



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage**  
*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for  
Housing and Local Government*  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
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12 February 2026

Dear all,

### **Fair consideration of requests to have a pet**

I am writing following Royal Assent of the Renters' Rights Act last year and in relation to the right for private tenants to request to have a pet in their home.

In November last year we published an implementation roadmap for the Renters' Rights Act 2025 explaining how the government will implement the Act. For private registered providers of social housing and tenants, the Act will come into force in 2027. We will shortly be consulting on a proposed new Tenure Direction to the Regulator of Social Housing. Ahead of implementation we will provide details on the Written Statement of Terms for the social rented sector (the written information social landlords must provide to tenants at the outset of tenancies). We will also continue to work with social housing landlords as we develop guidance for the sector ahead of implementation of the reforms. I'd like to thank the many organisations who engaged with us on the passage of the Bill.

The Renters' Rights Act will ensure private landlords do not unreasonably withhold consent when a tenant requests to have a pet in their home, with the tenant able to challenge unfair decisions. Private landlords will be required to consider requests by tenants for pets on a case-by-case basis and will be able to refuse unreasonable requests and ask tenants for further information.

During the passage of the Act, I committed to write to landlords across the social rented sector, including local councils and private registered providers, to reaffirm the importance of ensuring that tenant requests to keep pets are considered fairly and, where appropriate, tenants are allowed to keep pets.

This is an issue close to my heart, and I am aware, close to the hearts of many social housing tenants. Pets play a valuable role in providing companionship, emotional support, and in contributing to improved mental and physical wellbeing.

Tenants in social housing do not generally experience the same barriers to keeping a pet as those in the private rented sector and that is why I did not feel it was proportionate or necessary to legislate to require social housing landlords to fairly consider tenants' rights to request a pet. I recognise though that it is important there is clarity, fairness and consistency across the private and social rented sectors.

I know that many social landlords already outline their policies on pets within their tenancy agreements. Where landlords do not, I encourage them to do so and also want to encourage landlords to share best practice on how requests to have pets are considered and communicated to tenants.

Existing examples of good practice include publishing clear, accessible pet policies in tenancy documents and on relevant websites. These policies should set out a clear process for making a request for a pet and the circumstances in which a request will be refused – for example setting out non-permitted animals (e.g. species listed under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976, and dogs prohibited under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 unless exempt).

I also expect that as landlords, you will wish to clearly explain to tenants the factors that will be considered as part of any request for a pet —for example, whether the tenancy or superior lease allows pets, the suitability of the property (size/layout, shared access, access to gardens/communal space), the type/size of the animal, and welfare considerations—and provide a simple route to apply with a standard timeframe for a decision noting when timelines may extend if superior landlord consent is required.

Where requests are refused, decisions should be confirmed in writing with an explanation for why the request hasn't been granted and, if appropriate signpost the tenant to the options available for review or redress.

Many social landlords also include details in their policies on pet welfare and control measures such as ensuring animals are looked after appropriately, are well-controlled in communal areas, and do not cause nuisance or damage. Policies also commonly highlight the importance of pets being identifiable and maintained in good health, helping to ensure animals can be kept safely and without impacting neighbours.

These approaches show how landlords balance enabling responsible pet ownership with effective property and neighbourhood management, giving tenants clarity on criteria, timelines and redress. I am grateful to you if you already have such a policy in place and, if not, encourage you to adopt one as soon as practicable.

Thank you for your continued commitment to supporting tenants and communities.

Yours ever,



**BARONESS TAYLOR OF STEVENAGE**  
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government