

Some simple tips to being a good neighbour

Noise nuisance is a serious issue which affects many people and can have a significant effect on their health and wellbeing.

However, noise is an unavoidable part of urban life and it is not reasonable to expect to live in silence, especially if you live in a flat, or a terraced or semi-detached property.

The question is at what point does noise change from being a normal part of everyday life to an unreasonable intrusion.



Many people believe that they are allowed to make as much noise as they like as long as they are quiet between 11pm and 7am. This is completely false! Although it is easier to determine noise at night as unreasonable, a statutory noise nuisance can occur at any time of the day or night.

If the council decide that you are causing a noise nuisance and you do not act to stop it, you can be fined up to £5,000 and also have your equipment confiscated.

Music

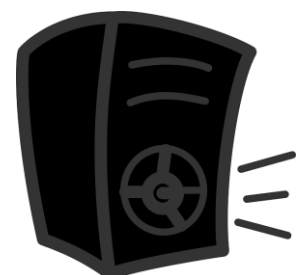
- All types of music can be disturbing, not just music with a heavy bass
- Keep the volume of your music lower at night or early in the morning
- Remember that a heavy bass can be annoying even at lower volumes, so you may need to turn the bass down
- Don't fit speakers to the party wall with your neighbours
- Playing loud music in the garden is likely to disturb more people than playing it inside
- A simple test to see if your music is too loud is to go into another room in your house with the door shut between the rooms. If you can clearly hear the music at a level that would stop you sleeping or watching the TV, your neighbour probably can too!

Parties including wedding and birthday celebrations

Most people don't mind their neighbour having the occasional loud party. However events that last for several days or until the early hours of the morning may upset people.

If you plan on having a party or any other event that could be loud, we advise that you do the following:

- Contact your neighbours before the event to advise them what you intend to do and most importantly the time you intend to finish. You may even want to invite them!



Noise Fact Sheet

- Give your neighbours a contact number to call if they have any problems during the event
- Respond politely and quickly to any complaints during the event
- Turn the music down later at night, especially after 11pm
- Keep the bass low, it can be heard a long distance away
- If you intend to have an event lasting several days, remember that people are likely to get very cross if they haven't slept properly for a few nights

As a general rule the council will not investigate complaints about a one-off party lasting for one night, however they will be recorded should the issue persist.

If I am disturbed by my neighbours – what should I do?

Your neighbour may be genuinely unaware that they are causing a disturbance and therefore speaking to your neighbours may be the quickest and most effective means of resolving matters.

If this isn't successful, contact Customer Services on 0116 288 8961 or report your issue online using <https://www.oadby-wigston.gov.uk/pages/noise>, a case will then be opened and allocated to a case officer to investigate.

What will we do?

The first step is your allocated case officer will contact you to discuss the case and set out the next steps to investigate your case or provide initial advice.

Typically this will start with asking you to record details of how and when the noise is disturbing you. This will allow us to build up a body of evidence to support your case and any action the council may be able to take.

Usually we will ask you to download The Noise App, which will allow you provide GPS tagged and time stamped recordings to the council, however diary sheets can be made available to residents without access to the a smart phone.

This must be done in all cases as it tells us:

- How long the noise lasts – it is more likely that the law will consider nuisance is being caused if the noise is ongoing for long periods
- When it is happening – it is more likely the law will consider nuisance is being caused if the noise occurs at unsocial hours i.e. night, early morning or late evening.
- How long it happens for– the more often the noise affects you, the more likely the law will consider it as a nuisance.

Once we have this information and the evidence to support your case we will then be in contact with you in relation to the next steps, this could be providing advice to your neighbour, but could escalate to the service of a legal notice instructing them to prevent or abate the noise.

This may not mean stopping the noise completely but reducing it to a more acceptable level to reduce impact on neighbours, however the best course of action will be determined by your case officer on a case-by-case basis.