



PET POLICY

Reference	HPS-H-18
Information Classification	Public
Review Frequency	3 years
Date Reviewed/Approved	16 August 2021
Next Review Due Date	August 2024
Applicable Committee(s)	Housing & Property Services
Owner - role	Senior Housing Services Officer

Record of Updates/Changes			
Current Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Changes
August 2021	16 August 2021	H&PS Committee	

1. Aim

This policy aims to set out how the Association will deal effectively with requests for permission to keep pets and how we deal with complaints about pets which are causing annoyance or nuisance.

The Association recognises the benefits that pets can bring to our tenants and their families and can improve physical health and/or emotional well-being. It also recognises that irresponsible pet owners can have a negative impact on others.

The Pet Policy aims to complement other policies including:

- Allocations Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Equalities & Diversity Policy
- Estate Management Policy

2. Legislative & Regulatory Framework

This Policy aims to cover the obligations and requirements set out in the following relevant legislation:

- Animal Health and Welfare Act (Scotland) 2006
- Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003
- Equalities Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Microchipping of Dogs (Scotland) Regulations 2016

3. Roles & Responsibilities

Information on responsible pet ownership will be available in the Association's Pet Ownership Leaflet and on the website.

The Housing Officer will be responsible for making decisions regarding any permission for a pet received to the Association within 28 days. The Senior Housing Services Officer/Housing Services Manager will be responsible for any appeals from a tenant(s) who have been refused permission for a pet. Appeals will be responded to within 28 days.

4. Staff and Tenant Guidance

The Association also promotes responsible pet ownership to minimise any anti-social behaviour and ensure the animal's wellbeing.

All requests for any type of pet must be in writing or via the online form on the Association's website and will be responded to within 28 days (see section 2.5 or 2.6 of Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement for definition of pet). For management reasons, we reserve the right to restrict the number of pet

permissions granted throughout a block or scheme of properties, and in the event of the Tenancy Agreement being breached continuously, we reserve the right to fully withdraw permission. (See Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement or Short SST, section 2.5 or 2.6). The pet must not be obtained until permission has been granted by the Housing Officer. If permission for a pet was previously granted it should not be assumed that permission for a second pet would automatically be granted and should still be requested.

4.1 Restrictions on Pets

The Association will give permission for the following pets:

- General needs houses – maximum of one dog &/or one cat OR two cats.
- General needs flats – no dogs allowed. Maximum of two indoor cats.
- Sheltered housing flat within the communal areas of the scheme – no dogs allowed. Maximum of two indoor cats.
- Sheltered housing cottages out with the communal areas of the scheme – one dog &/or one cat OR maximum of two cats .
- Enhanced housing support in Moray schemes within flats within the communal areas of the scheme – no dogs allowed. Maximum of two indoor cats.
- Enhanced housing support in Moray schemes with cottages out with the communal areas of the scheme – one dog &/or one cat OR maximum of two cats.
- Very sheltered housing – no pets allowed although consideration for discretion can be applied by Housing Officer.

Permission for smaller domestic pets in multiple numbers will be at the discretion of Housing Officer although no cages/huts etc will be permitted in any communal areas.

Permission for fish will not be required with the exception of fish tanks that are more than 55 gallon aquariums (48" x 12" x 24") in size.

The Association has restrictions on types of animals and permission will not be granted for:

- any pet forbidden under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (including dogs placed on the Index of Exempt Dogs), or any other animal prohibited by any other law, unless the dog has been exempted from the prohibition by a Court Order.
- the keeping of an animal which has ever caused injury to a person.
- any animal prescribed under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976, regardless of whether or not a license has been obtained from the local authority.
- a tenant to keep racing pigeons.
- a tenant to keep livestock, or farm animals, for example: sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, horses, chickens, or ducks.
- developments where title deeds do not allow certain type(s) of pets.
- whilst wild birds are not considered to be pets, bird feeders are not permitted in any communal area

4.2 Exemptions to Restrictions

The Association recognises that there will be occasions when the restrictions should not apply. Whilst this will be on a case by case basis examples of this could be:

- In the event of a tenant requiring a seeing or hearing dog, the revised policy restrictions will not apply, although the Association must be advised of the dog living in the property.
- In the event that a tenant or household occupant requires a dog or other pet as a therapy pet or for improving the wellbeing or health of a tenant or household occupant this will be permitted. Supporting evidence or documents should be provided from a suitable health professional before permission will be given.
- That a tenant wishes to temporarily foster a pet although this will be in line with restrictions on pets in point 4.1 above.
- If an applicant has a pet and wishes to bring this pet to a restricted scheme. Permission would still not be granted for dogs to be brought to flatted properties. Any outdoor cats going to a no outdoor cat flatted property will be allowed but should not be replaced once it has passed away. This would be on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Housing Officer. Evidence may be required e.g. if the pets were required due to well-being of a household member.

4.3 Promotion of Responsible Pet Ownership

The Association is committed to promoting responsible pet ownership for the wellbeing of the animal and to ensure that anti-social behaviour from the animal does not affect people living in the local area.

Pet insurance is encouraged so that our tenants do not find themselves in financial difficulty should the need to pay a vet's bill arise.

Tenants who are pet owners must:

- Ensure that dogs are microchipped as per legislation from eight weeks old. Current legislation does not require cats to be microchipped but this should be encouraged for the animal's welfare. There are some charities which provide this for a lower cost depending on a tenant's income.
- Ensure that dogs are kept on leads in communal areas and should be exercised appropriately.
- Ensure that dogs wear a collar and ID with the owner's name and address. The following dogs are exempt from this; any dog registered with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and any working dog whilst in the process of carrying out its duties.
- Pick up any dog faeces. Failure to do so may result in a reporting to the local Dog Warden who can issue a fixed penalty notice.
- Ensure that dogs are not left for prolonged periods without being exercised or left to bark or make noise or cause damage.
- Not allow their pet to cause any noise or nuisance that would affect others or damage a property.
- Ensure that cats are not allowed to roam in communal flatted areas.
- Not jam or keep any communal door open to allow pets to gain access.

4.4 Issues with Pet Ownership

There will be occasions when the Association will have to take action against a tenant(s) regarding poor pet ownership. The Housing Officer will refer to the pet management procedure and may work with agencies such as Dog Warden, Environmental Health, Police Scotland and/or animal welfare organisations or charities.

If a tenant has failed to take adequate steps to address any issues that have occurred and continues to breach Section 2.5 or 2.6 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement, they will be asked to rehome the animal. In rare cases, the Association may have to enforce legal action against a tenant.

5. Monitoring & Review

Pet permissions will be monitored by reviewing the recording of any pet related anti-social behaviour on the QL system and by reviewing the pet management procedure.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.