

L&Q Pest Management Policy



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1 Purpose

- 1.1 Maintaining a pest-free home is vital to ensuring a safe, healthy, and comfortable living environment for all residents. We recognise that pest infestations can occur for a variety of reasons and, if left untreated, may pose health risks or compromise the habitability of a property.
- 1.2 Both residents and landlords have an important role to play in preventing and dealing with infestation. This policy outlines our approach to pest management, including residents' responsibilities as well as outlining what we are responsible for or the circumstances in which we can help.

2 Scope and Exclusions

- 2.1 Our approach to dealing with pests may differ for different types of properties and tenure. This policy covers responsibilities for pests in:
 - Social and Affordable Housing, including Intermediate Rent properties (IMR, LLR, RTB)
 - Leasehold and Shared Ownership properties
 - Sheltered and Supported Housing
 - Temporary Accommodation
- 2.2 This policy does not cover invasive plant species such as Japanese Knotweed.
- 2.3 Reports relating to repair will be dealt with in accordance with our Repairs Policy.

3 Legislation and Regulation

- 3.1 We always aim to meet our relevant legislative and regulatory obligations. Those relevant to this policy include, but are not limited to:
 - **The Consumer Standards**

The Housing Safety and Quality Standard sets out the expectation for landlords regarding the safety, quality and maintenance of resident's homes.
 - **Landlord and Tenant Act 1985**

The Act requires landlords to ensure their properties are fit for human habitation.
 - **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation Act) 2018**

The Act places the obligation on landlords to ensure that properties, including communal areas, are free from serious hazards, which includes pest infestations.

- **The Housing Act 2004**

As part of the Act, the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) were introduced. The HHSRS identifies 29 potential hazards in residential properties, including pest and refuse.

- **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981**

- **Environmental Protection Act 1990**

4 Definitions

4.1 **A Pest-** this refers to an animal or insect that is deemed to cause nuisance or pose a risk to humans or property. Examples of common household pests include, but are not limited to, flies, spiders, moths, garden ants, mice, bedbugs, silverfish, daddy long-legs and wasps.

Often pests can be treated with remedies that can be bought from local DIY/hardware stores. However, where the pests pose a risk, further treatment to resolve the infestation may be required. Please see section 5 for detail on responsibilities for pest management in your home.

Animals such as foxes, bats, badgers and other wild birds are not considered pests but may present some nuisance. Many of these are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which prohibits the killing or injuring of these animals.

4.2 **Infestation-** refers to the presence of a large number of insects or animals that are classed as pests. What constitutes “large” will vary depending on the type of pest and context. Indicators of a large presence may include:

- Visible clustering or swarming (e.g., multiple pests congregating in one area).
- Repeated sightings over time rather than isolated occurrences.
- Evidence of breeding activity (e.g., nests, eggs, larvae).
- Damage or contamination to property, products, or surfaces.
- Interference with normal operations or posing a health/safety risk.

4.3 **Pest management-** the control of a species defined as pests. This may include the treating and prevention of pests in a property.

4.4 **Communal area-** refers to areas of a house or a block of flats or an estate that residents have a right to use in common, for example, means of access to and exit from their flats.

5 Dealing with Pests in Your Home

5.1 All residents

- 5.1.1 In the first instance, you should review your tenancy and/or lease agreements as this should outline who is responsible for removing and eradicating any pests or infestations.
- 5.1.2 In line with your tenancy, you will be responsible for:
- Keeping your property clean and tidy. This includes keeping areas such as stairways, corridors and landings clean and clear of rubbish.
 - Not encouraging pests by leaving out uncovered food in your home and not disposing of rubbish correctly.
 - Seeking advice and taking appropriate action to deal with infestation of common household pests.
 - Acting promptly at the first sign of pests to avoid the issue from escalating.
- 5.1.3 If you fail to meet your responsibilities, we will take action which may include recharging you for dealing with pests in your home.
- 5.1.4 If you notice rats in or around your home, including internal communal areas, please let us know as soon as possible. Rats pose significant public health risks and require effective management to protect environmental health. Property owners have a legal obligation to keep their premises free from rats. We will advise you what action will be taken, or that you must take, depending on your tenancy type.
- 5.1.5 We do not treat for bees. If you are dealing with swarms of bees, we encourage you to contact your local beekeeper who will be able to provide advice.
- 5.1.6 Where we need to investigate or address a pest issue, including situations where infestation is reported in multiple homes within a block, you will be required to provide access to your home. We will work with you to arrange entry at a convenient time and, where reasonable, may offer an alternative date. If we cannot gain access to your property we will take reasonable action in line with our Property Access Policy.
- 5.1.7 Some Local Authorities offer pest control services. Therefore, where it is your responsibility to deal with the pests in your home, we would ask you to contact your local Environmental Health Department for advice on pest control. Whilst we would encourage you to report any concerns about pests affecting your property to us, if you believe the infestation originates from a private property, you should also contact your Local Authority's Environmental Health Department.

