

PRESS RELEASE

Anti-social Britain: Could good neighbours become good friends?

- **More than a quarter of next door neighbours have fallen out¹**
- **Two fifths of people have no interest in socialising with their neighbours**
- **Nearly a quarter of Brits are friends with their neighbours on social media**
- **Almost a third of 18-24 year olds confess to not knowing their neighbours' names**
- **Taking in parcels is the biggest must if you want to be considered a good neighbour**

New research from Admiral Home Insurance reveals exactly what makes a good, and bad neighbour in 21st century Britain and what you could do if you want to be considered the perfect neighbour.

Taking in Amazon orders and ASOS deliveries tops the list of traits that make a good neighbour according to Brits, as almost two thirds (65%) of people think that signing for and accepting parcels is the role of a perfect neighbour.

Keeping an eye on your neighbour's property while they're away is second on the list, with over half (57%) of homeowners saying this the mark of a good neighbour.

Meanwhile keeping the noise level down was third on the list, with 47% of homeowners believing that the perfect neighbour shouldn't be heard.

Just one in 10 people go to their neighbours' house for a chat as casual conversation is enough for most people, with over a third of Brits saying that a bit of chit chat is the sign of a good neighbour.

With an aging population, a third of people say that keeping an eye on the elderly in the community is the sign of a good neighbour.

Top 10 traits of a good neighbour – how many do you have?

Neighbourly trait	Percentage
Takes in my parcels	65%
Keeps an eye on my property if we are away	57%
Doesn't make too much noise	47%
Makes casual conversation	37%
Keeps an eye on elderly neighbours	33%
Takes my bin in or out	28%
Waters my plants while I'm away	23%
Keeps a spare key for my home	23%
Feeds my pets while I'm away	16%
Lends me tools or equipment	12%



But while most people would expect and trust their neighbour to take in a package for them or watch over their home, just one in seven people would lend their neighbours household items, tools or garden equipment.

Neighbourhood watch out

In almost two thirds (64%) of Admiral's home insurance claims for theft or attempted thefts² involving neighbours, the neighbours have alerted or assisted the victim through CCTV or given helpful information relating to it, proving that keeping an eye on your property while you're away is not just a good neighbourly trait to have, but it can also be extremely beneficial.

Of those claims, in nearly one in 10 cases the neighbour actually disturbed the burglar.

Thankfully for Brits the vast majority (85%) think they would notice if someone other than their neighbour was entering their neighbour's house.

Neighbourhood security is a much more important factor for older generations with two thirds (68%) of over 65s and 67% of 55-64 year olds valuing neighbours who keep an eye on their property while they're away compared to just 28% of 25-34 year olds.

The older generations are also more likely to keep an eye on their neighbour's property while they are away with 67% of over 65s and 59% of 55-64 year olds saying they would take on the responsibility, compared to just 24% of 25-34 year olds who would do the same.

When do good neighbours become good friends?

In an age when so much of our time is spent online, almost a quarter of Brits are friends with their neighbour on social media.

While two fifths of people in the UK say they have no interest at all in socialising with their neighbours in real life the same can't be said for everyone, with 46% of people socialising with their neighbours offline at some point.

Although 14% of Brits don't currently socialise with their neighbours, it's something they would like to do. The younger generation of 18-24 year olds are the most likely to feel this way, with almost a quarter (24%) saying they would like to socialise with their neighbours.

Men are more likely to socialise with their neighbour with 51% regularly or occasionally hanging out with their neighbour compared to just 42% of women.

Where people live appears to make a difference to how they socialise with their neighbours. A quarter of those who live in a city say they go to their neighbour's house for a catch up, compared with 12% of those who live in a village and just 7% who live in a small town.

City dwellers are also most likely to regularly socialise with their neighbours; 37% said they do this, compared with 13% who live in a village, and just 4% of those who live in a small town.

On first name terms

While more than half (59%) of people say they know the names of all their neighbours, a third (34%) admit that although they know some of their neighbours' names, they don't know them all.

Despite close quarters, those living in flats are least likely to know the names of their neighbours while people living in detached houses are the most likely to know all their neighbours' names.

Almost a third (31%) of 18-24 year olds confess they don't know the names of any of their neighbours, compared to just 2% of over 65s who admit the same.

People who live in a village are most likely to know the names of all their neighbours; 74%, compared with 52% who live in a city.

Love thy neighbour

Over a quarter (28%) of Brits say they've fallen out with their neighbour, with anti-social behaviour topping the list of reasons for arguing.

Parking causes a further 22% of arguments and boundary disputes over hedges and fences causes 18% of arguments. Admiral advises to [check your deeds](#) when it comes to boundary disputes to avoid unnecessary hassle and confrontation.

Although more than one in 10 have managed to put aside their differences, 15% of people say they no longer speak to their neighbour as a result of their fall-out.

Top five reasons for falling out with neighbours

Reason for dispute	Percentage
Anti-social behaviour	34%
Noise	32%
Parking	22%
Boundary disputes (e.g. responsibility of the hedge)	18%
Children	18%

More than one in 10 men who have fallen out with a neighbour have done so over a love affair - double the amount of women (5%) who have fallen out with a neighbour over the same reason.

Matters of the heart are also more common in the younger generations, with over half (55%) of 18-34 year olds who have fallen out with a neighbour claiming the argument was the result of a love affair.

