



Pests and Pest Control

Policy Statement

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1. Purpose of the Policy

Denbigh Methodist Housing Association recognises that the presence of pests can cause distress to residents.

This policy will set out our approach to preventing and managing infestations of pests and how we will work with residents and service users to do so.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy details the measures that we will abide by and offer to all residents living in accommodation that is owned or managed by Denbigh Methodist Housing Association.

All members of staff, volunteers, contractors and third parties should use and abide by this policy. This policy applies where Denbigh Methodist Housing Association provides a service to residents and any other service users.

This is an overarching policy that applies across Denbigh Methodist Housing Association.

3. Policy Objectives

- Outline the obligations and responsibilities of Denbigh Methodist Housing Association with regards to infestations of pests
- Outline how Denbigh Methodist Housing Association will prevent and manage infestations of pests
- Outline how Denbigh Methodist Housing Association will work with residents and service users to prevent and manage pest infestations

4. Definitions

Pest

In the scope of this policy, a pest is defined as an animal or another organism that is a threat to humans or the properties that they reside in.

Pest control

Pest control is the process of preventing, managing and/or removing pests (as defined above). This is to mitigate the effects on human health (and the ecology) and minimise damage to properties.

Infestation

The presence of an usually large number of animals or insects in a place typically to cause damage or disease.

Statutory Nuisance

A statutory nuisance is defined as a nuisance that may:

- Injure health or is likely to injure health.
- Unreasonably and substantially interfere with the use of a home or other premises.

5. The Legal Standpoint

The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 places a duty on the Local Authority to take action to keep their district free from rats and mice. Under the Public Health Act 1936, the Local Authority may kill and remove animals considered to be vermin. The Local Authority is also permitted to deal with nuisance caused by certain birds such as feral pigeons according to the Public Health Act 1961.

However, some wild animals are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These include lizards, worms, common frogs and toads, snails, bats, and crickets. The Local Authority is prohibited from intentionally disturbing, killing or injuring these animals.

6. Policy Detail

Responsibilities of Residents

Residents are expected to attempt to deal with infestations of pests themselves in the first instance. This may include measures such as setting mouse traps and using powder to deal with ants. However, this does not include engaging with paid pest control services.

If these measures fail, the resident should inform Denbigh Methodist Housing Association. Any available free of charge pest control services from the Local Authority will be exhausted as a second measure.

Residents have a responsibility to keep their properties clean and to correctly dispose of rubbish. If the infestation of pests is deemed to have been caused by the actions of the resident (such as failing to keep the property clean), the charge for paid pest control services (if needed) will be made to the resident. A decision on who bears responsibility for the infestation of pests will be made after a full inspection has been completed on the property by our staff or contractors.

A resident may be exempt from charges if they are deemed to be vulnerable or if they have a health condition or disability which affects their ability to maintain cleanliness within their property and correctly dispose of rubbish. Decisions about charges for pest control services will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Responsibilities of Denbigh Methodist Housing Association

Denbigh Methodist Association will keep properties in a state of repair (see Repairs and Maintenance Policy). This includes the structure and exterior of the property (including drains, external pipes, gutters, and external windows). This will serve as a measure to attempt to prevent pests from entering properties and causing an infestation.

If an infestation of pests is reported by a resident, a member of staff from Denbigh Methodist Housing Association (or a contractor or third party) will visit the property to carry out a full inspection and determine what further actions may need to be taken.

Denbigh Methodist Housing Association will manage all infestations of pests that may cause a statutory nuisance. These are rats, mice, cockroaches, bedbugs, and tropical ant species. This could include repairing any defects of the property that are allowing the pests to enter as well as providing treatments. A decision about whether the cost will be borne by the organisation, or the resident will be made on a case-by-case basis after a full inspection. Treatments for moths, bedbugs and wasps may be offered at a cost by Denbigh Methodist Housing Association or the Local Authority.

If an infestation of pests is deemed to have been caused by the failure of Denbigh Methodist Housing Association to keep a property in a state of repair, then the charges for pest control services will be borne by the organisation.

If an infestation of pests occurs in a communal area, Denbigh Methodist Housing Association will take the necessary steps to deal with it. Residents will not be expected to manage it themselves. However, if the infestation has been caused by the lifestyle or actions of a resident or a group of residents, then the cost of clearing the infestation will be charged to the resident(s).

If Denbigh Methodist Housing Association fails to treat the infestation of pests and it is not deemed to have been caused by the actions of the resident(s), then residents may contact the Environmental Health department of the Local Authority.

Reporting an Infestation of pests:

Residents are asked to contact Denbigh Methodist Housing Association as soon as it becomes clear that the infestation of pests cannot be managed by initial measures taken by the resident alone.

Reports can be made through the following means:

By phone: 0207 229 7728

In writing:

Denbigh Methodist Housing Association
Notting Hill Methodist Church
240 Lancaster Road London W11 4AH

Data protection, Storage, and Retention

Denbigh Methodist Housing Association will treat all information relevant to each resident in the strictest confidence according to data protection legislation. All data will be stored securely.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

This policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that all residents and service users are treated equally without prejudice or discrimination. Denbigh Methodist Housing Association recognises that all adults and children have the right to live in homes that are free of pests particularly those that are a threat to their health. We will ensure that we deliver services sensitively and consider all relevant factors about our residents when making decisions.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Legislation and National Standards

Data Protection Act 1998

Data Protection Act 2018 and subsequent Regulations Housing Act 1996

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Equality Act 2010

Health Act 2006

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018

Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

Housing Acts 1985, 1988, 1996 and 2004

Human Rights Act 1998

Mental Health Act 1983, 2007

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

Public Health Act 1936, 1961

The Charter for Social Housing Residents

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981