

Pest Control Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out our approach to controlling pest infestations in our customers' homes and communal areas. This includes when we will investigate cases of infestation, our response time for doing so, and proofing measures we will put in place to prevent future infestations.
- 1.2 This policy has links to some of our other policies, and we have thought about these links when reviewing the policy. This policy should be read in conjunction with our:
 - Responsive Repairs policy
 - Estate Management policy
 - Damp and Mould policy
 - Recharge Policy for Homeowners

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy covers social housing tenants (including Affordable Rent), supported housing, and sheltered housing tenants that live in Peabody Group properties, as well as residents of the Regency Estate.
- 2.2 This policy also covers leaseholders and shared owners. This does not apply to properties in Thamesmead.
- 2.3 This policy does not cover freeholders.

3. Key terms and definitions

- 3.1 Pest is a generic term for vermin, rodents and insects which are commonly considered to be a pest. This can include Statutory Pests, where legislation states they must be controlled by Local Authorities and owners and occupiers of land and properties within those Local Authority boundaries; and Non-Statutory Pests, being all other pests, which are not considered Statutory.
- 3.2 Pest Control means treating pests and may include blocking their entry to our properties in line with the requirement of the Human Habitation Act.

4. Our approach

4.1 Controlling pests inside the home

- 4.1.1 We will assess infestations of the following pests: rats, mice, cockroaches, pharaoh ants (tropical ants), pigeons/birds, wasps, fleas, squirrels, oak processionary moth caterpillars, and brown tailed moth caterpillars.
- 4.1.2 Customers are responsible for dealing with common household pests such as flying insects, ants, bed bugs, moths, household beetles, plaster beetles, silverfish, caterpillars, or spiders. This list is not exhaustive. We will work with customers to provide advice when treating these pests.

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- 4.1.3 In extreme cases where the customer has been unsuccessful when treating a bed bug infestation, we will review our approach on a case-by-case basis on receiving a report.
- 4.1.4 We will respond to infestations of all other pests on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the risks to people, environment and property.
- 4.1.5 We will investigate all pest infestations in our care and supported housing properties, with proofing and prevention measures in communal areas and/or individual units where required.
- 4.1.6 Where an infestation of pests is caused by the customer's lifestyle, we will recover the costs of treatment through our Responsive Repairs Policy for general needs customers, and our Recharge Policy for Homeowners for customers with a shared ownership, leasehold or freehold agreement. If they do not deal with the pests in their home, we may take action under the terms of the tenancy or lease. Before we do this, we will always try to contact the customer and give them advice about how to manage the problem. We will not take action until we have given them a written warning detailing their responsibility and how the problem should be resolved. Where appropriate, we will work with customers and/or support agencies to resolve the issue and will only take legal action as a last resort where all other options have failed to resolve the problem.

4.2 Approach to pests in communal areas

- 4.2.1 We will take a risk-based approach to the treatment of pest infestations within communal areas, assessing the severity and impact on residents to ensure the correct mitigation is taken for the particular block.
- 4.2.2 We will deal with pest infestations that are found in the communal parts of our properties, such as lobbies, hallways, staircases, landings of blocks of flats and bin stores.
- 4.2.3 We will also deal with pest infestations that are present in the 'structure' of blocks of flats, such as drains, roof spaces, car parks, boiler rooms and refuse enclosures. This includes dealing with rats, mice, cockroaches, pigeons, squirrels, wasp nests and beehives.
- 4.2.4 We will seek professional advice where appropriate. For example, bees are an endangered, protected species and may require specialist control that does not lead to their destruction. This may also apply to some nesting birds, such as parakeets.
- 4.2.5 Customers are expected to keep their garden maintained and tidy in line with their tenancy / lease agreements. We will not treat mice in gardens, but we may treat rat, fox, and badger issues in gardens where there are visible burrows.
- 4.2.6 We will recover the cost of all pest control works carried out in communal areas through service charges paid by the customers who benefit from them in line with their tenancy agreements and leases.

4.3 Approach to pigeons

- 4.3.1 Balconies are the responsibility of the customer to keep clean, free from rubbish and to deter pigeons from. Where a customer has problems with pigeon mess on their balcony, we can provide them with a quote to clean the balcony and these charges will be recharged back to the customer. We can also provide them with information about how to deter pigeons. We will not install pigeon proofing to individual balconies.

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- 4.3.2 We will only install pigeon proofing to communal areas where the communal areas to proof are easily accessible and require limited expense to access.
- 4.3.3 All communal pigeon proofing cost will be charged back to customers via service charges. Where necessary this will include consultation with customers.
- 4.3.4 Leaseholders are responsible for solar panels exclusively serving their premises. However, leases may set out different responsibilities and we always follow the lease in deciding the responsibilities of leaseholders and the landlord (us).

4.4 Response Times

- 4.4.1 We will take reasonably prompt action to manage pest infestations for which we are responsible for.

4.5 Proofing Works

- 4.5.1 Where we attend to a property for pest infestation, proofing works may be carried out, to prevent future infestation.
- 4.5.2 For pest infestations that have originated in communal areas, we will carry out proofing works where required.

4.6 Other

- 4.6.1 For some pest infestation cases, we will work with the Local Authorities if we deem it suitable.

5. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- 5.1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed for this policy. Ongoing monitoring of customers' protected characteristics will be conducted to identify any adverse impact and future actions.

6. Legislation and Regulation

- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Common Law Nuisance
- Regulatory Code 3.4.1:2.4
- Public Health Act 1936, section 83
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Greater London Council (General Powers) Act 1979, section 8
- Homes (Fitness for Habitation) Act 2018

7. Responsibilities

- 7.1. The Managing Director (North-East London) and the Director of Repairs (Property Maintenance) have overall accountability for this policy and implementation.
- 7.2. Customers are responsible for the following:

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- It is the responsibility of all customers to ensure that there is no food to encourage or sustain a pest infestation, both inside their property and outside in communal areas.
- Where multiple visits are necessary for baiting or other treatments, the customer will be expected to have taken any measures advised by our colleagues or contractors. If the tenant fails to do so and the infestation continues or becomes quickly re-infested, we will issue warnings and may recharge the customer.
- Where a case has been reported, the customer is responsible for providing access to the property for colleagues and contractors to assess and treat the infestation.

Approval

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| Policy owner | Managing Director (North-East London) & Director of Repairs (Property Maintenance) |