

How to be a good neighbour

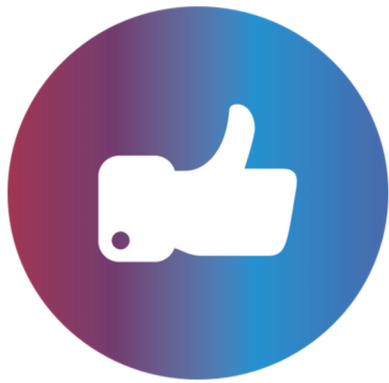


How to be a good neighbour

It's a lot easier to build a good relationship with your neighbours from the start than try to fix one that's turned bad. Here are some tips to start the relationship off on the right foot:

1 Introduce yourself

When you're moving into your new home, you might not think it's important to get to know your neighbours but it usually makes things better for everyone in the long run.



Small things like smiling, waving or chatting may make this seem less scary than formally going and introducing yourself to your new neighbours.

Don't be put off if your neighbours don't want to be your friend. We don't know everyone's story and why they are as they are.

Try not to take it personally if someone doesn't want to be friendly with you, and try to focus on living close by peacefully.

If you've lived in an area for a while, then take the first step to welcome new neighbours to the area. You might be able to offer them some advice such as the bin collection days or information about local shops or transport routes.

2 Neighbourliness

Think about how you like to be treated by your neighbours and be this way with your neighbours. Set a good example.

Be kind and considerate.

Be careful to never gossip about your neighbours or people in the community.





3 Keep your home and garden looking nice

This doesn't have to cost the earth. Reporting repairs to us will keep your home in a good state of repair.

However, there are things you can do too:

- **Use the correct bin for your rubbish and put it out for regular collection.** Try not to overload bins and use the right sized bin for your home, this will help in making sure they are collected. If you need a different sized bin, talk to your local council about getting a larger one. Where communal bins are used, be considerate to your neighbours by making sure bin bags are tied and placed within the relevant bins.
- **Contact your local council to organise a bulky waste collection** if you have bulky items you no longer want and don't have access to a car to go to the tip.
- **Keep on top of your garden.** You don't need to be a budding gardener, but make sure you keep your grass short and no large weeds are growing in your own garden, or into your neighbours. Pick up and dispose of litter that blows into your garden with the wind.
- **If you're not able to look after your garden, consider getting someone in to help.**

4 Use shared spaces with consideration

If you live in a home with a shared communal area, try to keep it as nice as possible by not using the area to store things that you don't want in your home.

It's really important that bikes, scooters, etc. aren't stored in the communal area, as this could make it more difficult to leave in the event of a fire.

- ✓ Remember to collect your post from your postbox if this is in the communal area.
- ✓ Pick up and dispose of litter or unwanted fliers that are not addressed to anyone.



5 Children in your neighbourhood

Play is really important to children and as long as isn't causing a nuisance or a danger, it should be encouraged.

Children don't always know that what they're doing is causing a nuisance or annoyance to others. If children are causing a nuisance it's really important that you have a calm chat with their responsible adult about what's happening and try to find a solution.

The responsibility to stay calm is with the adults here. If you need to speak to a neighbour about their child, don't be confrontational. Ask to have a chat and think of what could be a better way to play while still letting children be children.

If someone speaks to you about your child, try to not be defensive and understand that it's difficult for someone to approach you about your child. Listen to their suggestions and try to talk to your child about this, explaining why you're asking them to change their behaviour.

In some cases, it might be worth looking into local play spaces where your children can play in a safe place. We can help you to find places near to where you live.

6 Look after your pets

Make sure that you've got permission from us before getting a pet. This will make sure you're within our guidance and any laws.

Make sure you fully vaccinate and license your pets where needed, and keep them on a leash when in public spaces. If you have dogs, enrol them in training courses to reduce barking and noisiness.

Let your neighbours know that they can talk to you about it if your pets are ever bothering them. For example, you might say, "If you ever hear my dog barking too much in the evenings, just let me know."

If you're walking your dog in your neighbourhood, or if you let your dog out into your garden, pick up when your pet has fouled and dispose of this appropriately.



7 Think about noise levels

Think about your neighbours when carrying out DIY jobs that could be noisy. This could be things like thinking about the time of day that you use a hammer to put up some pictures or assemble furniture.



Give your neighbours notice before parties. If you plan on having a large group of people at your home, it's a good idea to let your neighbours know in advance. This lets them decide if they'll need to park elsewhere or move their cars for the night. It also alerts them that lots of 'new' people will be in the neighbourhood and that it might get loud. It's really helpful to let them know the approximate time that the gathering or music will stop or be turned down.

If you know your neighbours are unwell, work nights, or have a new baby, think about whether it's the right time to have a party at home, or if this could be arranged elsewhere.

8 Build a sense of security with your neighbours

It's always good to know that other people are looking out for you. Let's say it's late at night and your neighbour calls to let you know that they saw someone near your home. You then have time to call the police and do something about a possible intruder.



What happens if things go wrong?

Occasionally neighbourly relations break down. This can be more challenging than keeping things positive in the first place. If things take a turn for the worse, think about writing a note or asking if you can talk.

It's easier to focus on the things that have caused the issue but **try to focus on reasons why they're a good neighbour and how you can continue to live close by in a peaceful way.** You don't have to like one another, just be polite and civil, and respect one another's boundaries.

Here are some tips to repair a neighbourly relationship:

✓ **Use a Dear Neighbour card** - You can get these from us. They should be used to let your neighbour know that something they're doing is causing you a disturbance or annoyance. It's really helpful to put details of how this affects you. You could even suggest talking about it face to face.

✓ **Stay calm when talking with your neighbour** - If your neighbour comes to you with a concern or problem, it's important to respond calmly. Give them the time to explain things from their point of view. If you start to get frustrated, take a few deep breaths before answering. You can also ask to chat another time when you've had chance to think.

If you're finding this difficult, we can help you with offering a mediation service. This can take the emotion out of a situation and allow you to reach an agreement.

✓ **Deal with any problems face to face** - If you're able to speak with your neighbour face to face, it's important to act quickly. Explain any issue calmly, with how it is affecting you and that you'd like to reach a solution that works for both of you.

If you're worried about how to do this safely, you can give us a call to chat about the best way to go about it.