Trident Housing

PART OF TRIDENT GROUP

PET POLICY

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1 Introduction and Policy Statement

Trident understands that for many people pets are part of the family and bring a huge amount of joy and comfort to people's lives, including improving mental and physical wellbeing. However, we also have a responsibility to ensure that properties are suitable for the pet requested and to seek assurance of responsible pet ownership.

The policy aims to:

- Provide guidance to all staff about pet ownership to ensure staff take a consistent approach to requests for pets.
- Provide our residents with a clear guidance about pet ownership including how to apply for permission to keep a pet, how permission will be confirmed and how that permission may be revoked.
- Provide residents with information regarding acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour regarding pets.
- Provide a way for residents to enjoy the benefits of pet ownership, where the accommodation is appropriate for that pet
- To provide an enforceable approach to pet ownership, ensure those benefits do not infringe on the health and safety of others and the rights of any others to the peaceful enjoyment of their home.

Before having a pet you'll need to consider if your home and lifestyle are suitable for the type of pet you're planning to keep. The care different species and breeds of animal require can vary greatly, from the amount of outdoor exercise to the cost of providing for your pet.

2 Types of Pets

All animals are protected from harm by law. In addition, animal owners are responsible for ensuring that their pets have all of their needs met.

The five welfare needs are:

- To have a suitable environment
- To have a suitable diet
- To be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- To have the opportunity to be alone
- To be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease

DOGS

Pet applications for a dog will depend on the breed, size, property size, access to a garden, how often the pet will be left etc.

Permission will NOT be given under any circumstances to keep a dog listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. These include the Pit Bull Terrier, Fila Brasileiro, Dogo Argentino and Japanese Tosa.

In the UK, the Control of Dogs Order 1992 states that any dog in a public place must wear a collar with the name and address (including postcode) of the owner engraved or written on it, or engraved on a tag.

XL BULLY DOGS

On 31st October 2023 XL Bully Dogs were added to the Dangerous Dogs Act and on 1st February 2024 new laws were introduced banning this breed.

Owners are required to provide a copy of their valid Certificate of Exemption certificate, evidence of relevant in-date liability insurance policy and proof that the dog has been microchipped.

It is an offence to

- sell an XL Bully dog
- abandon an XL Bully dog or let it stray
- give away an XL Bully dog
- breed or breed from an XL Bully dog
- have an XL Bully in public without a lead and muzzle

For the lifetime of the dog it must be kept only at the same address as the certificate holder (unless kept temporarily at a different address, which Defra allow for a maximum of 30 days in a 12-month period). You are also required to:

- keep the dog muzzled in public places
- keep the dog on a lead in public places – the lead must be securely held by someone at least 16 years old
- keep the dog in secure conditions that will stop it from escaping

If you do not follow these requirements your dog will no longer be exempt from the ban, and you will be reported to the police or local authority dog legislation officer.

If you want a dog and you have your own garden or access to outside space, it's your responsibility to ensure the area is safely and fully enclosed, that there are no gaps in any fencing, and that neighbours will not be affected by your new pet.

CATS

Indoor ‘house’ cats must be provided with all pet care products required such as litter trays.

Outdoor cats must not be allowed to roam communal areas to access or exit properties.

SMALL DOMESTIC ANIMALS

Residents may be given permission to keep small animals which are housed in tanks, bowls or cages and do not need to be let out of the property, for example, this may include hamsters, fish, gerbil, mice etc...

Pet applications form will be considered on the individual circumstances of each application.

EXOTIC PETS

Pet applications form will be considered on the individual circumstances of each application for animals such as a reptile, amphibian, bird.

An application will be refused if the pet requires a licence in order to be kept or it may pose a risk to other residents should it escape.

If the exotic pet requires specialist care then as part of your application you may be asked to show you have the relevant knowledge and understanding of how to care for your pet.

Permission will NOT be given for the following:

- Farm animals, for example sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, horses, ducks, cockerels.
- Birds of Prey
- Animals registered under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976- such as venomous snakes, certain breeds of spider and various breeds of monkey.
- Dogs specified under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.
- Where there are already two pets in the household, depending on the type of pet

3 Animal Welfare

If permission is given by Trident to keep a pet, then it is the tenant's responsibility to ensure they meet the standards of health and welfare for their pets.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 requires proper day-to-day care of the pet. Routine healthcare and vaccinations must be kept up to date and when applying to keep pet tenants will be required to provide the name and address of their vet.

If the tenant is going on holiday or will be away from the property for a considerable amount of time, alternative arrangements must be made to ensure pets receive adequate care.

