



Housing & Neighbourhood Services

Pest Control Policy

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Pest Control Policy

1.0 Introduction

Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA) recognise that properties can get infested by various pests such as rodents, ants, fleas, wasps, bees and other insects at various time for various reasons

2.0 Policy Aims

The key aims of this Policy are to:

- clearly set out ACHA's position in dealing with pest in and around the property
- Provide advice to tenants on how to get rid of pests
- To promptly respond to any pest infestation, in any of our common areas

3.0 Key Points of the Policy

The Local Managers and the Repairs & Maintenance Service Development Manager will be responsible for the implementation of the policy.

ACHA Tenants , and owners who have common rights, are responsible for the removal of pest infestations within their property or garden, including common areas, unless there is clear evidence that the pests have arisen because ACHA has failed or neglected to fulfil its responsibility as the Landlord . Where a property is infested with a protected species, discretion will be used in terms of ACHA organising appropriate work.

ACHA will take responsibility for dealing with an infestation of Woodworm (or similar wood boring, destructive insects) within a tenant's property or communal areas.

ACHA will encourage Tenants with a pest infestation to deal with the problem using proprietary products available from hardware stores or to use the services of Argyll and Bute Council's Operational Services or Private Pest Control Companies. It is likely that there will be a cost for these services.

If the Tenant does not deal with an infestation, and as a consequence, neighbouring properties become infested due to the tenants neglect, ACHA will address the whole problem and costs associated with this will be charged to the tenant who neglected their responsibility to remove pests from their property in the first instance.

ACHA will provide tenants experiencing difficulties with a pest infestation with advice on the causes of pest infestations and practical measures to remove the pests from the property. The advice will consist of verbal advice, leaflet and a page on the Website.

4.0 Monitoring Performance Targets and Reporting

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ACHA will respond to a report of an infestation in a communal area within 5 working days.

5.0 Training

ACHA recognises that to effectively deliver the Pest Control Policy it is necessary to commit resources to train and develop both Committee Members and Staff in the relevant operating procedures in order to meet the policy requirements.

6.0 Equal Opportunities

ACHA will ensure that in implementing this Policy it will not unfairly discriminate against any individual, household or group on the grounds of sex or marital status, on race grounds, or on the grounds of disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

7.0 Policy Review and Tenant Involvement

This policy will be reviewed in consultation with the Board, tenants and staff. Thereafter it will be approved by the Board of Management. It will be reviewed every three years unless amendment is prompted by a change in legislation, operational requirements or customer feedback.

8.0 The Legal Framework

This Policy does not relate to the implementation of any specific Legislation

9.0 Related Policies and Documents

Repairs and Maintenance Policy

Recharge Procedure

Customer Care Policy and Procedure

Pest Control Policy

Appendix 1

Dealing With Common Household Pests

Dealing with Pests

Our dry and heated properties make them attractive places for a variety of common household pests.

Some pests can be a risk to your health and safety and it is essential that you are able to recognise problems and know what to do if your home is affected.

You are responsible for the removal of pest infestations within your home or garden unless there is clear evidence that the pests have arisen because the ACHA has failed or neglected to fulfil its responsibility as the Landlord.

Where a Tenant does not deal with an infestation and as a consequence neighbouring properties become infested due to the tenants neglect, ACHA will address the whole problem and costs associated with this will be charged to the tenant who neglected their responsibility to remove pest from their home in the first instance.

Below is a guide and advice on how to deal with some of the most common household pests (it should be noted that some species are protected):

If you intend to use any proprietary products available to deal with pests please ensure that you follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully, as certain chemicals can be dangerous.

- **Mice**

Mice will move in to properties where they can get shelter, food and water. They normally move into dead spaces where they will not be disturbed. They are extremely good climbers with exceptionally sharp teeth.

They can do significant damage to building materials and have caused fire by chewing through cables. They use the same pathways and can be detected by smear marks by their fur rubbing against surfaces, fresh droppings or gnaw marks.

You will be aware you have mice as you will see droppings on your surfaces and in cupboards and you will probably also hear them scratching in the property. You may also notice that various items have been gnawed.

Prevent an infestation by:

- Not leaving food out overnight
- Not leaving uneaten pet food over night
- Remove all spillages
- Empty waste bins frequently
- Store food in rodent proof containers
- Clear all refuse in the garden area
- Sealing cracks (mice can squeeze through a gap down to 5 mm).

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Treat by trapping or baiting but do not leave bait down for extended periods.

Argyll and Bute Council Operational Services will be able to provide a professional treatment service for a fee, other service providers are available.

- **Rats**

Rats are a hazard to public health as they can transmit a number of potentially fatal diseases as well as bacteria, viruses and parasites.

They will scavenge discarded food as well as scavenging in drains and sewers. They burrow into soil, compost heaps and under sheds and the likes. They can squeeze into small openings and have very sharp teeth.

They are generally difficult to spot due to their nocturnal nature and the sighting of a rat by day may indicate a sizeable infestations.

