



Noise – Living Well Alongside Your Neighbours

Introduction

At Lace Housing, we want everyone to be able to enjoy their home.

Living close to other people also means that we will sometimes hear our neighbours. Everyday household noise is a normal part of living alongside others and will not usually be anti-social behaviour.

Sometimes, however, noise can become unreasonable and have a significant effect on another person's enjoyment of their home. When this happens, we will consider what we can reasonably do to help.

Everyday household noise

Noise such as:

- footsteps and movement around a home;
- doors opening and closing;
- normal conversation;
- reasonable use of televisions or radios;
- household appliances;
- everyday cooking and cleaning; and
- people coming and going

would not normally be considered ASB simply because it can be heard in another home.

People have different lifestyles, routines and levels of tolerance. We therefore do not decide whether noise is unreasonable simply by whether somebody can hear it.

When might noise become unreasonable?

We will consider the whole circumstances, including:

- what the noise is;
- how loud or intrusive it appears to be;
- how often it happens;
- how long it lasts;
- when it happens;
- whether it is everyday household activity or avoidable behaviour;

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- its impact on the person affected;
- whether the behaviour appears deliberate or targeted;
- what steps have already been taken; and
- any other relevant circumstances.

There is no single time of day when noise automatically becomes ASB.

What should I do if I am being disturbed?

If you feel comfortable and safe doing so, a friendly conversation can sometimes resolve things quickly. Your neighbour may simply not realise that you can hear them.

You do **not** have to approach somebody yourself if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe doing so.

You can contact us for advice.

We will listen to what is happening and consider whether the concern appears to be:

Everyday living noise – where we may provide advice or consider practical neighbourhood-management options.

Potential noise nuisance or ASB – where further investigation or action may be appropriate.

A property or repair concern – where there is information suggesting that something within our responsibility as landlord should be investigated.

What will we do?

Depending on the circumstances, we may:

- talk through the problem with you;
- agree reasonable actions;
- speak with your neighbour;
- ask you to record incidents for an appropriate period;
- consider information from other residents or witnesses;
- suggest mediation where appropriate;
- consider practical steps that might help;
- work with Environmental Health or another organisation; or

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- where noise is persistent, excessive or otherwise unreasonable, and there is sufficient evidence of a tenancy or lease breach, consider enforcement action where this is reasonable and proportionate.

We will not take enforcement action simply because ordinary household noise can be heard from another home.

If recording incidents is difficult for you, tell us and we will consider another appropriate way of gathering the information.

How quickly will we respond?

Where a noise report appears to involve an **immediate or significant risk of harm**, we will respond under our urgent ASB arrangements and make contact within **1 working day**.

Where a noise report may amount to ASB but is not urgent, we will make an initial assessment and explain what happens next within **7 working days**.

Where the concern relates to everyday living or another neighbourhood matter rather than ASB, we will explain this and consider what proportionate neighbourhood-management response may be appropriate.

Environmental Health

Local authority Environmental Health teams have separate legal powers to investigate potential **statutory noise nuisance**.

In appropriate circumstances we may suggest contacting Environmental Health or work with them as part of our investigation.

A decision by Environmental Health about statutory nuisance and our decision about ASB or a breach of tenancy or lease are not necessarily the same test. We will consider our own responsibilities and the information available to us.

If someone reports noise from my home

Being told that somebody can hear you does not automatically mean that you have behaved unreasonably.

We will approach concerns fairly and, where appropriate, give you an opportunity to explain the circumstances.

We may ask you to make reasonable changes if particular activities are causing avoidable disturbance. Often a small change can resolve a concern without the need for further action.



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Where there are health, disability or other circumstances relevant to the situation, tell us so that we can take these into account and consider any support or reasonable adjustments that may be appropriate.

Living well together

Most noise concerns do not require formal ASB enforcement.

Being considerate, talking where it is safe to do so and making reasonable adjustments to everyday routines can often make a significant difference.

Where that does not work, we will consider the circumstances fairly and explain what we can and cannot reasonably do.

People, Places, Partnerships

Noise concerns are often best resolved by understanding both the **people** involved and what is happening in their homes.

Across the **places** we manage, we encourage consideration and practical solutions that help residents live well alongside one another.

Through **partnerships** with residents and, where necessary, other organisations such as Environmental Health, we will work to resolve unreasonable noise fairly and proportionately.
