

ASB hot line: 01202 460338

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Getting help with neighbour nuisance and neighbour disputes

twynham



If you have any questions after reading this leaflet, please contact our Resident Services team who will be happy to help you. The contact details are on the back of this leaflet.



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This leaflet explains how we deal with neighbour nuisance and neighbour disputes, and offers advice on how you can help yourself.

What can I do if my neighbour is causing a nuisance?

If you are having problems with your neighbour, the first thing you should do is talk to them.

Most people want to enjoy their homes in peace. Your neighbour may not realise that their behaviour is affecting you and they may be happy to stop the unacceptable behaviour. So you may be able to solve a problem by telling the person that their behaviour is causing a nuisance. Calmly explain how you are being affected by their behaviour. But do not do this if you feel threatened in any way.

What can you do if my neighbour is causing a nuisance?

We are committed to taking immediate action to deal with neighbour nuisance and antisocial behaviour (ASB). We will do everything we can to make sure our tenants know what standard of behaviour we expect and what action we will take if these standards are not met.

We will thoroughly investigate all incidents that are reported to us and take appropriate action if necessary.

Who should I contact?

You should first contact your resident services officer.

You, or someone acting for you, can report an incident by phoning our ASB hot line on 01202 460338. You can also report an incident in writing, by e-mail or in person.

We will keep your report confidential and we will only contact the person causing the problems if you give permission.

If a crime has taken place, you should report this to the police. If the problem is noise, report this to your local council's Environment Health Department.

How quickly will you respond?

We aim to deal with all reports of neighbour nuisance as quickly as possible.

This should always happen within the following timescales, depending on how serious the incident is.

- Severe antisocial behaviour (for example, serious violence or threats of violence, vandalism causing danger, drug use causing physical danger) – **straight away**.
- Urgent antisocial behaviour (for example, offensive graffiti, serious noise nuisance, abandoned cars which are dangerous) – **within 24 hours**.

- Moderate antisocial behaviour (for example, non-violent unreasonable behaviour, non-violent intimidation, suspicion of drug dealing or other illegal activity, dumping rubbish illegally) – **within 3 working days.**
- Minor antisocial behaviour (for example, inconsiderate household noise, dog nuisance, un-roadworthy vehicles, inconsiderate parking, non-offensive graffiti, non-dangerous vandalism) – **within 5 working days.**

Regardless of how serious the incident is, we will always send you a letter within five working days of our interview with you to explain what we are going to do and what we expect from you.

If we need to carry out further investigations we will complete these within 10 working days of the interview with you. We will also keep you informed of progress during our investigations.

What action will you take?

There are different actions we can take, depending on how serious the nuisance is.

We will look at all these actions and in some cases we may ask you to keep a diary of incidents to gather evidence over a period of time. If we do ask you to keep a diary, you will need to record dates, times and details of who may be involved and the effect that it has had on you.

If appropriate, we may offer mediation and support from other agencies (such as the police or social services) to help you and your neighbour to sort out your disagreements peacefully.

If the problem is noise or pests such as rats or mice, we may also refer you to your local council's Environmental Health Department.

If, after carrying out our investigations, we find that your neighbour has broken their tenancy agreement and we need to take legal action, as long as we have enough evidence to support it, we will consider taking one or more of the following actions.

- Entering into an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) or parental control agreement.
- Getting an antisocial behaviour order (ASBO).
- Taking out an injunction to prevent the tenant from behaving in an unacceptable way.
- Getting a demoted tenancy order to give the tenant a less secure type of tenancy.
- Evicting the tenant.

We will only consider taking action to evict a tenant in extreme cases where all other possible action has failed. In most cases you would need to act as a witness in court for the court to allow us to evict a tenant.

Are there times when you will not take any action?

Yes. In some situations we will not, or cannot, take action. Some examples of these situations are if:

- the information we have been given is not accurate;
- there is no evidence to support the complaint;
- the complaint refers to a one-off minor incident; or
- you are not willing to try to solve the problem (for example, by becoming involved in mediation).

If we decide to take no action we will tell everyone involved.

Please remember that you are responsible for the behaviour of all those living in and visiting your home while they are at your property, in any shared areas or in the area around the property

What happens if I am not satisfied with the way you have dealt with my situation?

If you are not satisfied with the way we have carried out our investigation or the decision we have come to, you can make a complaint using our formal complaints procedure.

Our complaints procedure is explained in our leaflet 'Customer feedback'. If you would like more information on how we deal with antisocial behaviour, we also have a leaflet called 'Tackling antisocial behaviour' which summarises our policy and procedures. You can get both these leaflets from the reception at Dolphin House or from our website. We can also send you copies in the post.

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