with all the agencies we work with, which set out expectations clearly. Every new donor receives a courtesy call soon after signing up to check that they were happy with the way in which they were encouraged to support us and that they understand the nature of their regular gift to Cats Protection. The calls are recorded for monitoring and training purposes and donors are given every opportunity to opt out if they no longer wish to take part. Fundraisers at our agencies all receive specific Cats Protection training before conducting fundraising activities on our behalf. We also carry out a structured programme of mystery shopping. Despite these controls, complaints will be received from time to time. In 2016, we received a total of 101 complaints about our fundraising, a reduction of 32% compared to 2015. We are striving to achieve a further reduction in 2017.

The number of complaints is monitored and we keep a close eye on the pattern of complaints so retraining can be targeted appropriately. Cats Protection's training to the personnel of all fundraising organisations contracting with the charity includes the issue of vulnerable adults' need for protection and the appropriate action that we expect them to take. Our training is based on the 'Treating Donors Fairly' guidance developed by the Institute of Fundraising, which can be viewed at [www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/treatingdonorsfairly](http://www.institute-of-fundraising.org.uk/library/treatingdonorsfairly).





*The Advocacy team and colleagues at Cats Protection's Christmas parliamentary event*

*Back row L-R: Briony Billingham, Michaela Phillips, Richard Clare*

*Front row L-R: Jacqui Cuff, Jo Perry, Richard Howard*

## Speaking up for cats

One of our aims is to make sure cats are not forgotten by politicians and decision makers, so through our advocacy work we campaign for change.

We submitted evidence to an EFRA (Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) Committee enquiry calling on MPs to update laws on pet vending and making the case for regulated cat breeding. We were delighted with the report that the committee made to the Government department responsible for pets. Many of the recommendations took up suggestions made by Cats Protection and are within our Manifesto for Cats. Key recommendations include the regulation of cat breeding and sale, mandatory minimum standards for online advertising and the inclusion of animal welfare in the national curriculum.

DEFRA launched a public consultation proposing a new regime for animal licences including a new regulation governing pet shop licences. This was an opportunity for us to pursue some of our manifesto priorities on pet shops (no sick or underage kittens should be in pet shops) and tighten up the law on cat breeding and sale. We launched the biggest advocacy campaign we've ever done – 'True cost of kittens' – calling for the prohibition on sales of kittens under eight weeks; closure of legal loopholes that allow repeat commercial breeding for sale from the family cat or cats; and a clear definition of commercial pet sales to protect the welfare of cats and kittens. We were looking for large-scale support so we wrote to over 4,000 vets and promoted the campaign on our national website, social media channels and in our official magazine, *The Cat*, asking for supporters to send e-letters to their MP or send postcards of support back to us that we could send to DEFRA in early 2017. Forty thousand e-letters were sent to MPs, over 7,000 postcards were returned to us and our campaign video was watched over 200,000 times.

Our parliamentary work included raising issues of concern that impact the welfare of cats. We believe that the microchipping of cats should be compulsory and we pressed for the strengthening of sentences for animal-welfare crimes.

We launched our Manifestos in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to put the welfare of cats firmly on the political agendas ahead of the devolved elections. Each launched at a dedicated event; the Welsh Manifesto launch was attended by Deputy Minister for Farming and Food, Rebecca Evans AM, while Richard Lochhead, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Food and the Environment at the time, attended the Scottish Manifesto event. We represented the charity at a Blue Cross conference discussing pet welfare legislation and licensing and Cats Protection's priorities for the future.

Forty-two MPs and three Peers attended our Christmas parliamentary reception, an annual 'thank you' where we welcome Parliamentarians and their staff to learn more about the great work the charity does over a mince pie. The reception will now be an annual event.

The Advocacy team generated a great deal of coverage in the media in 2016. All three Manifesto launches achieved a total circulation of 21 million reached by the print and broadcast items, with many more hits online. We conducted a survey about air weapon attacks on cats, exactly 20 years after our last survey on the issue, which found that air weapon attacks were less prevalent but more fatal, leading to us calling for air guns to be licensed in England and Wales. The campaign generated over 200 items in media reaching a total circulation of around 18 million people.

Along with over 75 MSPs and candidates, we pledged to do 'More for Scotland's animals' by taking part in a hustings event. Cats Protection's Advocacy Manager and regional staff and volunteers including our Scottish Community Neutering Officer raised questions about the importance of neutering and microchipping.

