



**South  
Cambridgeshire  
District Council**



# Getting a pet

advice and information on responsible pet ownership



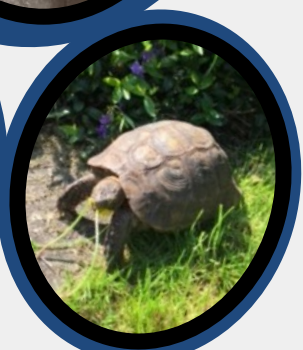
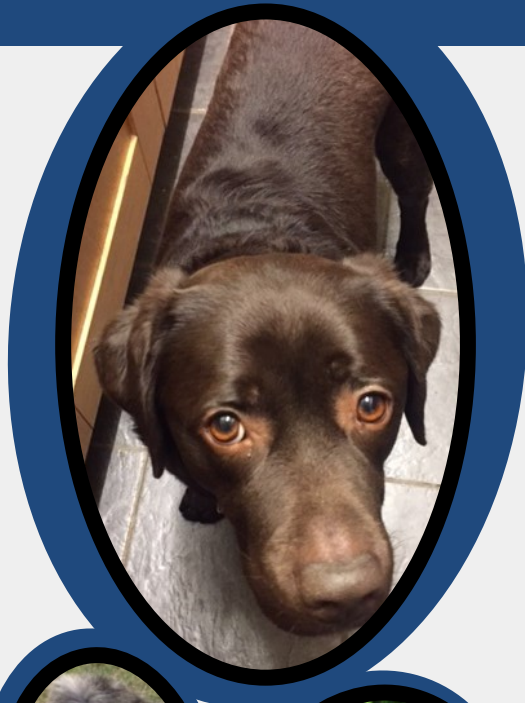
## Introduction

South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) recognises the huge value that having a pet can have for people. Usually, the majority of pet owners are wholly responsible and provide wonderful care for their animals; however there are some cases where this unfortunately cannot be said.

With this in mind, we felt that it was important to produce this leaflet so that people can take into account the areas that need to be considered before taking on the responsibility of having a pet.

In addition to providing guidance and advice to those thinking about getting a pet, we also aim to give an overview of SCDC's policy on keeping animals.

We love animals here in the housing department (*in fact most of the photos in this leaflet are of some of our own pets!*), so we certainly do not want to put anyone off from getting a pet; we simply want to promote responsible pet ownership and ensure that people consider what is expected of them if they do decide to add an animal to the family.



## Tenancy Agreement

Our tenancy agreement states that a tenant living in a house or a bungalow may get **one** domestic pet without obtaining permission from us, however we do ask that you notify us so that we can maintain up to date records of your household.

If a tenant would like more than one animal, or they live in a flat or upper-maisonette, they should fill out our 'Pet Permission Request Form' before getting a pet. This is available on our website or from your housing services officer (HSO).

Of course we won't unreasonably withhold permission but we will need to consider a number of areas before we can provide our approval.

These may include (*but are not limited to*):

- The size of the property
- The type of property
- The location of the property
- The type/breed of animal
- Access to open spaces

As part of the tenancy agreement, all pet owners are required to ensure that their animal(s) do not cause nuisance or any anti-social behaviour (ASB).



### microchipping and the law

It is the law to for **every dog** to be microchipped and registered with the relevant authorised databases in the United Kingdom. Some organisations offer free or reduced cost microchipping for pets.



## Permission

A tenant, anyone living at the property or any visitors, must not keep or bring into the area any breed of dog specified as dangerous in the 'Dangerous Dogs Act 1991' or any animals registered under the 'Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976' (*unless a court order has exempted them*).

The types of pets we generally would consider suitable to provide permission for include:

- Domestic dogs
- Domestic cats

- Non-venomous/poisonous reptiles, snakes, spiders or insects

We will assess each application individually but it is highly unlikely that we would grant permission for:

- Venomous animals
- Farmyard animals
- Wild animals
- Banned animals (*unless a court order has exempted them*)
- Cockerels are not allowed to be kept at an SCDC property.

## Responsibilities under the Animal Welfare Act 2006

Section 9 of The Animal Welfare Act (2006) contains provisions to safeguard the welfare of animals. Pet owners have a legal responsibility to provide suitable care for their animals.

The act outlines five welfare need areas that those responsible for an animal must ensure are met. They are:

- Need for suitable environment
- Need for suitable diet

- Need to be able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- Need to be housed with, or apart, from other animals
- Need to be protected from pain, suffering, injury or disease

Defra provides codes of practice for meeting these needs, which can be read or downloaded from the [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) website.

## Conditions



Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, owners are responsible for their pet's welfare. It is expected, without question, that owners of pets will act responsibly in relation to the welfare of their animal, other members of the household, visitors, the surrounding community and themselves.

In addition to this, SCDC expects the following from all pet owners:

- Tenants will only keep the number of pets that we have been informed of.
- Animals should remain well behaved and not cause a nuisance or any ASB to the community.
- All dogs will be appropriately microchipped as outlined in The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015.
- All dogs in a public place must wear a collar that displays their owner's address and postcode as outlined in the Control of Dogs Order 1992.
- We recommend that owners strongly consider microchipping their cat(s) which can increase the chance of the pet being returned if lost or stolen.
- Dogs will be walked on a lead whilst in built-up areas and on schemes.
- No breeding or sale of animals from an SCDC property.
- Boarding kennels may not be run from an SCDC property.
- Tenants will be responsible for their pet's behaviour.
- Must not allow their pets to cause damage to anyone's property, including their own home.
- Any damage caused by pets will be rectified and paid for by the owner.
- Ensuring any litter trays etc. are regularly cleared and cleaned.
- Pets and any litter trays will not be left or housed in communal areas (*such as hutches etc. in stairwells*).
- Must not leave pets alone for long periods of time without adequate care arrangements in place.
- Any fouling by a pet will be cleared up straight away and properly disposed of.
- Animals will not be allowed to roam freely around communal areas.
- Tenants and leaseholders will be required to source and pay for any additional items that may be required to keep their pet safe and under control (*e.g. additional fencing etc.*).
- Dogs should not be chained up.

