

## Your guide to being a good neighbour

You can't choose your neighbours, but you can choose to be a good neighbour.

As well as providing homes, we want to help build communities where people feel safe, can be themselves and feel connected to where they live.

We also understand that issues with your neighbours can cause a lot of stress and disruption, and that when you ask for our help, it can be frustrating when there isn't a quick resolution.

To help us keep everyone safe and happy in their home, there are a few things you can do to stop issues from turning into a bigger problem. Take a look at this guide to see how you can play your part in building a happy community.



### We want your ideas

If you've got an idea for something that you think would help you build community spirit where you live, such as a mural, a volunteer led project, a fundraiser or a community event then we want to hear from you.

Email us with your [ideascommunity.grants@stonewater.org](mailto:ideascommunity.grants@stonewater.org)



## Give back to your community

If you want to play an more active role in improving your community for everyone, we'd love you to get involved.

Here's a few ways you can help:

### Thanks and recognition scheme

We want to celebrate small acts of kindness and examples of good neighbourliness, so if there's someone in your community that deserves a bit of praise or a treat, tell us about them and we can make sure they know how special they are.

### Community Champions

Our brilliant team of Community Champions act as our eyes and ears in the community, telling us about the quality of our cleaning and grounds maintenance work, reporting anti-social behaviour, parking and more.

They have also submitted lots of great investment ideas to improve where they live for their neighbours.

Some of their recommendations have included better lighting to combat anti-social behaviour, new cigarette bins, new trip rail fencing, fresh white line painting for car parks, and new flowers to help brighten up communal areas.

To find out more, visit our website or contact us.



### Start a residents group

Some of our customers have formed their own residents association or group to share ideas, meet new people and organise events for their community.

If you'd like some help with forming your own, contact us and we can give you some advice on how to do it.

We can also support new groups to form as we have a Community Investment Grant customers can apply to for running costs, training and projects.

### Contact us

If you want to speak to us about creating a happy, healthier neighbourhood, say hello at [customers@stonewater.org](mailto:customers@stonewater.org), call us on 01202 319 119 or send us a direct message on social media.



Join the conversation  
[discuss.stonewater.org](https://www.stonewater.org/discuss)  
Give feedback and more



[myhome.stonewater.org](https://www.myhome.stonewater.org)  
Report repairs, set-up a direct debit and manage your tenancy 24/7



## Be the neighbour you'd want



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## Small things that make a **big difference**

**More often than not, a friendly word with your neighbour can resolve most issues without any intervention from us.**

If you call us to tell us about a problem you're having with your neighbours, we might ask you to speak to them first before we take any action.

Here are the most common cause for complaints we get and how you can avoid them becoming a problem.

### **Waste**

Rubbish that's not disposed of correctly can cause a lot of problems. Rubbish left on the ground, fly-tipping, loose bin bags and recycling not being sorted can create fire hazards, attract pests, cause missed collections and affect your service charges.

You can be a good neighbour by:

- Putting all your rubbish in the right bins and don't leave anything on the ground
- Take any bulky items to your nearest recycling centre

If you need some help recycling your items, then give us a shout as we can give you some advice or connect you to one of our partners such as the British Heart Foundation who can help take items away.

If you have your own bin, make sure these are put away safely after they've been collected to keep walkways clear – there may be people in your community with wheelchairs or pushchairs that might find it hard to get through otherwise.

### **Parking**

Parking can be tricky wherever you live and we understand how stressful this can be.

It's really important that you stick to the parking guidance in your neighbourhood, not only to prevent arguments but also to keep everyone safe. This is also true for any visitors you have to your home.

You can park considerately by:

- Only using your own allocated bays or driveways
- Not parking on curbs or grass verges so that everyone has enough room to use the pavements and roads

What's more, making sure you're not causing any obstructions means that emergency service vehicles can get through as quickly as possible.

### **Noise**

Noise can be a real nuisance to your neighbours, and you might not even know you're doing it.

Noise can be an extremely difficult problem for us to help with, so the best thing to do is speak to your neighbour to find out if there's anything they can do to stop it.

If you're planning a party or some work (e.g. DIY) that you know might cause a lot of noise, then letting your neighbours know beforehand will go a long way in helping to reduce any arguments.

There's more guidance on noise in our anti-social behaviour guide on our website. You can request a copy of this by contacting us.

### **Pets**

We want to support anyone that wants to have a pet in their home as long as they provide a suitable, safe environment for them.

We also appreciate the impact this can have on other people, so we have created a range of resources for customers, which are available on our website. You can also request a copy of these by contacting us.

The biggest issue we hear about around pets is dog fouling in communal areas, so if you have a dog, you can help to keep everyone safe by:

- Making sure you pick up after your dog
- Dispose of any waste responsibly
- Keep your dog on a lead in communal areas

### **Communal areas**

These areas are vitally important to making sure everyone is safe in their home.

Keeping them clear of personal items such as bikes, mobility scooters, pushchairs, prams and boxes is the best way to reduce trip hazards and make sure that, if anyone needs to, they can get out quickly and safely.

Some of these items create a significant fire hazard, so keeping them out of the way can help to prevent the spread of fire and smoke through your building.

If you need some help with storage, we may be able to help via buggy or bike hooks, or through some specialist storage for your mobility scooter. You can make this even easier by asking for our help before you make any purchases so we can advise you on storage. Get in touch to discuss your options.

## **Think about your neighbours**

Everyone who lives in your community is different, has their own challenges and sees things in their own way.

If you're having a problem with something, it's a good idea think about why that might be happening and be empathetic towards them.

For example, if one of your neighbours has a garden which you think needs tidying up, it could be that they're having difficulties maintaining it due to ill-health or a personal problem. Reporting this to us might cause them more stress, so talking to them about it might help you to understand what's going on first.

## **Look out for each other**

Did you know that loneliness can have the same long-term health effects as smoking 20 cigarettes a day?

You can help us build happy and healthy neighbourhoods by having a friendly chat with your neighbours. Our happy to chat benches have made a big impact on tackling loneliness, so if you see someone sitting on one by themselves, why not stop and ask how they are? If you think that your neighbourhood could benefit from a happy to chat bench, get in touch.

During cold snaps and heatwaves, there may be people in your neighbourhood that might struggle to look after themselves. You can help to save lives by keeping an eye on anyone you think might need a bit more support during these times.

