

HOLLY HEDGE ANIMAL SANCTUARY

HOLLY HEDGE ANIMAL SANCTUARY'S newsletter jam-packed full of heart-warming stories 2020

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HOLLY HEDGE
Animal Sanctuary

Providing shelter from
harm and the promise of a
brighter future



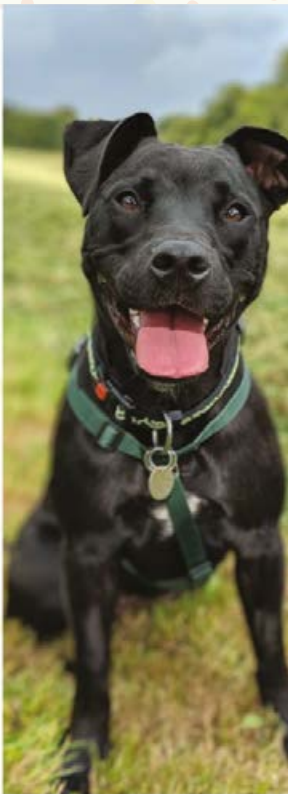
Wild Country Lane, Barrow Gurney, Bristol BS48 3SE • Tel: 01275 474719 • www.hollyhedge.org.uk

Reg charity No: 294606

PAWPALS

Our Pawpals are our everyday heroes - knowing what is coming in monthly helps us make life-saving decisions for our animals every day and over the coming months. As we try to recover from lockdown, this is vital.

From just £3 per month you can save a life



Will you be a Pawpal and become a hero for animals like us?

A monthly donation of:

-  **£3** - will purchase 12 sachets of kitten food each month, feeding me and the 200 kittens a year that Holly Hedge rescue and rehome
-  **£5** - covers my flea and worming treatment
-  **£10** - pays for me to have a microchip, so if I get lost, I can be taken home
-  **£20** - ensures I have nutritious food until I find my furever home
-  **£50** - covers my ongoing medical treatment

To join us as a Pawpal and make a life-changing gift every month, please go to www.hollyhedge.org.uk and go to "Donate"

Message from our Founder



We hope our newsletter finds you and your families well. As I write this letter, we are still in lockdown, but we have never stopped rescuing. Holly Hedge has overcome many obstacles since its inception, but COVID-19 has been our

biggest challenge to date. Our staff continue to work tirelessly to give our rescues the best possible care and chance of finding their forever homes. At times this has been physically and emotionally challenging, but our team keep giving their all. Without knowing when the pandemic will end, many elderly and vulnerable people have had to move in with relatives and couldn't take their beloved pets. This has been heartbreaking for them and our team. Our charity shop in Nailsea has regrettably had to close its doors until it is viable to begin trading again, which we hope will be some time this year. We had hoped to completely refurbish our cattery this year and add housing to accommodate the ever-increasing numbers of felines desperate for help. This will sadly now have to be put on hold for the foreseeable future. All fundraising events have had to be cancelled to keep our supporters safe. Every effort is being made to establish online events to interact with our supporters and raise much needed funds, which is proving very successful.

The aftermath of this pandemic will have a huge impact on every aspect of the future of Holly Hedge financially. However, there will always be hurdles to overcome, which we will face head on as we always do and fight relentlessly to continue to remain a safe haven for our precious rescues.

Our office staff have been the front line during the crisis and play a huge role in the intake and rehoming process. They have had to make difficult decisions based on our limited space as we are bursting at the seams with animals that need our help. They are always there to comfort a heartbroken owner who needs to part with their beloved pet through no fault of their own. Fortunately, we meet the loveliest people who want to adopt our rescues, flaws and all, and give them the loving homes and happy endings they so richly deserve, which lifts our spirits and makes all the heartache worthwhile. There is always a dog in the office to cuddle and give staff a warm welcome to make their day and remind them of each individual life they're changing for the better.

In the face of adversity and having to change the way we operate daily, you can all rest assured that our rescues are still receiving the greatest care and enrichment possible. We are also one of the few charities that continued to

take in animals during the peak of the crisis, prioritising the most vulnerable strays, pregnant or nursing mums, kittens, puppies, those under threat of being destroyed, or needing life saving veterinary treatments. We are rehoming by appointment only as we are conforming to social distancing. Since the lockdown started to the date of this going to print, we have so far rehomed 309 cats and kittens, including some who have been with us for almost a year, and 106 dogs and puppies, including most of our long termers, which is so heart-warming at this difficult time. This is testament to the dedication of our staff and the core values of Holly Hedge.

It has been a learning curve for us all, but throughout all the fear and uncertainty, our staff have been brilliant. You, our wonderful supporters have given us so much hope, positivity and encouragement to face the struggle for survival that inevitably lies ahead – and we will survive because we have a tower of strength behind us, and all the love in the world for the animals needing our help now more than ever.

While we are now focussed on staying resilient through the lockdown, prior to this, we had been working on plans for so many positive developments for Holly Hedge. We have strengthened the position of the Sanctuary; as of last year we are the proud owners of another three-acre field adjacent to the south boundary. We have plans to create a memorial garden as well as providing a wildlife haven for the beautiful creatures of the forest. Our rescued dogs also have another spacious and tranquil area for their enrichment and a space away from the kennels. We would also like to utilise the space for small fundraising events, though more parking space is needed in order to maximise our chances of generating income. For now, all plans for future development are on hold, but we are looking forward to a bright future for our Sanctuary and to rescuing cats and dogs for as long as they need us.

Through teamwork and amazing loyalty from our staff, volunteers and supporters, and of course our trustees, we have a Sanctuary to be proud of. The love and care reflect upon our rescues – and that is what makes Holly Hedge such a very special Sanctuary. Thank you all for being here and making their world a better place – it is very humbling. Please stay safe and well people, you are very important to all your four- and two-legged friends at Holly Hedge.

Pauline Leeson

Founder & Trustee

COVID-19 Sanctuary Diary



COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the Sanctuary; for the first time, we have been forced to close our doors to the public and our volunteers, but we haven't stopped rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming. We wanted to share our lockdown diary from the first few months of lockdown, featuring details of our incredible team, the highs, the lows, and how our supporters have kept us going!

Week 1 (17th-22nd March):

The lockdown measures have been announced and we are rushing to make huge changes to keep our animal carers safe from COVID-19. We have heard about so many other shelters that have closed and stopped rescue operations. We know that there are going to be so many animals in need of rescue because of the crisis and are preparing ourselves for a mammoth rescue operation in very difficult times. We have to say goodbye for now to our amazing volunteers (some of whom have been with us for over 20 years!). They are at the core of our Sanctuary and it feels surreal not to be able to hug them. To make room for lots of dogs and cats in need, we are processing as many adoptions as possible and finding foster homes for any animals who are struggling in the kennel or cattery environment.

Week 2 (23rd-29th March):

It's strangely quiet without our volunteers and the dogs are barking less as there are no new people to bark at! Our office team has been reduced to one person and everyone who can work at home is doing so. Our charity shop is now closed and we are starting to think about furloughing staff and keeping costs to a minimum as we are unsure of what is going to happen. Lucinda, our Kennel and Cattery manager, set Josie up a picnic table in the sunshine this week (complete with tablecloth and flowers!) so that she can enjoy lunch in isolation. Josie works with our dogs in ISO, who need a little extra space from other dogs and people. To limit contact with others, our staff are all working within set blocks and areas, minimising risk. This is difficult in a small Sanctuary, but we are adapting! We can't find loo roll or pasta for love nor money!

Week 3 (30th March - 5th April):

We are receiving such an outpouring of love from our supporters and the locals, who are determined to see us through the pandemic. We've been sent lovely cards, nutritious food and treats for our staff and, of course, the cats and dogs in our care, enough to make us all tear up! We feel like we are in a strange bubble, cut off from the rest of the world, but fortunately not forgotten. Vets around the UK have stopped all operations except emergencies, meaning many dogs and cats aren't receiving dentals or being spayed and neutered. We worry about the impact this will have on stray cats needing our help. We have 40 dogs and cats on a waiting list and are receiving daily requests from people who need to rehome their animals. We are having to prioritise the most urgent and we are giving behavioural advice for those who can keep their animals for now. Dougie and Daisy came into our care earlier this week - they belonged to an elderly man who has COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). Before the pandemic, his children had helped him care for Dougie and Daisy with regular visits and walks. With vulnerable people being told to self-isolate, he had a heartbreaking choice to make. He knew he couldn't care for the dogs on his own, so we have promised to find them a home where they will be just as loved as they always have been.

