

Gloucester City Council

Environmental Health Factsheet

NEIGHBOUR NOISE

Noise from neighbours is a common source of nuisance and annoyance. It is inevitable that we will hear our near neighbours to some extent, but it is unreasonable for the behaviour of others to intrude into our lives excessively.

What You Can Do

Most problems can be resolved amicably by talking about the problem to the person concerned. Often we are not aware that we are causing a problem, and most people are happy to make slight changes to their behaviour so that they do not upset their neighbours. However, you should approach the matter carefully if you think that your neighbour might react angrily to your complaint.

If you are unable to come to an agreement with your neighbour, the City Council can investigate and take action on your behalf.

In order to do so, the Council needs to be sure that the problem complained of is so severe as to allow legal action to be taken under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Enclosed with this factsheet are log sheets for you to complete and return so that the Council can assess what action may be appropriate. You should keep a diary of what the noise is and how it affects you for a period of approximately two weeks. At the end of this period, read through the information you have recorded and, if you are still unable to discuss it with your neighbour, return the sheets promptly to the address shown.

What The Council Can Do

When the Council receives the log sheets an officer will contact you to discuss further action. Please note that we will not usually carry out any further investigation until we have received properly completed log sheets.

If the officer believes that the problem described in your log sheets allows further action to be taken, we will need to gather further evidence to proceed. This may be by personal visit or through the use of sound recording equipment. In most circumstances we will make a maximum of three visits to gain evidence.

Once the evidence has been gathered, the Officer will decide whether legal action is appropriate. The offender may be served with a notice requiring that they limit or stop the noise in question.

If the notice is not complied with the officer will need to gain evidence of this fact. The Council may then prosecute the offender in the Magistrates' Court. In some circumstances noise-making equipment can be confiscated.

Please be aware that we are legally bound to assess whether noise would affect the 'average person'. It is inevitable that we will hear our near neighbours to some extent. Even if you are used to unusually quiet surroundings, need quiet or sleep in the daytime, we must always use the 'average person' test.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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