



Coventry Cat Group Newsletter

Registered charity 1065043

Winter 2013

Chairperson – Angie Willems

Co-ordinator – Judith Stanley

Treasurer and Membership Secretary – Angie Willems

Trustees : Angela Willems, Judith Stanley and Nicky Clark

Website - <http://www.coventrycatgroup.org.uk/>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/CoventryCatGroup>

Coventry Cat Group – The Centre

In January 2013, we finally received the keys to the house left to us by Diana Williams. A day of a mixture of sadness, happiness and pure terror!

The nine month wait in gaining access to the house gave us time to think about what we wanted to do, how we could make it work and also helped us raise some initial funding via the Big Give Xmas Challenge 2012, a total of £7000 donated over three days was doubled up to £14,000.

The downside was a burst pipe in December 2012 leaving the bungalow damp and very sad.



January began cold and we started by demolishing the old cat pens and having bonfires! This continued most of the next few months in between the snowfall and frost (and even during on a couple of days).

We also began refurbishing the bungalow this year. Because of the water damage and 1970's build, we had to take everything back to the prefab walls and add lots of insulation and replaster the building, with new ceilings, electrics, and plumbing. Half of the bungalow was completely finished into a one bedroom unit and occupied by one of our members at the beginning of May. The second part of the bungalow has been left partly developed and hopefully will be completed mid 2014 as a second one bedroom unit. Rental from both sides will help fund the ongoing costs.

May, June and July were the exciting months for us as after a slow start (too cold for concrete). The pens, stacked in the garden since their purchase in February, were finally erected in the last week of July. There are 10 double pens bought second hand saving over £15,000 on the cost of new units.



The pens were completed in the first week of August and fully occupied within a couple of weeks. In fact our first residents (a colony of feral cats from the Hemming's brickyard) arrived in July and had to slum it in the old triple pen that we managed to salvage.

We had our official opening day on August 31st, to mark the anniversary of Diana's ashes being scattered and a lovely day it was, well attended. In fact, we were all so busy we had no time to relax and enjoy the occasion!

We were blessed also with many volunteers on the day to man the refreshment tent and stalls, and show off the cats and are very grateful to them all. Lorna from Hog's Rest, a local hedgehog rescue had a stall and at the end released a hedgehog into our "Hedgehog Mansion" at the bottom of the garden. Terry Mcmanus, a long-time friend of Di's exhibited the artwork for his new book.

People were very generous and we made over £1000 on the day plus cat food and other gifts up to the value of £500.



Since the open day we have continued to develop the site. We are currently in the middle of creating our new storage sheds and workroom and once that is completed we can look forward to developing the second part of the bungalow.

There is still a lot of work to be done in the garden, currently more mud than grass and hopefully landscaping will take place over the coming years to develop a wild life section and memorial garden at the bottom.

Hog's rest have also moved in to use a bit of the garden to continue with the hedgehog rescue, something we hope Diana would approve of as she had a soft spot for hedgehogs.

Big Give Xmas Challenge 2013

Once again we are taking part in the Christmas challenge this year hoping to try and raise £4000 online during 3 days in December. At 10am on Thursday 5th, Friday 6th and Saturday 7th December the champion funds are released and the scramble is on to donate quickly so that the donations qualify to be doubled. Those of you who renewed their membership in this way last year will know that the matched funding ran out very quickly each day!

We are asking again, that members take the opportunity of renewing their membership on line during this period so that the contributions are doubled. We appreciate that not everyone will wish to do this, donations online need to be made by card and the minimum amount is £5. Please donate at <http://new.thebiggive.org.uk/project/CoventryCatGroup>. If you wish us to send you an email reminder please contact me on angie@coventrycatgroup.org.uk.





The Gifted Cat

Purrfect Christmas Gifts for Cat Lovers

www.thegiftedcat.co.uk

Join our Furriently Feline Community
on Facebook @ The Gifted Cat

A 10% donation to Coventry Cat Group
will be donated on sales resulting from
this flyer.



2012 – A brief history! Excerpts from the AGM

Our total expenditure in the year to 31st March 2013 was over £60,000.

Of this we invested just over £25,000 in the new centre while the operational expenditure of the Group increased from last year to approximately £35,000 (from £26253.43 last year). As usual, main spending on vets bills of £14,700 (2011 - £11,530), cat upkeep £14,130 (2011 - £12,263) and cat medications £1860 (2011 - £1,330).

Income for the year amounted to £32,000 (£24286.68 last year).

The main contributors were the rehoming fees (£7,500) and The Big Give Christmas Challenge (£14,000).

