

# Keeping Animals in your home



# Can I keep a pet?



**Responsible pet ownership can bring lots of benefits. However, keeping pets can sometimes have an impact on your property, and your neighbours.**

All Victory tenants must get written consent from us before taking ownership of a pet, to help avoid these situations.

## How do I ask for permission?

You need to complete our animal ownership request form to ask permission. You can do this on the Victory website using our online form. You can also download and print a form. Alternatively, call or email Customer Services to request one to be sent out to you.

## Assistance Animals

By law, we will not withhold permission for you to keep a guide dog or assistance animal. These are not classed as 'pets' but as an essential aid to daily living. However, we do still need to know about all the animals in your home, so please use the animal ownership request form to provide the details to us.

## You do not need permission for:

- Fish kept in one tank with a capacity of less than 21 litres
- No more than two small domesticated rodents, for example hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs or chinchillas

If these pets breed you'll need to reduce the number down once the offspring are independent, or apply for permission if you want to keep more than the numbers allowed.

## What information do you ask for when I apply?

The animal ownership request form asks for a range of information to help us to make an informed decision.

You will also be asked to sign a declaration to say you are responsible for the care, welfare and behaviour of your pets and you will ensure that they do not cause any nuisance or distress to others.



### You will need to tell us:

- If you have a guide dog or assistance animal
- The type of property you live in
- Whether you have access to gardens or open space
- The type and breed of animal
- Whether the animal will be neutered or spayed
- If the animal is microchipped (this is a legal requirement for dogs)
- Any animals you already have
- When you are planning to get the pet
- Where you are getting it from
- How long it will be left each day
- What arrangements you will make for your pet when you are away
- Which vet it will be registered with
- A contact in case of emergency
- Any special licenses or documents required



If you are affected by animal nuisance, please contact our Customer Services Team.

## What happens to my request?

Victory's Community Management Team will consider your request and will write to you to let you know their decision. We aim to let you know within 10 working days. We will contact you if we need more information.

We will assess whether the home you live in is suitable for the type of pet you have requested and also consider if it is likely your pet will cause a nuisance.

We will look at any previous problems with pet ownership or anti-social behaviour and the way tenants are managing their home. We also consider any pet-related problems in the immediate area.

**We assess all requests in a fair and impartial way.**

## Can permission be refused?

We can refuse permission in some circumstances, including:

- If you want to keep a dog that is outlawed under the Dangerous Dogs Act
- If your pet is dangerous in another way
- If you want to keep an exotic pet, livestock, poultry, horses or bird of prey
- If you have a history of animal cruelty, neglect or abandonment
- If your property has a communal entrance or in some cases a communal garden
- If you want to keep more than two cats or dogs (maximum of two animals)
- If you want to keep an unreasonable number of smaller animals

## Animals and the Law

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 makes owners and keepers responsible for ensuring that the welfare needs of their animals are met. These include the need:

- for a suitable place to live
- for a suitable diet, including fresh water
- to express normal behaviour
- to be housed with, or apart from, other animals, as suitable for that animal
- to be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease

Anyone who is cruel to an animal, or does not provide for its welfare needs, may be banned from owning animals, fined up to £20,000 or even sent to prison.



## Can permission be withdrawn?

We have the right to withdraw permission under reasonable circumstances.

### These include:

If the conditions given by Victory for keeping the pet have been breached

- If the pet causes nuisance, annoyance, disturbance or distress to neighbours
- If the cost of keeping the pet interferes with the tenant's ability to pay their rent
- If we believe the pet is neglected, malnourished or mistreated.

If permission is withdrawn, we will write to let you know, giving the reasons why this has happened.

We will give a reasonable timescale to arrange for the pet to be rehomed.

## Can I appeal if permission is refused?

If your request is refused and you do not agree with the reasons, you can make a formal complaint. This does not necessarily mean the decision will be overturned. Find out more about how to make a complaint on our website or contact our Customer Services Team.

## I live in an over 60's housing scheme. Can I keep a pet?

We do not usually give permission for cats or dogs to be kept in over 60's housing schemes as they often have internal corridors and lifts. However, if a new tenant is moving into an over 60's housing scheme already

has a cat or dog, we may be able to grant permission as long as they live in a ground floor property. Permission for any additional pets would be refused.

## Pets in internal communal areas

Pets are not allowed in shared facilities such as communal lounges, laundry rooms or kitchens, except for guide dogs or assistance animals.

## Visiting pets

Any visiting pets must not cause a nuisance while they are at the property. The tenant is equally liable for any nuisance being caused at the property even if it is from a visiting pet.

## Is 'pet sitting' or 'pet fostering' allowed?

If you are asked to look after a pet in your home temporarily, you will need permission from us before the pet arrives at the property.

Permission will be given for a limited amount of time unless there are exceptional circumstances surrounding the request.

We can refuse or revoke permission at any time under reasonable circumstances.

Contact our Customer Services Team to request permission for pet sitting.

Victory's full Animal Ownership Procedure is available upon request.

## Your responsibilities as a pet owner

If you receive permission to keep a pet, it is your responsibility to ensure the pet is cared for and looked after properly. It is also your responsibility to ensure you are able to afford to keep the pet you have requested permission for.

If permission is granted to keep a pet in a property with a communal garden, dogs must not be exercised in or given free access to the garden and must be kept on a lead while walking through the communal garden. Owners must clean up after their pets immediately, especially if they foul in communal spaces.

It is your responsibility to put right any damage to your property caused by the pet at your own cost. Any damage caused by pets to the property at the time you leave the property will be put right by Victory, and the cost recharged to you.

It is your responsibility to ensure all the conditions and guidelines set out in your Tenancy Agreement are met, as well as any other conditions specified in the written consent from Victory.

We will not give permission for any business activity at your home involving the breeding or selling of animals. We expect all animals to be spayed or neutered.

**Victory will periodically check the accuracy of information about animals in your home.**

### Contact Victory

**Call us 0330 123 1860**

(8.30am – 5pm weekdays or 24/7 for emergencies)

**info@victory-homes.co.uk**

**Tweet us: @MyVictoryHome**

**victory-homes.co.uk**

Livechat is available weekdays  
8.30am – 4pm

### Write to:

Victory Homes, Tom Moore House, Cromer Road, North Walsham NR28 0NB

