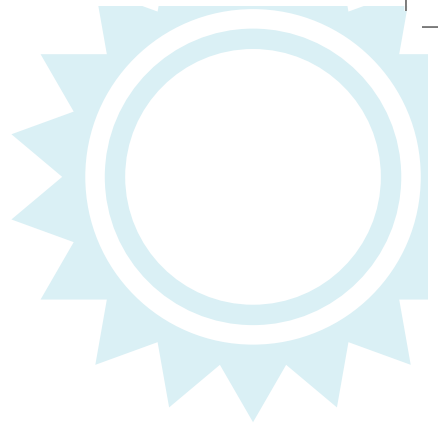




Your Homes
Newcastle



Living in your
neighbourhood

This information is about Your Homes Newcastle, who are responsible for managing council homes on behalf of Newcastle City Council. If you need this in a different language phone 0191 278 8633.

This information is also available in easy read, large print, Braille and audio tape. We can also arrange for you to see a British Sign Language interpreter.

বাংলায় Bengali	এই তথ্য হল নিউক্যাসলে কাউন্সিলের ঘর বাড়ীর ব্যবস্থাপনার কাজ আমরা কিভাবে করি সে সম্বন্ধে। এই তথ্য যদি <বাংলায়> অথবা অন্য কোন ভাষায় প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে এই নাম্বারে ফোন করুন- ০১৯১ ২৭৮ ৮৬৩৩
普通话 / 国语 Chinese Simplified	这是有关我们如何管理纽卡斯尔市政房屋的信息。如果您需要此信息的普通话版本或其它语言版本，请致电 0191 278 8633 索取。
廣東話 / 粵語 Chinese Traditional	這是關於我們如何管理紐卡素市政房屋的信息。如果您需要此信息的廣東話版本或其它語言版本，請致電 0191 278 8633 索取。
فارسی Farsi	این اطلاعات در مورد شیوه مدیریت مسکن دولتی در نیوکاسل است. در صورت نیاز به این اطلاعات به زبان فارسی یا زبانهای دیگر با شماره تلفن ۰۱۹۱۲۷۸۸۶۳۳ تماس بگیرید.
Français French	Ces informations concernent la manière dont nous gérons les logements sociaux de Newcastle. Si vous avez besoin de ces informations en français ou dans une autre langue, téléphonez au : 0191 278 8633.
کوردی سۆرانی Kurdish	ئەم زانیاریانە سەبارەت بە چۆنیەتی بەرپۆشەبەرایەتی خانووەکانی شۆرای شاری نیوکاسیلە. ئەگەر حەزتان لە وەرگرتنی ئەم زانیاریانە بە زمانی کوردی یا ھەر زمانێکی دیگەر ھەبە بە زمارە تەلەفۆنی 0191 278 8633 پێوەندی بکەن.
Português Portuguese	Esta informação refere-se à forma como gerimos a habitação social de Newcastle. Se precisar desta informação em <português> ou noutra língua, queira ligar para o 0191 278 8633.
русском Russian	Информация о нашем управлении муниципальными жилыми домами в г. Ньюкасле. Если Вы нуждаетесь в этой информации <на русском> или другом языке звоните по тел. 0191 278 8633.
Español Spanish	Ésta es información sobre cómo gestionamos las viviendas municipales de Newcastle. Si necesita esta información en español o en otro idioma, llame al 0191 278 8633.

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Living in your neighbourhood

Everyone has the right to live in an area that is clean, safe and pleasant. We (Your Homes Newcastle) and Newcastle City Council are committed to making sure that you can enjoy your home and your neighbourhood.

As a tenant, you must:

- respect and be considerate to your neighbours; and
- value the different backgrounds, cultures, experiences and circumstances of people who live in your community.

This booklet gives you information about how we can work together to make sure that living in your neighbourhood is as enjoyable as possible.

What is nuisance and antisocial behaviour?

Antisocial behaviour ranges from serious, criminal activity such as selling drugs, to other things including:

- playing loud music;
- arguing and slamming doors;
- dog barking and fouling;
- using noisy machinery;
- dumping rubbish;
- blocking shared areas;
- dismantling and repairing motor vehicles;
- playing ball games close to someone's home; and
- offensive drunkenness.

All forms of antisocial behaviour can cause a nuisance. Nuisance is behaviour that affects a person's quality of life and prevents them from enjoying peace and comfort in their own home. It is behaviour which annoys or disturbs one or more households, causing others to suffer through lack of consideration, and it is not usually aimed at one person.

What is harassment?

Harassment is more specific than nuisance and is directed against a particular person, family or group of people because of who they are. It includes attacks on property as well as people, and can include:

- offensive graffiti;
- verbal abuse;
- attacks or threats directed at a tenant, members of their household or their belongings; and
- indirect contact (for example, anonymous letters).