As a member of Eurogroup for Animals, we help represent the interests of cat welfare at European level and within the UK. We contributed to a joint position paper submitted to DEFRA on the risks and opportunities for animal welfare as a result of the UK leaving the European Union. A parliamentary reception for members of the Lords and Commons on animal welfare and Brexit is planned for 2017.

## Partnership working

As set out in our charity strategy, launched in 2015, we've continued working in partnership with other animal welfare charities, businesses and organisations to increase our impact and improve conditions for cats.

We are a member of the Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH), a group of over 100 rescues and our CEO, Peter Hepburn, is Vice Chair of the ADCH. We collaborate with ADCH to spread our cat welfare expertise as well as offering advice and support to others engaged in cat rescue work.

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) approached us about ongoing collaborative working, particularly in relation to their twice-yearly survey of member vets. As a result, we submitted potential survey questions for vets on key campaigns, particularly vets seeing sick or underage kittens presented in their surgeries, which will give us more accurate data.

Cats Protection is a longstanding member of the Pet Advertising Advisory Group (PAAG) comprising leading animal welfare and specialist agencies across the UK. PAAG works with online classified websites like Gumtree, Friday Ad and Preloved to improve the welfare standards of online pet adverts. We are also a member of The Cat Group, a collection of professional organisations that develops and promotes recommendations on cat welfare; and the Canine and Feline Sector Group, which provides expert advice to policymakers on all issues relating to dogs and cats.

Working with our partners gave added strength to our work with cats and helped publicise our key messages. As detailed previously we worked with *Simon's Cat* who kindly provided another design for a pin badge and two designs for our Christmas card range. We also worked with them to produce eight *Simon's Cat Logic* videos explaining feline welfare, which had nearly eight million views in total.

Purina® has partnered with Cats Protection for more than 35 years and supports a variety of our initiatives and campaigns. In 2016, our thanks go to them for being the official sponsor of the National Cat Awards for the fifth time. As sponsor, Purina® sent communications to their customers to encourage submissions and increase awareness of the awards and their reach. Purina® also provides subsidised food for the cats in our care, often donates free food plus items for our shops, and helps to communicate our key messages and campaigns to promote responsible pet ownership.

Petplan® promoted our sponsorship programme and Cat Guardians service in their customer magazine and Pets at Home have included our messages in their publication and e-newsletter. A number of our other partners supported National Black Cat Day too.

Weekly magazine *The People's Friend's* annual charitable appeal supported Cats Protection in late 2016 and saw their supporters make and donate knitted gifts to help the cats in our care.

Thank you to the many others who support our work through corporate partnerships. As detailed in previous areas of this report, we worked alongside animal charities such as RSPCA, Battersea Dogs & Cats Home, Dogs Trust, Blue Cross, PDSA, International Cat Care and others to help us achieve our objectives.

## Better information to help us do our work

The app developed to track homeless cats, which is being trialled in Nottingham, will give us more insight on the number of feral and community cats in the UK and will help us target our campaigns in the areas of most need.

Find-a-cat, our online rehoming service which allows people to search for cats in our care available for adoption, was improved to let us collect further data to track the number of enquiries that lead to adoptions. In addition to this, we conducted research to contact some individuals who enquired about a cat but didn't go on to adopt. This gives us more clarity around common barriers to adoption so we can adapt future communication plans accordingly.

Most of our branches are now using our web-based information systems so that we all have up-to-date information about the cats in our care, our finances and other aspects of our work.

We are developing a guide which is designed to help our volunteers and staff make decisions by applying good animal welfare principles with the aim of achieving the best outcome for the specific circumstances they are dealing with. Topics covered include the five animal welfare needs, animal ethics, breeding, euthanasia and feline behaviour. The guidance, which will be launched in spring 2017, restates our commitment to the principle that we never put a healthy cat to sleep.



# Infrastructure and support systems

## Learning and development

We understand that society is changing and this has an impact on the nature of volunteering and the contributions that people can offer. We ensure that our volunteering offering is flexible so that we can attract a range of people across a range of demographics, whether someone has two days or two hours to spare.

In 2016 we expanded the resources in our Volunteering Development team to allow us to support colleagues across the charity to develop and recognise volunteer management and leadership. Our Volunteer STARS (Special Thanks and Recognition Scheme) enables us to thank volunteer groups and individuals and shares all the great things our volunteers do across the charity.

A new online fosterer induction launched in July 2016 and 96% of survey respondents who had completed the induction said they found it beneficial. We also held volunteer information days which were attended by over 300 people.

