

Title:	Pets Policy and Procedure
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1. Introduction

This policy outlines WPH's approach to pets and is supported by the following tenancy management procedures:

- ASB policy and procedures

2. Aims of this Policy

2.2 The aim of this policy is to:

- Ensure that its implementation does not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, disability or age
- Promote animal welfare
- Minimise nuisance caused by pets
- Address residents' concerns about dangerous dogs and nuisance caused by dogs
- Improve the safety and environmental condition of housing estates

3. Legislation and relevant WPH Policies and Procedures

3.1 Regulatory and legal considerations include:

- The Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- The Dangerous Dogs (Designated Types) (England and Wales) Order 2023

- Guidelines on Pet Management for Social Housing Providers – Pet Advisory Committee
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Control of Dogs Order 1992
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Dogs Act 1871

3.2 In addition, there are other WPH policies and obligations that influence this policy, they include:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Unacceptable Behaviour Policy
- Tenancy Sustainment Policy
- Evictions Policy

4. Pets

4.1 Women's Pioneer Housing recognises that pet ownership offers significant benefits to owners and want to minimise the circumstances in which a resident's tenure or property type prevents them from enjoying the benefits of owning a pet.

4.2 Residents of Women's Pioneer Housing have an agreement within the form of a licence or tenancy which sets out the permission requirements and if pets are allowed the process that they must follow to obtain consent from Women's Pioneer as the landlord.

4.3 All residents under the terms of their agreement are required to seek formal written consent from Women's Pioneer Housing to keep animals in their home. It is necessary to obtain written consent for each pet. If a pet passes away, consent must be obtained for any new pet, even if it is a like for like replacement. Women's Pioneer Housing aim to get back to all requests within 14 days. The application form for permission can be found on our website.

4.4 We do not normally object to a tenant keeping a up to two pets if they do not require access to a garden, unless the pet is likely to cause nuisance through noise or some other cause or the pet's welfare cannot be assured. Under the terms of their agreement permission is not required for small birds, fish or small mammals which are housed in cages, bowls or tanks within the home. This includes:

- Fish (subject to the tank being less than 150 litres)
- Hamsters
- Gerbils
- Small birds
- Rabbits (in your own private garden or indoors)
- Guinea pigs (in your own private garden or indoors)

4.5 Prior permission is required for a dog, except if the dog is a guide dog or an

assistance dog. We will give permission to keep a dog only if the tenant has direct access to and exclusive use of a garden. Requests to keep a therapy or emotional support dog need to be supported by evidence from a medical professional and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4.6 If a resident has been given permission for multiple pets, where the number of pets is causing a nuisance or annoyance or health and safety concerns, we may request the number is reduced.

4.7 Women's Pioneer will not allow permission for any of the following animals to reside in residents' homes:

- Any dog/cat that is not microchipped as per current legislation
- Any breed of dog banned under the 1991 Dangerous Dogs Act
- An animal that would require a licence under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Birds of prey
- Cattle, horses, livestock

Women's Pioneer Housing will only allow permission for XL bully dogs where the following can be provided:

- Evidence that the resident had this dog before the ban came into place.
- An exemption certificate for the dog as per legal guidance.
- If these cannot be provided, permission will not be granted.

Women's Pioneer will not grant permission to any resident to keep a pet who is subject to the following in the last 3 years:

- If there is a history of animal neglect or cruelty
- If there is a history of nuisance, annoyance or disturbance as a result of pet ownership

4.8 Women's Pioneer will not allow any resident to keep a pet whilst they are subject to a time limited, or lifetime ban on keeping an animal further to prosecution by the RSPCA. Where permission to keep a pet is granted residents must ensure they are responsible in their pet ownership and will be issued with terms under which the permission is granted, including:

- That animals do not foul in communal areas
- Gardens are kept clean, and fouling is cleared up and disposed of hygienically
- Animals do not roam or stray in public spaces
- Animals are tethered in communal areas
- Animals do not cause a noise or odour nuisance
- That their homes are kept free from animal mess, fleas and vermin
- Animals are kept under control and do not interfere with activities of Women's Pioneer Housing staff or its contractors.
- Animals do not cause annoyance, nuisance or disturbance to neighbours
- Animals do not cause damage to their property
- Animals are not maltreated or neglected

- 4.9 Reports of nuisance or annoyance will be dealt with in line with Women's Pioneer Housing Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and procedure.
- 4.10 Where complaints are received around pet ownership Women's Pioneer will work with residents to help them resolve the issues between themselves. Where a resolution cannot be reached, and Women's Pioneer does not feel that the pet owner is engaging in the process permission may be withdrawn to keep a pet.
- 4.11 Where permission is withdrawn residents will be notified in writing and a reasonable timeframe agreed to allow for rehoming. Where this is not adhered to legal action may be taken.
- 4.12 Women's Pioneer may report incidents to the police or RSPCA.
- 4.13 Residents are responsible for the behaviour of any visiting pets to their home
- 4.14 Residents will be required to apply for retrospective permission where we become aware of unauthorised ownership.
- 4.15 If a tenant wishes to appeal a decision in relation to pet permission, they must send their appeal in writing to the DoO within 14 days of a decision. The DoO will consider the appeal and respond within 14 days of the appeal being received
5. Equality, diversity and inclusion
- 5.1 The Equality Act of 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against anyone on grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity. Women's Pioneer supports its principles and is committed to the values of equality of opportunity and non-discrimination. This policy does not adversely impact any of these groups.