Week 4 (6th-12th April):

We had a heavily pregnant cat come in who we've named Tabitha. She was ready to drop her kittens and gave birth within hours of arriving. We asked our supporters for help with a theme naming her kittens. In preparation for what might be our biggest kitten season yet we checked our cupboards and realised that we are running low on kitten food! Our virtual kitten shower begins this week! We're hoping to spread awareness of how important it is to spay and neuter, and to raise funds and food for this year's kittens. Not forgetting our lovely adult cats, we held an easter egg hunt for them in the cattery (with treats not chocolate!) and we are making some crafty enrichment games and toys for them.

Week 5 (13th-19th April):

This week we started growing cat grass for our kitties to nibble on. We have a few new arrivals to enjoy it: another stray with very young kittens, Ivy! She's so friendly that she must have been someone's pet, but we haven't been able to find an owner. She had five kittens but, sadly, only three survived. They're called Harley, Joker and Quinn - no prizes for guessing the theme of this little brood! Lovely Ivy adopted Selena, an orphan who was found on a building site with no sign of a mum or any siblings. Selena is older than Ivy's kittens but she didn't bat an eyelid and got straight to grooming her. Selena has a silvery grey 'fever' coat, this is because her mum was stressed or was sick whilst she was pregnant. Selena's fever coat will fade over time and her true colours will develop. We will never know what happened to Selena's birth mum but we really hope somebody rescued her.

Kitten season in full swing! Tabitha's kittens have been named after the heroes seeing us through the pandemic, our NHS! They're now called Nigel, Henry and Sweetie. We have another pregnant cat, Sia. Lucinda spent four nights sleeping on the floor of Sia's cat chalet because she's only six months old, and being pregnant so young can lead to a complicated birth. Lu decided to include her sleepovers as part of the Two Point Six Challenge to help raise funds for the Sanctuary. This means that she will be staying in a cat pen for 26 hours+. She will be leaving the pen for toilet breaks as she is not quite crazy enough to do her business in a litter tray! We are all so proud of Lucinda for undertaking this fabulous fundraising feat. We now have 18 kittens. Our new kittens aren't the only ones with birthdays this week; handsome boy Finn turned one. We decorated his cat chalet and he got a special chicken dinner, new toys and extra treats.

Week 6 (20th-26th April):

We have been worried about getting stopped by the police with a carful of cats and having to argue that it is key work! With the aid of technology, we have been able to rehome some of our rescues, although our dogs with behavioural issues will require a couple of meetings with potential owners so we're still figuring this out! Our cattery feels a little like Piccadilly Station with so many being adopted and newbies coming in. We've received the equivalent of 30 forms per kitten in our care - admin is difficult to manage as everytime we get started on the forms, there's another emergency that takes precedence.

COVID-19 Sanctuary Diary

Week 7 (27th April - 3rd May):

We taught Niko cat to ring the bell for chicken - what a clever boy! Tarragon and Patchouli, two very nervous farm cats who have been with us since November 2018, are starting to accept touches on the face; all the patience, hard work and love of our animal carers is paying off with this duo - socially distanced high fives all round! Also, we're famous - we're on The One Show talking about our work! We might start selling pawtographs soon...

Week 8 (4th-10th May):

Rescue never sleeps! 2:30AM wake up call for Lucinda this morning and she went out to collect four orphan kittens. She will be hand rearing them over the coming weeks. We also had two puppies come in: five-month-old Nala, whose owners were moving into a flat and working full time and nine-week-old Charlie, whose owner became seriously ill. We made a destruction box for Smudge, which kept him nicely entertained. Bidding opened on our online auction and we are so excited as we have so many amazing lots! Niko, Satsuma, Cassie, Alfie and Felix went to their forever homes!

Week 9 (11th-17th May):

MORE kittens: Lulubelle, a semi-feral cat came in with four kittens! Shy cats Bentley, Chess and Domino are going to a perfect home! They have been with us for almost a year, having been found in a school playground where Bentley was protecting his kittens and had his tail maimed. Charles and Kez are also off to their new home this week, it's so heartwarming to see these cats be chosen after being overlooked for so long. We received a wonderful donation from a kind person who realised that they had saved £250 by not commuting, and they decided to give it to us instead. That is enough to spay four cats. Our online auction bids closed and we raised a total £6009.55! Happy dances at the Sanctuary!

Week 10 (18th-24th May):

It's been a tough week - it feels like lockdown is going to last forever! Our furloughed staff are desperate to come in and volunteer to lighten the load but the law says you cannot volunteer for your charity if you're furloughed. Our cupboards are looking bare and we're all tired, but we have the best supporters in the world! We received lots of donations of food for our residents and sweet treats for our staff - a perfectly-timed morale booster.

Week 11 (25th-31st May):

We're full to the rafters! People have been doing clear outs and want to support the charity and we are so, so grateful. Unfortunately, due to limited storage we're only able to accept cat, kitten food or wet dog food, turning away donations feels wrong but we have no choice at the moment. De Niro, a stray, came in this week with more than his fair share of fleas and ticks. He is a little nervous but very sweet and affectionate.

Week 12 (1st-7th June):

We took in Mickey cat. He is so beautiful but it is going to take some time to gain his confidence. Boris cat has grown in confidence and will even get on your lap for a quick cuddle.

Week 13 (8th-14th June):

Luna, Dolly, Sweetie Pye, Todd, Buddy came in our care. Buddy looks just like a miniature version of our bouncy boy Tintin. Arrow has gone home!

Week 14 (15th-21st June):

Sweetie Pye, who came in last week, suffers from epilepsy and was rushed to the vet after multiple seizures. She recovered well and has gone to a lovely foster home to recuperate. We are now in the peak of the kitten season and we are getting through over 1,000 sachets a week! We have a new mama cat and five more kittens! We also have new dogs this week: George, Rolo, Buster and Truffles.

Week 15 (22nd-28th June):

We just rescued a little old lady cat called Agnes, rushing there in 20 minutes after a call to our emergency line! She had fallen approximately 40 feet and luckily not hurt herself! She is covered in fleas and ticks and her fur is badly matted but she's so cuddly. She is thankful to be safe! And one more pregnant cat. Thursday was so hot that we cooled the dogs off in paddling pools and cats had frozen Lick-e-Lix. Long-term residents Penny and Duke went home.

Week 16 (29th June - 5th July):

We are running low on kitten food again already! The kittens are eating us out of house and home! Basil went home to a sweet couple. Lockdown measures are easing everywhere but we are staying closed for now to protect our animal carer team as we would be lost without them.

Week 17 (6th-12th July):

Excellent news for Tintin! He's gone to his new home. We are so happy for this beautiful boy as he has waited over 18 months here. Two more big hurrahs: Patchouli and Tarragon also went home!

That's the story of journey during the first months of lockdown! We have made it through two national lockdowns and we remain closed to the public to protect our small team. There is still lots going on at the Sanctuary so please stay in touch with us to find out our latest updates. We hope you are all staying safe and well and we very much look forward to seeing you again when we can.

Miranda & Spudley



I came to Holly Hedge to adopt my first dog way back in 1993. My then husband and I had already been home checked and it was simply a case of picking 'the one'. I said hello to every dog and offered them a treat.

All of the dogs took their treats and inhaled them with gusto, apart from one very sad looking dog. It took him an age for him to build up the courage to come to the front of his cage. He then very gently and politely took the treat, walked away and discreetly spat it out! I sat in with him and it took him a good 10 minutes to come and say hello. After polite introductions, he shot into my lap and tried to curl up into a small ball - not easy for a gangly-legged whippet/collie cross. That was that; I had been chosen and our wonderful adventure together began.

It transpired that poor Zack had been horribly abused and had spent the first 7 years of his life tied to a washing line outside, while his owner had other dogs attack him. He was rarely given food or water. He had multiple old breaks and fractures including a still-healing broken pelvis. He was horribly underweight, emotionally shut down and so desperate for love. I thank dog I was trusted to take him.

We took Zack home with us that day and quickly realised this was a very traumatised puppy. He would curl up in bed with us but would wake screaming in terror every night. He had no clue what a food dish was and would only eat if I hand fed him. Let him near a lawn though and he would eat the grass for hours; it was the only 'food' he really knew. I have never seen a dog so happily eating grass with zero ill effects; I am still convinced that he was part cow.

