

Runnymede Borough Council

A guide on Antisocial behaviour
for tenants

October 2023





Introduction

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Introduction

We want to make it easy for tenants to know what to do if you are facing antisocial behaviour (ASB) or other difficult behaviours.

Some problems you encounter may be antisocial behaviour, and some may be criminal offences. This can make it difficult to know who to speak to for help.

This guide is intended for Runnymede Borough Council tenants who have complaints regarding other Council tenants. The Housing Service is unable to act if the person is a private-owner, private renter, or rents from a housing association.

If you have a complaint that is not related to housing, another service of the Council will address the issue.

The guide covers the most common issues we encounter. It will tell you what you can do should you encounter a problem, how to report the complaint, and what you can expect from us as your landlord.

How we deal with your complaint

Sometimes, complaints can take different priorities depending on their severity.

Once your complaint comes in, we will assess which team is best to address the issue you're facing, or whether another organisation, such as the police, is more appropriate.

The Council's Housing Department is open Monday – Friday, from 9am – 5pm.

You should contact the police in the event of an emergency regarding a criminal offence.

Once an antisocial behaviour report is received we will work with you and other agencies, such as the police, where appropriate and advise on next steps.

On-going complaints require record keeping. Therefore, we may ask you to complete a log of the antisocial behaviour activity you are experiencing. For example, if a neighbour's dog is barking throughout the night, we may ask you to record when this occurs and for how long. This helps us with our investigation and how we can help deal with the matter.

When reporting antisocial behaviour, you may want to

consider remaining anonymous.

You can choose to:

Staying anonymous

1. Provide no personal details resulting in you staying anonymous to the Council and the person causing the issues.
2. Provide your details to the Council, but request that you wish to remain anonymous to the person causing the issue.

If you chose to provide no personal details, it means the Council will not know who you are. Therefore, we will not be able to update you on the progress of your complaint.

Sometimes, when no personal details are provided, a report will come in without enough information. By not knowing who reported the issue, we are not able to contact them and collect evidence to carry out an investigation.

For this reason, should you prefer to stay completely anonymous, we would advise to report to the police on 101 or to CrimeStoppers.

If you decide to provide your details to the Council, we can discuss ways of protecting your anonymity.

If you would prefer to be unknown to the other person involved, we can update you on progress and assure you that we will not disclose who reported the complaint.

We ~~can never~~ cannot guarantee that the person causing the nuisance will not work out who has made a complaint against them. They may find out from other sources or in another way.

To report anonymously, you can either call us on **01932 838383** or through our website at

**[www.runnymede.gov.uk/
community-safety/
antisocial-behaviour](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk/community-safety/antisocial-behaviour)**



Types of antisocial behaviour to report to the Council

Every tenant is responsible for their behaviour, as well as those living with them or visiting their home. They must ensure they do not cause a nuisance, disturbance, or annoyance to their neighbours or those living in their area.

This guide covers the most common issues we encounter as a landlord. It will tell you what you can do should you encounter a problem, how to report the complaint, and what you can expect from us as your landlord.

Dog issues

Dogs bark for many reasons. If they are barking consistently, please contact the Council on **01932 838383** and make a noise complaint. We do have a Noise App, where we ask you to record the noise. This will help us with evidence gathering.

What you can do

► If you feel safe to do so, have a friendly word with your neighbour as they may not realise the barking is causing an issue.

- If your issue is investigated and you still need help, we will offer mediation. Mediation is an informal service available to help neighbours sort out their differences and reach an agreement.

To organise a mediation, please contact us on **01932 838383**

Fly-tipping

Fly-tipping is a criminal offence and considered antisocial behaviour.

What you can do

- Please report it to the Council on our website on

www.runnymede.gov.uk/fly-tipping

You will be asked to provide the location of the items, and photograph of what's been left.

- Certain factors, such as land ownership, type of waste, and scale, influences the time it can take to remove items meaning time frames can vary.

Noise

Many different noises can cause us discomfort and can include general living sounds, loud music, babies crying, children playing, DIY noise and neighbours shouting or arguing.

General living

We would not consider general living noises such as hoovering, opening, and closing doors, and so on as antisocial behaviour.

Try talking to your neighbour if the noise is frequent. You may be able to discuss some ways to reduce the noise.

If however you're affected by the noise frequently your Area Housing Manager is your first point of contact in relation to general living noise.

