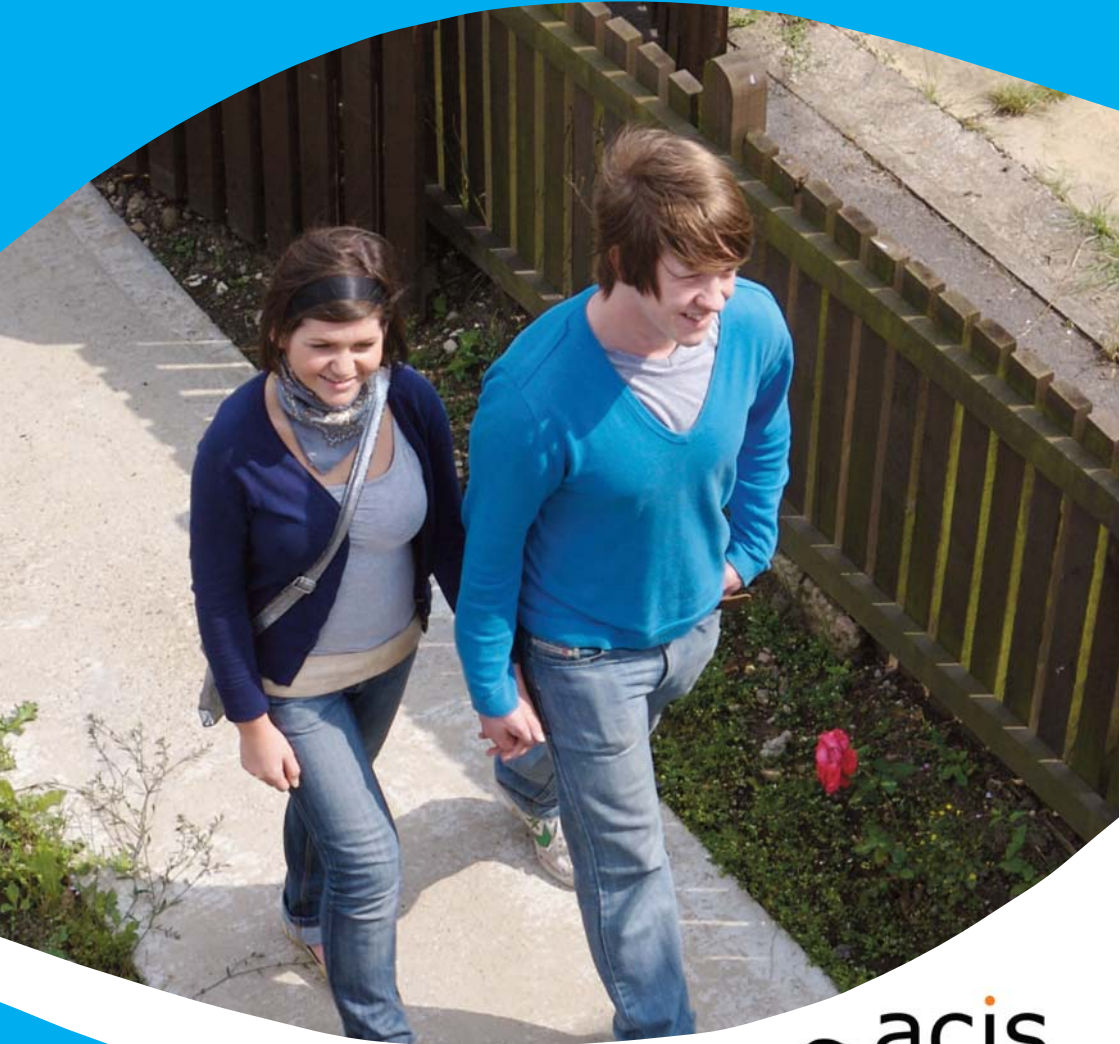




# Being a Good Neighbour



"Better homes and better services for better lives"



## Everybody needs good neighbours

How many of us can claim to have good neighbours? How many of us can actually claim to be good neighbours?

A number of complaints dealt with by Acis Group are because of a dispute between neighbours. Common causes of neighbour nuisance are barking dogs, loud music (or TV) smoky bonfires etc.

Problems can almost always be avoided if both sides have a little common sense, consideration and courtesy.

# How to avoid falling out with your neighbours

1. Try to be reasonable with your expectations. If you choose to live in a community close to other people, then you cannot expect to have perfect peace and quiet all the time.
2. If you feel that you are justified in objecting to a neighbour's behaviour, then try to talk to them about it as soon as possible to avoid the situation becoming out of hand. In many cases, your neighbour will not have realised that there is a problem. Have a friendly word, explaining the situation as you see it, giving your neighbour a chance to respond to your point of view.
3. If this fails, consider putting the complaint in writing to your neighbour - still politely - but perhaps more firmly, explaining what is wrong and what you would like them to do about it. Do not be offensive or threatening as this just weakens your own case. Always try to be reasonable with your requests. If you need help writing a letter, we can help you.



4. Remember to keep copies of any letters, as this may prove important later.

5. If the 'softly, softly' approach fails, you could try asking your solicitor to send a letter, but this can be expensive and often has little effect.

6. The next step is to approach your Area Housing Manager at Acis Group. They will advise you about the process and possible consequences of making a formal complaint. After a chat, you may feel like talking to your neighbour again to let them know you are prepared to make a complaint.



7. If you decide that you are going to make an official complaint, then please make it in writing. This gives you more time to think about what you want to say and you can keep a copy as proof.



8. Write all the details you can in your complaint and send copies of any letters that you sent before. Check with other neighbours about whether they are also troubled and use this to back up your own account. Even if you complain without first talking to the neighbour causing the problem, it will still be investigated. Your name and address will not be revealed.



9. During our investigation, you may be asked to help us by writing incidents down on diary sheets to provide us with further evidence regarding your complaint. Please be patient and co-operate as much as you can.



10. Please be aware that there are some things which Acis Group cannot possibly deal with and if your problem falls into this category, then you will be told and advised of what further action you can take yourself.

## What if you are the one being complained about?

Your natural first reaction might be to think 'what?!' and to want to confront somebody immediately. We will not tell you who made the complaint against you so do not confront somebody unless you know it is them.

**However, please 'count to ten' and think ...**

Perhaps you are doing something annoying, maybe without realising. This does not make it any more bearable for your neighbours.

If you can, please go and see them and discuss the complaint in a reasonable manner to try to get to the bottom of the problem.

We realise that this can be difficult and takes a great deal of courage.

Please always be **reasonable**. Accepting that you may be at fault is always going to be hard.

**Remember** that there are not too many problems which cannot be solved one way or another if we all try a little harder to be good neighbours.

**Acis Group is here to help.** For further advice and assistance, please contact us. You will find all Acis Group's contact details on the back cover of this leaflet.



This leaflet can be made available in a number of formats including **Braille, audio tape, large print, or other languages.** Please contact our **Customer Services team** using the details below for more information.

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## Compliments and Complaints ... Please help us to help you!

Acis Group want customers to share their views on how we are performing. This can be done by registering a complaint or acknowledging when you are pleased with the service you have received. You can contact us in a number of ways:

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