

# SAFER COMMUNITIES

DEALING WITH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR  
AND NEIGHBOUR DISPUTES



# SAFER COMMUNITIES

## Dealing with anti-social behaviour and neighbour disputes

Everyone has the right to live peacefully in their home and to be free from fear, harassment, intimidation, noise nuisance and any other form of behaviour that causes alarm or distress.

By signing your tenancy agreement, you made an agreement about the way you, members of your household and your visitors would behave in and around your home.

You agreed to live in your home without causing annoyance, damage, nuisance, or harassment or to threaten or act violently to others; this includes domestic violence and abuse.

## What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of activities and behaviours, ranging from those that cause minor nuisance or irritation, to major incidents of harassment, threats and acts of violence.

Examples of activities or behaviours that we class as anti-social behaviour include:

- ➔ Nuisance behaviour - noise, dogs barking continually or fouling in public areas, graffiti, badly kept gardens or rubbish accumulation, nuisance behaviour by groups of youths
- ➔ Violence or threats of violence - including domestic violence
- ➔ Harassment - behaviour that causes offence, alarm or distress to another individual or household which may be based on their race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age or religion
- ➔ Damage to property
- ➔ Substance related nuisance - drug or alcohol misuse or drug dealing

## Dealing with noise nuisance

It is important to think about the noise in your household and the impact it might be having on your neighbours. Try to be a considerate neighbour and where possible, keep noise levels to a minimum.

If a neighbour approaches you and asks you to keep your noise down, respect their right to peace and quiet in their home.

### **Suffering from noise nuisance late at night?**

If you have a problem with noise outside of office hours, contact Environmental Health on 0121 303 6007.

## **What you CAN do to be a considerate neighbour**

- ✓ Advise neighbours if you plan to have a party.
- ✓ Keep windows and doors closed if you have a party and be prepared to apologise and turn the music down if it is disturbing others.
- ✓ If you live in a flat, take your shoes off, particularly if you have laminate flooring.
- ✓ Fit carpets and curtains as these absorb sound.
- ✓ Try to avoid shouting or speaking loudly.
- ✓ Keep music and television

volume at a reasonable level.

- ✓ Always shut doors and cupboard doors without slamming.

## **What you should NOT do**

- ✗ Do not play music or watch television at a loud level, keep the base level down.
- ✗ Do not carry out noisy DIY work after 7pm or before 10am.
- ✗ Do not have regular, loud, late night parties.
- ✗ Do not use domestic appliances late at night.
- ✗ Do not allow children to play too noisily, especially if you live in a flat.
- ✗ Do not sound car horns or keep cars running outside your home.
- ✗ Do not let fireworks off after 10pm.
- ✗ Do not leave dogs outside for long periods. If your dog barks when alone, try to find someone to look after it when you are not home.

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## Noise nuisance

If you complain about noise nuisance we will provide you with diary sheets to record the frequency of noise and how it affects you.

If the noise continues and is substantiated, we will work with Environmental Health which may serve a Noise Abatement Notice. We may also serve a Notice of Intention to seek possession of the property.

If the noise still continues, Environmental Health has the power to seize equipment from the property and we will consider legal action to enforce an injunction or possession of the property.

## Other help and advice

**Environmental Health Officers, Birmingham City Council** - deal with nuisance, including noise, dumped rubbish and dogs that bark constantly or foul communal areas.

We work with the local authority to tackle nuisance, but you can approach them directly if you have a problem.

**Police** - contact for criminal activities including criminal damage, harassment, dealing or using illegal drugs and keeping of dangerous dogs. If you think there is criminal activity or if you have been threatened or subjected to violence you should contact the police as well as letting us know.

## Useful numbers

West Midlands Police  
0845 113 5000

Environmental Health  
Birmingham City Council  
0121 303 5466

Crimestoppers  
0800 555 111

Birmingham City Council  
0121 442 5600

Victim Support  
0845 303 0900

Women's Aid (Birmingham)  
0121 685 8687

Women's Aid (Sandwell)  
0121 552 6448

## How to tackle noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour

### Talk about it

If you feel comfortable about it, try talking to your neighbour and explain politely that their behaviour is disturbing you. In many cases the neighbour is not aware that they are causing a nuisance and are willing to stop.

### Make a complaint

Please use the details on the back of this leaflet to contact us and make an anti-social behaviour complaint.

If you contact us with an anti-social behaviour complaint, we will offer to see you within five working days. However for serious anti-social complaints, for example where there has been violence or a threat of violence, we will arrange to meet with you as quickly as possible and definitely within 24 hours.

### What we can do about it

In most cases we will try to resolve the problem by non-legal measures such as:

- Visit the person you are complaining about.

- Issue written warnings.
- Provide mediation between you and your neighbour.
- Work with other agencies to resolve the problem, such as the Environmental Health department at the council or police.
- Use Acceptable Behaviour Contracts.

We can also take legal action such as:

- Injunction Orders.
- Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO's).
- A demotion order on the tenancy.
- Possession proceedings through the County Court. This could result in the tenant being evicted.

If we take legal action you may be required to be a witness in court. We will fully support you throughout this process. We work with the police to protect witnesses and in extreme cases arrange a permanent or temporary move.

Please note that taking legal action can take time, on average four to five months to take possession of a property.

## Safer communities.

This document is available in other languages upon request.

### Bengali

আরও নিরাপদ কমিউনিটি

এই ডকুমেন্ট অনুরোধে বাংলায় পাওয়া যায়।

### Kurdish

کۆمەڵگای سەلامەتتر.

ئەم بەلگەیه بە پێی داواکاری بە زمانی کوردی ش دەس دەکەوێت

### Punjabi

ਸੁਰੱਖਿਅਤ ਭਾਈਚਾਰੇ।

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਲਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

### Somali

Deegaano ka Amaan badan.

Dokumentigaan waxaa lagu helaa Soomaali haddii la codsado.

### Urdu

محفوظ ترکمیونیٹیر

درخواست پر یہ دستاویز اردو میں بھی مل سکتی ہے۔

## How to contact us

You can contact us at our office, over the telephone, by e-mail or on our website.

### Telephone:

0121 766 1100

8am-8pm Monday to Friday

8am-1pm Saturday

Emergency out of office hours:

0121 766 1100 (transfer to our out of hours service)

### E-mail:

post@family-housing.co.uk

### Post:

Family Housing Association

(Birmingham) Ltd

Bordesley House

44/46 Coventry Road

Birmingham B10 0RX

### Website:

www.family-housing.co.uk