If your behaviour causes a nuisance or harassment to neighbours, you will be breaking your tenancy agreement. We will take action against you if this behaviour continues. We will also take action if you, or anyone living with or visiting you, assault, abuse or harass our staff or our contractors.

What should I do if I am experiencing harassment, nuisance or antisocial behaviour?

If you are experiencing the kinds of problems we have mentioned, you should do the following.

- Contact the person who is causing the problem and ask them to stop. **Only do this if you feel safe to do so.** They may not know that their behaviour is affecting you or other people.
- Assess the reaction of your neighbour and allow time for the situation to improve.
- If the problem continues, keep a diary of events, including the date, the time and what happened. Also give a description of, or the name of, the person who caused the problem.
- Contact your local community housing team to arrange a private interview. You will be given a diary booklet which you can record all the events in. You can ask for an interview with a member of staff who is the same sex as you. This may have to be arranged at another time.

These are only guidelines. If the situation or incident is serious, involving criminal activity, violence or serious threats, you should contact the police on 0191 214 655. Please also contact your local community housing team in these situations.

What is racial harassment?

Racial harassment is harassment that any person considers to be racist, whether that person is the victim or someone else.

Examples of racist incidents include:

- unprovoked verbal or physical assaults;
- damage to, or threats of damage to, property;
- making threats;
- abusive phone calls;
- putting rubbish through letterboxes; and
- offensive graffiti or slogans.

Racial harassment causes great harm to victims. If you, or anyone living with or visiting you, are responsible for racial harassment of your neighbours, or our staff or contractors, you will be breaking your tenancy agreement and we will take action against you.

What should I do if I am experiencing racial harassment?

If you are experiencing harassment, and you feel it is because of your race, report it in any of the following ways.

- By filling in an online form on our website at www.yhn.org.uk.
- By contacting any of our community housing teams.
- By phoning ARCH (Agencies against Racist Crime and Harassment) on 0800 032 32 88.

You can also contact the following organisations for help and advice.

Victim Support

 Phone: 0845 277 0977

National Helpline

 Phone: 0845 30 30 900

Racial Harassment Prevention Team

 Phone: 0191 262 1629

If you think you have experienced a racist incident, report it, even if you have no proof.

These are only guidelines. If the situation or incident is serious, involving criminal activity, violence or serious threats, you should contact the police on 0191 214 655. Please also contact your local community housing team in these situations.

There has been no improvement. What can I do?

If there has been no improvement, contact your local community housing team. They will discuss the problem and may decide to do one or more of the following.

- Meet you and the person causing the problem to agree what can be done.
- Refer you and your neighbour to a mediation service.
- Ask you to keep a record of the nuisance, harassment or antisocial behaviour.
- Write to the person responsible for the nuisance, harassment or antisocial behaviour to tell them what action may be taken against them if they continue to behave in this way.
- Refer the case to the Housing, Antisocial Behaviour and Enforcement Team.
- Apply to the county court for an injunction to order the behaviour to stop.
- Take legal action against the people responsible, which could lead to us evicting them.
- In partnership with Northumbria Police, investigate the possibility of using acceptable behaviour agreements (ABAs), antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) or injunctions (or all three).

You can also contact 'Nightwatch', the 24-hour helpline run by the city council to deal with excessive noise, on 0300 1000 101.

If the person causing the problems is not a council tenant, we will work with the city council Environment Protection, Pollution Control and LA 21 Team to try to sort out any issues.

What else are you doing to help tackle nuisance and antisocial behaviour?

We are taking steps to deal effectively with antisocial behaviour, nuisance and harassment so that residents can enjoy a comfortable and safe city to live in.

Your Homes Newcastle policy statement

We believe that you are entitled to live in a well-managed home where you feel good about yourself and your community. To achieve this, we will:

- try hard to work with others to reduce the level of crime, antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment; and
- develop effective procedures to support victims and to take action against those who cause problems for their neighbours.

We provide a central role in managing and reducing antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment.

Our community housing teams act on all reports of antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment that they receive. Most incidents are dealt with locally, by staff in the local community housing teams. They discuss concerns with both sides. Incidents of racial harassment are always reported to ARCH (see page 12), even if the incident is dealt with locally by staff.

The Housing, Antisocial Behaviour and Enforcement Team (HASBET) provides support to help local staff deal with nuisance and harassment, particularly where cases cannot be sorted out at a local level. An officer from Victim Support helps the team to support witnesses and victims.

Other ways we are working to reduce antisocial behaviour and nuisance




Estate inspections

Twice a year, local staff carry out full inspections on all estates. They carry out a street-by-street check of their area to identify issues that need action. Examples include:

- untidy gardens;
- repairs or improvements needed as a result of damaged fencing or guttering;
- uneven paving;
- graffiti; and
- general wear and tear.


