

antisocial behaviour • nuisance • harassment • criminal activities • neighbourliness •
problems with animals and pets • vehicles and parking • shared areas

Tenants' Handbook



Living in your neighbourhood

Everyone has the right to live in an area that is clean, safe and pleasant. We are committed to making sure that you can enjoy your home and your neighbourhood.

As a tenant, it is your responsibility to:

- have respect and show consideration for your neighbours; and
- value the different backgrounds, experiences and circumstances of people who live in your community.

This booklet gives you information about how we can work together to make sure that living in your neighbourhood is as enjoyable as possible.

What is nuisance and antisocial behaviour?

Antisocial behaviour ranges from serious, criminal activity such as selling drugs, to other things such as:

- **TV's or music being played loudly;**
- **Arguing and slamming doors;**
- **Dog barking;**
- **Using noisy machinery;**
- **Dumping rubbish;**
- **Blocking shared areas;**
- **Dismantling and repairing motor vehicles;**
- **Playing ball games close to someone's home;**
- **Offensive drunkenness;**
- **Abusive or intimidating behaviour.**

Nuisance is behaviour that affects your quality of life and prevents you from enjoying peace and comfort in your own home. It is behaviour that annoys or disturbs more than one household, causing others to suffer through lack of consideration, and it is not aimed at one person.

Please be particularly aware of noise problems where the type or location of your home may make noise nuisance more likely.

What is harassment?

Harassment is more specific than nuisance and is directed against a particular person, family or group of people because of who they are.

It may stem from any one of a number of reasons such as race, colour, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or family circumstances but whatever the reason, harassment will not be accepted.

Abuse or harassment include attacks on property as well as people and can include:

- Offensive graffiti;
- Verbal abuse;
- Attacks or threats directed at a tenant, members of their household or their belongings; and
- indirect contact (for example, anonymous letters).

If your behaviour causes nuisance or harassment to neighbours or people living on our other estates, you will be breaking your Tenancy Agreement. We will take action against you if this behaviour continues and you will risk losing your home.

We will also take action if you, members of your household or your visitors assault, abuse or harass neighbours, our staff, our contractors or people living on our other estates.

What should you do if you experience harassment, nuisance or antisocial behaviour.

Incidents vary in seriousness and each individual will have a different tolerance level which is why you should always have consideration for your neighbours.

If you are experiencing the kinds of problems mentioned earlier, you should do the following:

- Contact the person who is causing the problem and ask them in a friendly way to stop. They may not be aware that their behaviour is affecting you or other people.
- Assess the reaction of your neighbour and allow time for the situation to improve.
- If the problem continues, keep a diary of events, including the date, the time, what happened, a description or name of the person who caused the problem.

These are only guidelines. If the situation or incident is serious, involves criminal activity, violence or serious threats, you should contact the Police, and also let our Tenancy Management Section know.

There has been no improvement. What can you do?

If there has been no improvement, contact our Tenancy Management Section. They will discuss the problem and may decide to do one or more of the following:

- Meet you and the person causing the problem to agree what can be done.
- Ask you to keep a record of the nuisance, harassment or antisocial behaviour.
- Write to the person responsible for the nuisance, harassment or antisocial behaviour asking for an explanation. We may go on to warn them of the action that may be taken against them should they continue to behave in this way.
- Take legal action against the people responsible which could lead to eviction.
- Discuss with the Police what action might be taken.

If the person causing the problems is not a States tenant, we will work with other Departments or Agencies to try to sort out any issues.

If the incident is serious, you should contact the Police straightaway, and report later to our Tenancy Management Section.

Criminal Activities

You, your family and visitors must not carry out any criminal activities:

- in your home;
- in your neighbourhood; or
- on other social housing estates

If this occurs, you will be breaking your Tenancy Agreement and we will take action against you, as well as telling the Police.

You will face losing your home if you are, or one of your family or a visitor is, convicted of using the property for illegal purposes, or committing an arrestable offence in the neighbourhood or on another of our estates.

An arrestable offence includes burglary, theft, robbery, criminal damage, bodily harm and drug dealing.

What can you do to avoid annoying or disturbing your neighbours?

