

Croydon Churches Housing Association

Keeping pets

If you want to keep a pet, you should first contact your Homeowner & Leasehold Officer (HLO) to request an application form. You should not get the pet before permission has been granted even if you or the previous resident had a pet.

Please refer to the ccha Pet Procedure for more detail regarding the types of pets permitted.

We will charge a non-refundable administration fee of £60 + VAT to process your request for permission to keep a pet.

If we do not own the property, you may also have to pay a fee to the owner. Whether you will be allowed to keep a pet depends on the terms of your lease and the effect an animal may have on the building and other residents. We will not refuse permission unless we have good reason.

Our permission is always required to keep dogs in blocks of flats and may be refused on certain schemes or floor levels. The HLO may also ask your neighbours for their views. This is because many complaints we receive about noise nuisance in blocks of flats relate to dogs.

Permission may be refused if your service charge and rent payments where relevant are not up to date.

If we do give permission for you to keep a pet, you must be considerate to your neighbours by keeping it under control. You will be responsible for any nuisance or disturbance caused by the animal. You will also be responsible for all costs arising due to damage caused by the pet.

We can withdraw the permission at any time if we have good reason to do so.

Croydon Churches Housing Association

PET POLICY (Homeowners)

1. INTRODUCTION

ccha recognises our residents may wish to keep domestic animals or pets in their homes. We also acknowledge the positive effect pet ownership can have on health and wellbeing. This policy sets out how we will deal with requests to keep pets and applies to all homeowners including shared owners. ccha recognise the importance of complying with the terms of the lease in carrying out our functions as a responsible landlord. In our leases owning and keeping a pet in a ccha property is not an automatic right for homeowners. We do however reserve the right to use discretion and will allow homeowners to keep certain types of pets with our express permission. Any permission issued is subject to the homeowner and their pet complying with our rules and conditions.

2. AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Ensure a consistent approach is taken when processing pet requests
- Ensure homeowners keeping a pet comply with the terms of their lease
- Ensure complaints relating pets are dealt with efficiently and effectively
- Signpost for advice where re-homing a pet is the most appropriate option

3. DEFINITIONS

Pets include cats, dogs, fish, insects, reptiles, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, caged birds. **ccha does not permit homeowners to keep pigeons, foul or livestock.**

We take exotic pets, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates to be snakes, lizards, spiders etc. We do not encourage you to keep this type of pet in a ccha property because they usually need specialised care and living conditions.

Any exotic pet that would require a licence under the dangerous wild animal act 1976 is not permitted.

Permission will not be granted if in the opinion of ccha the pet will pose a safety risk to the household or neighbours should it escape.

All residents must seek permission from ccha before any pet is kept as part of their household.

4. LEASE REQUIREMENTS

The ccha lease does not allow homeowners to keep pets unless they have express permission from us first. Where permission is granted, homeowners must keep pets in line with the terms and conditions set out in their lease agreement and any house rules.

The lease states:

No bird, fowl, dog, cat or other creature shall be kept in the Premises other than with the written permission of the Landlord (entirely at the discretion of the Landlord and without implied consent) and such consent if given shall be in the form of a revocable licence in the event of nuisance, breach or lack of control.

5. ANIMAL WELFARE AND SAFETY

In all cases where an application for pet permission arises, we must also consider the welfare of the pet itself. The Animal Welfare Act 2006 places a 'duty of care' on pet owners to provide for their animal's basic needs. These include the need:

- for a suitable place to live
- for a suitable diet
- to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- to be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease

As a responsible landlord we should be aware of the suitability of the homeowners' property for the particular type of pet as well as the effect it may have on those living around it. The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 removes the police's responsibility for stray dogs, leaving local authorities with sole statutory responsibility. Local bylaws may also forbid dogs from certain areas, regulate their behaviour, and establish their owner's responsibilities in public parks, playgrounds and other open spaces.

6. PERMISSION REQUESTS

Any requests to keep pets must be made in writing to ccha by the homeowner. Permission is not an automatic right and we reserve the right to refuse permission. We will confirm our decision in writing within 10 working days unless there is a specific challenge or further investigation is required.

Where permission has been granted in writing, it can be withdrawn at any time if it is deemed that the terms of the permission have been broken.

7. CONSIDERATIONS FOR PERMISSION

Assistance dogs such as guide dogs for the blind and hearing dogs for the deaf or hard of hearing will receive careful consideration due to the primary reason for ownership of a pet. They will not normally be refused unless the grounds for refusal

can be reasonably justified. Livestock, wild animals and endangered species are not permitted under any circumstances. ccha will comply with RSPCA guidelines and instructions regarding the safety and rehoming of any pets. We will not normally give permission for residents to keep dogs unless they have exclusive use of a garden. We will require all dogs that are kept in our properties to be microchipped. Permission for any dog known to be bred for fighting or any breed/type of dog listed in the Dangerous Dogs Act (as above) will not be given unless the resident is able to present a Certificate of Exception. We will inform the relevant authorities if we become aware of any such dog being present in one of our properties.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

ccha will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people in line with our Equality and Diversity Strategy. We will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and communities and will take positive action where appropriate.

9. TRAINING

ccha will provide all staff responsible for implementing this policy with comprehensive training as required.

10. REVIEW

ccha will formally review this policy every three years unless changes in legislation or regulation require an earlier review.

11. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This policy is informed by the following legislation and regulation:

- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005
- Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

Version History	
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