

# Policy

## Title: Pets Policy

Author: Neighbourhood Coordinator  
Approved by: Calico Homes Board

Last full review date: Jan 2020  
Updated: Mar 2024  
Date of next review: Mar 2026

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This document relates to:



# Policy

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Pets Policy details the approach to responsible pet ownership that will be used for Calico Homes tenants resulting in customers having an understanding of the terms and conditions.
- 1.2 Calico Homes is committed to creating and maintaining sustainable tenancies and neighbourhoods.
- 1.3 This policy applies to all customers who have or are signed up to a Calico Homes tenancy agreement.

## **2. Context**

- 2.1 This policy has been developed to ensure that Calico Homes is fully compliant with all relevant legislation and regulations relating to tenancies.

## **3. Policy Aims and Objectives**

The aims of the policy are:

- To communicate clearly and transparently the type and number of pets that will be permitted in Calico Homes tenancies.
- To set out how we will ensure compliance with ongoing legal and regulatory requirements specifically relating to banned breeds of dog.
- To ensure that domestic pets do not cause a nuisance to other residents and visitors to the neighbourhood or our properties.
- To ensure that pets do not have a negative impact on the physical environment within Calico neighbourhoods.
- To provide guidelines for a consistent and enforceable approach to pet ownership.
- To consider the welfare of any animals kept as pets in our customers homes.

The policy supports delivery of the Calico Homes vision and strategic objectives as set out below.

## **The Calico Homes Vision**

“Going one step further with customers and local communities to provide affordable, safe and quality homes and personalised services; supporting customers to live their best lives in challenging times.”

### **The Calico Homes objectives:**

- To provide safe and well-maintained homes through investment in existing and new properties.
- To support customers to sustain tenancies.
- To provide good quality and personalised repairs, customer and neighbourhood services.
- To develop trusting relationships and to empower customers and communities to take the lead on the things that matter most.
- To strengthen the business so it is strong, well-governed, environmentally friendly and provides value for money customers.
- To create a place where people want to work now and in the future.

## **4.0 Customer Scrutiny, Oversight and Monitoring**

- 4.1 Calico Homes values transparency and accountability in our pets policy and management processes.
- 4.2 We encourage customers to provide feedback on their experience of pets living in Calico Homes properties. Whether positive or negative, customer input helps us continuously improve our services.

## **5. Pets Policy Statement**

- 5.1 Under the terms of their tenancy agreement, our customers have a right to have peaceful enjoyment of their homes and the immediate surrounding environment.
- 5.2 For some of our customers, this may include keeping a pet or pets. Keeping pets can give a boost to customer’s physical and mental wellbeing.
- 5.3 Irresponsible pet ownership can cause nuisance to other residents, staff and suffering for the animal(s).
- 5.4 Customers wishing to own certain pets must apply to Calico Homes for permission. This will be entirely at Calico Homes discretion.
- 5.5 We will deal with requests to keep pets as fairly as possible bearing in mind any issues or restrictions which may exist in any neighbourhood or block. The numbers of pets allowed will depend on the property, type of pet and circumstances of the customer.

## **6. Policy description**

- 6.1 Customers must not keep any pet in their property without first obtaining Calico Homes written consent (with certain exceptions noted in this policy). The granting or refusal of consent is the discretion of Calico Homes. Calico's consent may be withdrawn at any time, in particular if a pet causes a nuisance or annoyance in the neighbourhood.
- 6.2 Any registered assistance dog (or similar registered assistant animal) will automatically receive consent and this will not be withdrawn within its working life.
- 6.3 Permission should be requested by contacting the Neighbourhood Officer (if the property is supported housing, the Supported Housing Officer will assume the same role as the Neighbourhood Officer, with guidance from the Neighbourhood Management Team). All requests for permission to keep pets will be considered by the Neighbourhood Officer. This may involve a home visit to the customer. Calico Homes will respond to each request within 28 days in writing to either allow or deny permission to keep the pet. If permission is granted, the letter will detail what is expected of the customer to ensure responsible pet ownership. A copy of the letter of permission will be kept on file.

### **Small animals**

- 6.3 Written permission is not required to keep up to 2, small animals which are housed in cages or small tanks and are kept inside the home and do not need to be allowed outside of the property, for example small birds, fish, hamsters or mice etc.
- 6.4 Written permission is not required for 1 fish tank under 33 gallons (155 litres).
- 6.5 If a customer has their own private garden, permission may be given for them to keep 2 small pets in hutches such as rabbits or guinea pigs.

For other animals, permission may be granted based in the following circumstances:

### **Dogs**

- 6.6 Permission to keep a dog will only be granted to customers who have the dog micro-chipped.