Taking into account the VAT rebate, Gift Aid and Interest earned, **the accounts showed a net loss of £9,835.46** (Loss of **£1,199.84** in 2011).

2012 – Low homing rates

It has been another slow year for homing cats. In part this is due to the financial climate but also due to the main focus of the group on the development of the centre. We realised that the development would require most of our effort this year and while not closing down the rescue side, it was necessary to run it at a slow pace. The same people involved in the homing and fundraising activities were now wielding sledgehammers, screwdrivers and paint brushes!

In the year to March 2013 the Group homed 103 cats and kittens, down from 121 the previous year. This number does not include the cats we have helped in some way or rehomed directly from their owners.

From March, homing figures have also been low. The open day, though well attended, did not generate any homings and things are still proving to be very slow. This is a great pity as we have some beautiful cats in at present, young and not so young.

2012 – Goodbyes

In the past year we have had to say goodbye to Eddie Wilkinson who died in May, a founder member of Coventry Cat group who spent many years as secretary and trustee.

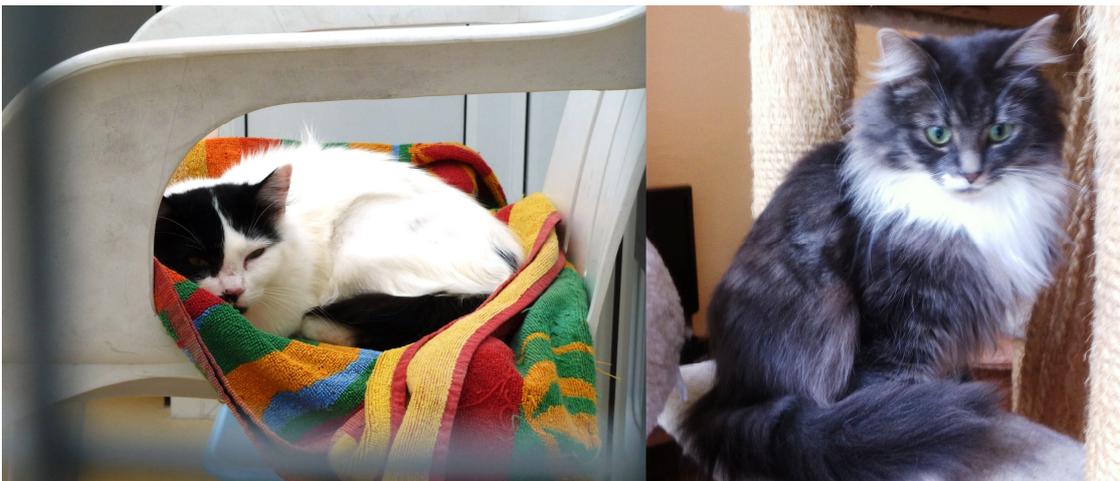
Also Margery Vickers, a regular contributor to our newsletter with stories of her two cats Sandy and Charlie died late last year, shortly after we printed the last newsletter. Sandy and Charlie came back into the group and have since been rehomed. Charlie has a thyroid problem and his medications are being sponsored by Margery's family.

Brenda Williams retired as secretary to the group.



Making a difference – Part 1

Hemmings Brickyard Ferals Before and After photos. Eight adults and four kittens trapped in July this year. Two adults are now living in a stable. The four kittens have been socialised and two have been homed.



Misty and Billy and Bob (below), still waiting for their new homes with 3 others.



Please help us!

Coventry Cat Group is a small local charity run by volunteers.

As with most charities at the moment we constantly battle with lack of funds and volunteers. Now that we have a centre to maintain, our need for help has never been greater.

We need volunteers that can spend some time on a variety of tasks from cat cuddling to gardening (including design!) to general DIY as well as the more traditional tasks of fostering cats in your own home to fundraising, publicity and even running the group. If you can help in any way please email angie@coventrycatgroup.org.uk or phone 024 726 8073 and leave a message on the helpline.



Membership renewal

We hope that you will take up the opportunity the Christmas Challenge gives us once again this year and renew your membership online.

However, if you prefer to renew your membership as usual, at the end of this newsletter is the renewal form for membership. Membership is still set at a nominal £5 per year (or £2.50). Some of the membership money is spent on producing a yearly newsletter and the rest goes towards our work each year. Either way, the membership year runs from April – March and we are extremely grateful to all of you for your continued support.

For those of you that elect to pay by direct debit, obviously your membership will be renewed automatically.

Please note that membership payments do qualify for Gift Aid so please let us know if you are a UK tax payer and are happy to collect this tax back from your membership money/donations as it is true every little helps!

