



Living with Pets in a Sandbourne Property



Your guide to living with pets in
Sandbourne properties, including
assistance dogs, etc

Sandbourne Housing Association
Registered Office: Beech House, 28-30 Wimborne Road, Poole, BH15 2BU
Tel: 01202 671222
Email: info@sandbourne.org.uk
www.sandbournehousingassociation.org.uk

Introduction

Many people love animals (pets) but there are people in the community who don't and some people are actually frightened of them.

The purpose of this leaflet, therefore, is to let both pet owners and non pet owners know what Sandbourne's expectations are.

This applies to all of our occupiers whether you are a tenant, leaseholder or a shared owner.

When we talk about 'residents' in this leaflet, it can relate to tenants, leaseholders or shared owners.

This leaflet should be read in conjunction with, where applicable, 'Your Tenancy Handbook' (pages 23 and 24). If you are a leaseholder or shared ownership occupier, you should also read your lease.

Are there benefits to having, or looking after, a pet?

Owning or looking after a pet, and in particular a cat or dog, has been proven to be beneficial in many ways for the owner, for example providing companionship and helping to alleviate social isolation, improve health and reduce stress, etc. In addition, some people require the support of animals, for example assistance dogs, in their day-to-day lives.

Sandbourne therefore wishes to enable residents the opportunity to have these benefits, where reasonably possible, but with our permission.

What should I consider before getting a pet?

Although we've outlined some of the benefits, we would ask you to think carefully about getting a pet and consider:

- **Can you afford to have a pet?**

If you are a low income household you will need to make sure that you can afford it, in addition to your existing obligations. You will need to consider the purchase price of the pet; food (dogs, in particular, can be very expensive to feed); vets bills (for spaying/neutering, vaccinations, general health issues, flea treatments and worming, plus any unfortunate accidents); insurance against injury or damage (not only to your pet or to you, but also third parties). We should mention that damage to a property and/or communal areas, by your pet, could result in you being recharged for any repairs. There are even now dog ASBOs to contend with.

In 2014 the Telegraph quoted the lifetime cost of a dog as anywhere between £16,000 to £31,000, a cat as £17,000 and even a rabbit as £9,000.

- **Are you at home to look after your pet?**

Some organisations insist that you need to be at home for a large part of the day to look after certain types of pets, for example a dog. If this is the case, are you able to do this or is there someone else who can and will look after your pet while you are away or you are ill, etc.

- **Will your pet need exercising?**

If yes, are you fit and able to do this and is there somewhere close by that you can take your pet to exercise and toilet them, particularly at night when it may be dark and you may be on your own.

Is permission needed to keep or look after a pet?

Yes, residents must write into Sandbourne to request permission to keep a pet(s), including assistance dogs or looking after a pet for someone else. Residents must also allow 28 days for us to provide a reply. We are obliged to normally give our consent, unless we have good reason to refuse, in which case we must give our reason(s).

To assist you, if you are thinking about having a pet of your own or looking after one for someone else, we have included a request form at the end of this leaflet.

What about new residents who already have pets?

We automatically ask any potential residents about any pets they may have and will make them aware of their responsibilities before granting permission for them to move their pets into their new home with them.

What are my responsibilities?

Whether you currently own a pet, including assistance dogs, are thinking of getting a pet, are looking after a pet, or know of a resident with a pet, here are some guidelines to ensure that everyone is clear about a pet owner's/keeper's responsibilities.

Sandbourne occupancy agreements outline that residents are responsible for all companions staying in, and/or visiting, their home or in the locality of their home, both animal and humans! To be clear on what we expect from residents, we require that:

1. Pets should not be allowed to:

- enter any of the communal lounges, kitchens, laundries or guest rooms
- roam free in any Sandbourne communal areas/grounds or in the neighbouring area (in the case of dogs)
- use the grounds where they live for exercise or as a toilet; this must be carried out away from Sandbourne premises
- be noisy and/or disturbing to neighbours, for unreasonable periods of time and/or frequency, especially at night time
- jump up or approach neighbours, visitors, staff or contractors, without invitation (for example, dogs).

2. Pets should

- be insured, healthy and be up-to-date with vaccinations
- be microchipped, as required by law for dogs, and their details kept up-to-date
- in the case of dogs, be kept on a lead once outside of your home
- never be left unattended for unreasonable periods of time
- be cared for by someone, or an organisation, in the event of an emergency (for example if you are hospitalised at short notice)
- always be under the owner's/keeper's control in Sandbourne communal areas and in your own home

- be cared for and all litter should be disposed of responsibly
- be moved to another room during a visit from a member of Sandbourne's staff, or one of its contractors, if they request this.

What if a complaint is made about a pet and their behaviour, or the owner?

Sandbourne will take any complaints about pets, or the actions of their owner, very seriously. Any complaint will be investigated and information/evidence gathered. If the complaint is then deemed valid, consent to keep the pet may be withdrawn and you may have to re-home it/them.

Need more information?

You can:

Write to us at our registered office:

Beech House, 28-30 Wimborne Road, Poole, BH15 2BU

Email us on: info@sandbourne.org.uk

Telephone us on: 01202 671222

Please note that telephone calls to the registered office number above may be recorded for information and training purposes.

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PERMISSION TO KEEP OR LOOK AFTER A PET

To:	Sandbourne Housing Association Beech House 28-30 Wimborne Road Poole BH15 3HF		
From:	Tenant(s) names(s):		
	Address:		
	Address:		
I/We would like to ask for permission to keep/look after a pet in my property, as detailed below:			
To keep a pet	Yes / No	To look after a pet	Yes / No
Type of pet, including breed (for dogs)			
If looking after a pet, how long for?			

Continued over/

Has your pet been microchipped?	Yes / No
Are your pet's details up-to-date?	Yes / No
Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the pet or the circumstances?	
By signing below, I/we confirm that I/we have read the contents of this leaflet and will accept my/our responsibilities as a pet owner.	
Signed (Tenant 1):	
Date:	
Signed (Tenant 2):	
Date:	