Where a member of staff witnesses cruelty or neglect they will report this to the RSPCA. Where cruelty or neglect is reported to Trident by a third party they will also report this to the RSPCA making it clear that they have not witnessed this themselves. The person reporting this will also be encouraged to contact the RSPCA directly.

Permission may not be granted where there is an ongoing problem with pet ownership in the household, or scheme, or there have been concerns about the welfare of a pet in the household previously.

Pet applications form will be considered on the individual circumstances of each application.

4 Affordability

There are lots of associated costs when owning and looking after a pet for their lifetime, introducing a pet may have an impact upon your heating and electricity costs, as well as the increased costs for housing, feeding and veterinary care.

There is information online about the **cost of caring for different pets**.

The Pet Application Form will ask for all monthly costs to be listed and a declaration that the pet will be affordable for the household.

5 Request for Permission to Keep a Pet

Applicants for housing are asked to indicate on their application form if they intend to keep a pet. This will not prejudice their application however if they plan to keep a pet for which permission will not be granted, then this matter must be resolved before an offer of accommodation is made. Pet application forms must be emailed to lettings@tridentgroup.org.uk

Not all accommodation is suitable for pets and as well as ensuring the animals welfare needs are met, Trident must also consider other residents when deciding whether to grant consent.

Residents/ Tenants/ Leaseholders must seek the prior written consent of Trident should they wish to keep pets at their property (either indoors or outdoors) and will be required to complete a Pet Application Form.

A Pet Application form must be completed in full and emailed to HomesandCommunitieshousingofficers@tridentgroup.org.uk

Dependant on the request your Housing Officer may need to visit you at home to assist us with making a decision. Trident will not unreasonably withhold, or delay responding to a Pet Application submission and will respond in writing with an outcome decision within 28 days.

No requests will be granted without a signed Declaration of Understanding on the Pet Application Form unless your pet is a guide dog or assistance dog. In some cases, Trident may grant permission for a pet subject to additional specific conditions being met which will be outlined in the outcome letter. A formal written agreement signed by the resident/ Tenant/ leaseholder must be received stating that they will adhere to these conditions.

Trident will ask for a pet to be removed from a property where:

- Permission has not been sought.
- There has been a breach of the pet agreement contract
- The pet has caused a nuisance, distress or annoyance to any owner or occupier or property adjoining or within the locality of the tenant's property or has caused damage or destruction to any communal or private parts of the building.
  In the event of any damage caused by pets, with or without any specific 'pet related clauses', the tenant will still be held liable and responsible for any damage and will required to repair damage/ replace damaged items at their own expense.

6 Pet Related Nuisance

A range of behaviours can cause nuisance to neighbours, the following are examples of this, however this list is not exhaustive:

- Roaming and un-supervised animals (dogs not on leads when in public or in communal areas)
- Pets fouling in communal areas and in owners' gardens (and not being cleared up immediately)
- Pets fouling in neighbours gardens
- Excessive noise
- Over population of animals within the household
- Unpleasant odours from pets
- Aggressive animals

- Breeding pets for business purposes.
  If your pet gives birth you decide to keep the kittens/puppies and do not find them suitable new homes, you'll exceed the number of animals we have given you permission to keep. Keeping more animals, regardless of how they came to be part of your household, may result in action being taken against your tenancy.

If a pet is found to be causing a nuisance or annoyance then Trident will aim to resolve the situation informally and by agreement. However, in some instances this is not possible, and the following actions may be taken. It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list:

- Arranging for mediation
- Involving statutory organisations such as the Police or Local Authority.
- Involving voluntary organisations such as the RSPCA.
- Serving an injunction to oblige the owner to start or stop undertaking certain actions.
- Withdrawing permission to keep an animal.
- Restricting the number of animals.
- Terminating the tenancy/ occupancy where conditions are breached.

7 Death of a Pet

Losing a pet can be a very distressing time and impact significantly on an individual or family's well-being http://www.livingwithpetbereavement.com/aftercare.htm

Trident expects pet owners to bury or cremate their pet responsibly. Pets cannot be buried in communal areas and only appropriately small pets should be buried in private gardens. Trident will provide, or signpost residents to, advice and information to help them through this difficult situation.

There are many charities and organisations that can help you to decide whether to bury or cremate your pet and what the next steps to take are and a local vet or the RSPCA can provide advice and guidance.

8 Legislation

- Dangerous Dogs Act 1989 & 1991 (updated 2023)
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Control of Dogs Order 1992
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Crime and Policing Act 2014