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# The Trust

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## Pet Policy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This policy sets out Peaks and Plains Housing Trusts (the Trusts) approach to encourage responsible pet ownership, and to ensure that pets do not become a nuisance.
- 1.2. This policy sets out The Trusts commitment to our customer's wellbeing, animal welfare and the local environment. The policy defines our approach to supporting and managing pet ownership.
- 1.3. This policy takes into account the recommendations made by the RSPCA to encourage housing providers to take positive steps to ensure responsible pet ownership in the properties they manage.

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy sets out the Trusts position in respect to allowing our customers to have a pet at their property.
- 2.2. This policy refers to anti-social behaviour and has been written in accordance with the Trust's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Hoarding of Animals (information contained in the Hoarding Policy).
- 2.3. This Policy explains how we approach a request for a pet and when a permission will be given or refused.
- 2.4. This Policy applies to social and affordable rent properties and any Home Ownership properties.

## 3. LEGAL & REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 Operating of this Policy considers the following legislation:
  - Housing Act 1988 (as amended)
  - The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (as amended in 1997)
  - The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
  - The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
  - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
  - Animal Welfare Act 2006
  - Data Protection Act 2018
  - The Equality Act 2010
  - Care Act 2014
  - Environmental Protection Act 1990
  - The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act
- 3.2 The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England sets out within the Tenancy Standard of the Consumer Standards, that Registered Providers shall:

‘Offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock’.

The Trust recognises the benefit of allowing tenants to have pets. This is balanced against restrictions within certain property types, where having pets would not be suitable and could have a negative impact on other tenants as well as Peaks and Plains housing stock.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

4.1. **Pet** - Any domesticated or tamed animal that is kept as a companion and cared for.

4.2. **Assistance Dog** - Specifically trained to assist an individual with a disability, e.g. guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs for the deaf, service dogs for the disabled, etc.

Dogs should be trained by a member of Assistance Dogs UK thereby having formal identification and endorsed by the Department of Health. These organisations have respected standards and accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) or International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF).

The following are members of Assistance Dogs UK:

- Canine Partners
- Dog A.I.D. (Assistance in Disability)
- Dogs for Good
- Guide Dogs (The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association)
- Hearing Dogs for Deaf People
- Medical Detection Dogs

4.3. **Emotional Support Animals** – Typically, dogs, that provide comfort and support to an individual who suffers from a mental or emotional condition such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety. They are not considered registered assistance dogs by the Department of Health and not entitled to claim the same public access rights that apply to assistance dogs.

4.4. **Therapy animals** – these animals have the responsibility to provide psychological or physiological therapy. They are not considered registered assistance dogs by the Department of Health and not entitled to claim the same public access rights that apply to assistance dogs.

4.5. **Dangerous Dogs** - a dog is deemed dangerous if it is showing threatening behaviour, out of control or being aggressive to people or animals. This is anywhere in England, regardless as to whether it is a public or private place (including a customer’s private garden). This includes banned breeds of dogs specified in the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. For more information on banned dogs, refer to the Government website: [Controlling your dog in public: Banned dogs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/dangerous-dogs)

4.6. **Nuisance** – to cause annoyance or inconvenience. Some examples that are deemed as nuisance are, but are not limited to:

- **Animals kept without permission**
- **Unpleasant pet odours**
- **Allowing dogs to roam freely in communal areas**
- **Noise caused by animals.**

4.7. **Fouling** – to knowingly, or unknowingly, fail to clear your pets waste from your property, garden, communal area or any other Peaks and Plains land.

## 5. OUR POLICY

### 5.1. PERMISSION FOR PETS AND OTHER ANIMALS

5.1.1. The Trust requires all customers to get our written permission before acquiring a pet or other animal. Customers must not keep a pet or animal that the Trust has not provided written consent for.

5.1.2. Requests for permission must be made in writing to the Trust's Neighbourhood Team or alternatively an application can be made through the Trust website. A written decision will be sent within 5 working days.

5.1.3. When giving our consent, the Trust will consider the type of pet, suitability of the accommodation for the pet, the number of pets at the property, and the local area.

5.1.4. When giving permission for customers to keep pets, we will ask customers to abide by certain terms and conditions depending on their accommodation and the type of pet. This is to ensure the welfare of the pet and to prevent pets from becoming a nuisance. Any specified terms and conditions, not already covered in the tenancy agreement, will be provided at the same time as the written permission response.

