



Pet Policy

1.0 Purpose and scope

This policy sets out our approach to dealing with pets. The policy recognises both the positive effects pet ownership can have on the general health and well-being of individuals, but also the challenges pets can present if not managed appropriately.

This policy applies to all residents who live in properties owned or managed by Notting Hill Genesis.

This policy should be read in conjunction with [Anti-Social Behaviour Policy](#) and [Complaints Policy](#).

2.0 Definitions

Animal hoarding- keeping large numbers of animals without having the ability to properly care for them.

Assistance animals - an animal, usually domesticated, that lives with a disabled person and is trained to perform tasks. Those are a guide or service dogs, or they may be animals trained strictly to perform a job.

Emotional Support Pet (ESP)- pets that are required for a person's ongoing mental health treatment by a licensed therapist, psychologist, doctor (GP) or any licensed mental health professional. This could be a part of the person's ongoing treatment programme, that it is designed to bring comfort and minimise the negative symptoms of the person's emotional or psychological disability.

Pet - any domesticated or tamed animal that is kept as a companion and cared for responsibly.

Pet nuisance - this includes, but is not limited to:

- Roaming animals
- Fouling in communal areas and gardens and not cleaning after the dog
- Uncontrolled behaviour, such as barking or aggressive behaviour
- Lack of care and attention causing foul odours.

Roaming- a dog that is wandering off its property and unattended.

3.0 Permission to keep pets

We allow residents to keep pets in line with the conditions set out in their tenancy or lease agreement. Residents must have written permission from us to keep a pet on either a permanent or temporary basis.

All requests will be considered in line with this policy and existing pets will be considered when deciding whether to grant permission for subsequent pets.

Requests from residents living in homes owned and managed by NHG are considered and responded to within 28 days of the request being received. We may extend the response time if consent is needed for the superior landlord or their agent. This will be subject to a response or information being received from the superior landlord or their agent within this timeframe.

All reasonable requests will be granted permission provided:

- The property is suitable for the pet. When assessing suitability, we will consider the size and layout of the property, access to a garden or communal ground (if appropriate), access to the property (whether it is shared or not), type and size of a pet
- The lease agreement does not prohibit the resident from keeping a pet.

When making a decision to allow a resident to keep a pet, we will also consider medical and / or health benefits of keeping a pet. For example, residents might require an Emotional Support Pet. That need will have to be supported by a medical professional.

We will always grant permission to keep assistance animals.

3.1 Permitted Pets

Cats, dogs, small-caged animals, caged birds, fish, and reptiles in tanks may be kept in line with the terms of the tenancy agreement or lease agreement and if the associated equipment needed is of a reasonable size.

Where a resident chooses to keep a pet, whether on permanent or temporary basis, they must fulfil the following conditions:

- Ensure that the needs of the animal(s) are met. Animals' needs as defined by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 include the need for suitable environment, suitable diet, ability for the pet to exhibit normal behaviour patterns, any need to be housed with or apart from other animals and its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease
- Residents should take steps to ensure their pets are identifiable
- Animals must not be left unattended for a period of time which could result in inability to meet the animals' welfare needs. [See external guidance.](#)
- All animals must be kept in proper care and control and must not cause a nuisance to other residents/neighbours
- Animals must not be allowed to foul in communal areas inside the building. In all cases any fouling must be cleared up immediately by the pet's owner
- Animals must not damage any NHG property, both indoors and outdoors. We may charge the resident to repair any damage caused
- Dogs must be kept on a lead in communal areas and under control and must not enter children's play areas
- Pet owners must consider registering their pet with a local veterinary practice and taking out a pet insurance to help meet the costs, should their pet need

medical attention. Low-cost vet care options are available through animal charities for pet owners on low incomes.

In instances, where a resident is looking after a pet for a friend or a family member, all the above requirements must apply. They also apply if you have friends of family visiting your home with their pet.

4.0 Exclusions

The following activities are not permitted:

- Keeping livestock, wild animals, insects, or endangered species
- Keeping of any animals listed under the schedule to the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 such as large mammals, carnivores, larger or venomous reptiles, dangerous spiders, and scorpions
- Running a business such as breeding animals, or operating boarding kennels from a property
- Keeping dogs listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (i.e., Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, or Fila Brasileiro) - with the exception to dogs registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs.

Any breaches of the above conditions will result in legal action against the resident unless the dog has been exempted from the prohibition and the terms of the exemption are fully complied with, including being registered on the Index of Exempted dogs.

5.0 Complaints about pets

Complaints about pets fall into two categories:

- Complaints about pets being kept where they are not permitted
- Complaints about nuisance being caused by the pet.

Both complaints constitute a breach of tenancy.

5.1 Complaints about pets being kept where they are not permitted

On receiving a complaint about a pet kept without permission, or where we know that that's the case, we will investigate and consider providing retrospective consent.

If we do not provide consent, we will ask the customer to re-home the pet within 14 days.

We provide advice on rehoming through referrals to relevant organisations such as the RSPCA and Dogs' Trust, as well as other local animal shelters and charities.

If the resident fails to re-home the pet, we may take legal action to resolve the issue.

5.2 Complaints about nuisance being caused by the pet

Where a complaint is made about a pet causing a nuisance (such as not cleaning up after a dog), we investigate the complaint in line with our Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

Where we know that a resident has a pet that is not being looked after properly and is causing a nuisance, we will provide them signpost to external resources on how to look after a pet.