Signs of an infestation consist of droppings, gnaw marks, runs and smear marks.

Prevent an infestation by:

- Ensuring all drainage is in good condition
- Bins are emptied regularly and refuse is not allowed to accumulate
- Seal crack in property
- Placing bird food on table and not the ground

The infestation can be treated by baiting.

Argyll and Bute Council Operational Services will be able to provide a professional treatment service for a fee, other service providers are available.

- **Fleas**

Fleas are a parasite that lives off warm blooded animals. Different species live off different animals.

There has been an increase in numbers in recent years due to pet owners neglecting to clean their pets bedding properly.

You would become aware of fleas in your house as you would have bites on your legs; you wouldn't typically find them much higher than your knees.

Fleas can be treated and controlled by regular cleaning of the property with a vacuum cleaner to prevent breeding followed by placing an insecticide on the carpet.

Pets should be treated with suitable veterinary products.

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Argyll and Bute Council Operational Services will be able to provide a professional treatment service for a fee, other service providers are available.

- **Birds/Squirrels**

Some birds and Squirrels can occasionally take up residence in roof spaces. You may only realise that you have birds in your house if you see a nest in the eaves of the house.

Argyll and Bute Council Operational Services will be able to provide a professional treatment service for a fee, other service providers are available.

ACHA will make arrangement to close over any access points into the building

- **Bats**

Bats are a protected species. They are a flying nocturnal mammal. They eat insects and hibernate in winter. They can get into buildings through very small space. If you have bats in your building please contact ACHA for further advice.

You will become aware of bats as you will hear the scratching in the loft space and can occasionally see droppings. It is possible that you will become aware of a smell. The penalty for removing a bat is £4000 per bat and if you have bats in the winter and they leave in the summer you are prevented from blocking up the entrance back to the nest.

- **Wasps**

These are flying; stinging insects and are active from spring through to autumn. They collect food when out to feed others back at their nest. Wasps particularly like fruit such as apples, pears and plums. They often build nests in the eaves of buildings, roof spaces and chimneys.

You will become very quickly aware of the presence of wasps by the sound they make and they should be dealt with as soon as possible as the nest can vary in size from 5 to 5000 wasps.

Some people react to stings and medical advice should be sought if you suffer and allergic reaction from a sting.

Treating wasps can be dangerous and protective clothing should be used to prevent stings.

The nest can be treated with an insecticide available from your local hardware store. Treatment should be done the evening when activity is low. The ingoing wasps carry in the insecticide in to the nest and control can be achieved within a few hours.

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Argyll and Bute Council Operational Services will be able to provide a professional treatment service for a fee, other service providers are available.

- **Bees**

Bees are also flying; stinging insects active from Spring through to Autumn. You will become aware of the bees by the buzzing sound they make.

Again, some people react to stings and medical advice should be sought if you suffer and allergic reaction from a sting.

Bees sometime swarm when there is more than one queen in a nest. In the event of a swarm of Bees you should contact Argyll and Bute Operational Services for advice.

- **Cockroaches**

Cockroaches are an insect with large antennae and 2 pairs of wings. They can give off an unpleasant odour which can give people an allergic skin reaction.

They like warm humid conditions where they have a source of food and shelter. They are nocturnal and spend the day behind sinks and at the back of cupboards. Cockroaches are attracted to dirty kitchens so good hygiene is essential. You will probably hear them walking over surfaces but you are more likely to see them.

Prevention is by high standards of hygiene to prevent them having access to a source of food. Crack should be sealed.

Cockroaches can be killed using an appropriate insecticide from a hardware store.

Argyll and Bute Council Operational Services will be able to provide a professional treatment service for a fee, other service providers are available.

- **Ants**

There are 41 varieties of ants in the UK. They generally nest out of doors but enter homes through small gaps in search of sweet foods. Black ants are the most common ants that enter the house and the main reason for this is that they are looking for food. Good housekeeping prevents this.

Treatment consists of applying a crawling insect insecticide at the entrance of the nest and where they enter the property to try and create a band of insecticide that the ants have to cross.

- **Slugs/Snails**

Slugs and snails feed on a variety of plants and decaying matter. They move by a muscular foot which secrete mucus to allow the animal to slide along. This later dries out and leaves the tell tale silvery trail. They are most active at night or on cloudy/wet days. They hibernate during winter. If you have slugs or snails you will know as you will see the trail along the surfaces.

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Slugs and snail can be treated with proprietary treatment from your local hardware store. You should also try to identify how they are getting into your home.

- **Earwigs/Woodlice and Silverfish**

Earwigs are dark brown about 14mm long, have wings but never fly and normally active at night. These infestations are caused by vegetation close to entrances and can be prevented by good housekeeping. They are naturally occurring and most people are not even aware of their presence.

Woodlice are slate grey in colour and have 7 pairs of legs. They are a crustacean.

Silverfish are a slender shiny wingless insect about 10mm long and have 3 bristles at the end of their body.

These 3 insects all prefer moist damp places. They are dealt with by removing the damp conditions and applying a proprietary residual insecticide.