



## **Pest Control Policy**

**Approved: September 2023  
V.02 (Code: PS19)**

## Our Vision, Mission Statement and Values

Shettleston's vision statement '*Thriving and prosperous local communities where all residents enjoy great homes and services, an attractive physical environment, and good life chances.* This statement is the foundation for Shettleston Housing Association's commitment to its residents and the communities they live in.

This commitment is also demonstrated in the Association's values which were agreed following discussions with the Board and staff. Shettleston's values are fundamental to how we carry out our day-to-day activities.

Our values are:

- **Customer service**
- **Make a difference in the community**
- **Teamwork**
- **Fairness**

## Equality & Diversity Statement

The Association is intent on ensuring people or communities do not face discrimination or social exclusion due to any of the following protected characteristics: age; disability; sex; marriage & civil partnership; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation; gender reassignment; pregnancy & maternity.

This document complies with the Association's equality & diversity policy.

The Association will regularly review this document for equal opportunities implications and take the necessary action to address any inequalities that result from the implementation of the policy.

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to set out our approach to *urban pests*. Shettleston Housing Association attaches great importance to ensuring the safety of its tenants, their families, visitors, and the general public. This policy outlines how the Association will ensure appropriate control measures are in place to prevent and eradicate an infestation of urban pests.

The Association has a duty of care to ensure that its residential and commercial properties are safe for use and, where pest control issues are identified, they are promptly identified and properly managed to ensure eradication of the infestation.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Association's Strategy on the Management of Rat Infestations.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy assists the delivery of two of the Association's Strategic Objectives:

- To effectively manage our resources to protect our assets and deliver the best possible outcomes for quality affordable homes in the area – by ensuring the good quality of our homes and our neighbourhoods is maintained, and our stock is always in demand.
- To continue to improve the quality and value for money of our services – by focusing on the whole-life value of our assets whilst managing annual costs prudently.

The Association, through this policy, will comply with the following legal requirements:

- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008

Under this legislation the following definitions apply:

**Urban pest** means a destructive insect or other animal which has human health or aesthetic implications. For example, bedbugs, rats, mice, cockroach, wasps, etc.

Urban pests can:

- Spread diseases
- Damage tenants' homes and belongings
- Sting or bite
- Aggravate asthma, eczema and other allergies

**Pest control** refers to the control or management of a species defined as urban pests.

**Public Health** is defined by World Health Organisation (WHO) as “the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts of society.”

### **3. Responsibilities under the Policy**

- 3.1 Treatment for most of the common household pests and minor infestations is the responsibility of the tenant.
- 3.2 The Association will take action, in conjunction with Environmental Health, to ensure that the problem is addressed for the more serious issues such as rats and cockroaches because they can spread disease and are a risk to public health. The Association may also act to treat infestations of bedbugs which, if not treated, can spread into the fabric of the whole building, and can become very difficult and expensive to eradicate. Squirrels can also chew through cables, and this could cause an electrical fire and the Association will act to eradicate squirrels from a property.
- 3.3 In circumstances where it is apparent that an infestation (and any consequent damage) has been caused by the action, or lack of action, on the part of the tenant the tenant may be held liable for the cost of treating pest infestations and will be recharged any costs incurred by the Association.
- 3.4 If it is apparent that an infestation is caused by disrepair or lack of action on the part of the Association, then it will take responsibility for carrying out repairs and treating the infestation, regardless of the pest. The Association is not responsible for damage caused by pests to tenants' belongings.
- 3.5 In cases of serious infestation of rats and mice, where they are present in substantial numbers, the Association may be served with a notice under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, which would mean it has a legal obligation to take steps to remove the rats and mice and repair any damage they have caused.
- 3.6 The Property Services Manager is the responsible person for the implementation of the policy on behalf of the Association.
- 3.7 Maintenance staff are responsible for:
  - Carrying out a visual pest control inspection when carrying out quarterly close inspections to ensure all communal areas are free from pest activity. Recording any evidence and instructing remedial action as required.
  - Ensuring that the appropriate advice is given to customers and staff when an infestation is reported.
  - Ensuring that, where necessary, infestations are inspected to determine the source and identify who is responsible for undertaking the treatment.

