

Pet Policy



Reference:	HS_POL_HOU_PET_2	Author:	Neighbourhood Team Manager
Scope:	Housing Solutions	Approved by:	ET policy group
Legislation:	Animal Welfare Act 2006 Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014 Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Dangerous Wild Animal Act 1976 Environmental protection act 1990 Control of Dogs Order 1992 Microchipping of dog's regulations 2015 Equality Act 2010	Date of approval:	July 2023
Regulatory/ Governance:	Tenancy Standard	Date of next review:	July 2026
Related Policies:	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Vulnerable Customers Policy Complaint & Compliment Policy Anti-social Behaviour Policy		

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 This policy defines our approach to managing pets within our homes, the conditions under which residents may keep pets in their home and the standards we expect of owners.
- 1.2 We recognise the importance pets have for owners in terms of being part of the family as well as the positive impacts on mental and physical wellbeing.
- 1.3 We need to ensure our approach is balanced with the potential for nuisance to others if pet owners are not responsible in the way they care and manage their pets behaviour.
- 1.4 This policy aims to:
 - Clearly define our pet-friendly approach to managing pets within our homes.
 - Clearly define the standards we expect of pet owners.
 - Clarify when we will allow certain pets - and when we will not.
 - Provide a consistent and fair approach to managing pets and outlines our approach to dealing with nuisance caused by pets cause within our homes as well as any related issues such as reports of mistreatment.
 - Contribute to our corporate strategy of being safe, satisfied and

sustainable.

- Comply with all relevant legislation.

1.5 This policy applies to all pet owners living in homes owned or managed by Housing Solutions including general needs, intermediate rent, market rent, leasehold, shared ownership, supported and sheltered accommodation.

1.6 There may be some circumstances in which Housing solutions is not the freeholder, or it is agency-managed and there may be specific rules regarding pets.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The roles and responsibilities relevant to this policy are:

Executive Team	Responsible for approving this policy and any amendments from time to time. Responsible for recommending the strategic direction of the policy that feeds into the operational delivery for residents.
AD Housing & Resident Services	Responsible for overseeing the operational delivery and service quality of housing services and compliance with this policy
Neighbourhood Team Manager	Responsible for overseeing operational delivery.
Community Services Team Manager	
Home Ownership Team Manager	
Housing, Supported / sheltered Team leaders	Responsible for the day-to-day management of the teams delivering operational services to all prospective and current tenants.
Housing Officer	Responsible for tenancy management and informal resolutions
Anti-social Behaviour Officer	Responsible for Anti-Social Behaviour case management and enforcement action.
All Staff	All staff are responsible for helping residents to sustain their tenancies wherever possible.

3. Our Approach

3.1 Your existing tenancy agreement or lease should set out if you are allowed to keep a pet in your property. In general, where your lease or tenancy agreement states you can only keep a pet with our permission, or that you cannot keep a pet, we will only enforce this clause, if there are breaches of other parts of the policy, e.g. pets causing nuisance. However, if the lease contains a prohibition on keeping pets, then while we would not seek to enforce this (as long as there is no nuisance), it is possible that a third party may complain or object, which could lead to the resident being asked to rehouse a pet.

3.2 In some blocks we do not own the freehold or manage the communal areas, we

are bound by the rules of the freeholder and our agreement with them. Therefore, these blocks will have a no pet policy, If you live in such a block or if you're unsure what's in your agreement, you should ask us to check for you, before you get a pet, or risk being told to rehouse it.

- 3.3 Blocks where we are unable to give permission for pets are listed in Appendix B
- 3.4 Under no circumstances are households permitted to keep the following as pets:
 - Animals listed under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
 - Any endangered species
 - Any hybrid between a domestic and a wild animal
 - Bees
 - Dogs listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
 - Guard dogs
 - Livestock (including poultry, horses, and cattle)
- 3.5 We will undertake enforcement action to deal with any breaches of the above.
- 3.6 We expect all pet owners to behave responsibly by upholding the standards listed in Appendix A.
- 3.7 Where a pet owner fails to work with us, and we consider the nuisance to be serious or persistent, then we will take appropriate enforcement action against the pet owner in accordance with our Anti-Social Behaviour policy which may include injunctive proceedings requiring the owner to re home the pet, or in some cases extreme cases seeking possession of the property.
- 3.8 Where an injunction order has been granted to rehome an animal, we will allow this to take place within the time scale ordered within the order.
- 3.9 It is illegal for a pet owner to allow their dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place. We will report all incidents to the police, and this may result in criminal prosecution and tenancy enforcement action being taken against the owner.
- 3.10 We would expect pet owners to keep their dogs on a lead and under control within communal areas.
- 3.11 We will report any complaints of animal cruelty to the RSPCA and will report any stray animals to the relevant local authority.
- 3.12 Households have our permission to keep the following pets in properties we own or manage:
 - Up to two dogs in a house, one dog in flat, and/or
 - Up to two cats in a house, one cat in a flat
 - Up to two small mammals and/or caged animals
- 3.13 If residents want to keep additional pets, they must seek our permission in writing. We will make a decision using a common-sense approach taking in to account the household and type of property. The housing officer will make a decision in consultation with the housing team leader.
- 3.14 Residents in shared accommodation (e.g. shared living facilities, kitchens,

bathroom) including Extra Care/Supported/Sheltered accommodation, will need to seek permission in advance from your Housing officer

