

Animal Matters



September 2013

Hants & Surrey Border Branch

Registered charity no. 201291

www.rspca-hantsandsurrey.org.uk

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Tails to Tell



CARAMEL in our cattery enjoying a cuddle with one of our Cat Cuddlers.

This lovely white and pale caramel coloured cat was brought in by one of our Collection Officers earlier this year having been reported living rough on a local estate. She had spent a lot of time under or inside the engine of a car as she was covered in oil and in poor condition, very underweight and had no tail.

After a thorough check-over at the vets and blood tests, all of which were fine, the vet's opinion was she was very elderly and clearly stiff and uncomfortable around her back legs from a previous accident when we surmise she must have lost her tail. It was also reported she was completely deaf, possibly from birth.

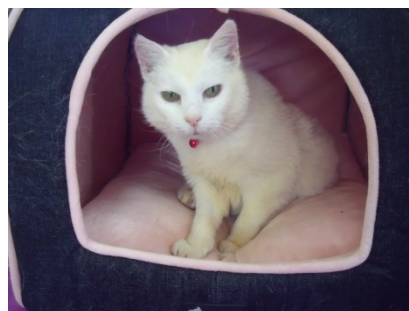
Ideally she should have gone into a foster home but we didn't have a space so she had to go into the cattery. The staff were fabulous and set up a special ground floor only pen inside the main building with her own heater so that she could have the best attention. Ravenously hungry and quite frail she was fed every few hours and once she'd settled the staff and our Cat Cuddlers set to the task of shampooing her followed by regular, laborious grooming several times a day to remove the oil. She wasn't too keen on this but as long as she was given food she would allow anyone to do anything – amazing what a bowl of food will do!

She was such an affectionate lady, loved by all the staff and Cat Cuddlers and loving her cuddles in return. Once she had gained weight sufficiently she was vaccinated and had a dental which included a few extractions.

We advertised her on our website and Facebook page and hoped it wouldn't be too long before someone would want to adopt her. The problem with very elderly pets is so often they're the last to be chosen by families for fear of them not being around for very long. However, she didn't have a hugely long wait..... Almost 3 months after coming to us Caramel was rehomed to a local family. With the benefit of our Senior Years Vet Support Scheme, any age-related treatments are paid for by us, which in Caramel's case is long term pain relief for her stiff joints.

We will never know how old she is, how she came to lose her tail, or how long she's been deaf or even how she came to be homeless but she has plenty of stamina and character which has served her well in what we suspect has been a hard life! Thankfully not anymore, as this email from Cathi will show.....

"I thought I'd leave it until she was settled to let you know how she is doing. She settled in a lot quicker than I'd expected. She loves her igloo bed that I bought her, I think it makes her feel safe which was the idea. She also has two open beds around the room which she alternates with and uses them all! She is lovely and so funny. She is very noisy at food time and runs (yes runs!) down the room following me to get to her food bowl. She always polishes off her food, which is good otherwise my dog would eat it! She doesn't seem to like the biscuits though.

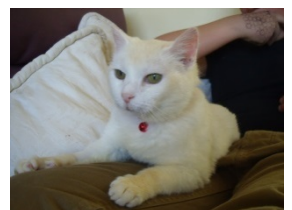


It's taken a while to get used to her little ways. She loves her head being scratched and her chin rubbed but doesn't like her tummy rubbed or her legs touched, probably something to do with the accident. She spends most of the time sleeping but always appears in the evening and comes and sits on my lap for a fuss. She has shown no interest whatsoever in going outside so maybe she'll be an indoor cat but she may venture out when we have better weather and the doors are open. She's got her first jabs booked for next week. I wanted her to settle before whisking her off to the vets. I'm bit worried about taking her as the vet will probably want to check her legs and I know she won't like it but hopefully she'll be okay.

She's getting on really well with my dog, we started off with them in separate rooms but they could see each other. Every time Caramel saw Amber she hissed loudly and Amber just looked puzzled. They gradually got used to each other being around so we let them both have the run of downstairs, at first keeping Amber on her lead just in case but after a few days Caramel stopped hissing and now they just walk past each other without batting an eyelid. Amber will wait for Caramel to get out of the way before she walks through a door so I think she knows who's boss!

She is now part of the family after only 3 weeks. My initial worries have gone and we are enjoying her company and I think she is enjoying ours! She always looks so comfortable stretched out or curled up on her bed. It must be nice for her to be somewhere warm. I think the cold makes her joints stiffen up because she has been a lot more mobile since we brought her home. She walks with straight back legs and I think one of her front legs must have been broken in the past as it's not straight but it all adds to her character.

