



working  
together to  
tackle nuisance  
and harassment

**Cestria Community Housing is very concerned about the effect nuisance and harassment has on our tenants and on other people living or working in the area. We will not tolerate harassment because of a person's race, religion or belief, disability, age, gender or sexual orientation.**

**Nuisance** is behaviour that can annoy or disturb one or more of your neighbours.

**Harassment** is defined as unwanted behaviour, which has the purpose or effect of:

1. Violating a person's dignity; or
2. Creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Everyone is entitled to peace and quiet in their own home. You must show consideration towards your neighbours and other local residents, by not causing excessive noise or behaving in a way which makes life unpleasant for others.

You must also take all reasonable steps to prevent anyone living in or visiting your home (including children) from causing a nuisance.

This includes, for example, not creating excessive or persistent noise, not playing loud music constantly, not holding loud parties and not undertaking abusive or threatening behaviour towards other people.



We also want to make sure that anyone working for us should not be harassed while they are carrying out their work.

We will take appropriate action using a range of powers and remedies available, against anyone who causes nuisance or harassment (including racial harassment). This may result in legal action, depending upon the seriousness and whether the person causing the problem has made genuine efforts to sort things out.

## **How to be a good neighbour (when noise is likely)**

If you know there will be some noise in your home (for example, because you're planning a party or doing some home improvement work), please let your neighbours know in advance.

Please do your best to be a good neighbour by following these tips:

- Avoid doing any noisy work on your home or car late at night or early in the morning.
- Keep the volume of your television and music system low at night and early in the morning.
- During the day, make sure that the volume of your television and music systems are not so loud that people outside your home can hear them.
- If you have a dog, keep it under control and don't let it bark continuously.
- If your house or car alarm goes off, deal with it as quickly as possible.
- Don't sound car horns, slam car doors or rev your car engine unnecessarily.
- Co operate with your neighbours if they ask you to reduce noise.
- Only allow your children (and those visiting you) to play where it won't disturb your neighbours, but be tolerant of young children playing in the area.



Remember, you are responsible for the behaviour of your household, your lodgers and your visitors. Noise and vibrations travel easily through walls, floor and doors, especially in flats. Hardwood floors require insulation to prevent noise travelling through to your neighbour's home.

## If you are troubled by nuisance

If you are experiencing nuisance from a neighbour, ask them to stop. They may not even realise they are causing a problem. Allow time for the situation to improve.

If the situation continues, please keep a record of the dates, times and details of the nuisance.

If things don't get any better, please contact your Estate Services Officer. Our staff will deal with your complaint in confidence.

Wherever possible, we will try to help you sort things out amicably. In some cases, we offer you and your neighbour use of an independent mediation service.

If you are troubled by excessive noise, Chester-le-Street District Council's Environmental Health team may get involved. This could lead to legal action against the person causing the nuisance. Legal action takes time, but can result in firm measures to stop the problem.





Serious cases involving anti-social behaviour or harassment will be passed to an Anti-Social Behaviour Officer who specialises in this area of work. This may involve talking to the Police, or a community safety specialist. To try to resolve problems we may look towards an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement (ABA) however, if the situation is more serious, we may work with the Police to apply for an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) or other legal remedy.

## Harassment

If you are suffering from any form of harassment, please contact your Estate Services Officer and the Police as soon as possible.

We may also arrange for a specialist Anti-Social Behaviour Officer to talk to you and the Police, and produce plan of action to address the problems.



## Vandalism and damage to Cestria property

You will break the rules of your tenancy agreement if you, members of your household or visitors to your home damage any property belonging to Cestria Community Housing.

This includes:

- Malicious damage to your home
- Tampering with services such as heating
- Vandalism to any building, including empty properties
- Damage to equipment or vehicles belonging to Cestria Community Housing.

We will take action against you if you cause damage. We may charge you the cost of putting the damage right or even take legal action against you to sort things out.





**We are committed to providing fair opportunity to access information.**

**If you would like information in another language or format, please call us on Freephone 0800 587 0001.**

**Also available in:**



Visual impairment formats



**[www.cestria.org](http://www.cestria.org)**