



Renting to Pet Owners - Top 5 FAQ's

Almost half of the UK population now own pets¹ but many landlords still have concerns about renting their properties to pet owners, so here are the Top 5 FAQ's landlords ask the Lets with Pets team for advice on:

Q1. What are the benefits of renting my property to pet owners?

A. You'll immediately increase the number of potential tenants for your properties as 'pets considered' homes are always in demand! Some evidence suggests pet owners stay longer in their tenancies than other tenants thereby minimising void periods. Many pet owners are also willing to pay a little more to find the best home for themselves, family and pets, so you could charge a higher deposit, of up to two months. For additional peace of mind you could also ask the tenant to arrange and pay for a professional clean at the end of their tenancy.²

Q2. What should I look for when renting to pet owners?

A. Just as not all tenants may be right for your property, not all pets will be either. Think about which pets you'd consider for your property. A property with no garden could still be suitable for small pets or even a dog, as long as the owner provides plenty of regular exercise. Responsible pet owners keep their pets healthy and treated to avoid unwanted visitors, like fleas, so check this by asking for a pet CV and, if they've rented before, a pet reference from their previous landlord or even their vet. If you have time, meet the pet with their owner, it's the best way to make up your mind if you're still unsure.

Q3. What can I do if I find a 'hidden pet' in my property?

A. Finding your tenant has a pet, or pets, which you weren't aware of may seem like a reason to end the tenancy. However provided your property doesn't have leasehold restrictions, there are other approaches you can take. If you're happy that the pet owners are responsible and there are no pet related issues, then why not allow the tenant and their pets to stay. You could ask them to pay for a professional clean at the end of the tenancy and agree an addition to the tenancy agreement to include the pet details to make sure no more pets are added to the household.

¹ 48% - PFMA Survey 2012

² Scottish law relating to the charging of fees or premiums in the private rented sector has recently been clarified; the Private Rented Housing (Scotland) Act 2011 states landlords and letting agencies may only charge rent and a refundable deposit for the granting, continuance or renewal of a tenancy in the private rented sector. Any other charges or fees are not permitted; however landlords may still consider requiring tenants with pets to arrange and pay for a professional deep clean at the end of their tenancy.





Q4. I'm worried about fleas being left in my property, what should I do?

A. Responsible pet owners keep their pets healthy and treated to avoid unwanted visitors, like fleas, so ask for evidence that they regularly do this before they move in. However should an infestation occur it is usually very straightforward to treat. Initially a thorough vacuum of all carpets, floor surfaces and soft furnishings will remove and kill most of the fleas and eggs. Pay particular attention to the edges of rooms and don't forget to vacuum under furniture like sofas. Remember to throw the vacuum bag away as soon as you've finished. Then a flea treatment should be applied, following the manufacturer's instructions. Follow this up with another thorough vacuum to remove any dead bugs. There are many effective products available to buy, including some completely natural remedies.

Q5. What about if my next tenants have pet allergies?

A. It's possible that tenants with allergies may move into a property you've previously let to people with pets. However, as long as the property has been thoroughly cleaned, vacuumed and aired throughout there shouldn't be any problem. And if you've asked your tenant to cover a deep clean, you can feel reassured that your next tenants shouldn't experience any problems.

Dogs Trust Lets with Pets Team say:

"Dogs Trust knows from experience that many people will go to extraordinary lengths not to be parted from their pets. People have moved areas or rented larger homes than they need simply to keep their pets with them. We hope that the Lets with Pets scheme will encourage more landlords and letting agencies to take up a 'pets considered' approach to letting their properties."

For more free advice, resources and useful forms for pet owners, landlords and letting agencies visit the Lets with Pets website: www.letswithpets.org.uk or call the team on 0207 837 0006.



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