



# Resolving neighbour issues

A step-by-step guide

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Neighbour disputes are not uncommon and do happen from time to time. At Aragon, we have found the best way for residents to address minor problems and nuisances is to deal with these yourself. If that seems a little daunting, here is some advice on how to go about it.

Firstly, your neighbour may be quite unaware they are causing a problem. If you approach them calmly and discuss what is annoying you, they may be quite understanding. Usually this is much better than letting things build up and having a shouting match, or writing angry letters, when it could all have been sorted out easily.

## Advice before approaching your neighbour



- Be well prepared, think about what you want to say.
- Keep the message simple and straightforward to avoid any misunderstanding.
- Stick to the point and try not to get diverted onto other subjects.
- Plan what kind of solution you would like from the discussion and make that clear. Be willing to be flexible.
- Choose a good moment – both for you and your neighbour, when their attention is not elsewhere.
- Choose a time when you are not feeling angry.
- Before you talk to your neighbour, try talking to another person e.g. a friend or acquaintance to rehearse what you plan to say.
- Give some consideration to which adult in your neighbour's household you would prefer to speak to.

## Some useful tips during the discussion

- Stay calm and friendly.
- Explain the problem clearly and how your life is being affected by the other person's behaviour.
- Give your neighbour the chance to reply and explain their side.
- Try not to interrupt the other person when they are talking.
- Don't try and shout your neighbour down or become abusive. Don't make it a personal attack on the other person's character.
- Stick to the current problem – try not to drag up a whole catalogue of complaints from the past.
- Always suggest a solution if you believe there is one and be flexible where possible.
- If discussion leads to an argument, it is probably best to withdraw at that point.
- If you feel concerned about aggressive or threatening behaviour, please end the discussion politely and contact your housing officer for further advice.

# Help is at hand

## Mediation

If you feel things cannot be resolved, and communication with your neighbour has broken down, Aragon Housing Association can offer assistance from the mediation service, where a trained independent third party can assist you to sort out your differences. Mediation is used to encourage communication between all parties involved, with a view to reaching an amicable outcome for all parties.

Mediation will normally be most successful if referred to early on in the dispute and it is suggested that this is the first remedy for consideration.

If the parties are reluctant to meet, the officer can discuss the option of shuttle mediation where the Mediator acts as a go-between instead of a meeting.

You should discuss this with your housing officer who will make the arrangements for you.

**Aragon Housing Association operates a zero tolerance policy towards any intimidating, threatening or abusive (verbal or physical) behaviour aimed at its staff.**

## Equality and Diversity

Aragon Housing Association has a responsibility to ensure that equal opportunity and effective management of diversity are at the core of its business. The association sets targets to deliver services that are responsive to the needs of communities and individuals, and promote social inclusion. Further details of this policy and our action plan are available on request.

### Do you need this in a different format?



Do you need the information in this document in a different format? Please contact us on **01525 840505** to discuss your specific requirements.



**Give respect Get respect**

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