



# Anti-social behaviour

Use the information in this leaflet to understand what you can do and what we can do about anti-social behaviour in your neighbourhood.

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**Inverness**

## Information

This leaflet is to provide advice and tips on what you can do if you are experiencing non-threatening behaviour and incidents. If you are being threatened, you should contact Police Scotland.

### What is anti-social behaviour?

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of persistent and unacceptable activity which negatively impacts the quality of community life.

The legal definition is behaviour which “causes or is likely to cause alarm or distress” Anti-social behaviour can have a negative impact on people’s lives and we are committed to tackling it by working together to make our communities safer.

If you are experiencing anti-social behaviour and need to speak to us, you can call us during office hours Monday—Friday 9am– 5pm.

### What to do

If something your neighbour does upsets you then the best thing to do is to tell them about it straight away; they might not realise that they’re causing a problem. Try to resolve the issue before it becomes a serious problem and you fall out over it. Put yourself in their shoes, how would you feel if the first you knew of a problem was when a housing officer arrived at your door? If your neighbour approaches you about the problem, take the time to listen and try to see their point of view. If you do not listen and do not take the issue seriously, they may open a complaint against you. It is much better to deal with the issue between neighbours than to let it escalate into complaints.

You can contact us if you feel that you are not able to approach your neighbour about the issue. Whilst we would not reveal your details, it may be obvious to your neighbour who has made the complaint against them.

Whilst we can offer help and advice when you are experiencing issues with your neighbours, we will only take action if your neighbour is our tenant and the issues you report are covered by the Private Rental Tenancy Agreement. We will not be able to become involved in tenant disputes which are not breaching the tenancy agreement.

## Noise

You should have a tolerance for general household noise; i.e., children playing, footsteps, washing machines etc. However, if you are experiencing serious and persistent noise there are services which can help.

1. In the first instance you should speak to your neighbour and explain the issue, they may not be aware they are causing a disturbance.
2. If the issue persists, you should contact your landlord who can take remedial steps to help, such as contacting your neighbour to discuss any issues or requesting a noise monitor (the equipment is not readily available and often there is a waiting list for installation)
3. You should keep a diary of incidents to record when and where the incidents occurred, if there was any witnesses and if the Police were involved.

## Approaching your neighbour

It can often be the case that your neighbour may not realise they are causing a disturbance. By having a conversation with your neighbour about the issue it may resolve it before it becomes a bigger problem.

- You may choose to let the incident pass – it may never happen again. You can take a note of the details in case it does.
- Think about what you want to say. Talk to a friend first to ensure you sound reasonable and stick to the facts. Be willing to listen to the other person’s point of view.
- Tell your neighbour what the problem is, how you feel and how it affects you. Non-blaming language will help you get your message across
- Listen to what your neighbour has to say in return: they have a point of view, even if you do not agree with it. People appreciate feeling as though they have been heard
- Don’t let things build up until you are too angry or upset to deal with them reasonably.
- Avoid shouting and interrupting.
- Don’t blame, accuse or make threats
- Don’t retaliate: it will make things worse
- Don’t assume people are doing things just to annoy you

## What happens when I contact HRIL?

If you have tried to resolve the situation with your neighbour but the issue persists, you should contact us and explain the issue. Where there is no clear breach of tenancy neighbours will be expected to resolve disputes themselves.

If there is an issue that we are able to deal with, we will try to deal with your problem as quickly as possible. We aim to respond to routine complaints within 10 working days and serious complaints within 3 working days. You should provide us with details of incidents and dates so we are able to investigate. We will discuss the problem with you and advise if we are able to take any action. We will keep you updated every fortnight until the case is closed.

We will discuss with you an action plan detailing what both you and Highland Residential will do. This may include;

- You or us approaching your neighbour
- Us interviewing or writing to your neighbour
- Arranging a joint interview

We will need to collect evidence through;

- Diaries
- Photographs
- Other neighbours
- Police reports

We will usually contact other neighbours within the development to assess the situation and will speak to the person you have complained about. If this is unsuccessful, and the neighbour is breaching their tenancy agreement, we can progress the case further and provide written

or verbal warnings. In extreme cases, we can impose legal action against the tenant. In these cases, we need evidence to progress ASB cases to court.