We quickly realised that his former name carried nothing but negative emotions for him, so he was renamed Zack. He had no idea how to 'dog' at all. Everything in the house terrified him, from the washing machine to the kettle. He had terrible separation anxiety; he became our permanent shadow and no doors could be closed in the house. He was very dog aggressive on the lead (for obvious reasons) but walked perfectly to heel without a lead and loved everyone and everything he met, including dogs. He never played with toys until one day when I was peeling potatoes for my mum and dropped a tiny potato. Before I could reach to pick it up, Zack sprang into action. He chased, threw, growled at, rolled on and played with that potato for well over 2 hours until there was nothing but shreds left. This was when his lifelong nickname of Spud was born.

There was challenge after challenge with Zack while he worked out what life was all about, but every second was worth it. Within a year, he was a confident and happy pooch. We eventually took on another two dogs, and he was the perfect big brother and protector. He loved nothing better than being able to run and, when he did, he was like the wind. His favourite sport was chasing squirrels. The second he saw one, it would be a case of nose down, bum up, quick wiggle of the butt and he was off and away. He actually managed to catch one once when the squirrel tripped over its own feet. Spud was on him in a second and then, thankfully, had no idea what to do! Squirrel and Spud looked at each other, both shocked at the turn of events. Spud then very slowly moved his head towards said squirrel, gave it a huge lick (much to the squirrel's disgust) and then came happily running back. All his Christmas' came at once that day.

He lived happily in Bristol and then we moved to Scotland where he LOVED the beach. Then, after I divorced, we moved back to Bristol and then to Wales. In that time, he chased everything you could think of and even once tried to 'herd' a pod of dolphins who came too close to the shore. We all got very wet that day trying to get him back as he swam off after them!

We sadly lost him at the grand old age of 22 ½ and he took a huge chunk of my heart with him when he left. I miss him every day, well over a decade since losing him. I was so very privileged to have been servant to Sir Zackarius Spud-u-like Cheese and Onion Flavour Pringle Breath Robertson and I will love him forever and a day.

This is the last photo I have of us together. It was a belated News Year's Day dinner at my mum's place (delayed as he was too poorly) and we lost him just five days later. It's one of my most precious photographs.

Secret treat tray

For: 

You will need:

- toys • treats
- an egg carton / cupcake tray or a similar tray with indents (match the size of the indents to the size of your pet's toys)

How to make it:

1. Place treats into some of the indents on your tray.
2. Cover up the treats with toys.
3. Add toys over some of the indents that don't contain treats.
4. Watch as your pet tries to find the treats!

Tip: You may find that you need to put a treat in one of the open slots in order to tempt your pet.

You can watch us setting up this activity (and our lovely kitty Kez having a go) here: tinyurl.com/holly-hedge-tray



**BOREDOM
BUSTER!**

If you have adopted from us, we want to hear from you!

Every Monday on our Facebook page we tell a story about a happy ending for one of our rescues. If you are interested in providing your Happy Furever After story, please send it to us at fundraising@hollyhedge.org.uk including the photos you want to include or send us a Facebook private message.

Orphan Newborn Puppies Get a Second Chance

At Holly Hedge, we are often called to help animals who need urgent medical care, and we have so many happy stories we can share with you as a result. Sometimes, however, despite doing everything we can, not every animal makes it. This rescue was difficult for us because we didn't get to save them all but, out of this sad story, there has been something beautiful. Four orphan puppies whose lives hung in the balance were saved and brought joy to two dogs who wanted desperately to be mothers. This is their story.

In the early hours of the morning on Saturday, 28th March 2020, just as the COVID-19 lockdown began, a couple found a heavily pregnant border collie in a very weak state, panting and disoriented. She had no collar and was all on her own – it was clear that she needed urgent help. She was so weak that she had to be carried to the car. The couple tried to find a local vet but to no avail, so they called Holly Hedge, hoping we could help. We asked them to bring her straight to our vet.

At the vet, it became clear that the situation was extremely serious; this poor girl was desperately trying to bring her puppies into the world, but she was exhausted and her body was failing. She was not microchipped so the owner could not be contacted. We wondered how this poor mum-to-be could have been left to get into such a terrible state. As she wasn't able to give birth to her puppies naturally and time was running out, the only option was an emergency Caesarian section to try to save mum and pups.

She gave birth to seven tiny puppies and, even in her terribly weak condition, she suckled her precious babies, giving them a small amount of immunity from her colostrum (first milk). During the Caesarian, we discovered that both of her ovaries were badly infected. We did everything we could to try and save her; she deserved another chance at happiness and her puppies needed her. Heartbreakingly though, the poor mum passed away hours after her puppies were born. She had only been with us a short time but in that time we had got to know her sweet and caring nature, and her love for her babies was clear. We named her 'Angel'.

Now we had an urgent issue: seven tiny puppies didn't have a mum. We knew that we needed to take urgent action to give them the best chances of survival. They needed feeding every two hours. We sprang into action

and were able to enlist the help of some amazing people and two very special dogs to give these puppies a chance at life. Two of the vet nurses took puppies home to bottle feed them through the night and an urgent plea was put out for a lactating female, or one experiencing a phantom pregnancy. We always prefer finding a surrogate mother to hand rearing, as puppies and kittens take so much comfort from a mother.

Among the overwhelming sadness of it all, there was a ray of light: two amazing families came forward, both with dogs having phantom pregnancies and producing milk! Our two new mums, Lottie and Coco, both desperately longed to be mothers, and it was a dream come true for them to raise Angel's puppies for her. The puppies were soon latched on and feeding happily and Coco and Lottie were flourishing in their new roles. As fate would have it, we also had an experienced puppy handrearer, Andrea Hirthe, close by. She showed Jo and Cariann, our wonderful human fosterers, how to bottle feed the little ones in case there wasn't enough milk to go around, and she was on hand to give advice and any help needed throughout the whole process.

Sadly, without adequate colostrum from their mum in the first 12 hours of life, puppies don't receive vital antibodies and, even with the best care, can go downhill very quickly. The next morning things took a tragic turn and three of the puppies started to fade. They were rushed to the vet, but couldn't be saved. It was touch and go with another two puppies, but, thankfully, they pulled through. The vet bills for Angel and her puppies now totalled £1,995, but we would have given anything to have been able to save them all. We are deeply grateful to all of our supporters; you enable us to make those emergency interventions that save lives.

Both Lottie and Coco now had two babies each and they thrived under these gentle mums' loving care. As the pups grew up, they got stronger and stronger and began happily playing, running around on their sturdy little legs and getting into mischief! Now, all puppies have been adopted, and Coco has been able to keep one of her babies!



Thank you!

We want to say a huge thank you to the vets and nurses who did their very best for Angel and her pups, to Andrea who willingly gave up so much of her time and expertise, to the fantastic human carers, Jo and family and Cariann and Lee, for all the loving care bestowed upon the puppies, day and night, and to the amazing furry surrogate mums who took the little orphans into their hearts and suckled and nurtured them as their own.

Felix, the Cat Who Wants to Live



Felix was so hungry
he had eaten rubber



Felix arrived on the 20th September in a pitiful condition and mere hours from death. He was emaciated, dehydrated and throwing up large pieces of rubber. We rushed him to Vale Vets who found that he not only had a stomach full of rubber, but also a hernia in his abdomen and his internal organs were up in his chest cavity... This type of injury is often seen when cats are kicked in the stomach, so we believe poor Felix, who has no street smarts whatsoever, had approached someone thinking they might help him and been kicked instead. Without hope and at the point of starvation, he had resorted to eating plastic.

It was nothing short of miraculous that Felix made it through surgery. However, it was a major procedure and his body was so weak that the next few days were critical. He had endured immense suffering, and even though he had been given the best care possible, everything could have been just too much for his tiny body. With every new day that he awoke, bright eyed and asking for food, we were made fully aware of his determination and desire to live. When he was strong enough to leave the vets, he was placed in foster care with our Fundraiser who kept a watchful eye on him and fell in love with him. He ate like a horse, slowly but steadily gained weight, and showed how grateful he was to be warm and safe with deep purrs and head bumps.

But Felix's trauma wasn't over just yet... Only 11 days after being fostered, Felix started to breathe rapidly and laboriously, and had to be rushed to the vets for another x-ray. Fluid was found in and around his lungs. Over the next few days, his breathing rate was monitored closely and it was discovered that he has a dilated bile duct, anemia and fluid in his abdomen. As his body has been pushed to such limits and is still in survival mode, it is difficult to know exactly what is wrong with Felix. We decided that as he has been through so much and whilst he is so happy in himself, it would be kinder not to put him through any more invasive tests for the time being, and to let him enjoy being in a loving home.

