

# Reducing noise in your home

## A guide for council tenants and leaseholders

Complaints about noise, particularly noise from neighbours, are amongst the most common complaints made to the Council.

A certain amount of noise will be unavoidable when you live close to others but there is a lot you can do to help reduce the noise that you make.



People may not be aware that they are disturbing neighbours, for example, wooden flooring can amplify sound.

Unfortunately noise can sometimes lead to disputes between neighbours which can be stressful and upsetting for everyone involved.

We have outlined below some steps you can take to help reduce sound coming from your home:

- Talk to your family and other people who live with you to ask them to be aware of your neighbours and avoid things like shouting, slamming doors, children jumping around and heavy footfall. As a tenant or leaseholder you are responsible for their noise as well as your own.
- Let your neighbours know beforehand if you will be doing something noisy like DIY or holding a party and give times when they can expect it to start and stop. If people know in advance they are usually far happier to tolerate the noise.
- Don't have frequent parties.
- When you have visitors, particularly between 11pm and 8am, ask them to arrive and leave your home quietly.
- Be careful closing the main entrance door. These are a common cause of noise complaint at night times as they can slam – ask your visitors to close these quietly too.
- Keep your television, radio and music volume down and, if it will be heard outside your home between 11pm and 8am, wear headphones.

- Place your stereo and audio equipment away from walls that are shared with a neighbour. Use stands for your speakers and keep the bass low.
- If you have people living beneath you keep floors, including hallways and stairs covered with carpet and a good quality underlay or something with similar noise reducing qualities. Rugs do not have the same sound reducing qualities as carpets and so should not be used instead.
- Fit felt, rubber or cork pads under chair and table legs to prevent them scraping noisily. This will also help protect your floors. Wear slippers indoors and avoid walking in high heel and hard soled shoes.
- Avoid moving heavy furniture or using washing machines, spin driers and vacuum cleaners at night.
- If you need to do noisy DIY you should do this no later than 6pm on weekdays, 1pm on Saturdays and not at all on Sundays if this can be avoided. Keep the evenings and Sunday free to carry out less noisy work (such as decorating). Remember that we must give you our permission in writing before you start work if you wish to carry out improvements.
- If you own a dog, do not leave it alone for long periods. Don't let it bark or run around in your home, particularly at night. If you need help in managing your dog's behaviour speak with your housing officer who can provide support and assistance through Camden's Dog Hub service.
- Finally, be cooperative if someone complains to you about noise and listen to their point of view. Remember that they might be hearing noise you are unaware of making.



Written by the Housing support group  
 Bidborough House  
 38/50 Bidborough Street,  
 WC1H 9DB  
 Tel 020 7974 4444

August 2013