

PET POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. English Rural recognises the benefit people experience from their pets and acknowledges that the majority of pet owners look after their pets in a responsible way. Pets can offer companionship, comfort and improve people's health and well being.

1.2. The Association understands that the properties we own and manage are situated in rural communities and residents may work with and keep pets as part of the rural way of life. We generally do not have any objections to residents keeping pets within their home, so long as a reasonable approach is taken to pet ownership and pets do not cause a nuisance to others or damage to property.

1.3. This Pet Policy aims to give clear guidelines about the Association's requirements for keeping pets for all residents, to encourage responsible pet ownership and to ensure animal welfare is promoted.

2. APPLYING FOR PERMISSION TO KEEP A PET

2.1. In all circumstances residents are required to obtain written permission from the Association before going ahead and keeping a pet; this applies to each individual pet.

2.2. You can do this by completing a "Pet Permission Form" which can be downloaded from our website or you can contact us by ringing 0207 820 7930 or speak to your Regional Housing Manager.

2.3 The Association will exercise discretion when granting permission and may take other circumstances into account when making its decision. We will look at how many other pets are in the household, the mix of pets, the size of the house and garden, whether the garden requires fencing or whether there has been a history of complaints. For example, the Association will not usually permit residents living in flats to keep dogs or cats where they do not have a door opening directly into their garden.

3. ASSISTANCE AND SERVICE ANIMALS

3.1. Some residents may require a specially trained animal to help assist them to live independently such as a Seeing or Hearing dog. The Association recognises the role of assistance animals and does not withhold permission to residents who have trained assistance animals. We would like to be made aware by residents in writing using the pet permission form if they have an assistance animal.

4. BANNED ANIMALS

4.1. There are some animals which the law states households are not permitted to keep because they are either banned or keeping them is against the law. These animals may be banned as they are seen as a risk to others or are a protected species and includes both domesticated and wild animals, native or non native to the UK.

4.2. For banned animals and some other animals, for example reptiles, insects or birds you are required by law to have a licence to allow you to keep them. If you are unsure or require detailed information about keeping these animals as pets please contact your local RSPCA,

the vet or refer to the links listed at the end of the policy. Banned animals which are kept under licence must be insured by law.

4.3. Where it is suspected that a banned animal is being kept by a resident the Association will make a referral to the police and RSPCA for further investigation.

5. ANIMAL WELFARE

5.1. Pet owners are responsible for their pets by law. The Association promotes responsible pet ownership and recognises that the majority of residents take care of their pets. Where there are welfare concerns or complaints we will contact the pet owner to discuss the matter and aim to reach an agreement to improve or rectify the situation. This may also include a referral to the Animal Warden at your Local Authority, the RSPCA or other animal welfare organisations. In extreme cases of neglect it may be necessary to recommend or enforce the rehoming of pets.

5.2. The Association expects vaccination of pets to be implemented in line with welfare requirements and recommendations. If in doubt seek advice from your vet or refer to the links at the end of the policy.

5.3. Pet insurance offers a safeguard to pet owners in the event of the unforeseen costs of accident or injury to their pets or to others.

6. PET IDENTIFICATION

6.1. The Association requires pet owners to ensure that their pets can be identified as part of responsible pet ownership. For example there is legislation in place requiring all dogs to wear a collar and tag with the owners name and address on it. Residents must ensure that they comply with all relevant legislation as regards the identification of pets.

6.2 The Association also requires that all dogs and cats are Micro Chipped to ensure they can be identified. We recommend that all other pets are micro chipped where possible. Residents are required to keep the micro chipping record/s for their pets up to date when they move.

7. SPAYING AND NEUTERING

7.1. Pet owners are strongly recommended to spay or neuter their pets including dogs and cats. The RSPCA and other charities offer financial assistance with neutering.

8. NUISANCE AND ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

8.1. If your pet causes nuisance to your neighbours or behaves in a way which may cause harm or injury this will be treated seriously by the Association.

8.2. The Association will investigate all reports of Nuisance and Anti Social Behaviour and take action to prevent it. The types of behaviour likely to cause nuisance occur when animals are left unattended, are allowed to roam or stray, when they make excessive noise, create fouling problems or if they are neglected or abandoned and in extreme cases where animals are used to intimidate, cause menace or threaten people or other animals.

8.3. The Association will work with residents to resolve reported incidents and in line with our Anti Social Behaviour Policy use mediation, work with agencies such as the RSPCA, animal welfare agencies, environmental control departments at the local authority including the Animal Warden, or the police to resolve incidents of anti social behaviour.

8.4. Where there is serious recurring or persistent problems that remain unsettled which breach the terms of your tenancy agreement or the terms of your lease the Association will revoke permission for pets and, if necessary, take legal action to resolve the situation with the cost being borne by the resident.

8.5. The Association strongly recommends at least the basic level of training as a requirement for pets to ensure proper control of animals and to minimise the risk of nuisance and anti social behaviour.