



Pest Control Policy

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Responsible Officer: Head of Housing & Customer Services

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Regulatory Standard: 1, 2 and 5



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Providing homes, supporting communities

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1.0 Hjaltland Values

Our Vision

Providing homes, supporting communities

Our Values

Teamwork

Working together as one team, to the benefit of our customers. To demonstrate and extend trust in each other.

Open, Honest & Inclusive

We offer a people focused service that is centred in fairness and integrity. We believe in being open, honest and respectful in everything we do.

Ownership

We expect our staff to take responsibility for their actions and give them the freedom to do their job in a positive working environment.

Quality

We value quality in everything we do from the standard of our product to the level of service we provide. We take pride in making a difference in communities and providing continuous improvement.

Innovation

We seek to ensure we have sustainable housing, fit for future generations, maintained and developed to the highest possible standard.

2.0 Introduction

This policy has been established to ensure consistency of all Hjaltland Housing Association activities

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Hjaltland Housing Association standards with regards to Pest Control.

Each employee is an important contributor to the Hjaltland Housing Association vision and each employee is needed at work to assist in the accomplishment of Hjaltland Housing Association's values.

To ensure effective and efficient operations of the Hjaltland Housing Association and provide the best possible work environment to employees, Hjaltland Housing Association expects employees to adhere to the standards as outlined in this policy.

3.0 Policy Statement

Hjaltland Housing Association and our employees recognise the legal obligations placed on them by the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act and of any other statutory provisions and regulations applying to its activities, and aims to:

- Clearly set out the Associations position in dealing with pests in and around the property.
- Confirm the pest control issues that the Association will take responsibility for.
- Confirm the pest control issues tenants will take responsibility for.
- Provide advice to tenants on how to eradicate pests.
- Clarify the circumstances that may result in a re-charge to the tenant.

Employees [and any sub-contractors] have a duty to co-operate in the operation of this policy by fulfilling the responsibilities placed upon them.

Signed

Ian Bray
Head of Housing and Customer Services

Date: February 2025 Planned Review Date: February 2028

4.0 Regulatory Framework / Legal

The Regulatory Framework is based on the Housing (Scotland) Act.

Hjaltland Housing Association has a range of duties, obligations and responsibilities placed on them by legislation and through statutory guidance. These include achieving the standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter, duties to help people who are homeless, duties around the safety of tenants' homes, and promoting equality and human rights.

Hjaltland Housing Association also have requirements placed on them by other regulatory bodies, including the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Care Inspectorate, Audit Scotland and the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Hjaltland Housing Association will ensure that we meet all of our legal duties and responsibilities and that we adhere to relevant guidance and the requirements of other regulators.

Relevant Regulatory Standard: 1, 2 and 5

- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Public Health etc.(Scotland) Act 2008

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 Committee

It is recognised that the Management Committee, while not actively involved in the day to day running of the organisation, is collectively responsible for providing leadership and direction.

Committee Members are responsible for ensuring that Hjaltland Housing Association fulfils its statutory obligations and allocates adequate resources to do so.

5.2 Executive Team

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the Committee's policy objectives are achieved and that policy and performance are kept under active review to address any changes required. The following individual post has been allocated overall responsibility within the terms of our policy:

- Bryan Leask, Chief Executive Officer

5.3 Senior Leadership Team

Due to the 'managerial' function performed by Heads of Departments it is accepted that they will be best placed to identify and control any concerns within their departments. Day to day responsibility for ensuring the policy is put into practice and consultation with employees is delegated to:

- Heads of Departments

They will ensure:

- The objectives and guidance outlined within our management system is fully understood and observed by persons under their control;
- Responsibilities are clearly defined and allocated / delegated to the appropriate levels within their areas of responsibility;
- The policy statement will be brought to the attention of all employees under their control;
- Any changes to the policy or our arrangements are brought to the attention of all persons under their control;

5.4 Responsible Persons

It is important that policy standards are maintained and improved therefore where necessary specific roles within Hjaltland Housing Association, have been allocated additional responsibilities. Where this responsibility is specific to a subject area, the details of the responsible person are communicated to employees in writing or verbally as required.