We began a charity-wide regional conference programme to share working best practice and recognise the many achievements of our volunteers and staff.

## Information technology

It's important that our teams have the best tools and technology available to them to equip them for their work with cats.

We continued to improve our systems to better enable volunteers to do their cat welfare work. We further developed cloud-based technology across the charity and the IT infrastructure to support the rapid development of our digital strategy.

Data security is a priority for us so we continued to invest in this area to ensure our information is protected against cyber threats. In 2017 we are appointing an Information Governance Officer to ensure we continue to comply with data protection law enforced by the Office of the Information Commissioner and standards set out by the Fundraising Preference Service and Payment Card Industry.

## Plans for future periods

The charity will celebrate its 90th birthday in 2017 so we'll be recognising and honouring the people behind our amazing achievements since our beginnings in 1927. In 2017, we also plan to undertake the following activities in order to achieve our strategic aims:

- We will continue to look for opportunities for partnerships to help our homing work and get our cats seen by more potential adopters
- We'll evaluate the results from our community neutering projects and plan for further work
- To help people seeking refuge from domestic abuse, we will launch our own temporary pet fostering project, Paws Protect
- Our customer service team will continue to expand to help members of the public with all their enquiries about the charity and good cat welfare
- We'll be developing a programme of exciting mass participation events
- We plan to open four new centres and 40 new shops in 2017



## Our impact

Cats Protection is the UK's leading feline welfare charity. The impact of our work addresses cat welfare issues across a range of timeframes. Our rehoming addresses the immediate issue of helping cats in need. In the last five years, we have rehomed and reunited more than 230,000 cats. In the medium term, our neutering work will help control the population of cats so there are fewer unwanted cats. In the last five years, we have helped to neuter over 800,000 cats, preventing millions of unwanted litters. Our education and information work has the long-term impact of changing attitudes within society so that people take a more responsible view of cat ownership and welfare. In the last five years, we have delivered 4,000 educational talks.

## Public benefit

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

We believe that our vision of a world in which every cat is treated with kindness and an understanding of its needs benefits society as a whole. Cats play a huge part in the lives of millions of people in the UK. According to research, a quarter of UK households has at least one pet cat (Source: PDSA, 2015). By supporting cats, we are providing a benefit to owners, carers and other people who come into contact with cats.

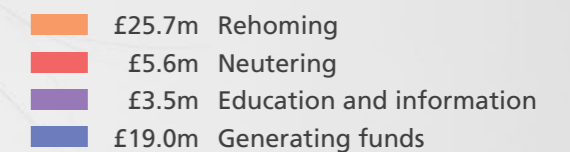
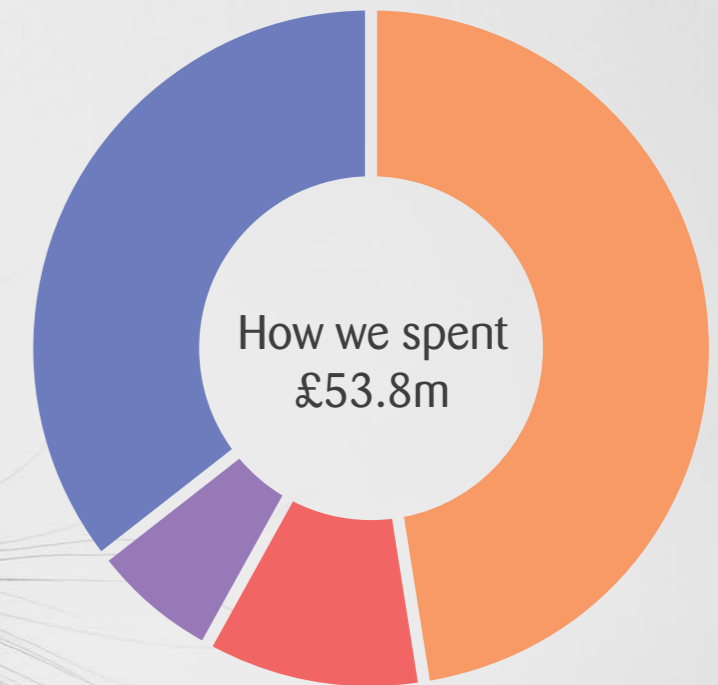
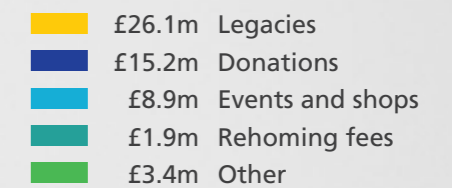
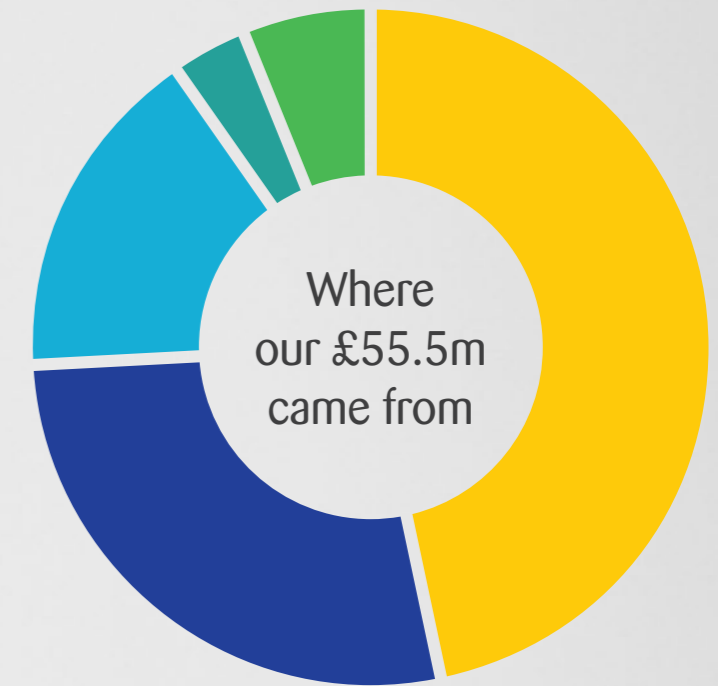
We provide public benefit by:

