



Resolving an Issue

Good Neighbourhood Toolkit

If you are experiencing an issue with a neighbour, we recommend actioning Step 1, as outlined below, ahead of seeking assistance from the London Borough of Hillingdon (where appropriate) and actioning Step 2.

Step 1

Nothing gets resolved without good communication and so a respectful discussion with your neighbour can go a long way.

Ahead of speaking to your neighbour, please refer to the relevant section in this toolkit to review the tips and guidance on reducing the impact of the issue on your household so you can discuss the options with them:

Pets	4
Cigarette and cooking smells	6
Parking disagreements	7
Loud music	8
General household or living noise	10
Household appliances	10
Garden noise	11
Entering and leaving your home	12
DIY	12
Shouting and arguing	13
Children playing	14
Minor personal conflict	14
Criminal incidents	14

If you do not feel comfortable speaking to your neighbour, please contact your Tenancy Management Officer and they will be able to provide you support and advise of how best to approach your neighbour.

If you or your household have any mental or physical health needs which are making it difficult to manage or resolve an issue, let us know as soon as possible by contacting your Tenancy Management Officer on **01895 556666**.

Similarly, if you are concerned about a neighbour's wellbeing, please get in touch on the details above and we can advise next steps.



Step 2

If you have had a conversation with your neighbour about the issue and how it is affecting you, but it is still not resolved, contact your Tenancy Management Officer.

While most cases will not be dealt with under our ASB procedure, we can review the situation and advise on the most appropriate course of action available. This could include:

- Arranging mediation (which we can facilitate if both households agree) with your neighbour and offer further advice.
- Us writing to your neighbour about your report (with your consent) with tips and further guidance.
- Providing you with a noise app that will enable you to record any noise or nuisance that is disturbing you, which can be used to escalate a report and investigate the issue. If you do not have an apple or android smartphone or device, we will discuss other ways to gather evidence.

Signpost or refer you to agencies who can support you and your household. These

- agencies may include Social Services, Mental Health Services and Support Coaching.

If you decline our recommendations to resolve the issue and we have not escalated the situation to ASB, there may be nothing further we can do.

Pets

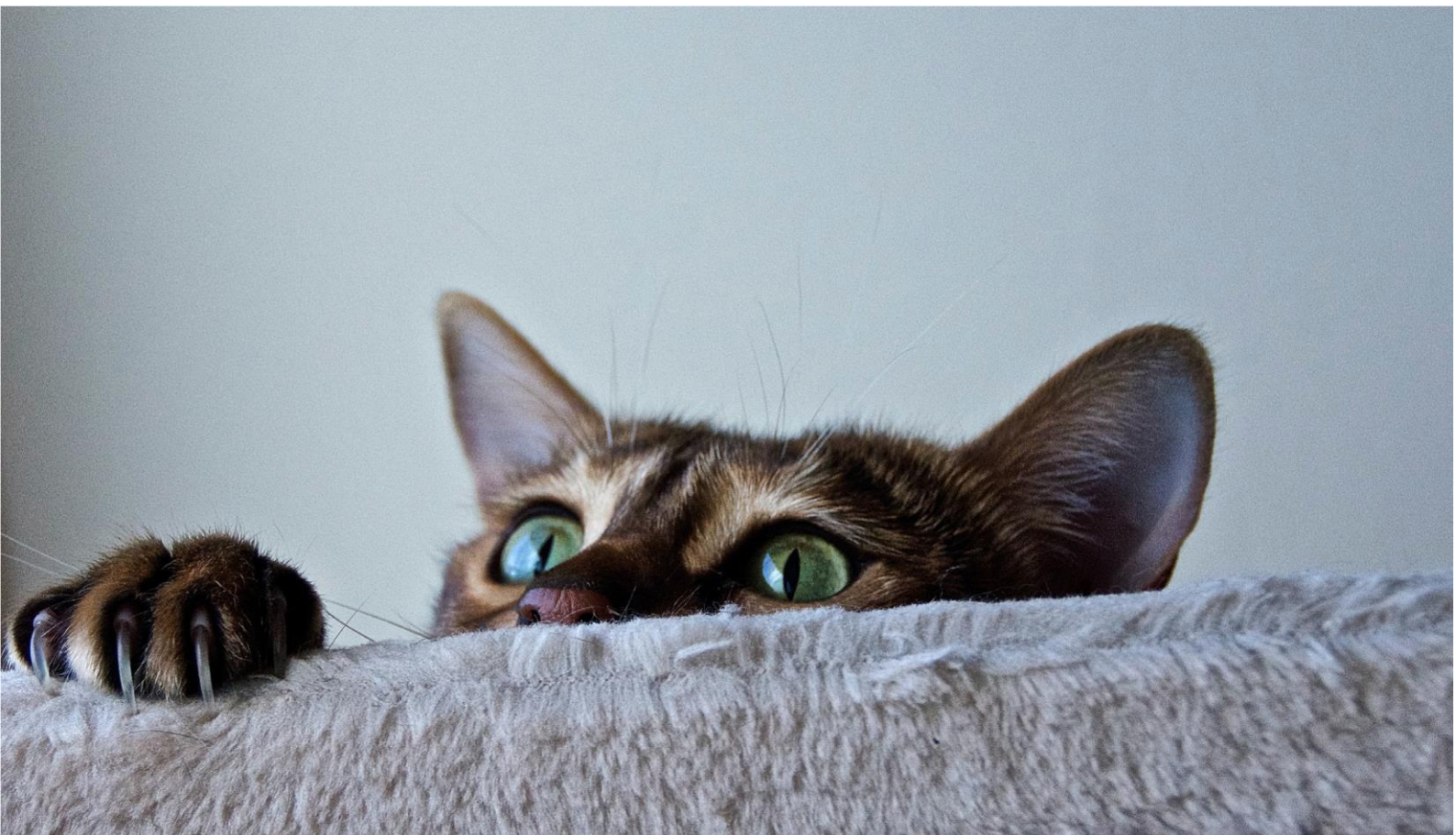
While it is natural for dogs to bark from time to time, we understand that this can become incredibly frustrating if it is continuous. Cats also have the 'right to roam' so if a cat defecates in any external space (communal or private), it is not considered ASB. We recommend seeking specialist advice on how to safely deter cats from entering your personal garden.

