
Bath & North East
Somerset Council



How to prevent Noise Nuisance

Domestic

Environmental Protection

Introduction

Noise can affect people's enjoyment of their homes and become a nuisance. This leaflet contains practical advice about how to reduce nuisances and prevent them.

When a nuisance has an unreasonable effect on people living nearby, action can be taken under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Under this legislation, the Council has a duty to investigate all complaints about nuisances and if we feel that the nuisance constitutes a Statutory Nuisance we will take action.

To be classed as a Statutory Nuisance in terms of the law, it must be clear that the nuisance has a significant impact upon people nearby. When assessing if an alleged nuisance is a Statutory Nuisance we consider a variety of factors including:

- The time(s) at which it happens;
- How often it happens;
- How long it lasts;
- The volume or intensity of the alleged nuisance;
- The location and characteristics of the area where the alleged nuisance takes place.

The matter may also be investigated under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The behaviour needs to meet three tests before the Council can take further action:

- The behaviour affects the Quality of Life of those in the local area;
- The behaviour is continuous or persistent;
- The behaviour is unreasonable.

Each case is assessed individually and the particular circumstances relating to it are considered.

If you are approached by neighbours complaining about the noise, please listen to their concerns and take time to view the problem if relevant. Take all reasonable action to minimise the noise and tell them what you will do to resolve the situation and when you will do it.

If a complaint has been made about you to the Council, where possible we work to resolve nuisance activity informally by discussion and negotiation. However, if the Council is satisfied that a Statutory Nuisance exists or the matter is unreasonable, a Notice can be served on the person(s) responsible. Failure to comply with the notice can result in court action. If convicted, the person responsible for the nuisance can face a fine.

For more information please contact the Environmental Protection Team on: 01225 477551, or email Environmental_Protection@bathnes.gov.uk or visit the website www.bathnes.gov.uk

How to avoid causing a noise nuisance.

Amplified Music & TV

Keep the volume as low as possible, especially late at night; use headphones;

Set the bass control as low as possible to avoid causing problems with the “bass beat”;

In a terraced property or flat, stand outside with the front door and the windows closed; if you can hear the music or the TV, so can your neighbour;

Site the speakers well away from party walls and place on a carpet or rubber mat to reduce vibrations.



DIY

- Carry out noisy operations during the day. Use evenings for less noisy work such as painting and decorating;
- Don't leave equipment running – turn it off after use;
- Remember hired equipment is usually more powerful and therefore noisier than normal DIY equipment;
- Complete the work as quickly as possible. Don't let it go on for months;
- Inform neighbours when you are going to carry out potentially noisy work, especially on party walls or floors.



Car Repairs

- Don't rev the engine for long periods of time;
- Where possible, carry out work in a garage;
- Carry out noisy operations during the day, avoiding early morning and late evenings;
- Avoid noisy operations on Sundays.



Use of Domestic Appliances

- Site fridges, freezers and washing machines away from party walls, if possible;
- Stand washing machines/ spin dryers on a solid floor or place on a carpet/ rubber mat to reduce vibration;
- Operate noisy equipment, such as washing machines and vacuum cleaners during the day;
- Mow the lawn and use garden power tools at a reasonable time, not early in the morning or late at night.



Musical Instruments

- If you play a musical instrument, do not practice early in the morning or late at night;
- If the instrument has an amplifier, then turn down the volume or use headphones;
- If you play the drums use practice pads.



Social Events

When holding a party or a barbeque, respect your neighbours;

- Inform your neighbours prior to the event if it is likely to create noise that may cause unreasonable disturbance;
- Ensure persons arriving and leaving your property keep noise to a minimum;
- Consider reducing noise in the late evening to lessen the impact on your neighbours;
- Site any speakers away from neighbours' properties and angle them into your room or garden so the sound is directed away from the neighbours.

Noise in the Street

Noise from vehicles, equipment and machinery in the street can constitute a noise nuisance under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. In order to prevent occurrence of a noise nuisance, ensure the duration of the noise is limited and avoid repetition.

- If work is essential, keep nearby residents informed of what work is being done and how long it should last;
- If in a vehicle, use it responsibly and avoid revving of the engine, sounding the horn and playing the car stereo too loudly.



Alarms

Ensure your car alarm is in good repair and operates within acceptable parameters, and that it is not causing an unreasonable disturbance;

Audible intruder alarms and fire alarms can cause a nuisance if sounding for prolonged periods. Ensure alarms are maintained/ serviced regularly;

It is recommended that you provide a neighbour with contact details of a suitable key holder, in case your alarm misfires whilst you are away from your property.



Bath & North East Somerset Council Offices

Opening Hours

Bath

Lewis House
Manvers Street
Bath
BA1 1JG

One Stop Shop Opening hours:

Monday to Thursday 8.30am to 5pm;
Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

Keynsham Civic Centre

Market Walk,
Keynsham.
BS31 1FS

One Stop Shop Opening Hours:

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 8.30am to 5pm;
Tuesday 8.30am to 6pm;
Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm;
Saturday 9am to 4.30pm

Midsomer Norton

The Hollies,
Midsomer Norton
BA3 2DP

One Stop Shop Opening Hours:

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 8.30am to 5pm;
Tuesday 9.30am to 5pm;
Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

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