

Pet Policy

Adopted by the following group entities:

Name	Date Approved
Change Housing	01.04.2026
Hilldale Housing Association	01.04.2026
Quays Housing	01.04.2026

Purpose and Objectives

This policy outlines the group's approach to responsible pet ownership. This policy has been written in accordance with the principles of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and guidance produced by the RSPCA, 'Housing - Good Practice Guidance'.

Where appropriate, Hilldale is in support of allowing tenants to keep pets provided they are well looked after and do not adversely affect the lives of neighbours and those living in the vicinity. Hilldale recognises that having a pet can contribute to positive and improved mental health.

In some cases, the design and layout of a scheme or service may not make allowances for permission to be given, however, the Pet Policy is designed to ensure that we provide a clear and consistent approach in the administration and process of pet permission applications. Where applications are rejected, a detailed response will be given to outline the reasons why and the factors considered in reaching the decision.

While Quays Housing generally does not permit pets on its premises, in cases where this policy forms part of a joint agreement, contract, or commissioning arrangement, Quays Housing will adhere to the terms outlined, provided that the presence of pets is explicitly identified and agreed upon in the relevant contract and in line with this policy objectives.

We will also revert to the terms and conditions of the individual tenancy agreement should this policy be breached.

This policy covers:

- Application and permission
- Wellbeing and Welfare
- Management and Implementation of Policy

We do not intend to proactively target households who already have pets or revoke historical permissions unless we become aware of any management issues concerning this. Tenants who wish to look after an animal on a temporary basis (such as an emergency situation for family) should contact their Housing Officer/Support Worker to advise of the circumstances and agree to a set timescale. Frequent visiting animals will be treated as per the same terms of this policy.

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 For the purpose of this policy a pet is defined as any domesticated or tamed animal that is kept as a companion and cared for responsibly.
- 1.2 We will consider all requests from customers requesting permission to keep a pet in their home. Alongside cats and dogs, permission is also required for small birds, rabbits, gerbils etc., mammals which are housed in cages.
- 1.3 Each application will be treated fairly, consistently and on a case-by-case basis. This will involve a dynamic risk assessment, and the following criteria will be taken into consideration. All decisions and any factors which are taken into consideration should be clearly documented:
- Terms as outlined in the tenancy agreement
 - Type of property (house, bungalow or flat)
 - Design and layout of the scheme (shared communal facilities, shared entrance etc.)
 - Size of property
 - Size of the outdoor space
 - Whether the property has a communal or individual garden
 - The location of the property
 - Where the property is situated within a high-rise block
 - The nature and type of animal/pet kept
 - Maximum number of permitted pets
- 1.4 **Permission will not be granted for the following:**
- Any large animals (unsuitable to be kept indoors)
 - Any banned breeds including those classified under the dangerous dogs Act 1991.
 - Any animals that are a danger due to being poisonous or venomous
 - Any wild animals
 - Any animal classed as livestock
 - Any animals that have to be kept outdoors (including caged birds, pigeons or similar)
 - Where there is a high likelihood of animals creating a statutory nuisance e.g., through noise
 - The number of pets allowed within any one property, will be limited dependant on the factors outlined in 1.3.

2. Wellbeing and Welfare

- 2.1 Where we grant permission, tenants are responsible for the health and welfare of their pets. Under the animal Welfare Act 2006, this is called a duty of care.
- 2.2 Animal welfare requires suitable day-to-day management and care of pets. Tenants should not leave their pets in the property whilst they are away from the property for a prolonged period unless suitable arrangements have been made with a responsible person to provide adequate care.

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- 2.3 If it is suspected that a tenant has abandoned a property leaving a pet behind, the RSPCA will be informed immediately. If any member of staff or contractor has concerns regarding how a pet is treated, they will report this to RSPCA.
- 2.4 We recommend that dogs should be permanently identified by a microchip and the identification details registered in line with legislation. It is now compulsory for all cats to be microchipped and contact details to be stored and kept up to date in a pet microchipping database.

3. Management and Implementation of the Policy

- 3.1 All steps must be taken to ensure dogs do not defecate in any internal or external communal areas, including any grassed areas of the community. If a dog does defecate in a communal area this must be removed immediately and the area cleaned.
- 3.2 Dogs must always be kept on a lead when in any public or communal areas including communal balconies and stairwells. They must never be let out on their own, or without being supervised by a responsible adult.
- 3.3 Where visits/repairs are carried out in homes and where pets are present, staff and our contractors have the right to request the pets are kept away for the duration of the visit. Where this is not the case, staff and contractors can leave the property without completion of the repair or visit. This may result in a recharge.
- 3.4 Tenants must ensure they look after their pets responsibly and must not allow them to cause a nuisance to any neighbours or members of the public. Tenants will also be held responsible for the behaviour of any pets brought into their home or Neighbourhood by their visitors.
- 3.5 If a pet is found to be causing a nuisance or annoyance, we will manage this in line with the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. Some examples are:
- Excessive persistent barking or any other loud noise causing a disturbance
 - Failing to keep pets under control, or away in another room when Hilldale staff or its contractors are present at the property
 - Dogs or any other animals being used to intimidate people
 - Pets causing damage to a Hilldale property
 - Any other behaviour considered to be causing a nuisance or annoyance
- 3.6 If a pet is considered to be causing a nuisance or annoyance, we may consider the following actions. Actions will be proportionate and in-line with the severity of the incident(s) and the evidence provided:
- Issue a verbal or handwritten warning
 - Outline expectations regarding the control and welfare of pets within an Acceptable Behaviour Contract
 - Withdraw permission and require the pet to be rehomed within 14 days of notification
 - Report an incident to the Police and/or the RSPCA
 - Take legal action to obtain an injunction
 - As a last resort take legal action to obtain a possession order.