Thank you for letting us adopt her and thank you from Caramel too."



Our New Branch “CAT-alogue”



We have recently set up our own Amazon Wish List which we've aptly named our "CAT-alogue"! This option means our supporters can choose to buy a gift from a varied list of cat related items that we need as part of caring for the cats and kittens we rescue and look after in our cattery and foster homes. The benefit is the donor can choose exactly how their money is spent rather than giving cash with no idea what happens with it.

There's plenty to choose from, ranging from ping-pong balls for a couple of pounds, to special diet food for kittens and nursing mums and the ever popular scratching posts, so often quickly shredded!

During any one year we usually rescue and re-home around 200 cats and kittens and they are all cared for either in a local privately run cattery where we have the use of self-contained pens, or in the case of mums, kittens under the age of six months and older moggies, in foster homes. This all costs a lot of money – around £7 per day for every cat boarded in the cattery, and £2.50 per day for supplies for cats in foster care. In addition there are the veterinary costs of vaccinations, neutering, micro-chipping plus other treatments as necessary.

Whilst clearly our priority spend is on the cats' day-to-day subsistence costs, they do need equipment and toys whilst in our care. Sadly, some can end up with a long wait before they move to their forever homes; either because they have been unwell or injured and need time to rehabilitate, or because sometimes it just takes time for the right owners to come along. In the case of kittens they will always be with us until at least 8 weeks of age and there's a lot of kitten playing time in some of those weeks!

In the ten weeks or so since we started our Amazon wish List we have received some really useful and

generous donations from a number of kind supporters including several scratch posts, kitten food and some really great toys like catnip mice and play tunnels. Every gift received is photographed and posted with a "thank you" on our Facebook page.

By buying our cats something from our "CAT-alogue", it all helps to give them a happy and healthy transition to their new forever lives. We will be very grateful as will the cats!

If you would like to buy our cats a gift you can find our wish list either via our website's News page or directly on Amazon's site, using our Branch name to search with.

Branch Volunteer Group



Our main source of income each year is from our charity shops which enables us to spend several thousands of pounds every month on local animal welfare. We are always looking at other ways to add to our fundraising and one of them is by attending more local events as well as organising and running some of our own Branch events. The benefits of being involved in such activities helps to raise awareness of the services we offer and the work that we do in our local the community.

The difficulties we face, like most Branches, is having the people to organise and participate in them, and as a charity aiming to keep our operating costs to a minimum, we do not have the luxury of lots of members of staff to take on these duties. This is where volunteers come in.....a vital part of any charity's accomplishments.

With this in mind, in order to expand our calendar of fundraising events we have recently set up a 'Branch Volunteer Group' – its aim to recruit animal loving people who are willing to get involved as 'Volunteer Event Fundraisers' – their role to provide the hands-on help needed to run stalls or undertake other fundraising activities. So far we have held one induction evening when those people who had

registered their interest in helping us came along to hear a presentation about the broader picture of the RSPCA as a whole; the work of our Branch, and in particular, more about ways to help us.



Our Group has only been up and running for two months and already we've had a few volunteers help us with some

outdoor summer events. These have included Kynoch Vets Open Day; Ash Fun Day; Hartley Wintney Village Festival Dog Show, Responsible Dog Owners Day and Calthorpe Park's 'Bark in the Park' Dog Show. To date these additional events have raised a few



hundred pounds that we wouldn't otherwise have had and enabled us to give advice to families with pets, some of which has resulted in the neutering of several cats and dogs, which is one of our primary welfare aims.

If you are interested in learning more, without obligation, about our Branch Volunteer Group, then we'd love to hear from you. We do not expect people to commit a huge amount of



time, but a willingness to roll up your sleeves and get stuck in is a must! Further details and/or to

register your interest in attending our next induction evening, please contact Joy by email at admin@rspcahantsandsurreyborder.org.uk or by phone on 07579 001459.

Facebook Fans



Whilst our newsletters try to keep our supporters informed and up to date with some of our activities, it's not possible to share all our news this way. If you are a Facebook follower you can get a lot more information on our day to day activities and cats we have for rehoming. Both our Facebook page and our website have all our latest events, news and general information and if you like what you see, perhaps you could "Like" us on Facebook – we would appreciate your support. PTO for web addresses.