Policy title	**Pet Policy**
Summary	This Policy details MSV's approach to managing and responding to requests from its customers to keep a pet along with customer responsibilities where requests are accepted.
Scope	The Pet Policy applies to MSV's General Needs and Market Rent customers.
Author & Job Role	Ross Tomlinson, Head of Neighbourhoods
Directorate	Customers
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Consultation	Leadership Team – Neighbourhoods Customer Scrutiny Group

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1. Introduction/Policy Purpose

1.1 Mosscare St Vincent's Housing (MSV) aims to deliver an excellent customer service to support customers to sustain tenancies and live well in their homes.

1.2 MSV recognises that keeping pets offers significant benefits to their owners in providing security, companionship and contributing positively to health and wellbeing. As a landlord we balance this by considering any health and safety issues that may arise, ensuring that animals are kept safely and responsibly, whilst acting promptly to respond to instances of animal suffering, damage to property or nuisance that is caused to neighbours.

1.3 This Policy applies to tame animals e.g. cats, dogs, rabbits, large birds e.g. parrots, to animals that could be classed as exotic (snakes, caged spiders etc) or rodents (mice, rats etc).

1.4 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure a fair, consistent approach to responding to requests to keep a pet.
- Detail customer responsibility in responsible pet ownership.
- Detail MSV's approach to responding to irresponsible pet ownership.

1.5 The policy has been developed with consideration to:

- Animals Act (1971)
- Animal Welfare Act (2006)
- Control of Dogs Order (1992)
- Dangerous Dogs Act (1991)
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act (1976)
- Dogs Act (1871)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)
- Landlord and Tenant Act (1985)
- Micro Chipping of Dogs (England) Regulations (2015)
- Renters Rights Act (2025)

2. Scope

2.1 This policy details how MSV will achieve the aims of the Pet Policy.

2.2 The Policy sets out how MSV support customers in understanding their responsibilities where pet requests are accepted.

2.3 The Policy sets out how MSV respond to instances of irresponsible pet ownership.

2.4 This policy applies to MSV General Needs and Market Rent customers.

3. Definitions

3.1 The Policy does not apply to the following which cannot be kept as pets:

- Animals not deemed tame/domesticated (e.g. badgers, foxes, monkeys)
- Animals classified within the Dangerous Wild Animals Act (1976) which includes certain types of venomous snake and spider.
- Dogs classified within the Dangerous Dogs Act (1991)
- Livestock (e.g. cattle, goats, horses, pigs, sheep)

3.2 Irresponsible pet ownership means any behaviour or action which is not permitted under this Policy.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

4.1 Regional Neighbourhood Managers and ASB Manager are responsible for implementing the policy.

4.2 Regional Neighbourhood Managers and ASB Manager are responsible for delivering the policy and ensuring that key performance indicators are monitored and achieved.

4.3 Neighbourhood and ASB Team Leaders are responsible for day-to-day operational assessment and guidance in relation to the Policy.

4.4 Head of Neighbourhoods is responsible for reviewing the policy and ensuring that it is fit for purpose.

5. Monitoring, Review & Evaluation

5.1 MSV will monitor the effectiveness of the Policy by:

- Customer feedback and feedback from Officers managing cases.
- Review of cases involving irresponsible pet ownership

6. Related Documents

6.1 ASB Policy

6.2 Good Neighbourhood Management Policy

6.3 Home Condition Policy

6.4 Safeguarding Policy

6.5 Tenancy Visits Policy

7. Version History

Version	Date	Author	Reason
1	15 May 2024	Shaheen Yousaf	New Policy
2	4 July 2026	Ross Tomlinson	Policy Reviews

8. Delivering the Policy

8.1 MSV wants its customers to live well in their homes, sustain tenancies and supports the right to keep a pet responsibly which contributes to this.

8.2 MSV considers all requests to keep a pet on a case-by-case basis; we are reasonable, consistent and fair in our response to requests and determining whether the request is accepted.

8.3 MSV usually accept requests where a pet supports a customer with a disability e.g. registered guide or therapy dogs. We check that these pets are registered with an accredited member organisation e.g. Assistance Dogs International or the International Guide Dog Federation.

8.3 MSV does not unreasonably refuse requests to keep pets.

8.4 Customers are responsible for the health and welfare of their pets; which is called a Duty of Care under the Animal Welfare Act (2006). Pets are required to be cared for and managed daily, ensuring responsible pet ownership.

