



Pets Policy

Introduction:

This policy outlines the Society's approach to pets within its housing stock. This policy is based on the document 'Guidelines on Pet Management for Social Housing Providers' published by the Pet Advisory Committee and endorsed by the British Veterinary Association, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Chartered Institute of Housing.

Policy Statement:

The Society recognises that keeping pets can offer significant benefits to their owners. However, irresponsible ownership can cause nuisance and affect the quality of life for other residents.

It is also recognised that some buildings such as Sheltered Housing schemes may not be suitable for pets and in some circumstances may be designated 'pet free' areas.

Sheltered Housing Schemes:

Pets are not permitted in all Sheltered Housing properties.

The layout and type of accommodation is unsuitable due to risks associated with shared entrances / corridors and residents' ability to control and care for an animal.

There are potential noise and nuisance concerns relating to pets living in our sheltered housing properties.

Assistance Dogs:

Assistance Dogs are permitted in our properties which are dogs trained to assist and support their disabled owners with their specific disability. Most types of dogs can be trained to aid their owners.

Each dog is taught task work tailored to the owner's needs, enabling that person to lead a more full and independent life.

Assistance Dogs are instantly recognisable by the harness or identifying dog jacket they wear.

Visiting Pets or Assistance Dogs:

Pets will be permitted to visit residents for short periods during the day with the consent of the Scheme Manager but will not be allowed to stay overnight except for Assistance Dogs.

Residents who are asked to 'pet sit' for a period will not be allowed to do so in any circumstances.

If visiting pets cause a nuisance, then permission will not be granted for them to visit again.

General Needs Properties:

Pets are permitted in our General Needs stock with written permission.

A new pet application form must be completed for each pet. This applies to both new pets and replacement pets.

All pets must be permanently identified by microchip or tattoo and the identification details must be registered with the Society.

To comply with current legislation dogs must also wear a collar and tag. Cats should be neutered. Dogs listed in the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and any animals listed in the Schedule of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 may not be kept. This is to protect the health and safety of any residents and employees of the Society who may encounter them.

Where permission is granted, tenants are responsible for the health and welfare of their pets. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, this is called a duty of care. This requires proper day to day management and care of the pet.

Permission to keep a pet will be withdrawn if it causes a nuisance and residents must make good any damage caused to the property by their pets.

Pet Care:

If residents have any questions about the care of their pets, they should contact their vet or a suitable accredited animal welfare organisation. Routine healthcare must include regular control of parasites (fleas and worms), vaccinations and neutering where appropriate.

When applying to keep a pet you may be asked to provide the name of your vet and evidence from them that your pet is regularly treated.

No pet should be left in the property when the resident is away unless clear arrangements have been made to provide adequate care. This will require the pet to be boarded elsewhere but close supervision by a neighbour may be adequate for some animals.

Pets Kept Without Permission:

When the Society discovers that a resident is keeping a pet without consent, a letter together with a copy of this policy will be sent giving the resident 14 days to remove the pet.

If the resident does not adhere to the policy and remove the pet, the Society will consider legal proceedings against the tenant concerned.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion:

The Society is committed to promoting fair and equal access to services. The Society's policies have been established to promote an environment which is free from discrimination whilst valuing the diversity of all people.

Value for Money:

Implementing and adhering to this policy will help prevent pet nuisance to residents, prevent pet fouling, barking noise nuisance and harm from pets. This will reduce the impact on time and resources used when dealing with nuisance pets and reduce the costs of legal enforcement action.

Resident Consultation:

This document was reviewed by our Tenant Advisory Group. Members were in favour of the Policy. The feedback received was very useful in making sure that the Policy was fair and fit for purpose.