

# Good Neighbourhood Management Toolkit







At Grŵp Cynefin we are committed to supporting tenants to build good relationships with their neighbours. All our tenants should enjoy a safe and welcoming neighbourhood.

This toolkit tells you what to do if a neighbour's behaviour is upsetting or frustrating. While this is not the same as a tenant demonstrating antisocial behaviour (ASB), some of the issues may be escalated to ASB.

This guide gives you tips and advice on what to do if there is an issue with a neighbour. It also tells you how we can support you.

# Resolving an Issue

If you are experiencing an issue with a neighbour, we recommend Step 1, as outlined below, ahead of seeking assistance from Grŵp Cynefin (where appropriate) and proceeding to Step 2 if needed.

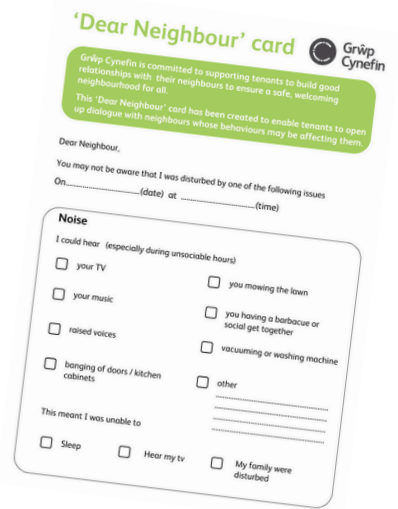
## Step 1

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

Before you speak to your neighbour, have a look at the topics below. If one of them is the issue you're concerned about, read the relevant section for advice.

- 6 Shouting and arguing
- 7 Pets
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If you do not feel comfortable speaking to your neighbour, you can also complete and post our 'Dear Neighbour' card. This is available to download from our website. Alternatively, contact your Housing Officer or Cyswllt Cynefin and they will be able to provide you with a copy.

If you or your household have any mental or physical health needs which could make it difficult to manage or resolve an issue, let us know as soon as possible by contacting your Housing Officer or Cyswllt Cynefin on [post@ grwpcynefin.org](mailto:post@grwpcynefin.org) or 0300 111 2122.

In the same way, if you are concerned about a neighbour's wellbeing or approaching them to resolve an issue, please get in touch on the details above and we can advise next steps. Or contact Social Services or the Mental Health team directly if you're worried about your neighbour's wellbeing.



## Step 2

If you have spoken with your neighbour about the issue and how it is affecting you, but it is still not resolved, contact your Housing Officer or Cyswllt Cynefin. (Please write a brief description of your conversation and when it happened).

While most cases can be dealt with without resorting to our ABS procedure, we are more than happy to help you resolve the situation. This could include:

- Arranging mediation (which can facilitate if both households agree) with your neighbour and offer further advice.
- Us writing to your neighbour (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, this can be used to escalate a report and investigate the issue. If you do not have an apple or android smartphone or device, there are 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 choose not to take our advice to resolve the issue and we have not escalated the situation to ASB, there may be nothing further we can do.

# Shouting and arguing



Our primary concern in relation to shouting and arguing would relate to potential domestic abuse or a safeguarding issue (this includes adults shouting at children).

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 Housing Officer or Cyswllt Cynefin on [post@grwpcynefin.org](mailto:post@grwpcynefin.org) or **0300 111 2122**. You can remain anonymous.

Alternatively, in a non-emergency, you can make a safeguarding referral to your local council, by contacting the Duty Office at the Social Services Department of the local Council, and as we've said above, you can remain anonymous. Their telephone number can be found on their website.

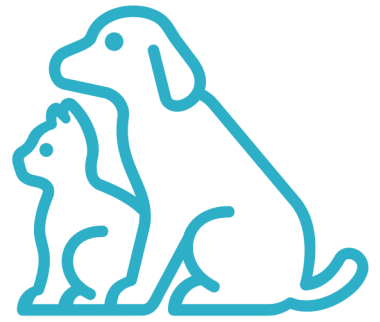
If you think that there are any factors contributing to the shouting and arguing, please let us know when you call. In addition, we may ask you the following questions to help us better understand and assess the situation:

- 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.



# Pets



Dogs bark from time to time and 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.

Please refer to [Step 1](#) on [page 3](#) 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 Grŵp Cynefin

*If you don't feel comfortable talking to your neighbour, you can use our 'Dear Neighbour' card.*

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## When might an issue with a pet become ASB?

If you are worried that a pet is dangerous, please contact the police and then get in touch with Grŵp Cynefin. We will then assess whether we will investigate the issue under our ASB Policy.



This may be ASB if

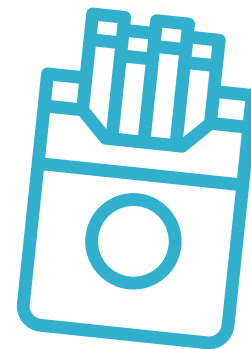
- the barking or noise is daily and for continuous periods lasting 30 minutes
- or for shorter periods which prevent you from sleeping during the night
- or has a prolonged impact on direct neighbours or the local community, this may be ASB.