Felix has fought against all the odds and is one of the sweetest cats we have ever had the pleasure of meeting. He asks politely for a stroke with a slow, gentle paw, leaps at any chance to sit on your lap and purr contentedly with a smile on his adorable little face. For Felix to have been through so much and be such an affectionate cat is a testament to his loving nature. Felix wants to live; he loves life and has so much of it within his little body. We are committed to giving him every opportunity we can.

Felix's story is sad for everyone involved. His owner's mother passed away, and she had to leave the country for the funeral. Felix and his sister were left with a family member who, unfortunately, had no knowledge of cats and, instead of keeping them in for four weeks, let them outside after just a few days. Both of them were soon lost in an unfamiliar city. Felix was straying for two months and, in that time, his owner cancelled his insurance, believing the worst had happened and that she would never see him again. From the moment Felix started vomiting the rubber pieces, his bills quickly escalated into the thousands. As Felix's health issues may not be over and would not be covered by any insurer, he has been signed over to us so that he can receive the best chance possible at a long and happy life. Even with a generous charity discount from both Vale Vets and Langford Small Animal Referrals, the total of Felix's veterinary care is over £5,400. We hope this serves as a reminder of the importance of insurance. If your pet goes missing, many insurers will pay out to help with the cost of posters and flyers, and, if the worst happens, many will backdate the payment and refund you. The search for Felix's sister continues and we desperately hope that she is still out there, surviving, and that some kind soul will stop to help her.

Exciting News for 2022 !

Holly Hedge 30 year exhibition: do you have a story to tell?

An exciting milestone is coming up for the Sanctuary: in 2022, Holly Hedge will be turning 30! To celebrate 30 years of animal rescue, we are planning to hold a 30 year exhibition to explore the history of the Sanctuary.

Send us your stories and photographs

We are looking for any amazing stories or photographs you have that could help to tell Holly Hedge's story over the past 30 years. Please email us at 30years@hollyhedge.org.uk with all of your stories and pictures - we can't wait to see them!

Could you help us tell our story?

We are also looking for someone to help us organise the stories and images and put the exhibition together. If you have some experience in this area and could give some time to creating a wonderful record of Holly Hedge's history please email us at 30years@hollyhedge.org.uk

Checking in on Teddy!

Nothing makes us happier than seeing how far our dogs and cats have come in their new homes. Last year, Teddy came into our care as his owners couldn't afford the surgery he needed to correct a growth deformity in his leg. Thanks to your support, we raised £2,575 for his surgery, which was a success!

With a big surgery like Teddy's, it was important for him to recover in a calm environment where he had a human at his beck and call. There was no time to waste – he went off to his lovely new home.

A year on, here's an update from his mum, Becki:

Teddy has lots of quirks and strange habits and there isn't a day that he doesn't make us laugh. We aren't sure whether it's due to his operation or just because he's clumsy, but he often falls over when he gets too excited running with other dogs or turning a corner too quickly!

Whilst we have been working from home, Teddy has spent his days lying on the sofa in very strange positions, not even wanting to get up when his dog walker comes. When he's not sprawled out shamelessly like an amateur gymnast, he's digging holes in the grass or burying treats, so much so that we now have a lawn resembling Swiss cheese! He doesn't understand the paddling pool and thinks it's a gigantic water bowl. After a few failed attempts to take a dip, we realised that he doesn't like to get his fluffy feet wet! We wouldn't change him for the world; he's our oversized, goofy lunatic!



Meet One of our Foster Heroes!



In just over a year, Becky has fostered seven cats and kittens for us. She is part of our family of fosterers who play a crucial part in rehabilitating animals before they can find their forever home. Thinking about fostering for us too? We spoke to Becky about her experience and what it takes to be a foster hero.

Please tell us a bit about why you first started fostering.

When I unexpectedly lost my dear little rescue cat at the end of December 2018, I was so heartbroken that I couldn't face getting attached to another cat. However, being a huge cat lover and having had cats all my life, I knew I couldn't not have one in my life, so I thought fostering could be a good compromise. I had a chat with the Cattery Manager, Lucinda, and she explained about the types of foster homes needed, i.e. short-term emergency fostering, fostering for cats with health conditions, or fostering for cats that aren't coping well in the cattery environment. Holly Hedge provide all the supplies you will need and can be contacted at any time with any worries or questions. It was reassuring to know that I would have their full support. Shortly after my chat with Lucinda, my first furry little visitor arrived... Fastforward 16 months and I am now on foster cat number seven!

What do you love the most about being a foster carer for cats?

There are many things I love! I love getting a new foster; it's an exciting time welcoming another little cat into my home for a bit of extra attention. Some cats take a while to settle in and come out of their shell, so seeing them relax and become more affectionate is magical. I am very grateful to be in touch with most of my previous fosters; I receive regular updates and photos, which I cherish. There is great satisfaction in knowing that you are making a huge difference to the life of a cat by giving them safety and love while they wait for their forever home.

What does a typical day consist of?

My typical day varies with each cat as it depends on their needs. Of course, each day starts with a demand for breakfast! Next, I will clear their litter tray; as a fosterer, you do have to keep the cat indoors for their own safety, so good litter tray management is a must. I will clear the tray a few times a day, depending on their use of it. I work part time, so before I leave for work, I ensure that the cat has lots to keep them happy for the few hours I'm away. I have various toys, tents, tunnels, trees, scratch posts and boxes dotted around... Really, my flat is a cat play den that I happen to live in too!

I try to keep meals at the same time each day as cats like routine. Some cats will happily eat what they're given. Other cats are more fussy; it can be trial and error to find a food they like and I will have to encourage them to eat, especially if there is medication hidden in the food! With regards to playtime and fussing, I am led by the cat. Every cat is different, so it's important to understand and respect their individual needs. Some cats require regular grooming, and this is a good way of bonding with them. It feels nice for the cat, helps remove excess fur, and gives you a chance to check for any new lumps and bumps.

What's the hardest part of fostering?

Goodbyes are bittersweet. Some foster cats have been with me for months, so it's a wrench when they leave. However, they are going to their forever home with lovely new owners who I have got to know a little, so I know they are going to be loved and cared for. The thing I keep in mind is that, although I'm saying goodbye to one cat, I'm making room for the next little soul who is living in fear or neglect. The sad reality is there will always be the 'next little soul', so I know that I am providing an invaluable service and that makes the goodbyes easier.

But truly, the hardest part for me is the time between fosters. I generally have a couple of weeks to clean my flat thoroughly, wash all blankets and toys, disinfect litter trays, etc. I am then raring to go and impatiently awaiting my next furry guest!

What would you say to someone thinking about fostering?

Fostering is a fantastic way of having an animal in your life without the financial, emotional, and lifetime commitment that comes with owning a pet. Seeing an animal flourish under your care is so deeply rewarding. In addition, you are not only helping that one animal, you are also a part of something so much bigger. While an animal is staying with you, you are freeing up resources at the Sanctuary to enable another little life to be saved. So, if you are thinking about fostering, I would absolutely encourage you to go for it!

**Inspired to foster?
Amazing!**

Email us on
info@hollyhedge.org.uk
for more information



Don't miss our feature on Dylan, one of Becky's foster cats, on page 11 to see the huge difference that she has made in his life!

What to Do if You Find a Stray Cat



THIS CAT VISITS ME AND I AM WORRIED THAT HE / SHE MAY BE A STRAY AND NEEDS A HOME. PLEASE CONTACT ME IF HE / SHE BELONGS TO YOU.

Tel:

www.hollyhedge.org.uk • Reg charity No: 294606

What are the signs a cat is stray?

If you have noticed a new cat in your area that you think might be a stray, you can run through our checklist. Some may be vocal in asking for help but many aren't.

Signs a cat could be a stray:

- They are often very nervous and run off if you get too close.
- Do they look unhealthy? They may have scars, scabs, bald patches, matted fur, injuries or fleas.
- They may be skinny or show signs of a lack of care.
- They are often very grubby from living outside, particularly their front paws.

What should you do if you think a cat is stray? Who should you contact?

- 1 If you have any immediate cause for concern, such injury or illness, take the cat straight to the vet. They will scan the cat for a microchip, hopefully reuniting the cat with their owner.
- 2 Try to find out more about the cat by knocking on doors and asking your neighbours and by posting on lost and found groups on Facebook. You can also put up 'Found' posters in your local area. If someone comes forward to claim the cat, make sure you ask for proof of ownership (usually a photograph of the owner with the cat).

