



Solihull
Community Housing
Shaping our neighbourhoods

Pet Policy 2025

Pet Policy

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Approval Chain:	Head of Service SCHape Panel SCH Executive Leadership Team
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1.0	20 November 2025	Updated Policy

1. Scope

Solihull Community Housing (SCH) manages and maintains council homes and delivers housing services on behalf of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC). Although SCH provides day-to-day housing services, the Council remains the owner of the housing stock and is your landlord. The Council retains the responsibility for ensuring your home is managed in line with the Consumer Standards

This policy sets out Solihull Community Housing's (SCH) approach to managing pet ownership within our homes. This policy covers all resident and persons living in properties managed by SCH.

Assistance and guide dogs will automatically be permitted without the need for official consent.

The tenancy agreement gives residents the right to keep pets or animals such as a cat, a dog, small bird, fish as well as non-poisonous insects, spider, small snakes or lizards. Customers are not allowed to breed or have multiple pets unless you have asked SCH for authorisation, and we have granted permission.

The Policy applies to all tenants, leaseholders, licensees, employees, contractors, and anyone living in or visiting homes within our management and ownership. The policy also applies to any visitors to our customers' homes and communal areas of our properties managed by Solihull Community Housing (SCH).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy, Tenancy Policy and Complaints Policy.

2. Policy Statement

Solihull Community Housing (SCH) acknowledge the importance of pets in the lives of some customers. We recognise that owning pets can be truly life enhancing and bring a great deal of pleasure and enjoyment to customers. We also recognise that in the case of vulnerable customers, owning a pet can have a positive impact on their health and well-being and improve their ability to live independently.

We will support customers in being responsible pet owners and therefore will not impose unnecessary restrictions on pet ownership. Equally, we recognise that pets that are not suitable for the home and/or not looked after or controlled properly may cause nuisance and disturbance or pose a risk to neighbours, staff and contractors. This policy seeks to address this delicate balance.

3. Policy Objectives

This policy explains how we will respond to pet queries, permissions and complaints and covers the following points:

- Assistance Animals
- Animal Hoarding
- Responsible pet and animal ownership as defined under the Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- Breeding or running of a pet or animal related business
- Complaints about pet and animal nuisance
- Dangerous Dog Act 1991 (as amended)
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Pet
- Permission requests, type of pets and animals allowed
- Pets that are not permitted

4. Key terms and definitions

Assistance animals - an animal, usually domesticated, that lives with a disabled person and is trained to perform tasks. Those are a guide or service dogs, or they may be animals trained strictly to perform a job.

Animal Hoarding - We define this as keeping a higher than usual number of animals as pets without having the ability to properly house or care for them.

Animal Welfare Act 2006

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 has a code of practice to protect the welfare of animals. We encourage our customers to be responsible pet owners and protect the wellbeing of their pets. We expect all pet owners to:

- Care for their pets responsibly. This includes giving their pets a healthy diet, not subjecting them to abuse, providing a suitable home for the type of pet (with or apart from other animals), and not leaving pets unattended for a significant amount of time.
- Keep pets under control, supervised and not cause a nuisance to other households. This includes dogs being kept on a lead in communal areas, not entering children's play areas, and being under control when our colleagues or contractors attend a property.
- Clean up any fouling in gardens and communal areas immediately.
- Make a conscious effort to stop unpleasant smells being released from their home due to their pet(s).
- Ensure dogs older than eight weeks are microchipped and wear a collar and tag in public.

- Have suitable care arrangements in place for their pet if they are going to be absent for long periods.
- If a pet dies, bury or dispose of its body a responsible and safe way.
- Pets are not left in the home on vacation of the tenancy

Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

In compliance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 pet owners must not allow their pets to cause damage or nuisance within their property or to their neighbours.

Breeding or running of a pet or animal related business

Tenants or leaseholders are not permitted to run any business or activity that involves the rehabilitation, breeding and sale of animals or any kind of animal boarding business, animal hostel, animal sanctuary, animal hospital, cattery or kennels. - This list is not exhaustive

Complaints about pet and animal nuisance

Tenants or leaseholders must not allow their pets or animals to become a public health or noise nuisance, annoy or frighten people. A range of behaviours can cause nuisance and examples of this can include (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Roaming animals
- Fouling in communal areas and gardens and not cleaning up after the dog
- Uncontrolled behaviour, such as barking or aggressive behaviour
- Excessive noise (due to the volume, duration, or time of day)
- Cockerels, poultry, quails, pigeons
- Lack of care and attention causing foul odours.
- Attacks on people or other animals
- Causing a person to believe they might be injured due to an out-of-control pet
- Failing to keep a dog on a lead in communal areas
- If requested to do so, pets should be put in a separate room if a member of staff specifically requests it.

