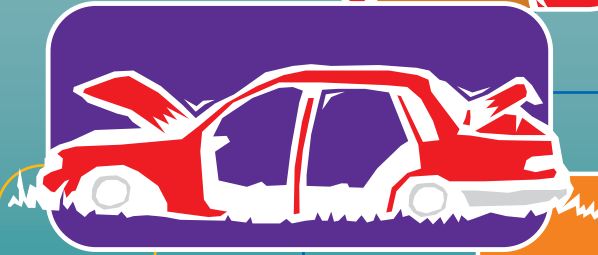


Living in Harmony



*What to do about
neighbour disputes*



What this leaflet is about

Most people try and be good neighbours and don't set out to cause disputes. However, if problems do arise, this leaflet contains advice and information on:

- what you can do yourself
- when to seek help and advice from an organisation
- the different organisations that can help and what they can do
- useful local contacts

What you can do yourself if you have a problem with a neighbour



• *Try not to rush in!*

If this is the first time you've experienced a problem with your neighbour, the right thing to do to start with may be nothing! Maybe they're putting up a shelf, or having a birthday party. A bit of tolerance on your part might be all that's needed to sort the problem out. If you're too quick to complain, it might make things worse between you both.



• *Try and sort things out yourself first*

Try talking to your neighbour and explaining what the problem is. They may not realise they are causing you any disturbance. If you get someone else involved at this stage, it may make things a lot worse.

It's often difficult to approach people to make a complaint. Below are some hints you might find helpful:

Don't leave it until you're really angry, or things get out of hand, before you complain

Don't lose your temper or use aggressive body language (eg hands on hips, pointing, staring, etc.)

Do wait till you are calm before you speak to the person

Do talk to the person face to face and when they are on their own

Do work out beforehand what you want to say and explain the problem clearly

Do approach the person when they are likely to have time to talk (e.g. not late at night or when they are off to work)

Do speak quietly and slowly; this helps keep the other person calm

Do be prepared to listen to their side of the story and don't interrupt

Do leave straightaway if people are aggressive or threatening when you approach them. If this happens you'll need help to sort things out from an organisation

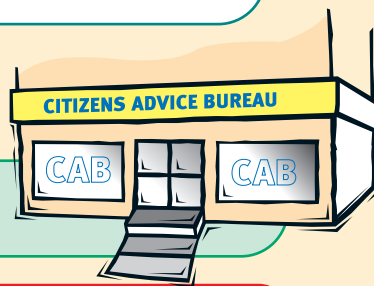


When to seek help and advice from an organisation

Sometimes people are not willing to listen or compromise, or are aggressive or violent. If you have this problem:

- **you will need to get help from an organisation.** Some organisations that can help are included below. Their contact details are on the back of this leaflet. Other helpful organisations are listed in your local Yellow Pages.
- **it may be helpful to keep a diary** recording incidents, including times, dates and details of what happens.

Citizens Advice Bureau, Tenants, Residents & other Community Groups



Can listen to people and advise them about where to get help

Can't sort out the problem themselves, or take sides



If you are a tenant, your Landlord

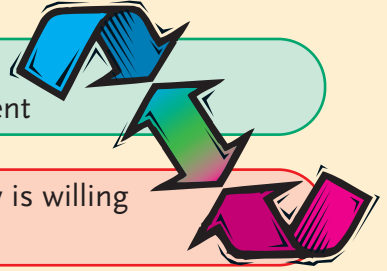
Can talk to other neighbours and tenants on your behalf, or take legal action if the tenancy agreement has been broken

Can't evict tenants who have broken their tenancy agreement without going to Court or if there isn't enough evidence available, or take action if people have different landlords

Mediation Service

Can work with each party involved to help sort out problems by agreement

Can't work with people unless each party is willing to take part



Environmental Health Department



Can take action if there is a serious problem with noise, smoke, rubbish, vermin or abandoned cars

Can't take action if the problem is not serious enough for the law to have been broken, or if there is not enough evidence available

