

Date Issued	20 August 2026
Last Reviewed	n/a
Department	Housing Management
Title	Domestic Pets
Objective:	To provide a clear framework that allows tenants to keep pets responsibly while protecting the interests of neighbours, communities, the Association and its housing stock.
Responsible	Director of Housing & Customer Services
Next Review	August 2031

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out the Association's approach to domestic pet ownership within our homes. We recognise that pets can play an important role in supporting tenants' well-being, mental health and quality of life. At the same time, we have a responsibility to ensure that pet ownership does not adversely affect neighbours, communities or the condition of our housing stock. This policy aims to strike a fair and proportionate balance between these interests.
- 1.2 Our Tenancy Agreement states that tenants have the right to keep domestic pets provided they recognise their responsibilities and obligations set out in the Agreement, including not allowing their pet to cause a nuisance.
- 1.3 We do not normally limit the number of pets a tenant can have but there are some circumstances when permission must be sought, or restrictions are in place (see Sections 6.0 & 7.0).
- 1.4 We will ask prospective tenants about any pets they may have before they are allocated a new home to assess any potential for disturbance, nuisance or distress that a pet may cause neighbours, and to assess the size and type of accommodation where the pet is to be kept. We will also ask whether the pet will be kept for breeding purposes.
- 1.5 We will tell the prospective tenant if permission may be required or where restrictions are in place (see Sections 8.0 & 9.0) and will ensure we respond to any requests for permission by the prospective tenant prior to signing of the Tenancy Agreement. We will also highlight the relevant clauses relating to pets within the Agreement before the prospective tenant signs the document.

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- 1.6 We do not normally allow dogs in flats within a communal stair with the exception of Assistance Dogs (see Section 9.0). When we advertise flats to which this restriction applies, we will clearly state this in the advert to ensure that applicants are aware of the restriction, and reiterate this when contacting the prospective tenant. Visitors cannot bring dogs into common stairs where the dog ban applies unless they need an Assistance Dog.
- 1.7 New and existing tenants owning an XL Bully breed must have applied for a Certificate of Exemption from the Scottish Government to keep an XL Bully and a copy of the exemption must be provided to the Association. Tenants owning an XL Bully must not breed or breed from an XL Bully, sell, give away, rehome, abandon or leave an XL Bully to stray.
- 1.8 In some new developments the Deed of Conditions (a legal document that sets out a structure to make sure that the development is maintained in the future for the benefit of all residents) may restrict the number and type of pets allowed. The rules in a Deed of Conditions take precedent over the clauses in the Tenancy Agreement.

2.0 Policy Aims

- 2.1 The aims of this policy are to:
- Support responsible pet ownership
 - Promote safe, well-managed neighbourhoods
 - Protect the condition of our homes and communal areas
 - Ensure fairness, consistency, and transparency in decision making
 - Meet legal and regulatory obligations, including equality duties
 - Contribute to tenancy sustainment and positive tenant-landlord relationships

3.0 Scope of Policy

- 3.1 This policy applies to:
- All tenants of the Association
 - Members of tenant's households
 - Visitors to a tenant's home
 - Any person temporarily residing in an Association property

4.0 Legal and Regulatory Framework

4.1 We will comply with all relevant legislation and regulations including the following:

- Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001, 2010 & 2025
- Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006
- Control of Dogs Order 1992
- Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003
- The Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010
- The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- The Equality Act 2010 (including reasonable adjustments)
- The Microchipping of Dogs (Scotland) Regulations 2016
- The Dangerous Dogs (Designated Types) (Scotland) Order 2024

4.2 We will also comply with the Scottish Housing Regulator's Social Housing Charter Indicators which support the requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, and in particular, the following outcomes:

Equalities	Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that: Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services
Communication	Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions, and the services provided
Estate management, anti-social behaviour, neighbour nuisance and tenancy disputes	Tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe
Tenancy Sustainment	That tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations

5.0 Related Policies & documents

5.1 This policy complies with the following:

- Tenancy Agreement
- Neighbour Nuisance & Anti-Social behaviour Policy
- Chargeable Repairs Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Estate Management Procedures

6.0 Equal Opportunities

6.1 We will not discriminate unreasonably in the operation of this policy on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

6.2 We aim to promote equal opportunities and comply with our duties under the Equality Act 2010, and make reasonable adjustment where required.

7.0 Definition of a Domestic Pet

7.1 The term domestic pet covers the following types of animal:

- Dog
- Cat
- Fish
- Bird (caged)
- Rodent (e.g. hamster, gerbil, rat or mouse)
- Small non-venomous reptile (e.g. terrapin, tortoise)
- Non-venomous insect or amphibian (e.g. newt)
- Rabbit

8.0 When to Seek Permission

8.1 Tenants / prospective tenants must request permission in writing in the following circumstances:

- To keep an Assistance Dog in a flat within a communal stair
- To keep an XL Bully Breed
- If a tenant wants to erect large structures in their garden, for example, a dog run, kennel, aviary or pigeon loft (they can do this by completing an Alteration & Improvement form in their My Home account or by contacting our Head Office to request a paper form, we will consider such requests in relation to garden size and possible neighbour nuisance, and may discuss such proposals with adjacent neighbours prior to consent being given)
- If a tenant wants to keep a large fish tank in flatted accommodation, we will take into consideration the size and weight of the fish tank when full of water when granting permission

8.2 We will acknowledge requests for permission on receipt and will respond with our decision within 28 days. We will not unreasonably refuse permission to keep a pet but if we do refuse, we will explain the reasons for doing so.

