Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

POLICY DOCUMENT

PROPERTY AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT

LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING MANAGEMENT

Main document
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minor revisions
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www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Pets

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1. PETS

1.1 The keeping of pets is very popular in Britain, and it is estimated that in 2016 40 - 46% of households have a pet.

1.2 Despite this around 47,000 cats and over 100,000 dogs were abandoned and taken in by animal charities in 2015.

1.3 Not all homes provide a good environment in which to keep a pet. This is especially the case with the keeping of cats and dogs in properties such as multi-storey blocks of flats, and sheltered housing.

1.4 This document sets out the policy of what animals can be kept and the possible action that can be taken if problems are encountered.

2. DIFFERENT TYPES OF PETS

2.1 The first distinction to be made is between the keeping of cats and dogs, and the keeping of other types of pet.

2.2 The keeping of cats and dogs is

- Restricted as to the number that can be kept
- Restricted to being kept at certain properties and not others - cats and dogs are not allowed in around 2,500 of the city council's 15,000 properties - see appendix.

2.3 The keeping of small caged animals such as guinea pigs, hamsters and gerbils is not restricted, although should this become a nuisance, action can be taken.

2.4 The keeping of non-domestic animals (snakes, monkeys, horses) is not allowed.

2.5 The **tenancy agreement** spells out the number and type that can be kept:-

- In any property - small, generally caged animals such as budgerigars or hamsters are allowed, but not large animals such as monkeys or horses
- Houses and Bungalows - a maximum of either two dogs or two cats or one of each.
- Flats and Maisonettes - a maximum of one dog or one cat.
- "No Pets" blocks - no cats or dogs at all (See list at Appendix).

3. CATS AND DOGS

3.1 Most issues around the keeping of pets centre on the issue of keeping cats and dogs.

3.2 The most recent overall policy on the keeping of pets was taken by the Housing, Health and Social Care Executive Decision Meeting of 18th November 2004.

3.3 The decision was to allow the following conditions regarding the keeping of pets:

a) In houses and bungalows - up to 2 dogs or cats (or one of each) to be allowed.

b) In blocks of flats with 9 storeys or more - no dogs or cats to be allowed, except flats which fall in to Recommendation (f) below.

c) In blocks of flats of 4 storeys or below, and those with 5 storeys that are currently allowed to keep pets by the Housing Service - 1 dog or cat to be allowed.

d) In blocks of flats of 5 storeys that are not currently allowed to keep pets by the Housing Service, and blocks of flats of 6, 7 and 8 storeys - one dog or cat to be allowed where properties have open balcony access to their front door.

e) In Category 1 Sheltered Housing - 1 dog or cat to be allowed where ground floor flats have outside door access direct to the flat.

f) Flats and maisonettes with their own private gardens or yards and which are the bottom floor accommodation - up to 2 dogs or cats (or 1 of each) to be allowed.

g) No cats or dogs to be allowed in other properties.

h) No cats or dogs to be allowed in the 7 blocks where no overall majority voted in favour of keeping pets, namely Church Street, Cotteridge House, Denmead House, Milverton House, Perth House, Timpson Road and Wingfield Street.

3.4 The list of properties where no cats or dogs are allowed is set out in the Appendix.

3.5 Tenants can keep a dog in a "no pets" block if it is a guide dog for the blind, a dog for the deaf or a dog provided to help with some other recognisable medical condition. If they have the dog at the time of allocation

3.6 This exemption does not extend to the tenant or applicant having a letter from a GP saying that it is therapeutic for their patient to have a pet.

3.7 New applicants for housing and those wishing to exchange are generally made aware of how pet ownership will affect the number of offers likely to be made. This is a similar situation to those applicants who limit their choice to any given geographical location.

3.8 **Mutual exchanges.** Tenants have the right to exchange unless the property is "unsuitable" for their needs. If an exchange would result in breaking the pets restrictions, the property should be regarded as unsuitable and not approved. The exchange application form requests details of pets in order that this potential problem can be identified.

3.9 **Transfers and management moves.** When tenants are transferred they are also made aware of the implications of pet ownership on the offers of property that can be made.

3.10 **Too many pets.** If a tenant is suspected of keeping more pets than allowed then this must first be proven. Methods of gathering evidence include:-

- Witness statements
- Information from the Estates Services Officer
- Unannounced visits to the tenants home

3.11 **Fouling of communal areas, noise from barking dogs etc**. See Policy Document "Anti-Social Behaviour".

END OF POLICY DOCUMENT

Appendix - Portsmouth City Council residential accommodation where cats and/or dogs are not permitted

Name of block	
Arthur Dann Court	Ladywood House
Avocet House (except ground floor flats)	Leamington House
Barkis House	Lyndhurst House
Blackwood House	Mill Gate House
Brisbane House	Milverton House
Bresler House	Nicholson Gardens
Church Street	Nickleby House
Connors Keep	Norrish Court
Copperfield House	Omega House
Cotteridge House	Perth House
Darwin House	Pickwick House
Denmead House	The Ridings
Edgbaston House	Roslyn House (added 24 January 2017 by Housing Cabinet member decision)
Elsie Fudge House	St Clares Court
Escur Close	St Johns Court
Grenville House	Sarah Robinson House
Grosvenor House	Thorrowgood House
Hale Court	Tipton House
Handsworth House	Tweed Court
Horatia House	Wakefield Court
Ian Gibson Court	Wilmcote House (except ground floor flats)
John Marshall Court	Wingfield Street
Kingsley Court	Wyn Sutcliffe Court (except ground floor flats)
	ALL TEMPORARY / LEASED ACCOMMODATION