These Responsible Persons will also be required to monitor their areas of control as well as the performance and activities of all persons under their control to ensure that acceptable standards are maintained.

Relevant responsible persons are:

- Senior Technical Officer
- Technical Officers
 - .1 Ensuring that, where an infestation is suspected, work with tenants to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities and steps they can take to alleviate the problem.
 - .2 Ensuring that, where recommendations on tenant behaviour are made to treat or prevent infestations, these are notified to tenants and followed up as appropriate.
- Estate Worker
 - 1. Carry out a visual inspection when completing weekly visits to communal areas to ensure all communal areas are free from pest activity, reporting any evidence to the maintenance team.

5.5 All Staff

- Employees will comply with the policies, procedures and arrangements set out in the Management System together with any information, instruction and training provided. In addition, any risk control measures and equipment provided to ensure safe-working practices will be properly used.
- Employees will report to their Head of Department or other member of management any identified breaches of procedures, any accidents or incidents in any aspect, which appears to them to give rise to a significant risk to employees or other persons. Such reports will be made without undue delay.
- Employees will inform their Head of Department or other member of management, without undue delay, where they believe that further training or other risk control measures would be beneficial.
- Employees will co-operate in all programmes, training, assessments and other initiatives that are intended to reduce risk and will actively implement any control measures identified as being required.

- Employees will not participate in horseplay, practical jokes or other acts, which may result in harm being caused to themselves or to other individuals.
- Demonstrate their commitment by their behaviour and co-operate in the investigation of accidents and incidents;

6.0 Definitions

Urban Pest – means a destructive insect or other animal which has human health or aesthetic implications. For example bedbugs, rats, mice, birds, cockroach, bees, wasps, etc.

Urban pests can:

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

Pest Control – means the control or management of a species defined as urban pests.

Public Health – is defined by World Health Organisation (WHO) as “the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts of society”.

Nuisance – generally involves some form of damage to, or intolerable interference with a person's use or enjoyment of property. The various matters which may constitute a statutory nuisance are set down in section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act.

Minor Infestation – The presence of a single pest doesn't necessarily mean you have a problem. Each different type of pest has different signs that indicate they are in or are inhabiting a particular area.

Infestation – the presence of an unusually large number of insects or animals in a place, typically so as to cause damage or disease.

7.0 Policy Arrangement or Procedure

It is acknowledged that any form of pest infestation is unpleasant and will require action to eradicate the issue. Dealing with this is usually the responsibility of the tenant, unless the infestation has occurred through disrepair or a lack of action by the Association.

If it is deemed to be the responsibility of the tenant, but the infestation is so severe the tenant can't reasonably be expected to coordinate the repair, the Association will provide assistance. In this scenario, the cost of treatment will be passed on to the tenant as a rechargeable repair.

Tenant Responsibilities:

- Tenants are responsible for the treatment of minor pest control within their property.
- Tenants are responsible for informing the Association if there is an infestation within their property so that the Association can assess the cause and advise the tenant on the most suitable course of action.
- Tenants must notify the Association if communal areas are infested with vermin/pests or there are signs of birds nesting in lofts.
- Report pest issues relating to rats and mice to Shetland Island Council:

<https://www.shetland.gov.uk/environmental-health/public-health/3>

[01595 745250](tel:01595745250)

ehadmin@shetland.gov.uk

Environmental Health
Infrastructure Services Department
Shetland Islands Council
Gutters Hut
7 North Ness
Lerwick
SHETLAND ZE1 0LZ

- Tenants are responsible for allowing access to external contractors for necessary pest treatments

Landlord Responsibilities

The Association's duties regarding pest control are outlined below:

- The Association will ensure properties are free from visible pests before the start of any new tenancy
- The Association will carry out a visual pest control inspection when carrying out routine inspections to ensure areas are free from pest activity. This will be through the regular Routine

Maintenance and Estate Management inspections carried out by Housing Services, together with ad-hoc visits by other Officers when carrying out their day-to-day duties.