You can ask Wood Green any question you may have about your pet, from behaviour tips to health and wellbeing advice. Their team can help you and your pet to live in harmony and get the best out of life. You can call them 7 days a week (8am - 4.30pm) on 0300 303 9333 or visit [www.woodgreen.org.uk/petadvice](http://www.woodgreen.org.uk/petadvice).

## Things to think about

The benefits of having a pet are undeniable and we recognise how exciting it can be. But pet ownership does come with significant responsibilities, so this section goes over a few things that should be thought about before committing to an animal.

- A pet requires both an investment of time and money
- Being able to provide care for your animal for it's entire life
- Being able to meet the animal's exercise needs
- Being able to meet the animal's emotional needs
- Being able to properly train your pet and prevent any anti-social behaviour such as noise etc.
- Really consider if your environment is suitable for the pet you would like. Can suitable care, shelter, food and water be supplied?
- Providing regular treatments that are required, whether it be worming, de-flea or specific medication if prescribed by a vet
- Vaccinations & Neutering
- Having options available to provide care for your pet whilst you are unable to (e.g. *holidays, health etc.*). This might be with family/friends or being able to afford to pay for kennels/cattery etc.
- Your pet will be another life that you will be responsible for and you will need to factor them into your daily routine and any emergency plans that you have in place
- If you have children, will your pet be suitable? What is their temperament like?
- **It is the law to ensure your dog has been microchipped.**



### wearing a collar

Dogs in a public place have to wear a collar that displays their owner's address and postcode. You do not need to put the dog's name on there, in fact this isn't recommended in case of theft as the dog may respond to it. For full information please see Article 2 of the Control of Dogs Order 1992.

## Rabbits

Naturally active, rabbits need a big enough space for them to run, hop, dig, stand upright on their back legs (*without touching the roof of the enclosure*) and be able to comfortably stretch out. With this in mind, they should be given a large living space that is secure, dry and comfortable for them. Animal welfare organisations state that a hutch is not enough. The Rabbit Welfare Association and Fund recommend that a minimum area of 3m x 2m x 1m is suitable for a pair of average sized rabbits (*whether they live indoors or outside*).

They are social animals and not having another rabbit to interact with can cause negative effects. You should keep your rabbit with at least one other rabbit unless a qualified vet has stated otherwise (*due to behavioural issues etc.*). If you are unsure, contact a vet or a qualified animal behavioural specialist for advice.

They also need a place to hide away as they can be very scared around predators like dogs, cats and birds etc.



In order to care for your rabbit properly we strongly advise you take a look at some of the leaflets available online from animal welfare organisations. These have a wealth of information and help provide you with the knowledge to provide your pet with a good quality of life.

Check out places such as the RSPCA, the Blue Cross and the Rabbit Welfare Association and Fund for more information and advice.

### *Did you know?*

*Rabbits have teeth that continue to grow all the time! Grass and hay help to wear them down.*

## a place for your notes

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## Useful contacts

A few useful contact numbers and websites for you to check out:

### Blue Cross

☎ 0300 790 9903

🏠 [www.bluecross.org.uk](http://www.bluecross.org.uk)

### Cat's Protection

☎ 03000 12 12 12

🏠 [www.cats.org.uk](http://www.cats.org.uk)

### The Cinnamon Trust

☎ 01736 757 900

🏠 [www.cinnamon.org.uk](http://www.cinnamon.org.uk)

### Citizens Advice Bureau

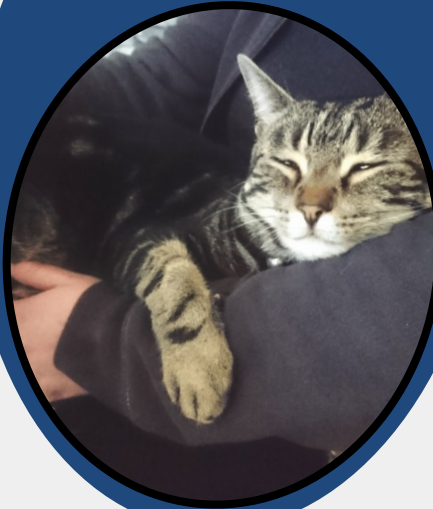
☎ 03444 111 444

🏠 [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

### Dogs Trust

☎ 0207 837 0006

🏠 [www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)



### PDSA

☎ 01952 290 999

🏠 [www.pdsa.org.uk](http://www.pdsa.org.uk)

### RSPCA

☎ 0300 1234 555

🏠 [www.rspca.org.uk](http://www.rspca.org.uk)

24hr Cruelty Line - 0300 1234 999

### Wood Green, The Animals Charity

☎ 0300 303 9333

🏠 [www.woodgreen.org.uk](http://www.woodgreen.org.uk)

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