We will deal with complaints of pet or animal nuisance in line with our anti-social behaviour policy and in most cases, we will aim to resolve the situation informally. However, if this can't be achieved, we will take necessary action to enforce the terms of the tenancy agreement or lease.

Dangerous Dog Act 1991(as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour crime and policing Act 2014)

A person must not keep pets that are prohibited by current or future law, including any of the following dogs identified under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991(i.e., Pit Bull Terriers, Japanese Tosas, Dogo Argentinos, Fila Brazilieros) with the exception to dogs registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs.

Where we receive a report of a resident not complying with the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 by having a certificate of exemption, we will ask the owner for proof the dog has a certificate of exemption.

Where we believe a dog meets the definition of a Dangerous Dog, but the owner states otherwise, we will request proof to assure this is the case. If proof is not provided, we will report the matter to the police and the local authority for a determination.

Under the 2023 amendment to the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, XL Bully Types are banned in England without a certificate of exemption. If any customers own or want to own an XL Bully Type dog, you must contact their local housing team and a register of ownership will be kept and managed locally.

Owners are expected to take all necessary precautions as directed by government:

- Certificate can be produced, and a copy taken by SCH to be kept on file.
- Proof of microchipping provided, and a copy taken by SCH to be kept on file.
- Proof of Public Liability Insurance provided, and a copy taken by SCH to be kept on file.
- Proof of all relevant vaccinations and a copy taken by SCH to be kept on file.
- Dogs managed appropriately and are kept on leads and muzzled in public places (including cars)
- They are kept in a secure place and cannot escape.

XL Bully Types are defined as “Dangerous Dogs” by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (2023 Amendment) and as a result, our approach in dealing with them is consistent with all dog breeds that are defined as such under the Act.

A certificate of exemption does not necessarily mean SCH will give consent for the dog to be kept at one of its properties. Consideration will be given to this on a case-by-case basis, in line with any contractual agreement (e.g. tenancy agreement) and this policy.

SCH reserves the right to revoke permission of ownership if the dog becomes dangerous and / or if they are a nuisance to neighbours and / or causing anti-social behaviour.

Failure to follow such guidelines can have serious consequences and pet owners may be fined up to £5,000 and/or can be imprisoned for up to 6 months if the dog is deemed to be out of control.

Tenancy Enforcement action will also be taken where appropriate

Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976

It is an offense to keep a dangerous wild animal without a licence granted by a local authority. This act gives powers to the local authority to enter a premises and seize any dangerous animal without compensation.

Emotional Support Pet (ESP) - pets that are required for a person's ongoing mental health treatment by a licensed therapist, psychologist, doctor (GP) or any licensed mental health professional. This could be a part of the person's ongoing treatment programme, that it is designed to bring comfort and minimise the negative symptoms of the person's emotional or psychological disability.

Pet - any domesticated or tamed animal that is kept as a companion and cared for responsibly.

5. Permission

SCH is aware that there will be customers living in our properties who have pets without our permission. In these cases, we will give implied permission unless we receive complaints that the pet is causing a nuisance. Where a resident chooses to keep a pet, whether on a permanent or temporary basis, they must fulfil the following criteria and be in line with our tenancy agreement conditions. Subject to the terms of the tenancy agreement or lease, our permission criteria are as follows:

- Ensure that the needs of the animal(s) are met. Animals' needs as defined by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 include the need for suitable environment, suitable diet, ability for the pet to exhibit normal behaviour patterns, any need to be housed with or apart from other animals and its need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury and disease.
- All customers may keep reasonable (**maximum of two**) number of domestic pets that can be kept in cages and / or tanks without seeking permission from SCH.
- All customers living in self-contained accommodation may keep dogs / cats (in any combination up to a **maximum of two**) without seeking permission from SCH.
- In communal living, customers must seek permission from SCH to own a dog, cat or any other pet that requires access through communal areas on a regular basis.
- SCH will not reasonably withhold permission, but it is important for us to understand where these pets are kept, so we can manage our communal areas and facilities.
- All permission will only be granted upon the approval of an assurance questionnaire which commits the customer to responsible pet ownership.
- Official assistance or guide dogs are normally allowed for all customers (regardless of property type), if this has been properly determined by a professional, such as a registered medical doctor or therapist. Customers must provide evidence on request should this be the case.
- Permission must be sought by all customers who wish to own exotic pets. Again, permission will not be unreasonably withheld but there may be additional risks we have to consider with regards to exotic pets. For example, specific living conditions, temperature control & secure enclosures. These will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Please note that this list is not exhaustive.
- If a tenant plans to host a pet temporarily that will increase the number of pets already kept, they should notify SCH in advance. The tenant is responsible for ensuring they do not cause a nuisance.

