



PET POLICY



Pet Policy			
Last Reviewed	May 2026	Next Review	May 2029
Responsible Officer	Chief Operations Officer		

1. Policy Statement

This policy sets out the approach to pets and animals within properties managed by Freebridge Community Housing. It aims to balance customers' enjoyment of pets with the need to ensure safety, cleanliness, and the peaceful enjoyment of homes by all customers.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All tenants, leaseholders, shared owners, and licensees
- All residential properties managed by the Association
- All types of domestic pets and animals kept within the property or communal areas

3. Legal and Regulatory Context

This policy has regard to:

- Tenancy agreements and lease conditions
- The Animal Welfare Act 2006
- The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (as amended)
- Equality Act 2010 (including assistance animals)
- When phase 2 of The Renters' Rights Act (2025) comes into force (scheduled for 2027) this policy will require review to ensure it is compliant

4. General Principles

- Customers may keep pets where this is consistent with their tenancy agreement and this policy.
- Permission may be required depending on the type of property and pet.
- The Association will not unreasonably withhold consent for pets.
- Customers are responsible for the behaviour and welfare of their pets at all times

- We will assess requests consistently using a standard checklist, record decisions and conditions on the tenancy file, and review conditions if issues arise. The form at appendix A should be completed and sent to communitiesteam@freebridge.org.uk We aim to respond to permission requests within 15 working days.

5. Permission for Pets

5.1 Where permission is required

Written permission is required for:

- Flats or maisonettes
- Properties with shared or communal entrances
- Larger animals

Permission for pets in ground floor flats and maisonettes will not be unreasonably refused if there is access to outside space. The same applies to indoor cats in any flat or maisonette. Permission for dogs in flats or maisonettes above ground floor would not normally be approved but the Association retains the right to exercise discretion in such cases.

5.2 Where permission is not required

Permission is not usually required for:

- Small caged animals (e.g. hamsters, gerbils)
- Fish

5.3 Applying for Permission

Customers must provide:

- Type, breed, and number of pets
- Size and age of the animal
- Evidence of vaccinations and microchipping (if requested)
- Details of how the pet will be managed

The Association will consider:

- Property size and suitability
- Impact on neighbours
- Previous history of pet ownership (if known)

5.4 Number of pets permitted

The Association will determine the number of pets permitted at a property having regard to the type and size of the property, the type and size of the animal, the welfare needs of the animal, and the likely impact on neighbours and communal areas. As a general guide, permission will normally be granted for no more than one dog or two cats in a household. Small, caged animals and fish will usually be permitted in reasonable numbers, provided they can be kept safely and hygienically

and do not cause damage, nuisance, or welfare concerns. Requests to keep pets above these levels will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Permission, where granted, will apply only to the number of pets approved by the Association, and any additional pets will require a new request for permission. This clause does not apply to assistance animals, which will be considered in accordance with section 6 of this policy.

6. Assistance Animals

6.1 Assistance dogs (e.g. guide dogs, hearing dogs) are permitted in all properties and do not require permission. Reasonable adjustments will be made in line with the Equality Act 2010.

6.2 Emotional Support Animals are not classified as a separate legal category in the United Kingdom. While there is no legal obligation to give permission to keep a pet in these circumstances, Freebridge will consider requests on a case-by-case basis where:

- a) The owner has a disability under the Equality Act
- b) There is medical evidence that the domestic animal genuinely helps with that condition
- c) That the Association is satisfied that there will be little or no impact on neighbours/property

7. Responsibilities of Pet Owners

Customers must:

- Ensure pets are well cared for and not neglected
- Keep pets under control at all times
- Prevent pets from causing nuisance, noise, or distress
- Clean up after pets in communal and public areas
- Ensure dogs are kept on leads in communal areas
- Prevent damage to the property and communal areas
- Ensure pets do not foul indoor communal spaces
- Ensure that the property and garden contains pets within its boundaries; customers will need to bear the cost of additional boundary security e.g. higher fencing

8. Prohibited and Restricted Animals

The following are not permitted:

- Dangerous or banned dog breeds under UK law
- Wild or exotic animals
- Livestock (e.g. chickens, cockerals, goats, pigs etc.) unless explicitly permitted

The Association will refuse permission where:

- The property is unsuitable
- The animal poses a risk to others
- The request involves making structural changes to the building or garden e.g. aviaries, pigeon lofts or fishponds
- Pets are being bred for commercial purposes

9. Nuisance and Complaints

Complaints relating to pets may include:

- Excessive noise (e.g. barking)
- Aggressive behaviour
- Fouling
- Damage to property
- Repeated straying
- Keeping more than the approved number of pets at the property

The Association will:

- Investigate complaints
- Work with customers to resolve issues informally where possible (For low-level issues, we will seek improvements first by agreeing these with the pet owner and signposting to advice e.g., training, behaviour support)
- Take enforcement action where necessary
- Require the customer to reduce the number of pets kept at the property to the number approved by the Association within a reasonable timescale
- We may work with partner agencies to resolve welfare, nuisance or ASB issues

10. Breach of Policy

Where a customer breaches this policy, the Association may:

- Withdraw permission to keep a pet
- Require the pet to be removed
- Take tenancy enforcement action in line with the tenancy agreement

11. Animal Welfare Concerns

Where there are concerns about animal welfare, the Association may:

- Report concerns to relevant authorities (e.g. RSPCA)
- Take action where poor conditions affect the property or neighbours

12. End of Tenancy

Customers must:

- Ensure the property is free from pet damage
- Carry out or pay for any cleaning or repairs required due to pets

13. Pets Left Behind

If a pet is left in a property or the customer is unable to care for it (e.g., hospital admission), the customer (or next of kin/emergency contact) must arrange care immediately. In emergencies where an animal is at risk, we may arrange access and contact appropriate agencies. Any costs may be recharged where permitted.

14. Appeals

Customers may appeal decisions relating to pet permission or enforcement. Appeals should be made in writing within 14 days of the decision.

15. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years or sooner if required due to legislative or operational changes.

Appendix A – Application Form (Template)

Pet application form	
Tenant(s) name and address	
Type and number of pets	
Please state the breed of each pet you are applying for	
Age of pet(s)	
Height of pet(s)	
Weight of pet(s)	
Is your pet an assistance dog?	
Do you have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010?	
If yes to above question, please provide further information and explain if (and how) you rely on your pet in relation to your disability	
Do you need to make any physical changes to your property to accommodate your pet(s)?	
Emergency contact for pet care	
If you are in a flat or maisonette please state the floor level	
Are you seeking to breed pets for commercial purposes?	