

1.0 AIMS

- 1.1 To ensure awareness of Health and Property risks posed by pests, and to ensure appropriate measures are in place to firstly prevent and thereafter, control and eradicate.
- 1.2 To identify where responsibility lies for dealing with pest infestations in and around properties.
- 1.3 To mitigate risk, and ensure compliance with legislation, best practice and guiding standards.

2.0 CONTEXT

- 2.1 In 2002, the World Health Organisation carried out the LARES¹ survey into the relationship between housing and health. This involved an investigation into the housing conditions of over 8,000 inhabitants in over 3,000 dwellings in eight different European cities.
- 2.2 The survey revealed that 60% of dwellings had been infested by at least one pest in the previous year. Additionally, the survey demonstrated the physical and mental health implications that follow from living in a pest infested environment. This proved to particularly be the case as regards more vulnerable members of society, such as older people, children, people with disabilities, and those with pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma.

3.0 SCOPE

- 3.1 Reflecting both landlord and Property Factoring duties, this policy will outline measures for preventing and controlling the infestation of pests, as well as the scope of responsibilities for both the association, tenants and factored owners.
- 3.2 This policy applies to all properties owned by Glasgow West Housing Association (GWHA). In certain circumstances it requires tenants to take responsibility for behaviour change and Pest Control actions to address a pest infestation. GWHA will make any special provisions as necessary to ensure persons with a protected characteristic, in particular, disabilities, who is unable to take the required action themselves, will receive necessary support.
- 3.3 The policy also addresses situations where the infestation impacts on the common areas of a property factored by Glasgow West Enterprises (GWEn) in term of engagement with private owners.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 A “pest” is a destructive insect or animal which has both human health and aesthetic implications².
- 4.2 “Infestation” is the state of being invaded or overrun by pests³.
- 4.3 The “wider public health” is defined by the World Health Organisation as the art and science of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organised efforts of society⁴.
- 4.4 The term “resident” will apply equally to tenants and factored owners.

7.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 7.1 GWHA recognises it has an important role in ensuring its properties are well maintained and fit for habitation. In this context the Association will work with other partners to promote best practice general, food and recycling waste management; and will ensure robust and effective measures are in place for the prevention and effective control of pests.
- 7.2 The three key issues driving effective pest control are acknowledged as: property maintenance, promotion of good practice, and behavioural change; with treatment considered a remedial measure whereby there has been a lapse in one or more of the issues that have resulted in the pest control issue. In some cases instances around wildlife pest control may be unforeseen and fall out with these categories.

¹ Large Analysis and Review of European housing and health Status

² [EVH Model Pest Control Policy](#)

³ Dorland's Medical Dictionary

⁴ <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/Health-systems/public-health-services>

8.0 POLICY

8.1 General

- 8.1.1 Reasonable actions will be taken by GW, in the context of responsibilities, to mitigate risks from pests to health and safety.
- 8.1.2 Procedures for recording reports of infestations will ensure problem areas are identified so that appropriate action is taken.
- 8.1.3 A list of appropriate consultants / treatment service providers will be held and routinely updated in accordance with GWHA's Procurement Policy and associated responsibilities (Appendix 3). Exploring cost efficiencies through Procurement for delivery of appropriate treatment, demonstrating value.

8.2 Resident (tenant and owner) Responsibilities

- 8.2.1 Responsibilities will be made clear via routine communication measures, including the Tenants Handbook, website, tenant sign-up packs and newsletter articles. In general, residents are expected to:
- Inform GW if there is a (potential) pest infestation in their property or common areas.
 - Arrange for the treatment of minor infestations⁵ within their property and to ensure reporting to GCC where the infestation is of either rats or mice.
 - Demonstrate appropriate behavioural change towards eradication of the issue as appropriately outlined by GW staff or service providers.
 - Refrain from feeding wild birds within the curtilage of the common parts and locality of their home.
 - Follow direction and best practice relating to domestic waste and recycling.

