

Charity  
focus

# Building bridges

The Mayhew Animal Home is doing all it can to help the overpopulation of Bull breeds in the capital, says **Rachael Buzzel**.

## WHAT THE MAYHEW DOES

### Rescue and rehoming

- The Mayhew rescues and rehomes dogs, cats, and rabbits.
- It is dedicated to giving animals a second chance and will do all it can to nurture them back to health.
- A healthy animal is never put to sleep.
- The home has state-of-the-art animal units, which provide comforting and secure surroundings.
- Each kennel has home comforts such as blankets, toys, and even a TV. Classical music is played throughout the kennels, which has been proven to be a calming influence.
- The home works closely with a network of foster carers.

**A**midst the bustling London borough of Hammersmith sits the Mayhew Animal Home, a busy charity that not only works tirelessly to rescue and rehome animals in need, but also educate people on animal welfare too.

The home, which is gearing up for its 125th birthday in 2011, has seen a major increase in Bull breeds coming through its doors since opening in 1886. Chief executive officer Caroline Yates said: "We definitely see too many of these breeds. About 40 per cent of our dogs are Staffies or Bull-type breeds."

"Recent coverage in the media hasn't helped the situation; people are being

scare-mongered, and dogs who are perfect family pets are ending up in our care, and it really is having an effect on us. Our main aim is to alleviate the situation."

### Free neutering

The Mayhew now offers free neutering for all Bull breeds and Bull-types after starting a pilot scheme in 2006. "We are the only charity to provide this service and due to the demand we started running the initiative full-time in 2007," said Caroline. "We have neutered 1,424 dogs under the scheme; we neutered 512 dogs alone last year and are well on the way to exceeding that number this year. We only take

The Mayhew is passionate about helping Bull breeds.

appointments for this on Mondays but with the high demand our vets could easily be performing the procedure 24/7.

"Problems with Bull breeds definitely seem to be more of an urban problem and it's because they are just too easy to get hold of. Day in, day out, we see people come to our clinics with Bull breeds and you can't help but wonder, 'where did that dog come from?'"

For the Mayhew, education is a major priority — trying to stop the problem at the source is far more productive than trying to fix it once it's already happened. "We throw our energy and commitment into educating the public about responsible pet ownership, as there would be little point in expanding facilities just to fill it up with more dogs," explained Caroline. "The problem needs to be addressed at the root cause. This is where the various initiatives we run are of great help. We have various educational programmes including educational visits to schools, colleges, and youth groups; homeless community support; pet refuge — a temporary foster care scheme for owners in crisis; and pet industry workshops. All of these programmes are run either at the home

or offsite by our dedicated animal welfare officers, and all aim to educate the public on animal welfare.

"The initiatives aren't about bombarding people with information. They're about building good relationships so that we can work together to do what's best for these animals."

### On patrol

In addition to these programmes the home works closely with Brent Council, and alongside the RSPCA, the Metropolitan Police, and Brent Housing Partnership, it has created the Brent Action for

## WHAT THE MAYHEW DOES

### Veterinary services

- The Mayhew community clinic offers low-cost neutering, vaccinations, microchipping, flea and worm treatments, and a nurses' clinic providing advice on diet, weight, nails, and teeth.
- The clinic is also an approved centre for the training of veterinary nurses.

## WHAT THE MAYHEW DOES

### Humane education centre and community animal care

Programmes are run both at the home and offsite by animal welfare officers. Programmes include:

- Educational visits to schools, colleges, and youth groups, giving talks on responsible dog ownership.
- Homeless community support: animal welfare officers work alongside several organisations that offer support to homeless people with animals in London, providing welfare advice, assistance, and basic health care.
- Pet Refuge: providing up to three months of support and foster care for pet owners who are in a personal crisis and have no other option for care of their pet.
- Pet industry workshops: workshop opportunities are arranged throughout the year for employees and managers working in the pet industry, helping employees learn more about the needs of different animals, and how to impart this information to their clients.

Staffies such as Brindle are given a second chance at the Mayhew.

For more information about the Mayhew or to make a donation call 020 8968 2446 or visit [www.mayhewanimalhome.org](http://www.mayhewanimalhome.org)



The BARK patrol raises awareness in the local area.

