

YOUR GUIDE TO Keeping a Pet



Our Neighbourhood Service
Warrington Housing Association

Your Guide to: Keeping a Pet

We know that pets provide companionship, comfort and love, and offer a way of making contact with others. Fit, healthy and well cared for pets can improve owners' health and benefits like these are not restricted to those who own dogs who might walk several miles a day.

Many people see pets as being part of their family and WHA are committed to supporting tenants to own and safely keep a domestic pet within their home.

Our Pet Policy

WHA have a 'pet friendly' policy. This means that we recognise the value and benefit of allowing tenants to own a pet and care for it in their own home.



What do I do if I want to keep a pet?

If you live in a property where you have your own front door and this door does not lead onto a communal area, you can bring a domestic pet into your home to live with you. You can do this without asking for our prior permission.

It is important to note in all cases, your pet must not cause a nuisance to your neighbours and must not foul or cause unpleasant odours in communal areas at any time.

If you already live in a property or are about to move into a property where your front door opens onto a communal area and you want to bring your existing pet to the property to live with you, you must let WHA know about this immediately to seek prior permission.

If you already live in one of our retirement schemes your scheme manager is on hand to advise and support you on this matter, they will be able to guide you through the process.

We will need to know some basic details about the pet, such as type, breed and size. This will help us both to work out if the property/building is suitable for your pet. It is important we do this as we have to respect other residents living



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Your scheme manager will discuss your needs, the suitability of your scheme and property for a pet and ensure that the long term welfare of any pet is at the forefront of the decision to permit a pet to live in your home and within the scheme.

We will always confirm our permission and any agreed conditions of our approval in writing. Your lease or tenancy agreement requires you to seek this consent before bringing your pet to the property in all cases.

Please note we do not allow pets that are listed under current legislation as 'prohibited'.

Ensuring your pet's wellbeing

Please see advisable points to consider when thinking about bringing a pet into your home:

- **Size of accommodation** – It is particularly important that the accommodation is big enough for you, any other household members residing in your home and the pet and that the pet can move around easily and freely within the property.

- **A pet's ability to exhibit 'expected' behaviour** – Your pet should be able to carry out 'expected' behaviour, for example if you have a dog that requires a lot of exercise, WHA will need to be assured that the property and you are able to provide this with ease on at least a daily basis.
- **Protected from pain, suffering and injury** – your pet should be kept in an environment where it is safe and cannot easily injure itself or others.

Measures we expect to be taken when looking after a pet

As a responsible pet owner we would expect the following in all cases:

- **Registering at a vets** – it is advisable that your pet is registered at a local veterinary practice. There are charities such as the PDSA (see further information section) that can provide financial assistance with vets' bills for people who are eligible.

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- Pet identification – dogs, and ideally cats, should easily be identified by wearing a collar or

micro-chipping. Identification can ensure your pet does not become lost and can also allow a veterinary practice to identify your pet should it stray.

- Insurance – although insurance is not mandatory we do suggest that your pet is insured. Insurance is not just for vet's bills it can also be for public liability should your pet cause damage or an accident/injury to someone else.
- Alternative arrangements – if you go on holiday or into hospital you should make alternative accommodation arrangements for your pet. If you live in a retirement scheme, the scheme manager can help you by recording these details should you in an emergency situation not be able to take care of your pet.

Remember your local vets will always be able to advise you if you have any questions about your pet's welfare.

Living in harmony with your neighbours

Not all tenants choose to be near or want to keep a pet and it is important to respect their views. Here are a few

ground rules which should form the basis of good relations with everyone.

- Communal areas – Your pet should not at any time be allowed to roam unsupervised within any communal part of the scheme where you live. Dogs should always be kept on a lead while walking through the internal communal areas and should also be kept under control and on their lead while exercising in the external communal areas of the property.
- Fouling – All pet owners have a responsibility to prevent their animals from fouling in any area of our schemes. If your pet does foul or cause an unpleasant odour, then it should be cleaned up immediately.
- Excessive noise – Repeated noise nuisance can be very disturbing to neighbours. Although we



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- Recognise it can difficult to manage a barking dog you should do everything to try minimise this. Your vet or local dog training group should be able be able to provide advice and guidance.
- Preventing smells and pests - Animals should not smell if they are correctly looked after. Some pets are susceptible to fleas, ticks and worms. To stop this please make sure your pet receives the correct preventative treatments. Your vet or local pet shop will be able to advise you.
- Cat flaps- we do not give permission for cat flaps to be fitted.

If your pet becomes a nuisance we will advise you wherever possible to get the correct help. If you do not adhere to the ground rules set this may be seen as a breach of our pets' policy and of your tenancy agreement or lease. This may result in us asking you to make long term alternative arrangements to house and care for your pet.

Further information

The following organisations provide help and advice to pet owners:

PDSA - provide free veterinary services for eligible people.

Enquiries: 0800 917 2502

Eligibility: 0800 731 2502

www.pdsa.org.uk

RSPCA

Tel: 0300 1234 555

Fax: 0303 123 0284

www.rspca.org.uk

Pet Bereavement Support Services

The Blue Cross

Tel: 0800 0966606

Email: pbssmail@bluecross.org.uk

www.bluecross.org.uk

Cinnamon Trust – provide fostering services or long term care for animals that belong to older people.

Tel: 01736 757900

Email: admin@cinnamon.org.uk

www.cinnamon.org.uk



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