

Scope

This Policy outlines our approach to dealing with pets in residents' homes.

This Policy applies to residents living in Affordable and Shared Ownership properties.

We encourage responsible pet ownership; balancing the positive impact pets can have, while ensuring they do not negatively affect others or cause a nuisance.

Keeping a pet

Your tenancy agreement should set out if we allow pets and, if so, if you need permission. In some blocks, where we do not own the freehold, we will be bound by the rules of the freeholder and what is in our agreement with them. If you live in such a block or if you are unsure what is in your agreement, you should ask our Property Manager for further information.

We encourage responsible pet ownership, in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006. We will involve the RSPCA immediately where we suspect animal cruelty or neglect and encourage anyone who reports concerns about a pet to us, to do the same.

Your responsibilities

You must keep animals in a reasonable manner and not allow them to cause a nuisance to anyone or cause damage to your home. You must not keep, or allow visitors to bring to your home, any livestock or animal classed as wild or dangerous in law. Visitors can bring animals to your home for temporary periods of time, as long as they do not cause nuisance to neighbours.

We may ask you to keep animals in a separate room when we visit your home e.g. contractors visiting to carry out a repair. You and your visitors must keep dogs on a lead at all times in communal areas of our buildings and grounds.

Failure to meet these expectations may be a breach of your Tenancy Agreement

When you need our permission

You must obtain our permission before you get a pet, if you:

Live in a self-contained house, flat or maisonette and you would like to have a pet (except small pets, such as hamsters and goldfish)

- Want more than one cat or dog and you live in a house or bungalow with a private garden
- Want to run a pet related business from home e.g. grooming, dog walking, pet sitting
- Want to install dog or cat flaps - we need to check the flaps will not affect the door's fire safety.

When you request permission, we will consider:

- The terms and conditions of your occupancy agreement

- The suitability of the accommodation
- Your ability to care for the pet including any previous issues if you previously had pets
- Local issues relating to pets and anti-social behaviour
- Any breaches of tenancy relating to noise
- Whether this is a temporary arrangement e.g. a family member is in hospital.

We will grant permission for an assistance dog.

Before we grant permission, we may ask you to sign a Pet Agreement. If we do not give permission, we will contact you to explain why.

Where we discover a pet is being kept without our knowledge, we may give permission retrospectively if other conditions for keeping a pet can be met.

If you feel we have refused a request for a pet unfairly, you can appeal by following our Complaints Policy.

Restrictions

We will not allow you to keep:

- Any animal listed in the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 including large or venomous snakes and certain types of spider.
- Dogs listed in the Dangerous Dog Act 1991 Section 1
- Farm animals e.g. sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, horses, cockerels.
- Bees
- You must not bury pets in any private or communal garden

What if there is a problem?

If there are problems with a pet in your home e.g. noise complaints, we will work with you to solve any problems in line with our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

If pets cause damage to your homes, we will charge you in line with our Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

We will ask you rehome your pet(s) if:

- You are keeping pet(s) where we wouldn't give permission or refused your request
- Your pet is causing a nuisance and you are not working with us to resolve this
- Your pet is causing a nuisance and there are no further options to solve this
- Your pet attacks or injures other animals or people
- Your pet is causing damage to the property or the condition of your property is unhygienic because of your pets
- You have too many pets in your home.

If we ask you to rehome any pet, we will tell you why and discuss with you a timescale for you to remove the pet from your home. We will confirm our agreement in writing.

We expect you to engage with us and help resolve problems. We may take possession proceedings for breach of tenancy if you fail to put right any problems or fail to rehome your pet within a reasonable time.

Monitoring and continuous improvement

This policy will be reviewed annually unless legislation requires otherwise.

Legislation and regulations

Animal Welfare Act 2006

Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976

Dangerous Dog Act 1999

Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014