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4. **Existing Pet Owners**

We recognise there are customers who have existing pets prior to the implementation of this policy and as such Hilldale will allow these pets to remain on a discretionary basis subject to ongoing compliance with tenancy conditions and this policy provided:

- There are or are/have been no concerns as to welfare of the animal
- No complaints have been received about the pet
- Provided the property and outside space is suitable for the type of pet
- No damage to any property has been caused as a result of the keeping of the pet.

5. **Process**

- 5.1 As set out within the tenancy agreement, tenants will be required to seek permission in writing before taking ownership of any pet. We will process these permission requests as soon as reasonably possible bearing in mind any problems or restrictions that may exist (as noted above). Permission will only be confirmed as granted once the Pet Contract in [Appendix 1](#) has been signed and returned to the Housing Officer/Support Worker.
- 5.2 In some cases, we may be made aware of a customer's pet(s) at the point of referral, prior to the commencement of a tenancy. Where this occurs, the suitability of the pet(s) will be considered as part of the overall referral assessment, in accordance with this policy and the requirements set out within it.
- 5.3 All requests must be submitted to the Housing Officer or support team. These should include details of the address, pet(s), its name and veterinary details. Any new tenants (or a representative) should add this detail to the application form at the application stage.
- 5.4 Permission will not be unreasonably withheld and will be based on the property standards and consultation where applicable. All applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis with the Housing Officer/support team being responsible for any discretionary decisions made in line with their management of the wider estate/scheme.
- 5.5 Consideration must also be given where there may be shared spaces, to ensure that any existing tenants have no pre-disclosed allergies, or issues that need to be considered prior to approval. If this is the case, a separate risk assessment may be required.
- 5.6 All documentation linked to requests must be saved within SharePoint and/or the Housing Management System. Where the tenant is unhappy with the decision provided, they may seek a review of the decision made with the Housing Services Manager, or an independent manager who has not been involved in the decision if felt necessary.
- 5.7 We are aware that in most instances, dealing with animal related problems is best tackled in partnership. Where appropriate, we will work with the Local Authority, Police, RSPCA or any other organisation that may provide the most beneficial resolution.
- 5.8 If a tenant fails to act responsibly, we will attempt to resolve the issue amicably. Should these steps fail, enforcement action will be taken. This could include professional mediation; contacting a statutory authority e.g. RSPCA for assistance; serving an injunction; restricting the number of pets at the property; withdrawing pet permission and seeking possession of the property.

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6. Responsibility

6.1 The following outlines the roles and responsibilities associated with this policy.

Job Title	Responsibility
Head of Operations/Operations Manager	It is the responsibility of the Head of Operations to implement this policy.
Housing Services Manager/Housing Officers/Scheme Managers	The Housing Services Manager and the Housing Officers have the responsibility for delivering this Policy. The Housing Officers also have the responsibility of processing new housing applications and the pet permission requests received in line with this policy. Consideration must also be given where there may be shared spaces, to ensure that any existing tenants have no pre-disclosed allergies, or issues that need to be considered prior to approval. If this is the case, a separate risk assessment may be required. Housing Officers will refer to the Housing Services Manager or Head of Operations where discretionary decisions are required. Discretion will be applied and if applicable, consultation will be carried out by the Housing Officer.
Tenant Engagement Manager	This policy's effectiveness will be measured using the performance indicator of customer feedback and complaints.
All Colleagues	All staff members entering into homes have a responsibility to follow the policy at all times.

7. Performance Reporting

- 7.1 This policy will be effective from May 2024.
- 7.2 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or when required taking into account changes in regulation, legislation and good practice.
- 7.3 This policy will be overseen by the Housing Services Manager/Operations Manager/support teams who will work with Housing Officers to monitor the effectiveness of this policy. The housing team/support team are responsible for the administration and application of the Pet Policy. Any issues arising from the ownership of pets will be investigated accordingly and where applicable with the support of the Community Safety Officers.
- 7.4 This policy's effectiveness will be measured using the performance indicator of customer feedback and complaints.