A history of Coventry Cat Group

The original Group was formed in about 1986 by the late Mrs. Joyce Ostick. Being an affectionate lover of all cats, Joyce wanted to form a local group under the umbrella of the national cat group, Cat Action Trust. After receiving several replies to an advert in the local paper, Joyce invited the respondents to a meeting and the Cat Action Trust (Coventry) branch was born to care for local feral cats.

For some years, the group fed and cared for a number of feral cat colonies in the city and its outskirts. Caring meant trapping and neutering the cats to minimise their population growth and providing food on a daily basis. Cats found to be docile (rather than feral) were placed with fosterers until a suitable home could be found. Where feral colonies needed to be moved due to (construction) development of their living area, homes on farms, small holdings or similar were found where the cats could remain feral, be provided with food by the owner and also hunt naturally.

By about 1991, the group's numbers had increased such that a small off-shoot was existing in Bulkington doing considerable work in that and the Nuneaton area. It was decided therefore to split the group; one part operating out of Bulkington with a new name and the other remaining in Coventry under the original name of Cat Action Trust (Coventry).

Work continued with feral cats but domestic waifs and strays were increasingly being cared for as well.

In about 1995, it was felt that affiliation to the national Cat Action Trust charity was no longer viable and so the group decided to become independent. The new name of Coventry Cat Group, coined by Maggie Tarry, was adopted along with a logo suggested by Janet and Graham Tedds. The new group continued to care for a mix of feral and domestic cats in the same way as before.

In 1997, after a great deal of preparation work, the group adopted a formal constitution and applied to the Charity Commission for Registered Charity status. Towards the end of that year, this status was finally granted and Coventry Cat Group became a registered charity with the number 1065043.

The original paperwork for registration as a charity was penned by Mike Tarry. At this time Eddie Wilkinson was the secretary and named contact for the group, Cynthia Smith Chairman, Mike Tarry Treasurer and Maggie Tarry Membership Secretary. These four ran the charity as officers and Trustees.

Eddie retired in 2004, and Jenny Poole took over as secretary. Other people who have accepted this task since are Brenda Williams (two of!).

Mike and Maggie retired from the group in 2010, Nicky Jennings became treasurer for a year before Angie Willems took over.

Anthony and Kayleigh Patchett took the role of membership secretary for a year and this task was absorbed into the role of treasurer in 2011.

Cynthia Smith resigned from the group in 2011.



Maggie Tarry, Mike Tarry and Cynthia Smith at a fundraiser in Telford 2005.

In 2004 Angie Willems joined the group and soon became active as the fundraiser and Trustee on Eddies retirement.

Judith Stanley joined in 2005 as a fosterer and became trustee on Mike and Maggie's retirement. In a similar way Nicky joined the group in 2009 and also agreed to become a trustee in 2009.

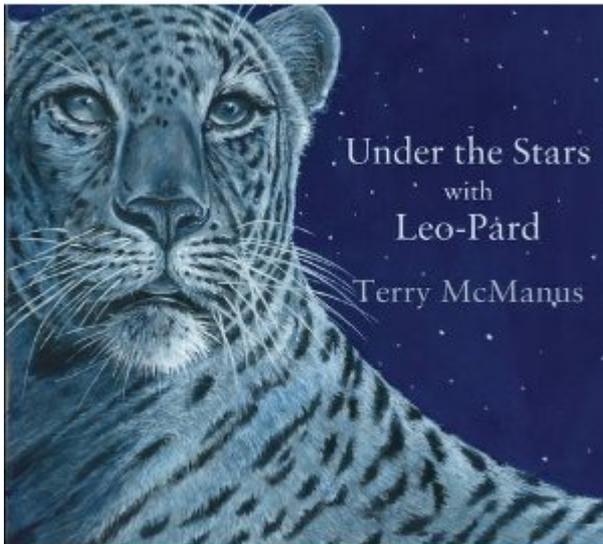
Since 2009 Angie, Judith and Nicky have been running the group with the help of a gang of fosterers who have come and gone over the years.

The group continues to work for cats in much the same way as before although perhaps now, there is slightly more emphasis on caring for waif and stray domestic cats than there is for feral cats. The development of the centre in 2013 has brought new challenges and increases the groups capacity to help the local cat population.

Mike Tarry and Angie Willems



Under the stars with Leo-Pard by Terry McManus.



Life should have been wonderful, but somehow, the zoo felt like a prison.

What was wrong? What was missing? What was it he longed for?