### **Dangerous dogs**

- 6.7 Permission will not be given in any circumstances to keep any dog listed as banned as defined by the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, as amended 2023.
- 6.8 XL Bully dogs – Owners must adhere to the specifications in the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 including having a valid certificate of exemption

### **Cats**

- 6.9 Permission to keep a cat may only be granted to customers who are able to let the cat outside on a regular basis (unless the cat is a house-cat).

### **Non-domestic or exotic pets**

- 6.10 Permission will not be granted for a customer to keep livestock. An application for non-domestic or exotic pets will be refused if:
- The pet requires a licence and the customer does not hold one.
  - The pet will pose a safety risk should it escape.
  - The property is not suitable to keep the species of pet.
  - The customer is not able to look after the pet

An exotic pet can include a variety of species including, but not limited to:

- Amphibians - salamanders, frogs, toads
- Avians - duck, birds or prey, ostrich
- Canine - fox, wolf
- Carnivores - mink, racoon, weasel
- Insectivores - mole, shrew
- Mammals - bat, ferret, squirrel, sugar glider
- Reptiles - lizards, snakes, turtles
- Spiders

### **If pets cause a problem**

- 6.11 Calico Homes will aim to resolve the situation with the customer. Problems caused by pets may include, but are not limited to:
- Noise/barking
  - Roaming dog in neighbourhood
  - Animal fouling in neighbourhood or garden (including communal gardens)
  - Animal attacks

If the situation is not resolved, Calico Homes may:

- Withdraw permission to keep an animal.
- Make restrictions on the number of animals a customer can keep.
- Ask the customer to sign an Acceptable Behaviour Contract in partnership with partner agencies which may include the Police, RSPCA, Local Authority Dog Warden.

- Apply to the local Council for a Community Protection Notice which could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice if breached.
  - Apply for an injunction to control behaviour or force action.
  - In extreme cases, seek a possession order to recover possession of the property.
- 6.12 Customers are responsible for the repair or replacement of any damage to the property caused by pets and for treating any infestations in the property caused by pets.
- 6.13 Customers are responsible for the behaviour of their pets. Pets must be supervised and kept under control and must not cause nuisance or annoyance to anyone in the neighbourhood. This includes fouling, noise aggressive behaviour and odours from pets. Dogs should be kept on a lead when outside of the home, in the neighbourhood. Customers are required to have a collar and tag on their dogs.
- 6.14 Dogs must be put away in another room during any visit from Calico Homes
- 6.15 Customers should clear up animal fouling from their pets immediately both inside and outside of the property.
- 6.16 In the event that a customer is no longer able to look after a pet, it is the customer's responsibility to make arrangements for the continued care of the pet.
- 6.17 Calico Homes understand that there may be customers who have become pet owners above the level allowed in this policy. In these cases, we will take a compassionate view and will use discretion unless the pet(s) is adversely affecting others or its behaviour is detrimental to the neighbourhood.
- 6.18 Customers should not operate a business from their home which involves pets such as breeding, dog walking or pet grooming.
- 6.19 No pet should be left in the property when the customer is away unless clear arrangements have been made to provide adequate care. This may require the pet to be boarded elsewhere but close supervision by a friend or neighbour may be adequate for some pets. Customers in communal schemes can ask family/friends to look after their pets if they go away on holiday but should inform the Independent Living Officer of this before going away.
- 6.20 If a customer is looking after a pet for someone else, the criteria in this policy will apply.
- 6.21 Customers are responsible for re-homing their pets in the event that they need to decant to a temporary home due to, for example, major repairs or fire/flood. This will be done at the customers expense.

## **7. Reasonable Adjustments**

- 7.1 It is our policy to ensure that discretion is used in cases of identified vulnerabilities such as disability, frailty, domestic abuse, concern for welfare or any other identified need. Calico will use information provided by customers and held in our systems to assist in identifying responsibilities. We will also ask customers and applicants if there are any issues that need to be considered to help us make appropriate decisions when offering a tenancy.
- 7.2 In cases where abuse is identified or suspected at the point of offering a tenancy a safeguarding notification will be made.
- 7.3 Calico Homes allow customers to be supported by a representative or advocate in interactions about landlord services.

## **8. Monitoring**

- 8.1 Monitoring of the delivery of this policy will include the production of reports by exception if permission is sought for a dangerous animal.
- 8.2 Customer feedback received via transactional surveys and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures will be used to actively improve the service being offered.

## **9 Appeals**

- 9.1 If a tenant believes that they have been denied permission to keep a pet wrongly, they can make an appeal, in writing or by email, for this decision to be reviewed. This should be made within 28 days of the decision. If appropriate, we may offer an extended period for any appeal due to vulnerability. Appeals will be responded to within 10 working days.

## **10. Regulatory and Legal Compliance**


- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 2004
- Health and Safety at Work act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended)
- Equality Act 2010
- Animal Health and Welfare Act 2006
- Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976
- Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 amended 2023.

