

Pub's pet cat banned by officials

Publicans are angry over the closure of a local pub by officious food watchdogs until it booted out its pet cat Jo-Jo, writes **Mike Edwards**. Godfrey Seager, licensee of the Jolly Sailor, in Saltford, Avon, was told by local council health officials that he could keep his dog Mickey but the pub would have to close until Jo-Jo went, because she was a health hazard. 'This is bureaucracy gone mad,' said Mike Newson, spokesman for the Association of Licensed Free Traders. 'It's wrong to ban cats from pubs — they can even be good for environmental health by keeping mice away,' he said. The Campaign for Real Ale said that cats and dogs are part of the great British pub scene. 'To force a publican to get rid of his cat is going too far,' they said. But the Institution of Environmental Health Officers says that 'cats carry worms like toxocara which can cause food poisoning', and Wansdyke Council said that its officials had found Jo-Jo lying on a chair in the pub's restaurant area while the dog was in a basket under a bench in the bar.

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