He didn't know the word for it, but it felt like an itch that his claws couldn't reach to scratch.

The first of a trilogy, *Under the Stars with Leo-Pard* is a full colour children's picture book, influenced by a trip to the nature reserves, jungles and forests of Belize. It tells the story of **Leo-Pard**, a very well looked after but extremely bored leopard. Having spent all his life in captivity, he dreams of just one night of freedom. He escapes with his two friends, Rocky the American Cougar and Stripes the beautiful Bengal tiger. They all taste freedom, and tell their own story of how they came to stay at the zoo.

Unfortunately, **Rosa** the Jaguar has to stay behind, but receives a strange gift and an even stranger new house guest, which gets the whole zoo talking and wondering what will happen next...

This beautifully illustrated story will introduce children aged 4-8 to important issues, such as conservation, working together, and even touches on aspects of equality, all gently pulled together by a slight sprinkling of magic.

Publication Date: Jan. 2 2014

Product Details

- **Paperback:** 48 pages
- **Publisher:** Matador (Jan. 2 2014)
- **ISBN-10:** 1783062037
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1783062034
- **Product Dimensions:** 25 x 23 x 0.4 cm
- **Price:** £9.99



Diana Madge Williams

Although this trilogy was written for each of my children this, the first Under the Stars with Leo-Pard, is also in memory of a very much missed family friend Diana Williams.

Di was truly a one off who has been a very big part of our lives knowing my wife Lin since birth and myself for about the last 35 years.

Di's love of animals brought our unlikely little group together and bridged the age gap with fun, laughter, madness and at times heart-ache, but always the connecting factor being animals.

Animals of all shapes and sizes would manage to seek Di out and get their paws, webbed feet or hooves firmly under the carpet, and what started off as a quick feed in order to help them on their way always ended up being a golden pass to a wonderful retirement retreat.

And in most cases the lucky golden ticket holders were cats, cats of all shapes and sizes.

Di, Lin and I would often set out in hot pursuit of some needy cause or other whilst Vic, Di's husband would stay at home manning and repairing the stations, these were great times which my wife, children and I often look back on with fond memories, we wouldn't have changed them for the world.

Sweet dreams Di x.

In memory of Diana Williams the most caring cat person I have ever been fortunate to have known for each book sold through Coventry Cat Group £1.00 will be donated to them. Please email enquiries via angie@coventrycatgroup.org.uk.



The Boss!



“Let me introduce myself I am Angus and I am the Boss of the household. At 10 I consider myself mentally mature but young enough to be an active Boss. I know I am beautiful and have a long fluffy black coat; hence my name after the superior breed of cattle that lives in Aberdeen. I know what I like ... and always get it. Some workmen recently asked HER to keep me indoors as I was scaring them with my stalking and staring! I boss by glares.

Oh yes, I am the boss.”



“Out of my way, granddad – make room for spiv aka Rudolf. I am a splendiferous example of a cat in its prime; sleek and deep red ginger with marking you can only gasp in admiration at. I am the boss OK. If anyone gets in my way I hit them and if SHE won't give me what I want I enrich the carpet with Eau de Rudolf,

Oh yes, I am the Boss.”



“Oh no you're no-ot, boys. I am Lilyanna and I get what I want by fluttering the lashes that surround the huge eyes that bulge out of my ginger face. I do what I want and SHE does what I want too. Unlike you guys I have fans the length of the street. everyone knows and adores me. SHE does as I please and if SHE doesn't I simply relocate for a few days and worry her witless ☺

Oh yes, I am the Boss.”



“Excuse me ... ccccan I put my case, I am Lucy or Looby or LuLu or Lupin. My plethora of names demonstrates my importance. I am a tiny Felixette who knows how to work it; outside a tiny baba but inside – and when no one is looking, of course, a tiger ready to growl at or paw any passing felines. Even better SHE always runs to my aid. Accusing other cat of ‘being horrible to poor ‘iccle Lucy’! Ha ha triumph

Oh yes, I am the Boss.”



“Who’s that? Go away shadow. I hate you.

Therefore I get my own way. Allow me to say hello. I am Freddie, a beautiful ginger cream boy who bosses the functioning of the household by being hyper anxious. I am scared of Rudolf so I get my own upstairs apartment with own post, tray, food, water and bed (HERS). I am scared of the cat carrier so SHE doesn’t go away. She buys me toys, plays with me; I sleep all night with HER to myself so you see I am cunning and therefore,

I am the Boss.”

“I am Sarah. I earn the money to buy the food, litter, toys etc and pay the vet’s bills. I feed them and clean up after them. I pamper to their every need. I know my place

I am their slave but wouldn’t be without them!”

