

## **Media release from Cats Protection**

13 November 2018

### **Purrfect Landlords campaign to help give renters chance to own cats**

Cats Protection has launched a major new campaign to help more people living in rented housing own a pet cat.

The UK's largest cat charity is offering free guidance to landlords and letting agents to help ensure that tenancy agreements reflect modern day living.

Issues over finding cat-friendly housing have been one of the top five reasons recorded by Cats Protection for cats being handed into the charity's adoption centres over the past 12 months. Cats Protection's research shows that less than half (42%) of private rented housing allows cats in the UK.

### **In the East of England, 42% of private landlords state their tenancy agreements would allow tenants to keep a cat.**

Jacqui Cuff, Cats Protection's Head of Advocacy & Government Relations, said: "More and more people are renting their homes either by choice or necessity, yet very few rented properties accept cats. This means tenants are missing out on being able to own a cat, while landlords may be losing out on attracting responsible and settled tenants."

The charity has launched a new website full of guidance for landlords and tenants about allowing cats into their properties and addressing any concerns. The website, at [www.cats.org.uk/purrfectlandlords](http://www.cats.org.uk/purrfectlandlords) includes free, downloadable legal wording for landlords and letting agents to add to their own tenancy agreements, setting out simple conditions on cat ownership to protect and benefit both landlords and tenants.

Jacqui added: "We hear from renters who tell us most adverts state 'no pets'. Often, the reason for not allowing cats is simply habit, with a third of UK landlords who don't accept cats saying they didn't proactively choose to ban cats, but instead followed a standard template or advice from a letting agent.

"The aim of Cats Protection's Purrfect Landlords campaign is to transform renting so that responsible cat ownership benefits both landlords and tenants - happy landlords, happy tenants, happy cats.

"Becoming a cat-friendly landlord means advertising properties as 'pets considered' which ensures landlords stay in control and can make a decision once they've met their potential tenant.

"Our downloadable example cat clauses can then be simply added to existing tenancy agreements and they include tenancy conditions to require cats to be neutered, vaccinated and microchipped. This helps to ensure that cats are in the best of health and unlikely to cause any issues.

"We're also offering advice to help tenants speak to their landlords to ask for permission to own a cat. Landlords are often willing to be flexible, especially as tenants with pets are likely to stay for longer."

Private tenants who are able to own cats benefit immensely. Of those that own a cat, 94% report that their cat has a positive effect on their life such as making them happy, providing company and affection, or improving mental health.

Jacqui added: “The reality is that cats very rarely cause problems for landlords. In actual fact, many cat owners tell us that having a cat is what makes their house a home and helps them put down roots and value the home they’re living in.”

Broadcaster, writer and Cats Protection supporter Andrew Collins is backing the Purrfect Landlords campaign.

He said: “Cats are more than just much-loved pets, they’re part of the family and the heart of the home. For me, a home without a cat isn’t a home at all! They’ve got an important role to play in the lives of many people – from helping children understand about caring for others to providing a lifeline to pensioners who may otherwise feel isolated and lonely.

“It’s heart-breaking that so many renters are not able to own a cat but this needn’t be the case. Cats Protection’s Purrfect Landlords campaign is a major step forward in modernising how cat ownership is viewed in a rental market many people now rely on. By helping landlords see the benefits of happy, settled tenants, we can help more tenants experience the joy of sharing their lives with a feline friend.”

For more information, please visit [www.cats.org.uk/purrfectlandlords](http://www.cats.org.uk/purrfectlandlords)

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