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8. Equality and Diversity

- 8.1 We will be mindful of the Equality Act 2010 in all its actions and will consider all the protected characteristics of the Act which are: Race, Sex, Gender Reassignment, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Religion or Belief, Age, Marriage/Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity explicitly. Further to the protected characteristics, we will be mindful of socio-economic disadvantages, and will do everything in its power to minimise this and other forms of disadvantage.
- 8.2 When applying this policy, we will seek to make appropriate adjustments throughout the process to meet an applicant's needs.

9. Data Protection

- 9.1 Under the General Data Protection Regulations and the Data Protection Act 2018, organisations are required to process personal information 'lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner.' Hilldale and Quays Housing are committed to respecting the privacy of our tenants and we will protect their personal data.
- 9.2 In certain circumstances, we may be required to share personal data with other statutory agencies. Where practical, consent from the Data Subject will be obtained prior to the information being shared, however there may be instances where we have a statutory duty to share information without the individuals consent e.g. if there is any reason to suspect children are at risk, if the individual does not have capacity or if an individual is in immediate risk of abuse or for the prevention and detection of crime. An assessment will be made in each case to decide which information is necessary to be shared, referring to the Data Protection Officer for further guidance as required.
- 9.3 Tenants also have the right to know what Information we hold about them. The group have a separate Data Protection Policy which should be adhered to when considering data protection.

10. References

- 10.1 Legislation, regulations, code of practice, guidance etc:
- Housing Act 1988 (As amended)
 - The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (As amended in 1997)
 - Animal Welfare Act 2006
 - The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
 - The Anti-Social Behaviour Policing Act 2014
 - Anti-Social Behaviour Policy and Procedure
 - Allocations Policy and Procedure
 - Tenant Handbook

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11. Document Change History

Version	Date	Change	Owner
1	26/09/23	V1	James Place
2	28/10/24	V2 – Hilldale Specific	Andrew Oates
	22.12.25	V3 - Amended version of document previously written by AO, Head of Housing which was not approved by PAG. Now includes Quays and factors in complaints learning.	Anne-Marie Holyoak

Appendix 1

Pet Contract

Hilldale Housing Association has given permission for:

Name(s):

to keep the pet(s) listed below at

Address:

Pet Details

Name: Type: Breed: Marks / Colourings:

Vaccinations (yes/no): Neutered / Sprayed (yes/no):

Name: Type: Breed: Marks / Colourings:

Vaccinations (yes/no): Neutered / Sprayed (yes/no):

Veterinary Practice Details

Name: Address: Tel:

Nominated Emergency Person Details

Name: Address: Tel:

In signing this agreement, I/we are agreeing that the Pet Policy has been provided, and I/we agree to the following conditions:

1. Tenants must provide contact details of their veterinary practice and a nominated person who will care for their pets in case of an emergency.
2. Tenants are responsible for the health and welfare of their pets. In accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Animal Health & Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, all tenants have a duty of care to provide their pets with a suitable place to live, a suitable diet, proper exercise and adequate health care.

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3. If Hilldale believes that a pet kept in the property has been neglected or abandoned, we will report the case to the local police and appropriate animal welfare organisation.
4. Tenants must not leave their pets in the property when they are away unless clear arrangements have been made for their care. Pets should be boarded elsewhere but close supervision by a neighbour may be acceptable for some animals.
5. Tenants must ensure that their dogs will not cause damage to the property or noise nuisance if they are left unsupervised.
6. All pets must be vaccinated and regularly treated for fleas and worms (if appropriate).
7. Tenants may be recharged to cover the cost of professionally cleaning the property once they have moved out.
8. Tenants must ensure that their pets do not cause a nuisance to neighbours or visitors. This includes dog fouling, excessive noise and damage to other people's property. Dogs must be kept under control and on a lead in all communal areas and walkways.
9. Pets must not be allowed to foul in the property, except for caged pets and pets trained to use a litter tray. The only exception to this rule would be in the event of illness of a pet, in this event, any faeces must be removed immediately. Any pet faeces must be removed immediately from the garden or outside areas and disposed of safely and hygienically.
10. Tenants are responsible for keeping all areas of the property clean and free from parasites, such as fleas. We reserve the right to recharge for any pest control treatment necessary to be carried out on your property.
11. Dogs must by law, wear a collar with their owner's name and address on it when in a public place. Cats should also wear a 'snap apart' collar to enable them to be identified. Both dogs and cats should be microchipped.
12. Dogs listed under the Dangerous Dog Act 1991 and any animal listed in the schedule of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 may not be kept in this property.
13. Tenants may not intentionally breed or offer for sale any animal in this property.
14. Tenants who wish to obtain an additional or replacement pet after moving into the property must apply for permission in writing to Hilldale Housing Association in advance of acquiring the pet.

Print : _____ on behalf of Hilldale

Signed : _____ on behalf of Hilldale

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Print : _____ Tenant 1

Signed : _____ Tenant 1

Print : _____ Tenant 2 (if joint tenancy)

Signed : _____ Tenant 2 (if joint tenancy)

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