



A diary should be kept detailing all incidents in order to assist the Association in dealing with the complaint. Giving as much information as possible will enable your complaint to be dealt with quickly and more effectively.

The Association will attempt to deal with neighbour complaints in a fair, sympathetic and confidential manner, and rely very much on you to provide assistance. However where the Association sees persistent breaches of tenancy it will not hesitate to act.

Mediation

The Association can call on a Mediation Service where attempts to resolve neighbour problems have failed. A mediation service is independent of the Association and can help to solve problems by providing trained negotiators to arrive at a solution which both parties can agree.

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A Guide to being a Good Neighbour

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We are committed to equality and diversity, valuing people's differences and aim to provide a service to all of our customers. We are happy to make any of our information available in other formats and languages. If you need this information in Braille, on audio tape, in large print or in a different language, please let us know. We will also be happy to arrange a sign or language interpreter on request. If you need any more help or advice, our staff will be happy to help.



Dalmuir Park
Housing Association



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Being a good neighbour

Every Association tenant has certain obligations to fulfil. This includes cleaning the stairs and other parts of the common and keeping the garden tidy if it is exclusive to you. It also means not causing a nuisance to those who live around you. Co-operation in the carrying out of these duties leads to a more pleasant living environment and also to better relationships between neighbours.

You never know when you may need a neighbour's help or they may need yours.

What do I do if a problem arises?

From time to time problems can arise between neighbours. Simple problems are always better dealt with amicably, without the involvement of the Association.

Obviously problems vary in the level of seriousness and this will dictate how they are dealt with by Housing Officers with experience of neighbour difficulties. Other cases however which involve physical violence should be notified to the Police. The Association can also work together with other agencies to come to a solution. We also have an agreed protocol with the Council and other Housing associations to follow the same principles to resolve issues.

Types of neighbour problems

This could include:

- lack of parental control of children
- neglect of house-keeping standards (e.g. not cleaning close, stairs etc)
- failure to keep your garden tidy
- persistent excessive noise
- rowdiness within the house (e.g. loud parties)
- vandalism to Association property and the surrounding area
- physical assault and verbal harassment of neighbours
- racial harassment

Making a formal complaint

If you feel that you cannot sort out your complaint by yourself, and you wish to take it further, the Association may take action. If you wish to make a formal complaint:-

Always put your complaint in writing as this ensures that:

- it is recorded
- it makes it easier for the Association to be fair and deal more effectively with the complaint.

Where there is a suspected breach of tenancy conditions, written complaints will be investigated, and if substantiated, a verbal warning given to the offending tenant.

If further written complaints are received about the same issue, a letter will be sent, warning the tenant about their behaviour.

If the problem is still unresolved, the Association will then consider serving the tenant with a "Notice of Proceedings". This is the first step in the legal process towards eviction, and therefore should be viewed with extreme seriousness. We will then contact our partners in the Council's anti Social behaviour team in accordance with our agreement.

Legal Action can only be taken in the most serious of cases. Other forms of legal action will also be considered such as an Interdict, where the Sheriff grants an order to prevent someone carrying out an activity or a Specific Implement where the Sheriff orders someone to do something, (e.g. clean the stairs). If they refuse then this can lead to a criminal conviction.

Where the situation cannot be resolved, a case can be prepared for court action. At this stage the complainer(s) will be requested to attend court and provide evidence. However our arrangements with the Council can allow us to call on the services of professional witnesses.

This legal procedure is laid down in statute, under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

It must also be stressed that the Association cannot side with one tenant against another. Therefore formal action can only be contemplated where there is a independent evidence to support a complaint, and where the complainer is willing to give evidence in court.

Council Assist Team

The Council can also help by using a special anti social behaviour team who along with Environmental Health staff can visit unruly families and ultimately can obtain Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) on behalf of the Association.

Putting your complaint in writing

When you complete the standard complaint form provided or send in a letter of complaint, you must include the following important details:

- Your name and address. No action can be taken on anonymous complaints.
- The name and address of the person(s) you are complaining about.
- Full details of the nature of the complaint giving us as much information as possible, e.g.
 - time of specific incidents
 - whether the Police were involved
 - the name(s) and address(es) of independent witness(es)