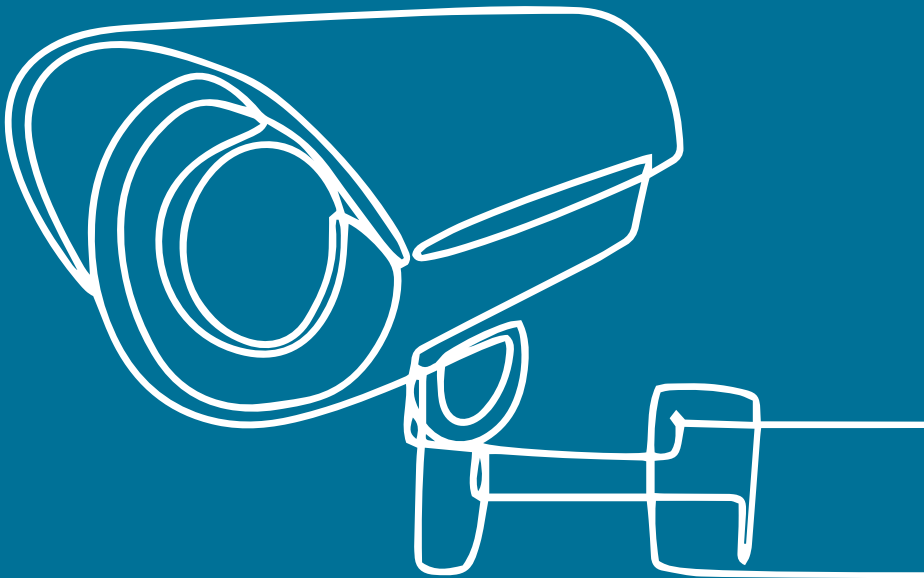




**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

# Domestic CCTV cameras and smart doorbells in your home



The use of domestic surveillance equipment such as CCTV cameras and smart doorbells have become more accepted in society and technology has become more mainstream and affordable in recent years.

Recognising this is a complicated area we have produced this leaflet to help you make sure you do not fall foul of data protection laws, maintain your relationships with your neighbours and adhere to your Tenancy Agreement.

## Why do I have to ask permission for cameras or a smart doorbell in my home?

As a Darlington Borough Council tenant and as per our Tenancy Agreement, we class cameras or smart doorbell as an alteration or improvement to your home. This means if you wish to install this type of equipment you must request permission in writing from us before carrying out any work. If you are an Introductory Tenant, you do not have the legal right to carry out improvement works.

## Is the use of recording equipment a breach of data protection laws?

No, the use of recording equipment, such as CCTV or smart doorbells, to capture video or sound recordings outside the user's property boundary is not a breach of data protection law.

When we give permission for cameras or doorbells, we recommend that you should try to point cameras away from neighbours' homes and gardens, shared spaces or public streets. But we appreciate that this is not always possible, and it is not illegal to do so.

However, there are some data protection laws that you should adhere to when you capture images or audio recordings from outside your home from a fixed camera. You should:

- Tell people that you are using recording equipment – this should be through clear signs on your property explaining that cameras are in use.
- In most circumstances, provide some of the recording if asked by a person whose images have been captured.
- Regularly or automatically delete footage.
- In most circumstances, delete recordings of people if they ask.
- Stop recording a person if they object to being recorded, but only if it is possible to do so. For example, if you can point the camera in a different direction but still use it for the same purposes such as keeping your property safe.



# What should I do if I am thinking about installing a smart doorbell or camera?

You should request permission from Housing Services, we will make a decision from this request and will offer you advice and guidance whatever the decision.

To help us make the decision we will consider things such as:

- Where the cameras would be located.
- Could the cameras have an impact on the privacy of other residents.
- Would electrical work be required to install them.
- Do other residents have cameras.
- Have we received complaints in relation to cameras in that area previously
- What are the ICO guidelines.
- Why does the applicant wish to install cameras.

We would also suggest that you talk to your neighbours to find out their views and address any concerns they have before buying the equipment.

You should also read the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) guidelines which can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/domestic-cctv-systems/>

# What do I do if my neighbour has installed CCTV and I have concerns about it?

We recommend that you start by talking to the person who owns the equipment to explain your concerns and try to come to a solution between you. You might want to ask:

- Why they are using cameras – usually this is to protect their personal property and to make them feel safer.
- Explain your concerns – they may not realise why you are worried about being recorded.
- Ask to see what they are recording – the footage may not be as intrusive as you think, seeing what it records may make you feel less concerned.

# What should I do if my neighbour and I cannot come to a solution?

You should contact the ICO and if your neighbour is a Council tenant you can report this to us. If you think they are breaking the law through violent acts or harassment you should contact the Police.

The ICO will send your neighbour a letter asking them to consider moving the cameras and to think about the privacy of others to help resolve the issues. The ICO cannot force the removal of cameras from domestic properties.

Housing Services will try to work together with you and your neighbour to find a solution, this may be through an informal meeting, mediation or in partnership with the Police. In some cases, we may have to ask for the equipment to be removed from the property if there is no resolution and it continues to cause distress and anxiety to neighbours.

# How do I contact you for more information?

You can contact us in a variety of ways:

-  Through your digital tenancy Darlington Home Online
-  Through emailing us at [housing@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:housing@darlington.gov.uk)
-  By telephone 01325 405333



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