

Pet Policy

1. Summary

- 1.1. Shal recognise the benefits that responsible pet ownership can bring to its tenants. This policy clearly outlines where permission to keep a pet will be granted, where it will not be granted and where it may be withdrawn.
- 1.2. It is important to make sure that any pets are being kept properly and in a home which is suitable for them.

2. Objectives

- 2.1. Shal aims to ensure that we encourage responsible pet ownership that mitigates nuisance caused to other residents and protects animals against cruelty. We also aim to ensure that pets are accommodated by considering the suitability of the home.
- 2.2. This policy applies to residents living in accommodation that is owned or managed by Shal, across all tenure types.

3. Details

- 3.1. Anyone wishing to keep a pet in their property must first obtain written permission from Shal prior to the pet moving in.
- 3.2. Permission to keep a trained assistance dog will always be given where the dog is placed with a disabled person.
- 3.3. SHAL will not grant permission for any dogs listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act.
- 3.4. When assessing whether permission can be granted, we will consider:
 - The size and type of property and its suitability for a pet
 - Whether there are any communal areas
 - Whether the size and species of the pet is suitable for the property
 - The pets already in residence, for example, in a block of flats

3.5. Responsible pet ownership

3.6. SHAL will make a considered judgement on whether we feel a resident is able to exercise responsible pet ownership both at the point of considering the permission request and also throughout the tenancy by assessing:

- If the pet is properly trained / provisions have been made for training
- If it is suited to the tenant's lifestyle, environment and physical abilities.
- Whether the pet causes a nuisance or annoyance to neighbours or the community
- Whether the pet could have a detrimental effect on the property, for example fish tanks can cause condensation and in turn damp or mould issues.
- If the pet is allowed to roam in communal areas. This is particularly important to minimise nuisance and protect residents who may have allergies. Dogs must be kept on a lead when in communal areas.
- Permission for dog or cat flaps is sought in advance and any installation does not affect the doors fire safety.
- Any pet food items must be stored in a safe and secure location, to ensure that vermin is not attracted. Any resulting issues around vermin will be the responsibility of the tenant to resolve.

3.7. In relation to dogs specifically:

- Owners must pick up any foul immediately.
- The dog must have a collar and be microchipped.
- It is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that the garden is 'dog proof' so that the dog cannot get out and that disturbance from barking is kept to a minimum.

- 3.8. Withdrawal of permission
- 3.9. Permission will be withdrawn if pets are deemed to be causing a nuisance. Any such issue will be managed as a breach of the conditions of the tenancy agreement. Some examples of behaviour which could cause a nuisance are:
- Fouling and urinating in communal areas
 - Excessive noise e.g., barking for long periods of time
 - Unattended pets
 - Aggressive pets
- 3.10. In cases where an animal has been mistreated and/ or has been neglected, we will report this to the RSPCA and the Dog Warden service at the Local Authority (if appropriate). Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, pet owners have to ensure that the basic needs of the animal are being met. This includes ensuring that satisfactory food and water are provided.
- 3.11. SHAL work with Local Authorities, Police and other partner agencies in instances where animals are causing a nuisance, where we identify that they could be being mistreated and where animals are aggressive and could potentially cause harm.
- 3.12. SHAL does not permit the breeding of any animals under any circumstances, and this will lead to withdrawal of permission to keep the pet. This does not apply if the animal has a litter which is unexpected. In these circumstances Shal expect the tenant and/ or pet owner to act responsibly to ensure that the litter is well looked after and rehomed as soon as possible.
- 3.13. SHAL will always seek to resolve complaints from nuisance informally in the first instance. If an agreement with the owner cannot be reached, we will consider the following:
- Withdrawing permission to keep the pet(s)
 - Involving other agencies where appropriate e.g., RSPCA or Police

- Issuing Court proceedings which could involve an Injunction or serving a Notice of Seeking Possession

3.14. SHAL will not be responsible for the treatment of fleas or other infestations. This cost must be met by the tenant and pet owner. If SHAL do have to pay such costs, e.g., following the end of a tenancy, this cost will be recharged in full.

3.15. Right of appeal

3.16. Residents have the right to appeal and must do so in writing to the Housing Manager.

3.17. The Housing Manager will then carefully consider the request, the type of animal and the property and will write to the resident with the outcome.

3.18. Enforcement

3.19. If a resident is found to have a pet in their home without having first requested permission and that permission being granted, they will usually be given the opportunity to request permission retrospectively.

3.20. If the pet has already been reported to be causing a nuisance, permission will not be granted and the resident will be asked to rehome their pet.

3.21. Further tenancy enforcement action will be considered, if the resident fails to take the appropriate action to remove the pet from their property. This includes Injunction proceedings and/or the commencement of possession proceedings.

4. Outcomes

4.1. Shal staff will have a clear understanding of where permission can be granted to keep a pet, where permission cannot be granted and where it will be withdrawn.

4.2. Tenants, residents and pet owners will know what information Shal will be taking in to account when granting or refusing permission and working within this policy will ensure that any pets in Shal homes are well looked after and do not cause a nuisance to neighbour or the community.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. A copy of this policy is available on our website to allow members of the public an opportunity to comment on its contents.
- 5.2. All tenants will be contacted to let them know of its availability online and a copy will be made available on request.
- 5.3. SHAL's involved tenant group will review the policy and suggest any comments and amendments to the board.

6. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- 6.1. We will treat all our customers fairly and equally. We will not, under any circumstances, discriminate against anyone because of:
 - 6.1.1. Age
 - 6.1.2. Being or becoming a transsexual person
 - 6.1.3. Being married or in a civil partnership
 - 6.1.4. Being pregnant or on maternity leave
 - 6.1.5. Disability
 - 6.1.6. Race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
 - 6.1.7. Religion, belief or lack of religion/belief
 - 6.1.8. Gender
 - 6.1.9. Sexual orientation
- 6.2. We will understand the different needs of our customers and we will ensure our services are accessible to everyone and will make reasonable adjustments for people so that they can make full use of this policy and process.

7. Value for Money

- 7.1. For SHAL, value for money means delivering our purpose as efficiently, economically, equitably and effectively as possible.
- 7.2. This policy will provide value for money by ensuring that time and resources are not wasted and that SHAL uses complaints to improve its services efficiently and effectively.

8. Owner

8.1. Housing Manager

9. Version and Revisions

9.1. This policy will be reviewed every 3 year(s)

9.2. Revisions

New version	Date	Revision details