- 3 Download a free paper collar from our website or cut out and use this one.

Write your details on the collar and pop it around the cat's neck, leaving two fingers of space between the cat's neck and the collar. If they do have a home, the owner will read your message.

It's important that you do steps 2 and 3 before moving on to step 4 as the cat may be a lost or confused pet.

- 4 If the cat is hand shy or nervous, try setting up a feeding station and feeding the cat at a regular time each day and providing shelter to gain trust. They may be too afraid to eat while you're close by, so you may need to try putting some space between you and the cat so that they feel safe. Once you have developed this trust, it will be much easier for the cat to be captured.
- 5 If you have tried all of the above and haven't been able to locate an owner, speak to a local rescue about the cat and ask if they could help you trap the cat and take it in.

A happy ending for Dylan

Dylan came to us from another rescue where he was deemed aggressive and in need of more behavioural work than they could provide. However, many cats that seem aggressive are just very scared and trying to protect themselves from what they perceive as a threat. Poor Dylan was facing the prospect of being put to sleep, so we stepped in to see if we could help this hissy, scary street cat by giving him another chance.

When he first arrived, he was shut down and frightened and, rather than being scary, he just seemed sad. He needed special attention and lots of love so we sent him home with Becky, one of our foster heroes. A handful of chin scratches and treats later, it was clear that, under that burly exterior, there was a sappy boy with a heart of gold!

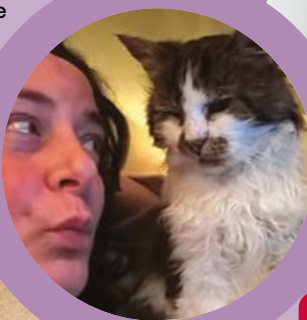
It didn't take long for this handsome rogue to be snapped up by a lovely couple. Dylan was ready to be loved and love his new family, although it wasn't without teething problems! Dylan was terrified and would only come out when his new parents went to bed. He was shut off and unresponsive.

After a worried phone call from Beth, Becky went to visit Dylan to reassure him it was a safe space, and it seems that this was just what he needed! He recognised Becky immediately and started to purr for the first time at his new home. Beth and Becky worked out that Dylan did not like his new room, so they moved him to another. Almost instantly, he was purring, playing and cuddling!

Here's the latest update from Beth:

Dylan is such a happy, confident boy now. He is constantly begging for a fuss or to be brushed. He used to be wary of new people but today he climbs all over our guests in the hope that he will get a chin scratch! He is always chatting away to me; he makes very good lockdown company! He sits on my desk every day while I work. Concentrating is 100x harder when I have that little face looking at me!

Dylan is absolutely adored and we feel very loved in return; thank you for taking him in and setting us up with our sweet boy.



Want to learn more about what it takes to be a foster hero?

Becky has provided her amazing insight and answered some key questions on page 10.

A Walk in Memory of Keanna

Holly Hedge are incredibly grateful to a very special family for their strength and compassion in organising a special fundraising event that took place last April: a charity walk in memory of Keanna Pegram.

Keanna was an amazing young woman and is remembered by those who knew her as kind, beautiful, smart and a true animal lover. In June 2018, Keanna was working in accountancy in Bristol and had just passed her personal trainer exams, ready to pursue her dream career and start her own business. After suffering from a bout of headaches, she visited her doctors and received news that would change everything. Tragically, she was diagnosed with sarcoma, soft tissue cancer. After a brave fight, she passed away a few months later, at the age of 21.

In Keanna's memory, a charity walk through Clevedon was set up for Saturday 13th April 2019, the date Keanna passed her exams just a year before. With all funds raised to be split between the Teenage Cancer Trust and Holly Hedge. Keanna's friends and family worked hard to set up a poignant event that would honour Keanna's memory and raise crucial funds for causes close to her heart.

The memory walk was an overwhelming success; Keanna had touched many people in her life and around 100 people came to remember her. They were joined by many four-legged supporters, including Keanna's beloved dog Mabel. The streets of Clevedon were filled with her friends and neighbours from all walks

of life, tackling the 11km (6.8 mile) route. In total, the walk raised over £4,000, with the JustGiving page hitting 468% of the original target – an incredible achievement.

Holly Hedge were chosen as a charity for the event due to Keanna's great love of animals. Keanna's mum, Daniela, came to the Sanctuary to meet some of the rescues receiving life changing care in her daughter's name and told us about Keanna's caring nature and urge to protect vulnerable animals. If Keanna ever saw a dog (or 'pupper' as she affectionately called them) tied up outside a shop, she would make everyone wait with her, watching over the dog until the owner came out and she knew they were safe.

Keanna and her loved ones have touched our hearts and we are honoured to have a plaque on our Sanctuary walls where Keanna will forever watch over our puppies until they find their forever homes. We would like to say an enormous thank you to everyone who took part in Keanna's walk: the walkers, donors and all of Keanna's fantastic friends and family, whose resilience and compassion are an example to us all. And thank you to Keanna, who has inspired so much kindness and left the legacy of a lifetime.



The Warehouse Cats

In May, we were called out to rescue a colony of cats living in a warehouse. As you can see in these photographs, the warehouse was incredibly dirty and unsafe; it was filled with litter, scrap materials, dirt and faeces. For some of these cats, this cold, uninviting place may have been the only home they have ever known. This is the hard reality of the situations in which many stray cats and dogs are found.

Most of the cats were terrified of humans and ran from us if we tried to approach them. Fortunately, some kind people had been visiting the cats and feeding them. This meant that some of the cats were a little more used to humans and therefore easier to trap. They were given names, their own clean, safe space and delicious, regular meals. We then started the long term, highly rewarding process of teaching them to trust, and finding their forever homes.

As people started going back to work, we received dozens of calls a week about stray cats finding shelter in buildings, and this hasn't stopped. Over the spring and summer months, the amount of kittens being born steadily climbed. With many other shelters running reduced rescue services and with many TNR (trap, neuter, release) programmes paused, we know we have only seen the tip of the iceberg. How many of these litters will go unrescued, leading to a rise in the stray cat population? A female cat can get pregnant again just four weeks after giving birth, so we are concerned about the impact this will have for years to come.

We are so grateful to all our supporters for enabling us to be there for these cats. We found it heartbreaking to see these frightened souls in that warehouse, like objects left abandoned in storage. In summer, neutering and spaying cats in our care typically costs us £660-£1790 a month, but it prevents so many cats being born into similar awful situations. Our warehouse cats are such unique little characters and they have so much to give, and we are so glad that thanks to you, we can be there for them.



Volunteer Spotlight!

Dianne Stephens

Dianne has loved cats, dogs and small furries her whole life. She found Holly Hedge when she went to see a friend who had just adopted one of our dogs.

Dianne was keen to help an animal sanctuary however she could and couldn't believe we were right on her doorstep! She hurried to catch us before we closed, marched straight to reception and asked how she could help. At the time we had lots of rabbits and she jumped straight into finding anything and everything she could do to keep them happy. Dianne was a typist, so she soon became our 'Thank You Queen', typing up the handwritten letters to thank our supporters who helped us rescue animals and building relationships with them that have laid foundations for who we are today.

It's been over 20 years and Dianne's support has never wavered. She's a familiar face to so many, having organised countless supermarket collections and carried out more than 500 home checks for us, securing wonderful homes for our residents. She's taken part in numerous tabletop sales and fundraisers, often with the incredible Nicola Bendall – between the two of them they have saved the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of rescues. We are so glad that, all those years ago, Dianne marched into our reception and became a part of our family. Holly Hedge wouldn't be the same without her.



Wildlife Meadow Update

We've come so far since November 2017! Our Wildlife Haven is blossoming and teeming with life. The pond is established now and has its own ecosystem with water snails, dragonflies and tadpoles that quickly grew into frogs! This is a great indicator of the environment as they have porous skin that is sensitive to pollutants.

Different plant species bloom at different times of the year but wherever you look there are little bursts of colour dotted amongst the grass and heather. "Little" is the important word here, as they're quite small, but no less impressive for their size! We saw 6 species of bees, drowsily buzzing from one flower to the next, so the flowers are little but mighty! Our plans for this year to re-sow in Spring were put on hold due to bad weather and Coronavirus, so we're next sowing in August, which we are really looking forward to.