If residents have a caged bird that likes to sing and squawk, we recommend making sure it's kept where it will least disturb neighbours, particularly at night. Similarly, some caged pets tend to be more active at night and are known for chewing and rattling their cages. Consider carefully where and how such pets are housed.

If, however, you feel:

- That a pet is constantly disturbing you
- You have noticed a neighbour is not picking up their dog's faeces.
- Concerned about a neighbour not keeping their dog on a lead in a communal area, on land owned or managed by The London Borough of Hillingdon

Please refer to **Step 1** on **page 1**.



When might an issue with a pet become a Statutory Nuisance or ASB?

If you are worried that there is an immediate danger because of a pet, please contact the police and then get in touch with your Tenancy Management Officer. We will then assess whether we will investigate the issue under our ASB Policy.

Similarly, if you report to us that the barking or noise is daily and for continuous periods lasting 30 minutes or for shorter periods which prevent you from sleeping during the night or has a prolonged impact on direct neighbours or the local community, this may be a Statutory Nuisance.



Cigarette (Tobacco) and Cooking smells

By law, internal communal areas (stairwells, lobbies, lifts, and hallways) of blocks of flats must be smoke-free. However, residents are legally allowed to smoke ordinary tobacco cigarettes inside their homes, gardens and they may also smoke cigarettes in communal gardens.

Similarly, residents are also free to cook food of their choice in their home. Neither of these activities are considered antisocial behaviour. However, you may wish to speak to your neighbour to see if there is anything they can do to reduce the impact of these activities on your household. Below are the steps we recommend taking, as well as some tips to reduce the smell of cigarettes and cooking.

Tips on reducing smells caused by...

Cigarettes

- ➔ Be considerate when smoking in external areas by not smoking directly outside the building's entrance or in front of, or under, your neighbours' windows.
- ➔ When smoking in your home, ventilate by opening windows or consider using an air purifier.
- ➔ Charcoal or white vinegar can help absorb the smell of cigarettes. Leave containers open and change them regularly.
- ➔ Do not litter and ensure that cigarette butts are disposed of safely.

Continued...

Cooking

- ➔ Let fresh air circulate in your home by opening the windows and using your kitchen extractor fan. You can also use your oven extractor fan if you have one.
- ➔ Clean up as soon as possible after cooking to remove any lingering smells, as well as food mess and grease.
- ➔ Put any food waste in a bin with a closed lid, as soon as possible and empty it regularly.

