

Animal shelter vouchers for adoptee pets in rental accommodation

Benefits of a pet vouching system

- Assists shelters in reducing pet entry and subsequent euthanasia numbers
- Assists prospective real estate agents in being able to assess viable pets and pet owners

With stories emerging nationally on the rental crisis, pet owners are finding it tough to find rental accommodation that will house both their pet and themselves. Tenants are not the only ones struggling in the current crisis; animal shelters are being flooded with an increasing number of pets being reluctantly surrendered by their owners because they cannot find suitable accommodation.

The RSPCA is looking to help address the crisis with a scheme that allows the organisation to 'vouch' for pets that come through its system.

"The animals the RSPCA re-home are given a very thorough evaluation before we adopt them out," says Gail Lane, the Shelter Manager for the RSPCA Townsville centre. The rehomed dogs need to be desexed, heartworm tested, fully vet checked, have passed a comprehensive behavioural assessment, be clean, microchipped and vaccinated.

"Well adjusted behaviour in the shelter lends itself to well adjusted behaviour in the home, which is why the RSPCA feels it can readily vouch for the pets that come through our system to prospective real estate agents and landlords."

Gail Lane, RSPCA Townsville



The RSPCA vouching system also takes care to ensure that hopeful pet adoptees have been given the authorisation from their rental agent or landlord to accommodate a pet on the premises.

"The situation is very difficult and we want to do all we can to address it from our end," continues Gail.

"Many people, who find they need to surrender their pet because of the rental crisis, feel as if they're giving up a much loved member of the family. Many of the pets are 12 or 13 years old

and you can't blame the families. It's either a roof over their

family's head or a roof over their pet's head. They have to make their family a priority, but it doesn't mean it's not breaking their hearts."

Gail's personal experiences have led her to believe that pets contribute not just to the immediate family, but to the cohesion of the neighbourhood. Gail lives in a street where eight out of ten houses have dogs which the majority of owners walk regularly together and catch up at the nearby off-leash park while their dogs play.

"It's a highly used park and I've met many of the people I know through there. Pets make it so much easier to talk to each other. There are many people that meet across Townsville through off-leash parks, hold 'Bark BBQs' and some even marry!"

Gail Lane

"Life is getting expensive and stressful," she continues.

"People are working longer hours and in this crazy world it's nice for people to come home to unconditional love, someone they can tell their problems to and not be judged. It's because of these benefits that I firmly believe it should be the right of all people to own and care for a pet."

Tips

- If your Council's shelter uses behavioural assessments and vaccinations etc, consider vouching for the animals that pass through the system

Web Links

RSPCA Queensland - www.rspcaqlld.org.au