We built the resource centre and the gift shop in 2019, which is a beautiful light and bright space! We're selling garden and home bits and it has a tea and coffee machine which pre-lockdown was enjoyed by many visitors whilst they browsed our educational material.

You may have seen in Pauline's letter that we purchased the South Meadow, which we have fenced in so the deer can still hop in and out as they please and the dogs can be allowed off lead to run and play. In 2020 the north field was renamed Storm's Freedom Meadow, which you can read about on page 18. These spaces have been a wonderful asset for our dogs and the local wildlife, which is all we hoped for.

ANIMALS SPOTTED: Frogs, squirrels, rabbits, deer, dragonflies, damselflies, water boatmen, pond skaters, pond snails, butterflies, bees, bats, ducks, buzzards.

PLANTS SEEN: Oak, hawthorn, buttercups, daisies, ox-eye daisies, mint, white clover, thistles, dandelions, pink campion, purple loosestrife, bullrushes, St John's wort.



From Pound to Safe Ground

Holly Hedge's Poundie Rescues

If you know Holly Hedge, you know how important it is to us that we help those animals who need us the most.



Thinking of animals in need of rescue will tend to bring to mind pets in unsafe and unhappy homes or wandering on the streets. There is, however, another source of dogs and cats in desperate need of help: those who find themselves unwanted or unclaimed at a council pound. These unfortunate animals usually end up in this situation after being picked up as strays. Often they are healthy, but some are suffering with ongoing medical conditions that have been neglected and now need urgent treatment. They may have been abandoned because of these costly health issues and this breaks our hearts because this is when they would have needed their humans the most.

The hope is that, once dogs and cats reach the pound, they can either be reunited with their owners or rehomed.

However, a pound is no safe haven for these poor creatures; they can be put to sleep in as little as seven days if they go unclaimed. In addition, once a pound reaches full capacity, animals can face death at any time due to a simple lack of space. This is an awful fate to befall these little souls who have ended up lost and alone through no fault of their own.

According to the Dogs Trust's annual Stray Dog Survey, 69,621 stray dogs were handled by local councils across the UK between 1st April 2018 and 31st March 2019. Of these, approximately 1,303 dogs were put to sleep. This extensive study focussed only on stray dogs, and the number of stray cats euthanised by pounds in this period is not included in these figures. This is a huge number of animals being killed because there is deemed to be no place for them and we know that this is just not right. That's why we take in these cats and dogs at risk of death in pounds whenever we can. We affectionately call these rescued animals our 'poundies'.

When we get new arrivals in from the pound, we get them settled in, assessed by our vets and given any medical treatment they need. Although every animal has already been checked for a microchip at the pound, we always double check, just in case there is still a chance of a happy reunion. Once our new poundies are safe, well and happy, we can focus on finding them their forever homes; our ultimate goal is that they will never feel unwanted or abandoned again.

Just before the outbreak of COVID-19 and the resulting restrictions, we took in over 20 dogs and cats from pounds that had reached maximum capacity. Cats like Fleur, whose teeth were in such a bad state of decay that she needed a full extraction, and dogs like 10-month-old Bando, who was found on Christmas Day tied to a tree, alone and afraid. The family who found Bando desperately wanted to keep him but were unable to because he didn't get along with their dog. With local shelters full, he was taken to the pound. Based on Bando's breed (Alapaha blue blood bulldog cross), age and nature, and the fact that he was unneutered, we believe that he was bought as a status dog and, when he became a big, boisterous teenager, his owner abandoned him.

One of our recent poundies most desperately in need of help was Bob, a little dog who arrived in a terrible state of neglect: urine stained, underweight and riddled with fleas. Our vets found a heart murmur, testicular cancer, a mouthful of rotten teeth and arthritis, as well as muscle wastage caused by malnourishment. Once his urgent medical needs had been taken care of, lovely Bob struck gold when our founder, Pauline, offered to foster him herself and nurse him back to health, tending to him after his surgeries. Bob has taken everything in his stride and come such a long way in just a few months. He demonstrates what the right care and lots of love can do. Seeing the happy, healthy dog he is today and knowing that we have been part of his journey brings us pure joy. These dogs and cats have a new lease of life, all because there are people out there who want things to get better for them.

Thanks to our supporters, we are able to give so many beautiful poundies a second chance at happiness.



Legacies of Love

Over the last 28 years, Holly Hedge has responded to more emergencies than we can count, and given urgent medical care to thousands of animals in desperate need. Having an open door policy and taking in animals regardless of age, veterinary and behavioural needs comes at a huge cost. We try to have one year of running costs in our reserves at all times, but our vet bills alone are often £15,000 each month, and this is where legacy gifts are a lifeline.

We don't like the thought of saying goodbye to any of our treasured supporters, and know these conversations are sometimes painful and uncomfortable. So we want to take this opportunity to talk about the impact of the gifts we have been left in wills.

Our amazing legacy donors have each had a dying wish to help the vulnerable. Before leaving this earth, they secured second chances of happiness for so many. They may have passed away, but they live on in the hearts of every cat and dog their kindness benefitted. This compassion and forethought have sustained us in our darkest hours. So many times over the last three decades, when we have been in a crisis, we have been saved by a final act of kindness from a lifetime supporter. We simply wouldn't be here today

without the kind folk who, after taking care of their loved ones, provided a legacy of love for our rescues.

We sometimes receive legacy gifts anonymously, or from people who haven't adopted from us. It is humbling to know that there are kind people out there who see the value of our work. We sorely wish that we could have had the chance to know them, and been able to thank each of them for the legacy of love they have bestowed upon us. Knowing

that someone remembered us when thinking about the legacy they want to leave behind is a beautiful and amazing gift, and one that helps us plan for the future. If you are considering leaving us a gift in your will once your family has been taken care of, please let us know. We would love to give you a tour, hear your voice on the phone, send a card and make sure you know that you are special and you will live on forever at our Sanctuary as a lifetime supporter.

Guardianship Service

If you worry what would happen to your pet in the event of your death, we are here to help. Holly Hedge can provide you with the peace of mind that in the event that you pass away before your pet, that they would be cared for. Please be reassured that we have an open door policy and will take cat and dogs regardless of age or health issues, and treat them as the special individual they are.

By making a provision in your will, you can ensure that your beloved pet will come into our care to be looked after and rehomed with someone who can give them everything they need.

To register, simply create or update your will to reflect your wishes, leaving a gift to provide for your pet, and let us know. We will ask you for a few details and can answer any questions you might have. Then, if the worst should happen, we will be there to take care of your pet.



Building McFluffster's Mansion

A Safe Haven for Semi-Feral Cats



In May, we were asked to help a supported colony of feral cats on an industrial site in Somerset, as part of a large rescue operation.

What probably started out as one or two unneutered stray cats, had become a colony of around 50 cats and kittens! Some lovely cat rescue volunteers and local charities were monitoring these bewhiskered bohemians and feeding them daily. In order to prevent the colony from growing further, they had neutered or spayed 35 cats in a TNR (trap, neuter, return) programme.

Many of the cats and all of the kittens were rehomed in order to keep the remaining colony manageable for the caretakers who were feeding them daily. There were 17 cats left on site when the landowner asked for the remaining cats to be relocated, with just a week's notice. Mid-lockdown, many offers for homes had fallen through, and we were asked if we could help. We quickly assessed what we had at the Sanctuary. Our cat chalets are much larger than most, with an indoor and outdoor section so cats can make themselves comfortable and each one has a view and access to the cat garden.

However, feral cats are used to having complete freedom and lots of space, so we needed to get creative.

