Policy title	**Pest Management Policy**
Summary	This Policy details MSV and customer responsibility in relation to pest management and infestation; setting out the approach to responding to, managing and resolving pest issues which are MSV responsibility. It ensures compliance with legal obligations, regulatory and contractual obligations, promoting customer safety, operational efficiency and consistency.
Scope	The Pest Management Policy applies to MSV general needs, directly managed supported living and later living customers, as well as young persons customers living in our Foyers. The Policy does not apply to leaseholders or shared owners.
Author & Job Role	Ross Tomlinson, Head of Neighbourhoods
Directorate	Customers
Document Status	Approved
Document Reference	CUSTOMERS/Neighbourhoods/PestManagement/0.1
Latest Date of Approval	N/A – New Policy
Dates: **Draft** **Approved** **Ratified** **Effective from** **Review by**	 4 February 2026 1 April 2026 August 2026 August 2026 Updated September 2026, next review September 2027
Impact Assessments: **Date EIA completed** **Date other IAs completed**	 4 February 2026
Consultation	Awaab's Law Task & Finish Group Senior Leadership Team & Executive Customer Scrutiny Group

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1. Introduction/Policy Purpose

1.1 MSV recognise that pest issues can be harmful and distressing to customers, creating an unsafe or unpleasant home environment. Efficient and decisive action is required to ensure accurate advice is given to customers and the correct actions are taken by colleagues. We work with customers, colleagues, contractors and partners to ensure customers' homes are healthy, safe and free of pests.

1.2 Where the infestation is MSV-responsibility, expert pest management contractors are used to undertake initial assessments, treatments and to provide written reports detailing the type and extent of infestation, any remedial actions required and any treatment required or carried-out.

1.3 Where the infestation is customer-responsibility, MSV provide general guidance and advice on practical steps to remedy the infestation, as well as signposting customers to self-management pest management options or professional pest management experts.

1.4 Pest issues reported by leasehold or shared ownership customers are not covered within this Policy; MSV refer to the individual lease for individual homes and communal areas to determine responsibility and required actions.

1.5 Application of Awaab's Law and Good Practice: Where the infestation falls within the scope of the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS), MSV follows timeframes and escalation processes detailed within our Awaab's Law Policy; which defines Emergency and Significant Hazard categories. Where similar levels of pest-related risk arise outside the scope of the HHSRS, MSV may adopt the same Emergency or Significant Hazard processes as good practice to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of customers.

1.6 The purpose of this policy is to:

- Detail who is responsible for the management of pests in MSV homes, aligned with rights and obligations within tenancy agreements
- Ensure pest issues that pose a risk to health and safety are acted upon and remedied quickly and in line with statutory and regulatory obligations
- Highlight MSV's approach to pest management reports where there are children or vulnerable adults present in the home
- Provide clear advice and guidance to customers in respect of pest management responsibilities
- Set out a framework to support MSV colleagues to take quick, decisive and correct action when responding to reports of pest issues

1.7 The policy has been developed with consideration to:

- Animal Welfare Act (2006)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)
- Health & Safety at Work Act (1972)
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act (2018)
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations (2005)
- Housing Ombudsman Centre for Learning – Pest Expectations
- Landlord and Tenant Act (1985)
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act (1949)
- Protection of Badgers Act (1992)
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act (2023)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)

2. Scope

2.1 This Policy details how MSV will achieve the aims of the Policy

2.2 The Pest Management Policy applies to MSV general needs, directly managed supported housing and later living customers and all MSV colleagues.

2.3 The Housing Ombudsman considers pests to be:

- Bed Bugs
- Cockroaches
- Daddy Long-Legs
- Mice
- Rats
- Silver Fish

This Policy also considers the following:

- Ants
- Badgers
- Bats
- Bees
- Fleas
- Foxes
- Maggots
- Moles
- Nest Birds
- Other Insects (Butterflies, Caterpillars, Moths
- Slugs
- Squirrels
- Wasps
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)
- Woodworm

3. Definitions

3.1 Communal areas: Areas which are accessible to and used by a group of customers rather than individual use / access. These include:

- Communal corridors
- Communal sheds, mobility scooter stores and bin stores
- Communal lounges, kitchens, dining rooms and activity rooms
- Communal gardens
- Shared laundry facilities
- Shared pipework, plant rooms and service cupboards
- Shared walls (internal/external)

3.2 Customer-Responsibility: Where MSV customers are required to arrange and/or pay for pest treatment. This also refers to customer obligations to maintain the condition of their home and garden and to take reasonable steps and precautions to prevent pest issues.

