



HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

By being good neighbours, you, and those around you can enjoy living in a safe and secure environment.

This booklet has been designed to give you help and advice about being a good neighbour.





What are good neighbours?

Good neighbours are considerate, tolerant, and understanding of other people and their different lifestyles. They help build successful communities. Despite this, there are different behaviours that can cause problems for neighbours, and some are more serious than others.

Why you should be a good neighbour

Being on bad terms with your neighbour can make your life frustrating, day after day, but taking the time to establish good terms with your neighbours has numerous benefits. The community will be friendlier, the neighbourhood safer, and the area a nicer and more comfortable place.



Different Lifestyles and one-off incidents

We are all different and we should respect that. Often people do not realise they may be disturbing others. One-off incidents can be annoying, such as a loud party, but if they are not frequent then you should try to tolerate it.

If they occur on a regular basis, and the disturbance causes you a problem, it is often a matter of making your neighbour aware in a friendly manner and seeking to work out a solution together.

Our Community Safety and Neighbourhood Teams will encourage residents to try to resolve matters themselves where appropriate. Involving us before talking to your neighbour may lead to hostile feelings and make matters worse.

Understanding each other

Get to know your neighbours if you can. Sometimes, you can remedy problems before they start.

For example, if they work nights, quiet mornings will be important for them. If they have young children, quiet evenings will be important to them.

Give them information that will help them be more considerate of your lifestyle too. If your teenage son plays the drums, let them know in advance and say if it's getting too loud, they should let you know.





Introduce yourself – say hi!

Whether you're new in the neighbourhood or new neighbours have just moved in, introduce yourself. Say hello and share or ask about the local area.

Noise

As part of everyday living, and the fact that no home is totally soundproof, we all must expect some noise from the people living around us. Common everyday living noise includes TVs and stereos, DIY, dogs barking, intruder, or car alarms, closing doors or simply walking around the property.



Recognise that your neighbours do not want to hear noise from your home, particularly late at night, or for long periods.

Keep noise at a reasonable level at all times.

Noise carries through walls, floors, and doors. Laminate flooring and other hard surfaces can amplify noise. To help reduce it, put down rugs and fit felt or rubber pads to movable furniture. Remember, if you live in a flat, you should not use hard surfaces such as laminate flooring. You should cover your floors with carpet and a good quality underlay or with a suitable alternative floor covering that has similar noise reducing qualities.

Warn your neighbours if you are going to do anything noisy such as a party or DIY.

Co-operate with your neighbours if they ask you to reduce noise.

If you are living in a property that has the living space linked together, position noisy household appliances such as washing machines and tumble dryers - even TVs and speakers - away from partition walls.

If you live above someone, consider putting carpets or rubber matting underneath your appliances to deaden or muffle the noise, and remember that someone downstairs can hear you walking around



Being a responsible dog owner

Dogs are great companions and family pets but make sure they don't whine or bark for long periods of time. **If your dog fouls in a public space, you must clean it up.** Always keep your dog under control e.g. use a lead when walking the dog. Get your dog micro-chipped so it can be traced back to you if it ever goes missing.

Gardens and communal areas

Do not block communal areas with prams, bicycles, or your other personal belongings. Items left in communal areas may be removed and disposed of.

Do not allow your garden to become overgrown and unkempt. Keeping it tidy and free of rubbish helps improve the look of the area and discourage fly-tipping.

If you are struggling to get rid of unwanted items or maintain your garden, please speak to your housing officer, to see what support may be available.

If you share a communal door, make sure it's always kept closed and don't let anyone in that you don't know. This way everyone's homes are kept secure.

If your neighbour's trees or hedges are a problem, you may be able to prune or remove anything that comes over to your side of the boundary as long as you offer any clippings back to your neighbour. Some trees are protected so it's best to check first with your neighbour before you take any action.

If after speaking to your neighbour, the matter is not resolved, please report it to your housing officer at housingofficers@lancaster.gov.uk or on 01524 582929.



Bins

Recycle your waste as much as possible and use the right bins. Put your rubbish out for collection no earlier than 6pm the night before and always bring bins back in afterwards.

If you have a communal bin area, dispose of your rubbish correctly in the bins provided, and make sure the area around the bins is kept tidy.

Any costs associated with cleaning up bin areas or clearing fly-tipping in communal areas of flats will be recharged to tenants through their service charges.



Bonfires

Bonfires can be very irritating to neighbours. The smoke and smell often cause complaints when neighbours are prevented from opening windows, hanging out washing or enjoying their gardens. Bonfire smoke can cause unnecessary air pollution and temporarily worsen people's underlying health conditions.

It is rarely necessary to have a bonfire when you can compost or recycle garden waste. In fact, it can be quite difficult in urban areas to have a bonfire without causing a disturbance.