Noise nuisance is the most common cause of disagreements between neighbours. People often are not aware how much noise they are making, and in most cases will reduce the level of noise once the problem has been pointed out to them.

- You must keep noise, including televisions, radios, hi-fi equipment and musical instruments, at a reasonable level at all times.
- Give your neighbours notice when you know there is going to be some noise, for example, a party.
- Please consider your neighbours' comfort. You must not allow noise to be clearly heard outside the property after 10.00pm and before 7.30am.
- Noise between properties, particularly flats, can be reduced by using headphones whenever possible and carpeting flooring and stairs.
- Do not carry out noisy work on your home or car late at night or early in the morning.
- If your house or car alarm goes off, deal with it as quickly as possible.
- Do not sound car horns, slam doors or rev your car engine, especially at night.
- Respond in a positive way when neighbours ask you to reduce noise.

What will happen if your pet causes nuisance or disturbs other people?

For keeping pets, please see the booklet '**Living in your home**'

If you keep a pet, you are responsible for making sure that it does not cause nuisance or danger to other people. If your pet causes nuisance or disturbs other people, permission to keep it will be withdrawn, as you will be breaking your Tenancy Agreement.

In extreme cases, we may take legal action against you and you will be at risk of losing your home.

Nuisance can include:

- Allowing your pet to foul your home, garden, public footpaths or shared areas.
- Allowing your pet to stray.
- Letting your pet make a noise for long periods or during the night.
- Allowing your pet to become out of control.
- Allowing your pet to annoy or frighten other people.

You must keep your pets under control at all times. Animal droppings must be disposed of hygienically.

If not, it is likely to cause a health hazard and we will refer the matter to Environmental Health Services.

What about nuisance from neighbours' pets?

Contact the owner of the pet and ask them to stop the nuisance. If the situation does not improve after a while, report the matter to our Tenancy Management Section.

Other Animals

Seagulls and feral pigeons can be a nuisance so please do not feed them on your property or in the neighbourhood.

Don't put rubbish bags out too early as animals can tear them open and scatter the contents.

Is there anyone you can contact about stray or dead domestic pets?

To report stray dogs in your area please contact the Police.

If you find a dead cat or dog contact the Animal Shelter on **257261**

Car Parking

Please consider your neighbours when you, your family or visitors park cars and avoid causing an obstruction.

You must not park on grass verges, footpaths and open space as it causes environmental damage and looks unattractive.

Please keep to any local parking rules.

Large vehicles such as caravans, boats, trailers and commercial transport can annoy neighbours, so you should not park them in your neighbourhood unless you first get our approval.

The availability of garages varies across the Island. Please contact our Tenancy Management Section for more information. You may not sub-let our garages or allocated spaces.

Vehicles which are untaxed, uninsured or unroadworthy may not be kept except in a garage.

We will remove vehicles of this type and we will charge the costs of removal, storage and disposal to the owner.

Repairing vehicles

Working on vehicles can also disturb neighbours through noise and oil spills. You can carry out routine maintenance to your vehicle as long as you do it in a suitable place and do not cause a hazard, nuisance or annoyance to other people. You should not work on more than one vehicle at a time, and it should belong to someone who lives with you.

Oil, petrol or other chemical substances should not be poured down drains and gullies, and spills must be cleaned up.

Major repairs, such as engine changes, body part replacement and paint spraying, must not be carried out in the neighbourhood.

Shared areas

• Indoors

Having a tenancy where there are shared areas indoors such as stairs, means that you should keep these areas clean and free from any rubbish or obstruction. All the residents are responsible for making sure this happens. You could consider setting up a rota system.

• Outdoors

To help maintain the overall appearance of your neighbourhood, we are responsible for regularly mowing the communal grassed areas and for keeping communal hedges and shrub beds neat and tidy.

Please help us by keeping these areas free of litter and rubbish.

• General

Dangerous or offensive substances must not be stored in any part of the neighbourhood.

Please let us know if there are any problems with the shared areas around your home by contacting our Property Management Section.

How do you complain?

If you want to complain about a decision we have made about your tenancy or a service that we provide, there are procedures for you to do this.

These are explained in the section '**What to do if you have a complaint**' in the booklet '**What you can expect of us**'

