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Waltham Estate RMO Pets and Dog Policy

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PETS AND DOGS POLICY

OVERALL OBJECTIVES

The objective is to provide a consistent approach to pet ownership in Waltham Estate RMO properties, which is:

- a) Unambiguous.
- b) Open to inspection by all interested parties
- c) Promotes a consistent approach to responsible pet ownership,
- d) Provides a reference document for Waltham Estate RMO staff and tenants

This Guidance aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To ensure that its implementation does not discriminate directly or indirectly on the grounds of race, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age
- To promote animal welfare
- To minimise nuisance caused by pets
- To address residents' concerns about dangerous dogs and nuisance caused by dogs
- To identify irresponsible owners and tackle them for breach of tenancy conditions
- To improve safety and environmental condition of housing estates

1. BACKGROUND

Pet ownership in Britain has risen considerably over the last few decades. In 2013 it is estimated that 13 million (45% of) households have pets. The pet population has increased by 4 million to almost 71 million – that's 24.5 million excluding fish, of this 8.5 million are dogs.

The new Tenancy Agreement introduced in August 2012 set a requirement for tenants to obtain written permission from the landlord to keep domestic pets. Waltham Estate RMO would not unreasonably turn down authorisation to keep a domestic pet, so long as the pet(s) does not cause nuisance to other residents.

To obtain authorisation to keep a pet the tenant must have suitable insurance to cover any damages caused by or resulting from keeping/owning a pet.

While Waltham Estate RMO may grant permission to keep a pet, the responsibility for the animal remains solely with the owner and Waltham Estate RMO accepts no liability for any pet(s) kept in its properties.

1.1. EXOTIC PETS

Waltham Estate RMO will usually not grant permission to keep exotic animals but will consider applications to keep small birds and fish.

2.1 DOGS

In the recent years there have been increasing concerns about the rise in "status dogs". Evidence suggests that in the UK "status dogs" used for criminal and anti-social purposes is getting worse.

An increased number of potentially dangerous dogs are kept illegally, and some animals are mistreated.

Waltham Estate RMO works closely with the Animal Welfare Officer, London Borough of Lambeth, the Metropolitan Police, RSPCA and Battersea Dogs Home and animal welfare agencies to investigate incidents involving dangerous dogs.

Waltham Estate RMO will not tolerate antisocial behaviour from dogs including:

- Using dogs as weapons
- Using dogs to intimidate others
- Allowing dogs to attack other dogs
- Illegal dog fighting
- Mistreatment of dogs
- Damage to public property, including trees

2.1.1 Banned Dogs

Under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Section 1 (Amended 1997), it is illegal to own a banned type of dog (unless it is registered in the Index of Exempted Dogs Register). The four banned types of dogs are:

- Pit Bull Terrier type (other names include American Pit Bull Terrier, American Pit Bull, American Staffordshire Terriers, Irish Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Irish Blue or Red Nose)
- Dogo Argentino type (other names include Argentian Mastiff)
- Japanese Tosa type (other names include Tosa Inu and Tosa Fighting Dog)
- Fila Brasileiro type (other names include Brazilian Mastiff)

2.1.2 Microchipping

The RSPCA, veterinary organisations and the police agree that microchipping is the most effective way to manage antisocial behaviour connected to dogs and to promote the welfare of dogs.

The government has recently announced that all dogs will need to be microchipped from 6 April 2016. Microchips are coded with owners' details, and owners can face fines of up to £500.

Waltham Estate RMO is aware that the requirement to microchip dogs could be financial burden for low-income households. Since October 2009 we have worked with the Council, RSPCA and other animal welfare organisations to arrange free microchipping for Lambeth residents.

Waltham Estate RMO also sign posts pet owners to the RSPCA Southeast Branch at West Norwood, 380 Norwood Road, SE27 9AA, where free micro chipping can be obtained.

2.1.3 Requirements under the Tenancy Conditions

In August 2012 a clause was introduced in the Tenancy Conditions stipulating that tenant must obtain Waltham Estate RMO permission to keep dogs and the leaseholder tenant need to obtain Waltham Estate RMO permission to keep dogs.

The agreement confirms that to obtain consent Waltham Estate RMO requires documented evidence that the animal is micro chipped.

Early compliance with your tenancy agreement will prepare tenants for The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 – which will make it compulsory for all dogs over the age of 8 weeks in England to be fitted with microchips from 6 April 2016. Once this new rule comes into effect, if a dog without a microchip comes to the attention of the authorities, its keeper may be served with a notice requiring the dog to be microchipped and may face criminal prosecution and a £500 fine if they do not comply with the notice.

Before consent is granted the tenant will also be asked to sign an agreement:

- To keep the microchip information up to date
- That the dog has a name tag and contact details when in public places

- That the dog is on a lead in public places, at all times
- That the dog does not cause nuisance
- That the dog does not foul or damage communal areas
- That the dog is not used for breeding purposes

Except in a very exceptional case permission will not be granted to have more than 2 cats or dogs. We will not give permission if we think your home is unsuitable for your pet, or if we think it would cause a nuisance or pose a danger to any other person.

AUTHORISATION TO KEEP A PET

Procedure

1. REQUEST TO KEEP A PET IN A WALTHAM ESTATE RMO PROPERTY

1.1. Written application to keep a pet

Waltham Estate RMO tenants/resident wishing to keep a pet must submit a written application to the Customer Services Officer (see appendix 1).

1.2. Requirements to obtain authorisation to keep a dog

1.2.1. In order to obtain authorisation to keep a dog the applicant must present documentation to prove that the animal has been microchipped.

