

Pets Policy

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Service area: Housing Operations

Owner: Head of Housing Operations

Scope		Entity		Business Stream	
Customers	✓	Progress Housing Group Limited (Parent)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Progress Homes	✓
Colleagues	✓	Progress Housing Association Limited (PHA)	✓	RWP	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-Executive Directors / Trustees	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reside Housing Association Limited (RHA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Progress Lifeline	<input type="checkbox"/>
Third parties*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Key Unlocking Futures Limited (Key)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Progress Living	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Concert Living Limited	<input type="checkbox"/>		
*Other: Specific leaseholder statement included within the policy					
Exclusions:					

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Section 1: Purpose and Policy Statement

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines the Group's approach to pet ownership and the conditions under which permission is granted to keep pets its properties.
- 1.2 It covers requests for new, existing, or replacement pets staying permanently in Group homes, sets out what is expected of pet owners and how pet management issues may be resolved.

2. Policy statement

2.1 The Group will:

- ensure a clear and consistent process for managing pet applications while balancing tenant well-being, community harmony, and animal welfare
- promote responsible pet ownership that does not negatively impact other tenants or residents, who have a right to enjoy their homes peacefully
- support tenants' wellbeing through pet ownership while maintaining property standard

Section 2: Policy Guidance

3. Direction

Leaseholders

- 3.1 Leaseholders must check their lease agreements for pet restrictions. Temporary pet care (e.g., looking after a pet for a family member) must be reported and approved by the Group.

Applying for permission

- 3.2 As set out within the tenancy agreement, tenants will be required to seek permission in writing before taking ownership of any pet. However as set out in this policy the Group will agree to automatically grant pet permissions subject to the following criteria:

Animal type

- 3.3 Permission will be automatically granted to small domestic animals, which are permanently housed in cages, bowls or tanks inside the home and do not need to be allowed outside of the property. For example small birds, fish, hamsters, mice, etc.
- 3.4 If the tenant has their own private garden, permission may be given for them to keep small pets in hutches such as rabbits or guinea pigs so long as the numbers are kept low with a maximum of 2.
- 3.5 Permission is automatically granted for up to 2 pets, either cats or dogs (e.g. 2 cats, 2 dogs, or 1 of each) dependent the size of property. Any exceptions require approval from the Housing Operations Team, considering factors such as the type, size, suitability of the animals and property.
- 3.6 The Group will automatically permit the keeping of guide or other assistance animals for residents with disabilities but will still require permission to be requested in writing along with supporting documentation. All permissions are subject to behaviour rules.
- 3.7 Permission will not be granted for non-domestic animals, including but not limited to farm animals (e.g. pigs, ducks, chickens, etc.) or birds of prey (e.g. owls). In exceptional cases where consideration is given, a full consultation with relevant tenants will be conducted.
- 3.8 Permission will not be given in any circumstances to keep any dog listed as dangerous as defined by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.
- 3.9 An application is required for exotic pets such as snakes or spiders. This will be refused if the pet:

- requires a licence and the tenant does not hold one
- could pose a safety risk to the household or neighbours should it escape.

Property suitability

- 3.10 The Group will not grant permission when a tenant does not have adequate space in their home or garden for the type of pet they are applying to keep. This is particularly important when considering an application to keep a dog.
- 3.11 If multiple pets already reside in the property, permission for an additional pet will not be granted if:
- it may compromise the welfare of existing animals may cause a nuisance
 - excessive numbers of pets may cause a nuisance to neighbours
 - it could result in damage to the property.

Factors such as health, safety, and hygiene will be considered.

- 3.12 The Group operates a no-pets policy in properties with a communal entrance to minimise potential nuisance, maintain cleanliness, and ensure all residents can equally enjoy shared spaces. The only exception to this policy is for guide dogs or other registered assistance animals.
- 3.13 The Group will not grant permission for animals to be housed in a communal area or garden and hutches, kennels, aviaries, etc.

Personal circumstances

- 3.14 Tenants are responsible for the health and welfare of their pets. In line with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Animal Health & Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, tenants have a duty of care to ensure their pets have a suitable living environment, a proper diet, regular exercise, and appropriate healthcare.
- 3.15 Tenants must provide information regarding any previous prosecutions for an offence against animals or being responsible for their care.
- 3.16 The Area Housing Teams will assess pet requests using prescribed criteria, which will include:
- disability
 - type of property
 - existing number of pets within the household

- any history of pet-related problems
- the potential impact on neighbours.

