

Case 4 (Contract law – Offer and acceptance)

Michael has four pet white rats which have been trained to dance together as a group. They escape from their cage. Michael places an advertisement in the local newspaper describing the rats and promises to pay £ 700 for each rat to anyone who returns the rats to him. Kathy, one of Michael's neighbours, finds one rat and keeps it warm and well fed in a shoe box overnight and then takes it to Michael's house. Before she can reach the house, the rat escapes from the shoe box, runs away from her, and then wriggles through a hole back into Michael's house. Erik searches diligently for the rats during two days and spends £ 15 on bus fares travelling to different parts of the city. When he finds one of the rats, he takes it home and does not immediately return it. David finds another rat. Unfortunately, it has been savaged by a fox and is now dead. David takes the corpse to Michael who refuses to pay him anything. Johanna, Michael's sister, finds another rat in her room. She gives the rat to Michael who refuses to pay her anything. Michael decides that, as one of the rats is dead, there is no point in reassembling them as a dancing group. Accordingly, he distributes leaflets everywhere in the city cancelling the promise of a reward. Erik does not see the leaflets and returns the rat found to Michael later that day. Michael refuses to pay him anything.

Solve the case according to English law for each of the four concerned persons.

Relevant case law might include *Carlill v Carbolic Smoke Ball Co.*, *Daulia Ltd v Four Millbank Nominees Ltd (1978)*, *Errington v Errington (1952)* and *Shuey v United States*.