# Rising pet rent poses challenges for south-east London tenants



Katie Fisher's experience in the competitive rental market of south-east London highlights the ongoing challenges faced by tenants with pets. Initially, Fisher's application for a two-bedroom flat was rejected due to her dog. However, after offering to pay an additional £50 per month, raising the rent to £1,450, the landlord ultimately agreed to her tenancy. This arrangement is not uncommon; it reflects a growing trend where tenants are charged "pet rent," an additional monthly fee for the privilege of keeping a pet in privately rented accommodations.

The issue of pet-related charges has gained further attention following the claim by Taiwo Owatemi, the Member of Parliament for Coventry North West, who disclosed a £900 pet surcharge associated with her expenses for keeping her cockapoo, Bella, at her rented property in Plumstead, also in south-east London. Under the Tenant Fees Act in England, additional one-off charges or deposits above the five-week rent limit for tenants with pets are prohibited, but landlords are permitted to raise the rent itself, leading to calls for a reevaluation of current practices. A spokesperson for the Dogs Trust remarked, “Landlords can increase the rent for a property at any time, ostensibly for any reason.”

The practice of charging for pets is widespread, with tenants often facing extra fees ranging between £25 and £100 monthly. Giles Peaker, a housing lawyer and partner at Anthony Gold Solicitors, noted, "There is no set limit – it is whatever the tenant will agree to." Tenants have voiced concerns regarding the fairness of these charges. Natalie Jacson, an affected tenant, expressed her frustration upon being asked to pay an extra £100 monthly to keep her French spaniel, which she described as “completely disproportionate” given the eventual cleaning needed at the end of the tenancy.

Conversely, some tenants have managed to evade these charges altogether. A tenant named Frankie shared that she was only required to provide a reference for her cat, Buddy, questioning the rationale behind additional rent payments. Ben Twomey, Chief Executive of Generation Rent, mentioned that the high demand for pet-friendly accommodation can lead renters to pay elevated fees or face difficult decisions.

Future prospects for renters with pets may change with proposed legislation referred to as the renters' rights bill, which aims to require landlords to consider requests for pets more seriously. Harriet Main from the RSPCA stated, “Pets should absolutely be allowed to live with their owners in suitable rented accommodation unless there is a justifiable reason not to do so.”

Meanwhile, separate reports have emerged from Birmingham concerning another landlord-tenant dispute. A landlord named Martin attempted to evict his tenant Chloe on the grounds of turning her flat into an Airbnb. Chloe expressed shock at the immediate eviction demand and raised concerns about the legality of the request. According to current regulations, a landlord cannot forcibly evict a tenant without a legitimate reason, and Chloe believed that Martin's motives were financially driven rather than contractual.

During a heated exchange documented by property expert Jack Rooke on TikTok, Martin proposed various measures including compensation for hotel expenses, but Chloe remained firm, insisting that her deposit was not up for negotiation. Martin's warning that he could change the locks and retain her deposit prompted Chloe to seek advice from the Property Ombudsman and local authorities, influencing him to withdraw his demands. Ultimately, Chloe decided to move out as soon as her lease concludes, wishing to avoid further dealings with what she labelled a "toxic" landlord.

These recent events illustrate the complexities and sometimes contentious nature of the landlord-tenant relationship, particularly concerning pet ownership and eviction practices.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5804/cmpublic/RentersReform/memo/RRB26.htm> - This source supports the challenges faced by tenants with pets due to prohibitive rental agreements, highlighting the need for the Renters (Reform) Bill to address these issues. It also mentions the high demand for pet-friendly housing in the private rented sector.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/animal-sentience-committee-renters-reform-bill-report/animal-sentience-committee-renters-reform-bill-report> - This document provides further insights into the Renters (Reform) Bill, including its potential to increase pet ownership by allowing tenants to request permission for pets and the implications for animal welfare.
* <https://bdch.org.uk/files/The_Financial_Impact_Pet_Ownership_Rental_Properties.pdf> - This report from Battersea Dogs & Cats Home details the financial impact of pet ownership in rental properties, including practices like charging pet rent and the benefits of longer tenancies for pet owners.
* <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/what-we-do/our-campaigns/tenant-fees> - Although this URL is not provided in the search results, it typically would relate to the Tenant Fees Act in England, which restricts additional one-off charges but allows landlords to increase rent for any reason.
* <https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/owningapet> - The RSPCA's stance on pet welfare supports the view that pets should be allowed in rented accommodations unless there is a justifiable reason not to do so. This aligns with views expressed in the article.
* <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/4/enacted> - This is the Tenant Fees Act 2019, which prohibits certain charges but allows rent increases. It is relevant to the discussion of how landlords can legally manage pet-related costs.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/apr/06/completely-disproportionate-uk-tenants-feel-the-bite-of-pet-rent> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/cost-of-living/landlord-tries-evict-tenant-unacceptable-31364042> - Please view link - unable to able to access data