

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR!

ENTERTAINMENT NOISE FROM PUBS AND CLUBS

Musical entertainment in Pubs and Clubs can cause noise problems. This leaflet tells you how to avoid noise nuisance in order to maintain good relations with your neighbours.

Entertainment in pubs and clubs is traditional and is an important part of community life. It brings in business for the licensee and for the local economy. However, it can also lead to noise nuisance, sometimes badly affecting neighbours. Modern amplification and music styles make this an increasing problem.

Premises now open longer and later than they used to, with the prospect of 24 hour opening. Are you sure the location and structure of your premises is suitable for the entertainment you intend to provide? Due to the proximity of neighbours, some establishments may simply not be suitable for entertainment. Having said this, preventing noise nuisance need not cost money:-

Volume and Bass – Simply lowering the volume and reducing the bass frequencies will go a long way to avoiding noise nuisance. Keep the music at a reasonable level. Tune out the bass (this is a major problem with complaints).

Windows and doors – Keep these shut, including emergency doors.

Loudspeakers – Keep these away from party walls with your neighbours. Place speakers on acoustic mats or absorbent material which will absorb some sound. Speakers can also be hung from the ceiling – this helps to stop the noise transmitting through the building structure.

Sound system design – Proper design is important. For example, it is better to have several smaller speakers “dotted” around the premises, rather than one large one next to the DJ. Have controls so you can alter the bass.

Control your entertainers – Management need to be in control. The event is in your premises and it is your responsibility. During the evening, go out into the road and garden to check noise levels. Do not let the volume “creep” up during the evening.

Control your customers – Especially as they leave your premises.

Other noise control measures may include:-

- The fitting of a noise limiting device.
- The fitting of secondary glazing or locking curtain windows, where windows point at residential neighbours.
- Lobbied entrances (double doors). External doors should be close-fitting to prevent noise from “leaking out”.
- Mechanical ventilation, or even some air conditioning units, may become necessary.
- You may need to ensure that music will cut out if emergency exits are opened. Customers often open emergency exits if it is too hot and this is why you may need mechanical ventilation. Interlock the emergency exits with your noise limiting device.

Pub Gardens and other outside areas – Be very careful if you use speakers in your pub gardens. This can easily cause a noise nuisance to your neighbours. Loud voices, especially those singing along to the music, will certainly cause a problem. If you have a beer garden, you may decide to limit the hours it is used, to try and avoid causing late night nuisance.

Children’s play areas can also cause a noise nuisance. If not adequately supervised, a group of children can create quite a lot of noise.

Barbecues can also cause problems. Not only can you have loud voices with people enjoying themselves, but it is also a prime time to have external loudspeakers. Please think about how this could annoy your neighbours.

External Loud Speakers – Loudspeakers on the pavement or fixed to the walls of your premises fronting the pavement are not acceptable. They are actually prohibited by law.

Licensing and Enforcement – We ask you to always consult the Noise Team and the Licensing Section before providing amplified music or entertainment. Many events will need an Entertainment Licence. Even if they do not need a licence, it is best to get advice before you start.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Noise Team must take action to stop (and prevent) nuisance. If an Abatement Notice is served on you, and it is contravened, the Courts can impose a fine of up to £20,000.

What it comes down to is consideration for others. Please enjoy your entertainment, along with your customers, but remember – other people wish to enjoy their homes and gardens.

Contact information:

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