3.3 Emergency Hazard: Immediate risk to health or property (e.g. gas leak, structural collapse, urgent safeguarding where immediate risk is identified).

3.4 Housing Health & Safety Rating System: A risk-based evaluation tool to help identify and protect against certain risks.

For the purpose of this Policy, the relevant section is 15 – Domestic Hygiene, Pests and Refuse. This is concerned with protection against infection, including hazards resulting from:

- Poor design/layout/construction of the home so that it is difficult to be kept clean and hygienic
- Access into and harbourage / shelter within the home for pests;
- Inadequate and unhygienic provision for storage and disposal of household waste.

3.5 MSV-Responsibility: Where MSV arrange and pay for pest treatment, or where MSV undertake repairs / proofing works to prevent re-entry from pests. In some Independent Living schemes, some communal pest control and preventative treatments may be funded through the service charge; where this applies, customers contribute through their service charge rather than individual payments.

3.6 No Access: Failure to gain entry after reasonable attempts.

3.7 Significant Hazard: Issues posing serious health outcomes (e.g. severe infestation causing serious or actual harm – this may be physical or mental harm).

3.8 Support Provider Responsibility: Where a support provider are required to arrange and/or pay for pest treatment. For example sleepover rooms or offices within a scheme.

4. Roles & Responsibilities

4.1 Clear roles and responsibilities are imperative to ensure customers are clear on what actions MSV will take and what actions are customer responsibility. Unambiguous and defined responsibilities ensure accountability and consistency in applying this Policy.

The table below sets out the key responsibilities for colleagues and customers involved in pest management:

Role	Responsibility
All MSV Teams	Timely response and communication, risk-assess and consider any vulnerabilities or risks.
Asset Operations	Lead on repairs / proofing required to prevent the entry or re-entry of pests in tenanted or empty homes and in internal and external communal areas. Undertake expert surveyor inspections in complex or severe cases.
Contractors	Uphold MSV principles and approach, provide regular updates and written reports after each visit / treatment.
Customer Experience	Timely referrals to relevant teams following reports of pests, support with arranging appointments for repairs / proofing works, communicate cancellations or requests to re-schedule .
Neighbourhoods	Lead on management of pest issues / reports; communicating MSV and/or customer responsibilities to customers and arranging expert pest management visits / treatments. Assess vulnerability / risk and escalate any emergency or significant cases, supporting customers with any care, support or wellbeing needs.
Independent Living	Lead on management of pest issues / reports; communicating MSV and/or customer responsibilities to customers and arranging expert pest management visits / treatments. Assess vulnerability / risk and escalate any emergency or significant cases.
Legal Team	Support escalation and enforcement where there are persistent access issues or customer actions which are resulting in pest infestations.

5. Monitoring, Review & Evaluation

MSV will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through:

- Complaints received in relation to Pest Management.
- Feedback from customers and colleagues involved with the process.
- Reporting on compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Reporting on number of Pest Management cases each Quarter.

6. Related Documents

- Awaab's Law Policy
- Building Safety Policy
- Complaint and Compensation Policy
- Damp and Mould Policy
- Decant Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Gas Safety Policy
- Hoarding and Clutter Policy
- Home Condition Policy
- Pet Policy
- Recharge Policy
- Repairs & Maintenance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy (Adult and Children)
- Tenancy Policy
- Tenancy Visits Policy

7. Version History

Version	Date	Author(s)	Reason
1	4 February 2026	Ross Tomlinson – Head of Neighbourhoods	New Policy
2	19 September 2026	Ross Tomlinson – Head of Neighbourhoods	Amend responsibility on mice and silverfish as per HOS guidance.

8. Delivering the Policy

8.1 Policy Principles

8.1.1 MSV customers are responsible for taking reasonable steps and precautions to prevent pest infestation, which includes maintaining good home and garden conditions, not causing any damage to the home and correctly disposing of household waste. Customer obligations are set out in the tenancy agreement and where the action or inaction of customers causes the infestation, the cost of remedying the pest infestation may be recharged to the customer.

We always inform customers in writing where this is the case and provide support to manage, maintain and resolve any environmental issues where there are vulnerabilities or care / support needs.

8.1.2 MSV take quick and decisive action to resolve pest issues arising a result of repair-related property issues, for example: gaps, cracks and holes in the home, damp and mould or on-going leaks.

8.1.3 Where it is identified that pest issues are caused by neighbouring land or property that does not belong to MSV, we raise this with the land-owner and liaise with Environmental Health / the local authority to resolve the issue.

