

Noise nuisance



Noise from neighbours is a common source of disturbance and can be very upsetting, causing annoyance, lack of sleep, stress, and generally affecting quality of life. This booklet gives you guidance about what to do if you are being troubled by noise nuisance.

To report noise nuisance you can contact us any of the following ways:

- Call the Service Centre on: **020 7613 8080**
- Email: **asb@newlon.org.uk**
- Write to us at: Housing Services, Newlon Housing Trust, Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, London, N17 9FE

What is noise nuisance?

Everyone should expect a reasonable degree of noise from neighbours.

If you are being disturbed by such noise, it could be that:

- Your neighbours may be behaving unreasonably, for example playing loud music day or night or allowing their dog to bark all day.
- Neighbours may have different lifestyles and shift patterns, for example there may be small children playing or the washing machine is vibrating, and the insulation in the floors or walls between you may not cut out the sounds.
- You have become over-sensitive to the noise, particularly if you do not get on with your neighbours. Some people 'tune into' the noise from next door and find it annoying, while others do not.

Tips for preventing noise

Have consideration for your neighbours. There are certain things you could do to minimise your noise such as:

- Have carpets and curtains as they absorb sound.
- Keep the volume down on TVs and stereos.
- Consider using headphones when listening to music.
- Arrange speakers away from partition walls and the floor. If you are putting them near the floor, make sure they go on stands or something that insulates the sound.

- Tell your neighbours if you are having a one-off party and give them some idea of when the party will end.
- Make sure noisy household appliances such as the washing machine and vacuum cleaner are used at reasonable times and never between 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- Avoid doing noisy DIY activities after 9 p.m. and before 9 a.m. If neighbours have young children they will go to bed earlier so try to be considerate.
- You may be able to change the flooring. However, please seek permission from us first.

What should I do if I am being disturbed by noise from my neighbours?

Firstly, provided you feel comfortable to, approach your neighbour and explain politely that you are troubled by the noise. If it's appropriate you could invite them into your home so they can hear the noise for themselves. Most neighbours will be glad to do what they can to reduce the noise.

If the problem persists it is worth discussing the problem with our Service Centre. Most tenancy terms include a requirement that residents do not cause disturbance to neighbours. We can take action if serious disturbance is being caused.

Where it is not household noise, please phone the Noise Pollution Team (see the website for your local Council for details).

What initial action can Newlon take to tackle noise nuisance?

- We will ask you to complete an incident diary, a template for which is available on our website – www.newlon.org.uk. Please contact us if you do not have access to the internet. You should record incidents which are likely to be statutory nuisance rather than household noise.

We will need to know the date and time of the incident, where it occurred, the source of the noise and details of any witnesses to the incident.

- If you feel it is difficult to try and resolve these problems, then mediation can help. You can be referred to professional mediators who can help you explore possible solutions to disputes. This service is free to residents.
- We can send a letter reminding the offending resident to abide by their tenancy or lease terms.
- Where appropriate, we will arrange to meet with you.

Statutory noise nuisance

There is legislation covering nuisance – including noise nuisance. Your local authority's Noise Control team deals with defined statutory noise nuisance. If noise nuisance persists, our Enforcement team will get together with the Noise Control team to examine the problem.

What constitutes a statutory noise nuisance?

This cannot be easily defined, but could be described as an unreasonable interference with the enjoyment of your property. It must occur regularly and continue for a period of time that makes it unreasonable.

The following are unlikely to be a statutory nuisance:

- A one-off party.
- Neighbours arguing.
- A lawn mower used during the day.
- A baby crying, children playing or dogs barking occasionally.

Action to tackle proven statutory noise nuisance

Depending on the seriousness and type of nuisance, the following types of formal action can be taken to stop the statutory nuisance:

- A formal warning letter can be sent to the resident causing the noise, saying that we will consider taking legal action if the noise does not stop.
- Under the Environmental Protection Act a local authority can serve an 'abatement notice' to the resident.
- Legal action – tenancy breach/injunction.
- Applying for an eviction order. If there is sufficient evidence to prove that a nuisance is being caused we can apply to the court

for a court order. Like other forms of legal action, we will have to prove the nuisance is taking place which will usually include residents who have been affected going to court as witnesses.

Will the perpetrator be told who reported the noise nuisance?

We will not reveal your identity to the alleged perpetrator without your permission but cannot guarantee assumptions will not be made. For example, if you live in a very small block of two flats and complain about loud noises it will be difficult to attempt to resolve a problem without revealing your identity.

What can I do if I am not happy with the way my problem has been handled?

If you are not confident that we are dealing with your problem adequately you can make a complaint in any of the following ways:

- Email: serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk
- Fill in the online complaints form on our website: www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint
- Call us on: **020 7613 8080**

If you would like this information in large print, audio, Braille, or an alternative format, please ask a member of staff.

Newlon Housing Trust
Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk,
Hale Village, London, N17 9FE.
Tel: 020 7613 8080

Phone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.

Newlon Housing Trust is a charitable housing association.

This leaflet was correct at the time of printing. Information does change over time. Please check our publications at www.newlon.org.uk/publications/leaflets-brochures/ for the latest version.

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