



Haig Housing Pets: Our Policy

Haig Housing recognises that pet ownership can have a positive effect upon the health and general well-being of individuals. For example, a pet may be a valued companion for an elderly person living alone. However the majority of the Trust's properties are in urban areas and pets can cause problems if they are not properly cared for or if they are in an unsuitable property. Examples include a dog kept in a house or flat with no private garden, or several dogs kept in a small garden or yard.

Tenants must have written permission from the Trust to keep a pet. Tenants are always responsible for their pets and for those owned by visitors to their home and estate.

Legislation

Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 / Dangerous Dogs Act (Amendment) 1997 makes it an offence to:

- Allow any dog to be dangerously out of control (ie may injure a person) in a public place
- Keep a *Pitbull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino* or *Fila Brasileiro* without a Certificate of Exemption. In public, these breeds must be muzzled, on a lead and in the charge of someone who is at least 16 years old. These dogs must also have current insurance cover and compulsory 3rd party liability insurance cover.

Environmental Protection Act 1990 – under this Act:

- Annoyance to neighbours from pets may amount to a *statutory nuisance*. Problems should be reported to the Environmental Health Department
- Local Authorities are responsible for rounding up and detaining stray dogs in public places.

This leaflet is a summary of Haig Housing's Pets Policy – a full copy of the policy is available from Haig Housing – please see over for details

PERMISSION TO KEEP A PET

Permission must be sought from the Trust to keep ANY animal. Permission will usually only be given to keep:

- A small number of cats, small caged/ tanked animals, birds or fish
- One dog only in a house or flat / maisonette with a private garden and its own separate entrance

Exceptions:

- Permission will not be given to keep endangered species, wild animals livestock or dangerous animals
- Permission will always be given for a guide dog for the blind or a hearing dog for the deaf to be kept in a Trust property

CONDITIONS FOR KEEPING A PET

- Animals must be properly cared for and kept under control
- Animals must not cause a nuisance to other residents
- Animals must not be allowed to foul in public or communal areas
- Animals must not damage the Trust's property
- Dogs must be kept on a lead in communal areas and must not enter children's play areas
- All waste, e.g. excrement, litter, bedding etc, must be properly disposed of
- Fencing to gardens must prevent a dog from escaping and must be in place before a dog is introduced to the property. Installation of such fencing is at the tenant's expense

HOW TO APPLY FOR PERMISSION TO KEEP A PET

Complete the Trust's Application Form requesting to keep a pet. The Trust will take the following into account in the decision to give permission

- ***Breed and size of dog and suitability of property*** – for example, a large dog in a small house or flat with no garden would not normally be allowed
- ***History of nuisance*** – if there have been previous complaints about the animal or previously owned animals causing a nuisance, permission is likely to be refused

NB: Permission is given for a specific animal not for any animal of that type or any other animal

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PETS

Pets can cause problems on estates and between neighbours. The main problems concern:

- Pets being kept without permission (this is in breach of the Tenancy Agreement)
- Pets causing a nuisance eg, barking incessantly
- Owners not taking responsibility for their pets, ie not clearing up and hygienically disposing of excrement
- Dogs showing aggression

The Trust will investigate and, if proven, the pet may have to be re-homed