

## STATEMENT OF INTENT

The principle of Saffron Housing Group (referred to hereafter as ‘Saffron’ or ‘the Trust’) Pet Policy is to set out clear guidelines around tenants right to pet ownership and to ensure pet owners and neighbouring residents are treated fairly whilst also taking into account any management issues which may occur.

### 1. PURPOSE

1.1 This policy is designed To set out the different accommodation types Saffron owns/manages and state where permission to own a pet is required, and details of any associated conditions.

### 2. Aims

Whilst we are positive about pets and want to ensure that tenants /leaseholders and residents can, in most circumstances, own a pet in their home, subject to reasonable terms, we will also seek to minimise disruption or inconvenience to neighbours by encouraging responsible ownership.

We recognise that owning a pet has many benefits including:

- **Reducing stress**
- **Increasing physical activity**
- **Increasing social interaction**
- **Improving mental health**
- **Improving physical health**

### 3. Our Approach

3.1 Saffron own and manage several different types of accommodation, due to the nature of some of these, it is necessary to have a different approach to pet ownership to be fair to all residents.

Property Type	Pets allowed/restrictions
General Needs with own private entrances	Two pets (cats or dogs) without permission, more only with written permission, permission required for poultry, but not for small caged animals such as rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs etc
General Needs with communal entrances	Permission required for any pet, plus pet agreement
Independent Living/specialist bungalows with own private entrances	Permission required for any pet, plus pet assessment and pet agreement required
Independent Living with communal entrances	Permission required for any pet, plus pet assessment and pet agreement required
Independent Living Plus/Specialist with communal areas	Permission required for any pet, plus pet assessment and pet agreement required
Specialist Temp accommodation /licences (Right Tracks)	No pets allowed (unless Assistance dogs)*

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Specialist shared accommodation	No pets allowed (unless Assistance dogs)*
<u>All leasehold properties (including shared owners and Independent living plus schemes)</u>	<u>Permission required through the Sales team</u>

\*An Assistance dog includes:

- (a) a dog which has been trained to guide a blind person;
- (b) a dog which has been trained to assist a deaf person;
- (c) a dog which has been trained by a prescribed charity to assist a disabled person who has a disability that consists of epilepsy or otherwise affects the person's mobility, manual dexterity, physical coordination or ability to lift, carry or otherwise move everyday objects;
- (d) a dog of a prescribed category which has been trained to assist a disabled person who has a disability (other than one falling within paragraph (c)) of a prescribed kind

**3.2 All Accommodation** – Certain pets will not be allowed in any Saffron property, including:

- Animals listed under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976 (including large mammals, carnivores, larger or venomous reptiles, dangerous spiders and scorpions)
- Any endangered species
- Any hybrid between a domestic and a wild animal
- Dogs listed under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (i.e. Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, Dogo Argentino, or Fila Brasileiro) - with the exception of dogs registered on the Index of Exempted Dogs. In these cases, although the dog is a banned breed, the dog will have undergone an assessment to determine that it is safe, and the owner will be legally bound to comply with certain conditions. Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/banned-dogs>.
- Livestock (including horses, pigs goats and cattle – some poultry may be allowed with permission)
- Exotic or dangerous animals including venomous snakes, spiders or other reptiles

**3.3 All types of accommodation with communal entrances and/or general needs accommodation for more than two pets (dogs or cats) etc** – permission may be granted on a case by case basis, with the breed, size, and temperament of the pet being taken into account when assessing if it is suitable for the type, size, and location of the property. Whilst Saffron will not unreasonably refuse permission, we will retain a right to refuse and there is no automatic right to own a pet/additional pets in these accommodation types. Permission will be at the discretion of the Neighbourhood Officer or Wellbeing Co-Ordinator. Appeals can be made to the Neighbourhood Manager or Head of Wellbeing and Partnerships accordingly, who will review the permission request, but their decision will be final. A pet agreement is required to be agreed to and signed by the tenant setting out conditions of pet ownership. Permission maybe withdrawn if the conditions of the pet agreement are not adhered to, and legal action considered where necessary. For new tenants wanting to move in with pets needing permission, permission must be granted and the pet agreement completed prior to signing up for the tenancy.