- SCH retain the right to withdraw permission where the pet has caused nuisance, or we believe the owner to be showing signs of animal cruelty or neglect.
- Prior written consent from SCH must be obtained before installing any aquatic tank within the premises. Tenants must also provide evidence of adequate insurance coverage to protect against potential risks, including (but not limited to) water leakage, glass breakage, blocked drains, and structural damage. Failure to maintain such insurance may result in enforcement action and recovery of any associated costs.
- Permission is required from SCH for any aquatic tank installation due to structural load-bearing considerations. Where permission is not sought and a tank failure causes damage to the property or adjoining properties, SCH reserves the right to take appropriate legal and financial recovery action, including charging the tenant for all repair costs and any consequential losses.

6. Pets/Animals that are not permitted within our homes.

Under no circumstances are households permitted to keep the following as pets:

- Animals listed under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (including large mammals, carnivores, larger or venomous reptiles, dangerous spiders, and scorpions)
- Any endangered species
- Any hybrid between a domestic and a wild animal
- Bees
- Dogs listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 unless exempt as explained above.
- Livestock (including horses and cattle)
- Breeding of pets or animals or any associated activity is not permitted and is considered a breach of tenancy.

Rescue of Injured Wild Animals

Tenants are not permitted to keep injured wild animals in their homes under any circumstances. If a tenant encounters an injured wild animal, they must seek professional assistance from a licensed wildlife rescue organisation or veterinarian immediately. Tenants should not attempt to rehabilitate or house wild animals themselves. Any wild animals in need of care should be handed over to appropriate wildlife facilities for treatment and rehabilitation. Failure to comply with this policy may result in enforcement actions.

7. Owners' responsibility

All pet owners are expected to act responsibly and be responsible pet owners. The following standards will apply

- All pets must be kept under control and not cause a nuisance to other households. Including dogs being kept on a lead in communal areas and not entering play areas. Dogs must be under control when any SCH representative attend a property.

- No fouling in communal areas. Where fouling has occurred, the responsible owners must clean up immediately, any waste will need to be disposed of in a suitable manner, securely wrapped and placed in a refuse bin.
- Tenants, leaseholders (including their tenants) must take responsible for cleaning up any mess inside communal blocks caused by their animal in addition to fouling. For example, this includes animal hair, saliva and muddy paw prints. (Please note that this list is not exhaustive)
- Owners must actively seek to prevent unpleasant odours coming from their property due to their pet(s).
- Animals must not damage the property, including communal parts of the building and neighbouring properties. Owners may be recharged for any repairs which are needed because of such damage.
- Cat beds, scratch posts and litter trays must not be stored in communal areas. They must remain in the resident's home.
- Cats should not be allowed to roam inside communal areas
- Animals must not be kept for the purposes of breeding or sale.
- Owners must not keep an excessive number of animals in their property.
- Owners must have suitable arrangements in place for looking after their pet during prolonged periods of absence.
- Cat or dog flaps must not be installed without our prior consent as these can compromise the fire safety of a property.
- Deceased pets must be buried or disposed of in a responsible and safe manner.
- In the event of an emergency (fire, flooding etc) tenants must have a clear plan for the safety and relocation of their pets. Pets should not impede emergency exits or the work of emergency responders

All visitors to resident's properties are required to adhere to the same standards

8. How we will address pet related issues

SCH is aware that pets are important to our customers and therefore we will work with our customers on any pet related issues. This could include referrals to specialist animal welfare organisations for advice, support, and guidance.

If we are unable to make contact or engage with the pet owner where issues have been raised, or if there are clear signs of cruelty/neglect we will take more serious action.

This could include working with Solihull MBC environmental services or the police, demanding the rehoming of the pet or animal and in some cases seeking legal actions such as injunctions, CPW, CPN or possessions proceedings.

If an agreement is made for the rehoming of an animal, then we will allow a reasonable time for this to take place – no more than 28 days.

SCH has a duty to report any complaints of animal cruelty to the RSPCA, and any stray animals will be reported to the dog warden service.

9. Equality and Diversity

SCH respects our customers and their individual differences. We ensure that any resident that has contact with SCH has access to the same standards being treated with fairness and respect.