8.1.4 Some customers experience financial difficulties and MSV acknowledge that the cost of pest management treatments or services, where the pest issue is customer-responsibility, may not be affordable. We use discretion to determine whether we will pay for the treatment / service and recharge reasonable costs through a payment plan.

8.1.5 In situations where MSV and/or contractors cannot gain access to a customer's home to carry out work / treatment to resolve a pest issue, the No Access procedure will be followed, with a focus on engagement and support to prevent escalation to legal action.

8.1.6 MSV only take responsibility for the treatment of pests in communal gardens and do not take responsibility for treatment of pests in individual gardens.

8.2 Pest Categories and Responsibilities

8.2.1 Rats, Mice Squirrels, Silverfish, Cockroaches and Bed Bugs

MSV arrange all treatments of rats, mice squirrels, silverfish cockroaches and bed bugs inside customers' homes and in communal areas. This does not include individual gardens.

It is customer responsibility to act on any advice or guidance provided to resolve the infestation and prevent reoccurrence.

It is a criminal offence to intentionally kill or injure a red squirrel or intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy any structure or place a red squirrel uses for shelter or protection, or disturb a red squirrel while it occupies such a place.

Grey squirrels are conversely afforded limited protection due to their recognition as an invasive species.

8.2.2Fleas and Maggots

MSV arrange all treatments of fleas and maggots in communal areas.

It is customer responsibility to act on any advice or guidance provided to resolve the infestation and prevent reoccurrence.

Fleas and maggot issues in individual homes and gardens are customer responsibility, except where MSV have failed to remedy a defect with the building fabric that is allowing infestation, which may include but is not limited to cracked brickwork, missing air-brick covers, gaps in window frames.

8.2.3 Ants and Slugs

MSV arrange all treatments of ants and slugs in internal communal areas.

MSV do not treat ants or slugs outside.

Ant and slug issues in individual homes and gardens are customer responsibility, except where MSV have failed to remedy a defect with the building fabric that is allowing infestation, which may include but is not limited to cracked brickwork, missing air-brick covers, gaps in window frames.

8.2.4 Bees and Wasps

MSV arrange all treatments of bees and wasps in internal or external communal areas.

Bee and wasp issues in individual homes are customer responsibility, except where MSV have failed to remedy a defect with the building fabric that is allowing infestation, which may include but is not limited to cracked brickwork, missing air-brick covers, gaps in window frames.

We are committed to facilitating the safe removal of bees and will work with local beekeepers wherever possible.

8.2.5 Badgers, Moles and Foxes

Badgers, moles and foxes are wild animals which MSV do not treat; customers are signposted to agencies which support in resolving issues with these animals.

Badgers and their setts (homes) are heavily protected under the Protection of Badgers Act (1992).

8.2.6 Other Insects (Butterflies, Caterpillars, Moths) and Daddy Long-Legs

Other insects and daddy long-legs issues are customer responsibility.

8.2.7 Nesting Birds and Bats

Nests cannot be treated if eggs are present; MSV undertake any repair / proofing issues to prevent reoccurrence once it is confirmed that birds have left the nest.

MSV arrange pigeon prevention / works in communal areas or where there is damage to the home, for example solar panels.

It is customer responsibility to act on any advice or guidance provided to resolve the infestation and prevent reoccurrence.

Bat roosts are legally protected and cannot be removed; MSV undertake any repair / proofing issues to prevent reoccurrence once it is confirmed that bats are no longer present.

8.2.8 Woodworm

MSV arrange all treatment of woodworm within the structure of home.

Woodworm issues relating to the contents or furniture of a home only is customer responsibility.

8.2.9 Other Pests

Other pest issues raised which are not covered in this Policy are investigated by MSV; we will determine who is responsible for treatment and whether treatment is legal / permitted.

8.3 Communal Areas

8.3.1 Pest issues in communal areas are investigated by MSV's pest management specialist contractors in the first instance; MSV arrange the initial visit and the contractor reports back any findings. Where pest management action is required to resolve the infestation and prevent reoccurrence, MSV arrange the treatment and / or works.

8.4 Customer Responsibility (Pest Management)

8.4.1 Where pest management is customer responsibility, we provide advice and signposting on 'home-remedy' treatments that customers can purchase, along with private pest management contractors.

8.4.2 Customers are contractually responsible for taking reasonable steps to prevent contributing factors; which include but are not limited to: home and garden condition; domestic waste and fly-tipping; unhygienic living conditions and feeding wild animals.