- Ensuring that, where appropriate, works orders are raised to treat infestations, including the blocking up of holes, cutting back vegetation, etc, to prevent further infestation.
- Ensuring that the Association investigates and follows up any recommendations from the Council's Pest Control team or specialist contractors to prevent further infestation.

### 3.8 Housing Management staff are responsible for:

- Carrying out a visual pest control inspection when carrying out quarterly estate management inspections to ensure all communal areas are free from pest activity and reporting any evidence to the maintenance team.
- Ensuring that appropriate advice is given to customers when an infestation is reported.
- Ensuring that, where an infestation is suspected, Housing Officers work with tenants to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and steps they can take to alleviate the problem.
- Ensuring that, where recommendations on tenant behaviour are made to treat or prevent infestations, these are notified to tenants and followed up as appropriate.

### 3.9 The Specialist Sub-Contractor / Pest Control team is responsible for:

- Undertaking the appropriate treatment to eradicate the infestation.
- Providing recommendations to prevent further infestations.
- It should be noted that Pest Control teams can only take action where there is clear evidence of the presence of pests and cannot bait or set traps as a preventative measure.

### 3.10 The tenant is responsible for:

- Advising the Association of any infestation so that it can assess the cause and provide guidance on treatment and responsibility.
- The treatment of minor infestations by common household pests within their property, including mice, but with the exception of rats, bedbugs, cockroaches and squirrels.
- Notifying the Association if communal areas are infested with vermin/pests.
- The Association will make all tenants aware of their responsibilities at the start of their tenancy through the Tenancy Agreement, information packs and leaflets.

## **4. Reporting Process**

- 4.1 When a tenant calls to report a pest problem the Association will record the details on the pest infestation register and advise the tenant whether they or the Association will be responsible for arranging any inspection or treatment.
- 4.2 Where responsibility lies with the tenant the Association will provide initial advice on dealing with the problem and advise them that they will be expected to take appropriate action to treat these pests at their own cost. The Association will also recommend that they contact the City of Glasgow Council's Environmental Health Team for more detailed advice on dealing with pests such as wasps, beetles, etc.
- 4.3 The Association can provide contact details of companies who can offer a service to treat pests but must advise that it cannot vouch for the performance of any company in treating pest problems.
- 4.4 Bats are a protected species, and it is illegal to kill, injure and capture a bat or deliberately damage its roost. If the infestation relates to bats the Association will notify Scottish Natural Heritage and advise tenants that they must not do anything to remove or disturb the bats. The Association will appoint a specialist contractor to inspect the area and provide a plan for treatment / removal of the bats.
- 4.5 Pigeons and pigeon droppings. The Association will only take action where there is a health hazard to residents or members of the public. Where it is shown that the actions of the tenant have contributed to the problem the tenant may be recharged for the cost of treating such infestations.
- 4.6 The Association will only remove a wasp's nest if it is directly attached to or located within the property and causing issues with opening windows, or opening front or back doors of the property.
- 4.7 Where a tenant is not satisfied with the way the Association has handled their concerns around pests or vermin, they will be advised that they may make a complaint via the Association's complaints handling policy.

## **5. Monitoring & Assessment**

The Association will maintain a register of all reported pest sightings and infestations to ensure it can monitor action by the relevant Pest Control teams and by the Association's own contractors until the pests are eradicated from the area.

This register will also allow the Association to assess and identify potential clusters of activity where more strategic action may be required.

## **6. Policy Review**

This policy will be due for review in three years, or earlier if there is a requirement to do so following guidance/procedures received by regulatory bodies, etc.