In the majority of cases, we aim to resolve the situation informally and by agreement. Where this is not possible, we will consider a range of options for resolving the problem including:

- Withdrawing permission to keep the animal
- Restricting the number of animals
- Liaising with the local authority's Environmental Health department and/or Dog Warden
- Making responsible pet ownership part of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract. This may stipulate that the owner must investigate any behavioural concerns (such as excessive barking) with a registered vet
- Serving an injunction to oblige the owner to start or stop taking certain actions, or to remove the animal
- Terminating the tenancy and taking possession proceedings where tenancy conditions are breached.

All instances of animal cruelty will be reported to the RSPCA.

Any complaint received regarding a suspected banned breed of dog under the Dangerous Dogs Act will be reported to the local Safer Neighbourhoods Team, who can arrange for the dog to be identified.

Where the nuisance has caused threat or injury to a member of staff, the staff member records the incident using the internal incident reporting procedure.

6.0 Home visits

Residents must keep their pet under control inside the property while any member of NHG staff or its contractors are at the property. Residents may also be asked to put any pets in a different room for the duration of the visit.

Where a resident's pet(s) attacks a staff member or a contractor, we will withdraw consent, report to the police and/or take any of the actions highlighted in the 'Complaints about nuisance being caused by the pet' section above.

7.0 Pets and tenure type

We recognise the benefits that pets can bring to a household. However, in some instances we may consider environmental factors, before we come to a decision to grant permission to keep a pet.

7.1 Care and Support

We will always consider a resident's request to keep a pet. Our decision on whether to grant permission to keep a pet will be in line with this policy and in accordance with the tenancy agreement.

In addition to the accommodation being suitable to keep a pet, as part of the support planning discussion, the resident must be able to demonstrate that appropriate arrangements are in place to care for the pet should they become ill or hospitalised.

As we are unable to look after pets, in those instances, we provide information and signpost residents to external organisations, to allow for suitable arrangements to take place.

7.2 Leaseholders and Shared Ownership

Depending on the terms of the lease, leaseholders might need to request our consent to keep a pet in the property. As individual leases may contain clauses on owning a pet, where there is discretion under the terms of the lease, we will not unreasonably withhold consent.

Where the lease allows pets or is silent, consent is not required.

8.0 Other considerations

8.1 Animal hoarding

Where customers are found to be hoarding animals, we will involve all relevant agencies such as Social Services and the RSPCA as appropriate.

8.2 Cat flaps

Residents must request permission to install a cat flap. Permission to install a cat flap will not be granted if it compromises the fire safety or security of the door.

8.3 Identification

By law, dogs must wear a collar with their owner's name and address on it when in a public place and be microchipped and their details registered on an authorised database.

Cats should also wear a collar so they can be identified. It is also a good practice to microchip cats. Residents should take steps to ensure their pets are identifiable.

8.4 Vaccination

All pets where applicable must be vaccinated and regularly treated for fleas and worms. Residents may be required to provide evidence of this from their veterinary practitioner.

9.0 Our approach

In writing this policy we have carried out an assessment to ensure that we are considering equality, diversity and inclusion. If you'd like a copy of the assessment, please email your request to policy@nhg.org.uk

10.0 Reference

Legislation, regulation, and external links.

- **Animal Welfare Act 2006:** The welfare of all animals is protected by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which makes it an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any animal. The Act also contains a duty of care to animals - anyone responsible for an animal must take reasonable steps to make sure the animal's welfare needs are met.
- **Anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014:** A constable or an officer of a local authority authorised by it can exercise the powers conferred by this subsection and may seize any dog in a place in England or Wales which is not a public place, if the dog appears to the constable or officer to be dangerously out of control.
- **Care Act 2014**
- **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005:** The Act provides local authorities with more effective powers to tackle poor environmental quality and anti-social behaviour. In particular the Act includes sections on nuisance and noise and dogs.
- **Dangerous Dogs Act 1991**
- **Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976**
- **Environmental Protection Act 1990:** The Act refers to incidents involving noise, fouling and smells. Contacting the local authority Dog Warden Service, who have responsibility to ensure animal health and welfare.
- **Equality Act 2010:** The Equality Act 2010 prohibits service providers, from discriminating against those who need an assistance dog with them.
- **The Control of Dogs Order 1992:** The order states that every dog while in a highway or in a place of public resort shall wear a collar with the name and address of the owner inscribed on the collar or on a plate or badge attached to it.
- **The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015:** The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 required that from 6 April 2016, every dog that is older than eight weeks must be microchipped, and their details recorded on an approved UK database. If you buy or rehome a dog, or if you change your address, you must also update your details on the database.

Useful links:

- [Battersea Dogs & Cats Home](#)
- [Pet Friendly Properties | Battersea Dogs & Cats Home](#)
- [Dogs Rehoming & Dog Rescue Charity | Dogs Trust](#)
- [Dog School | Dogs Trust](#)
- [Dog School Virtual Training Classes | Dogs Trust](#)
- [Our Happy Dog Happy Home workshops | Dogs Trust](#)
- [How to help your dog get used to spending time alone | Dogs Trust](#)

- [The Largest Animal Welfare Charity in the UK | RSPCA](#)
- [Blue Cross | Pets change lives. We change theirs.](#)
- [Home – The Cinnamon Trust](#)
- [Animal Welfare Charity in London Helping Dogs and Cats \(themayhew.org\)](#)

Document control

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Version Control

Date	Amendment	Version
31 July 2019	New Notting Hill Genesis policy.	V1.0
01 September 2021	Amended to include a timeframe for which residents will receive a response to a request.	V1.1
06 March 2023	Policy review considered the following key changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated legislative position on Dangerous Dogs Act, • Provide information and signpost residents to affordable, low-cost vet and external resources, • Clarify on flexible approach, to allow all residents across all tenures to make a request to keep a pet 	V2.0