

Housing Pet Policy

**Analysis of stakeholder consultation
March 2026**

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THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Introduction

Background

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is reviewing its Housing Pet Policy and invited residents to share their views. The updated policy aims to support responsible pet ownership, protect animal welfare, and ensure that our neighbourhoods remain safe, clean and enjoyable for everyone. It sets out expectations for pet care and behaviour, guidance for keeping pets in council housing, rules for using shared and public spaces, and approaches for managing noise, nuisance and safety concerns.

Methodology and report

An online survey was launched on the Council's Consultation and Engagement Hub and was promoted via housing newsletters, leaflets and posters in housing receptions. The consultation included a draft of the Pet Policy for residents to consider and feedback on and was open from 1 February 2026 to 15 March 2026 receiving a total of ten responses. This report analyses the feedback received and details all the comments made in response to the consultation.

Acknowledgements

The Council would like to thank all respondents for taking part into these exercises.

Survey Analysis



Analysis of survey responses

Is the draft Pet Policy clear and easy to understand?

We asked respondents if they found the draft Pet Policy clear and easy to understand:

- **Eight** respondents said yes.
- **Two** respondents said no.

Respondents who answered no were asked to explain further. There were **two comments** as follows:

1. *While the intention of the policy is understandable, several sections lack clarity, contain ambiguous language, or rely on discretionary phrasing that could lead to inconsistent interpretation. Key terms are not defined, statutory duties are not explicitly referenced, and important processes (such as decision-making for Emotional Support Animals, enforcement steps, and appeal routes) are not explained in a transparent or accessible way.*
2. *It's not detailed enough. It's nice and polite but fails to point out that pets must be registered with the council and that people who acquire pets after they've moved in must inform the council, with details of breed and age.*

Analysis of survey responses

How far do you agree or disagree that the policy provides a fair approach for both pet owners and non-pet owners?

We asked respondents how far they agreed or disagreed that the draft Pet Policy provides a fair approach for both pet owners and non-pet owners:

- **Five** respondents agreed (two agreed and three strongly agreed).
- **One** respondent gave a neutral response (neither agreeing nor disagreeing).
- **Four** respondents disagreed (three disagreed and one strongly disagreed).

Respondents were asked to expand on their answer and there were **seven comments** as follows:

1. *Explain compensation for when someone's pet terrorises me.*
2. *Bring in dog licences and do something about dog faeces in streets and parks.*
3. *There is no mention about dog fouling on our street and certainly no mention about fines. Dog fouling is disgusting and those who do not pick up their dogs mess should be fined. This is a constant problem on our street.*
4. *There still appear to be too many dangerous-looking dogs allowed.*
5. *I believe especially dog owners should not let their dogs run around and defecate freely on the estate.*
6. *The policy will only work if council staff explain it in very clear terms to all new tenants, which doesn't currently happen. It's fair but hopeless if nobody explains it to residents. It's time to stop trying to be fair and start enforcing basic pet care, including the responsibility of not allowing pets to foul communal areas and gardens,*

Analysis of survey responses

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7. *While the policy aims to balance the needs of pet owners and non-pet owners, several gaps and ambiguities prevent it from achieving a genuinely fair and transparent approach. Fairness requires clear criteria, predictable processes, and safeguards against inconsistent or subjective decision-making. The current draft does not fully provide these. Key reasons:*
1. *Decision-making criteria are not published, particularly for Emotional Support Animals, which creates uncertainty and the potential for unequal treatment.*
 2. *No time frames or appeal routes are set out, meaning residents cannot rely on timely or reviewable decisions.*
 3. *Enforcement language is broad and discretionary, which risks disproportionate action against pet owners without equivalent clarity on council responsibilities.*
 4. *Statutory duties (e.g., Equality Act 2010) are not explicitly referenced, which weakens protections for disabled residents and carers.*
 5. *Non-pet owners' concerns (noise, nuisance, shared spaces) are acknowledged, but the processes for addressing these concerns are not clearly defined or evidence-based.*



Analysis of survey responses

Is there anything in the policy that you feel needs more explanation or detail?

We asked respondents if there was anything in the draft Pet Policy they felt needed more explanation or detail:

- **Six** respondents said yes.
- **Four** respondents said no.

Respondents who said yes were asked to explain further and there were **six comments** as follows:

1. *My rights as a non pet owner resident of Kensington.*
2. *As above, dog mess left on our streets.*
3. *If owners consistently allow dogs to defecate/not clean up on the estate then they should receive a warning as no one cares.*
4. *Why is there no clear info and how to register the pet, and where to do this! No point having a policy if you don't know who owns which animal, is there! It's all very well telling people the rules but you need to be very clear at the outset that keeping a pet needs permission. And the council needs to keep a log with a photo of each pet, its address and any other relevant info. The last register kept listed animals as "dog, brown" which I'm sure you'd agree isn't much use.*
5. *I occasionally provide short-term care for my daughter's well-trained Boston Terrier. The dog is always kept on a lead in communal areas, and no single stay exceeds 28 days. Based on these terms, I am operating under the assumption that formal pet permission is not required for these temporary visits, but please let me know if your records require otherwise.*



