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**Flood victims illustrate crucial problem of strict landlord policies regarding pets.**

The devastating floods in Cumbria have indirectly highlighted one of the problems that is putting strain on UK rescue centres; the strict „no pet“ policies held by some landlords of rentable properties.

Today (23.11.09), BBC Five Live discussed one of the problems faced by flood victims as many are struggling to find temporary accommodation that allows them to bring their family pets.

The Mayhew Animal Home in London is taking this opportunity to highlight to all UK landlords the importance of reconsidering their strict 'no pet' policies on rented properties. High numbers of cats and dogs arrive annually at rescue homes across the country after owners have to move and are unable to find a landlord to accept their existing pets. Rescue centres are continually fit to bursting and with long waiting lists. Landlords would be helping a great deal to alleviate the crisis by considering tenants with pets.

In existence since 1886, The Mayhew is confident that any responsible pet owner to ensure that their cat or dog behaves well inside the home and animal staff from the Home are always happy to offer information to any pet owners who are looking for behavioural advice.

The Mayhew proposes that landlords ask pet owners for references from previous landlords and their vet in order to establish they are a responsible owner. They should also ask for all pets living in the property to be neutered, therefore eradicating any territorial marking of the property and unwanted litters of puppies or kittens. Landlords could potentially ask for an increased deposit to be placed as reassurance for while the animal is living at the address. All these measures would offer a huge amount of security for concerned landlords and would reduce the high numbers of dogs and cats needing to be rehomed unnecessarily through rescue centres.

*Mayhew CEO, Caroline Yates, said: "We hope that by raising the awareness about this issue while it is highlighted in the media, in regard to the flood victims, private landlords will take into consideration how a well-trained pet can present them no problems whatsoever. They will also be directly helping rescue centres like The Mayhew by reducing the numbers of animals arriving to be handed over."*

ENDS

For the Editor

**The Mayhew Animal Home** was established in 1886 for the benefit of "the lost and starving dogs and cats of London so that they should have sanctuary from the cold inhumanity they are being dealt outside". Today, The Mayhew is one of the busiest animal sanctuaries in London, rescuing thousands

of animals from cruelty and neglect each year. We provide shelter and care for cats, dogs, rabbits and when the need arises, for a wide variety of other animals.

The Mayhew Animal Home strives to tackle the companion animal welfare crisis from every possible angle. The organisation is pro-active, innovative and continually works to assist animals and their carers. We aim to set the standards in animal welfare.

The Mayhew offers a wide variety of community services providing advice, care and assistance to animals and their carers whatever their circumstances.