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## **Cat crisis hits London animal rescue centre**

The Mayhew Animal Home is over-capacity in the run up to Christmas London – Animal rescue centres usually struggle in the aftermath of Christmas and launch appeals in the New Year to find new homes for abandoned and unwanted pets.

However, The Mayhew Animal Home in North West London is already overwhelmed with an influx of dumped and discarded animals and is over-capacity and has had to close the cattery.

The Home is only able to take in emergency cases at present, but that hasn't stopped people continuing to turn out their pets, or dump them in the rescue centres reception area, like Advent, pictured. Kitten Advent was left in a box on Sunday afternoon, sadly no longer wanted at only 4 months old. This is not an isolated case and the Home's kitten cabins are packed with litters of unwanted kittens, with over 35 desperately needing new homes. They are the lucky ones, as last week Mayhew veterinary staff found a shoebox outside their doors with one-day old kittens left inside, none of which were strong enough to survive.

Mayhew Animal Care Manager, Gillian Rich, said: *"This is crisis time here at the Home, our cattery and kennels are over capacity and we are having to create make shift accommodation areas here to care for all the animals coming through our doors. Pet owners seem to be reacting in a panic to the approach to Christmas and are dumping and abandoning their cats and dogs left, right and centre and it is left up to charities like The Mayhew to care for them and find them new homes. This is a desperate plea for people to think extremely carefully about getting a new pet for Christmas, as it looks like we will have little room to squeeze in the unwanted Christmas gifts after the holiday. A cat, or dog is a huge commitment and the rocketing figures of unwanted animals arriving at the Home is a sad reflection of our society's throwaway attitude to pets."*

*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.

**Other issues The Mayhew is qualified to comment upon:** Pet therapies, pet refuge programmes, early neutering initiatives, dangerous dog issues, feral cat trapping and community-based animal care