- The Association will report any infestation/pest issue to Shetland Island Council where it has a responsibility to respond to it. This may include a site inspection prior to referral.
- The Association will be responsible for carrying out repairs and appointing an appropriate contractor to eradicate the infestation (regardless of the pest) if it is apparent that an infestation is caused by disrepair or lack of action on the Association's part.
- The Association will not be responsible for dealing with an infestation if it is caused by the tenant's own negligence (i.e. if they have left food out or have not disposed of rubbish correctly). However, The Association will intervene within their properties on the most serious infestations promptly (i.e. Rats and cockroaches) as they can spread disease and are a risk to public health. This may be classed as a rechargeable repair where the infestation has been caused by a tenant's negligence.
- The Association will not be held responsible for any damage caused by pests to tenants' belongings.
- The Association will record all reports of urban pests and infestations so that the Association can monitor any trends or problem areas.

Enforcement Notices as issued by Environmental Health

- If there is deemed to be a serious infestation of rats and mice (present in substantial numbers) The Association may be served with a notice under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 which would mean the Association is legally obliged to take steps to remove the rats and mice and repair any damage they have caused.
- The Public Health (Scotland) Act deals with premises that are filthy and verminous, and, under Part V of the Act, local authorities have the power to serve notices on owners, or occupiers, specifying the works required to eradicate pests and vermin.
- Under provisions of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, The Association maybe held liable for the remediation of neighbouring properties affected by the infestation and or/may be required to carry out factored close treatment.
- Under the provisions of The Environment Protection Act, where a local authority is satisfied that statutory nuisance exists, or is likely to occur or recur, the local authority has the power to serve a notice on The Association as owner, or to the tenants or landlords specifying the works required.
- The Association, if served with such notices, will act immediately with the appropriate remedial action as required.

Preventative action to discourage pests within the home

- Avoid feeding birds around your home
- Clean all surfaces thoroughly to remove crumbs
- Make sure refuse bins are covered, emptied and cleaned regularly

- Do not store food on the floor and keep all food stored in sealed containers
- Make sure any minor leaks in your home are reported and dealt with promptly to ensure there is no potential water source
- Report any missing soffit vents or obvious areas where birds may access loft spaces (it is illegal to remove any active bird's nests – chicks must have flown the nest before removal or blocking an entrance)
- Keep your home free from clutter
- Wash and dry bed sheets on the hottest temperature setting
- If you purchase second-hand furniture or clothing, inspect them carefully before bringing them into your home
- If you are a cat or dog owner, regularly treat your pet with a suitable flea treatment
- Ensure any pet food is also stored properly in sealed containers and off the ground

8.0 Related Policies, Document & Forms

Policies

- MP7 - Maintenance Policy

Documents

- Repairs Handbook
- SS44 Receiving a Repair Request
- SS47 Raising a Repair Order on Omniledger
- SS53 Process for Tenant Re-Charge Repairs

9.0 Equality, Diversity and Human Right Impact Assessment

The Association is committed to promoting positive measures that eliminate all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Our aim as landlord, service provider and employer is to recognise the needs of all individuals, and ensure these commitments are evident throughout every aspect of our business and our activities.

The Association assesses and reviews all new and revised policies and procedures, and an Impact Assessment is available.

10.0 GDPR

The Association will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own Data Protection Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in Hjaltland Housing Associations Privacy notices.

11.0 Monitoring and Review

Employees [and any sub-contractors] have a duty to co-operate in the operation of this policy by fulfilling the responsibilities placed upon them.

As stated, the operations of the company and this policy will be reviewed at regular intervals or in light of changing company circumstances, procedures and statutes. These changes will be brought to the attention of employees and others whose health and safety may be affected by such changes.

Planned Review Date: February 2028