- 3.15 Residents in shared accommodation must not use communal washing facilities including washing machines to wash pet items such as bedding.
- 3.16 Residents living within Extra Care/Supported/Sheltered accommodation must supply details for two people we can contact in an emergency.
- 3.17 We retain the right to withdraw permission where the pet has caused nuisance, or we believe there are signs of animal cruelty or neglect.
- 3.18 We expect all residents to complete a dog registration form, with the exception of residents with assistance dogs.

4. Appeals

- 4.1 Appeals must be made in writing within ten working days of the original decision being communicated to the customer. The Head of Housing will investigate the reasons for the refusal and will advise the applicant in writing of their decision. This process will be concluded within ten working days. The decision of the Head of Housing will be final.
- 4.2 This appeal process does not interfere with the individual's right to make a complaint to the Housing Ombudsman.

5. Legislation

- Housing Solutions will ensure that we remain compliant with the legislation and guidance set out on page 1 of this policy. We will also ensure that we remain up-to-date with any changes in legislation, guidance and best practice.

6. Consumer Standards

- By publishing and adhering to this policy, Housing Solutions is upholding the requirements set out in the Consumer Standards published by the Regulator of Social Housing.

7. Equality and Diversity

- Housing Solutions recognises the needs of a diverse population and always acts within the scope of its own Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Policy, the Human Rights Act 1998, and Equalities Act 2010 to ensure that all tenants and prospective tenants are treated fairly and equally in making decisions under this policy. Housing Solutions works closely with its partners to ensure it has a clear understanding of its resident community with clear regularly updated service user profiles. Housing Solutions will record, analyse and monitor information on ethnicity, vulnerability and disability to support the fair application of this policy.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1 Under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR), all personal and sensitive information, however received, is treated as confidential. This includes:
- Anything of a personal nature that is not a matter of public record about a resident, client, applicant, staff or board member.
 - Sensitive organisational information.
- 8.2 Housing Solutions employees will ensure that they only involve other agencies and share information allowed either by statute or by an agreed Information Sharing Protocol relevant to this Policy.

9. Review

- 9.1 This policy will usually be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis or more frequently in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice or changes in other relevant Housing Solutions' policy.
- 9.2 Our performance in relation to the delivery of the services and activities set out in this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through our established reporting mechanisms to our Executive Team, Board and associated committees.

Appendix A – Housing Solutions Pet standards

- Residents must notify us when they get a dog and complete the dog registration form.
- All pets must be cared for responsibly, and in line with Section 9 (2) of the Animal Welfare Act 2006:
- All pets must be kept under proper control and must not cause a nuisance to other residents within shared spaces. This includes dogs being kept on a lead in communal areas, not entering play areas and being under control including when Housing Solutions employees or contractors attend a property.
- Pet owners need to be mindful of other residents and where possible try to take the stairs to your home, rather than the elevator, and avoid enclosed communal spaces.
- No fouling in communal areas or balconies. Where fouling has occurred, the responsible owners must clean up immediately.
- Communal washing facilities such as washing machines are not to be used for washing pet bedding / equipment.
- If a pet is excessively noisy, which could be considered a nuisance to others professional advice should be sought, as this could be a symptom of behavioural problems which will also need investigation. Should action not be taken this will result in enforcement action.
- Animals must not damage any Housing Solutions property, including communal parts of the building and neighbouring properties. Owners will be recharged for any repairs which are needed as a result of such damage.
- All dogs over the age of eight weeks must be microchipped and wear a collar and tag in public.
- Animals must not be kept for the purposes of breeding or sale.
- Owners must have suitable arrangements in place for looking after their pet during periods of absence.
- Cat or dog flaps (or similar devices) must not be installed without our prior consent as these can compromise the fire safety of a property. And they are not permitted on doors that open onto shared areas.
- In situations where a resident is temporarily looking after a pet for a friend or family member, all the requirements within this policy will still apply.
- If your pet sadly passes away, it must be buried or disposed of in a responsible and safe manner and cannot be buried in communal gardens.
- It is recommended that pet owners consider taking out pet insurance.

Appendix B – Housing Solutions Pet permission exclusion list

- Furnival shared accommodation,
- Brunel Court,
- Lockwood Court,
- Park View,
- Providence,
- Bridges Court
- Trinity Place
- At some Shared, Supported and Sheltered schemes; where we will consult with all residents before granting permission for any one person to keep a pet or animal.

Updated 25/07/2023.