

## **Keeping Animals Policy**

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#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This policy provides additional information to that of the tenancy agreement in relation to keeping animals. Manchester City Council's Housing Services

recognises the benefits that responsible pet ownership can bring. However controls must be in place to prevent irresponsible pet ownership which can cause suffering to animals, a nuisance to neighbours or damage to property.

## 2. Purpose of policy

2.1 This policy covers the following issues.

- Which animals can be kept and in what circumstances.
- The actions Housing Services will take where animals are kept inappropriately or cause a nuisance to neighbours or damage to property.

## 3. Applicants for Housing

3.1 Applicants for housing are asked to indicate on their application if they intend to keep a pet. This will not prejudice their application unless they plan to keep a pet for which permission would not be granted. If this is the case then this matter must be resolved before an offer of accommodation is made.

3.2 The property advertisement will indicate if pets are allowed, applicants will not be accepted for no pet properties if they own a pet.

## 4. Tenancy Agreement

4.1 The Tenancy Agreement sets out the basic rules regarding the keeping of animals. They are as follows:

### Section 4: Community Responsibilities:

4.2 You (or anyone living with you, or visiting your home) must not cause a nuisance, annoyance or disturbance to any other person. Examples of nuisance, annoyance or disturbance include – loud music, arguing and door slamming, dogs barking and fouling, offensive drunkenness, selling drugs or drug abuse, rubbish dumping, playing ball games close to someone else's home.

4.8 You (or anyone living with you, or visiting your home) must not break any of the City Council's bye laws.

4.10 You (or anyone living with you) must not keep a dog if:

- You live in a multi storey block or
- Your home shares a common entrance and there is a 'no dog' agreement between the tenants and the local housing office. To find out whether your home is part of a 'no dog' agreement, or how to set up an agreement, contact your local housing office.

4.11 You (or anyone living with you) must not keep any animal that the City Council decides is unsuitable for your home or garden. If you are in any doubt at all please contact your local housing office. Your pet or pets must not annoy or frighten other people.

- 4.17 You (or anyone living with you must not put up structures such as sheds, garages or pigeon lofts anywhere on your property without the City Council's agreement in writing

## 5. Responsible pet ownership

- 5.1 The size and number of animals must be appropriate for the type of property in which they live. Advice on this can be provided by your housing officer. If the number of animals kept is causing a nuisance or annoyance, or the condition of the property is suffering due to the number of animals being kept, then we will ask the tenant to reduce the number of animals kept. Legal action may be taken if the nuisance, annoyance, or detriment to the property persists.
- 5.2 Pets must not cause nuisance to neighbours. This includes noise nuisance, property condition issues, fouling in gardens and allowing animals to stray. Legal action may be taken against tenants who allow their pets to cause a nuisance or annoyance.
- 5.3 Tenants must ensure that all animals are homed in a secure and clean environment and are required to meet any costs associated with this.
- 5.4 Pets must not cause damage to the property and tenants will be charged for any damage pets cause to property.
- 5.5 Tenants are responsible for ensuring the health and welfare of their animals.
- 5.6 Tenants are responsible for the control of their pets and any other animals visiting their home.
- 5.7 Dogs must be on a lead in communal areas and not left to roam unattended.
- 5.8 A person responsible for a dog must keep it on a lead whilst in public. This includes all roads, pavements and footpaths including gated alleyways, as well as designated small parks, planted flower beds and horticultural areas.
- 5.9 If an animal fouls on any public or communal area, the mess must be cleared up immediately. This applies also to any garden of a property owned by Manchester City Council, including the dog owner's own garden.
- 5.10 If an animal damages, muddies or makes a communal area dirty, then the area should be cleaned immediately by the person responsible for the animal.
- 5.11 If a person wishes to construct any outside accommodation for a dog, including a kennel or pen, they must obtain prior permission in writing. All kennels or pens must be removed by the tenant at their expense at the time they terminate their tenancy.

## 6. Restrictions

- 6.1 Permission to keep an animal may not be granted if there is currently a problem with pet ownership in the household or there has been a problem in the past.
- 6.2 Chickens, ducks or geese may only be kept if prior written permission has been secured in advance. In deciding whether to grant permission, consideration will

be given to the suitability of the property and garden, the accommodation in which the birds are to be kept, if there are objections from neighbours and any other factors considered to be relevant in determining whether the birds are likely to cause a nuisance. Permission will be subject to conditions relating to the number of birds to be kept and the accommodation in which they are to be housed. Permission can be withdrawn if such conditions are breached or if the birds cause annoyance. Birds cannot be kept in communal gardens or other communal or public areas. Cockerels cannot be kept.

6.3 An animal cannot be kept if this is likely to lead to a breach of the tenancy agreement: this includes causing a danger, nuisance or alarm to neighbours or damage to the property (including any communal areas).

**6.4 The following animals are not allowed to be kept under any circumstances.**

- Livestock – for example, sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, horses.
- Non domesticated animals – e.g. monkeys, foxes, etc
- Animals registered under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976; examples of animals registered under the Act are certain types of venomous snake & certain types of spider
- Dogs specified in the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (see exemption below)

## 7. XL Bully dogs

7.1 XL Bully dogs can only be kept if:

- The dog was owned before 31 December 2023
- The owner has a Certificate of exemption to keep an XL Bully dog
- The owner has third party public liability insurance

Ideally XL Bully dogs must be taken out of the property when a member of Housing Services staff or contractor working on our behalf is present in the property. If this is not possible then the dog must be muzzled and kept in a separate room or caged.

When we are aware of XL Bullies in a property, an alert will be placed on the tenancy management system – “XL Bully in property” and this alert must be forwarded to all staff and contractors who will be attending the property.

## 8. Dealing with cruelty and neglect

8.1 Where a member of staff witnesses cruelty to or neglect of an animal they will report this to the RSPCA. If cruelty or neglect is reported to Housing Services by a third party this will also be reported to the RSPCA.

8.2 Cruelty or neglect resulting in a detriment to the condition of the property could result in legal action against the tenant.

## 9. Responsibility

9.1 Overall responsibility for the policy is with the Strategic Lead – Home & Place.

## 10. Linked Documents

- Manchester City Council tenancy agreement
- The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Government guidance on keeping an XL Bully