8.3 GWHA/GWEn Responsibilities: (GW)

- 8.3.1 GW's responsibilities as landlord and factor will be routinely reinforced via training and team meetings. Costs will be apportioned to owners in respect of factored properties, unless otherwise specifically noted. In general, staff are expected to:
- Carry out visual inspections of common areas as part of Estate Management Inspection Schedule and also by Officers conducting brief checks when they attend properties for routine purposes.
 - Ensure appropriate wildlife surveys are undertaken in line with GWEn and statutory obligations, when instructing environmental maintenance works, specifically tree removal.
 - On receipt of a report regarding an infestation, to inform the resident who is responsible for taking action: where the responsibility lies with the resident, to provide initial information and advice on tackling the problem and at all times reiterating that the resident is expected to take appropriate action at their own cost. To advise specifically that GW is not responsible for:
 - The cost of treating infestations which have been caused by a resident's negligence.
 - Damage caused by pests to resident's personal property.
 - Squirrel, Pigeon, or Gull culling / proofing works unless internal to common parts of a building.
 - As a matter of good practice, and in addition to advising residents of their responsibilities, to also report infestations of rats or mice to GCC.
 - Carry out repairs when legally instructed to do so by an Enforcement Notice under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, the Public Health (Scotland) Act 2008 or the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (see Appendix 2).
 - Instruct remedial cleaning / pressure washing for removal of guano from common parts.
 - Carry out, and meet the cost of repairs, if it is apparent that the infestation has been caused by GW's disrepair or lack of action, where the issue has been previously reported.
 - With Services Director approval:
 - To instruct the treatment of an infestation within a resident's home
 - To instruct the works where the pest infestation is likely to impact on the fabric of the property, or on another residents' peaceful enjoyment of their homes.

⁵ Crawling insects (including Ants, Spiders, Roaches), Flies

8.3.2 GWHA Property Specific

- (a) To ensure GWHA void properties are free from visible, active pest issues before key issue to new tenant.
- (b) To carry out repairs on areas where pests are gaining access to GWHA properties, as per GCC treatment.
- (c) To intervene and take lead action on the most serious infestations promptly (i.e. rats and cockroaches) as they can spread disease and are a danger to public health.
- (d) In cases where a property has an infestation, GWHA may, after seeking advice from Glasgow City Council (GCC)⁶, decant a tenant if the property is deemed uninhabitable for reasons of danger to the health and safety of the tenant(s). Where the property is deemed to be habitable, in most occasions, the tenant will not be entitled to decanting. However, all the circumstances of the case will be assessed and a decision taken by the Property Services Manager following a risk review.
- (e) If an infestation has occurred or escalated as a result of the tenant's action or inaction, or failure to cooperate with GWHA, and/or any consultant or contractor appointed to address the issue, including GCC, this may be treated as a breach of tenancy and/or as a rechargeable repair.

9.0 PROCEDURE FOR BATS

- 9.1 Bats are a protected species, and it is a criminal offence to capture, injure or kill a bat, or to intentionally damage a bat roost. The penalties for contravention are severe.
- 9.2 If bats are discovered in any GWHA property or in a common area factored by GWEn, they must not under any circumstances be touched, disturbed, expelled, stopped from gaining access, or killed. When a colony is suspected, this information and direction MUST be made clear to the caller.
- 9.3 GWHA/GWEn has a responsibility to stop contractors undertaking work anywhere near bats or anything which may disturb them.
- 9.4 Scottish Natural Heritage should be contacted for further advice on any infestation (See Appendix 3).

10.0 MONITORING

- 10.1 A detailed record of reports received regarding a potential infestation will be kept in line with appropriate GDPR⁷ guidelines to enable monitoring of trends and identification of problem areas. Reports will include, at a minimum, the following information:
 - Tenant/owner's name;
 - Property address;
 - Date of report;
 - Type of infestation (i.e. rats, mice, cockroaches);
 - Location of infestation (i.e. kitchen, bathroom, garden, stairs)
 - Advice Given
 - Further/Follow up Action (including timescales and responsibilities)

11.0 APPEALS, COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

- 11.1 Service users dissatisfied with any matter arising from the implementation of the policy will be entitled to raise a formal complaint.
- 11.2 Feedback may be provided about this policy by emailing admin@glasgowwestha.co.uk

12.0 REVIEW

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or sooner where there is a change in legislation or circumstance.
- 12.2 In any case of conflict between this policy and legislation, the relevant legislation will always take precedence.

⁶ Glasgow City Council, GCC including subsidiary departments (Environmental Health / Land and Environmental Services).

⁷ General Data Protection Regulations