PEST CONTROL POLICY

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Business Information provided by Gloucester City Homes

PEST CONTROL POLICY

DOCUMENTATION MASTER SHEET

Amendments to this Document are Detailed Below.

Version Number	Date Amended	Comments	Date Approved	Author	Approved By
01	12/06/26		22/07/2026	Dale Pashley	SLT
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OVERALL AIM/INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out Gloucester City Homes' approach to preventing, managing and resolving pest infestations to protect residents' health, maintain safe and habitable homes, and ensure effective use of resources. We aim to deliver timely, proportionate and customer-focused responses that minimise recurrence.

Our aim is to minimise the risk of infestations, protect the health and wellbeing of customers, and maintain safe and habitable homes and communal areas.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to:

- Secure and assured tenants
- Independent Living customers
- Licence holders
- Assured shorthold tenants within homeless and dispersed accommodation
- Leaseholders and shared owners where Gloucester City Homes retain repairing obligations or responsibility for communal areas
- Contractors / third-party responsibilities
- Temporary decants / void properties explicitly

LEGAL AND REGULATORY EXPECTATIONS

This policy has regard to:

- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Housing Act 1988
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Equality Act 2010
- Relevant tenancy agreements and lease conditions
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 / Consumer Standards
- Awaab's Law (anticipated application to hazards like pests/damp linkage)

SERVICE STANDARDS

Gloucester City Homes Responsibilities

We are responsible for managing pest infestations where:

- The infestation is located within communal areas.
- The infestation originates from or affects the structure or fabric of the building.
- The infestation is linked to a defect for which Gloucester City Homes is responsible.
- The infestation presents a wider risk to neighbouring properties or the wider community.
- A vulnerability assessment determines that additional support is required.

Examples include:

- Rats entering through defective drains.
- Mice entering through structural defects.
- Squirrels accessing roof voids through damaged roof coverings.
- Cockroach infestations linked to communal services or shared facilities.

Where a structural defect is identified, Gloucester City Homes will arrange for appropriate repairs to prevent re-infestation. Where remedial works are required to remove or prevent pest access routes, Gloucester City Homes will aim to complete these works within **5 working days** of the defect being identified, subject to access, materials availability and the complexity of the repair.

Customer Responsibilities

Customers are generally responsible for managing pest infestations within their homes and private gardens where the infestation has not arisen from a building defect or communal area.

This may include, but is not limited to:

- Mice and rats within individual properties.
- Bed bugs.
- Fleas.
- Ants.
- Moths.
- Beetles.
- Silverfish.
- Spiders.
- Wasps' nests within private gardens.

Customers are expected to:

- Maintain reasonable standards of cleanliness.
- Store food appropriately.
- Dispose of household waste responsibly.
- Report defects that may allow pests access.
- Follow advice provided by pest control contractors.
- Provide access for inspections and treatments where required.

Communal Areas

Gloucester City Homes is responsible for pest control within communal areas and shared spaces including:

- Communal hallways and corridors
- Stairwells and landings
- Bin stores and refuse areas
- Roof spaces
- Plant rooms and boiler rooms
- Shared service areas
- Car parks and communal grounds

We will investigate and take appropriate action where pest activity is identified in these locations.

Vulnerable Customers

We recognise that some customers may be unable to manage pest infestations independently. Where a customer is affected by:

- Disability
- Long-term health conditions
- Age-related vulnerabilities
- Safeguarding concerns
- Financial hardship

We may provide additional support following an individual assessment and in accordance with our Vulnerability and Reasonable Adjustments Policy.
Support may include practical assistance, pest control treatment, advice, referrals to support agencies, or other reasonable interventions.

Pest Prevention

Prevention is the most effective way to manage pest infestations.
Gloucester City Homes will:

- Maintain communal areas.
- Repair defects that provide pest access routes.
- Manage refuse arrangements in communal areas.
- Provide advice and guidance to customers where appropriate.

Customers are expected to:

- Keep properties reasonably clean and free from excessive clutter.
- Store refuse appropriately.
- Avoid behaviour that attracts pests.
- Report building defects promptly.

Pest Control Treatments

Where Gloucester City Homes agrees to provide pest control treatment, customers must comply with all advice and instructions provided by pest control specialists.
Where repeat infestations occur, Gloucester City Homes may review the circumstances before authorising further treatment.

A maximum of two treatment programmes will normally be provided before a management review is undertaken to identify and address any underlying causes of re-infestation.
Failure to follow professional advice may result in further treatment being declined and costs being recharged where appropriate.

Cost Recovery

Gloucester City Homes reserves the right to recover the cost of inspections, treatments, repairs and associated works where an infestation has been caused or worsened by:

- Customer actions or neglect.
- Failure to maintain acceptable living conditions.
- Failure to follow reasonable advice.
- Deliberate feeding of birds or wildlife.
- Accumulation of waste or food sources.

Any recharge will be considered on a case-by-case basis and applied in accordance with Gloucester City Homes' Recharge Policy.

Tenancy Enforcement

Behaviour that attracts or encourages pests may constitute a breach of tenancy.
Examples include:

- Feeding pigeons or other wildlife.

- Improper waste storage.
- Accumulation of refuse.
- Refusal to cooperate with treatment programmes.

Where appropriate, Gloucester City Homes may take action under its Tenancy Management and Anti-Social Behaviour Policies.

Protected Species

Some species are protected by law and cannot be disturbed or removed without appropriate permissions.
This may include:

- Bats
- Certain bird species and active nests
- Bees
- Badgers

Where protected species are identified, Gloucester City Homes will seek advice from appropriately qualified specialists and comply with all relevant wildlife legislation.

Response Standards

We will respond to reports of pest infestations within a reasonable timescale based on:

- The type of pest.
- The severity of the infestation.
- Any associated health and safety risks.
- The vulnerability of affected customers.

Where Gloucester City Homes has responsibility for investigating a reported infestation, we will arrange an initial inspection within **10 working days** of the report being received.
Following inspection, where Gloucester City Homes identifies a defect, access point or repair for which we are responsible that is contributing to the infestation, we will aim to complete any necessary remedial works within **5 working days** of the issue being identified, subject to access, materials availability and the complexity of the repair required.

Examples of remedial works may include:

- Sealing holes or gaps that provide pest access.
- Repairs to defective vents, air bricks or pipe penetrations.
- Minor repairs to walls, doors, roofs or other building elements that allow pest ingress.
- Repairs to defective drains, covers or communal infrastructure where appropriate.

Priority cases presenting an immediate health and safety risk will be responded to as a matter of urgency and may be subject to accelerated response and repair timescales.

CONSULTATION

This policy has been developed with input from operational teams across GHC (Property Care, Customer Experience and Homes and Neighbourhoods) and reflects current working practices, safety requirements and customer expectations.

APPEALS

You can appeal decisions made under this policy - The appeal must be formally received in writing within 14 working days of the decision notice, providing any further supporting documents that may be useful in the appeal. GCH will provide acknowledgement within 5 working days, and a final outcome response will be provided within 28 working days of formally receiving the appeal. The appeal will be carried out by a manager who was not involved in the original decision.

Customers who are dissatisfied with the service provided under this policy may raise a complaint through Gloucester City Homes' Complaints Procedure.

REVIEW

This policy will normally be reviewed triennially to ensure that it reminds fit for purpose, unless an earlier review is required due to regulatory, statutory or other requirements.