

Pets and animals – Frequently asked questions factsheet

Q ? Do I need permission to keep a pet?

A ✓ This depends on what your tenancy agreement and any restrictive covenants say but generally speaking the answer is yes. The reasons why we may refuse permission are set out in our pets and animals policy.

Q ? Are there any restrictions on the type of pet I can have?

A ✓ Yes, there are. It depends on the type of pet and also what type of property you live in. Information about this can be found in your tenancy agreement, any restrictive covenants and our pets and animals policy.

Q ? Can I keep livestock at my property?

A ✓ No. The keeping of livestock such as sheep, goats, pigs, horses, ducks and poultry, etc, is prohibited unless your tenancy agreement states that you can keep such animals.

Q ? How do I go about asking for permission to keep a pet?

A ✓ You will need to submit a 'Request for permission to have a pet' form which we will send to you.

Q ? I am getting a pet from a rescue centre and know what type of animal I want but I need your permission first so that I can register my interest with them. I don't know the breed, age or colour of the animal at the moment. Will you still give me permission to have a pet?

A ✓ It depends on the type of pet and also what type of property you live in. Information about this can be found in your tenancy agreement, any restrictive covenants and our pets and animals policy. Our staff also refer to our pets and animals guidance when advising you about this. If we do give permission then you will need to provide further details to us about the animal once you have acquired it.

Q ? If my pet dies do I need permission to get another one?

A ✓ This depends on what your tenancy agreement says but generally speaking the answer is yes.

Q ? I already have a pet. Do I need to ask for retrospective permission to keep it?

A ✓ This depends on what your tenancy agreement says but generally speaking the answer is yes.

Q ? I already have a pet. Do I need permission to get another one?

A ✓ This depends on what your tenancy agreement says but generally speaking the answer is yes.

Q ? Will you need to visit my home before you give me permission to keep a pet and do you carry out spot checks after permission has been given?

A ✓ Yes, we will need to carry out a property inspection of your home before giving permission for you to have a pet, unless we have visited your property in the past 12 months and the condition of your home was satisfactory. We do not carry out spot checks once permission has been given.

Q ? If I needed permission to keep a pet and didn't ask for it and you refuse retrospective permission for me to keep it, will I have to arrange to have the animal rehomed?

A ✓ Unfortunately the answer is yes, you will.

Q ? Where can I get advice about how to look after my pet?

A ✓ You can find lots of advice on the internet but the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) is a good place to start.

Q ? I live in a flat. Am I allowed to keep a dog or a cat?

A ✓ This depends on what your tenancy agreement says but generally speaking the answer is no if your front door opens onto a communal area such as a corridor. However if you previously had permission to keep a pet in your flat you will be allowed to keep it.

Q ? I live in a flat and you have told me I cannot have a dog or a cat but one of my neighbours has a dog and a cat. Why can't I?

A ✓ It is likely that their tenancy began before we stopped customers in flats being able to keep dogs and cats so this rule did not apply to them at that time.

Q ? Can I ask for permission to keep a house cat in my flat?

A ✓ Unfortunately no as we cannot discriminate between different types of cat.

- Q ? Is there a limit to how many pets I can have?**
A ✓ Yes but it depends on the type of property you live in. Each situation is considered on a case by case basis.
- Q ? I have an 'assistance dog' which was provided for me by an organisation which is a member of Assistance Dogs (UK) and I live in a flat. Will you make an exception for me so that my dog can live with me?**
A ✓ Yes we will.
- Q ? My neighbour's pet causes a nuisance. Can you do anything about this?**
A ✓ Yes. Every customer's tenancy agreement contains clauses about pets or animals and nuisance. If we cannot resolve the issue amicably we may have to take legal action against your neighbour to stop the nuisance. However the nuisance will have to be quite serious before such action is taken.
- Q ? My neighbour's dog barks a lot. Can you do anything about this?**
A ✓ Yes as this is classed as nuisance so there are things we can do but we would encourage you to talk to your neighbour about it first.
- Q ? My neighbour's cat keeps coming into my garden and fouling. Is there anything you can do about this?**
A ✓ No. As cats are roaming animals we do not consider them entering or messing in gardens to be a nuisance, so you will need to try and resolve any issues with your neighbour.
- Q ? What is your stance on fostering pets and 'pet sitting'?**
A ✓ This is not allowed as the animal is not your pet.
- Q ? Can visitors to my flat bring their pets with them?**
A ✓ Yes but we don't encourage it.
- Q ? Am I allowed to breed animals in my home?**
A ✓ No
- Q ? My pet has had young born. Can I keep them?**
A ✓ You will need to ask for permission to keep them in the usual way and our decision will be based on the criteria that we apply to any request to keep a pet.

Q ? What do I do if I am concerned about the welfare of my neighbour's pet?

A ✓ You should contact the RSPCA but also let us know as well as there may be associated tenancy issues such as poor property condition. The police and the council may also need to be aware as in some cases they may also want to take action against the pet's owner.

Q ? Do I need to ask for permission to put in a cat flap, construct a pond or aviary, set up a rabbit hutch or erect a fence to keep my pet secure?

A ✓ Yes as these are classed as alterations.

Q ? Am I allowed to keep animals in my garden?

A ✓ This depends on the animal and its welfare. You should seek advice by going onto the RSPCA's website or get advice from a vet.

Q ? If my pet dies can I bury it in my garden?

A ✓ No. We do not allow this for environmental reasons and because if you ever move to another property you will not be allowed to return to visit your pet's grave. Instead you should use a reputable pet and animal sanctuary to either bury your pet or scatter the ashes.

Q ? I already have a pet buried in my garden. What happens in this situation?

A ✓ No action will be taken in relation to customers who buried pets in their garden before our pets and animals policy came into effect.

Q ? Do I have to let you know if my pet dies?

A ✓ No this will not be necessary.

Q ? What happens if my pet has caused damage to my home, someone else's property or injures someone?

A ✓ You will be liable for the cost of any repairs and could be sued for damages. It is also likely that you will also be in breach of your tenancy agreement.

Q ? Should I take out pet insurance?

A ✓ This is generally speaking a good idea but it is your choice.

Q ? Can I put pet faeces in my refuse bin?

A ✓ You should check this with your local authority.

Q ? I am moving to another Selwood Housing property. Can I take my pet with me?

A ✓ This depends on the type of property you are moving to and its suitability for your pets.

Q ? What do I do with my pet if I go on holiday or have to go into hospital?

A ✓ You should make sure that you have someone available such as a relative, friend or neighbour who can care for your pet whilst you are away. If there is no-one who can help you you will need to find temporary accommodation for them to stay in such as kennels or a cattery. Pet sitting and pet boarding are other alternatives.

Q ? Foxes and badgers are coming into my garden and causing a nuisance. What can I do about this?

A ✓ You should contact your local authority as some animals are protected by law.

Q ? Are there any other restrictions that I need to be aware of that might affect me being able to keep a pet or animal at my property?

A ✓ There could be as some of our properties are subject to restrictive covenants. A covenant is a provision or promise contained in the legal title to a property that affects or limits its use.