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## **TUNBRIDGE WELLS AND MAIDSTONE BRANCH** incorporating the Headcorn Cattery

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### **BRANCH UPDATE FROM DAPHNE**

Dear All. Welcome to our Autumn/Winter newsletter 2021.

What a time we have all had! We hope that this newsletter finds you and your pets in good health and coping with the horrendous changes that have had to take place in recent months.

So far the branch has managed to survive all the trials and tribulations involved and our grateful thanks go to all staff and volunteers for their continued hard work and loyalty to the branch and animals. Our animals haven't noticed any difference in their routine!

We must also thank everyone else that has supported us with financial and food donations. These donations have definitely helped us to carry on giving our very best to the animals. So a BIG thank you to everyone for that support. Alongside this we must also thank Jan and Trev for their continued production of crosses and the companies like Happy Glastonbury and Coven of Witches that raise money from their sale for our animals.

### **VOLUNTEERS -WE NEED YOUR HELP!!**

#### **TRUSTEES**

As you know, we are a small independent branch of the RSPCA run by a committee of trustees. We want to expand the committee to avoid the risk of being taken over by RSPCA HQ in the event of having insufficient numbers. After many years of loyal service, Carol, our current Secretary, has decided to step down from this post although she will still stay involved with the branch as a trustee. We are therefore looking for someone with secretarial skills to become our new Secretary but there are also a number of other opportunities for anyone interested in becoming a trustee. We would particularly like to hear from anyone who could help with fundraising or who has the knowledge and skills to develop our website and social media presence to promote the branch and our activities.

#### **CATTERY ASSISTANTS**

We would also like to create a pool of people who could step in at short notice to help out at the cattery. We have a team of staff and regular volunteer cattery assistants but sometimes we need some extra help to cover staff absences. This would mostly involve feeding the cats and cleaning the cat pods or maybe running the occasional errand.

So – can you help? Do you have a love of animals and believe in what the RSPCA stands for? Do you have skills, experience and ideas to offer? Do you have some spare time? If so, we would love to hear from you. For more information, please contact us at [maidstonerspca@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:maidstonerspca@hotmail.co.uk)

*Many of you have commented on the fact you have missed our lovely calendars. So have we! We are really hoping that we might be able to get this up and running again for 2022. Cross your fingers!*

*In the meantime can we wish all our staff, volunteers, members, friends and donators the very best for Christmas and New Year. - Very best wishes - Daphne Harris, Chairperson*



## NEWS FROM OUR SHOP

*The shop in Wheeler Street, Maidstone was established over 35 years ago in a building that was left to the Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells Branch by a benefactor. The funds raised are the main source of finance for the Headcorn*

*cattery and for helping needy pet owners in the area with vet's fees.*

*The shop is managed by Tony and Sue Loy supported by their volunteers Wendy, Maria, Sarah, Trudie, Karen, Julie and Angela. They open up Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10am to 3pm and work extremely hard sorting and presenting all kinds of donated items. Clothes and shoes being the most donated items followed by toys, puzzles, games, bric-a-brac, household items, books, CDs, DVDs and Christmas decorations.*

*The condition of many items will mean that they will be difficult to sell so there are several established routes to create income from resale with brokers and auctions. Other items such as books, metal and textiles will go for recycling. Despite notices asking that only clean and saleable donations are brought to the shop and not left out of hours a huge amount of broken, dirty and unsaleable items are dumped and then have to be disposed of. This means that a large wheelie bin of totally unusable junk from amongst these donations is sent to landfill every week at considerable cost to the branch. This is a problem affecting all charity shops as it has become more and more difficult to access council tips*

### HEADCORN OVER 60s LUNCH CLUB - THANK YOU SO MUCH

*On 3rd November Daphne and Kate and Tony Matthews gave a long overdue presentation to the above group about the Headcorn Cattery and our Branch work. We had a delightful time, ran a small picture competition, took some Christmas bits along and generally chatted to everyone - along side drinking delicious coffee. Gypsy the dog was also a smash hit wagging her tail for all those who would fuss her!!*

