

## Homes & Neighbourhoods

### **PET POLICY**

**Kirklees Council operates a Pet Policy that provides conditions to pet ownership in Council-owned social housing.**

**Author:** Head of Housing Management

**Publish Date:** 22 June 2020

**Review Date:** May 2025

**Regulatory Standard:**

**Approving body:** KC Cabinet

Amended March 2024 to incorporate Ban on XL Bully Ban. Approved by Portfolio Holder 19 March 2024

## Table of Contents

PET POLICY .....	1
1 INTRODUCTION .....	3
2 POLICY STATEMENT .....	3
3 POLICY SCOPE – PERMISSIONS .....	3
5 NUISANCE .....	6
6 ADVICE AND INFORMATION .....	7
7 MONITORING AND REVIEW .....	7

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

1.1 Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing (KNH) and Pinnacle Group acknowledge that pet ownership can bring a great deal of pleasure, enjoyment and companionship to tenants and improve their wellbeing and quality of life. Generally, KNH and Pinnacle will allow its tenants to keep pets where the property type is suitable, the Tenancy Agreement is complied with and the animal's welfare is assured.

1.2 This policy has been developed following consultation with tenants and incorporates good practice outlined by the RSPCA and Pets Advisory Committee Guidance.

## 2 POLICY STATEMENT

2.1 This policy sets out the Kirklees Council (KC) approach to the keeping of pets to ensure that tenants are aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to their tenancy, their pets welfare and neighbouring communities. It also provides guidance to officers when dealing with pet related enquires.

2.2 There are many laws concerning the keeping of animals which we expect our tenants to abide by. The most common are outlined below:

- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Animal Health and Welfare Act 2006
- Dangerous Wild Animal Act 1976

2.3 This policy also links to and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- KC Tenancy Agreement
- Anti- Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure
- KNH Good Practice Guidance on responsible Pet Keeping

## 3 POLICY SCOPE – PERMISSIONS

3.1 Permission will be required to keep cats or dogs in Council accommodation as outlined in the table below:

House Type	Number of Cats and Dogs
House	Maximum 2 cats or dogs in total
Bungalow	Maximum 2 cats or dogs in total
Low rise flats up to 2 storeys with own access	Maximum 2 cats or dogs in total
KNH low rise with communal access	Maximum 1 cat or dog in total
6 Storey and above accommodation	KNH managed properties. Maximum 1 cat – no dogs allowed
KNH Retirement Living Schemes	1 dog or cat where the wellbeing of the tenant is identified
Pinnacle Group Extra Care Housing	Assistance pets only
Pinnacle Group low rise accommodation with communal access	Assistance pets only

## Tenants transferring to alternative accommodation

3.2 Permission will be required to continue to keep pets if a tenant moves to an alternative KNH or Pinnacle managed property.

## Tenants with pets prior to the implementation of the Policy

3.3 Where a tenant has a pet prior to the implementation date of this policy an application for retrospective approval will be required in all cases and will only be granted in the following circumstances:

- The animal is being kept in accordance with this policy
- The property is suitable for keeping the existing animal as outlined in the policy. If the tenant has pets over the policy limits prior to implementation, when the pet subsequently dies permission will not be granted to replace the pet
- Existing pets are not causing a nuisance, annoyance or frightening anyone within the property, communal area or to others in the locality of the property

3.4 **All permissions granted is conditional on tenants making sure that their pets do not:**

- Stray, roam or foul internal or external public areas
- Injure, annoy, frighten or cause nuisance to anyone
- Breed additional animals in the property

**Permission for keeping a pet will not be granted in the following circumstances:**

3.5 For any pet type to which Section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 or Dangerous Wild Animals act 1975 applies including dogs placed on the Index of Exempt Dogs as follows:

- **Pit Bull Terrier**
- **Dogo Argentino**
- **Fila Brasileiro**
- **Japanese Tosa**
- **XL Bully unless the dog has a valid Certificate of Exemption**

3.6 If it is found that a tenant has an exempt dog the matter will be reported to the Police immediately who will be able take the dog away and keep it even if it is not acting dangerously and there has not been a complaint.

**3.6 Permission will also not be granted for:**

- Any non - domestic animals, such as but not limited to wild animals, primates, livestock, poultry, horses, sheep, goats or pigs, as these are not animals suitable to keep in a domestic property or garden
- Keeping dogs in accommodation of 3 storeys or above
- To keep any animal after it has caused a nuisance or annoyed, frightened or attacked anyone unless they have permission in writing from the Council or their representatives
- Where a tenant or another member of the household has previously had tenancy enforcement action taken against them or have been convicted in relation to their previous ownership of any animal or have previously left a pet behind at the end of a tenancy

**4 EXEMPTIONS NOT REQUIRING PERMISSION**

**Small Animals**

4.1 Tenants will not need permission to keep up to two small pets such as birds, hamsters, rabbits, guinea pigs and non-venomous reptiles, dependent on the suitability of the property. However, if more than two animals are to be homed, permission will be required.

**Assistance pets**

4.2 If a tenant requires a pet for assistance, service or support i.e. a registered guide dog or hearing dog these may be kept regardless of the type of property, but must be obtained from a recognised agency, with evidence of this provided on request.

#### **4.3 All Pet Owners Must:**

- Where it is not clear whether their pet is or is not permitted by the policy, seek permission from KNH or Pinnacle
- Make arrangements for their animal's care when not in the property
- Always take full responsibility for their own pets
- Ensure litter trays are frequently cleaned to avoid damage to the home and the home is free from all animal faeces and obnoxious odour
- Ensure that dogs are kept on a lead outside the home including within internal and external communal areas
- Ensure their pets are kept under control at all times inside the home when visitors, contractor's postal workers and KC/KNH/Pinnacle officers are in attendance
- Ensure their pets do not foul or urinate in the internal communal areas or foul in the external areas and to clean up if they do. If fouling or urine is not cleaned up pet owners may be charged for any clean up required and repeated action will be classed as a nuisance under the terms of this policy
- Cats and dogs must be microchipped for identification purposes and evidence of microchipping must be provided upon request
- Cats must be neutered
- Take responsibility for any visitor pets in accordance with the expectations of this policy

## **5 NUISANCE**

5.1 Tenants must make sure that no animal that is kept or brought into the home causes any nuisance, annoys or frightens anyone, this includes any visitor's pets. The tenants will also be responsible for visitor's pets in and around their home.

5.2 Any tenant keeping a pet is fully responsible for any nuisance the pet may cause. Nuisance will be treated as anti-social behaviour and the appropriate action to remedy the behaviour will be taken promptly by KNH or Pinnacle.

5.3 Tenants must take and pay for all reasonable steps that KNH or Pinnacle considers necessary to prevent any animal in the home from causing harm, nuisance and annoying or frightening anyone, including fitting fencing (with landlord permission).

5.4 Tenancy enforcement action will be taken in all cases of breaches to the policy and tenancy agreement where tenants allow animals to cause a nuisance, this includes and is not limited to causing injuries to others, noise nuisance, smells, fouling, damaging property and dogs off lead in communal areas.

## **6 ADVICE AND INFORMATION**

6.1 General advice and information will be provided to tenants on request or where a tenant needs support to care for a pet or where a pet is causing a nuisance by referring them to local specialists in animal welfare for example the RSPCA, local PDSA.

## **7 MONITORING AND REVIEW**

7.1 This policy will be formally reviewed in 2025 or earlier if subject to legislative change.