



Dealing with neighbour nuisance

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Neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour

This leaflet is designed to give you practical advice and information to help you deal with neighbour nuisance and anti-social behaviour. It gives some examples of what we consider to be unacceptable behaviour or nuisance. It also contains details of how we will respond to your complaint.

What is nuisance and anti-social behaviour?

There are many types of nuisance and anti-social behaviour, including;

Noise

playing loud music, arguing and shouting, slamming doors and DIY noise

Gardens

overgrown, rubbish, bonfires

Pets

dogs barking, fouling common areas, poor conditions

Environmental

litter, graffiti, fly-tipping

Vehicles

parking on grassed areas, repairs, dangerous driving

Drugs

substance misuse, supplying or dealing

Violence

aggressive or threatening behaviour or language or actual violence

Harassment and intimidation

verbal or physical abuse, hate crime

Criminal activity should in all cases be reported directly to the police.

Dealing with nuisance and anti-social behaviour

What you can do

Speak to your neighbour

This is often the best approach, as most people are reasonable if spoken to in person. People are often not aware that they or someone in their household are causing you nuisance.

Preparation

Think about what you want to say beforehand. Be clear about what the problem is and how it affects you. Don't stray from the issue.

How to behave

Stay calm and friendly. Becoming aggressive will not help the situation. Explain what the problem is and how it is affecting you. Listen to your neighbour and think about what they say to you. Try not to interrupt and do not shout or use bad language, even if your neighbour does. Try not to bring up incidents from the past and concentrate on the current situation and what needs to change to make things better. If your neighbour becomes aggressive or abusive – end the discussion.

Keep a record of events

It may be helpful for you to keep a record of the time and date of incidents, the details and to note how this made you feel.

What we can do

If speaking to the people concerned yourself does not work, and if the problem continues, telephone your neighbourhood officer on 0845 849 2000. Your neighbourhood officer will contact you within set timescales to get more information from you and together you can decide a way forward.

Mediation

In many cases of neighbour dispute mediation can help to resolve the problem. The Community Mediation Service is an independent organisation which offers a free, impartial service. If we feel that you would benefit from using their service we will refer your case to them. They will speak to both or all parties involved to try to establish some common ground and work towards an agreement.

How we deal with your complaint

To help us deal effectively with nuisance and anti-social behaviour, we prioritise the complaints we receive. This does not mean that we do not take your complaints seriously, but we must deal with the more serious cases first. Please note that we will not normally get involved in disputes between neighbours unless there is a clear breach of the tenancy agreement. In order for us to treat each complaint in a fair and open way we have categorised different kinds of nuisance and anti-social behaviour and given each type a different response time.

Category 1 – severe nuisance or harassment.

These complaints will normally be responded to within five working days. However, where there is an immediate and real risk to the safety of an individual these cases will be referred to the area manager for your neighbourhood for an immediate response.

Category 2 – other nuisance such as noise, rubbish, abandoned cars, vehicle nuisance will normally be responded to within 10 working days.

Category 3 – general complaints including environmental, disputes over boundaries and issues that can be attributed to the season (for example playing of football on communal areas) will normally be responded to within 15 working days.

These categories are a guideline only. It is not always possible to follow the same procedure rigidly in each case, and the most appropriate course of action will be decided based on the facts and information available. It will not always be necessary for us to visit you, as some problems can be resolved over the telephone.

Some of the problems that you report to us may not be our responsibility, or we may not be in a position to help you. In these circumstances we will explain to you the action we can take or refer you to other organisations, such as North East Lincolnshire Council.

We need your help!

In some circumstances, where the problem is ongoing, we may ask you to complete 'neighbour nuisance diaries'. This will help us to build up a picture of events and will help us decide what the most appropriate action is for us to take.

In more serious cases where legal action is being considered we may need to take more formal statements from you and discuss the possibility of you attending court to give evidence. We will offer you support and guidance throughout this process.

Working with other agencies

We work with other agencies, such as the local policing teams and neighbourhood officers, North East Lincolnshire Council Environmental Health Team, Safe and Clean, Neat Streets, Social Services, Local Education Authority etc, in order to help resolve any problems at the earliest stage possible, and to offer support where appropriate.

Contact us

If you want to report nuisance or anti-social behaviour please telephone your neighbourhood officer on 0845 849 2000 or our Anti-Social Behaviour confidential 24 hour message line on 01472 572174.

Alternatively, you can email us at info@shorelinehp.com or call in at our Customer Service Centre, 11-13 Osborne Street, Grimsby DN31 1ES.

Other useful contacts

Humberside Police	0845 6060222
Community Mediation Services	01472 251054
North East Lincolnshire Council: Environmental Health Team	01472 324770

0845 849 2000

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