

# *SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS*



25 December 2014

The Editor  
Forum Page  
The Straits Times

Dear Sir,

I refer to Dr George Wong Seow Choon's letter, "Concerted effort needed to tackle rat problem" (22 Dec), and to Dipa Swaminathan's letter, "Dog feeders just showing they care" (22 Dec, Forum online).

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) is heartened to note the genuine care that many well-intentioned feeders exhibit.

The SPCA also wishes to dispute the notion that the community dogs are ultimately responsible for the rodent infestation in the area, and thus disagrees strongly with Dr Wong's suggestion that the SPCA (and the AVA) "trap and remove all the stray dogs in the area".

We must recognise that the community dogs have no place to go and, while the SPCA and the other animal welfare groups have tried their best to house them, they have space and resource constraints.

For the record, the SPCA does not round up healthy animals from the streets, unless they are injured, ill and/or distressed.

Many a time, it has been observed that members of the public have been casually feeding the dogs, without actually cleaning up leftover food. There is already a core group of community feeders (and caregivers tending to the dogs' basic nutritional needs and care) who would be happy to help in resolving any issue concerning the dogs.

The SPCA aims to point out that the community animals are inevitably a part of our living environment. The only homes that many of these have known are the streets and housing estates that they have lived in all this while. Removing community animals could create a 'vacuum effect', and the void left would be filled by another group sooner or later.

In light of this issue which has brought to the fore differing viewpoints, understandably, the SPCA would ask for tolerance in respect of community animals that share this environment with us. A little more empathy, too, will go a long way.

*Yours sincerely,*

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**Executive Director**  
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