Sarah Lewis 2013



If you have a story you wish to share in the next newsletter please email angie@coventrycatgroup.org.uk or write to us – address on the membership renewal form on the last page.

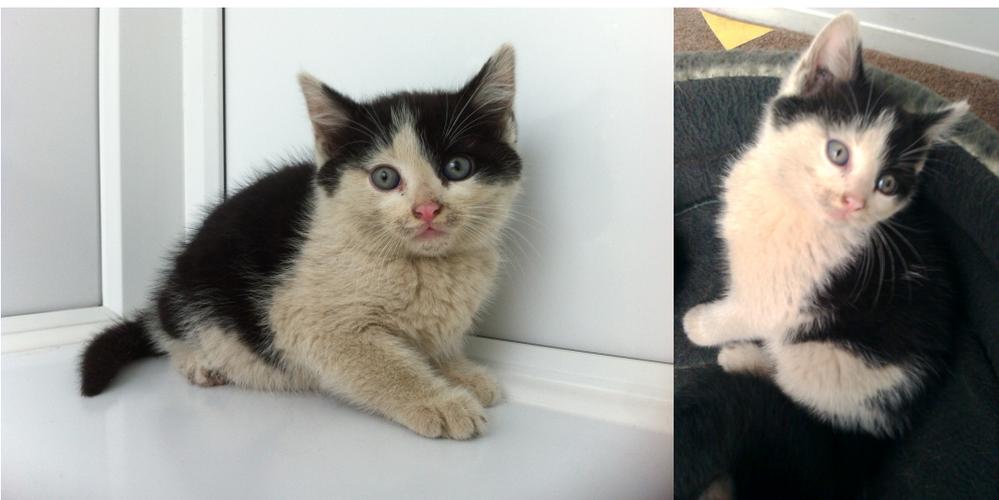


Making a difference – Part 2

Angel and her four kittens were trapped living in a metal workshop. Three of the kittens have now been homed and mum and remaining kitten still at centre.



The lovely Jazzy J below, now homed



How to make a donation



It is now possible to make donations to Coventry Cat Group by standing order payments (Coventry building Society, Sort-code 40-63-01 account 060180178 Coventry Cat Group Trust – please put your name as a reference so that we know who you are – we have one donor we cannot trace!) or a one off payment via our website. The contribution can be any amount and on a regular basis or a one time donation, all are gratefully received. If you would like to send a cheque please make it payable to “Coventry Cat Group Trust” and send to us at 175 Butt Lane, Allesley, Coventry. CV5 9FD. We are now registered with gift aid so if you are a tax payer please indicate that we can claim back the extra money. Thank you.

If you would like to ask any questions please feel free to visit our website and/ or contact us via

<http://www.coventrycatgroup.org.uk/> or telephone on 02476 268073



Shop online with easyfundraising

If you shop online this Christmas, consider shopping via our link to earn us donations on your purchases. There are hundreds of stores signed up to this scheme from Argos to Zooplus!

<http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/coventrycatgroup>



2013 AGM Date

Our 2013 Annual General Meeting has been scheduled for Friday the 9th May 2014. The meeting is open to all members. The meeting will be held at the centre.

Nominations for officer roles must be submitted to the secretary at least two weeks before the meeting.

Please indicate on the membership renewal form if you wish to attend or via email.

Please inform us if you wish to attend (either our registered address or via email angie@coventrycatgroup.org.uk)



2013 Coventry Cat Group Membership Application

(Registered Charity 1065043)

Name:

Address:.....

.....

.....

Post Code:

Tel No.

Email:

(The email address will only be used for sending out E-newsletters and other COVCAT news)

Please Tick **Membership to 31 March 2014**

- Membership - £5.00
- Senior citizen/unwaged - £2.50
- Under 16 years old - £2.00

Donation £____.____ (Thank you)

Please tick box if you are a UK Tax payer and agree to allow us to claim tax on your membership and donation for this year and the last 6 years. This enables us to claim an extra 25p for each pound donated.

Total - £____.____

(Please make cheques payable to "Coventry Cat Group Trust")

Signature: Date:

I will / will not* attend the 2013 Annual General Meeting of Coventry Cat Group to be held on the 9th May 2014. *please delete

Please return to the membership secretary:
Coventry Cat Group
175 Butt Lane
Coventry
CV5 9FD

Please enclose a SAE for return of membership card



That's it for this issue; all of us at the charity wish you a lovely
Christmas and a happy new year.
Coventry Cat Group

