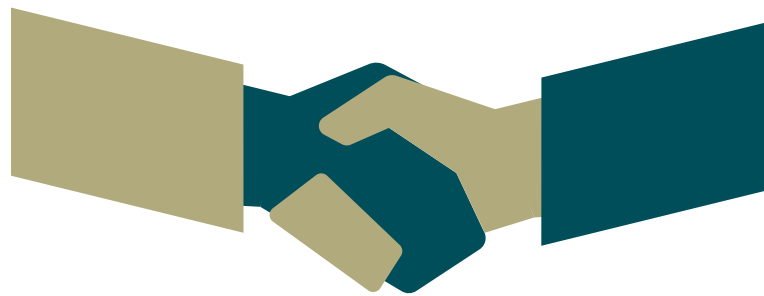


Know your



Neighbour

Information pack





Hello neighbour,

Thank you for contacting us about an issue in your neighbourhood.

We understand that living in a community with different people who live different lives can cause conflict – and this can impact how you feel in and around your home.

Once an issue is reported to Council, it can be difficult to recover a good relationship with your neighbour. Often, even if people ask to be anonymous, their neighbour usually suspects who has complained and this can cause ongoing problems.

What we do know is that working things out together brings better, long lasting solutions and helps create strong communities.

Let's work together to resolve neighbourhood issues

Our Know Your Neighbour initiative has been used by Tweed Residents over the past 3 years to assist with solving conflict and building long lasting relationships.

This information pack is designed to give you the tools and information you need to help find a solution to your neighbourhood issue. It also has some great tips on getting to know your neighbour early on, which can help if and when problems arise.

You can find out more about **Know Your Neighbour** by visiting:

tweed.nsw.gov.au/property-rates/property-residents/neighbours

or feel free to call us on **(02) 6670 2400**

If you can't resolve your issue, here's how we can help

If you can't resolve your problem and you would like Council to follow up on this issue, please read this pack and complete the 14-day record sheet before lodging your request.

If you have safety concerns with raising the issue with your neighbour or need further assistance in resolving the issue, please call us on the number above.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Galle".

Denise Galle

Manager Building and Environmental Health

Helpful conflict resolution tips



#1

Get to know your neighbours early on
Say hi! This could help soothe the problems later.

#2

Try to step back from the issue
Consider if it is worth raising. Is it a one off event, or something minor that you could let go?

#3

Most people will be happy to help
They might not have known about the problem. Give them a chance to fix it first.

#4

Differences of opinion are normal
Try having a casual chat to resolve conflict.

#5

Try to avoid blaming the person.
Instead express how you feel, for example:
'When this happens, I feel (...).

#6

Keep the conversation on track
Be calm, listen and check you understand what is being said.

#7

Work solutions out together
Be flexible and try to understand your neighbour's needs and limitations when finding a solution.

#8

It's ok to take time to solve problems
You might not find a solution the first time. Keep trying.

#9

Your safety is key
If you think you may be put in danger when raising an issue, get in touch with Council or a Community Justice Centre.

#10

Help is available
If you still need help, Community Justice Centres, Council or other government agencies can give specialised advice.

Think you might need legal advice?

Unfortunately some issues can't be solved easily – and in some cases you may need to ask a professional what your rights are, or how you should handle a situation. In this case, please contact:

Community Justice Centres: 1800 990 777

Community Justice Centres (CJC) are run by the NSW Government and provide free, professional advice and mediation. CJC mediation gives everyone a chance to talk about the problem with the help of, impartial mediators. Around 79 per cent of sessions result in an agreement.

Law Access: 1300 888 529

A free government telephone service that provides legal information, referrals and in some cases, advice for people who have a legal problem in NSW.

The Know Your Neighbour mailbox card

Hi neighbour

When you have a spare moment can we catch up for a quick chat about

It would be great if we could work something out together.

Would you be able to give me/us a call or text when you're free and we can organise a time to chat?

From your neighbour

Name _____

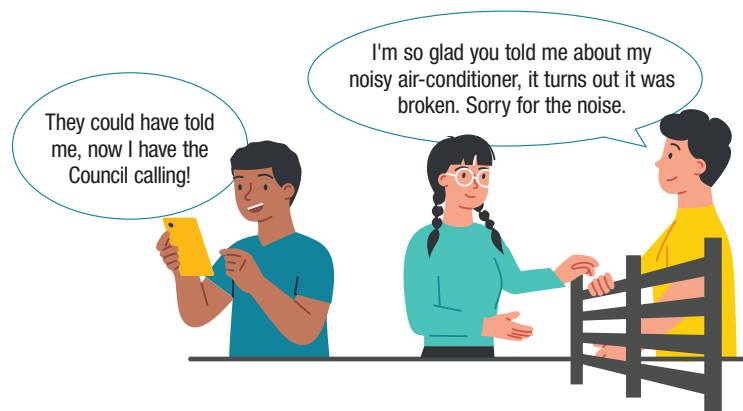
Phone _____

Thanks very much

This card was developed as a tool to start a conversation with your neighbour, to let them know who you are, or to discuss something that may be bothering you.

