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Tenant Participation  
Housing Service  
Housing Repairs  
Council Information Services



**HOUSING &  
CUSTOMER SERVICES**  
Your Questions Answered

# NOISE



## What can I do if I am bothered about the noise coming from my neighbour?

If you are concerned about the noise from your neighbours try to speak to them about it. You may find they are unaware they are disturbing you and will be able to easily take action which will reduce their noise. Everyone makes a noise sometimes which could cause irritation to others and it can be worse when you live in a flat or adjacent to another house. Often talking to your neighbour will help solve the problem and you can reach an agreement on when to play music, use household appliances, undertake car repairs or DIY. The problem may be a simple one to solve and most people will be glad to reduce their noise once they realise it is disturbing you.

## How much noise is too noisy?

Everybody has a different level they find acceptable. No house or flat is totally soundproof and everyone can expect to hear some noise. If you are unsure and want some further advice you can contact your local Environmental Health Department. They will investigate your complaint and take action where necessary. They may also ask you to start keeping a diary when the noise happens to help them investigate your complaint.

## What can the Environmental Health Department do?

They can write to the person causing the nuisance and ask them to take steps to reduce the noise. In more serious cases if they believe a statutory nuisance is occurring they will take further action. A statutory nuisance is a “noise from premises which is prejudicial to health or a nuisance”. In reality this means Environmental Health measuring the level of noise, how often it occurs and at what times before deciding if it can be classed as a statutory nuisance. If they decide a statutory nuisance exists then they can issue an abatement notice which requires the noise to be stopped altogether or limited to certain times of the day.

## What happens if the noise still doesn't stop?

If someone disobeys an abatement notice then they have committed an offence and could be prosecuted by the local authority and fined.

## What if the noise is coming from a pub or shop?

Business premises also have a duty to make sure they are not causing a nuisance. There are set limits to the amount of noise they can make and the Environmental Health Department will be able to give you further advice and assistance.

## What other action can I take?

You could consider taking legal action on your own behalf but this could prove expensive and should only be used as a last resort. It is better to try to resolve the problem in a friendly way especially if you are going to continue living beside the person who is causing the noise. One way of doing this is mediation. This is when an independent third party will listen to the views of both people and help them to reach an agreement. You can contact your local area housing office to find out more about mediation.

## How can I make sure I am not being too noisy?

- What you consider acceptable may not be the same for the people round about you. Think about the volume you are playing your stereo or watching t.v. Can you hear other peoples? Then they can probably hear yours.
- Consider what time you are using household appliances. Are you using the washing machine too early or late at night ? Can you position it away from party walls or place a mat underneath to reduce vibrations?
- Do you play your car stereo too loudly or leave your dog at home to bark all day ? Think about what affect this could have on your neighbours.
- Are you planning a party ? Your neighbours are likely to be more understanding if they have plenty of notice and you try to keep the noise at a minimum.

**Often talking to your neighbour can solve the problem and you can reach an agreement .....**

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## Customers with Special Requirements:



**West Lothian Council**

Text phones offer the opportunity for people with a hearing impairment to access the council.

**The Text Phone number is 18001 01506 651115**

A loop system is also available in all offices.

Information is available in Braille, tape, large print and community languages. Please contact the Interpretation and Translation Service on 0131 242 8181.

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الرجاء الإتصال بخدمة الترجمة على الهاتف: 0131 242 8181

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這份資料是可以凸字、錄音帶、大字印刷及社區語言的式本提供。請聯絡傳譯及翻譯服務部。電話：0131 242 8181

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If you have used the Council's complaints procedure and you are still unhappy, you can pass your complaint, within a year, to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman, 23 Walker Street, Edinburgh, EH3 7HX Tel: 0870 011 5378 Email: enquiries@scottishombudsman.org.uk