8.4.3 MSV proactively visit customers' homes and identify any home or garden condition concerns which may contribute to pest issues. Where issues are identified, we work with customers and other agencies to improve the condition of the home or garden, which may include an action plan and regular visits until the condition has improved.

8.4.4 Customers are responsible for treating customer-responsibility pests while remedial actions are taken to improve the condition of the home, garden or to remedy any factors contributing to the pest issue.

8.4.5 In situations where a customer-responsibility pest infestation poses a significant or emergency hazard, MSV arrange treatment to remove or mitigate the hazard. Where the customer-responsibility pest issue is reported as being caused by the action or inaction of a customer, we may recharge the cost of treatment and remedial works.

8.5 MSV Responsibility (Pest Management)

8.5.1 Where pest management is MSV-responsibility, a suitably qualified and approved contractor is instructed to undertake an initial visit and investigation. The contractor reports back their findings and any follow-up treatment or actions required.

8.5.2 Customers are updated on the outcome of the pest management visit and any follow-up treatments or actions required.

8.5.3 MSV tailor the approach to pest management where children or vulnerable adults are affected by pest issues. We consider risk to both physical and mental health in determining what action is required and within what timeframe.

8.5.4 MSV colleagues maintain communication with customers whilst a pest issue is on-going; providing updates on treatments / works outstanding and confirming once all works are complete and that the pest issue is resolved.

8.5.5 Where a customer disputes the findings reported by a pest management contractor; MSV may instruct a different contractor to provide a second opinion.

8.6 Support Provider Responsibility (Pest Management)

8.6.1 In some of our supported living schemes there are offices which are used by support providers. It is the responsibility of the support provider to arrange and pay for pest management to remedy any pest issues of this nature.

8.6.2 It is the responsibility of the relevant support provider to arrange and pay for pest management to remedy any pest issues within sleepover rooms within a supported living scheme.

8.7 Response Times

8.7.1 We respond to reports of pests within 24-hours or on the next working day where a report is made on a Friday, weekend or Bank Holiday.

8.7.2 Attendance for initial inspections / treatments are dependent on whether the pest infestation reported is classed as an emergency, a significant or a routine issue:

8.7.3 Emergency

This is where there is an immediate actual risk to health or property caused by a pest issue; for example serious allergies to specific pests, underlying health conditions meaning greater susceptibility to infection, urgent safeguarding where immediate risk is identified, fire/electrical/gas issues due to pests or risk of structural collapse.

In these instances, MSV consider temporary rehousing if the risk is not reduced / issue cannot be resolved within 24-hours or less.

Three access attempts are made within 24-hours to investigate the issues; full legal escalation is considered if access is not gained, to ensure MSV meet statutory obligations and safeguard the health and safety of customers.

Work / treatment to make the home safe must be complete within 24-hours of MSV finding out about the hazard.

8.7.4 Significant

This is where pest issues pose serious health outcomes; for example, non-life-threatening safeguarding concerns; customer vulnerability; health implications and faults with electricity / gas.

In these instances, MSV consider temporary rehousing if the risk is not reduced / initial investigation/visit cannot commence within 10-working days or less.

Three access attempts are made within 10-working days to investigate the issues; full legal escalation is considered if access is not gained, to ensure MSV meet statutory obligations and safeguard the health and safety of customers.

Upon conclusion of the investigation, work / treatment commences within 5-working days.

8.7.5 Routine

This is where a pest issue does not pose a serious health risk but is MSV-responsibility; for example slugs in an internal communal area or bees in an external communal area where there are no allergies / underlying health conditions.

In these instances, MSV will not consider temporary rehousing and initial treatment will commence within 14-working days.

8.8 Temporary Rehousing

8.8.1 Temporary rehousing may necessary due to an emergency or significant hazard as a result of pest issues.

8.8.2 Cases are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, where MSV consider individual circumstance and associated risk / impact.

8.8.3 The process of temporary rehousing is managed in accordance with the Customer Relocation Policy.

8.8.4 Where a customer or household are provided temporary rehousing due to pest issues; MSV communicate clearly and openly with customers about expected timeframes and required actions for them to be able to move back home.

8.8.5 Temporary rehousing arrangements are followed-up in writing and customers are advised that they must provide access to their principal home to allow treatment / work to be undertaken.

8.8.6 Where rats are identified in cavity walls or in the external areas of the home, MSV do not ordinarily temporarily rehouse customers.

8.9 Hoarded Homes (Pest Management)

8.9.1 Where a home is identified or known to be hoarded and there is a pest management issue; the dedicated Hoarding Officer will manage the pest management process as part of the overall support provided to the customer(s) living in the hoarded home.