Parking Disagreements

When parking near your home it's important that you and your neighbours remember:

- ➔ No one has the right to park in front of their home on a public road.
- ➔ To not park across a dropped kerb or driveway and to leave enough space either side of the driveway for a car to manoeuvre in and out.
- ➔ If possible, avoid parking opposite a driveway as it may also obstruct access to it. Before you leave your vehicle, ask yourself “could I get in or out of that driveway?”
- ➔ Do not park or allow your visitors to park anywhere that is not permitted and may cause a problem for other people. For example, on a pathway or blocking areas that should be kept clear for bin lorries or emergency vehicles.
- ➔ If you live on a scheme with allocated parking, you should not park or allow your visitors to park in someone else's bay even for a short period.

Continued...

- ➔ If you live on a scheme with non-allocated parking it means that residents are permitted to park there on a first come first served basis, providing that there is a parking space available.
- ➔ If you live on a scheme with non-allocated parking and have a preferred space, you can ask a neighbour if they would mind allowing you to park in a particular space. However, they are entitled to decline your request.
- ➔ You cannot park an untaxed/unroadworthy vehicle in a car park owned or managed by the London Borough of Hillingdon and this includes SORN vehicles (Statutory Off-Road Notification). We will remove these vehicles.
- ➔ In car parks owned or managed by The London Borough of Hillingdon where you are allowed to park commercial vehicles, they must not weigh 3.5 tonnes. Anything above this would be considered an obstruction and a breach of your tenancy.
- ➔ If you live on a scheme which does not permit any work commercial vehicles it will state this in your tenancy or leasehold conditions.
- ➔ You must only carry out reasonable minor repairs to your own vehicles in the parking areas of a car park you are allowed to use, and you must not use paint spraying equipment, hoists, welding equipment or power tools.
- ➔ Disabled parking places are for blue badge holders.

If you are having issues with a neighbour about any of the above, please refer to **Step 1** on **page 1**.

Alternatively, if you are having difficulties with your neighbours about parking and believe there are measures such as consulting residents about allocated parking, or the introduction of parking enforcement measures please get in contact.

Loud Music

Music tastes vary so do not assume just because you like a song your neighbour will want to hear it as well. We recommend considering:

- ➔ With amplified sound, keeping the volume down, especially the bass which can be more annoying than higher frequencies.

- > If you have a bedroom TV, keep it quiet at night – especially if your bedroom adjoins someone else's.
- > If playing an instrument, practice where and when it will have least impact on neighbours.
- > Where possible, use headphones.
- > Be mindful of open windows.

If you are having issues with loud music, please refer to **Step 1** on **page 1**.

We will only consider loud music to be ASB if it is persistent, and we will normally require you to submit noise app recordings. This means a one-off party would not typically be considered ASB.

Persistent noise nuisance usually means the disturbance lasts for continuous periods of over 30 minutes a day for at least 5 days within one week.



General household or Living noise

From babies crying, people talking and walking in their homes, closing doors and windows, vacuuming, using white goods and plumbing, everyone can expect some noise from the people who live around them.

To reduce noise in your home and minimise any disturbances, review the following tips and share them with your neighbours.

Household appliances

- ➔ Where possible, position any appliances on an even floor to cause the least amount of disturbance to your neighbour and consider using an anti-vibration mat under washing machines and tumble dryers.

- ➔ Avoid overloading and try running a washing machine at a time when it will least disturb neighbours. Remember, the final spin is usually the noisiest bit.

- ➔ Do the vacuuming at a reasonable time. Especially if you live in a flat or terrace, avoid early morning or late-night cleaning sprees.

In the kitchen, avoid banging pans and cupboard doors and don't use blenders/grinders on surfaces attached to party walls.

- ➔ Cupboard doors can also be annoying, particularly if the units are fixed to party walls. Avoid slamming doors.

- ➔ Inexpensive adhesive furniture pads can be a very effective way of reducing noise by sticking these to the inside of the cupboard door or around an internal door frame.

Garden noise

Our gardens are a place to rest, relax and play. Remember that any noise you make in your garden will be heard by your neighbours.

- ➔ Try and carry out noisy activities, like mowing your lawn, in the middle of the day.
- ➔ Where possible purchase quieter equipment and maintain your equipment properly.
- ➔ If a child's toy or game is extremely noisy, try and find quieter alternatives.
- ➔ Barbeques, trampolines and paddling pools are not permitted in communal areas.
- ➔ If you have a barbeque or party in your home or garden, tell your neighbours, invite them if appropriate, avoid amplified music out of doors and if anyone does complain, turn it down. Either end your party or bring your guests indoors at a reasonable time.