Although generally the council advises against domestic bonfires, there are no relevant byelaws in the Lancaster district and therefore it is legal to do so provided that there is no nuisance, the waste is not household rubbish and there is no breach of planning permission.

Parking

Park considerately and only in areas that are designated for parking.

Recognise that you don't have the right to park outside your home.

Anyone can park on a public road if they adhere to any restrictions imposed by way of signs and markings, and it is not causing an obstruction.

Do not park anywhere that blocks dropped kerbs, garages or pavements.



Children Playing

Be tolerant of children playing outside – Lancaster City Council actively encourages children to be fit and active.

However, if you're a parent, consider how the noise of your children playing outside may affect your neighbours. Consider if there's a safer place to play such as a park or skateboard area.

If a child accidentally throws or kicks a ball into your property, you should either hand it back or allow it to be collected.

What can you do if your neighbour is causing problems?

We recommend talking to your neighbour as soon as possible about anything they are doing that's affecting you. This is often the quickest and easiest solution.

Tips on approaching your neighbour:

- Choose a time that's convenient for everyone.
- Plan what you are going to say.
- Be polite and explain the problem and how it's affecting you.
- Listen to what they have to say.
- Be understanding of different ways of life.
- Be open to suggestions.
- Come to an agreement that suits everyone.



Do not:

- Approach your neighbour if you don't feel safe.
- Go around when you feel angry or very upset.
- Be argumentative or use threatening behaviour.
- Post negative comments about your neighbour on social media



What can you do if your neighbour is causing problems?

If you feel you cannot approach your neighbour yourself, consider whether you have a friend or relative who could act on your behalf.

Alternatively, you could write them a friendly letter or use a Dear Neighbour card to highlight the issues you are concerned about.

If you are too scared to do any of these then please contact us and we can discuss your options, on 01524 582929 or at housingofficers@lancaster.gov.uk.

Mediation

If after listening to each other's views you are unable to reach an agreement with your neighbour and this results in a dispute or counter complaints, then we may be able to consider mediation.

Mediation is an informal, confidential, and independent service available to help neighbours resolve their differences and reach an agreement. Please contact us if you would like to know more about mediation.

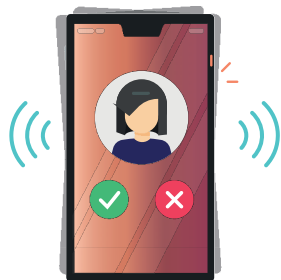
Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

Lancaster City Council is committed to tackling Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in our communities. If the behaviour being perpetrated by anyone is deemed to be anti-social or a breach of the Lancaster City Council tenancy agreement, then action will be taken to address this.

If you are unsure about what is or isn't deemed as ASB then refer to the anti-social behaviour leaflet provided when you started your tenancy. ASB leaflets are also available at Lancaster and Morecambe Town Halls or via 01524 582929.

Need To Get In Touch?

Please find essential contact information and online resources below to assist you in accessing our services. Should you have any questions or feedback, feel free to reach out to us through any of the following channels:



Customer Services:

For any general inquiries, tenant support, or housing-related questions, our dedicated Customer Services team is available to assist you. Reach out to us via phone at **01524 582 929** or through email at **councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk**.



Official Website:

For comprehensive information about Lancaster City Council Housing's services, policies, and resources, please visit our official website at **lancaster.gov.uk/housing/council-housing**. Here, you can find valuable insights into the application process, tenancy guidelines, and other relevant topics.



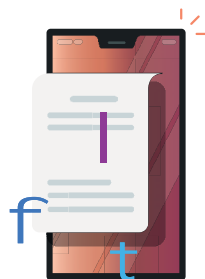
Ideal Choice Homes:

Our service for the allocation of social housing, Ideal Choice Homes, offers a wide range of housing options and related services.

To explore available properties, or to simply discuss your specific requirements, visit the website at

idealchoicetohomes.co.uk or contact Ideal Choice Homes directly at **01524 582 005** for assistance.

To access Ideal Choice Homes' bidding system at any time, you can use our 24-hour automated bidding line. Dial **0845 505 8230** to use this service and participate in housing allocation bids effortlessly.



Stay Connected With Us On Social Media:

For the latest updates, news, and community engagement, follow Lancaster City Council Housing on our social media platforms and stay informed about housing-related events and announcements:

f Connect with us at **facebook.com/LanCityHousing**
t Stay in the loop at **twitter.com/LCC_Housing**
i Enjoy our media at **instagram.com/lancaster_city_council_housing**

Visit Our Hubs:

If you live on one of our estates or schemes, you can always pop into one of our housing hubs:

MyMainway Hub:
Open Monday,
Tuesday & Thursday
10.00 - 16.00

Morecambe Town Hall
Open Monday to Friday
10.00 - 16.30

Lancaster Town Hall
Open Monday to Friday
10.00 - 16.30