The Police

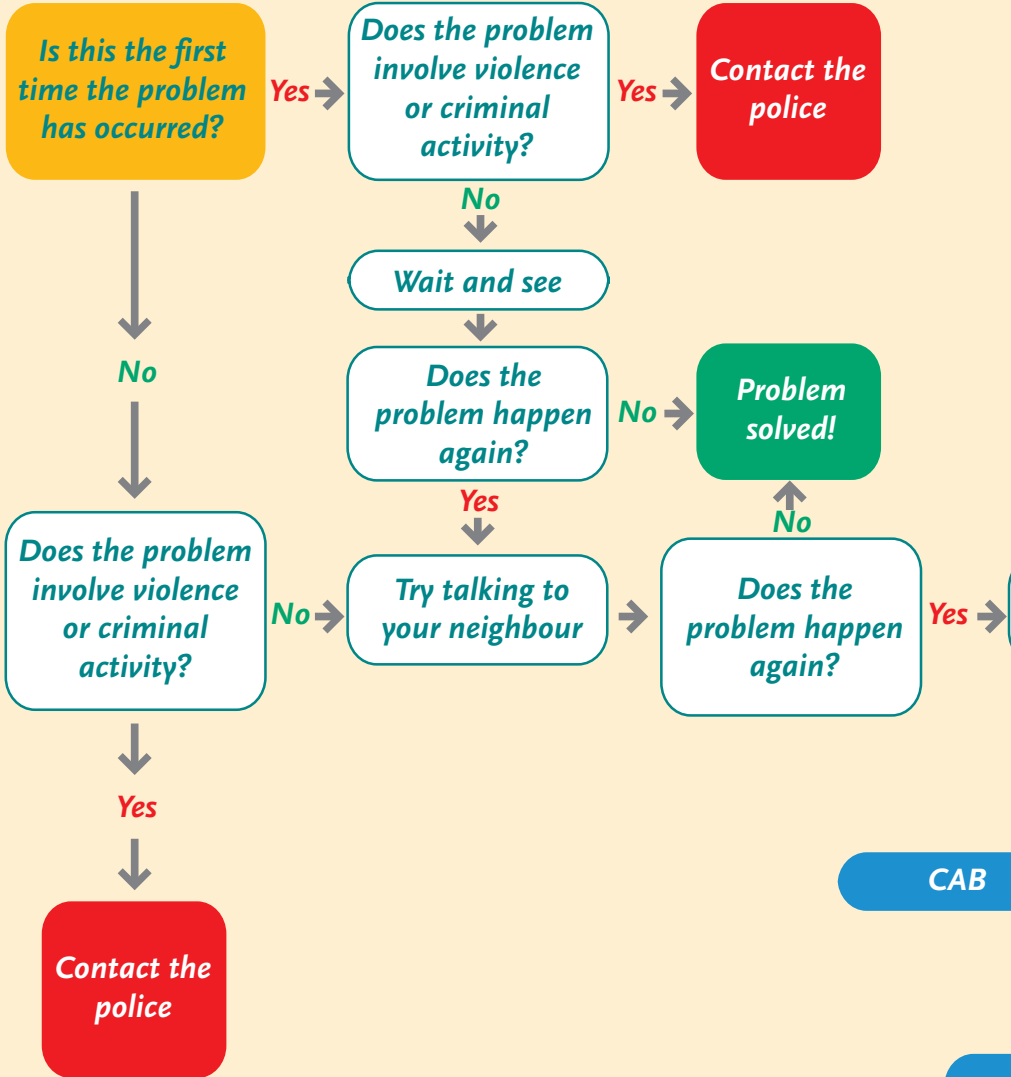
Can advise you about getting a restraining order or injunction, or take court action themselves following an incident