## **11. Links with other Calico Strategies, Policies and Procedures**

- The Humanitarian Offer – Calico Group Customer Strategy
- Tenancy Fraud Policy
- Tenancy Sustainment Policy
- Starter Tenancy Procedure
- Lettings and Allocations Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Health and Safety Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Reasonable Adjustments Policy
- Tenancy/Licence/Lease agreements
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Community Safety Policy



## Risk Assessment

<b>Activity / Role / Person Assessed:</b>	Working in and around areas where dogs may be present	<b>Company / Dept:</b>	Calico Group				
<b>Assessor:</b>	Julie Wilks	<b>Date:</b>	26/01/24				
<b>Health and Safety Name:</b>	Mark Hull	<b>Health and Safety Signature:</b>					
<b>Company Lead Name:</b>		<b>Company Lead signature:</b>					
<b>Reference Number:</b>	GEN010						
<b>Hazard</b>	<b>Hazardous Event</b>	<b>Risk Assessment</b>			<b>Who is Affected</b>	<b>Controls Measures</b>	<b>Residual Risk Rating</b>
<i>What is the potential for harm?</i>	<i>How could the harm be realised?</i>	Likelihood (A)	Harm (B)	Risk Rating (C)		<i>What are the current controls? How can the risk be reduced further?</i>	

Sustaining dog bite	In properties/residences/general open spaces	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	All staff entering estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check for presence of dogs prior to leaving your vehicle or when walking in an open/outside area. If you observe a dog off a lead do not leave your vehicle, if you have left your vehicle try to put some distance/barrier between you and the dog, go back to your vehicle if possible and telephone the dog warden.</li> <li>• Prior to visiting any property, check for any warning markers on the register for the property you are visiting for the presence of dogs.</li> <li>• Ensure the dog is placed in another room before entering the property. Do not enter a property where the dog has not been put in another room, if this is not possible then the dog must be put on a lead and if possible muzzled. (See addendum regarding XL bully dogs)</li> <li>• If you are bitten seek medical advice and the earliest opportunity, inform your line manager, complete the Health and Safety incident report and send this to <a href="mailto:h&amp;steam@calico.org.uk">h&amp;steam@calico.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Always carry your mobile phone</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>
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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remember to take extra care when posting anything through a letterbox and be aware that dogs could be present, never put your hand through a letterbox</li> </ul>	
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Col (A) - Likelihood of Injury or Hazard	Col (B) - Severity of Injury or Hazard	Who Could Be Affected
1. Improbable - (Extremely Unlikely To Occur)		Operators
2. Remote (Small Chance Of Occurring)		Maintenance / Quality
3. Occasional (Could Occur Sometime)		Contractors
4. Probable (Unsurprised If It Happened)		Visitors
5. Frequent (Almost Certain To Happen)		Special Cases (Pregnant Worker/Young People Under 18)



### Risk Change Register

Date:	Change:	Reason for Change	Signed
26/01/24	Risk mitigation review and to provide additional supporting information	Reviewed and amended for considerations to include the new legislation/guidance for XL-Bullys	<i>[Signature]</i>

Persons affected by this Risk Assessment – Have been instructed and understand the contents of this risk assessment and associated documentation, by signing below you are accepting that all the associated hazards and risk involved with this work activity have been assessed and will abide to the control measures detailed within.

Date	Person	Trade / Occupation:	Signed

<b>Overall Risk Rating: 5</b>	<b>Date of Next Review: 26/01/25</b>
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## ADDENDUM – XL BULLY DOGS

### New Legal restrictions on XL Bully dogs.

From 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 new restrictions on the XL Bully dogs came into force making it a legal requirement for all XL Bully dogs to be kept on a lead and muzzled when in public. It is also illegal from this date to breed, sell, advertise, gift, exchange, abandon or let XL Bully dogs stray.

The decision to ban XL Bully dogs was made following a concerning rise in attacks from these dangerous dogs, with 23 people sadly losing their lives after vicious dog attacks in the last three years. XL Bullies have been involved in many of these tragic deaths.

Owners are also being urged to apply to register their current XL Bully dogs, as the Government takes action to safely manage the existing population of the breed. The deadline for this is 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024 and then the ban will come into force.

Owning an unregistered dog after this date will be a criminal offence, with owners who don't facing a criminal record and an unlimited fine.

Owners who do not want to keep their dogs after this date should take them to a vet to have them put down.

If owners are unsure whether their dog could be classed as an XL Bully, they should (as per government guidance) [check their dog carefully against our guidance and photo examples](#) of XL Bully dogs to help them decide.

If in the nature of your work an XL Bully is on your warning marker, please follow the above risk assessment and also ensure that the dog is muzzled and kept in another room. If you suspect that an XL Bully is not registered or a risk phone the dog warden/police for advice.

For further information from the government website please scan the QR code.

