

# Pets and animals policy

**Author:** Richard Flavin  
**Tel:** 01225 715740  
**Email:** r.flavin@selwoodhousing.com

**All policies are the responsibility of the leadership team to own, deliver, disseminate, monitor and review**

## Purpose

This policy sets out our approach to the keeping of pets and animals by our customers and members of their household in all of our properties, including general needs housing, sheltered properties, supported accommodation and care homes.

## Underpinning principles

The following legislation is of particular relevance to this policy.

- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Consumer Rights Act 2015
- Housing Act 1996
- Torts (Interference with Goods Act) 1977

We are contractually bound by any terms and conditions in our tenancy agreements relating to pets and animals.

We must comply with the Regulator of Social Housing Neighbourhood and Community Standard 2015 and the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard 2017.

## Policy detail

### Definition

For the purposes of clarification, the definition of a pet is normally considered to be a domestic animal such as a dog or cat which depends on a human for food.

### Benefits and obligations

We recognise the benefits that responsible pet and animal ownership can bring, such as enhancing the owner's mental and physical health and encouraging exercise. However, customers are expected to act responsibly in relation to their pets and animals, and this includes adhering to their legal and welfare obligations.

## **Responsibilities**

The owner of a pet or animal is legally responsible for their welfare under the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Customers are responsible for the welfare and behaviour of any pet or animal at their home, whether they belong to them, a member of their household, or someone visiting them.

## **Permission**

Pets will normally be allowed in all our properties with prior consent which will not be unreasonably withheld, except for flats where there are communal entrances, shared areas or communal facilities such as a lounge or laundry, and where any door from the property leads into a communal entrance or area.

Each case will be considered in accordance with the customer's tenancy agreement, any restrictive covenants (a legal promise that limits the use of a property), this policy, our pets and animals guidance and our lettings policy, although discretion will be exercised where there is an evidenced medical need.

Permission to keep an assistance dog should be granted where a customer requests it, and the dog has been provided by a recognised organisation which is a member of Assistance Dogs (UK) [a coalition of eight assistance dog charities]. This includes properties where permission to keep a dog would not normally be allowed.

Unless the tenancy agreement states otherwise and taking into account any restrictive covenants, permission will not be given for customers to keep livestock such as sheep, goats, pigs, horses, ducks and poultry.

## Refusing permission

Permission to keep a pet or animal may be refused if the customer or a member of their household has any convictions for, or past history of,

neglecting or mistreating a pet or animal. The criteria to be considered is set out in our pets and animals guidance document.

We will not allow customers to foster animals, as these cannot be classed as pets in the true sense due to the temporary nature of the care involved and is not considered to be an appropriate use of our properties.

The breeding and sale of animals at our properties is prohibited.

#### Withdrawing permission/rehoming

We may withdraw permission for a customer to keep a pet or animal, or ask them to rehome it, if this constitutes a breach of tenancy, any restrictive covenants, this policy or the pets and animals guidance.

#### **Breaches of tenancy**

The owner of the pet or animal must make sure that it does not cause a nuisance or annoyance or cause a deterioration in the condition of the property. Any breach of tenancy will be investigated and remedied if necessary through legal proceedings.

#### **Burial**

Customers are not permitted to bury a deceased pet or animal in their garden or in a communal area.

#### **Signpost**

- Animal Health Act 1981
- Animals Act 1971
- Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Control of Dogs Order 1992

- Consumer Rights Act 2015
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Dogs Act 1906
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- National Assistance Act 1948 – s48
- The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015
- The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
  
- RSPCA – Housing – A Guide To Good Practice 2013
  
- Anti-social behaviour policy
- Anti-social behaviour guidance
- Compliments and complaints policy
- Compliments and complaints procedure
- Eviction procedure
- Lettings policy
- Lettings procedure

**Policy Review Date** – 25 February 2023