The procedure includes providing information to be fed into discussions on plans for local work, estate-based planning processes or enforcement action. As well as these formal inspections, all local staff are responsible for identifying issues as part of their daily work.



Estate-based planning

Estate-based planning involves local housing managers planning improvements on housing estates along with staff responsible for housing maintenance. The input from local staff includes information from estate inspections and from discussions with local resident groups about what improvements they would like to see. We combine this information with other information we have collected to develop plans for improvements.

We recognise that how we invest in our properties can have a great effect on improving security and making residents feel secure. Our investment plan includes safety and security measures, such as providing smoke detectors, security improvements through our environmental improvements programmes, and the high-security features of the 'Secured by design' requirements that all door and window replacement programmes must meet (see the 'Living in your home' and



'Improvements and other planned work' booklets for more information).

The concierge service

The security and reception services provided by our concierge service in multi-storey blocks across the city give many of our residents extra safety, security and peace of mind. This service means that blocks have become more stable environments which people want to live in. There is more information about this service in the 'Extra support for tenants' booklet.

Working with others

We work very closely with a range of organisations, called 'partners', to tackle nuisance and harassment.

Our partners include the following.

- Safe Newcastle, which is made up of a wide range of agencies and partnerships working together to make Newcastle a safer place. The partnership develops the Safe Newcastle Strategy with local people.
- The city council's Community Safety Unit, which works with the community to make Newcastle a safe place for people to live, work and socialise.
- The city council's Environment Protection, Pollution Control and LA 21 Team takes action to tackle nuisance. Local staff work with environmental health officers where legal action is appropriate to deal with noise nuisance or health and safety issues.

- The city council's Neighbourhood Services employ neighbourhood street wardens, rapid-response staff and a graffiti team to work on estates. Staff work with wardens who work outside normal office hours to increase public safety and security, and to discourage antisocial behaviour.

They report incidents and provide evidence to the police and the Housing, Antisocial Behaviour and Enforcement Team. Rapid-response teams tackle small-scale damage on estates that we have identified, and the graffiti team give priority to racist or abusive graffiti.

- Northumbria Police work with us to tackle incidents of antisocial behaviour, neighbour nuisance and harassment on our estates. We work with them formally, through Tasking and Co-ordination Groups (looking at policing and public priorities in dealing with crime and antisocial behaviour), and informally at a local level in relation to specific problems of nuisance or harassment.

- Voluntary organisations and other agencies such as ARCH (Agencies against Racist Crime and Harassment), the Youth Offending Team, social services and the National Probation Service work with us to tackle antisocial behaviour and nuisance.

- Working with local groups is important in dealing with crime, antisocial behaviour, nuisance and harassment. Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, good neighbour arrangements or security schemes are often the result of working together like this.

For more information about the work we are doing to reduce antisocial behaviour, nuisance and harassment, contact your local community housing team or phone the Housing Antisocial Behaviour and Enforcement Team on 0191 278 8740.

What can I do to avoid annoying or disturbing my neighbours?

Noise nuisance is the most common cause of disagreements between neighbours. People often do not know how much noise they are making, and in most cases will reduce the level of noise once the problem has been pointed out to them.

- You must keep noise, including televisions, radios, hi-fi equipment and musical instruments, within a reasonable level at all times.
- Give your neighbour notice when you know there is going to be some noise, for example, a party.
- Do not cause unreasonable noise from slamming doors, shouting or arguing.
- Please consider your neighbours' comfort. You must not allow noise to be heard at all outside the property after 11pm and before 8am.
- Noise between properties, particularly flats, can be reduced by using headphones whenever possible and having carpets on floors and stairs.
- Do not carry out noisy work on your home or car late at night or early in the morning.
- If your house or car alarm goes off, deal with it as quickly as possible.
- Do not sound car horns, slam doors or rev your car engine, especially late at night.
- Respond in a positive way when neighbours ask you to reduce the noise

What is domestic violence?

Domestic violence is physical, emotional, psychological or sexual violence that a person inflicts upon their partner. It can range from slaps, kicks, blows, shaking or wounding to rape and murder. It can also include harassment, for example, by persistent letters or phone calls, threats of violence, emotional, psychological or mental abuse, and financial control. Examples include intimidating or humiliating behaviour, being kept prisoner at home or being cut off from family and friends.

We aim to help and support people who are suffering from domestic violence. If you need any help, advice or support, please contact your local community housing team in confidence. We can arrange private interviews with you to discuss how we can help, and this can be with an officer of the same sex if you prefer.

What should I do if I am experiencing domestic violence?

If you are experiencing domestic violence and you want help, advice or support you can contact:

- your local community housing team by phoning, email or in person (see the 'Useful addresses' booklet for contact details)
- Social Services and Education Welfare
☎ Phone: 0191 232 8520
- Housing Advice Centre – can offer emergency accommodation if it is not safe to stay in your home
☎ Phone: 0191 277 1711
- Out of Hours Emergency Service – for emergency accommodation if it is not safe to stay in your home
☎ Phone 0191 232 8520, after 4.30pm

Other organisations that can offer help and advice include the following.