We set to work on building a special



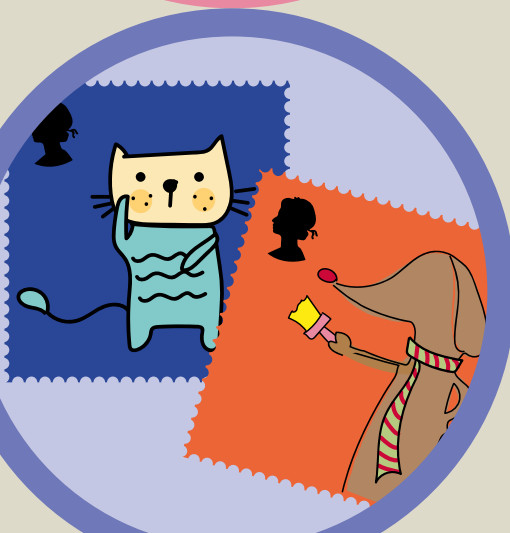
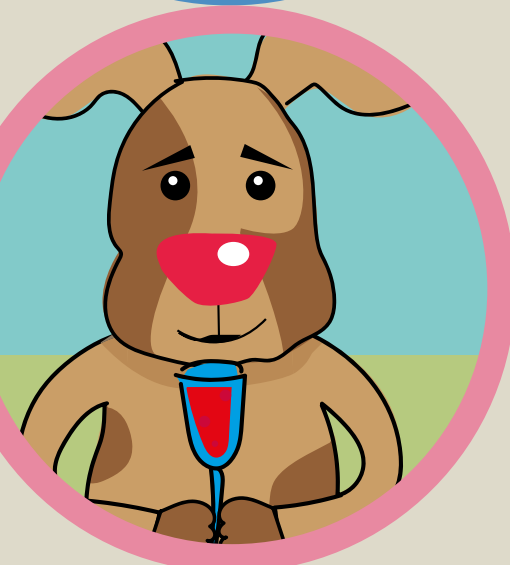
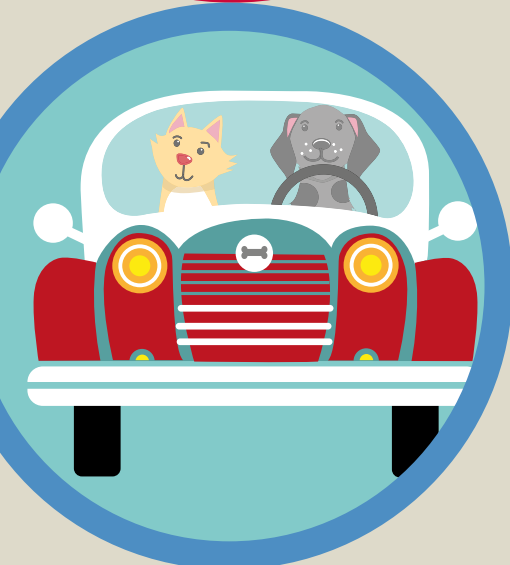
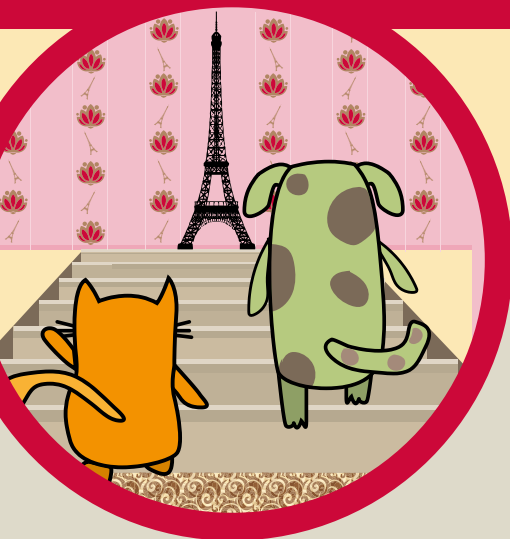
enclosure so that we could take in five bonded cats. Led by Lucinda, we adapted our kennel environment to create a large catio where the five friends would have their own private space. Lucinda's partner, Kenny, volunteered many hours of time to put it together in less than a week. As soon as it was ready, in moved Silas, Tabby and McFluffster! A day later, they were joined by Batman, shortly followed by JJ. We christened their spacious new abode the 'McFluffster Mansion' after the leader of their little gang!

Now that we have our new catio set up, we are looking forward to being able to house more cats from semi-feral colonies in the future.

Why is it so important to spay/neuter your cat? A cat's pregnancy lasts nine weeks and a female cat can be impregnated again just four weeks after giving birth. In one year, she can easily have three litters of kittens, who are themselves able to reproduce at four months old. It's therefore very easy for a situation involving unneutered cats to spiral out of control, particularly as, unfortunately, cats will mate with their relatives. In fact, it has been estimated that a single unneutered female cat and her kittens can be responsible for around 20,000 other cats in just five years! That's 20,000 cats without a place to call home, who are likely to need help in the future. Sadly, not all of these cats will be found by empathetic rescuers, so spaying and neutering really does save lives.



Fundraising



Want to support us from home?

During lockdown, many of our amazing supporters have found innovative ways to raise funds for our rescues. Here are some of our favourite ideas:

- **Set yourself a challenge and ask friends to sponsor you. This can be done at your own pace and can be tailored to you! Do you want to climb the equivalent of Mount Snowdon on your staircase? Or you could run a marathon in your garden over the course of a week!**
- **Donate your commute! With many people working from home, some are donating their petrol money to help us with our ever-increasing vet fees.**
- **Selling items on eBay? You can sell them on our behalf by selecting us as your charity and the funds will come directly to us!**
- **Send us your used stamps! We can turn your stamps into cash.**
- **Hold a birthday fundraiser on Facebook, or ask friends to donate the equivalent of a glass of your favourite wine (or whisky!).**
- **Shop via EasyFundraising or Amazon Smile. Both are free to use and the shops will donate to us when you make a purchase, without passing the cost on to you!**



Ben's amazing ride

We love celebrating the incredible people that help us rescue cats and dogs every day. It's Ben Thompson's turn - an amazing young man driven by compassion to do great things! Ben has a traumatic brain injury which he acquired at the age of 13, he is now a full-time wheelchair user. This didn't stop Ben from completing a 10k cycle ride in aid of Holly Hedge, and raising £300!

Ben's amazing bike ride was spread out over a day, the first part was on a static bike that his wheelchair was attached to, then he used an adapted bike around a carpark, it was his first time riding the adapted bike in the photo and as you can see, he loved it! Here's what his mum Liz had to say:

Ben loves animals and wanted to help out an animal charity. We had visited Holly Hedge in the past and loved how you helped dogs and cats who needed love and care. Unfortunately, we were not in a position to adopt an animal at the time so this was the next best thing we could do. Ben is very proud of the money he raised for your charity. We also loved coming to see you and all the animals.

Ben and his family came for a tour of Holly Hedge, and we were so touched by his challenge, we named a cat in his honour.



Storm's Legacy of Love in the Face of Prejudice

Storm was just two years old when he came to Holly Hedge on 29th December 2009 because his owner could no longer keep him. He was the most loving, gentle and sociable boy who loved to play with other dogs, adored everyone he met, and was a great favourite with staff. We assessed Storm, he was neutered and microchipped and then we began searching for his perfect forever home.

A month later, Storm's world was turned upside down when two dog wardens arrived at Holly Hedge stating that he was a pit bull type and that they needed to measure him. They met him and, although they conceded that he had a lovely temperament, they said that his measurements met the criteria required by the Dangerous Dogs Act and he should, therefore, be seized. We were devastated. This dear, innocent dog had done nothing wrong in his life. We advised the wardens that we would fight for him in court and he would be staying with us, not dragged off to some comfortless quarantine kennels for months on end awaiting his fate.

We put a case together along with beautiful photos of him and a glowing reference from our vet and, on the 16th April 2010, we went to court to plead for his life. The magistrates showed no emotion when they left the courtroom to deliberate whether Storm should live or die. Although it took them just 15 minutes to come to a decision, the wait was agonising. Upon their return, they said his life would be spared but he would have to be registered under the Dangerous Dogs Act, tattooed with a reference number, insured, as well as being muzzled and kept on a lead in public places. We had demonstrated we were responsible by microchipping and neutering him, however, if he was adopted from us, the new owner would need to go to court and obtain a licence to keep him and he would, again, be at risk of being euthanised. We made a promise to Storm that we would keep him safe as long as he lived. It was a bittersweet triumph because his only crime was that he had the misfortune to be born with the wrong measurements. This was not justice; it was persecution for the way he looked!

Storm spent a few years living in the staff room where he loved to chill out on the sofas with staff 'helping' them eat their lunch, and relaxing in the garden on a nice day. This adorable boy was content. We had no choice other than to muzzle train him, which broke our hearts as he wasn't a threat to anyone, but Storm took it in his placid stride as he did everything. Storm was very well-travelled, enjoying days out to the coast, visiting the arboretum and the countryside, touring towns and cities, and going into dog-friendly cafés for a bite to eat. Everyone he met loved him and couldn't understand why he was under the Dangerous Dogs Act and had to be muzzled when he was so affectionate.

