

Key information sheet

Keeping pets and animals



We recognise the benefits of pet ownership and support this wherever it is appropriate. But keeping a pet comes with responsibilities, both towards the animal and to your neighbours. Irresponsible pet ownership can cause nuisance and potentially pose a risk to people and other animals.

This information sheet covers how we deal with requests to keep pets, as well as how we support residents who experience nuisance caused by animals owned by neighbours.

Granting permission

If you would like to keep a pet, please get in touch with us to ask permission. Our contact details are at the bottom of the page.

We will grant permission where it is reasonable to do so taking into account the type of home you live in and what type of pet you would like to keep.

Your tenancy or occupancy agreement may have specific rules for keeping animals – we can advise you on this. Some local agreements set out there are no pets allowed in certain blocks of flats or types of accommodation.

If there are no specific terms in your agreement, some general points about keeping an animal are:

- You must not keep a pet without prior consent from us or the service provider
- Pets must be kept under control at all times
- You must clear up any dog mess immediately
- Pets must not cause nuisance or danger to persons or other animals (this will be treated as anti-social behaviour)
- Running a business such as breeding animals, or

operating a boarding kennels from one of our properties is not allowed.

You are legally responsible for the health and welfare of your pets. If there is an ongoing or unresolved problem with pet ownership, we will not grant permission.

We will support and assist residents who make use of guide dogs or other assistance animals. Registered blind, deaf and disabled residents who use trained assistance animals are not subject to estate regulations or dog control orders.

Types of animal

We will allow small domestic animals to be kept, as long as the accommodation is suitable. We may ask the RSPCA for advice on suitability.

We will not grant permission for ‘weapon dogs’, dog breeds specified in the Dangerous Dogs Act, or animals requiring registration under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act.

We will assess requests for keeping pigeons or farm animals such as chickens, sheep or ducks on an individual basis based on your type of home and impact on neighbours.

Types of home

In most cases, a pet may be kept if your home is a house, maisonette or flat with its own entrance and access to an outside area. If your flat has a communal entrance, we will need to assess your request on an individual basis.

Tel: 0121 322 7373

Email: info@mercian.org.uk

www.mercian.org.uk

If you live in shared accommodation, such as a supported or sheltered housing, we will speak to all residents and service users before granting permission.

Nuisance and anti-social behaviour

We will take action to deal with nuisance and disturbance caused by pets and animals, using our procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviour. We will refer the case to the local authority, police or RSPCA where appropriate.

Some examples of nuisance include:

- Dogs not being kept under proper control, including dogs not being on a lead in communal areas
- Fouling of gardens and communal areas, where animal faeces or urine are not cleaned up immediately.
- Loud or persistent noise or barking that disturbs other residents
- Unpleasant odours caused by animals, or by owners not caring for or cleaning up after their animals
- Residents keeping windows or communal entrance doors open so that an animal may be allowed in and out
- People using animals to menace, intimidate or attack people or other animals.

If you experience nuisance or disturbance caused by a neighbour's pet, please get in touch with us. We will aim to resolve a situation informally, but other options include:

- Involving organisations such as the Police, Local Authority or RSPCA
- Arranging for a mediator to become involved
- Making responsible pet ownership part of a Good Neighbour Agreement or Acceptable Behaviour Contract
- Withdrawing permission to keep an animal or restricting the number of animals
- Applying for an Injunction or Court Order
- Starting possession proceedings where tenancy conditions are broken.

Animal cruelty

If you witness cruelty or neglect of an animal, you can report this to the RSPCA – telephone 0300 1234 999. They will treat all reports in confidence. Alternatively, we can make a report on your behalf.