

PORT OF LEITH HOUSING ASSOCIATION PEST CONTROL POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1 Pests such as rats, mice, wasps, bedbugs, hide beetles, ants, fleas and cockroaches can:

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

1.2 Treatment for most of the common household pests and minor infestations are the responsibility of the tenant, but the Association will intervene to ensure that the problem is addressed quickly for the more serious ones (i.e. rats and cockroaches because they can spread disease and are a risk to public health, and also bedbugs which, if not treated, can spread into the fabric of the whole building and can become very difficult and expensive to eradicate). In certain cases, the tenant may be held liable for the cost of treating such infestations and will be recharged the cost incurred by the Association in doing so.

2. Policy Aim

2.1 To clearly set out where responsibility lies for dealing with pests in and around the property.

3. Links to Other Policies

3.1 This policy has links with our policies on Customer Care, Estate Management, Health and Safety, Property Management and Rechargeable Repairs.

4. Responsibility for Treating Pests and Vermin

4.1 The **Association** is responsible for arranging and paying for:

- treatment of rats
- treatment of bedbugs
- treatment of cockroaches
- treatment of infestations of any kind in communal areas, including mice and wasps

- Blocking up holes in properties where mice are gaining access

4.1.1 If it is apparent that an infestation is caused by disrepair or lack of action on the part of the Association, then we will take responsibility for carrying out repairs and treating the infestation, regardless of the pest. We will not, however, be responsible for damage caused by pests to tenants' belongings.

4.2 The **tenant** is responsible for:

- Advising the Association of any infestation so that we can assess the cause and advise responsibility
- Treating and paying for infestations by common household pests in their own property, including mice, but with the exception of bedbugs, cockroaches and rats.

4.2.1 If it is apparent that an infestation that we are dealing with and any consequent damage has been caused by the action or lack of action on the part of the tenant, we will recharge the tenant for the cost of the repairs and/or treatment carried out by the Association in dealing with the infestation.

5. **Advice to Tenants**

5.1 On receipt of a report of a pest problem, we will advise the tenant whether we will be responsible for arranging any inspection or treatment.

5.2 Where responsibility lies with the tenant for treating pests, we will give them 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. We will also suggest that they contact the City of Edinburgh Council's Environmental Health Team for more detailed advice on dealing with pests such as wasps, beetles, etc. We will provide contact details of companies who can offer a service to treat pests, but will advise that we cannot vouch for the performance of any company in treating pest problems.

6. **Monitoring**

6.1 We will record all reports of pests and infestations so that we can monitor any trends or problem areas.

7. **Bats**

7.1 Bats are a protected species, and it is illegal to kill, injure and capture a bat or deliberately damage its roost. We will advise tenants that they must contact Scottish Natural Heritage before doing anything to remove or disturb the bats.

8. Enforcement Notices

- 8.1 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 we were legally obliged to take steps to remove the rats and mice and repair any damage they have caused.
- 8.2 The Public Health (Scotland) Act 2008 deals with premises that are filthy and verminous and, under Part 5 of the Act, local authorities have the power to serve notice on the owners, or occupiers, specifying the works required to eradicate pests and vermin. The City of Edinburgh Council's Public Health Department therefore has powers to serve notices on households requiring them to clean their property or to force access to carry out treatment and we liaise with them in cases where this course of action may be required.

9. Complaints

- 9.1 Tenants who are not satisfied with the way we have handled their issues around pests or vermin will be advised of the Association's complaints policy.

10. Review

- 10.1 This policy will be reviewed after one year unless any amendment is required by a change in legislation or monitoring and reporting indicates that a change in policy is required before then.

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