This Policy can be translated into alternative formats including Braille, large print, audio and languages.

This policy allows all customers to own a pet if they adhere to and meet the criteria set out in this policy meaning customers with protected characteristics are and will be treated fairly

10. Legislative & Regulatory Framework

The main legislation and regulations governing this policy are

- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (as amended)
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Dogs Act 1871
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Dangerous Dog Act 1991 (as amended)
- Housing Act 1985 (as amended)
- The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015
- The Control of Dogs Order 1992
- Building Safety Act 2022

11. Related Policies & Procedures

This policy has links to some of our other policies, and we've thought about these links when reviewing the policy. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Allocations Policy
- Tenancy Policy
- Equality and Diversity
- Complaints Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- Lease Agreement
- License Agreement

12. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
SCH Board	- Responsible for delegating approval of this policy to Executive Team. - Ensuring customers' voices are heard.
Chief Executive	Responsible for approving this policy and overseeing compliance with this policy
ELT	- Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the policy objectives to be met. - To ensure that appropriately qualified and suitably experienced people are employed to implement this policy.
Housing Services Manager	Responsible for overseeing the operational delivery and service quality of the Pet Policy.
Neighbourhood Team Leader/Line Manager	- Responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy, the management of the Neighbourhood Team in processing succession applications, and for approving applications. - Responsible for the implementation of this policy; management of the Neighbourhood Team in managing the Pet Policy.
Neighbourhood Officers/Assistants	- Responsible for the processing of the Pet Policy. - Responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.
Neighbourhood Customer Service Assistants.	- Responsible for supporting Housing Officers in processing permission requests and complaints of nuisance caused by pets/animals as outlined in the Pet Policy - Responsible for receiving and dealing with general enquiries about pets/animals
Customers	Responsible for informing SCH of their pets and adhering to the terms of their tenancy agreement and it's supporting policies.

13. Monitoring & Review

This Policy will be monitored by the Neighbourhood Services Team Leaders/Line Managers, Housing Services Manager and Home Options Manager.

This policy will be reviewed every **3** years by **Housing Services Manager** unless there are any significant changes to current legislation or regulation, good practice or guidance, or as the result of the outcome of an incident review or Ombudsman determination.

Approved documents are valid for use after their approval date and remain in force beyond any expiry of their review date until a new version is available.

Pet Application Form

Please complete all sections of this form in BLOCK CAPITALS. Return the completed form to your local Connect office or email it to: info@solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk

Applicant Information

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact Number: _____

Email: _____

Property Details

Property Type: House ☐ Flat ☐ Maisonette ☐ Bungalow ☐

Floor Level: _____ Garden: Yes ☐ No ☐

Pet Details

Number of pets applying for: _____

Type of pet: Dog ☐ Cat ☐ Exotic ☐ Other ☐

If Other, please specify: _____

Existing pets in property: _____

Species and ages of existing pets:

1. _____ Age: _____

2. _____ Age: _____

3. _____ Age: _____

Veterinary Information

Do you have a registered vet? Yes ☐ No ☐

Vet Surgery Name & Address: _____

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate and agree to comply with SCH's Pet Policy and Responsible Pet Owner Agreement.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Responsible Pet Owner Agreement

This is an agreement between Solihull Community Housing and

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

The tenant agrees the following in respect of future conduct: -

I WILL

1. Ensure that animals are kept in a suitable environment and receive the proper medical attention when required. This includes standard routine healthcare such as vaccinations and regular parasite control measures.
2. Keep dogs under control and on a lead when in public areas.
3. Take responsibility for all animals visiting the property.
4. Ensure that pets wear a collar and tag with the tenant's name and address inscribed.

I WILL NOT

1. Allow my property to become unhygienic.
2. Allow my pets to cause damage or nuisance within my property or to my neighbours.
3. Keep any dogs listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act, 1991.
4. Allow dog fouling to take place.
5. Install any large tank or enclosures without first getting written permission.
6. Allow the breeding of animals to take place within my premises

I agree to the above documentation and will act to meet the needs expected of me as a pet owner. I have read and understood my tenancy agreement and understand the legislation that is in place. I also acknowledge that breach of this policy is a breach of the tenancy agreement and understand that permission to own a pet may be withdrawn and legal action taken if necessary.

By signing this document, I understand that I will be legally bound to its terms and conditions.

Please ensure that you have taken your time to read through all pages of the document. If you would like to clarify any details or believe that an amendment should be made to the policy, please contact us before signing.

Signature: _____ Date: _____