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.





# Cigarette (tobacco) and other substances smells



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

Similarly, tenants 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 other substances

## 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.
- Dispose of your cigarette butts

# 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
- Don't park across a dropped kerb or driveway and 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 or estate with allocated parking, you should not park or allow your visitors to park in someone else's bay even for a short period.
- If you live on a scheme or estate 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 say no.

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- You cannot park an untaxed/unroadworthy vehicle in a car park owned or managed by Grŵp Cynefin and this includes SORN vehicles (Statutory Off-Road Notification).
- If you live on a scheme or estate 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.
- 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 only. If a member of your household is registered as disabled or have any other vulnerabilities, seek further advice from Grŵp Cynefin if they are experiencing problems with parking.

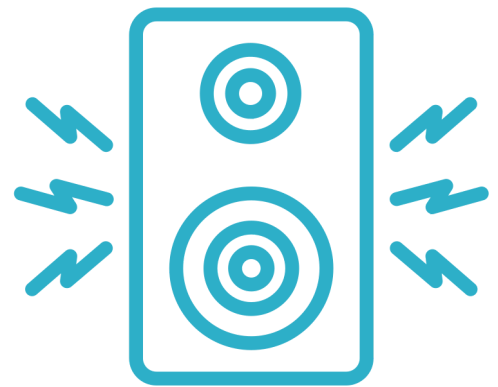
If you are having issues with a neighbour about any of the above, please refer to [Step 1](#) on [page 3](#).

Alternatively, if you are having difficulties with your neighbours about parking and believe there are measures Grŵp Cynefin may be able to take, please get in touch. This could include consulting residents about allocated parking or the introduction of parking enforcement measures.



# Loud music

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



- keep the volume down, especially the bass which can be more annoying than higher frequencies.
- keep TV volume 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 3](#).

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 or it occurs during the night-time between 11pm-7am.





# 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 where possible.

## Household appliances

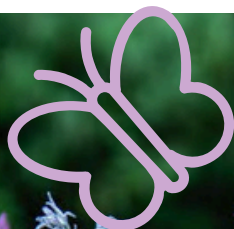
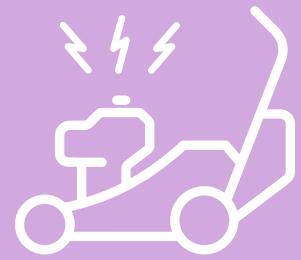
- Where possible, position any appliances on an even floor to cause the least amount of disturbance to your neighbour and consider using an anti-vibration mat under washing machines and tumble dryers.
- Avoid overloading and try running a washing machine at a time when it will least disturb neighbours. Remember, the final spin is usually the noisiest bit.
- Some people on electric tariffs may do their washing overnight to save money, so if you do this, or suggest to others that do, an anti-vibration mat helps reduce noise.
- 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.
- Check decibel levels. and remember to maintain your equipment properly.
- If a child's toy or game is extremely noisy, try and find quieter alternatives.
- BBQs, trampolines and paddling pools are not permitted in communal areas.
- If you have a BBQ or party in your home or garden, tell your neighbours, why not 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

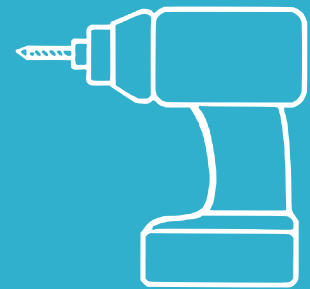
- Avoid slamming car doors, front doors or communal entrance doors, particularly late at night or early morning.
- If you're expecting a visitor, ask them to knock rather than sound a car horn.



## DIY (Do it yourself)

You might need permission to do DIY work. For a full list, refer to the tenants handbook. fer, to the tenants handbook

- Whenever possible, let your neighbours know that you are planning 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 3](#).

## Can Grŵp Cynefin help?

If you think there are any contributory factors affecting the noise, let us know so that we can review the situation and advise the next best steps. For example:

- Do you think that your neighbour has underlay and carpet?  
\*Most Occupancy Contracts state that underlay and carpet is laid unless it is a house or ground floor flat.
- If the noise has only started recently has any recent major building or maintenance work taken place in the neighbouring property?
- Do you have any concerns about any repair issues in the neighbouring property e.g damaged floorboards?
- If the source of the noise is a household appliance e.g. a washing machine, do you think it is defective?
- Do you think your neighbour's home is overcrowded?
- Do you think the correct people are living in the property?

## 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 3](#).

## Minor Personal Conflicts

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 3](#).

## 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. Please do not try and deal with these yourself.



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 Housing Officer or Cyswllt Cynefin on [post@grwpcynefin.org](mailto:post@grwpcynefin.org) or **0300 111 2122**. 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 our website.