5.1.5. When deciding how many pets or animals can be kept at a property the Trust will consider whether the space or facilities allow for proper care to ensure the welfare of the pet or animal.

5.1.6. Pets include: dogs, cats, small caged birds, rodents, rabbits, fish, non-venomous insects and non-venomous reptiles.

### 5.2. SUITABLE TYPES OF PETS

5.2.1. When giving permission the Trust will take into account the following guidance and consider any exceptional circumstances;

| Type of accommodation                                                         | Pets usually permitted                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sheltered accommodation                                                       | House cats and fish                                                                                      |
| Properties with their own access                                              | A dog, a cat, small caged birds, rodents, rabbits, fish, non-venomous insects and non-venomous reptiles. |
| Properties with access via communal areas                                     | House cats, fish, non-venomous insects and non-venomous reptiles.                                        |
| Properties with suitable outside space where facilities exist for proper care | Small caged rodents, rabbits, a dog, a cat                                                               |

### 5.3. REASONS FOR REFUSAL

- 5.3.1. The Trust will not refuse permission without good reason.
- 5.3.2. Customers who live in high rise flats or sheltered accommodation will not be permitted to keep dogs, with the exception of assistance dogs. For assistance dogs, customers will be asked to provide confirmation in writing stating their dog has been trained by an ADI (Assistance Dogs International) or IGDF (International Guide Dog Federation) accredited organisation.
- 5.3.3. The Trust will not provide consent for customers to keep a dog or dogs or allow the dog(s) to visit their home where the dog(s) are classified as dangerous under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 now includes XL Bully breed dogs. The Act covers all dogs listed, in some instances owners may obtain a certificate of exemption. Where this is the case, tenants will be required to provide their certificate of exemption (for example an XL Bully).
- 5.3.4. The Trust will not provide consent for customers to keep any animal which is classified as dangerous under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 and its successors.
- 5.3.5. Animals we don't give permission for in any Trust property include livestock, wild animals, insects, or endangered species.
- 5.3.6. Customers must not keep or allow any pets or animals which through noise, number, behaviour or smell, frighten/intimidate or cause nuisance or annoyance to other persons in the local area.
- 5.3.7. The Trust will not provide permission for customers to keep any pets or animals where the space or facilities do not allow for proper care.
- 5.3.8. We retain the right to withdraw permission to keep a pet where the pet has caused nuisance, the lack of care and inadequate storing of food is attracting vermin, or we believe the owner to be showing signs of animal cruelty or neglect.

#### 5.4. OWNERS RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.4.1. Customers must ensure the welfare of their pets or other animals do not cause a nuisance.
- 5.4.2. Customers are responsible for any pet or animal that is visiting their home, even if that pet or animal belongs to someone else.
- 5.4.3. Under the Animal Welfare Act pet owners have a legal responsibility to ensure their pets welfare and to provide for their pets' needs. Including providing:
- somewhere suitable to live
  - a proper diet including fresh water
  - the ability to express normal behaviour
  - for any need to be housed with, or apart from, other animals
  - protection from, and treatment of, illness and injury
- 5.4.4. Pets or animals must not be kept in poor or insanitary conditions. Customers must make sure that their pets always have access to fresh water, and suitable nutrition.
- 5.4.5. Customers must make sure that their pet receives regular veterinary check ups, vaccinations and preventative treatment for parasites and prompt veterinary treatment for sickness or injury.
- 5.4.6. Customers must make sure that their cats and dogs can be identified, and use micro-chipping as a permanent identification where possible.
- 5.4.7. Any pets or animals must be kept under proper control and must not cause nuisance to any other person. Dogs must be kept on a lead in communal areas at all times. Cats must not be allowed to roam in internal enclosed communal areas.
- 5.4.8. Customers, their visitors or anyone living with them must clear up after their pets, and must not allow their pets to foul any gardens, communal or public areas. If we have to clear up after customer's pets, we will charge the customer our costs for doing this.
- 5.4.9. Customers are responsible for repairing any damage their pets or animals may cause to their home or communal areas including parasite infestations. The Trust may repair the damage and will recharge the customer our costs for doing this.
- 5.4.10. Customers must make proper arrangements for their pets or other animals to be cared for whilst on holiday, or away from the property.
- 5.4.11. Permission for breeding or selling animals will not be allowed in any Trust property. Animals must not be kept for the purposes of breeding or sale.
- 5.4.12. The hoarding of animals is not permitted. The RSPCA define animal hoarding as where an individual keeps a large number of animals but fails to provide adequate care and fails to recognise the suffering of the animals due to the lack of care.