You can call them on **01932 838383**, or contact them by email on

Tenancy.Management@runnymede.gov.uk

or go to our website on **www.runnymede.gov.uk/nuisance-1**

and we will decide to take enforcement action.

Loud music

We would only consider loud music antisocial behaviour if it's disturbing you and it is persistent.

What you can do

- First try speaking with your neighbour. They may not realise you can hear their music and is disturbing you.

- If this doesn't make a difference, or you don't feel safe speaking to them, and the noise continues, you can contact the Council.
- We may ask you to keep a log of the noise, including when and how often.
- This log will help us decide whether we can take enforcement action.
- After your case is looked into, but you still need support we may offer mediation. Mediation is an informal service available to help neighbours sort out their differences and reach a solution.

Baby crying

We wouldn't consider this antisocial behaviour, but if you're worried about the baby's welfare, please contact the police.

Children playing

We wouldn't consider this antisocial behaviour. If they're causing damage to property like cars, please report it to the Council on **01932 838383**, or report it to us online.

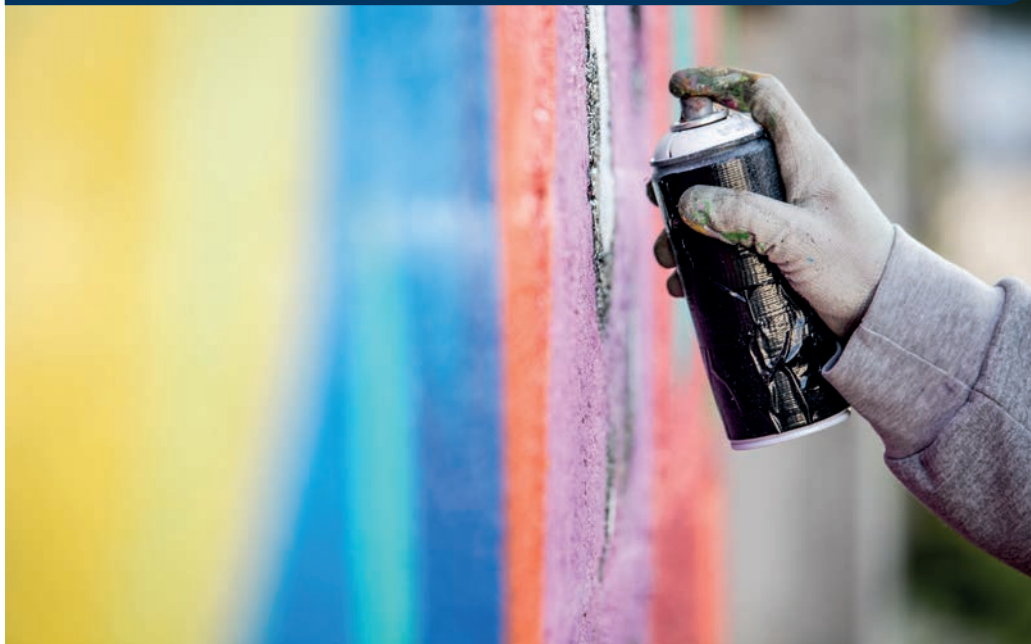
Arguing neighbours

We wouldn't normally class this as antisocial behaviour but if you're worried about the safety of an adult or child, please contact the police.

What you can do

- If you feel safe to do so, have a friendly word with your neighbour – they might not think anyone else can hear them.
- If you've tried this or didn't feel safe speaking with them and their arguing or shouting is persistent, please contact the Council on **01932 838383** or report it to us on **www.runnymede.gov.uk/community-safety/antisocial-behaviour**
- If your issue is investigated and you still need help, you may be offered mediation. Mediation is an informal service available to help neighbours sort out their differences and reach an agreement. It can help you understand each other's point of view and reach a solution.

Vandalism and graffiti



Graffiti is criminal damage and considered antisocial behaviour. You can report to us graffiti on land, buildings or structures which you think are owned or managed by the Council.

What you can do

- Please report it to the Council, including images and location. You can report it online at www.runnymede.gov.uk/street-cleaning-1/graffiti or call us on **01932 838383**
- We aim to remove, cover or obscure offensive graffiti within one working day. We do not remove

graffiti from private land or items.

- If you want to track progress on your report, you can log in to or register for a OneAccount at www.runnymede.gov.uk/oneaccount

Vehicle nuisance

Abandoning a vehicle is a criminal offence.

