

What to do if the problem gets more serious?

Serious or unresolved neighbour disputes can result in further enforcement actions being taken. The actions listed below may only be carried out as a last resort once all other options have been explored.

- Housing associations can apply for a demoted tenancy or a possession order against their tenants. This could mean that the person causing the problem could lose their home.
- There are new Premises Closure Orders available against home owners/tenants. These Orders give the courts power to temporarily close premises associated with persistent nuisance.
- Noise nuisance can be dealt with by issuing a noise abatement order. If the noise abatement order is not complied with then the responsible person can be fined up to £5,000 and may also have equipment creating the noise seized.

Useful contact details

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Community Safety Partnership
01732 876132

Tonbridge & Malling Anti-Social
Behaviour Officer
01732 876149

Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
(reporting noise) 01732 876184

Police – in an emergency 999
West Kent Police 01732 771055
(non emergency)

West Kent Neighbourhood Watch
01580 711004

West Kent Mediation
01322 615774

Maidstone Mediation
01622 692843

For more information about the
Community Safety Partnership look at
www.tmcommunitysafety.org.uk

Be nice to your neighbours

Information and advice on how to be a good neighbour



www.tmcommunitysafety.org.uk

What is a good neighbour?

Everyone has the right to enjoy their own home without excessive disturbance from others. Nuisance neighbours can disturb a person's enjoyment of their home and inconsiderate behaviour can even be harmful to your health.

When you're living near other people, be it friends, family or your neighbours, we all need to make a special effort to get along. Unfortunately sometimes disagreements can escalate and what starts as something minor can quickly become more serious.

This leaflet aims to give some 'common sense' advice to help avoid neighbour disputes:

- Moving into a new home is always a busy time and can be quite disruptive for you and your neighbours as you are busy decorating, moving furniture and belongings in. Once you've moved into a new home introduce yourself to your neighbours and check if anything you are doing is causing a nuisance.

There are also things that we can do to minimise disturbance to our neighbours.

- Don't play music loudly, especially after 11 o'clock at night. It could be keeping your neighbours or their children awake.
- Avoid banging doors, especially at night time.
- If you plan to have a party, let your neighbours know or invite them to come along.
- Children need to play but if you have children, encourage them not to play ball games where it is likely to cause disruption to neighbours.
- Don't leave your dog locked up or chained up all day if it barks. Barking dogs can cause a lot of annoyance to neighbours.
- Bad parking can cause inconvenience to other people, so try to park considerately.
- Litter, rubbish and overgrown gardens often annoy people so try to keep your area clean and tidy.

What you can do to resolve a neighbour dispute?

It is important to accept and understand the different lifestyles of other people. If you have a problem with a neighbour, you should first try to speak to them about the situation. Most people will respond well to this as often we don't even realise that what we are doing is causing a problem to someone else.

If you've tried to talk to your neighbour but the problem is still continuing there are agencies that you can contact to help you and their contact details can be found on the back page. If you are a tenant you should contact your Housing Association first. Owner occupiers or those renting privately can call the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer and noise nuisance can be reported to Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council.

They may suggest that mediation with your neighbours could help. A trained mediator will help both parties to work out an agreement. They will listen to the problems but will not take sides. Mediation can be arranged by the agencies or you can refer yourself.