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## **Record numbers of unwanted animals in only the first month of 2009**

### **Animal Home overwhelmed with calls from owners no longer wanting their dogs**

Kensal Green – The Mayhew Animal Home is releasing its January figures for unwanted dog enquiries to highlight the growth in a ‘throwaway’ attitude to animal ownership.

In the first month of 2009, The Mayhew’s Dog Adoption Officer received 162 calls about dogs that owners no longer want -126 of these being pure breeds of dogs – dispelling the myth that people don’t abandon, or give up, pure breed dogs.

The calls from the London area consists of a list of 36 different breeds of dogs, including Pugs, Schnauzer, Border Collies, Labradors, Spaniels, Pointers, Greyhounds and Great Danes.

The top reason given was that the owner simply ‘didn’t want’ the dog anymore, followed by ‘landlord won’t allow’, ‘new baby’, or ‘can’t afford’.

With a contract for strays with Brent Council and a maximum space for 35 dogs, The Mayhew was only able to take in 9 of these dogs and are working to advise some of the other owners as to their options.

The Mayhew Dog Adoption Officer, Lisa Guiney, said: *"These figures are alarming and indicate clearly how the over-population of dogs in the UK means that people view them as disposable as it is so easy to obtain another one from numerous sources. To be this busy in only the first month of a new year is a shocking reflection of society’s attitude to animal ownership."*

The Mayhew Animal Home carries out early-age neutering in their community clinic and offers free neutering for any bull breeds by appointment in order to stem the over-population crisis in the UK.

The Mayhew CEO, Caroline Yates, said: *"We would encourage anyone who is thinking of getting a dog to consider carefully the commitment of time and finances that this involves. And recommend that they visit their local rescue centre. It is understandable that people’s circumstances may change but pet owners need to plan ahead for these kind of incidences so that they can take into account the welfare of their pet."*

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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.