8.9.2 MSV recognise that customers living in homes that are hoarded benefit from a specialised, trauma-informed approach to support any issues, including pests, within the home.

8.9.3 The Hoarding Officer, in conjunction with the Wellbeing & Tenancy Sustainment Manager will determine the level of risk and whether escalation to the emergency or significant hazard process is required.

8.10 Proactive Pest Management

8.10.1 MSV consider that different areas experience different levels of pest issues; where pest issues are arising due to endemic or environmental problems outside of MSV's direct control, we will consider proactive pest management solutions / treatments.

8.10.2 Where proactive pest management solutions / treatments are implemented on a contractual basis, MSV implement a service charge to customers who benefit from the solution.

9.Appendices

N/A

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	Pest Management Policy	
Date of Assessment	19/03/2026	
Name & Role of Assessors	Ross Tomlinson – Head of Neighbourhoods	
What are the desired outcomes of the policy?	The purpose of this policy is to: ➢ Detail who is responsible for the management of pests in MSV homes, aligned with rights and obligations within tenancy agreements ➢ Ensure pest issues that pose a risk to health and safety are acted upon and remedied quickly and in line with statutory and regulatory obligations ➢ Highlight MSV's approach to pest management reports where there are children or vulnerable adults present in the home ➢ Provide clear advice and guidance to customers in respect of pest management responsibilities ➢ Set out a framework to support MSV colleagues to take quick, decisive and correct action when responding to reports of pest issues	
Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the function?	MSV customers, MSV Pest Management contractors and MSV colleagues.	
Who will be consulted and what types of consultation will be carried out?	Customer Scrutiny Group have been consulted, along with the Awaab's Law Task and Finish Group and relevant Team Leaders / Managers (MSV colleagues).	
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	If advice and guidance relating to pest management or reporting is only provided in English, residents who speak other languages may: • Misunderstand instructions • Miss appointments • Fail to report infestations early or at all

		This can create a pattern where certain ethnic groups experience worse outcomes simply because the policy wasn't designed with them in mind. Some ethnic groups have higher rates of conditions like asthma (https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC1276818/) If pest management treatment relies heavily on chemical treatments without offering alternative treatment or accommodation, those groups may face disproportionate health risks.
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	Where pest management treatments require customers with disabilities to: • Move furniture away from walls or treatment areas • Lift or bag belongings • Empty cupboards • Prepare rooms for treatment For someone with limited mobility, chronic pain, or fatigue these tasks may be difficult, painful or impossible without support. If the policy doesn't offer support or reasonable adjustments, disabled residents may experience delays, worse infestations or an unfair service. Customers who are neurodiverse or experience poor mental health *may* struggle with: • Understanding complex preparation instructions • Managing deadlines • Coping with strangers entering their home If the policy doesn't provide alternative communication formats or flexibility, these customers can be disproportionately disadvantaged. Some disabilities involve: • Respiratory conditions (e.g., asthma, COPD)

		• Immune disorders • Chemical sensitivities Pest management treatment plans may need to be tailored and/or alternative accommodation offered where there is risk of: • Deterioration in health • Breathing difficulties • Vulnerable people in the household Some customers may need the support of a carer or other individual to support them with daily living activities. If somebody relies on a carer but the treatment date/ requirements are communicated at short notice, or the choice of appointments is not flexible the disabled customer may receive an unfair service.
Age Consider Elderly or young people	No	N/A
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	No	N/A
Other protected or vulnerable characteristics: • marriage or civil partnerships • pregnancy or maternity?	No	N/A
If the answer is NO to <u>all</u> 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?	<u>Race / Ethnicity:</u> MSV provides accessible formats for communication such as translation, interpretation. MSV support with liaising with contractors where customers may otherwise struggle. Temporary accommodation is considered where a customer of any race or ethnicity has a health condition; due regard is given to the fact that some ethnic groups have a higher rate of health conditions. <u>Disability:</u> MSV communicates proactively with support workers and/or carers and/or customers with disabilities to	

	understand any specific requirements / adjustments as part of any pest management treatment. Support is available with temporary accommodation and the removal / moving of items. Flexible appointments are offered to customers by MSV contractors.
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?	All MSV policies are designed to be accessible and inclusive; we will continue to obtain customer scrutiny and recommendations in order to influence and shape our policies.
Which Action Plans have these solutions/strategies been transferred into?	Pest Management procedure and People theme of the MSV Way.
Who will be responsible for monitoring these Action Plans?	Head of Neighbourhoods Head of Later Living and Supported Housing Head of Young Persons Services

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