9.0 Restriction on Pets

9.1 Tenants are not allowed to keep a dog which is prohibited by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 or any other legislation or regulation. The current list includes:

- Pit Bull terrier
- Dogo Argentino
- Fila Brasileiro
- Japanese Tosa

Tenants owning an XL Bully breed must have applied for a Certificate of Exemption from the Scottish Government to keep an XL Bully and a copy of the exemption must be provided to the Association. Tenants owning an XL Bully must not breed or breed from an XL Bully, sell, give away, rehome, abandon or leave an XL Bully to stray.

9.2 We do not normally allow dogs in flats within a communal stair or in a flat with no private garden, with the exception of Assistance dogs, provided by a recognised agency (such as Guide Dogs for the Blind, Support Dogs or Dogs for the Disabled). However, the Housing Manager may grant permission in exceptional circumstances, for example, where a dog provides recognised emotional support. We will ask for supporting documentation such as a GP's letter in these cases. Alternatively, a transfer to an appropriate property may be offered.

9.3 We will not allow tenants to keep:

- Livestock or farm animals, for example sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, horses, chickens, ducks etc.
- Pets on a balcony
- A pet if we receive advice that the environment is not suitable for it
- A pet if we consider them to be unfit to look after the welfare of a pet and fulfil their responsibility for keeping it under control, unless the tenant can evidence that alternative arrangements will be put in place, and we are of the opinion that the pet would not be at risk of suffering

10.0 Removal of a Pet and Pet Nuisance Complaints

10.1 We may request that a pet be removed from a tenants home where:

- Appropriate permission in line with Section 8.0 has not been sought or it has been refused
- Any conditions applied to the written consent have not been adhered to
- The pet falls into one of the restricted categories set out at Section 9.0
- The pet has caused nuisance, distress or annoyance to any neighbour within the locality of the property or has caused damage or destruction to any part of property owned or leased by the Association

10.2 We will handle pet nuisance complaints under our Neighbour Nuisance and Antisocial Behaviour Policy. If we receive a complaint about unacceptable behaviour of a pet, for example, persistent noise, aggressive or uncontrolled animals, repeated fouling in communal areas or ongoing damage to property or the estate, we will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the complaint and aim to respond within ten working days
- Investigate complaints fairly and proportionately
- Engage with the tenant to seek early resolution
- Offer advice or support where appropriate

10.3 If a tenant breaches this policy, we will take a staged and proportionate approach to dealing with pet nuisance which may include:

- Informal advice and written warnings
- Agreeing actions or condition to address issues

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- Formal tenancy action if issues persist

10.4 We will only take action to remove a pet as a last resort, when all other options available to resolve the issue have failed and the issues are serious and persistent.

11.0 Appeals Process

11.1 All tenants have the right to appeal against a decision made by the Association in connection with their tenancy. Tenants can appeal if permission to keep a pet has been refused. The appeal should be made in writing within 14 days of the refusal.

11.2 Tenants requiring support to make an appeal can contact the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (at www.siaa.org.uk or by calling them on 0131 510 9410) who can provide you with information and support to find an appropriate advocate.

12.0 Tenant Responsibilities

12.1 Tenants will be held responsible for the behaviour of any pets owned by or living with them, or visiting their home. We expect tenants to take all reasonable steps to ensure their pets are properly cared for and not neglected.

12.2 Tenants must supervise and keep such pets under control and ensure that they are not aggressive towards neighbours, staff, contractors, consultants or our Board members. They must ensure that they do not cause nuisance to neighbours or deterioration to the condition of the property, common parts or the vicinity of the house. This includes fouling, noise or smell from the animal. We may charge a tenant for any costs incurred as a result of damage or cleaning up any mess left by a pet.

12.3 Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times when outside the property and dog faeces must be cleaned up immediately. All dogs must be microchipped and have a collar displaying their owners name and address. Tenants must also ensure pets are vaccinated and regularly treated for fleas and worms (if necessary) and not left unattended on balconies or in communal areas.

12.4 New tenants will be required to sign a formal agreement confirming they are aware of and will abide by these conditions.

12.5 Tenants owning an XL Bully breed must ensure that they do not have the dog in public without a lead and muzzle.

13.0 Monitoring and Review of Policy

13.1 The application of this policy will be monitored through the submission of regular reports to the Performance Panel.

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- 13.2 The Director of Housing & Customer Services will ensure that this policy is reviewed every five years, or sooner if required due to legislative or regulatory changes. Minor changes will be approved by the Senior Management Team, but any material amendments required will be presented to the ELHA Board for approval.