*At the end of the occasion we were handed £110 from donations towards our work. Since then this lovely group of people has held a Bring and Buy Sale in our honour and raised another £83.50 for our animals. What can we say - you are an amazing group of people and we all hope that we can visit you again in the spring. Thank you so much for all your kindness and generosity. Have a great Christmas and New Year - Covid free!!*

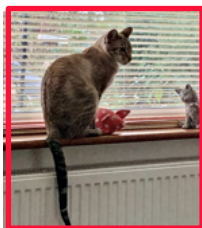


## SLEEP SWEETLY MAX

You will I'm sure remember this lovely old boy finding a new home with Kate and Tony Matthews. After 2 wonderful, happy and fun years Max suffered a sudden blood clot causing his back legs to fail. Despite this, with the help of our vet Dr. Viktor van Marrewijk of Viking Bay Vets (a superb mobile service) we nursed Max through a week when he made a remarkable recovery walking again and starting to use his paralysed back leg to get around. Sadly, despite his amazing strength of character, Max found the battle just too much and on the 4th September he quietly gave up the fight and fell asleep peacefully on my lap with Tony and me fussing and stroking him. Our grateful thanks to Viktor for all his help during this difficult time.



However sad this is we will never regret having this old chap for such a short time. His life was wonderful in his last two years and so was ours. So please, once again, consider an older cat even if they only have 1 eye or 3 legs. You will be surprised at the sheer pleasure it brings to you and to them.



AND NOW WE HAVE 8 YEAR OLD DIBBLES the Siamese (sent to us by Max I'm sure) - but that, as they say, is another story .....

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPONSOR A PEN?

Attached to this newsletter you will find a form that enables you to Sponsor a Pen at the cattery. For £25/year you get a plaque placed on the pen and you can arrange to visit from time to time by contacting the cattery to make an appointment if you so wish. If at the end of the year you do not wish to renew your sponsorship you are at liberty to retrieve your plaque as a memento.

This is a new venture which we feel many people might like to take part in. After such a difficult year it helps us to continue to giving the animals in those pens the very best of care until such time as they find their new and loving forever homes and as a sponsor you are helping that animal to a new life. It's a win win situation.

Cats like SYBIL SYBIL turned up one Sunday morning when a member of the public found her in their garden. She was only 4/5 weeks old so stayed here at the cattery in the house until she was big enough to home. She found a wonderful home and this is her after just been spayed wearing the famous cone of shame!

If you feel this is a way in which you could help our lovely animals please feel free to fill in and return the form or for more information contact Daphne on 01622 891222.



**NIGHT HUNTING:** *We all know that our beloved cats like to be out prowling at night but please - a word of caution! With the roads so busy these days many of our animals are getting caught out and injured, sometimes badly and sometimes killed on our roads and often at night. So please tell your moggy that it's not always in his/her best interests to go hunting in the moonlight.*

**CHRISTMAS REHOMING POLICY** - *Most of our regular readers will probably already be aware of the fact that we do not as a rule rehome animals in the run up to Christmas/New Year. Noise, excited children, parties etc can cause major distress to an animal settling into a new home. HOWEVER - occasionally an older couple who are living a quiet life and who are not involved in the Christmas/New Year party scene can be allowed to take an animal during this period of time. This can not only provide a loving home but much pleasure to the couple over a quiet festive season.*

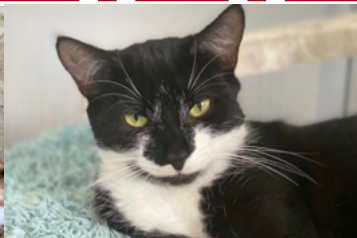
## GORGEOUS FACES FOR CHRISTMAS



**YEP HERE THEY ARE!** Just a few of our gorgeous felines that have graced or are still gracing our cattery over recent months. Thanks again to all our lovely staff and volunteers who have battled through the lockdown to keep them happy and contented. We have had staff and volunteer sickness, but thankfully not the dreaded Covid, which has involved extra time and effort along the way. But here we are at another Christmas/New Year.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us in any way, and especially a big thank you once again to the SEWARD COPY SHOP in Broadstairs for their continued support through difficult times.

Until we meet again, hopefully in the Spring we wish you and your animals a **VERY HAPPY, HEALTHY AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR**



editor Kate Matthews