While for some the reason for their fall-out is a mystery with people suddenly experiencing the cold shoulder, some of the more unusual reasons include falling out over animals, trespassing and air pollution:

Most unusual reasons for falling out with neighbours

More unusual reasons for dispute



Neighbours were feeding birds in my garden
Neighbour kept letting our dogs out of our garden
Neighbour stole a parcel
Neighbour cut down trees at the back of our garden
Neighbour lied about us
Smoke from their chimney caused pollution
They smoked marijuana

Friendliest regions in the UK

Despite being stereotyped as busy and on-the-go, Londoners make the most effort to be neighbourly, with almost a fifth (18%) visiting neighbours for a catch up, followed by Northern Ireland (14%) and Scotland (12%).

Meanwhile at the bottom of the list is Wales, who are more likely to have a chat or say hello in passing (60%) than going to their neighbour's house to catch up.

Those in Wales are also least likely of all regions to know their neighbours' names followed by Yorkshire and the Humber.

Noel Summerfield, Head of Home Insurance at Admiral, said:

"How you interact with your neighbours can have a huge impact on your home life and having good neighbours is a sure-fire way to make life more pleasant. While the days of popping next door for a cup of sugar and meeting them for a coffee might be over, it shouldn't mean we all live solitary lives.

"Our research shows what people expect from good neighbours in the modern world and what they value most is courtesy and consideration. Whether it's saying a simple hello on your way out of the house, taking in a delivery for your neighbour or bringing in their bins, such simple actions can go a long way.

"Thankfully, only a small proportion of our home insurance claims involve neighbourly disputes. But, if you do find yourself in a disagreement with a neighbour it's always best to try and first resolve it calmly face to face rather than immediately seeking to take legal action.

"If the problem isn't resolved, keep a record and speak to your local council. If the situation leads to a point where you need to take legal advice, your home insurance may include legal protection."

Also commenting on the research, Zoe Colosimo, Chief Operating Officer of [Neighbourly](#), a platform that connects businesses and local good causes, said:

"It's extremely important to preserve the social fabric of our communities, not least to keep an eye out when a neighbour is away but to also make the effort to say hello and pop in for a cup of tea periodically.

"We know from the thousands of local charities and community causes that we work with that loneliness is being experienced by every generation in our neighbourhoods; older generations due to isolation and younger generations because of the



prevalence of online interactions rather than face-to-face. A simple "hello" carries a value that shouldn't be underestimated."

For more information on neighbourly disputes visit [Admiral's guide](#)

Arc Legal Assistance's Top Tips for avoiding dispute:

- **Be considerate** as to noise, especially when living in a flat. You might enjoy the surround sound on your TV but your neighbours probably won't.
- Before replacing fencing, **make sure your neighbour agrees** that it is your right to do so and see that they are satisfied with the positioning of the new fence. Be sure the posts are in the same line as previous, if it is impossible to use the existing postholes.
- **Don't paint your side of someone else's fence without permission.**
- Make sure any hedges or shrubbery on the boundary are well maintained so that they **do not encroach onto your neighbours property.**
- If you have concern that trees or vegetation on your neighbours land could cause damage to your property or garden, **put them on notice verbally and in writing at the earliest opportunity.** It is usually the case that a claim for damage can only be made if your neighbour is aware that you consider the trees to be a risk.
- **Always contact a neighbour before** cutting back any overhanging branches/encroaching roots.
- **Consider consulting with a Party Wall** surveyor to check that a notice doesn't need to be served on your neighbour if you are undertaking structural works or building an extension on your property.
- **Avoid undertaking work that could affect your neighbour whilst they are on holiday.**
- Before extending your property or erecting a feature in the garden, **seek advice** as to whether there are any covenants in your deeds that might allow your neighbour to protest about your works.
- Think about how **any works on your property could affect your neighbours.**
- **Bear in mind that it is not usual for the legal costs of a property dispute to exceed £100,000.** Do not let disputes escalate and ensure that if there is the risk of dispute that you seek early legal advice.

Ends

Notes to editors:

Admiral Home Insurance offers optional Family Legal Protection on its policies. Provided by Arc Legal Assistance, this offers expert legal help and up to £100,000 worth of legal costs for issues such as property or employment disputes, personal injury and personal identity theft. It also provides a 24 hour legal advice helpline for advice on any private legal problem. More information can be found at <https://www.admiral.com/home-insurance/optional-cover/family-legal-protection.php>

Regional and age breakdowns of data available on request.

Friendliest regions in the UK

Region	Percentage of people who say more than just hello
South West	45%
London	44%
Scotland	44%
Yorkshire and the Humber	43%
North East	41%
South East	40%
East/East Anglia	38%
Northern Ireland	38%
West Midlands	37%
East Midlands	34%
North West	31%
Wales	29%

Unsociable regions in the UK

Region	Percentage of people who have no interest in socialising with their neighbours
Wales	49%
Yorkshire and the Humber	48%
East	48%
North West	47%
West Midlands	46%
East Midlands	46%
Scotland	41%
South West	40%
Northern Ireland	38%
North East	37%
South East	35%
London	21%

¹In July, 4Media carried out a survey of 2,000 UK adults – full data available on request

²Based on two years of home insurance claims involving neighbours

About Admiral:

Admiral (a trading name of EUI Ltd and part of Admiral Group plc) is a UK based insurance company, founded in 1993 to specialise in car insurance. In 2005, it launched MultiCar, a product designed to help people with two or more cars get a better deal and in 2013, it launched its telematics product LittleBox which helps safe drivers receive discounts based on their driving style. Admiral also offers other insurance products including home insurance, travel insurance, pet insurance, van



insurance, learner driver insurance and MultiCover, enabling customers to insure their cars and home on one policy. Admiral was also voted the UK's Best Car Insurance Provider at the 2018/19 Personal Finance Awards and the Admiral Group employs over 7,400 people in the UK and has over 5 million UK customers.