8.5 The behaviour and control of pets living at or visiting the home is the responsibility of the customer. This includes but is not limited to instances of fouling; noise; smell; damage to the home or internal/external communal area, or injuries caused by the animal.

8.6 MSV ask customers to make good any damage caused by pets and may in some circumstances recharge customers for any work that is required to repair damage to property.

8.7 Once a request to keep a pet is accepted; MSV colleagues and contractors must be able to carry-out their roles without the pet affecting the delivery of housing management services. Customers will move a pet to another room or outside for the duration of a visit if requested, along with muzzling an animal if asked to do so.

8.8 Some customers who have a Protected Rights Tenancy may not need to request permission to keep a pet. In all instances where a customer requests to keep a pet or MSV identify that a pet is being kept, we will check the tenancy agreement in the first instance.

8.9 Where the tenancy agreement details that customers require permission from MSV to keep a pet, customers submit a pet request which must include what type of animal is being requested and how big it is.

8.10 MSV respond to all pet requests, in writing, within 28-days of the request being made.

8.11 In some instances, we may require more information from customers to consider the request. Where this is the case we request further information in writing. If the customer does not provide the additional information, the request does not have to be considered and may be declined at that time.

8.12 Where customers provide the additional requested information, MSV respond in writing either by the original 28-day deadline, or within a further 7-days if this is later.

For example, if the additional information is received on day 24, MSV will have a further 7-days to respond to the request which means a response will be provided on day 31.

However, if the additional information is received on day 19, MSV will have until the 28-days to respond.

8.13 MSV do not unreasonably refuse requests to keep pets, examples of reasonable refusal reasons are:

- Another tenant has an allergy (usually in the case of shared housing)
- The home is too small for a large or several pets
- The pet is illegal to own
- The animal is not deemed tame, domesticated or is livestock

8.14 Where a pet request is declined, customers have a right of appeal by putting their appeal in writing within 14-days of a decision being made. Appeals will be reviewed and responded to by the relevant Manager, with an outcome and response provided within 14-days of the receipt of the appeal.

8.15 When a request is accepted, customers will sign a pet permission form for each pet following. MSV may accept requests retrospectively in some circumstances.

8.16 Customers will not undertake any of the following activities:

- Breeding animals
- Hoarding of animals – excessive numbers of animals without being able to adequately house or care for them.
- Selling animals

8.17 MSV ensures that customers are aware that XL Bully dogs can only be kept if:

- The dog was owned before 31 December 2023
- The owner has a Certificate of Exemption to keep an XL Bully dog
- The owner has third party public liability insurance

8.17.1 MSV always ask for permitted XL Bully dogs to be taken outside the property whilst a colleague or contractor is working at a customer's home. If this is not possible, the customer is asked to muzzle the dog and put it into a separate room for the duration of the visit.

8.17.2 We update our housing management system, placing alerts on customer accounts where it is known that a permitted XL Bully dog is kept.

8.18 Permission to keep a pet is on the condition that customers are responsible pet owners.

8.18.1 For social rent, general needs customers, MSV may withdrawn permission to keep a pet if the pet causes nuisance or is not adequately controlled or cared for.

8.18.2 MSV may withdraw permission to keep a pet in the following circumstances which is a non-exhaustive list:

- Abuse or neglect
- Breeding
- Damage caused to MSV homes or internal/external communal areas
- Persistent noise
- Pet aggression or violence

8.18.3 When permission is withdrawn, customers usually have 28-days to rehome the pet. When there are serious health and safety concerns, the pet must be removed immediately.

8.18.4 For Market Rent customers, MSV cannot withdraw pet permission but may seek a civil Injunction order or a Possession order where pets are causing serious and/or persistent issues which constitute a breach of tenancy.

8.19 Where pets cause issues which are serious and/or persistent, MSV will take immediate and/or appropriate enforcement action against the customer.

8.20 MSV may seek a civil Injunction order to enforce the removal of a pet from a home where general needs customers refuse. Further legal action may be taken where appropriate.

8.21 We report all instances of animal cruelty/neglect to the RSPCA; working with appropriate partner agencies which may include the Local Authority, Environmental Health and the Police.

8.22 If an animal concern is raised, or neglect is suspected and we cannot make contact with the customer, the Next of Kin and/or an authorised contact, we may consider forcing entry to an MSV home in order to ensure the safety and welfare of an animal and/or customer.

8.23 MSV considers proportionality in conjunction with the Equality Act (2010) in all cases where action is sought due to irresponsible pet ownership.

