



Apartment living is a pet project

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Property Reporter

MERLIN enjoys playing with a stuffed duck, chewing on dried kangaroo and taking frequent naps.

He is one of thousands of pets to need their own resume, complete with character references, a medical history and photo ID, if they are going to be allowed in as a new tenant.

To stop a flood of complaints against people keeping their pets in secret, peak industry body the Institute of Strata Title Management is urging owners to compile documents to convince strata committees Fido won't be a nuisance.

Two of the top 10 complaints made to the NSW Office of Fair Trading last year were about pets — half from people dobbing in others for keeping pets without permission and half from pet-lovers refused permission.

“To encourage people to do the right

thing and not end up with a complaint made against them a pet application form has been developed,” ISTM president David Ferguson said.

“The idea is to make it easy for potential pet owners to apply for permission and also for the executive committee to have the information they need to make a decision.”

Two months ago Justin Wagemakers of Erskineville sent an application form and photograph of his new pup to his pet-friendly strata management and six days ago he brought Merlin home.

“If you tick all the boxes, you can have a dog,” he said.

“You get an application form, fill it out with a photo and at the meeting it is voted on. It was easy.”

Mr Ferguson said some owners' corporations needed to change their pet policy to fit modern lifestyles.

“Owners committees should review whether resident wants have actually changed since the building was first built,” he said.

“Owners must be conscious of the history of a building. Don't expect that as a new owner it is a matter of just making an application and it will be OK. Some people have chosen buildings based on their no-pet policies and their opinions may not change overnight no matter how responsible the new pet owners are.”

Petcare Information and Advisory Service consultant Susie Willis said pet owners had to be aware of the impact on neighbours and the property.

“If you own an apartment and want a pet, the first step is to check with the owners' corporation,” she said.



Good tenant: Merlin the pup with owner Justin Wagemakers