5.2 Sheltered and Supported Properties

- 5.2.1 If there are reports of pests in our Sheltered or Supported properties where we directly deliver housing management, we will make any arrangements to resolve most pest infestation.
- 5.2.2 In Agency Managed properties, the responsibility for arranging and funding pest control sits with the managing agent, as outlined in our contractual agreements. We would not be involved in pest control in Agency Managed properties unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as an infestation originating from communal areas managed by us or if Environmental Health determines the cause is due to our disrepair.
- 5.2.3 Where pigeon deterrents such as netting or spikes are already in place, we will inspect and repair them as needed. If further measures are required to prevent nuisance or damage, we will assess and arrange appropriate additional deterrents.

5.3 Social and affordable housing

- 5.3.1 Our help, which will include referring you to our partners, will be limited to the following circumstances:
- Where there are problems with the structure and exterior of your home, allowing pests to enter the property. Please see our Repairs Policy for more detail on repairs.
 - There is evidence to suggest that the pest was present when you moved into your home.
 - The Local Authority has deemed that there is a statutory nuisance which they consider we are responsible for dealing with.
 - Where there is evidence to show that you have exhausted all reasonable attempts to treat pests under your responsibilities. We encourage you to report persisting pest infestations.
 - Where there are reports of pest infestations affecting multiple homes or communal areas (see section 6)
 - Where pests are present in temporary accommodation that we manage.
 - Where existing pigeon deterrents, such as netting or spikes, require inspection or repair. If further measures are needed to prevent nuisance or damage, we will assess and arrange appropriate additional deterrents.

- 5.3.2 There may be cases where a pest infestation makes your home uninhabitable or we are unable to manage the pests whilst you are in your home. In these situations, you may be moved into temporary accommodation whilst the necessary works are completed. Please see our Temporary Accommodation During Repairs Policy for more information on this process.

5.4 Leaseholders and Shared Owners

- 5.4.1 In line with your lease agreement, as a Leaseholder or Shared Owner, you are responsible for dealing with any pests in your home.
- 5.4.2 If multiple homes in a block are affected by the same pest, we will investigate and determine if action is necessary. This will be done on a case-by-case basis. Please see section 6 for our approach to communal areas.
- 5.4.3 For Leaseholders and Shared Owners living in flats or maisonettes, we will inspect and repair existing pigeon deterrents, such as netting or spikes.

6 Communal Areas

- 6.1 We are committed to maintaining safe communal spaces in all internal and external communal areas that we manage directly. This includes taking responsibility for the treatment and prevention of pests in shared areas such as hallways, stairwells and bin stores.
- 6.2 All residents are expected to keep communal areas clear and dispose of waste responsibly. This should reduce the risk of pest infestations in your home and shared spaces.
- 6.3 If there is evidence indicating that a resident's action has contributed to an infestation or poses an environmental risk to others, this may be a breach of their tenancy or lease agreement, and we will take action to resolve the issue.
- 6.4 If you find a dead pest in your home or communal spaces, such as a rat, you should inform us and your local authority. For most pests, we would ask you to dispose of these safely. We will be able to give you advice in these situations. If the removal of the pest is too unhygienic or too large, we may need to involve professional services.

7 Monitoring and Controls

- 7.1 To assess compliance with this policy we will consider the following criteria:
- Volume and type of repair/treatment orders raised, and how these align with our responsibilities versus tenant responsibilities.
 - Timeliness- repairs/treatments completed within agreed timescales.
 - First-time fix rate- percentage of issues resolved on the first visit.
 - Related issues and complaints connected to pest management.
 - Follow-up activity required after initial treatment.

8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 8.1 Where appropriate, and in line with our responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, we will consider reasonable adjustments to our standard policy. Each report will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the resident's individual needs, the severity of the pest issue, and the potential impact on health and wellbeing. We will work collaboratively with residents and relevant professionals to identify appropriate solutions. Please see our Supporting Residents with Additional Needs Policy for more information on reasonable adjustments.

9 Communication

- 9.1 This policy will be published on the L&Q website.
- 9.2 We will publish this policy internally for colleagues to access, along with associated procedures, processes and guidance.
- 9.3 Complaints regarding the application of this policy, will be managed in line with our Complaints Policy.

10 Policy controls sheet

Date of approval: 15/01/2026

Approved by: Director of Maintenance Services

Effective date: 15/01/2026

Next Review date: 15/01/2029

Policy owned by: Director of Maintenance Services

Associated documents:

- Repairs Policy
- Supporting Residents with Additional Needs Policy
- Temporary Accommodation During Repairs Policy
- Property Access Policy

| Main change | Key points |
|---|---|
| Introduction of a new Pest Management Policy | <p>Outlining our existing approach to Pest Management in a standalone policy. This position was previously covered in our Repairs Policy.</p> <p>Clarifying resident's responsibilities in dealing with pests and the circumstance where we may be able to help, including referring to partners.</p> |
| Reviewed by: The Policy Team | |
| Approved by: Director of Maintenance Services | |