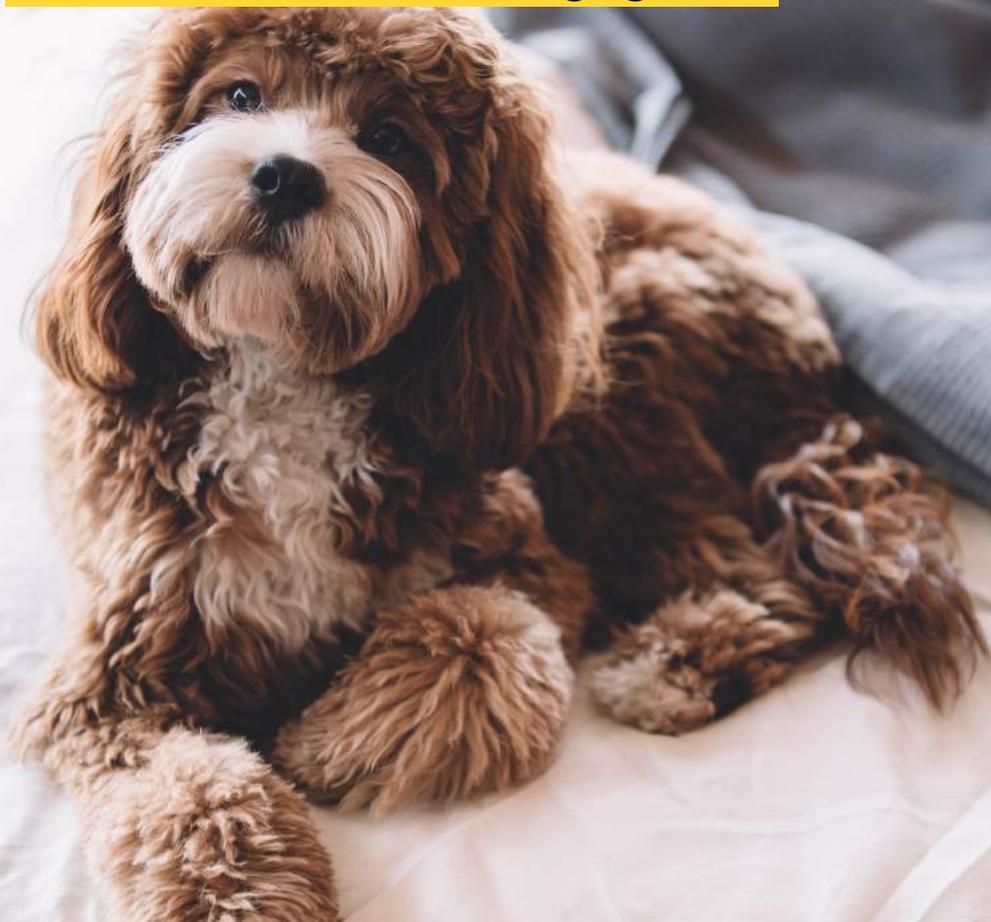


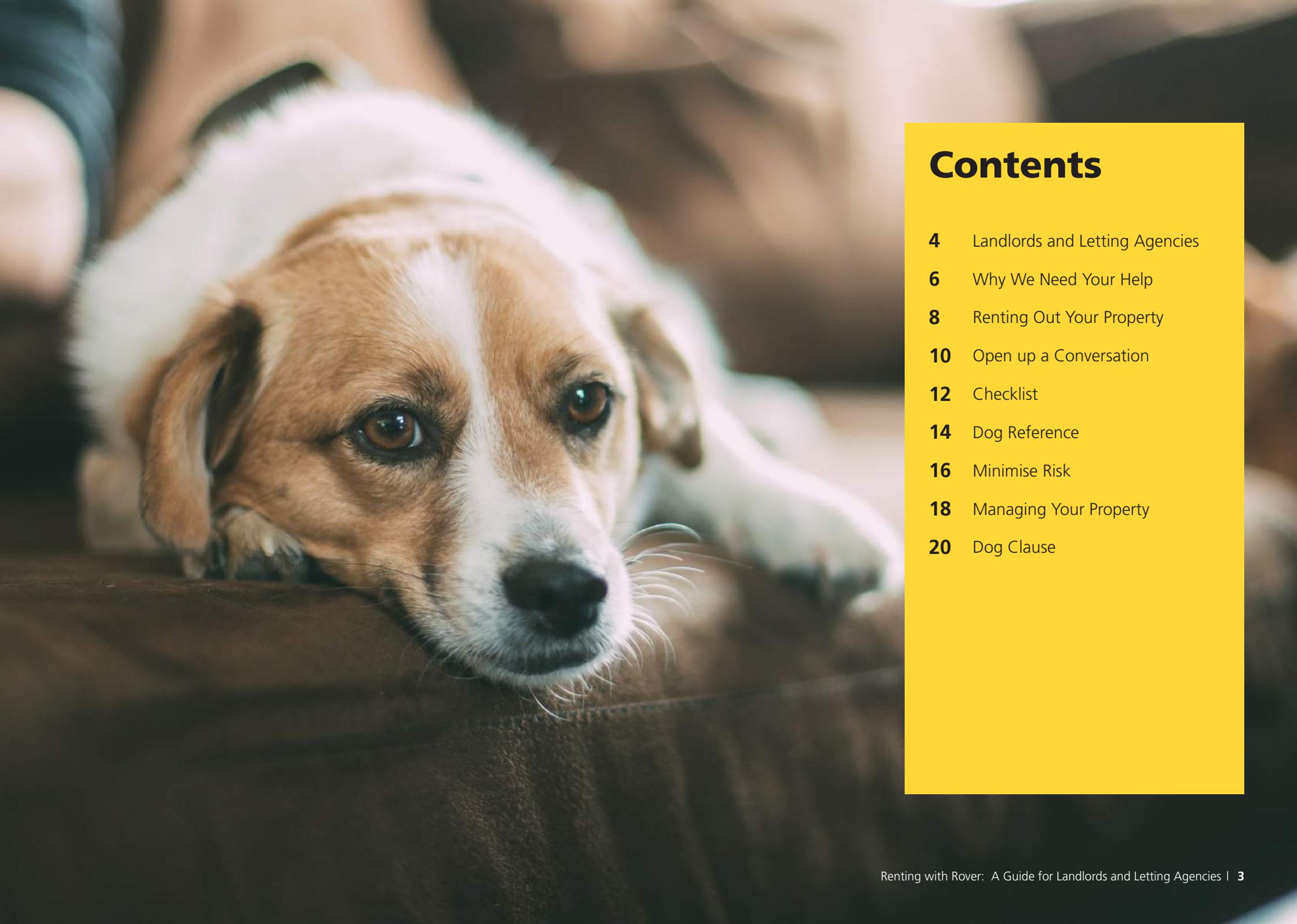
# Renting with Rover

A Guide for **Landlords** and **Letting Agencies**



**Dog  
Friendly  
Ireland**

Helping to make Ireland the best country in the world for dogs and their owners



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# 1 Landlords and Letting Agencies

With 40% of households owning at least one dog\* and the demand for privately rented accommodation growing year on year, landlords can no longer afford to miss out on this large cohort of the private rented sector.

Opening your property to responsible dog owners increases demand for your property and attracts long term, responsible tenants. As dog friendly properties are so limited, you will have a distinct advantage over competition in your area.

\* Behaviour and Attitudes Survey 2018

## By accepting dog owners as tenants, you can:

### Increase demand for your property

Finding a dog friendly property is becoming increasingly difficult for tenants. By considering dog owners as tenants, your property will instantly become a much sought-after property. A letting agency is likely to attract much more interest if they have a dog friendly section.

### Tenants are encouraged to stay longer

Dogs owners already know how difficult it is to find a place that is dog friendly. If they are successful in securing a dog friendly property, they are more likely to stay longer. Responsible dog owners are aware of the lifetime commitment that is taking on a dog. Therefore, they are less likely to keep moving and are more likely to be settled, mostly for the sake of their dog.

### Attract responsible tenants

Responsible dog owners often make responsible tenants. The desperate search for a dog friendly property also means most dog owners are so grateful to find a place that accepts their furry friend that they will be twice as diligent about minding the property.

# 2

## Why We Need Your Help

A recent survey carried out by Behaviours and Attitudes for Dogs Trust, found that 40% of households in Ireland have at least one dog. Dog owners, however, still find it near impossible to find a suitable place to rent simply because they own a dog.

With an already competitive and unpredictable rental market, most tenants in Ireland today find it extremely difficult to find accommodation that is both suitable and affordable. Throw a dog into the mix and the situation becomes almost unbearable. As Ireland's largest dog welfare charity, Dogs Trust is more than aware of the difficulties faced by dog owners in today's property market. Every week, we hear from people desperate in their search for dog friendly accommodation.