What you can do

- If you think a vehicle been abandoned check with your neighbours to see if they know who owns it.
- If no one knows, write down

the registration number and make of the car.

- If the car is on a public road or car park, please report it to the Council. You can do this on our website at

www.runnymede.gov.uk/roads-pavements-1/abandoned-cars-1

or call us on **01932 838383**

- Certain factors, such as land ownership and an unknown owner, can influence how long it can take to remove the vehicle meaning time frames can vary.
- If you think the car has been stolen, please report it to the police.

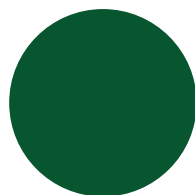
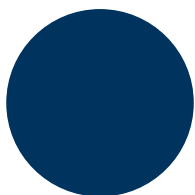
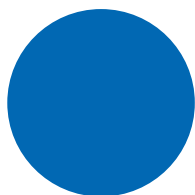
Keeping a log

If problems with your neighbours are re-occurring, we may ask you to keep a record of the activity. This will help us with our investigation. After your initial conversation with us about the

issues, we will issue a log for you to use to keep track of the disturbances, if appropriate.

The log will ask you to include:

- Dates and times of the activity.
- Record events as soon as possible, it makes it easier to remember accurately what happened.
- Start a new entry for each event.
- Write down everything you see and hear.
- If you can identify any people please name them, if you don't know their name give us a brief description of whereabouts they live.
- It is very important that you tell us how the events affect you. Provide as much information as you can about how you feel and any effect this is having on your health and way of life.



Criminal offences you should report to the police

This page includes items that must be reported to the Police immediately.

Once you've reported the incident, please contact the Council on **01932 838383** or report it online at **www.runnymede.gov.uk/community-safety/antisocial-behaviour**

You will need to let us know the name of the police officer you spoke to and your incident number. We'll work with you and the Police on the next steps.

Drug use or dealing

Drug dealing and using is a criminal offence, please contact the police. This includes cannabis.

Assault and violent threats

Assault may include hate crime, sexual offences, or violent threats.

Dangerous dogs

Should you feel a dog is dangerous please report it to the police immediately.

Threatening and rowdy behaviour

This may be a criminal offence. Please report it to the police immediately.

This may also include street drinking, or people gathering. If this behaviour results in things like criminal damage or you feel threatened, please report it to the police.



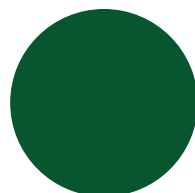
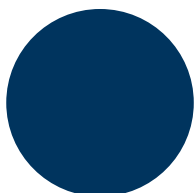
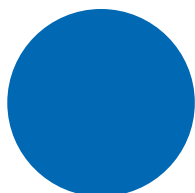
Tips for speaking to your neighbour

If the issue you're experiencing is caused by your neighbour, it can sometimes be resolved by talking to each other first. Contacting the Council before speaking first to resolve the problems can cause bad feelings between neighbours. However, if you do not feel safe to approach them, then contact the Council.

1. Choose a good time and only when you're feeling calm. Avoid going round when something has just happened and you are feeling upset and angry.
2. Think about when a good time for your neighbour might be, for example, it might be best to avoid when they've just arrived home for work.
3. Avoid assigning blame; talk about the effects the behaviour or situation has had on you. This makes it easier for your neighbour to hear what you are saying without becoming defensive.
4. Don't make threats or deliver an ultimatum. Your neighbour will

be more likely to respond well if you state the problem and leave them the opportunity to respond.

5. Try to keep the discussion light-hearted and friendly. It may be that there is a situation you are unaware of, and this could clear the air between you. Alternatively, your neighbour may be completely unaware of the disturbance they are causing you.
6. When outlining the problem, keep it clear and stick to the facts. Don't bring in other or past issues to 'prove' your point – keep to the most recent incident that has caused your concern.
7. Listen carefully to what they have to say, and don't interrupt them. Try to see it from their point of view and be prepared to be reasonable. Reassure them you want to resolve the problem in a friendly way.
8. If you can't or don't want to approach your neighbour in person, try writing to them and outlining your concerns instead.



For all information contained within this document contact:

Runnymede Borough Council
The Civic Centre
Station Road
Addlestone
Surrey, KT15 2AH

Tel 01932 838383

Email: Tenancy.Management@runnymede.gov.uk

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