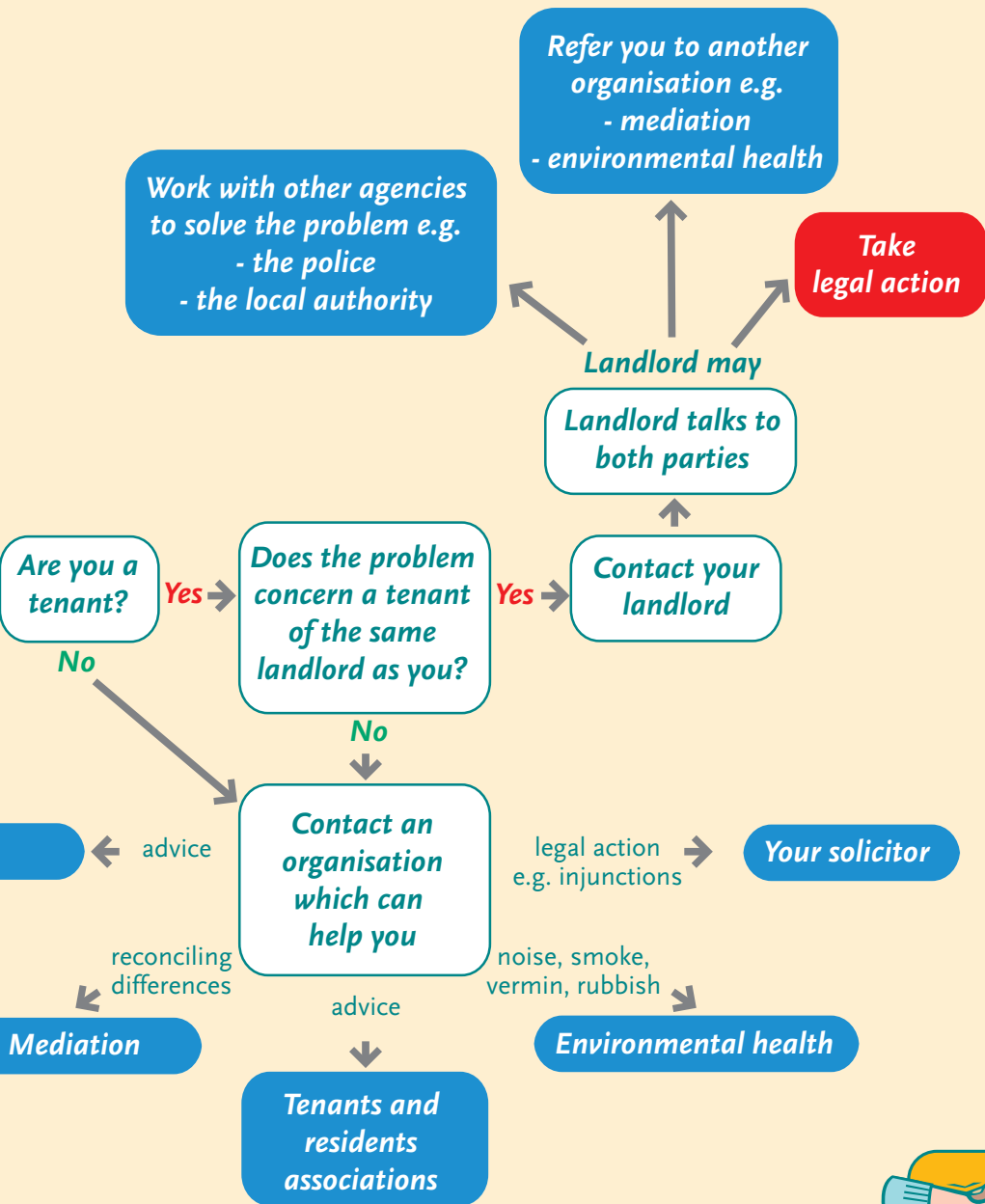
Can't take action if the law has not been broken, or if there is not enough evidence available



What should you do?

START HERE





Contact telephone numbers

Local Authority

Housing Division

Tel:

Community Safety

Tel:

Environmental Health/Public Protection

Tel:

Housing Associations

Name

Tel:

Name

Tel:

Name

Tel:

Name

Tel:

Name

Tel:

Citizens Advice Bureau

Area:

Tel:

Area:

Tel:

Mediation Service

Tel:

The Police

Tel:

Tenant and Resident Federations/Forums

Name

Tel:

Name

Tel:

Name

Tel:

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