

# You & Your Neighbours

Under the terms of your tenancy agreement with us, you are responsible for the behaviour of your household and visitors to your home. This means that you must ensure that they do not act in a way that will cause nuisance, annoyance or distress to your neighbours.

## Problems With Your Neighbours?

All our residents are asked not to cause nuisance and to have consideration for their neighbours and the people in the wider community. Residents are also responsible for the behaviour of their family and visitors, including any children.

Problems can be caused by many things including:

- Loud music
- Revving car or motorcycle engines
- Car repairs
- Pets behaving badly
- Inconsiderate parking
- DIY
- Noisy arguments and bad language
- Ball games
- Postings on social networking sites

Of course, everyone makes noise sometimes, but understand the need for peace and quiet too. Good neighbours bear this in mind and behave in a way that respects their neighbours.

## What Can I Do If I'm Having Neighbour Problems?

First of all, try talking to your neighbour and suggest a remedy to the problem. Sometimes people do not realise that their behaviour is a problem to others until they are told about it. Give your neighbour some time to sort the problem out. If for example they need to have a scrap car removed, this might take a few days to arrange.

If you feel unable to talk to your neighbour about the problem or if you are not able to resolve it you can report the problem to a housing officer who will investigate the matter further and offer you advice and support. We have a number of leaflets that give further advice on what you can do and what we will do.

We will work with you, your neighbours and other agencies to try to sort out the problems. You must understand that you will be involved at all stages and you cannot simply pass the problem to someone else to deal with.

If we cannot help you we will explain the reasons why.

## What You Must Do

If the problems do continue, you need to write everything down with times and dates to give to your housing officer. It is very important that you keep a diary of events. We can supply the diary so you can do this.

Whilst we want to, and will, tackle serious anti-social behaviour, there are some circumstances when we may not become involved, or when we may choose to deal with the incident differently. These include:

- Complaints that are really about people not liking each other's lifestyles.
- Where we have housed people who are vulnerable, for example because they have mental health or learning disabilities, we cannot by law discriminate against people because of their disability – nor do we want to. In most cases, care and support packages will be in place, but where they are not, assessments of a persons need will be undertaken and where appropriate a new or revised care and support package will be agreed. We do expect people to have a reasonable level of tolerance towards people who are different and ask people to bear in mind that sometimes it may take longer to resolve the incidents.
- Complaints which stem from personal dislike between people – we will not become involved in personal vendettas or feuds between ex-partners, family members or friends that have fallen out and where both parties are at fault, unless it affects others in the community.

## Noise Nuisance

You should report noise problems to your housing officer who will investigate the report and take appropriate action.

## Anti-Social Behaviour

We will make best use of working with the Police and the Local Authority to tackle anti-social behaviour if and when it occurs. There are a number of legal remedies we can use including anti-social behaviour orders being served against individuals actually involved in anti-social behaviour or behaving in a way that is 'likely' to cause harassment, alarm or distress.

We have powers to take action where a resident, their family or visitors cause nuisance or harassment to others, have committed an arrestable offence or been involved in anti social behaviour. This could result in the resident losing their home.

However we can only take action if we have proof and witnesses who are prepared to come forward and give evidence.

## Solutions

To try and solve a problem we may try mediation. This involves both parties coming together with an independent person to try and seek a solution.

We cannot always resolve neighbour problems, but we can help if we have evidence to take legal action. We will always do what we can to obtain evidence from other sources such as the Police or the Environmental Health Department but most action depends on neighbours' co-operation and willingness to provide evidence.

## Racial Harassment

Racial harassment is a crime and also a serious breach of tenancy conditions. It can take many forms including racist comments, racist graffiti, physical attack or damage to property when directed at a person on the basis of their, colour, race, religion and/or nationality.

If you are a victim of racial harassment please contact your housing officer who will thoroughly investigate the matter straight away. We will also offer support and assistance to victims of harassment. In very serious cases involving violence, threats or damage to property the Police should also be contacted. We will discuss with you what action we can consider taking and if your home has been damaged treat the repair as a priority.

## Other Forms Of Harassment

Harassment can take many other forms. We do not tolerate any form of harassment and will take action against perpetrators. If you are a victim of harassment then please contact your housing officer who will investigate and offer you advice and assistance.