Permission refusal

- 3.17 Permission will not be unreasonably withheld and will be assessed based on scheme standards and consultations. Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Area Housing Teams, who are responsible for any discretionary decisions in line with the management of the wider estate or scheme.
- 3.18 If the tenant is dissatisfied with the decision, they have the option to request a review by the Area Housing Manager, or by an independent manager who has not been involved in the original decision.

Animal Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour

- 3.19 Tenants are responsible for ensuring that their pets do not cause a nuisance to neighbours or their visitors. Pet-related nuisances include, but are not limited to:
- dog fouling
 - excessive noise
 - property damage.
- 3.20 Dogs must be always kept on a lead in communal areas and walkways. Pets must not be used to cause harassment, alarm, or distress.
- 3.21 In accordance with the Housing Act 1996, Section 218A, as introduced by the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Act 2003, social landlords, including the Group, are required to develop and publish policies and procedures for addressing ASB. Any incidents of ASB related to pet nuisance or dangerous dogs will be addressed in line with the Group's ASB Policy.

Breeding and Accidental Ownership

- 3.22 Tenants may not breed and/or sell animals on premises that the Group owns or manages (including garages and outbuildings).
- 3.23 The Group encourages customers to avoid becoming 'Accidental Owners' (those who acquire pets from friends or neighbours) without fully considering the animal's welfare needs and their ability to meet them.
- 3.24 Where permission is granted to keep a dog, cat, or rabbit, it is recommended that the pet be neutered. This helps ensure that the animal cannot breed and contributes to controlling the pet population.

Pets left behind

- 3.25 Pets must not be left unattended for a duration that prevents the owner from meeting the animal's welfare needs as outlined in the Animal Welfare Act 2006 (s.9).
- 3.26 If the Group believes that a pet in the property has been neglected or abandoned, officers will report the matter to local police and the relevant animal welfare organisation.
- 3.27 In cases where a tenant is temporarily hospitalised or placed into care, and an animal is left behind, the Group will contact the appropriate Local Authority under the National Assistance Act 1948 (s.48) to ensure the animal's welfare is attended to.

Partnership working

- 3.28 The Group recognises that, in most cases, addressing animal-related issues is best handled through partnership working. Where appropriate, the Group will collaborate with the Local Authority, Police, RSPCA, or any other relevant organization to achieve the most effective resolution.
- 3.29 If a tenant fails to act responsibly, the Group will make efforts to resolve the issue amicably. Should these efforts prove unsuccessful, enforcement action may be taken. This could include professional mediation, contacting a statutory authority such as the RSPCA for assistance, serving an injunction, limiting the number of pets at the property, withdrawing pet permission, or pursuing possession of the property.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Manager responsibilities

- 4.1 Housing Operations managers are responsible for ensuring that this policy and associated documents are complied with.

Colleague responsibilities

- 4.2 Employees are responsible for following the requirements of this policy and associated documents and escalating matters of concern to their managers.

Customer responsibilities

- 4.3 Tenants wishing to keep pets in their homes must comply with the requirements of the policy.

- 4.4 Tenants are encouraged to report any potential non-compliance to the Group.

5. Training

- 5.1 The Head of Housing Operations will ensure that relevant staff receive training to assess pet ownership applications in accordance with this policy.
- 5.2 Frontline staff responsible for handling animal-related matters will be trained in key legislation on animal welfare, as well as the application of the law and Group policies in enforcing tenancy agreements.

Section 3: Legal and regulatory

6. Legislation

- The Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Animal Health & Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006
- Anti- Social Behaviour, Crime, and Policing Act 2014
- National Assistance Act 1948
- Equality Act 2010

7. References

- None

8. Definitions

The Group	Progress Housing Group Limited (and subsidiary companies specified within the entities section)
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9. Associated policies and procedures

Document reference	Name of document
GRPOLHM21EIA	Equality impact assessment
GRPOLHM21DPIA	Data Protection Impact Assessment
GRPOLHM15	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy
GPOLHM28	Complaints, Feedback and Redress Policy

10. Equality Impact Assessment

- 10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and the outcome deemed to be of low risk to individuals within protected characteristic groups. No changes were required to the policy as a result of the EIA.

11. Data protection

- 11.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessment has been undertaken and no changes were required to the policy as a result.

12. Customer Voice and influence

- 12.1 The Tenants' Voice has been taken into consideration within the Community Chat, which listens to the concerns and issues of tenants and communities. During this engagement, no specific concerns regarding pets have been raised.
- 12.2 Concerns and complaints regarding pets are addressed by the Customer Contact Centre and Area Teams. The primary issue reported pertains to dangerous dogs, which is covered within the existing policy.

13. Monitoring and review

- 13.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years unless an earlier review is prompted by an external or internal change.