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 Historically Glasgow City Council (GCC) provided a full range of pest control services to GW residents. Due to cuts in the council budget, Pest Control services have been significantly reduced. The current services provided by GCC as per their website are:

- Investigate and treat issues with mice when the pests occur indoors at domestic properties.
- Investigate and treat issues with rats at domestic property either indoors or outdoors.
- Liaise with property managers to resolve issues that cause the rodent infestation.
- a non-refundable service for live wasps nests to residents in Glasgow between June and September

2.2 Glasgow has experienced a significant increase in reported incidents of vermin. In the period 2023/24, there were 13,607 rat-related callouts recorded in Glasgow, a figure which exceeded the combined total of such reports from the next nine largest Scottish local authorities. This figure reflects a 46% increase compared to the data from 2018/19.

2.3 The information highlights the continued importance of monitoring housing quality and proactively addressing new risks to occupant health, especially as environmental and social conditions shift in urban areas.

2.4 This Pest Control Policy ensures there is a clear and transparent approach to what GW will deal with in relation to pest control and what our tenants should take responsibility for.

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 implications[1].

4.2 “Infestation” is the state of being invaded or overrun by pests[2].

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 society[3].

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.

[1] EVH Model Pest Control Policy
[2] Dorland’s Medical Dictionary
[3] http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/Health-systems/public-health-services

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.

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 the Pest Control Policy 2025-26: Responsibilities Staff Guide.

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:

(a) Inform GW if there is a (potential) pest infestation in their property or common areas.

(b) Arrange for the treatment of minor infestations[4] within their property and to ensure reporting to GCC where the infestation is of either rats or mice.

(c) Demonstrate appropriate behavioural change towards eradication of the issue as appropriately outlined by GW staff or service providers.

(d) Refrain from feeding wildlife[5] within the curtilage of the common parts and locality of their home.

(e) 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:

(a) 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.

(b) Ensure appropriate wildlife surveys are undertaken in line with GWEn and statutory obligations, when instructing environmental maintenance works, specifically tree removal.

(c) 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 <u>at all times</u> reiterating that the resident is expected to take appropriate action at their own cost. To advise specifically that GW is not responsible for:

- Damage caused by pests to resident's personal property.

GW / GWEn may take action subject to a case review; informed by an assessment of H&S risk to household / communal areas without intervention measures being undertaken. Otherwise the GW are not responsible for:

- Professional pest control services for insects, cockroaches, and vermin.
- The cost of treating infestations which have been caused by a resident's negligence.
- Squirrel, Pigeon, or Gull culling / proofing works unless internal to common parts of a building.

(d) 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.

[4] Crawling insects (including Ants, Spiders, Roaches), Flies

[5] Including but not limited to foxes, badgers, hedgehogs, wild birds.

(e) 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).
(f) Instruct remedial cleaning / pressure washing for removal of guano from common parts.
(g) 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.
(h) With Director approval:

- To instruct the treatment of an infestation within a GW tenant's home (Services).
- 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. (Service/Technical)
- Instruct common area treatment (externally), monitoring, and associated proofing / remedial works subject to appropriate Property Factoring communication (Technical).

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), **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, individual household case reviews will be undertaken (evaluating contributing Tenancy and Repair factors) to assess habitability, and if appropriate; escalated for Director approval of exceptional decant or other reasonable adjustment.
(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 GDPR[6] 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)
- Treatment Cost.
- Basis for decision informing action taken by GWHA.

[6] General Data Protection Regulations

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.