Simply cut out your mailbox card (see page 7 of this pack), fill in your basic details and place it in your neighbour's mailbox.

Why should you get to know your neighbour? We know that neighbours who have built a relationship prior to a conflict are more likely to find long lasting solutions. We also know that neighbours who know each other feel safer in their street, building, home, or neighbourhood.



Steps to resolve the issue

The following checklist can be used to resolve an issue with your neighbour. It is also a great tool to use if you need to ask for help from Council.



Consider the problem

Is it re-occurring? If so, use the record sheet on page 11.

Keeping a record of the problem may help you decide if it is a problem you can live with or something that needs resolving.

Records (like on page 11) will be requested when lodging a customer request to Council.



Arrange a time to talk to your neighbour

A talk face-to-face is usually more effective. If you can't chat face-to-face, leave a Know Your Neighbour card or send them a message if you have their phone number.

Before talking to your neighbour, consider how the problem is affecting you and what could be a reasonable solution.

If you think the problem is breaking the law, read the contact list on page 9 and get in touch with your local authority.



Meet with your neighbour

Explain the issue from your perspective.

Give your neighbour a chance to speak and allow them to explain their point of view.

Be flexible in your approach and consider negotiating a resolution.

If you reach an agreement, thank your neighbour and let them know you appreciate their help (see the thank you cards on page 7)



If you cannot find a solution, it is okay to ask for help

If you don't reach an agreement, that's ok. Try your best to respect your neighbour's point of view.

Contact Council or use the contact list on page 9 to ask for help.

If you need advice on what is illegal activity and what is not, see page 6.

Keep a record and use the 14-day diary. See page 11.

What happens after I lodge a customer request?

If you can't reach a solution with your neighbour and feel you are still being impacted by the issue, you can lodge a customer service request (CSR).

Lodging a CSR with Council will need to include:

1. Your name and address,
2. The location of the issue,
3. A description of the problem and
4. Any supporting evidence such as photos, records, and statements from you and/or other neighbours explaining the issue and what steps you have taken to try and resolve it.

In most instances where a CSR is considered a first-time occurrence or is considered low-priority Council will take one or more of the following steps:

1. Investigate the issue.
2. Send correspondence or issue of a warning notifying the people involved.
3. Speak with the people involved to negotiate an outcome.
4. Advise you if the problem can't be investigated by Council and/or refer you to the correct agency.

Where a CSR is considered higher priority (e.g., affecting more than one household, is a compliance issue or public or environmental health risk) and a preliminary investigation warrants further action, Council will take the following steps:

1. Investigate the issue and determine if the activity is breaking the law.
2. Issue a warning or direction to stop certain activities.
3. Issue enforcement action e.g., penalty notice, notice or order.
4. Commence legal action or intervention.

Anonymous reports will be recorded and investigated, however, they are often more difficult to resolve if further information cannot be sought.

Council is bound by privacy laws to protect the identify of customers who make a CSR and will only give out relevant information needed to try and resolve a matter.

Remember, most people don't appreciate being notified of a problem by Council when they haven't been approached by their neighbour first.

Illegal activity and land use

Does your issue relate to an illegal activity or land use? Council investigates all customer requests on the facts provided by the customer and the evidence collected during an investigation. Council investigates illegal activities and land uses, such as:

- Unauthorised building works
- Home businesses
- Illegal clearing
- Unauthorised use of premises (without consent).



Some activities require development consent, approval, permit or a licence to operate. There are some minor building renovations or works that don't require planning or building approval. This is called exempt development.

If you think your problem relates to an illegal activity or land use and is not exempt works, get in contact with Council and we can provide some advice or investigate the problem.

If you want to do your own research, Council have a range of tools to look up development consents, zoning information and land constraints.

You can also visit Land use and planning controls tweed.nsw.gov.au/development-business/land-use-planning-controls

Civil disputes and mediation

Some issues are not able to be investigated by Council or any other authority, but still need resolving. These issues are known as civil disputes and can include a range of issues. For example:

- Dividing fences
- Trees or overhanging branches
- Bird feeding (where a public health risk is not present)
- Strata Property disputes (e.g., use of common areas)
- Noise (which is not considered offensive or an illegal activity)
- Green pools (which are not a public health risk)
- Mould in private residences
- Overgrown or unsightly properties (which are not a public health risk)
- When an allegation has been made but there is no evidence to support it.

Community Justice Centres (CJC) offer free mediation support to neighbours who need help in resolving civil disputes.

CJC mediation gives everyone a chance to talk about the problem with the help of, impartial mediators.

Around 80 per cent of sessions result in an agreement.

Community Justice Centres: 1800 990 777

Free government support is available by telephone service that provides legal information, referrals and in some cases, advice for people who have a legal problem in NSW.

Law Access: 1300 888 529

Your Know your neighbour mailbox cards

Simply cut out your mailbox card, fill in your basic details and place it in your neighbour's mailbox.

Hi neighbour

When you have a spare moment can we catch up for a quick chat about

.....

It would be great if we could work something out together.

Would you be able to give me/us a call or text when you're free and we can organise a time to chat?

From your neighbour

Name

Phone

Thanks very much

Hi neighbour

When you have a spare moment can we catch up for a quick chat about

.....