18% resorted to leaving their beloved furry family member with family or friends



23% resorted to keeping their dog in a property without the landlord's knowledge

Dogs Trust wants this to change. As part of our Dog Friendly Ireland campaign, we want to help make Ireland the best country in the world for dogs and their owners. We want to show landlords and letting agencies that allowing dogs to stay in your property makes great business sense. By following some of our helpful tips and guidelines, we want to show you how these small but effective steps can not only increase demand for your property and set you apart from the rest but can also take Ireland one step closer to being the best country in the world for dogs and their owners.

# 3 Renting Out Your Property

If you are considering allowing dogs to stay in your property, there are a few simple steps that you need to take to ensure all runs smoothly for both you and your tenant, most notably if you are renting out an apartment.

In Ireland, there are two types of property ownership-freehold or leasehold. A freehold interest in property is the highest interest an individual can have and generally speaking, the owner has more options to do what they like with the property than an owner of a leasehold.

 The first step for an apartment owner-occupier is to check their lease. If the owner does not have a copy to hand, he/she should request a copy from the Bank with whom they have a mortgage or from the solicitor who holds their Title Deeds.

 It is important to read the lease thoroughly for any mention of a clause prohibiting the keeping of dogs or other animals. If your lease does prohibit pets of any kind, it might be worth approaching the Ground Landlord to ask if they would consider changing the terms of your lease to give permission, in writing, to allow dogs to stay in your property.

 If you own a freehold property, there are usually very few restrictions on keeping dogs.

# 4

## Open up a conversation



Being open to the idea of allowing dogs to stay doesn't mean you have to allow every dog every time. Be pragmatic about the situation and open up the conversation about allowing dogs to stay with any prospective tenants. We would recommend that you consider each tenant and their dog on a case-by-case basis. Just as some tenants are more suitable than others, some dogs will be more suited to your property than others too.



In a survey conducted by Dogs Trust, most tenants wanted to simply have the opportunity to discuss and present their case to a landlord or letting agency. 65% of dog owners were keen to introduce their dogs to prospective landlords so they could see for themselves how well behaved they are.



Don't assume all dogs are troublesome. Meeting the dogs with their owners, or even in their current residence, if possible, is the best way to see how the dog behaves in their own home with their owners. You can use our handy checklist to guide the conversation and better understand if the tenant is a responsible dog owner.



# 5 Checklist

How many dogs do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

How old are they and how long have you had them for? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you able to provide a reference for your dog from a previous landlord? YES  NO

Is your dog registered with a veterinary practice? YES  NO

Do you have pet insurance for your dog? YES  NO

Is your dog regularly vaccinated and treated for fleas and worms? YES  NO

Has your dog been neutered? YES  NO

Is your dog microchipped and your correct contact details registered with an approved database? YES  NO

Do you have someone who can care for your dog in case of an emergency? YES  NO

Do you have someone who can care for your dog while you are away on holiday? YES  NO

How often do you walk/exercise your dog in a week? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you work away from home all day? YES  NO