Entering and leaving your home

- ➔ Avoid slamming car, front doors or communal entrance doors, particularly late at night or early morning.
- ➔ If you're expecting a visitor, ask them to knock rather than sound a car horn.

DIY (Do it yourself)

- ➔ Whenever possible, let your neighbours know that you are undertaking noisy work and try to work during normal waking hours.
- ➔ You should not start before 8am on weekdays and 10am on weekends and should finish by 5.30pm on weekdays and 4pm on weekends so that this does not impact on other residents' quiet enjoyment of their homes.
- ➔ Carry out the noisiest tasks in the middle of the day. If you must start early, do quieter jobs first.
- ➔ Keep tools well maintained and use lower/quieter settings on power tools where feasible. Where possible use hand tools.

If you are having issues with your neighbour about any of the above, check out [our tips](#) ahead of referring to **Step 1** on **page 1**.

SHOUTING AND ARGUING

Our primary concern in relation to shouting and arguing would relate to potential domestic abuse or a safeguarding issue.

If you think it may be domestic abuse or are concerned about any of your neighbours and there is an immediate risk, please ring the police on 999 and then let us know by contacting your Tenancy Management Officer or our contact Centre Team on 01895 556666.

Alternatively, in a non-emergency, you can make a safeguarding referral to your Tenancy Management Officer. If you think that there are any factors contributing to the shouting and arguing, please let us know when you call. In addition, we may ask you the following questions to help us better understand and assess the situation:

- ➔ Does the neighbour appear vulnerable?
- ➔ Do you think drugs/alcohol may be involved?
- ➔ Who do you think lives in the property?
- ➔ Have you noticed anyone new move into the property or whether there are any new visitors?
- ➔ Do have any concerns about anyone's welfare?
- ➔ Are there children living in the property?

To better understand the situation and whether we need to investigate the issue under our ASB policy, we may issue you with a noise app and request that you submit recordings.

CHILDREN PLAYING

Play is an essential part of every child's life and is vital for the enjoyment of childhood as well as their health, well-being, and development.

Although some types of behaviour can be annoying, children playing in their gardens, external communal areas or the street is not ASB. Consequently, we encourage you to be tolerant of children playing.

This is unless they are swearing, causing damage, or engaging in a dangerous activity which could cause a nuisance to other neighbours or a danger to themselves. If children are kicking a ball against your wall or their toys are at risk of damaging your car or windows, please follow **Step 1** outlined on **page 1**.

MINOR PERSONAL CONFLICT

Typically, this type of conflict involves a disagreement or unfriendliness between neighbours. It can include dirty looks or staring, personal dislikes, children falling out with each other and being excluded, personal relationship breakdowns and the positioning of bins ahead of collection.

It's important to remember that we don't always know what's going on in someone's personal life or what may be impacting them – but it's important that we treat our neighbours fairly and show respect.

If you are having issues with a neighbour about any of the above, please refer to **Step 1** on **page 1**.

CRIMINAL INCIDENTS

There are some issues between neighbours that are considered criminal offences and should be reported to the police immediately by calling 101 or 999.

Alternatively, you can contact your local police team or if you wish to remain anonymous and it is not an emergency, you can make a report to Crimestoppers online or call **0800 555 111**. Examples include hate crime, assault, and threats of violence.

In addition, drug dealing is also a criminal offence and so is using drugs (including cannabis) unless they have been prescribed by a doctor for medicinal use. If you believe someone is drug dealing or using illegally, please report this to the police.

We are committed to working with the police and other agencies to tackle these issues, which are also a breach of the tenancy and leasehold conditions. Once you have reported anything to the police or Crimestoppers please contact your Tenancy Management Officer on **01895 556666**.

We will ask you to provide the incident report number that the police provided as this will help us to liaise with them about the issue.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For full details on our Good Neighbourhood Management Policy, please visit [Anti-social behaviour involving council tenants and leaseholders - Hillingdon Council](#) You can also read the following policies on our website to better understand how we manage these areas before you speak with a neighbour about your concern.

Governance			
Effective from:	01/07/2024	Review Date:	01/07/2025
Procedure Owner:	Head of Housing Management		
Procedure Author:	Housing Manager – Housing Management Services		
Approved by:	Landlord Board		
Version Number:	1.01		

