

Providing Quality, Affordable, Sustainable Homes



PET POLICY

If you need this policy in another format, for example larger print, audio format, Braille, Dyslexia friendly or in another language, please contact us.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines Argyll Community Housing Association's approach to promoting responsible pet ownership.
- 1.2 The intention of this policy is to provide our tenants who wish to have pets with guidance and advice on what pets we allow in our tenancies and how to keep and care for them responsibly.
- 1.3 The aim of this policy is to provide a consistent approach to pet ownership and a balance to ensure that pet ownership does not infringe on the rights of other tenants and to the peaceful enjoyment of their home.
- 1.4 This policy aims to provide clarity on our approach to pet ownership, including which type and how many pets are allowed, how to seek permission to keep a pet, the grounds on which permission may be refused or revoked and how to be a responsible pet owner.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all occupancy types including Scottish Secure tenancies, Short Scottish Secure tenancies, Occupancy agreements, Travelling Persons Site leases and any special leases.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all tenants who keep pets in their tenancies or who wish to keep pets in their tenancies.
- 2.3 This policy does not apply to service dogs such as guide dogs.

3. Legal and Strategic Context

- 3.1 ACHA will comply with relevant legislation including:
 - Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004
 - Housing (Scotland) Acts 2001 & 2014
 - Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and amendments
 - Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
 - Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006
 - Microchipping of Dogs (Scotland) Regulations 2016
 - Equality Act 2010
- 3.2 This policy aligns with other ACHA policies including:
 - Estate Management Policy
 - Anti-social Behaviour Policy
 - Child and Adult Protection Policies
 - Home Argyll Allocations Policy

4. Policy Statement

4.1 The Association recognises that keeping a pet can offer significant benefits to our tenants. It is our intention to enable our tenants to benefit from the positive aspects of pet ownership while ensuring that consideration has been given to the commitment and responsibility required.

4.2 Section 2.5 of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement outlines the Tenant responsibilities which allow tenants to keep up to two domestic pets, subject to approval.

Pets must be legally permitted, well-controlled, and must not cause nuisance, damage, or hygiene issues. Tenants are responsible for cleaning up after pets and may be asked to remove them if problems arise.

4.3 Tenants are not required to apply for permission to keep smaller pets in small numbers these include:-

- Fish, reptiles or amphibians which are kept in one tank with a capacity of less than 21 litres
- Small domesticated rodents such as gerbils, chinchillas, guinea pigs, rabbits and hamsters where no more than one pair will be kept.
- Small domesticated birds such as parrots, cockatiels, finches, canaries, budgies and macaws providing no more than one pair are kept.

4.4 To help keep everyone safe including pets, permission will not be granted for the following animals:-

- Any animal or bird that requires a license under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 and subsequent amendments to this act;
- Any dog that requires a license under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and subsequent amendments to this Act;
- Any dogs prohibited under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 which includes:-
 - Pit Bull Terrier
 - Japanese Tosa
 - Dogo Argentino
 - Fila Brasileiro
- Any hybrid of a domestic dog and an animal identified in the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 that requires licensing for example a dog/wolf hybrid;
- XL Bully dogs not meeting Government legislation, meaning the owners must have owned the dog prior to February 2024 and have an exemption certificate, as per the Dangerous dogs (designated types) Scotland Order 2024. Third party liability insurance is also required by owners of XL Bully dogs;

- Any hybrid of a domestic cat and an animal identified in the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 that requires licensing;
 - Any type of bird of prey such as an owl, eagle, buzzard, kestrel etc.
 - Farm animals such as sheep, cows, pigs, goats;
 - Any type of primate including all species of monkeys;
 - Horses, ponies and donkeys.
- 4.5 Irresponsible pet ownership can lead to anti-social behaviour, nuisance and impact the quality of life for other tenants and for the local community. Anti-social behaviour arising from irresponsible pet ownership will be addressed in accordance with our policies.
- 4.6 Irresponsible or neglectful pet ownership can also impact on the quality of life of the pet. ACHA will not tolerate cruel or neglectful pet ownership in our tenancies.
- 4.7 Tenants are required to apply in writing for permission to keep pets in our properties.
- 4.8 When assessing the application all information provided will be taken into account and also the potential effect on neighbours and the community, before permission will be given. We will not refuse requests without good reason.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Director of Customer Experience: Oversees the scheduled review of the policy and ensures timely updates when necessary.
- 5.2 Regional Manager: Responsible for reviewing the policy and ensuring appropriate measures are in place for its implementation.
- 5.3 Operational Managers: Ensure effective implementation of the policy and its supporting procedures within their teams. They must also ensure staff are informed through induction, training, or e-learning.
- 5.4 All Employees: Must familiarise themselves with the policy and its procedures, comply with its requirements, and complete any associated training.

6. Staff Development

- 6.1 ACHA is committed to ensuring staff are trained and informed about this policy and its supporting procedures.

7. Performance Management

- 7.1 Tenant satisfaction surveys and regulatory indicators will be used to monitor the impact of pet-related issues.

8. Policy Governance

- Owner: Housing and Neighbourhood Services
- Review Cycle: Every five years or earlier if required
- Next Review Date: 10/11/2030

9. Complaints

- 9.1 Complaints about the application of this policy will be handled in accordance with ACHA's complaint handling procedure.

Reference – HNS_17		
Policy Name – Pet Policy		
Approving body - Policy, Performance and Operations Committee	Next Review Date	10/11/2030
Date Equality Impact Assessment completed	13/10/2025	

Appendix A – Operational Guidance

The Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement sets out the conditions of use of property including keeping of pets summarised here.

A1. Application Process

- Tenants must apply in writing for permission.
- ACHA will assess applications within 10 working days.
- Appeals must be submitted within 14 days and will be reviewed by the Regional Manager

A4. Assessment Criteria

- Potential for nuisance or distress
- Suitability of accommodation
- History of pet-related issues
- Intent for commercial breeding

A5. Conditions of Ownership

- Microchipping and ID tags for dogs
- Control in shared areas
- Faeces disposal
- Damage liability
- Secure garden boundaries
- No commercial breeding
- Nominated carer if tenant is unavailable
- Rehoming if tenant becomes permanently unable to care

A6. Withdrawal of Permission

- Neglect or cruelty
- Nuisance or risk
- Property damage
- Persistent fouling
- Proven complaints
- Commercial breeding

Legal action may be taken where necessary, including eviction if proportionate.