PET POLICY & PROCEDURE

All the Co-operative's Policies and Procedures are available in large print, braille, audio or other languages on request.

Please ask a member of staff if you would like a version in a different format.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST	
Policy Guardian:	PAUL MURPHY
Author:	ELAINE HYSLOP
Approved by Director:	18 APRIL 2026
Effective From:	25 APRIL 2026
Date of Next Review:	APRIL 2031
Diversity compliant:	YES
Equality Impact Assessment:	LOW
Data Protection compliant:	YES
Health & Safety compliant:	YES
Procedure implemented:	YES
SDM system changes made:	
Training Completed:	
Posted on SharePoint:	
Posted on website:	

CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

2.0 POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

4.0 TENANTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.0 RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

6.0 GUIDANCE ON PERMITTED AND NON-PERMITTED ANIMALS

7.0 RESTRICTIONS ON PET OWNERSHIP

8.0 PET MANAGEMENT ISSUES

9.0 ANIMAL NEGLECT OR CRUELTY

10.0 LEGAL PROCEDURE

11.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

12.0 APPEALS / COMPLAINTS

13.0 DATA PROTECTION

14.0 EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY

15.0 POLICY REVIEW

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Co-operative recognises that tenants have the right to keep a pet(s) within their home, provided they are looked after, do not cause a nuisance or disturbance to their neighbours and do not cause a health or hygiene risk.

We acknowledge that keeping a pet(s) has proven to have a beneficial effect on the physical health and social wellbeing of a person and can be important family members and make a house a home.

Pet ownership can help tenants maintain a healthy and active lifestyle, give a sense of purpose, and other significant benefits to a person's wellbeing.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that tenants and their pets can live together safely and happily within their homes and neighbourhoods. This is achieved through promotion of responsible pet ownership and fostering trust between the Co-operative and tenants.

However, it is also the case that irresponsible pet ownership can cause an issue for neighbours and suffering for the animals.

For this reason, the Co-operative has a policy on pet ownership that details the conditions that apply when permission is sought to keep a pet, and the position the Co-operative will take if these conditions are breached.

2.0 POLICY AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for allowing and encouraging responsible pet ownership in Co-operative properties and to ensure that:-

- Tenants who keep pets do so in such a way as to prevent adverse impact on other tenants' enjoyment of their homes;
- The keeping of pets within the Co-operative's tenancies has no detrimental effect on either a particular tenancy, common area or neighbourhood;
- The welfare of the animal is considered when taking any decision;
- All tenants are treated equally, and no groups within the tenant population are suffering from any form of discrimination or harassment in relation to the operation of this policy.

3.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Many pieces of relevant legislation inform this policy with the main areas to be considered are:

- **Equalities Act 2010 –** this Act requires that the Co-operative does not discriminate against any person identified as having one of nine protected characteristics.

- **Animal Health and Welfare Act (Scotland) 2006 –** this Act places a duty of care on pet owners to provide for their animal's basic needs. This means to provide food and water, veterinary treatment and a suitable living environment.

- **Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 –** this Act makes it an offence to keep specific types of dogs in the UK. These are: Pit Bull Terrier, Dogo Argentino, Fila Braziliero, and Japanese Tosa.

  Section 3 of this Act applies to all dogs, and makes it an offence to have a dog which is dangerously out of control. This includes incidents where there is simply a fear that injury may occur. Dog owners found guilty under this Act can be imprisoned for up to 6 months, be fined up to £5000, and their dog may have to be destroyed.

- **Dog Fouling (Scotland) Act 2003 –** this Act makes it an offence to allow a dog to foul on any public land. Owners can be issued with fixed penalties by the Local Authorities and the Police.

- **Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010** - this Act gives the Local Authority the power to impose Dog Control Notices to put and keep a dog under proper control.

- **Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 –** this Act contains a list of all wild animals which are considered dangerous and require a license from the Local Authority.

- **Human Rights Act 1998 –** this Act protects the right for someone to be able to enjoy a home they already have. In this instance, failure to ensure that there are proper measures in place to avoid inappropriate pet ownership presents a risk that neighbouring homes may have their rights breached.

- **The Common Law Duty of Care -** It is a commonly held view that cats have a 'right to roam' wherever they wish. This view is largely based upon the fact that certain duties imposed upon the owners of dogs and livestock to keep their animals under control – the Road Traffic and Dangerous Dogs Acts – do not apply to cat owners. The law in these respects recognises that, by their nature, cats are less likely to cause injury to people or damage to property than some other animals. However, cat owners do have a general duty at law to take reasonable care to ensure that their cats do not cause injury to people or damage to property. In practice, cases involving damage to property or injury to people by cats are few and far between.