## Gardens and communal areas

Most of the landscaped areas around our developments are maintained by us. If they are in a poor condition, you should contact us. Tenants are responsible for maintaining their own garden. If your neighbours are leaving items in the communal areas, you should ask them to remove it.

## Cars and parking

In most schemes parking is on a first come first served basis. We are unable to become involved in neighbourhood disputes over non-designated parking.

If you believe a vehicle has been abandoned you should be sure the vehicle has not moved for several weeks and that you do not know who it belongs to. You should then report this vehicle to us. You can contact the DVLA to see if the car is registered as off-road Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN) or taxed. We are only able to take action to vehicles in communal areas. We are unable to take action against cars on private driveway space.

## Criminal activity

If there is an issue with speeding or reckless driving, you should contact Police Scotland. We cannot investigate criminal activity and we cannot take action unless someone living at the property has been convicted of a crime. If you think there is criminal behaviour in your neighbourhood you must report this to Police Scotland on 101 for non-emergencies and 999 for emergencies only. You can also contact Crimestoppers. Criminal activity includes misuse of drugs, hate incidents, violence and threatening behaviour.

## Pets

Our tenants are allowed to keep up to 2 pets with permission but they are also required to look after them properly and ensure that they do not cause nuisance or annoyance to other people. We can revoke permission for pets if they are consistently causing issues.

### Animal Welfare

If you have concerns that an animal is not being looked after by your neighbour you should report this to the SSPCA 7am-10pm. We are unable to assist in this matter. If your neighbour's pet is out of control they may be in violation of the Control of Dogs Act 2010. This would be if their dog was causing alarm or distress to members of the public. Highland

Council Community Services may investigate reports of an out of control dog and issue a Dog Control Notice. The Highland Council Dog Warden patrols areas and responds to calls to catch stray dogs. You can call the dog warden if you believe there is a stray dog in your area.

### Dog Barking

Dog barking becomes an anti-social behaviour issue if the barking is continuous, frequent and at unsociable hours. Try and speak with your neighbour before contacting Highland Residential. The barking may be when your neighbour is away from their home so they may not realise there is a problem. It will also give your neighbour an opportunity to improve the dogs behaviour before needing to involve the landlord.

### Domestic pet fouling

It is an offence under the Dog Fouling Act (2003) to not clean up after your dog in a public place. We can only act if there is proof of whose pet is fouling and if this fouling is within a communal area. If we are unsure who the culprit is (e.g. several dog owners in the block) we may only be able to write to the scheme to ask that tenants ensure they pick up after their pets. The Highland Council Community Services Team can issue fixed penalty notices to offenders. You can report dog fouling in public spaces on the Highland Council webpage.

## Cars and parking

### Citizens Advice Scotland

Inverness— 0844 994111 or 01463 237664	
Nairn—01667 456677	Elgin— 01343 550088
Aviemore—01479 810919	Alness—01349 883333
Golspie—01408 633000	Dingwall—01349 864850
Thurso—01847 894243	Wick—01955 605989

### Highland Council

01349 886602  
www.highland.gov.uk

### Child Line

0800 1111

### SSPCA

03000 999 999

### Shelter Scotland

0808 800 4444  
www.scotland.shelter.org.uk

### DVLA

www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax

### Crimestoppers

0800 555 111

### Scottish Women's Aid

0800 027 1234  
www.womensaid.scot

### Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline

0800 027 1234

### Highland Council Social Work

01349 886606  
Out of hours 0845 6014 813

## Pets

For us to take any action against some-one for anti-social behaviour, we must have evidence. You should record the date and time of the incident, a note of who was involved, a brief description of the incident, and if Police Scotland had been notified. If you have called Police Scotland, you should ask for the call to be recorded and ask for a note of the incident number.

Date & time	Description of incident	People involved	Police contacted

[illegible]

[illegible]