



Rural Stirling

Housing Association



Quality property
management services

GROUP INFESTATIONS POLICY

Rural Stirling Housing Association, Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA Registered as a Scottish Charity No. SC037849 Venachar Limited, Incorporated under the Companies Act (Company Number SC447415), Registered Office: Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA	
Policy Name	Group Infestations Policy
Policy Category	Landlord Health and Safety
Date Policy Reviewed	10 August 2023
Review Period	3 years
Next Review Due	August 2026
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes

1.0 Purpose/Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to ensure appropriate control measures are in place to prevent and eradicate an infestation of urban pests.
- 1.2 The policy will ensure the wider public health risk posed by various urban pests are correctly identified and appropriate measures are in place to prevent and control them.

2.0 Equality & Diversity Statement

- 2.1 We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. In implementing this policy, we will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other grounds. Our commitment to equality and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or other personal attributes.

This policy and any other Rural Stirling Group (RSG) publication is available in other formats e.g., other languages, Braille, large print, audio.

3.0 SHR Regulatory Standards

- 3.1 The SHR's regulatory framework sets out Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management to be achieved by all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The Board accepts that it is responsible for ensuring that the Association complies with these standards. The standards of direct relevance to this policy are noted below:

Standard 1: The Governing Body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.

4.0 Relevant Legislation

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

5.0 Definitions

- 5.1 **Urban pest** means a destructive insect or other animal which has human health or

aesthetic implications. For example, bedbugs, rats, mice, cockroach, wasps, etc.

Urban pests can:

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

5.2 **Pest control** refers to the control or management of a species defined as urban *pests*.

5.3 **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.”

5.4 **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 1990.¹

6.0 Responsibilities

6.1 The Group's responsibilities regarding pest control are outlined below:

- The Group will ensure all properties, including gardens, are pest free before a tenant moves in;
- The Group will ensure that there are suitable and sufficient provisions in place to monitor matters that constitute 'statutory nuisance';
- Housing Services Officers will carry out a visual pest control inspection when carrying out estate management inspections to ensure all communal areas are free from pest activity and records will be kept;
- The Group will be responsible for carrying out repairs and treating the infestation (regardless of the pest) if it is apparent that an infestation is caused by disrepair or lack of action on the Group's part;
- The Group will be responsible for carrying out remediation work of neighbouring properties affected by the infestation, or commence the block treatment if the infestation spreads to another building;
- The Group will intervene on the most serious infestations promptly (i.e. rats and cockroaches) as they can spread disease and are a risk to public health. Additionally, the Group will intervene if there is an infestation of bed bugs, as if they are not treated promptly, they can spread into the fabric of the whole building and can become very difficult and expensive to eradicate;
- The Group will not be responsible for dealing with an infestation if it is caused by the tenants own negligence (i.e. if they have left food out or have not disposed of rubbish correctly);

- In certain cases where the infestation is caused by the tenant's own negligence, the tenant may be held liable for the cost of treating such infestations and will be recharged the cost incurred by the Group in doing so;
- The Group will not be held responsible for any damage caused by pests to tenants' belongings;
- The Group will record all reports of urban pests and infestations so that the Group can monitor any trends or problem areas.

6.2 The Tenant's responsibilities regarding pest control are outlined below:

- Tenants are responsible for the treatment of minor infestations within their property.
- Tenants are responsible for informing us if there is an infestation within their property so that we can assess the cause and advise the tenant on the next course of action.
- Tenants must notify us if communal areas are infested with vermin/pests.
- The Group will make all tenants aware of their responsibilities at the start of their tenancy through the Tenancy Agreement, information packs and leaflets

7.0 Related Documents

7.1 This policy links to other additional policy documents contained with the Landlords Health and Safety Manual, Tenancy Agreement and the Tenant handbook.

8.0 Review

8.1 We will review and update this policy every 3 years. More regular reviews will be considered where, for example, there is a need to respond to new legislation/policy or regulatory guidance.