- 5.4.13 Customers must also seek permission if they wish to install a pet flap. Permission to install a pet flap will not be granted if it compromises the fire safety or security of the door.

## 5.5. MANAGING PET ISSUES

- 5.5.1. The Trust expects pet owners to provide high quality animal care and supports responsible pet ownership.

- 5.5.2. Where we receive complaints about a customer's pet or other animal, we will investigate the complaint and work with the customer to resolve the issue.

The Trust will have controls to manage pets when staff visit, requests are made for pets to be located in an alternative room - the Trust has Risk assessments in place for these visits.

- 5.5.3. If we have reason to believe that any pets or other animals are being neglected, we will work with other agencies, such as the RSPCA and Local Authority, to assess whether they have been neglected. If evidence of neglect is found, we can serve a notice on the customer to remove some or all of the animals immediately and permanently, and recharge where appropriate. Failure to comply may be deemed a breach of tenancy and you could risk losing your home.

- 5.5.4. Where customers allow their pets to cause a nuisance or if we think the number of animals kept at a customer's home is unreasonable we will work with the customer to resolve the issue. Failure to comply with recommendations may be deemed as a breach of tenancy and you may be served a notice to remove any animal from your home immediately and permanently. If tenants keep pets without permission then they will be in breach of their tenancy agreement and the Trust will seek to enforce it.

## 5.6. APPEALS PROCESS

- 5.6.1. Any customer wishing to appeal against a decision of the Trust regarding the keeping of domestic pets or other animals may appeal in the first instance, in writing, to the Neighbourhood Manager. If the customer is not satisfied with the outcome they should then follow the procedure outlined in the Trust's Complaints Policy.

[Send us a complaint \(peaksplains.org\)](https://www.peaksplains.org)

## 6. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

- 6.1. We recognise the support that service assistance dogs can provide to those tenants with disabilities.

- 6.2. We are committed to fairness and equality for all regardless of their colour, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief. Our aim is to ensure that our policies and procedures do not create an unfair disadvantage for anyone, either directly or indirectly.

- 6.3. Written permission requests must be made for pets, a Neighbourhood Officer can help to support with this if required.

- 6.4. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of this policy, this has been reviewed by the Trust's EDI forum and also the Executive Management Team.

## **7. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 7.1. The Executive Management Team are responsible for approving this Policy.
- 7.2. The Head of Neighbourhoods is responsible for ensuring this policy complies with legislative requirements and responding to appeals against decisions.
- 7.3. The Neighbourhood Manager is responsible for ensuring day to day compliance of this policy and associated procedure.
- 7.4. The Neighbourhood Team are responsible for managing requests and updating tenants Housing Management file.
- 7.5. The Neighbourhood Team are responsible for monitoring and approving and refusing applications on pet permissions and investigating any complaints of nuisance and taking any action for breach of tenancy.

## **8. MONITOR AND REPORTING**

- 8.1. The Neighbourhood Team will be responsible for the day to day monitoring and management of pet permissions that come into the Trust
- 8.2. Permission requests and permission outcome letters will be saved on the housing management system. Any appeals and appeal outcome responses will also be saved.

## **9. CONSULTATION**

- 9.1. Customers have been consulted on this policy.
- 9.2. All managers have been consulted on this policy.
- 9.3. This policy has been consulted on by the Health and Wellbeing Group.

## **10. REVIEW**

- 10.1. This Policy will be reviewed every three years (from the date it is approved) by the Executive Management Team (EMT) or as required by the introduction of new legislation or regulation.

## **11. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

- Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Policy
- Hoarding Policy
- Complaint Policy
- Tenancy Agreement

- EDI Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Personal safety at work Policy
- Allocations Policy

## POLICY INFORMATION

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Policy Name:      | Pet Policy                          |
| Status:           | Draft                               |
| Approved by:      | Executive Management Team           |
| Drafted By:       | Sue Morcillo, Neighbourhood Manager |
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