

Getting Along With Neighbours





Introduction

It's important to get along with neighbours if you're going to enjoy living in your home. If something your neighbour does annoys or 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) to try to resolve the issue before it becomes a serious problem and you fall out over it. Try to 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? However, sometimes outside intervention is needed and this leaflet provides information on who to contact if you're having a problem with a neighbour and haven't been able to sort it out between you.

If your neighbour approaches you with a problem, please take the time to listen and try to see their point of view. If you refuse to listen, or don't take the problem seriously, your neighbour may not have any option but to make a complaint about you. It is far better to deal with a problem when it is a small issue between neighbours, rather than letting it grow to the point where one of you is "reported", the other feels aggrieved and your relationship may be spoiled for good.

While we can offer help and advice when you are dealing with neighbour problems, we can only take action against your neighbour if they are also one of our tenants, and the issues you report are covered by the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

Other Organisations & Agencies

If you feel your neighbour is not complying with their Tenancy Agreement you can, of course, contact a Housing Officer, but many of the calls our Housing Officers receive about neighbour problems have to be referred to another organisation or agency. This may be because these organisations and agencies have greater powers than us, or have specialised training to deal with your specific issue, or the issue may be something which we are not able, or allowed, to deal with. It is often faster and more efficient for you to contact these organisations directly.

Dog Warden

The Dog Warden is part of East Lothian Council's Safer Communities Team. The warden enforces dog legislation and can issue fixed penalty fines to people who don't clean up after their dog, as well as other measures to tackle other dog problems.

East and Midlothian Resolution Service

The Resolution Service is there to help neighbours in dispute find a solution to any issues that may have arisen between them. The service can become involved in cases that may involve loud music, inconsiderate parking, noisy and messy pets, and minor verbal harassment.

Noise Teams

The Night Time Noise and Daytime Noise Teams are two of East Lothian Council's Environmental Health teams. They work in partnership with Police Scotland and the Safer Communities Team to deal with noise complaints and have the power to seize sound systems if needed.

Safer Communities Team

Sometimes neighbour problems are more than just an annoyance, and may be anti-social behaviour. When they are, we urge tenants to contact East Lothian Council's Safer Communities Team, and keep us updated about the outcome. The helpline is available 24 hours a day, and will help resolve any issues.

Police Scotland

If the problem involves criminal behaviour, we cannot investigate, and the problem must be reported to Police Scotland.

Dogs

Barking

If barking is frequent and at unsociable hours, and you are disturbed by it, there are things you can do:

1. Talk to your neighbour – they may not be aware that there is a problem
2. If the noise continues, contact the Dog Warden, who is part of the Safer Communities Team at East Lothian Council
3. Consider applying to the Justice of the Peace Court for an Order under S49(2) of The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. Your Housing Officer can give you more details about this, but it will involve court costs.

Dog Fouling

We can only investigate and take action if the fouling is in a communal area that we own and there is proof of whose dog is the culprit. For dog fouling in the street, you need to contact the Dog Warden who has the power to fine owners who allow their dog to foul in public places.

Stray Dogs

The Council, in partnership with the Police, collects stray dogs. If you notice a stray dog, please contact the Dog Warden (or Police Scotland if out of office hours).

Contact Info

East Lothian Council's Safer Communities Team

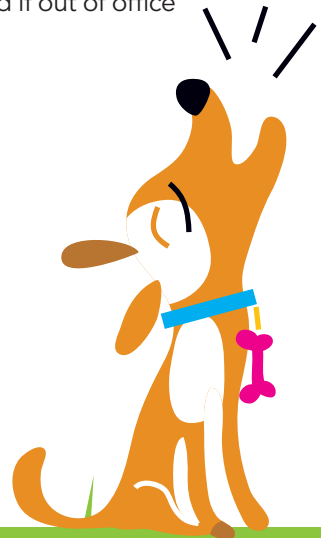
Tel: 01875 824 307

E-mail: asb@eastlothian.gov.uk

Web: www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Police Scotland

Tel: 101



Noise

If you are disturbed by noise at unsociable hours, or if there is persistent noise, there are things you can do:

1. Talk to your neighbour – they may not be aware that there is a problem
2. If the noise is excessive and it's late at night, call the Night Time Noise Team or the Police
3. Contact East Lothian Council's Safe Communities Team helpline
4. Contact your Housing Officer, who can discuss the problem with your neighbour
5. If speaking with your neighbour hasn't helped, give the Resolution Service a try
6. Request a noise monitor. Your Housing Officer can help you to arrange this

