

# PET POLICY

**Lead Officer: Emma Morgan, Head of Housing & Support**

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**Next Review: 2027**

Policy Owner	Emma Morgan, Head of Housing & Support
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Approved by	Stephen Evans, Director for Customers and Communities

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Version 1 - Date December 2017
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<b>Changes Made</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Date</b>
Whole policy has been redrafted	All	July 2024

## Introduction

Caredig is a pet-friendly organisation and recognises the importance and benefits of responsible pet ownership, Pets can provide companionship, a daily routine, opportunities for exercise , responsibility and can encourage social interaction.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that Caredig provides a consistent approach in responding to requests for pets.

We aim to ensure that there is clear guidance for tenants on responsible pet ownership, which does not impact on the rights of others to the peaceful enjoyment of their home.

The accompanying procedure will provide clear guidance on the process for tenants to request a pet and details when and how Caredig will intervene in the event of irresponsible pet ownership.

## Our Values

In applying this policy/strategy, we will be guided by our values. Our values determine how we behave towards our customers, our colleagues, our partners and our work: -

**Kind** - We recognise that relationships are at the heart of everything we do, at the heart of good relationships is kindness

**Innovative** – we continuously strive to be the best we can whilst seeking creative ideas to improve and grow

**Trusting** – We trust people to do the right thing, because good relationships are built on mutual trust and respect

**Accountable** – we accept the responsibilities of our role and are accountable for our actions and for doing what is right.

## Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

- A pet is defined as any domesticated or tamed animal that is kept as a companion and cared for responsibly.
- A pet is classified as a 'dog, bird, cat, fish, rabbits or some rodents and reptiles (depending on equipment and size)
- Assistance animals such as dogs for the blind, deaf or disabled are not considered 'pets'.

For the purpose of this policy, tenant is used to describe the contract holder.

## What is covered by the policy/strategy?

The key Acts and regulations that have been taken into consideration are listed below:

- Crime and Policing Act 2014

- Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016
- The Microchipping of Dogs (Wales) Regulations 2015
- Housing Act 1985 and 1988 (as amended 1996)
- Control of Dogs Order 1992
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1989 and 1991
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Community Housing Officers, Service Coordinators, Team Leaders and Extra Care Managers are responsible for responding to requests for pets and any related actions such as responding to poor pet ownership complaints. The Operational Managers for Housing Management, Supported Living and Extra Care are responsible for the overall performance management.

### **Equal Opportunities**

An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

### **References to other relevant policies and Procedures**

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) & Community Safety
- Disrepair
- Concerns, Complaints & Compliments

### **Pets in Extra Care**

There are restrictions for Tenants in Extra Care regarding pet ownership.

Pets that are not permitted:

- Dogs
- Cats

Permission to keep an assistance dog will be approved in line with the Equality Act 2010 on receipt of the correct proof of registration.

Pets that are permitted, pending approval from the Extra Care Manager:

- Birds
- Fish
- Rabbit (depending on equipment and size)
- Reptiles (depending on equipment and size)
- Rodents (depending on equipment and size)

Schemes are encouraged to work with partners to have regular Pets as Therapy visits for all tenants to enjoy.

Dogs are welcome to visit the schemes, when doing so, owners must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The dog must be on a lead at all times in communal areas
- The dog must not enter internal restaurant / café areas
- The dog must not pose a nuisance whilst visiting
- The dog must not foul in any communal areas
- The dog must not be left alone in a flat for any period of time
- The dog must not stay overnight and are not permitted in the guest suite

Reports of Anti-Social Behaviour caused by visiting dogs to a tenants' home will be investigated in line with the Caredig ASB & Community Safety Policy.

### **Pets in Supported Living**

There are further conditions for Tenants in Supported Living regarding pet ownership.

Requests for cats and dogs will be considered on a case by case basis. When responding to a request, over and above the conditions of having a pet, staff will also take into account the following:

- Shared living areas
- The impact on and the considerations of other tenants in the scheme
- The impact on support

Permission to keep an assistance dog will be approved in line with the Equality Act 2010 on receipt of the correct proof of registration.

Pets that are permitted, pending approval from the scheme Team Leader:

- Birds
- Fish
- Rabbit (depending on equipment and size)
- Reptiles (depending on equipment and size)
- Rodents (depending on equipment and size)

Schemes are encouraged to work with partners to have regular Pets as Therapy visits for all tenants to enjoy.

Dogs are welcome to visit the schemes, when doing so, owners must adhere to the following guidelines:

- The dog must be on a lead at all times in communal areas
- The dog must not pose a nuisance whilst visiting
- The dog must not foul in any communal areas
- The dog must not be left alone in the home or at the scheme for any period of time, the owner must remain with the pet and take responsibility for the pet whilst visiting the scheme
- The dog must not stay overnight

Reports of Anti-Social Behaviour caused by visiting dogs to a tenants' home will be investigated in line with the Caredig ASB & Community Safety Policy.

### **General Homes & 50+ Schemes**

Under the Caredig contracts, tenants must not keep any pets in their home without first obtaining permission from the Community Housing Officer.

There are no restrictions based on property type. This means tenants in houses, flats and bungalows can apply to have a pet in their home.

Reports of Anti-Social Behaviour caused by pets will be investigated in line with the Caredig ASB & Community Safety Policy.

## **Conditions of having a pet:**

### **Requests that will not be considered**

Requests will not be considered or approved for any animal or breed under the following circumstances:

- Non-domestic animals for example horses, poultry and livestock
- The tenant or a resident living at the property has any convictions or past history of abandonment, cruelty, neglect or mistreatment of animals, or convictions for any offences under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, or has been disqualified from keeping animals due to a conviction.
- Animals noted in the following legislation (including any subsequent amendments to the legislation):
  - Dangerous Dogs Act 1989 and 1991
  - Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976

Action will be taken as per the ASB & Community Safety Policy if a tenant is found to have an animal under the above categories including reporting all concerns to the relevant authorities for further investigation.

### **Requests that can be considered**

Caredig promotes responsible pet ownership. There are certain conditions that tenants will be required to demonstrate if they wish to have a pet in their home.

Conditions include:

- A maximum of 2 pets per property
- The pet is suitable for the property size and type
- The pet will not be bred at the home
- Pets must be vaccinated and microchipped
- Pets will not be left for long periods of time alone
- An emergency contact be provided for care of the pet in the eventuality that the tenant can no longer provide care
- There are no concerns regarding capability of the tenant to be a responsible of pet owner e.g. poor home condition or ongoing Anti-Social Behaviour
- The property is suitable e.g. fencing (it is the tenants' responsibility to ensure the fencing is adequate to prevent the pet from escaping)

Permission will not be unreasonably withheld. Tenants can expect a written response to their request within 30 days.

### **Policy Effective Date**

This policy will be effective as of the 01st July 2024.

Caredig will not review existing pet ownership in line with the above conditions unless the tenant has demonstrated poor pet ownership.