

BRIEFING PAPER FOR HEADS FOR TAILS REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Subject : Improving the lot of thousands of pets surrendered to rescues because of No Pets clauses in rental contracts, and making renting with pets fairer for tenants & landlords.

Prepared by AdvoCATS, a voluntary organisation with 3 years' experience in working with landlords & tenants regarding keeping pets in rented properties.

The problem :

- 55% landlords impose blanket No Pets clauses in rental contracts
- Only 7% of landlords actively market their properties as pet friendly
- Rescues seeing more pets surrendered because of rental issues
- Landlords no longer have ability to request separate pet deposits as would exceed the 5 week deposit cap stipulated in the Tenant Fees Act 2019
- Landlords concerned about recouping any pet damage costs
- Many landlords now asking additional monthly "pet rent" which at £25+ per pet costs tenants hundreds of pounds extra a year for the duration of their tenancy
- New pro-pet ownership Model Tenancy Agreement is voluntary, not the law

Our solution :

- Pet damage insurance and/or capped pet deposits
- Limited number of contents policies that include pet damage currently exist from around £20/month but are not well publicised
- More companies on the sidelines & preparing to enter the marketplace
- Tenant benefits from a portable policy which is per household not per pet
- Better use of "pet rent" monies as tenant can build up no claims/bear the increased premium for any claim

Our proposals :

- Add pet damage insurance to the list of permitted payments under the Tenant Fees Act 2019
- Make allowance for an additional (capped) pet deposit in the Act for landlords who prefer the responsibility to be theirs
- Introduce a Code of Practice for landlords & tenants to offer guidance on such issues as what type of accommodation is suitable for what pet(s), how to deal with pet related complaints, documentation a tenant should provide etc

The statistics :

- YouGov polled 1056 adults in February 2021 regarding have such insurance
- 57% of dog owners & 55% of cat owners would take out pet damage insurance if it was reasonably priced & a condition of being able to rent a property
- Early sight of a PRS industry poll of landlords indicates three quarters of landlords believe pet damage insurance should be available to protect both themselves & tenants

AdvoCATS_{eastmids} – *working hand in paw with rescues, landlords & tenants*

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