

1. Purpose and scope

Papworth Trust believes that everyone has the right to the lawful enjoyment of their home. The Trust recognises that the companionship of pets can offer significant benefits to their owners. However, irresponsible ownership can cause nuisance and affect the quality of life for other tenants and residents in a neighbourhood and will not be tolerated.

This policy outlines Papworth Trust's approach to responsible pet ownership and should be read in conjunction with any tenancy agreement and the anti-social behaviour policy.

The policy has considered the document 'Guidelines on Pet Management for Social Housing Providers' published by the Pet Advisory Committee and endorsed by the British Veterinary Association, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Chartered Institute of Housing.

2. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide a consistent and enforceable approach to pet ownership
- Recognise that pet ownership can be an important aspect to tenants' lives
- Strike a balance between that ensures pet ownership does not infringe on the rights of others to the peaceful and lawful enjoyment of their home and neighbourhood
- Provide tenants with guidance on pet ownership, how to apply and how permission can be removed
- Provide tenants with information on what type of animals are acceptable as pets and in what type of accommodation
- Provide tenants with information on what behaviour is deemed acceptable and not acceptable

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy a Pet is defined as 'any domesticated or tamed animal that is kept as a companion and cared for responsibly'

4. Application and Guidance

Tenants must apply for permission to keep any pet and Papworth Trust will not unreasonably withhold consent. Tenants wishing to own a pet must apply to the Trust for permission as part of the conditions of their tenancy.

Permission will only be considered where a Pet Application form has been completed. A Pet Application form must be completed for each new pet. ('New pet' means an addition to the number of cages, hutches, tanks, free roaming animals etc. It does not for example mean you have to request permission for each new fish in a tank or birds in a cage.) The Trust will deal with requests to keep a pet as fairly as possible bearing in mind any restrictions which may exist on any estate or the type of accommodation.

Permission may be granted based on the following circumstances:

Small animals

Tenants may be given permission to keep small animals which are housed in cages, bowls or tanks inside the home and do not need to be allowed outside of the property, for example small birds, fish, hamsters or mice etc. If the tenant has their own private garden, permission may be given for them to keep small pets in hutches such as rabbits or guinea pigs.

Cats

Permission to keep a cat may only be granted to tenants housed in non-shared ground floor properties so that the cat may be let outside on a regular basis.

Exotic Pets

An application for exotic pets will be refused if:

- The pet requires a licence and the tenant does not hold one
- The pet would pose a safety risk to the household or neighbours should it escape.

Dogs

Permission to keep a dog will not be given if the tenant enters their property through a communal entrance and/or if they do not have their own private garden. For permission to be given the tenant must have a sole entrance door and exclusive use of a garden (for the avoidance of doubt; an area of patio or similar outside a flat in an otherwise shared garden is not considered exclusive use).

The exception to this is where the animal is a guide or assistance dog, however tenants will still be required to request permission and will need to provide evidence that the animal fulfils one of these definitions. Where sufficient evidence is provided, permission will not be unreasonably withheld.

Permission will not be given in any circumstances to keep any dog listed as dangerous as defined by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. This includes the Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino and Fila Brasileiro.

Property Type

The Trust will not grant permission for dogs, cats, exotic pets or small animals requiring hutches, when a tenant resides in supported living or other shared accommodation.

The Trust will also consider the size of the property and garden alongside the type and size of the animal when considering whether to grant permission. This is particularly important when considering an application to keep a dog.

Number of Pets

If a number of other pets already exist in the property, permission will not be given where it is deemed a new pet may affect their welfare. Health, safety and hygiene will all be considered. Too many pets in a property will also cause a nuisance to neighbours and/or damage to the property.

New Tenants

Tenants moving into Papworth Trust accommodation who already have pets will be required to apply for permission in the same way as existing tenants. Consideration will be given to this before the property is offered at the Housing Officers discretion.

Leases

Where the Trust does not possess the freehold of a property and is subject to a land or head lease, and there are provisions that preclude or restrict the ownership of pets, permission will not be granted.

5. Identification

All dogs and cats must be permanently identified by microchip or tattoo and the identification details must be registered. This identification number will be required as part of the Pet Application. To comply with current legislation, dogs and cats must also wear a collar and tag.

6. Welfare

Where permission is granted, tenants are responsible for the health and welfare of their pets. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, this is called a duty of care. This requires proper day-to-day management and care of the pet. If tenants have any questions about the care of their pets they should contact their vet or a suitable accredited animal welfare organisation.

Routine healthcare must include regular control of parasites (fleas and worms), vaccinations and neutering where appropriate. Owners of cats must ensure they are spayed or neutered. When applying to keep a pet, tenants may be asked to provide the name of their vet and evidence from them that their pet is regularly or appropriately treated.

No pet should be left in the property when the tenant is away unless clear arrangements have been made to provide adequate care. In general, this

will require the pet to be boarded elsewhere, but close supervision by a nominated individual may be adequate in some cases.

7. Prohibited Activity

Under no circumstances will permission be given to breed or offer any animal for sale from a Papworth Trust property.

Dogs must not be allowed to defecate in internal or external communal areas, including grassed areas of a neighbourhood. If a dog does defecate in a communal area, faeces must always be removed immediately.

Dogs must always be kept on a lead when in public or communal areas. They must never be let out on their own – this includes communal balconies and stairwells. If cats are allowed free access outside, then steps must be taken to ensure they do not cause an unreasonable nuisance to neighbours.

Tenants have a duty to look after their pets responsibly and must not allow them to cause a nuisance to their neighbours, any member of their own household, Papworth Trust staff or contractors or any other member of the public. Tenants will also be held responsible for the behaviour of any pets bought into their homes or neighbourhoods by their visitors.

If a pet is found to be causing a nuisance or annoyance, the Trust will manage any complaints in line Antisocial Behaviour policy. The following are examples of incidents that will be recorded and managed as antisocial behaviour:

- Excessive and persistent barking or any other loud noise causing a disturbance.
- Dogs or any other animals being used to intimidate people.
- Pets causing damage to Papworth Trust property.
- Uncontrolled behaviour of dogs whilst Trust staff are in the property.
- Any other behaviour considered to be causing a nuisance or annoyance.

Papworth Trust will consider taking the following action against tenants allowing their pets to cause a nuisance:

- Issuing the tenant with a verbal and written warning.
- Requesting that the tenant has the pet re-housed within 14 days of notification.
- Reporting an incident to the Police.
- Commencing legal proceedings to obtain an injunction order.
- Commencing legal proceedings to obtain a possession order as a last resort.

8. Legislation

Listed below are the key regulations and Acts that have been considered as part of this policy:

- Housing Act 1985 and 1988
- Control of Dogs Order 1992
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1989 and 1991
- Dogs Act 1871
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Metropolitan Police Act 1839 and Town Police Clauses Act 1847
- Offences Against the Person Act 1861

9. Document control

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10. Version tracker

Version number	Date	Comments/Reason for issue
1.0	10.03.2019	New policy