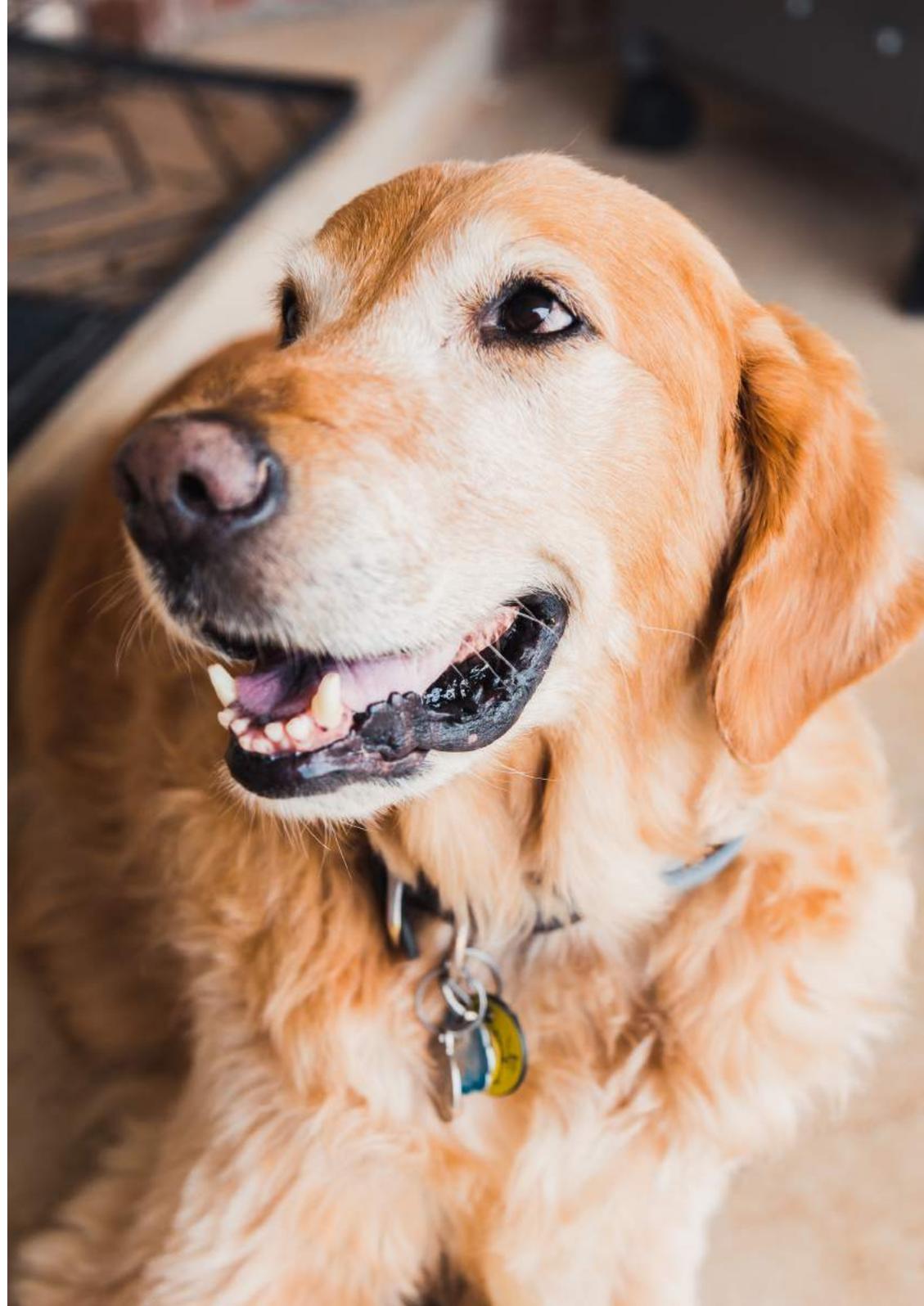
How often will your dog be left at home alone and for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a dog sitter or dog walker for when you are not at home for long periods? YES  NO

Is your dog toilet trained? YES  NO

Has your dog attended training classes? YES  NO

How does your dog get on with other people, such as unknown visitors to the property? \_\_\_\_\_



# 6

## Dog Reference

It can be a good idea to ask prospective tenants for a reference for their dog from a previous landlord. If this is their first time to rent, a similar reference could be provided by a vet. Alternatively, proof of attendance at a training class with comment by the coach could be just as helpful.

The main points to be covered in a dog reference are as follows:

- How long did the tenants live in the previous property?
- Did the dog in question live there at the time and how long for?
- Was the dog in question well behaved during his/her time there?
- Did the dog cause any damage to the property?
- Did the dog cause a nuisance to any neighbours or visitors?
- Did the owner regularly clean up any fouling outside?
- Does the referee consider the tenant to be a responsible dog owner?



# 7

## Minimise Risk

A few small steps can be taken to minimise the risk of damage to your property.

### Higher deposit

If you still have concerns about renting to a dog owner, even after discussing everything with them in person and obtaining references, you could discuss the option of a higher deposit to cover the cost of any unexpected damage. But it is important that you keep a record of this and ensure that it is separate to the regular deposit. And always remember to return it if there is no reason for you to hold on to it.

### Professional clean

You may want to discuss with your tenant about having the place professionally cleaned at the end of the tenancy. This should include professionally cleaning all soft furnishings and carpets and treating the property for fleas and mites. This can be written into the tenancy agreement or the extra deposit could be kept solely for this purpose.

Dogs Trust recommends that you discuss all options with the tenant in advance and agree together so there is no confusion.



### Insurance

Check with your insurance company to see if your landlord insurance for building and contents includes accidental pet damage. Some may cover this as standard, or others may require a small fee. It is worth phoning around to get the best offer.

# 8

## Managing your property

If you have given permission for your tenant to keep a dog in a property, it can be a good idea to discuss regular property inspections throughout the tenancy but especially at the start. Regular property inspections can be beneficial for both tenant and landlord as they can identify any problems with the dog early on and keep the levels of communication open between all parties.