In 2015, Storm developed lumps on his body and was diagnosed with mast cell tumours, which were removed straight away. To our devastation, we were warned that more could manifest. That was when the two people who loved him most in the world, decided to take him home. They had already taken him on so many adventures and they wanted to be there for him always. Storm thrived even more, sleeping on the bed with his head on the pillow and wherever else he wanted to. He had the run of the house, accompanying them almost everywhere they went. He had to have more tumours removed but he recovered well and life was wonderful for him, happiness and contentment written all over his beautiful face.

Storm was 12 years old when it was time for him to say goodbye to those he loved and who loved him dearly. This so-called 'dangerous dog' had the sweetest nature and kindest eyes. He was adored by so many, touching the heart of everyone who had the pleasure of meeting him along the way. Storm achieved so much in his life that we were grateful to be a part of. He changed so many preconceptions about his breed type by being a gentle and loving soul. He is so missed and mourned and will be remembered running free with no muzzle in his 'Freedom Meadow'. You will only ever be just a heartbeat away, precious boy, and will live in our hearts forever. We will love you always.



Thank Yous and Mentions!

Although this year has been devastating as we have had to cancel so many of our fundraising events which typically raise over £30,000 for our vital work, we have also seen a wave of generosity. Our amazing supporters have rallied around us and found new and innovative ways to support us in any medium imaginable. To everyone who donated vital funds to us, or sent our rescues, we appreciate you all keeping us close in your hearts this year. We have been blown away by your generosity and kindness, and every time we receive a food parcel or donation for our rescues, it means the world to us. Though the pandemic has taken so much from so many of us, it has highlighted the strength and resilience of our community.

We'd like to give a special thank you to:

- **Everyone** who took part in our *Spring Online Auction* this year and to the amazing companies and individuals that donated lots. You have all raised a magnificent **£6,009.55!** Thank you so much to **Swing for Victory Dance team** who organised everything! We are over the moon and we know **Ginny** and **Tania** are so happy to see their hard work be so successful.
- **Everyone** who joined us for our *Virtual Fun Day, The Big Weekend In*, and our wonderful sponsors and the kind people who donated fantastic prizes for the raffle. We were blown over by your generous bids in our raffle and had so much fun seeing the lovely little faces of your companions in the online pet shows. You raised a huge **£2,705** and we are so grateful!
- **Poppy's Picnic** for all the donations of wonderful raw food and treats - it has been very much enjoyed by our rescues!
- **Jenny Green** for taking *Bark in the Park* online, nothing can stop her!
- **Maria Bryan** for lending us her wonderful research skills and huge heart.
- **Bristol Dog Community** for holding an online dog show for us!
- **Dianne Stephens** and **Nicola Bendall** for their unwavering support. They haven't been able to do their usual car boots and supermarket collections, but have awed us by finding new ways to raise vital funds!
- **Pip Sharp** has stopped at nothing for our rescues, holding online events and taking up running and exercise bike challenges. Pip is currently planning our *Christmas Fair* meticulously to covid guidelines and we're crossing our paws that it goes ahead as planned!
- **Kayal Velaigam** for running the distance of the English channel for us - what an amazing feat!



- **Sue Huscroft**, whose compassion for our rescues and kind gift left us speechless.
- **Karl, Ian and Wojciech** for helping with our electrics. They never miss a chance to help us. Countless times they've waived fees and minimised prices saving us hundreds and hundreds of pounds!
- **David and Sandy Bailey**, forever helping however they can at any opportunity!
- **Forthglade and Butchers** for sending us pallets of wet food for our dogs! These pallets will feed our dogs for months, allowing us to concentrate our funds elsewhere.
- **Long Ashton Community Support Group** for their support throughout lockdown, helping collect much needed donations for our rescues alongside **The Natural Habitat Pet Shop**.
- **John and Sara Duerden** of **North Somerset Reproductions** for their continued support and incredible friendship throughout some of our hardest months.
- **Wetnose Animal Aid** for their belief and support of our vital work, and their commitment to helping thousands of animals in need.
- **Kenny Gordon** for his *Virtual Dance Party* and championing our cause at every opportunity.
- Two amazing ladies **Louise Piercy** and **Sam Williams** who have trained so hard for the London Marathon and kept their dedication and determination alive despite all of the setbacks caused by the pandemic.
- **Connie Inman** and **Jake Tipping** for *Jake's Car Wash*, where they cleaned a street's worth of cars in the name of our dogs and cats! They also walked from Weston-super-Mare to Bristol in one day with **Bob Inman**, to raise funds for our rescues (see pic left)!
- **Kim Ingleby** for hosting and running *The Human of Happiness Run* and making such a positive and inspiring event.
- The **Ostacchini Family Trust** for the donation of £5,000 to our vital work when we were desperately in need.
- Our **NHS Rapid Response heroes** from **Castlewood Hospital**, not only for taking care of all of us whenever we need them, but for their limitless compassion and desire to help. Pictured above is **Gaynor Whiting** (left), **Teresa Wright** and **Frankie Perry** with the mountain of donations they collected for our rescues. Thank you, you magical people, our rescues are so grateful to be loved by you all!
- The **ADCH** and **Petplan** for helping us fund a new Animal Ambulance, which is a lifeline for our rescues.
- **Adrian Cheshier** for his years of volunteering at the Sanctuary. Sadly, Adrian passed away earlier this year, and we would also like to thank the **Cheshier family** for the kind donations made in Adrian's memory.
- **Vale Vets** in **Portishead** for their continued care for such good care of our furry residents. Together we've spayed and neutered hundreds of animals this year, and given lifesaving treatment to so many in need.
- Our incredible **family of volunteers** whose support we have felt throughout the pandemic, like a reassuring hand on our shoulder.
- **Christine Sargeant** for her long-term devoted support of Holly Hedge and many years of fundraising with her husband **Nigel**. Sadly, she passed away in April 2020 and she will be sorely missed by many.
- Welcome **Janet Temperton** back on to the board of Trustees, we're very grateful to have her back.
- Our devoted **Trustees** who have navigated us through the last difficult year and all its challenges, never losing sight of our mission and values.
- **Tim Knott**, Eye Specialist from **Rowe Veterinary Clinic** for always going out of his way to help our rescues in complicated cases and being a very caring and generous friend to Holly Hedge.
- **ProDog Raw** once again have held their Dog Friday event and raised a phenomenal amount of funds! They also kindly sent our dogs delicious treats.



Donation Form

Title: _____ Surname: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ Email address: _____

Telephone no (daytime): _____ Mobile: _____ Date: _____

● **I would like to make a one-off donation of (please tick):**

☐ £5 ☐ £10 ☐ £15 ☐ £20 **Other amount £**

☐ I enclose cash/cheque (delete as appropriate) (please make cheques payable to **Holly Hedge Animal Sanctuary**)

☐ or please debit my Mastercard/Visa/Maestro

CARD NUMBER:

ISSUE NO (if you have one):

VALID FROM:

/

EXPIRY DATE:

/

SEC NO (last 3 digits on back of card)

Signature: _____

Date _____

☐ I would like to make a regular payment to **Holly Hedge Animal Sanctuary** and have completed the banker's draft form below.

BANKERS ORDER FORM

To: **The Manager**, Bank _____

Address: _____

Please pay to **National Westminster Bank plc**, Bristol City Office Branch for the credit of:

HOLLY HEDGE SANCTUARY

The sum of £ _____ on (date) _____ & thereafter monthly until further notice

Name (cap letters): _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Bank Account No: _____

Sort code: / /

(please quote above name on inter-bank credit for reference)

Thank you for your support! Please RETURN this donation form to:
Holly Hedge Animal Sanctuary, Wild Country Lane, Barrow Gurney, Bristol BS48 3SE

www.hollyhedge.org.uk • Reg charity No: 294606

● Gift Aid declaration

Make your donation go even further at no extra cost to you

Are you a UK Tax Payer? If so then please fill out the following gift aid declaration. Please ensure you have completed your details in full at the top of this form. We must have your name, address and postcode in order to claim back gift aid on your donation.

☐ **I AM A UK TAX PAYER.** Please treat this donation and all donations I have made to Holly Hedge Animal Sanctuary in the past 4 years and any I make in the future as Gift Aid donations until further notice.

I understand that the Charity will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008. Please notify Holly Hedge Animal Sanctuary if you change your name or address while the declaration is still in force. You can cancel the declaration at any time by notifying the charity – it will then not apply to donations you make on or after the date of the cancellation or such later date as you specify. You must pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April one year to 5 April the next) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities and/or CASC that you donate to will reclaim on your gifts for that tax year. Other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.

☐ **I AM A NOT A UK TAX PAYER**