Analysis of survey responses

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6. *Several key areas require further explanation, procedural detail, and statutory clarity to ensure the policy is fair, transparent, and consistently applied. Areas needing more detail:*

Decision-making criteria *The policy does not set out the criteria RBKC will use when deciding:*

- *- whether a pet is permitted*
- *- how Emotional Support Animals (ESAs) are assessed*
- *- what constitutes “nuisance” or “unacceptable behaviour”*
- *Without published criteria, decisions risk being subjective or inconsistent.*

Timeframes *There are no time limits for:*

- *- responding to permission requests*
- *- assessing ESAs*
- *- investigating complaints*
- *- reviewing enforcement actions*
- *Clear timeframes are essential for predictability and fairness.*

Appeal and review routes *The policy does not explain:*

- *- how residents can challenge a decision*
- *- what evidence is required*
- *- who conducts the review*
- *- how long the process takes*
- *A fair policy must include transparent, accessible appeal mechanisms.*

Analysis of survey responses

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Statutory duties *The policy does not explicitly reference:*

- - *Equality Act 2010 obligations*
- - *reasonable adjustments for disabled residents and carers*
- - *safeguarding considerations*
- *These duties should be clearly integrated into the policy wording.*

Enforcement processes *The enforcement section lacks procedural detail, including:*

- - *how concerns will be investigated*
- - *what evidence is required*
- - *how proportionality will be ensured*
- - *how residents will be informed and supported*
- *This is essential to prevent disproportionate or inconsistent action.*

Council responsibilities *The policy focuses heavily on resident obligations but does not set out:*

- - *RBKC's responsibilities*
- - *service standards*
- - *commitments to communication, transparency, and safeguarding. A balanced policy must define duties on both sides.*

Conclusion *The policy would benefit from clearer definitions, published criteria, statutory references, and transparent processes. These additions would make the policy more accessible, fair, and reliable for all residents.*

Analysis of survey responses

Do you have any suggestions that could help improved the policy?

We asked respondents if they had any suggestions that could improve the draft Pet Policy, there were **nine comments** as follows:

1. *Good but could be better.*
2. *As above and if licences it would generate money for dog wardens. Fed up with dog mess everywhere and don't see why left to street sweepers to deal with it.*
3. *Put up more dog bins and signs on our roads*
4. *I would like to see more restrictions on dangerous dogs.*
5. *Yes I believe you should send letters out and explain clearly what responsible pet ownership is and an email if other residents have to constantly put up with dogs running around making a mess!*
6. *As above. Do a proper audit. World's End is overrun by dogs that are not registered with the council and they aren't gentle little lapdogs, they're enormous BullyX crossbreeds, mastiffs and Akitas, all of which are big, strong and can be dangerous.*
7. *Refusing all non-assistance pets*
8. *It might be helpful to include the relevant contact details for reporting dog fouling in the common areas.*



Analysis of survey responses

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8. *Yes. The policy would be significantly improved by adding clearer definitions, transparent processes, and explicit statutory references. My key suggestions are:*

Publish clear, objective decision-making criteria *This should include:*

- - criteria for granting or refusing permission for pets
- - criteria for assessing Emotional Support Animals (ESAs)
- - definitions of “nuisance”, “unacceptable behaviour”, and “risk”
- *Clear criteria reduce subjectivity and ensure consistent, fair decisions.*

Introduce timeframes for all decisions and investigations *For example:*

- - 20 working days for ESA assessments
- - 10 working days for standard pet permission requests
- - defined timeframes for complaint investigations
- *Predictable timelines protect residents from harmful delays.*

Add a transparent appeal and review process *The policy should explain:*

- - how residents can challenge a decision
- - what evidence is required
- - who conducts the review
- - how long the process takes
- *This is essential for procedural fairness.*

Explicitly reference statutory duties *The policy should clearly state how RBKC will meet its obligations under:*

- - the Equality Act 2010
- - reasonable adjustments for disabled residents and carers
- - safeguarding responsibilities
- *This ensures decisions are lawful, consistent, and protective of vulnerable residents.*

Clarify enforcement processes and proportionality *The policy should set out:*

- - how concerns will be investigated
- - what evidence is required
- - how proportionality will be ensured
- - how residents will be supported during the process
- *This prevents disproportionate or inconsistent enforcement.*



Analysis of survey responses

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Include a section on RBKC's responsibilities A balanced policy should outline:

- - service standards
- - communication expectations
- - commitments to transparency and safeguarding
- *Currently, the policy focuses heavily on resident obligations without parallel duties on the council.*

Provide examples and case studies Short, anonymised examples would help residents understand how the policy works in practice, especially around ESAs, shared spaces, and enforcement.

Conclusion These improvements would make the policy clearer, more transparent, and more equitable for all residents — pet owners and non-pet owners alike — while ensuring statutory compliance and safeguarding protections.