4.0 TENANTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In accordance with this Policy tenants have the right, subject to the conditions below, to keep normally a maximum of two domestic pet(s). Section 2.6 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement which states that "no dogs, cats, birds or other animals will be kept in the house or any part of the premises of which the house forms a part (including outhouses and garden ground), without the prior written consent of the Co-operative".

An application form is required to be completed and returned to the Co-operative to enable the request to be assessed.

Should permission be granted tenants will be expected to take all reasonable steps to supervise and keep such pets under control and ensure they do not cause a nuisance to neighbours or deterioration to the condition of the property, common parts or the surrounding neighbourhood.

This includes fouling, smell and noise from the animal. The Co-operative will recharge any tenant for cost incurred by them as a result of damage caused and / or the cleaning up of any mess left by an animal.

5.0 RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP

The Co-operative expects any tenant who owns a pet to ensure the animal is well cared for and is kept under proper control both inside and outside of the property.

In order to ensure this the Co-operative insists that:

- Pet owners do not allow their pets to roam in communal areas (outdoor cats are an exception);
- Dogs are kept on their lead at all times when outside the property and in communal areas;
- Owners do not leave animal waste or cat litter trays in communal areas. Reasonable care must be taken to ensure that pets do not foul in a neighbour's property, within the vicinity of the house or in any communal area. Should they do so they must remove it immediately and dispose of it appropriately;
- Pets are not allowed to cause noise nuisance, fouling or damage, either within the tenancy or the neighbourhood;
- When outside, all dogs must wear an ID collar and ID tag with the owner's name and address inscribed on it. Certain dogs are exempt from having to wear a collar with a dog tag. They are:
  - Any dog registered with the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association;
  - Any working dog whilst in the process of carrying out its duties
- There is no intentional breeding of pets in Co-operative properties;
- There is no prolonged tethering of any sort of animal in any area;
- From April 2016 all dogs are microchipped, as required by law.

It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure they comply at all times with any relevant legislation relating to their pet or pets.

6.0 GUIDANCE ON PERMITTED AND NON-PRMITTED ANIMALS

The Co-operative will not unreasonably refuse to grant permission to a tenant who wishes to keep a pet(s). However, there are a number of conditions that apply to pet ownership.

- **Number of pets per household**

Tenants should normally have no more than 1 or 2 pets depending on size and type of animal.

The Co-operative will not allow you to keep pigeons either in your home, garden or backcourt and the erection of pigeon loft is prohibited.

Permission must be requested for large fish tanks especially where the tenant lives in flatted property.

Within Law View retirement housing complex tenants are only permitted to keep one pet.

Permission will not be granted for a tenant to keep livestock or farm animals, for example sheep, goats, pigs, cattle, horse, chickens, ducks etc.

This is intended purely as guidance and each case should be considered on its individual merits.

- **Permitted Animals**

The Co-operative keeps a register of pets (re-introduced 2018); written permission is required before a tenant can keep any pets in their home. Permission will normally be granted for small domestic animals and birds.

A domestic pet is:

- Dog
- Cat
- Fish
- Bird (caged)
- Rodent (hamster, gerbil, rat or mouse)
- Small non-venomous reptile (e.g. terrapin, tortoise)
- Non-venomous insect or amphibian (e.g.newt)
- Rabbit

- **Service Animals**

Service animals are animals trained to perform tasks that assist people with disabilities. Service animals may also be referred to as assistance animals, assist animals, support animals, or helper animals depending on the animal's function.

Permission will normally be granted for tenants who request permission to bring a service animal into their home, on condition that the animal has been through the necessary training provided by a recognised body. Failure to allow for this could constitute a breach of equalities legislation.

- **Emergency Service Animals**

Any animal that has been trained to undertake tasks by emergency services shall be subject to the same terms and conditions as Service Animals.

- **Permission will not be granted**

For farm animals (this is in line with Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) guidance), wild animals registered under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976, or dogs specified in the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991. These currently include:

- Pit Bull Terrier
- Japanese Tosa
- Dogo Argentino
- Fila Braziliero
- XL Bully

The Act also extends to a dog being considered illegal if it shares physical characteristics with one of the banned breeds.

This list is not exhaustive, and permission must be sought for any pets not listed. Keeping of any animals listed under the schedule to the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 is not permission under any circumstances. Permission will not be granted for livestock or captive bred Schedule 4 birds.

Permission can be granted for dogs prohibited under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, provided they are registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs. Owners must have a Certificate of Exemption and follow rules which can be found on the Scottish Government website. Tenants must notify the Co-operative if they own an exempted dog.