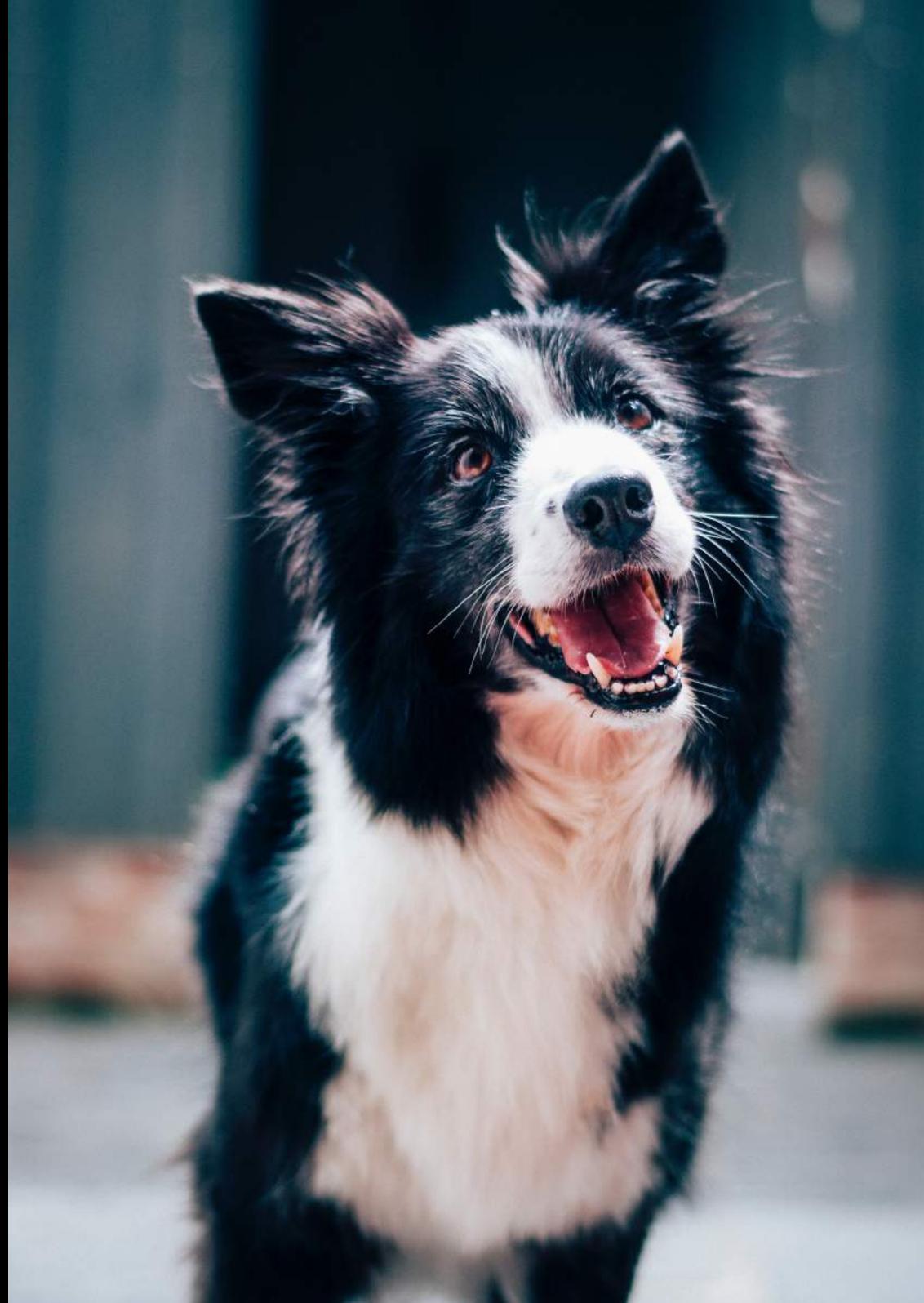
# 9

## Dog Clause

Once you have decided to rent your property to a tenant with a dog you should consider including a dog clause in your tenancy agreement. This is a good idea for both tenant and landlord as it clearly states what is, or is not, allowed on the property. This can also go so far as to include details about agreements made regarding any damage caused throughout, or cleaning at the end of, the tenancy.

Dogs Trust recommends that you contact a solicitor for advice on including this clause into your agreement.

A dog policy can also be included as an appendix, which details what is expected of the dog owner when renting the property.





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