- helping to control the incidence and spread of disease and suffering in cat populations through vaccination, neutering and education, benefitting both human and animal health
- assisting those on low incomes with the cost of neutering through our voucher scheme
- assisting local and housing authorities and local communities by taking in and rehoming stray, lost or abandoned cats and by controlling feral populations
- assisting local authorities by taking in cats from multi-cat households
- under the Cat Guardians scheme, reassuring cat owners that their cats will be taken into our care and rehomed if they become incapable of looking after them either through illness, death or for other reasons
- providing volunteering opportunities for those who wish to support our work, including through the Duke of Edinburgh programme
- providing advice to governments on animal welfare legislation, in partnership with other animal welfare organisations where appropriate
- providing educational talks and other activities to both children and adults to increase awareness of cat welfare
- commissioning, undertaking and disseminating research into matters affecting cats and the human population
- helping people experiencing domestic abuse by providing temporary care for their cats under our Paws Protect scheme
- enhancing the quality of life for people in care homes both by homing cats into care homes and encouraging care homes to welcome residents' own cats
- providing the Paws to listen grief support service
- educating vets, vet nurses, vet students and other animal professionals and giving them practical experience as part of and beyond their formal training

## Financial review

2016 was another very successful year for the charity. Our total income was £55.5m, which is very similar to the previous year (£55.9m). We continued to diversify our sources of funding to ensure that we remain financially resilient. Our expenditure increased from £47.9m in 2015 to £53.8m. We spent £3.6m more on rehoming, opening two new homing & information centres and establishing seven new branches. We spent £0.6m more on neutering to support campaigns in a number of locations and research activity into the impact of neutering. We invested a further £0.8m in our education work, including advocacy. We continued to invest in fundraising, to build sustainable income streams to support our work into the future.

A summary of our income and expenditure for 2016 is presented below. These figures are based on the income and expenditure figures included in the full, audited and unqualified accounts for the year ended 31 December 2016. Copies can be obtained from our website [www.cats.org.uk](http://www.cats.org.uk) or by applying to the National Cat Centre.



## Annual Review 2016

### Our network

- Over 250 volunteer-run branches
- 34 centres
- 110 shops
- 9,800 volunteers

### Support us

There are lots of ways you can help us, from adopting a cat to making a donation, leaving a legacy or following us on Facebook. For more information on how to help, see our website [www.cats.org.uk/get-involved](http://www.cats.org.uk/get-involved)

Contact us by phoning our National Information Line on 03000 12 12 12, or email [helpline@cats.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cats.org.uk).

You can also visit [www.cats.org.uk](http://www.cats.org.uk) or write to us at: Cats Protection, National Cat Centre, Chelwood Gate, Haywards Heath, Sussex, RH17 7TT.

### Thank you, on behalf of the cats!

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



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