

For further information relating to these issues please contact:



**Environmental Protection Service  
Stroud District Council  
Ebley Mill  
Westward Road  
Stroud  
Glos  
GL5 4UB**



**(01453) 754478**



**www.stroud.gov.uk**



**environmentalhealth@stroud.gov.uk**

## Noise Nuisance



## WHAT IS A NOISE NUISANCE?

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound. It is a fact of everyday life and we all generate noise to some extent. However, we are all entitled to expect that the noise intrusions of others does not interfere unreasonably with our own lives.



Examples of noises that cause complaints include amplified music, DIY activities, barking dogs, fans, motors, etc. In many cases the persons causing noise may be unaware that they are causing a problem. In those instances a polite request can often resolve the problem in an amicable way.

Where informal efforts fail to resolve a noise problem you may bring the matter to the attention of Stroud District Council's Environmental Protection Service. Officers will seek to assess whether the noise constitutes a statutory nuisance, i.e. whether it is a significant and unreasonable interference rather than just an annoyance or the mere detection of noise. The factors to be assessed include:-

- The volume, duration and frequency of noise occurrences;
- The time of day or night of the noise occurrences;
- The character of the locality;
- Whether the noise arises from unreasonable activities or is "necessary"; and
- The sensitivity of the complainant - nuisance must be assessed as to how it affects the "average" person.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I COMPLAIN?



Your complaint will be directed to an Officer within the Environmental Protection Service. The following procedure will be followed:-

- You will be asked to complete an accurate diary detailing when the noise occurs and how it affects you.
- Where circumstances warrant it, a letter will be sent to the alleged perpetrator to bring the matter to his/her attention and request co-operation.
- Noise monitoring equipment may be installed at your property if the completed diary indicates that a nuisance may exist.
- If noise occurrences are predictable, an Officer may visit to make an assessment.
- If a statutory nuisance is found to exist, an Abatement Notice will be served on the person responsible to make him or her remedy the situation.
- If problems persist after service of the Notice and its terms are breached, the Council may ultimately prosecute the "offender" in the Magistrates' Court. A successful prosecution may lead to a fine of up to £5000 (or £20,000 for a business).

## TIPS FOR REDUCING NOISE

### **Music & Parties:**

- Keep the volume down, especially after 23:00.
- Position speakers away from partition walls, floors & ceilings. Keep the bass level down.
- Keep doors and windows closed to reduce noise outbreak.
- Pre-warn neighbours about parties - perhaps invite them!

### **Banging Doors & Footsteps:**

- Avoid slamming doors and running up and down stairs, especially if you live in a flat.
- Be aware that laminate flooring is likely to increase noise levels - your floor may be someone else's ceiling.

### **DIY Activity:**

- Warn neighbours before undertaking major DIY projects.
- Try not to carry out noisy activities late into the evening or early in the morning at weekends.

### **Dogs:**

- Your dog is likely to be quieter if it is not hungry, has toys to stimulate it, has been exercised and is comfortable.
- It may help if your dog can hear a human voice (e.g. a radio at low volume) and is not likely to be disturbed by people passing by (e.g. by closing curtains or confining to a quieter area of the property).

### **General:**

- Try not to use domestic appliances late at night, e.g. washing machines, vacuum cleaners and dishwashers.
- Noisy appliances may benefit from being placed on a carpet or mat to reduce vibration.
- Make children aware that their noise can upset others.
- React positively to any approaches from neighbours about your noise.