

# Bield Guidance for Pet Owners

## *Promoting responsible pet ownership as part of Independent Living*

*Pets can offer companionship, purpose, joy. At Bield, we recognise the positive role pets can play in our tenants' lives. This guidance outlines how you can support your pet's wellbeing – and be a good neighbour.*

### **Ensure your pet is sociable and well-trained.**

Early socialisation is key, especially for young animals (up to 16 weeks old). Introducing them gradually to new sights, sounds, people, and experiences helps them grow into confident and calm pets. If adopting an adult animal, take time to help them adjust to their new home and surroundings.

### **Provide a nutritious, balanced diet.**

Your pet relies on you to choose appropriate food. Nutritional needs vary by species, age and health condition. Ask your vet if you're unsure what's best for your pet.

### **Provide suitable housing and bedding.**

All animals need safe, comfortable environments suited to their spaces. This is especially important for reptiles and exotic pets, which have highly specific care requirements.

### **Clean up after your pet and worm them regularly.**

Regular worming and flea treatments are essential to your pet's health – and to prevent spreading parasites to other animals or people.

### **Protect your pet against disease.**

Vaccinations protect your pet from serious and sometimes untreatable diseases. Speak to your vet about the right vaccination schedule for your animal.

### **Prevent unwanted litters**

Neutering helps prevent unexpected pregnancies and offers important health benefits. It can also reduce unwanted behaviours like straying and spraying.

### **Groom your pet regularly.**

Grooming helps maintain coat condition and supports bonding. Older pets often need more help, especially if they become less able.

### **Control and identify your pet**

Always supervise your pet in communal areas. Microchipping is the best possible way to ensure your pet can be returned to you if they get lost.

### **Consider pet insurance**

Vet bills can be unexpected. Insurance offers peace of mind – covering treatment for illness, injury or third party liability if your pet causes harm or damage.