8.24 The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations (2015) required that from 6 April 2016, all dogs over 8-weeks old must be microchipped with their details added to the UK database. Owners can be fined up to £500 if they do not do this as it is an offence not to have a dog chipped.

MSV will inform customers keeping a dog of their responsibilities under these regulations to support responsible pet ownership.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment

10. Impact Assessment

10.1 An equality impact assessment has been carried-out and is listed as Appendix 1 in this document.

Appendix 1 - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Name of Policy	Pet Policy	
Date of Assessment	4 July 2026	
Name & Role of Assessors	Ross Tomlinson, Head of Neighbourhoods	
What are the desired outcomes of the policy?	➢ Ensure a fair, consistent approach to responding to requests to keep a pet. ➢ Detail customer responsibility in responsible pet ownership. ➢ Detail MSV's approach to responding to irresponsible pet ownership.	
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the function?	This policy applies to the Neighbourhood teams, and MSV's General Needs and Market Rent customers.	
Who will be consulted and what types of consultation will be carried out?	Leadership Team – Neighbourhoods Customer Scrutiny Group	
Summarise any evidence considered		
Could the function have a differential impact on:		**What evidence exists to support your analysis?**
	Yes / No	
Race/Ethnicity Consider language and cultural factors	Yes	English is not the first language for some customers, which may lead to communication barriers in relation to managing this Policy.
Gender reassignment Consider people proposing to or have undergone a process of having their sex reassigned.	No	N/A
Disability Consider physical, visual, aural impairment, mental, learning difficulties	Yes	Some customers may require pets to support with their disability / health condition – for example a registered guide dog, therapy dog or emotional support animal.
Age Consider Elderly or young people	Yes	According to Age UK, more than 2 million people in England over the age of 75 live alone, and more than a million older people say they go over a month without speaking to a friend, neighbour or family member. People can become socially isolated for a variety of reasons, such as getting older or weaker, no longer being the hub of their family, leaving the workplace, the deaths of

		spouses and friends, or through disability or illness. It is easy to be left feeling alone and vulnerable, which can lead to depression and a serious decline in physical health and wellbeing. (https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-symptoms-behaviours/feelings-and-symptoms/loneliness-in-older-people/) Older people are more likely to experience social isolation and/or loneliness; therefore they may be disadvantaged by this Policy where applying to keep a pet for companionship.
Sexuality Either know or perceived	No	N/A
Gender	No	N/A
Religion or belief Consider religious or cultural observance including non-belief, practices of worship	Yes	MSV has a diverse customer base and our customers are of many different races/ethnicities. Cultural misunderstanding or lack of knowledge may lead to increased complaints or disputes, for example in some Islamic traditions, dogs are seen as impure and somebody practising specific traditions of Islam therefore may experience more distress at experiencing a dog off a lead in a communal area than somebody who is not.
Other protected or vulnerable characteristics: • marriage or civil partnerships • pregnancy or maternity?	No	
If the answer is NO to all questions and no differential treatment has been found there is no requirement for a full Equality Impact Assessment. Please go back regularly and review the cycle. **If the answer is YES to any of the questions please complete the rest of the form.**		
In what areas could the differential identified be considered to have an adverse impact in this function and what solutions will be introduced to overcome these adverse impacts?	Race / Ethnicity: We offer translation services where appropriate. Disability: MSV are committed to permitting any pets that are requested for disability / health reasons under this Policy. MSV's Wellbeing Team support customers who require additional care / support.	

	Age: MSV are committed to permitting customers to keep pets under this Policy. We will work with customers to support them to request pets and investigate any reasons which may lead to refusal, with a problem-solving approach at all times. Religion/Belief: MSV colleagues undertake cultural awareness training to understand different beliefs and how different situations may impact customers. We will approach all cases individually and sensitively.
In what areas could the differential identified be considered a positive impact in this function and what strategies will be introduced to safeguard and spread these positive impacts?	We adopt a problem solving approach, with the aim to support as many customers as possible to keep pets where they request to. We lead by education and awareness, ensuring customers are aware of their responsibilities as responsible pet owners.
Which Action Plans have these solutions/strategies been transferred into?	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy Good Neighbourhood Management Policy Neighbourhood Strategy
Who will be responsible for monitoring these Action Plans?	Ross Tomlinson, Head of Neighbourhoods

Ratified by: Committee/ Board / Delegated Approval **Date:**
(Highlight as appropriate)