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**3.4 Independent Living and Independent Living plus schemes** – In addition to the above, careful consideration will be made where giving permission for pet ownership within these schemes to take into account:

- The ability of the resident to care for their pet, with or without extra support,
- Suitability of the pet within the scheme, the layout of the scheme, and any communal areas,
- Whether this would impact negatively on other residents and staff members.
- Individual schemes may have varying conditions regarding allowing pets in certain communal areas, such as cafes, restaurants, lifts and communal gardens. The scheme conditions must be adhered to.

**3.5 Leasehold Properties (Including Shared Ownership and Independent Living plus schemes)** - Permission must be sought through the Sales team at Saffron ([Sales@saffronhousing.co.uk](mailto:Sales@saffronhousing.co.uk)) who will ensure compliance with the lease.

A pet assessment will be undertaken at the same time as the initial assessment for housing for all new tenants, and also separately for existing tenants applying to have a new pet. This is in addition to the Pet Agreement. Saffron will endeavour to assist older or disabled residents meet their responsibilities by working with the Cinnamon Trust and/or other charities who can provide assistance for dog walking, short term foster care and help and advice.

## 4 Pet Owner Responsibilities

We expect all pet owners to behave responsibly by upholding the following standards:

- All pets must be cared for responsibly, and in line with Section 9 (2) of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The Act contains a duty of care to animals - anyone responsible for an animal must take reasonable steps to make sure the animal's welfare needs are met.
- All pets must be kept under proper control and not cause a nuisance to other households. This includes dogs being kept on a lead in communal areas, not entering children's play areas and being under control including when Saffron employees or contractors attend a property.
- Dog and cat owners need to be mindful of other residents who may have allergies or are nervous around animals.
- No fouling in communal areas. Where fouling has occurred, the responsible owners must clean up immediately.
- Owners must actively seek to prevent unpleasant odours being emitted from their property due to their pet(s).
- Animals must not damage any Saffron property, including communal parts of the building and neighbouring properties. Owners may be recharged for any repairs which are needed as a result of such damage.
- All dogs over the age of eight weeks must be microchipped and wear a collar and tag in public. This is a legal requirement and the Government is currently looking to extend this requirement to cats over the age of 20 weeks.

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- Animals must not be kept for the purposes of breeding or sale.
- Owners must have suitable arrangements in place for looking after their pet during periods of absence. For example, if you go away for a weekend or a holiday you should either place your pet in a cattery or kennels, or arrange for someone to visit daily. Owners must also have arrangements to care for a pet in an emergency.
- Cat or dog flaps (or similar devices) must not be installed without our prior consent as these can compromise the fire safety of a property. They are not permitted on doors that open onto shared areas. If a resident has installed a flap, they will be asked to remove it at their own expense.
- In situations where a resident is temporarily looking after a pet for a friend or family member, all the above requirements apply. They also apply if you have friends or family visiting your home with their pet.
- If your pet sadly passes away, it must be buried or disposed of in a responsible and safe manner and cannot be buried in communal gardens.
- We suggest that pet owners consider taking out pet insurance to help meet costs should their pet need medical attention and/or cause an accident.
- Saffron will not be responsible in any way for loss, damage or accident caused by any pet.

## 5. Nuisance and Enforcement

- Saffron's Pet policy is to be considered in conjunction with Saffron's ASB Policy. Any persistent noise or other nuisance from pets, which constitutes Anti-Social Behaviour will be dealt with under the ASB policy, and tenancy enforcement action may be taken to prevent nuisance (i.e. an injunction), permission to keep a pet removed, and in extreme cases possession action may be sought.
- Saffron will also work in conjunction with Environmental Services from the Local Authority, the Police and/or RSPCA where necessary

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