

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, smiling and looking down at a cat. She is wearing a blue apron over a pink shirt. A calico cat with white, orange, and black fur and green eyes is looking towards the camera. The background is blurred.

**Thank you for
your support
in 2024**



**Your support
helped us make a
better life for so
many cats and the
people who care
for them in 2024.**

Your kindness enabled us to help **191,000** cats and kittens. That's **525** a day!

We found new homes for **29,000** cats and helped **850** cats stay with their owners by offering advice and support.

We microchipped **93,000** cats, including owned cats and those in our care, and reunited **1,600** cats with their owners.

We neutered **168,000** cats and kittens, including **13,000** feral cats.

We gave **1,290** cat welfare talks to **37,700** adults and children in schools and community groups.

We handled **157,800** enquiries from members of the public via our Contact Centre and many more via our regional teams.

9,800 volunteers gave their dedication, skills and time to help cats across the UK.

Speaking up for cats



- **Microchipping.** After years of campaigning by us and our supporters, in June 2024 it became compulsory for cat owners in England to have their cats microchipped. We continue to call for microchipping to be made compulsory across the UK
- **Pet theft.** We were a leading voice on the issue of pet theft to ensure that cats are given the same rights as dogs. The new Pet Abduction Act came into force in August 2024 in England and Northern Ireland, making the theft of a cat or dog a specific offence and recognising the emotional and welfare impact theft has on pets and their owners
- **The Cat Manifesto.** Before the 2024 general election, we launched *The Cat Manifesto*, a definitive guide to the steps needed to improve the lives of cats, both in legislation and wider society. Over 30k emails were sent by supporters to candidates in the general election, with every candidate standing receiving at least one email. Overall, 651 candidates responded to the campaign and 111 of these candidates went on to be elected as an MP
- **Cat breeding.** We continue to call for cat breeding regulations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Over 50k supporters have signed our petition calling for this important measure, which includes banning cats bred with extreme traits. In 2024 we inputted into an inquiry being led by the Animal Welfare Committee and in their final report they have recommended the UK Government introduce cat breeding regulations as soon as possible
- **Fireworks.** Along with other members of the Fireworks Working Group we hosted an event in Parliament to call for a review of fireworks legislation as fireworks can be stressful for cats and other animals
- **Pet adverts.** We reported 550 adverts selling cats on pet-selling websites that did not meet good welfare practices. We've seen improvements with labelling of photos on some cat-selling websites and fewer adverts being reported. Along with other charities, industry groups and veterinary organisations we are urging social media companies to do more to prevent pet sales and encourage the public to avoid buying pets through social media

McVitie's story

McVitie and his siblings were abandoned at our Kent Cat Centre in a cardboard box covered with chicken wire. Once safely inside the centre, our team began to peel back the layers of wire, hearing the small meows coming from inside. To their astonishment, inside the box were 13 little kittens. Yes, 13! All of them guessed to be just 10 weeks old. They were crammed in on top of each other in the stifling 27°C heat, exhausted and underweight. The team began checking them over one by one and gave them some food once they knew they were ok. The next challenge was to find space for 13 kittens, which meant the difficult decision of postponing other cats on the waiting list from coming into care.

The kittens soon adapted to life in the centre and turned out to be incredibly friendly and playful, despite their rough start. They were named after biscuits, a nod to their sweet nature: McVitie, Biscoff, Garibaldi, Hobnob, Bourbon, Dodger, Didgie, Gingernut, Jaffacake, Cookie, Lotus, Lemonpuff and Maryland. All the kittens are now happy, healthy and have found new loving homes.



Cats and Their Stats

Our *CATS (Cats and Their Stats) Report 2024* showed that younger cat owners are driving a shift in cat ownership. They are more likely to buy rather than adopt, keep their cats indoors, and use accessories such as backpack carriers and harnesses. These can have negative implications for cat welfare. We are leading the debate on how we adapt to the changing demographics of cat owners and the shifts being seen in how cats are acquired.

Rehoming

This year we've seen the challenging economic environment continue to have an impact. More and more people are needing our support, with many cat owners struggling to provide for their cats. This has led people to have to make the heartbreaking decision to give up their cats to us or, even worse, abandon them on the streets. In the last three years we've seen a 71% increase in the number of cats being abandoned and sadly, we expect this to continue. We understand that the decision to give up a cat is a challenging one. We work alongside cat owners to help them support the quality of their cat's life in their existing home. But sometimes we do need to bring the cat into our care. We always make sure that this is the best decision for the cat before we begin the next stage of the journey: finding them a new home. To help with rehoming, we are now working with 31 partner catteries across the UK, giving us access to over 250 additional cat pen spaces.

Neutering

We run the world's largest single-species neutering programme and help to neuter thousands of cats and kittens every year. Demand for financial support with neutering is growing. To help us have the biggest impact, we're developing a more targeted approach to neutering. Working closely with vets and other animal welfare organisations, this will help to create a more balanced and healthy cat population in the years to come. We have also enlisted the help of 44 advocates, including both animal welfare and human welfare organisations, to help us deliver our subsidised neutering scheme to cat owners.



Lifeline

Lifeline is our pet fostering service for families fleeing domestic abuse, looking after cats until they can be safely reunited with their owners. In 2024 we:

- expanded the service from London and the South East, Yorkshire, East Anglia and the Midlands into Scotland and Wales
- helped **430** cat owners flee domestic abuse by providing **750** cats with temporary foster homes
- recruited **370** new volunteer fosterers to the service
- trained domestic abuse professionals on the link between domestic abuse and pets, exploring how they can best support victim-survivors with their cats
- worked in collaboration and shared resources with organisations that support victim-survivors, including Woman's Aid in Scotland, Wales and England, and Refuge who deliver the National Domestic Abuse Helpline
- co-chaired the Links Pet Fostering Group with Dogs Trust, a coalition of specialist domestic abuse pet fostering services in the UK. We collaborate with existing members and support new organisations who are enhancing their processes with the aim of meeting the group standards

Lifeline is kindly supported by the Pets Foundation.

**Thank you on behalf of the cats, for everything
you helped make possible in 2024.**

**Making a better life for cats,
because life is better with cats.**

**Find out more about what you helped us
achieve in 2024 at cats.org.uk/annual-review**



Cats Protection is a registered charity 203644 (England and Wales), SC037711 (Scotland) and is listed as a Section 167 institution by the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland. | ED_25_471