Contact Info

East Lothian Council's Safer Communities Team

Tel: 01875 824 307

E-mail: asb@eastlothian.gov.uk

Web: www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Night Time Noise Team:

Tel: 101 (Police Scotland)

Daytime Noise Team

Tel: 01620 827365

Police Scotland

Tel: 101

East and Midlothian Resolution Service

Tel: 01620 827753

E-mail: mediation@eastlothian.gov.uk



Children

Noise

Children will, and should, play outside, and this usually involves some kind of noise. While we appreciate that this type of daytime noise can be annoying for some people, unless the noise is excessive and persistent, it's just part of living in a community.

If you think the noise is excessive, and it happens all the time, there are several things you can do:

1. Talk to the parents – they may not be aware that there is a problem
2. If there is no improvement, report the problem to your Housing Officer

Damage

If a child has damaged your property, either by accident, because they're too young to know better, or through vandalism, your first action should be to talk with the child(ren)'s parents. If this is not effective, you may consider the Resolution Service, and if you believe that the damage is not accidental, contact the Police.

Bullying

Children make and break friendships frequently, and sometimes a falling out can result in bullying behaviour. This is not a tenancy issue, and we will not normally get involved. Contact the children's parents and/or the Resolution Service. If you think there is a risk of harm to a child, we would recommend contacting the children's school for advice or the Police.

Contact Info

Police Scotland

Tel: 101

East and Midlothian

Resolution Service

Tel: 01620 827753

E-mail: mediation@eastlothian.gov.uk

Note: If the child(ren) do not live in one of our properties, we will not normally get involved.



Untidy or Overgrown Areas

Most of the landscaped areas around our properties are owned and maintained by East Lothian Council, and if they are in a poor condition, you should contact the Council's Landscape and Countryside Department.

Note: For Health & Safety reasons, grass cutting will not be done in areas where there is dog fouling. If this is a problem it must be dealt with first by contacting the Dog Warden.

If you live in a development which has a factor, or if the land belongs to us, you should contact us about any problems with overgrown grass/shrubs. You should also contact us if you are not sure if the land is ours or the Council's.

If you have a neighbour who does not look after their garden, leaves items in communal stairs, gardens or bin stores, talk to them and if that doesn't work, contact your Housing Officer.

Note: Stair and bin store cleaning can only be done if the communal stair and/or bin store is free from household items and rubbish – the cleaners will not pick up rubbish which has been left lying around, and they will not move items to clean under them.

Contact Info

East Lothian Council's Landscape & Countryside Department

Tel: 01875 824 305

E-mail: landscapeandcountryside@eastlothian.gov.uk

Web: www.eastlothian.gov.uk



Cars

Parking

In most developments, parking is on a first come first served basis, and unless you have a driveway or an assigned parking space, you are not guaranteed a place to park your car. We will not normally get involved in disputes over parking.

In most of our developments car parking areas are either on the public roadway, or on land adopted by East Lothian Council. If inconsiderate parking causes an obstruction, e.g. you are unable to drive out of your driveway because someone has parked across the end of your driveway, this is a Police matter.

Untaxed and/or Abandoned Vehicles

You can check with the DVLA if a suspected abandoned car is taxed or registered as SORN (off road). If it is not taxed or registered as SORN, it should be reported to the DVLA (if it is on the public road) or East Lothian Council (if it is in a car park or parking bay).

Contact Info

Police Scotland

Tel: 101

DVLA

Website: www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-tax

Enforcement Section, W070/D12, DVLA, Longview Road, Swansea SA7 0XZ

East Lothian Council Environmental and Consumer Services

Telephone: 01620 827365

Email: ehts@eastlothian.gov.uk

Web: www.eastlothian.gov.uk

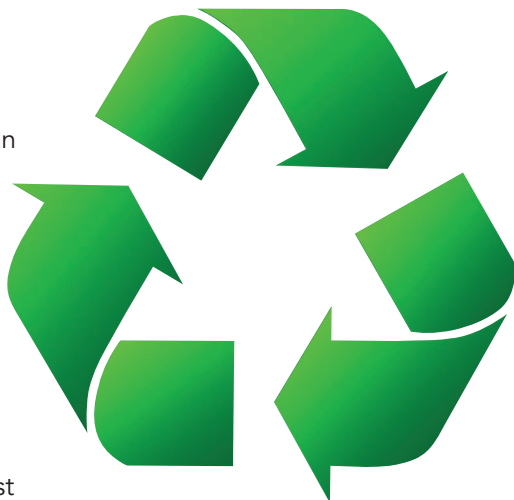


Waste, Recycling & Bin Stores

All tenants must dispose of their waste in a responsible and considerate manner. If a neighbour has left rubbish in a communal area, you should:

1. Speak to them about it.
2. If they do not remove the rubbish, contact your Housing Officer

Waste Services are provided by East Lothian Council. If they are unable to empty a communal bin store because it is blocked by cars or large pieces of discarded furniture, it is the responsibility of the tenant who blocked access to arrange to have the area cleared so that the bins can be emptied. If this is not done, we will arrange to have the area cleared, and will charge the cost of this to the tenant. If it is not known who blocked the access, the cost of clearing the area will be spread over all tenants who use the bin store.



Note: large items can be uplifted for free by calling Waste Services. There is a wait of several weeks, but tenants must put the items out no earlier than 24 hours before the uplift date.

Contact Details

East Lothian Council Waste Services

Email: wasteservices@eastlothian.gov.uk

Telephone: 01875 824305

Web: www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Drug Dealing

Drug dealing is a crime, and our staff cannot investigate crimes, or take action unless someone living in one of our properties has been convicted of a crime. If you have reason to believe that a neighbour is dealing drugs from the property, you must report this to the Police.

We can investigate complaints if visitors to the property are causing noise and disruption, but this investigation is limited to the noise and disruption, and cannot take any suspected criminal activities into account.



**POLICE
SCOTLAND**

Keeping people safe

Contact Info

Police Scotland

Tel: 101

More Information

Below is a list of agencies that can offer information and/or advice on how to deal with neighbour problems.

Scottish Citizens Advice Bureau Advice Guide:

<http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/scotland.htm>

Shelter Scotland:

<http://scotland.shelter.org.uk>

Neighbourhood Watch Scotland:

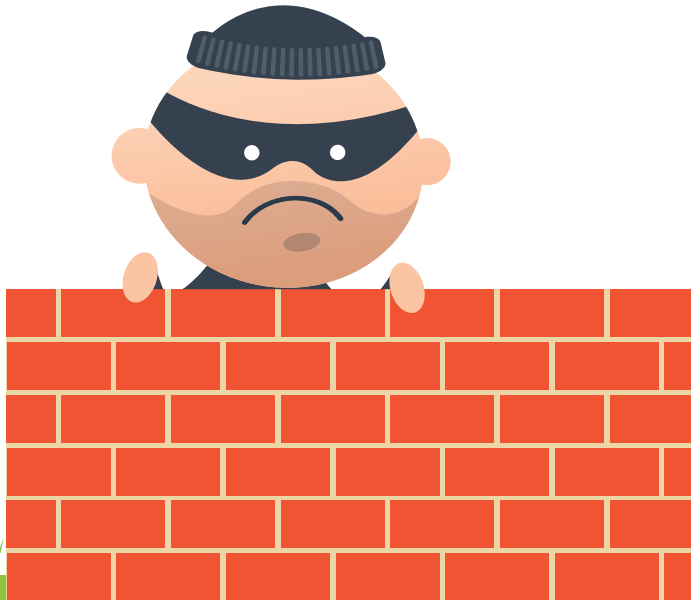
<http://www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.co.uk>

Problem Neighbours:

<http://www.problemneighbours.co.uk>

Crimestoppers:

<http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org>



Our Contact Details

Through your My Home account:

<https://myhome.elha.com>

Website: www.elha.com

E-mail: enquiries@elha.com
(general enquiries)

By post or in person:

East Lothian Housing Association
18-20 Market Street
Haddington
East Lothian
EH41 3JL

Telephone: 01620 825032 (Main switchboard)

03000 999 247 (Repairline)

Fax: 01620 826596

SMS:

'elha' and then your message to 88222
(message charged at standard rates)

Office opening hours:

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday:
9am to 4.30pm

Tuesday: 10am to 4.30pm

Friday: 9am to 4pm

Live Help opening hours:

Monday, Wednesday & Thursday:
9am to 12 noon and
2pm to 4.30pm

Tuesday: 2pm to 4.30pm.

Friday: 9am to 12 noon and
2pm to 4pm

elha.com
east lothian housing association



18-20 Market Street, Haddington, East Lothian EH41 3JL

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Text: elha then your message to 88222
(message charged at standard rates)