It would be great if we could work something out together.

Would you be able to give me/us a call or text when you're free and we can organise a time to chat?

From your neighbour

Name

Phone

Thanks very much



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Who to contact

Below are some of the common neighbourhood issues, their restrictions, and who is best to contact for assistance.

Issue	Contact details and relevant information
Residential	
Power tools and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8pm to 7am on weekdays • 8pm to 8am weekends and public holidays
Musical instruments and electrically amplified sound equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midnight to 8am on Friday, Saturday or any day before a public holiday • 10pm to 8am on any other day <p>For antisocial behaviour or disturbances outside of normal business hours: Police Assistance Line: 131 444</p>
Air conditioners and heat pump water heaters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10pm to 7am on weekdays • 10pm to 8am on weekends and public holidays
Motor vehicles	<p>Vehicle noise is acceptable when leaving and entering residential premises.</p> <p>Other vehicle noise should be restricted between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8pm to 7am on weekdays • 8pm to 8am on weekends and public holidays
Refrigeration units fitted to motor vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8pm to 7am on weekdays • 8pm to 8am on weekends and public holidays
Pool pumps and spa pumps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8pm to 7am on weekdays • 8pm to 8am weekends and public holidays
Barking dogs and keeping of animals	Council: 1300 292 872
Civil matters (e.g. dividing fences, tree branches)	Community Justice Centres: 1800 990 777
Keeping of animals	Council: 1300 292 872
Building works (including swimming pool fences)	Council: 1300 292 872
Industrial/commercial noise	
Large industrial complexes	<p>NSW EPA: 131 555</p> <p>Council: 1300 292 872 (including development consent, building works, unauthorised use)</p>
Commercial premises, smaller factories, and backyard workshops	Council: 1300 292 872
Clubs/pubs/licensed premises (including music and patron noise)	<p>Office of Liquor and Gaming NSW: 1300 024 720 or</p> <p>Complaints form: Go to www.liquorandgaming.nsw.gov.au, select 'Make a complaint' and click the form or click www.industrynsw.tfaforms.net</p>
Construction noise	Council: 1300 292 872
Short Term Rental Accommodation (STRA) e.g. Air bnb's	<p>NSW Fair Trading: 133 220 (including accommodation standards, amenity impacts or persistent complaints and requests for issuing a strike on the property)</p> <p>Police Assistance Line: 131 444 (including antisocial behaviour or noise disturbances outside of normal business hours).</p> <p>Council: 1300 292 872 (including illegal parking, fire safety, light or noise disturbances during normal business hours).</p>

Who to contact (continued)

Transport	
Aircraft noise and operations	Airservices Australia: 1800 802 584 To make a complaint go to www.airservicesaustralia.com and select 'noise complaints' or click www.complaints.bksv.com/asa
Noisy motor vehicles (including trail bikes)	NSW EPA (including licensed or large commercial activities): 131 555 Police Assistance Line (including hooning on public roads and vehicle noise out of hours): 131 444 Council (including domestic noise pollution during normal hours): 1300 292 872
Road traffic – freeways, tollways, main roads	Roads and Maritime Services: 13 22 13 NSW EPA: 131 555
Recreational boating, jet skis	Roads and Maritime Services: 13 12 36
Amplified music from vessels	Roads and Maritime Services: 13 12 36 Water Police: 1800 658 784 Council: 1300 292 872
Other	
Fireworks	SafeWork NSW: 13 10 50
Intruder alarms	Police Assistance Line: 131 444 (including antisocial behaviour or disturbances outside of normal business hours). Council: 1300 292 872
Noise in public places (including amusement parks and events)	Police Assistance Line: 131 444 (including antisocial behaviour or disturbances outside of normal business hours). Council: 1300 292 872
Asbestos	SafeWork NSW (where a contractor is onsite): 13 10 50 Council: 1300 292 872
Illegal dumping	Council (waste dumped on public land and hazardous waste on private land): 1300 292 872
Pollution (Water)	NSW EPA (including licensed premises or large pollution events): 131 555 Council: 1300 292 872
Pollution (Air)	NSW EPA (including licensed premises or large pollution events): 131 555 Council (incl. smoke from fires): 1300 292 872

14 Day Record

Please keep a record of the issue or problem for a minimum of 14 days.

This will help Council undertake further investigation.

Once you have completed this record in full, signed and returned the form to us, we will be in contact.

Please return form via email to tsc@tweed.nsw.gov.au or deliver this form to the Murwillumbah or Tweed Heads Council Office.

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Exact location of issue:

Have you spoken to the person about the issue? Yes No

If you have spoken to the person, what was the outcome?

.....

Your signature: Date:

Please continue your record on the reverse of this form if you need more space.

Day (1-14)	Date	Time started	Time stopped	Describe the problem (e.g. noise type/volume, odour, smoke etc.)

Day (1-14)	Date	Time started	Time stopped	Describe the problem (e.g. noise type/volume, odour, smoke etc.)

Privacy statement: The personal information on this form is being collected by Council to enable further investigation. The information will not be released unless required by law. You can apply to council for access and/or amendments of this information.

