

# Management of pest controls policy

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Date adopted	November 2022
Date of next review	November 2025
Version	1
Responsible board	Homes board
Responsible officer	Head of neighbourhoods

We are committed to providing excellent customer service, so that every time you contact us you have a good experience. Our pest control policy sets out what you can expect from us when a pest infestation problem occurs.

## This policy has been developed to:

- ◆ Explain how we will manage pest infestation problems when they are reported to us. (See Appendix 1).
- ◆ Ensure a consistent approach to managing customer enquiries about pest control issues and to minimise risks to the customer and to Homes Plus.
- ◆ Work with customers and partners to manage pest infestation in our homes and estates, and clarify the roles and responsibilities of our customers and of residents who live in our communities.
- ◆ Commercial properties owned or managed by us.

## This policy applies to all:

- ◆ Properties we own or manage in line with a customer's tenancy agreement or lease.
- ◆ Land owned by us, including that in communal areas and customers' private gardens.
- ◆ Our employees, partners, customers, and any external organisation supported or engaged by us.

## Because we want to provide:

- ◆ A value for money service, so you can enjoy your home and our communal, green, and open spaces. We will recharge the full cost of this service through a service charge or recover the costs via recharging, where appropriate.
- ◆ Advice and guidance about how to manage and control pest infestations.
- ◆ A professional treatment service, as recommended in a pest control survey, to make sure your home is safe.

## We will:

- ◆ Keep ownership and responsibility for the management and maintenance of all communal areas and land.
- ◆ Aim to identify any pest issues that we are responsible for - ensuring that a pest survey takes place and any treatment we are responsible for is carried out safely. We will minimise, as far as we can, any risk to people's health or safety, or damage to people's home and property.

- ◆ Tell you if we are planning to undertake inspections or works that require access to your home, including any adjoining properties. Following an inspection, we will notify you of the outcome, detail any work required and provide the timescales to do the work.

## Guidance and responsibilities (See appendix 1 for pests)

### We are responsible for:

#### Blocks of flats and communal areas

The treatment of mice, rats, cockroaches, wasps, pigeons, and squirrels in communal areas. On occasion, we may need to treat a whole block, including all flats and communal areas. If a leaseholder's property is part of a block being treated, we may recharge the leaseholder for a proportion of the total cost.

#### Flats/maisonettes

We will investigate the source of any pest issues and if treatment is required within your flat or a communal area, we will arrange for this work to be carried out, ensuring that any holes are blocked up before we start.

#### Houses/bungalows

We will investigate the source of any pest issues and if required, block holes in your home that could allow pests to access your property or loft area. Any holes allowing access will be dealt with prior to, during or after the treatments, referring to the contractors advice.

When a property is empty, we will inspect it and deal with any pest issues before the home is re-let.

We may recharge you or claim legal costs if you do not deal with pest control issues you have caused in your home and/or in adjoining properties or areas owned by us.

### You are responsible for:

- ◆ Reporting any pest control issues to us as soon as you discover them. This will enable us to investigate the cause of the problem using a competent, professional pest control contractor. If it is found that you are responsible for the necessary treatment, we will give you advice on how to deal with the problem.
- ◆ Maintaining your property and garden so that they do not encourage pests, which could cause repeat infestations that affect your property or neighbouring properties. Examples include using the recycling bins correctly and not leaving bags of rubbish in your garden or communal areas.
- ◆ Allowing us - and our appointed contractors - access to carry out pest control treatments that we are responsible for. If you fail to allow either our officers or contractors access to treat the issues, we may consider legal action such as an injunction to force entry in serious infestation cases affecting people's health.

If works are undertaken on land which forms part of a leasehold agreement or commercial premises, we will consult and charge according to the lease terms and conditions.

Appendix 1 includes details of when we will - and will not - undertake pest control treatments. It also lists the types of pests that we are - and are not - responsible for.

### Making sure we do what we say

We monitor performance related to pest control cases. This includes the number of cases reported, investigated, and acted on. In addition, this ensures that any arrangements made with our contractors provide the best value for money.

## **Links to other policies**

This policy links to our Neighbourhood management, Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Major improvements, and Aids and adaptations policies.

## **Policy review**

We will review this policy in three years unless it is required before.

# Appendix 1

## Types of treatment

Where we are responsible for pest control, we will provide the treatments listed below. Our contractors will explain the number of visits required at the commencement of the works. In addition, they will agree the process for removing dead animals.

<b>Mice</b>	Up to four visits to bait and remove.
<b>Rats</b>	Up to four visits to bait and remove.
<b>Cockroaches</b>	One visit to spray the affected area.
<b>Wasps</b>	One visit to poison and remove the nest.
<b>Squirrels</b>	Trap and remove from inside spaces like lofts, after any holes have been blocked.
<b>Pigeons</b>	Trap and remove from inside spaces like lofts, after any holes have been blocked. We will remove nests of live chicks from balconies but are not responsible for cleaning pigeon droppings or other debris.

**Please note: if more treatments are required to remove the pest issue, we will review with the contractor.**

## We will not treat the following:

<b>Bees</b> (we will not normally treat)	<p>Bees are not regarded as pests and cannot be killed. In exceptional circumstances, if they present a major risk, a registered bee handler can remove them.</p> <p><b>Honey bees</b> - a beekeeper will be called out.</p> <p><b>Masonry bees</b> - these insects are incapable of stinging us so we will not destroy them.</p> <p><b>Bumble bees</b> - their nests have much fewer individuals than wasp nests or honey bees and though capable of stinging humans, bumble bees are the least aggressive of the stinging insects.</p>
<b>Foxes</b>	Foxes are not regarded as pests and cannot be trapped or killed. Fox nuisance issues can be eased by not feeding them or leaving food out, and by maintaining your garden.
<b>Badgers</b>	Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which makes it illegal to kill, injure or take badgers, or to interfere with a badger sett.
<b>Bats</b>	<b>We cannot treat for bats because all bats are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.</b> It is illegal to intentionally kill, injure or take any bat, to disturb roosting bats, or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for roosting. This applies to all householders and all pest control services.

**Any other insects  
(including flies, ants,  
fleas, spiders, silver  
fish, bedbugs, and  
ladybirds)**

These can be controlled by keeping your home clean and well maintained. If treatment is required, you can do this using domestic products, for example ant powder. This issue would not normally require treatment from a pest control contractor. However, if the problem or source is something we are responsible for then we will offer the appropriate treatment.

The list does not cover every pest or animal that customers call us for advice about, but we will always ensure that all enquiries are dealt with, and customers receive guidance that is relevant to their situation.



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