

Neighbourhood Noise Policy Statement

Canterbury City Council – Social Housing Landlord Service

Canterbury City Council recognises that noise can have a significant impact on tenants' wellbeing and their ability to enjoy their home.

We understand noise complaints are often complex and that not all noise is anti-social in nature.

This statement outlines our approach to managing noise within our social housing landlord service, drawing on best practice and recommendations from the Housing Ombudsman's *Time to be Heard* spotlight reports.

We are committed to responding to noise complaints in a way that is fair, proportionate and sensitive to individual circumstances.

Our aim is to ensure tenants experiencing noise issues feel heard and supported, while recognising that some noise is a natural part of everyday life.

We encourage tolerance and neighbourly behaviour.

We will always try to help where we can. This policy statement can be considered alongside but separate from our Anti-Social Behaviour policy.

Our approach

- Listen and respond to tenants who report noise concerns, ensuring they are treated with fairness and respect and that their concerns are taken seriously.
- Distinguish between types of noise – recognising the difference between anti-social behaviour, statutory nuisance and general household noise such as footsteps, talking, or domestic appliances.
- Provide clear information to help tenants understand what constitutes unreasonable noise and what may be considered part of normal living. We have begun work with our Resident Engagement Panel to make this clearer in a tenant handbook.
- Work with tenants and neighbours to resolve noise issues informally where possible, including offering mediation where the Police have been involved and early intervention. This statement will be updated as access to other mediation services may be commissioned.
- Encourage neighbours to talk to each other where it is safe and appropriate.

- Please note that if you live in a flat or maisonette above ground floor you must not have any laminate or flooring of a similar type fitted without first obtaining our written permission.
- Support tenants with vulnerabilities who may be more affected by noise or whose behaviour may contribute to noise complaints. We will support people to report noise and we will make referrals to support services where needed and ensure safeguarding concerns are addressed appropriately.
- Collaborate across services, including Environmental Protection, the social housing landlord service, Community Safety and Kent Police, to ensure a joined-up response to noise complaints, including supporting residents to make reports to Kent Police that may be relevant.
- Monitor and review our approach to noise management, using feedback from tenants and learning from complaints to improve our service.

Resident Engagement Panel

As part of our continued commitment to improve our policies and the way that we deliver services to meet tenants needs. This policy was considered by our engaged tenants.

Here's some practical advice shared by one of our engaged tenants on managing noise and related issues:

"Before contacting the Council, try to resolve the problem informally. Communication is key – don't go in all guns blazing. Stop and think about what you're going to say and how you're going to say it. Always ensure you do not put yourself at risk when approaching a neighbour."

Common issues you might encounter

- Artificial light (for example security lighting set at the wrong angle – not streetlights)
- Noise, dust, steam, or smell (categories under the Environmental Protection Act 1990)
- Smoke (cigarette smoke, fumes, or gases)
- Build-up of rubbish encroaching onto your property

Managing expectations

Not all noise concerns will be treated as anti-social behaviour. Everyday living sounds – such as footsteps, talking, or domestic appliances – are not ASB. Issues like those listed above may fall under statutory nuisance, which is different from ASB and handled under environmental legislation.

Steps you can take

Talk to your neighbour informally – a calm conversation often resolves the issue.

Consider whether the issue is persistent and unreasonable – not all noise can be eliminated.

If you believe it meets the statutory nuisance threshold, contact the Council's Environmental Protection team who can help. [Report a noise, smoke or smell problem | Canterbury City Council](#)

Legal action through the courts – is only used as a last resort.

Our commitment

We recognise noise can affect anyone and our response must be thoughtful, proportionate, and rooted in kindness.

By embedding flexibility and understanding into our service delivery, we aim to support tenants in maintaining their tenancies and enjoying their homes without unnecessary disruption.

We also understand managing noise complaints requires a realistic and transparent approach.

While we will always listen and respond to concerns, we must be clear that not all noise can be prevented or resolved through formal action.

Some noise is a natural part of everyday life and differences in lifestyle, working patterns or building design may mean that complete silence is not achievable.

We will:

- be honest with tenants about what we can and cannot do in response to noise complaints
- explain when a noise issue does not meet the threshold for anti-social behaviour or statutory nuisance
- offer advice and support to help tenants manage low-level noise concerns, including guidance on self-resolution and tolerance
- ensure tenants are kept informed throughout the process and understand the likely outcomes of the noise issue that has been raised
- encourage respectful communication between neighbours and promote a shared responsibility for maintaining a peaceful living environment

Our commitment is to treat every tenant with fairness and respect, while also setting clear expectations about the limits of our role as a landlord always acting within our Housing Service Standards and putting things right if we don't get things right first time.

We believe open dialogue and realistic advice are key to helping tenants feel heard and supported.

Version control

Version number	Release date	Reviewer	Summary of changes	Approval Status
1	28 November 2025	Resident Engagement Panel and staff led by Tenancy Policy and Programme Officer	First Neighbourhood Noise Policy Statement shaped with a middle section from our Resident Engagement Panel	Director People