## Abuse Of Our Employees And Contractors

We do not expect our staff or contractors to put up with aggressive or threatening behaviour or with bad language directed at them. Residents must ensure that they, persons living with them, or visitors do not for any reason intimidate or verbally or physically abuse our employees or contractors. We will take appropriate action against people who do.

## Use Of Property

You must not use or allow your property to be used for any illegal or immoral purposes.

## Rubbish

Most Local Authorities will provide you with bins; where these are not provided you are responsible for providing your own. You should contact your Local Authority's refuse department for more information.

You should not leave rubbish in communal hallways or laying around your garden.

If there is a bin area at your scheme, you are responsible for keeping it clean and tidy. Untidy bin areas attract pests and vermin. We do suggest that you wrap rubbish in a bag before placing it in the bin. This helps the bin to stay clean and prevents it from smelling too badly.

If you need to dispose of large household rubbish or unwanted furniture most Local Authorities will collect this from your home. Some may charge a fee. You need to contact your Local Authority to arrange for this.

## Vermin And Pests

We will deal with pests in common areas if they are a nuisance. If you have a problem in your own home or garden, you should contact the Environmental Health Department.

**Common areas** (Stairs, landings, entrance halls, gardens, car parks)  
Residents should keep the common areas clean and tidy at all times. They must also be kept free from obstruction. This means that personal belongings such as bicycles for example, should not be stored there.

In most cases, we are responsible for cleaning of common areas and we may therefore charge for this service.

## Abandoned Vehicles

Scrap and abandoned vehicles are an eyesore. Where we believe a vehicle has been abandoned or left untaxed, we will take steps to remove it and the owner may be charged for this. If you have a vehicle that needs disposing of, please contact a local breaker and have them remove it. Do not leave untaxed or unroadworthy vehicles in communal areas, in parking bays or on the highway.

## Vehicles And Parking

Only roadworthy and currently taxed cars, light vans or motorcycles may be parked on the Association's property (this includes your driveway).

Heavy trade or commercial vehicles, buses, caravans, and boats cannot be parked on parking areas without our written approval. Do not park vehicles on grass areas.

You may carry out routine maintenance of your own vehicle on our property, but repairs to several vehicles are not allowed.

## Gardens

You are responsible for keeping your own garden tidy. If you do not maintain your own garden properly, we may have to do the work, but we will recharge you for this.

## Pets

If you live in a flat, maisonette or a shared house, you cannot keep any animal unless you have our permission, in writing.

You must not keep, or allow visitors to bring to the property, any animals that is restricted, for example, one that comes under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 or needs a licence.

You may keep other small domestic pet's e.g. small caged animals and birds or fish at the property without getting our permission.

You must keep your pets under control at all times and must make adequate provision to ensure that your pets cannot escape from your home or garden.

If you live in a house or bungalow that has a garden, you can keep a cat or dog. If you want to keep more than two cats or two dogs, you must get our permission, in writing, first.

Where applicable, garden fencing must be of sufficient height and strength to ensure that pets, such as dogs, do not escape. Any fencing provided by the tenant should be supported by its own posts and not be attached to the Association's existing fencing for support. The fencing must also be regularly and well maintained to ensure it remains in good condition.

You must not keep any animals for commercial breeding purposes.

You must not keep livestock such as chickens, ducks, geese or goats without our permission.

You must not allow any animal you keep at the property to foul in your home or in the shared areas or outside the property, for example, roads and footpaths or play areas in the local area;

If any animal (including birds and livestock) causes damage, noise, nuisance or is not kept under control it must be removed to a new home. If any animal attacks or injures another person(s) or animal(s), it must be removed to a new home. You will be liable for any damage to the property caused by your pet.

If we have evidence that you are ill-treating your pet(s), we will require you to find it/them a new home. Where we find instances of pets or animals being neglected, abused or mistreated we reserve the right to alert the RSPCA.

It is a requirement of this tenancy that you must keep any pet or animal strictly in line with these conditions.

Where you need to seek our permission, it will not be unreasonably withheld or delayed and if we refuse, we will give reasons why.

## **Running A Business From Your Home**

If you would like to run a business from your home, you must get our written permission first. If it is likely that your business would cause problems for your neighbours or if it requires planning permission, we will not normally consent to it.

## **Aerials**

Residents must get permission in writing from us before a television aerial or satellite dish is erected on the property. Sometimes, especially on blocks of flats, planning permission is required so you should check with the Local Authority first.