Permission will not be granted to keep dogs banned in the UK under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 Section 1 (Amended 1997), details as follows:

- Pit Bull Terrier type (other names include American Pit Bull Terrier, American Pit Bull, American Staffordshire Terriers, Irish Staffordshire Bull Terrier, Irish Blue or Red Nose)
- Dogo Argentino type (other names include Argentinian Mastiff)
- Japanese Tosa type (other names include Tosa Inu and Tose Fighting Dog)
- Fila Brasileiro type (other names include Brazilian Mastiff)

2. RESPONSE TO APPLICATIONS TO KEEP A DOG

2.1. Waltham Estate RMO will reply in writing within 10 working days.

2.2. If authorisation to keep the dog is granted, the tenant will be asked to sign an agreement to:

- To keep microchip information up to date
- That the dog has a name tag and contact details when in public places
- That the dog is on a lead in public places, at all times
- That the dog does not cause nuisance
- That the dog does not foul or damage communal areas
- That the dog is not used for breeding purposes

2.3. If authorisation to keep a dog is not granted and the dog is already living in a Waltham Estate RMO property, the tenant will be asked to confirm in writing the address to which the dog has been removed.

2.3.1 Customer Services Officer will inform the RSPCA and the Police about any applications received to keep a “dangerous dog” as described in the Dangerous Dog Act 1991.

AUTHORISATION TO KEEP A PET

Before you start

If I'm granted permission to keep the pet, I agree to abide by the following conditions:

- I will not keep more than 1 dog or 2 cats.
- I will inform you immediately of any change to microchip information.
- I agree to reimburse you of the costs you may incur if you have to clean up after a pet, or repair damage caused a pet, which is owned by me, a member of my household, lodger or visitor.
- I understand that any breach of these conditions will be regarded as a breach of my tenancy agreement, which may place my home at risk. I acknowledge it is desirable to have pet insurance and you have encouraged me to have a policy that protects me from third party liability.
- I understand that Waltham estate may withdraw permission at any time.

If I keep a dog, it will:

- wear a name tag with contact details when in public places
- be kept on a lead in public places at all times
- not cause nuisance
- not foul or damage council-owned property including communal areas and fixtures and fittings
- not be used for breeding purposes in the property or in the locality.

I confirm I have read and agree to the pet owner conditions

Names.....

Signature.....



Estate Housing Office
The Old Laundry
Thornicroft House
London SW9 9PT

Tel: 020 7926 9083
waltham@wermo.org.uk
www.wermo.org.uk

APPENDIX 1

APPLICATION FOR AUTHORISATION TO KEEP A PET

APPLICANT

NAME

TENANT: YES / NO

ADDRESS.....

I HAVE A PRIVATE GARDEN YES / NO

Email

TELEPHONE

PET DETAILS

NAME

SEX: MALE / FEMALE

NEUTERED (if applicable) : YES / NO

DATE OF BIRTH:

BREED

BREED DESCRIPTION

COMPULSORY FOR DOGS:

MICROCHIP NUMBER

ORGANISATION RESPONSIBLE FOR MICROCHIPPING.....

COPY OF MICROCHIP DOCUMENT ATTACHED: YES / NO

(APPENDIX 2)

AGREEMENT TO KEEP A PET

DATE

TENANT'S NAME:

ADDRESS:

PET'S NAME

MICROCHIP NUMBER (if applicable)

MICROCHIP ISSUED BY (if applicable)

You are granted permission to keep the above animal, on the understanding that you will:

- Keep microchip information up to date
- That the dog has a name tag and contact details when in public places
- That the dog is on a lead in public places, at all times

- That the animal does not cause nuisance
- That the animal does not foul or damage communal areas
- That the animal is not used for breeding purposes

(delete statements which do not apply)

Please be aware that failure to observe the above, will cause for Waltham Estate RMO to withdraw permission from you to keep your pet and legal proceedings could be pursued that might jeopardise your security of tenure.

SIGNED

SIGNED

NAME

CUSTOMER SERVICES OFFICER.....

APPENDIX 3

<p>SUPPORT AND ADVICE CONTACT DETAILS</p>
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To report stray dogs:

London Borough of Lambeth Animal Welfare Services

Telephone: 0207 926 8860 (office hours 9m-5pm) 0207 926 1000 (out of office hours for emergency stray dogs ONLY that are restrained/contained i.e. not roaming)

To report lost dogs or incidents of irresponsible dog ownership i.e. dog fouling and non urgent animal welfare concerns:

London Borough of Lambeth Animal Welfare Services

Telephone: 0207 926 8860 (office hours 9m-5pm)

Email: animalwelfare@lambeth.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/Environment/AnimalWelfare/>

If you have lost your dog there's a good chance that he/she may have already been picked up and taken to **Battersea Dogs & Cats Home**.

Lost Dogs & Cats Line (to report lost dogs)

Telephone: 020 7627 9245

Website: http://www.battersea.org.uk/help_advice/lost_dogs_cats/have_you_lost_a_dog.html

To report animal welfare concerns / animal cruelty:

RSPCA

Telephone: National cruelty line 0300 1234 999

For free microchipping, low cost vaccinations, advice on neutering:

RSPCA London South East Branch runs regular clinics for free micro chipping and low cost vaccinations. The clinics are held at the RSPCA south east branch which is situated at 380 Norwood Road, SE27 9AA.

Telephone: 0208 761 5832

Email: rspcalondonsoutheastbranch@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.rspca-london-se.org.uk/>