- **Welfare of the Animals**

Staff will always consider the welfare of the animal when giving permission to tenants to have them in their homes.

Tenants will be held responsible for the behaviour of any pets owned by them, living with or visiting them.

7.0 RESTRICTIONS ON PET OWNERSHIP

We may place reasonable restrictions for pet ownership under the following circumstances:

- Where necessary, on the number, type or size of pets (larger animals or multiple pets) we will take account of the property type, welfare of the animal and the impact on the wider community.

- In exceptional circumstances where there have been persistent problems with nuisance pets in the area over a period of at least 12 months, and all other measures have been unsuccessful, it may be decided there is a restriction on the number of pets per household.

New tenants moving into an area with restricted pet ownership are made aware of this restriction when an offer of accommodation is made. However, we will show compassion and understanding in these circumstances and assess each case on its own merit.

Any restriction should only be proposed once every other possible course of action has been exhausted. It should be clear and demonstrate a link between the issue and why it is necessary to restrict ownership.

These restrictions do not apply to service animal permissions.

8.0 PET MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Failure to take appropriate steps to manage pets and pet behaviour is a breach of the conditions contained within Section 2.6 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

Irresponsible pet owners will be held accountable by the Co-operative. Animal related neighbourhood issues are normally classed as a category "C" anti-social behaviour complaint, and staff aim to resolve cases in 20 working days. Housing Officers will work together with other agencies in order to resolve any issues or problems involving animals to prevent an escalation of the case. If the complaint becomes ongoing and persistent this could escalate to a more serious anti-social issue.

The Housing Officers will liaise with the following agencies in an attempt to prevent this happening (some examples are):

- Animal Welfare Officer
- Animal Welfare Services, North Lanarkshire Council
- Environmental Health Department
- Police Scotland
- Animal protection organisations, such as the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA)

Common pet management issues include fouling, noise, strays, abandoned animals, and cases of animal neglect.

If the Co-operative witnesses or receives complaints regarding failure to comply with the terms of this Policy, the Housing Officer will raise their concerns with the tenant and re-iterate their responsibilities and action that may be taken should they fail to comply.

Should the tenant fail to take the appropriate action, the Co-operative will letter the tenant to formally advise them they are in breach of their Tenancy Agreement and of the consequences should they continue to fail to comply with these conditions.

The Co-operative will consider the best possible action against a tenant where there are persistent problems involving pet(s) causing damage or nuisance. This could result in legal action against a tenant but this is viewed as a last resort. However all reasonable alternative actions are taken before this is considered and each case will be considered on its own merit.

Where appropriate community based solutions should be sought that involve partnership working with relevant agencies.

In a situation where a tenant has a pet but is continually failing to take adequate steps to control or care for the pet then the permission may be withdrawn, and the tenant may be required to rehome the pet.

9.0 ANIMAL NEGLECT OR CRUELTY

In the case of animal neglect or abuse the Co-operative will contact animal welfare organisations i.e. SSPCA and if deemed necessary Police Scotland.

10.0 LEGAL PROCEDURE

A Notice of Proceedings for Recovery of Possession will require to be issued for a breach of tenancy conditions where a tenant fails to control or care for a pet(s) and where permission has been withdrawn and they have failed to action this.

Should the tenant fail to remove the pet(s) from the property the case will be referred to the Co-operative's solicitor for court action to be raised.

11.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Requests to keep pets, permission processes, and issues are monitored by the Co-operative's Housing Management Team and will include:

- The maintenance of a pet permission data base (developed 2018 on SDM)
- The recording, investigation and finalisation of complaints received
- Review of all processes relating to the operation of the Pet Policy to take into account changes in pet ownership trends and behaviours
- Include any common issues in regards to pets within our quarterly newsletters

12.0 APPEALS / COMPLAINTS

Any tenant dissatisfied with a decision relating to this Policy and or the removal of a pet must submit a written appeal to the Co-operative within 28 days of receiving the decision.

The Co-operative will review the appeal and provide the tenant with the result of their decision in writing,

If the tenant is still dissatisfied, recourse can be sought through the Co-operative's Complaints Policy and Procedure.

13.0 DATA PROTECTION

The Co-operative will process information and data contained within the application in accordance with its policies and procedures relating to the General Data Protection Regulations.

Information regarding how data will be used and the basis for processing data is provided in the Co-operative's Fair Processing Notice.

14.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

This policy complies with the Co-operatives policies on Equality and Diversity.

15.0 POLICY REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed on a 5 yearly basis or earlier if the legislation changes, new guidance or to ensure that its aims and good practice are being met.