Victim Support – can provide advice, support and confidence-building

☎ Phone: 0845 277 0977

REACH – can offer confidential advice and help to anyone over 16 who has been raped or sexually assaulted

☎ Phone: 0191 212 1551

MESMAC – helpline for gay and bisexual men

☎ Phone: 0191 233 1333

Newcastle Lesbian Line

☎ Phone: 0191 261 2277

Tyneside Rape Crisis – rape and sexual abuse helpline

☎ Phone: 0191 232 9858

Panah – black women’s refuge and outreach service

☎ Phone: 0191 284 6998

Newcastle Women’s Aid – provides help, advice, secure accommodation and an outreach service for women and children

☎ Phone: 0191 265 2148

Housing Advice Centre

☎ Phone: 0191 277 1711

National Domestic Violence Women’s Aid Helpline

☎ Phone: 0808 200 0247

Respect – information and advice for people responsible for domestic violence. Also welcomes calls from friends and relatives who are concerned about someone responsible for domestic violence

☎ Phone: 0845 122 8609

Male advice and enquiry line – helpline for men who are victims of domestic violence

☎ Phone: 0808 801 0327

Broken Rainbow – help for victims of domestic violence in same-sex relationships

☎ Phone: 08452 60 44 60

Forced Marriage Unit

☎ Phone: 0207 008 0151

What about problems with pets?

If you live in a house, bungalow or flat with its own entrance, you can keep small caged birds (not pigeons), small caged animals or a small aquarium, and one dog and one cat, without having to ask for permission. Please see the 'Living in your home' booklet for more information.

What will happen if my pet causes nuisance or disturbs other people?

You are responsible for making sure that your pet does not cause a nuisance or a danger to other people. If your pet causes a nuisance to, disturbs or is a danger to other people, you will be breaking your tenancy agreement and we may take legal action against you.

Nuisance can include:

- allowing your dog to foul your home, garden, public footpaths or shared area;
- allowing your dog to stray;
- letting your dog bark for long periods; and
- allowing your dog to become out of control by becoming aggressive or threatening to other people.

You must keep your pets under control at all times. If dog or cat mess is likely to cause a health hazard, we will refer the matter to an environmental health officer.

Is there anyone I can contact to collect a stray dog or report dog fouling?

To report stray dogs or dog fouling in your area, phone 0191 211 6199. If you'd like to know more about the laws on dog fouling, send an email to phep@newcastle.gov.uk.

If you find a dead animal in the street, phone Envirocall on 0191 274 4000 (textphone 0191 277 3687). They will come and remove it.

Car parking

You and your family and visitors should park next to your home, on a public road, a proper parking area or drive only. Do not park on grassed areas, footpaths, verges or open spaces. Where you park should not block the way for other people who may also use the area.

Large vehicles such as caravans and commercial transport can annoy neighbours, so you should not park them in spaces meant for cars only.

The availability of garages varies across the city. Please contact your community housing team for more information.

You can park your car within the boundary of your property if you have a suitable vehicle hardstanding or driveway and a drop kerb. You will need our permission to build a drive or hardstanding. Contact your community housing team for more information.

Please consider your neighbours when parking your car to avoid causing an obstruction.

You must not park on grass verges, footpaths and open space as it causes serious environmental damage and looks unattractive.

Repairing vehicles

Repairing vehicles can also disturb your neighbours through noise and oil spills. You can carry out minor repairs to your vehicle as long as you do them in a suitable place and at a reasonable time, and you take reasonable care not to annoy other people. You should not repair more than one vehicle at a time, and it should belong to someone who lives with you.

Shared areas

If you have a tenancy where there are shared areas, including stairs, you should keep these areas clean and free from obstruction. All residents are responsible for making sure this happens. You could consider setting up a rota system.

Please note that you should report repairs to shared areas – do not assume someone else will report it!

To report a repair, phone the Repair Centre on 0191 277 8888

Who is responsible for maintaining the grounds around my home?

To help maintain the overall appearance of the area where you live, we are responsible for regularly mowing shared grassed areas and for keeping shared hedges and shrub beds neat and tidy.

Please let us know if there are any problems with the shared areas around your home by contacting any community housing office or customer service centre, or by phoning Envirocall on 0191 274 4000 (textphone 0191 277 3687).

How do I give you a compliment, complaint or comment?

We are committed to providing an excellent service to our customers. We would like you to tell us any compliments, complaints and comments you have about our services. Your feedback helps us to find ways to improve services.

For information about how you can give us a compliment, comment or complaint, please see the 'What to do if I have a complaint' section in the 'Welcome to your new home' booklet.



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