

Chapter 12: Pets

We recognise the importance of pets to many people, and we appreciate that most pet owners are responsible people who look after their pet and consider their neighbours and neighbourhood.

Keeping pets

You can keep a pet in your home but you must make sure you keep it under control. This is because pets can sometimes cause problems such as barking and making a mess, which can annoy your neighbours.

As a tenant, you are responsible for the behaviour of people visiting your home. You must make sure that their pets do not cause a nuisance to your neighbours or neighbourhood.

If you live in a flat or maisonette and do not have your own garden (a shared garden does not count), you must not keep more than one dog or cat (not both). You may only keep another dog or cat if you owned the pet before

1 April 1996 and had a council tenancy at the time. Conditions may vary for tenants in sheltered accommodation so please see your tenancy agreement for more information.

You are allowed to keep the following pets without permission.

- One cat or one dog
- Any small caged animal or bird normally kept as a pet, for example a hamster or budgie
- Fish

There are certain dangerous wild animals that you may not be able to own, such as poisonous snakes. There is a full list at www.defra.gov.uk, or phone the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 08459 33 55 77 for more information.

Dogs

When walking your dog on the estate, you must keep it on a lead. Do not let your dog enter fenced play areas.

If your dog's barking causes a nuisance, we may serve a notice on you to stop the noise. We may also fine you if your dog doesn't stop.

Letting your dog foul pavements or verges of estate roads or any other shared areas and not clearing it away is very inconsiderate. Street enforcement officers may issue you with a warning, prosecute persistent offenders or issue fixed penalty notice fines.

You must keep to the conditions of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. Certain types of dogs are not allowed to be kept under the act. This includes breeds of dogs such as the Japanese Tosa, Fila Brasileiro, Dogo Argentino and the Pit Bull Terrier.

You must make sure your dog can be permanently identified so that it can be traced if it is lost.

Housing staff and visitors to your home

Strangers coming to your home can often disturb animals. To reduce stress to the animal and show consideration for your visitors, including our staff, it may be appropriate to keep pets in another room while the visit takes place.

Anyone staying in or visiting your home who has a pet must keep it under control and not allow it to cause a nuisance or annoyance to anyone.

Reporting problems with animals

Tenants who allow their pets to disturb or annoy neighbours could be guilty of antisocial behaviour.

- To report problems such as persistent loud barking, fouling of footpaths or animals out of control, please contact the council's antisocial behaviour line on **0845 671 1177**.
- To report stray dogs in the area, please contact the council's animal welfare and control team on **020 8489 5546**.

Chapter 7 gives more information on our policy on nuisance and antisocial behaviour, and explains how we will deal with your complaint.

Questions about keeping pets

If you would like more information or you would like to discuss your own circumstances, you can phone the call centre or visit any Customer Services Centre or your tenancy management officer.

For general information on animal welfare, contact the council's animal welfare and control team on.