

## When noise really disturbs.....

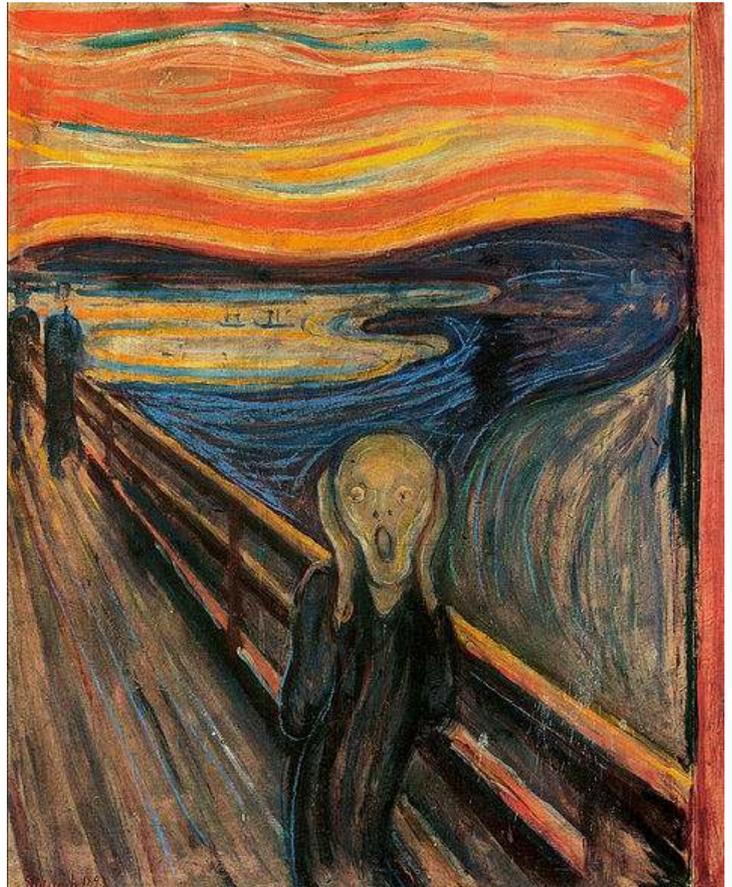
*'I have never seen anything that affects people like noise does'* Pamela Parker Shine, a noise inspector in Montgomery County, USA

**When noise becomes really disturbing, it can dominate every aspect of our lives and people will move mountains to get rid of it.**

It can be difficult for people who haven't been really disturbed by noise to understand the lengths those who are disturbed will go to get rid of it.

I wrote in *Why Noise Matters*, published in 2011:

*When noise – any noise – becomes really disturbing, it can dominate every aspect of our lives. It always seems to be there, an ever-present shadow, darting, taunting, tantalising; forever just out of reach. The desire to get rid of the offending noise by almost any means possible can become overwhelming. People spend their waking – and sleeping – hours fantasising on how to stop it. They dream of poisoning the barking dog; of shooting down the roaring jet; of smashing the neighbour's stereo; or of derailing the latest lorry that thunders past."*



**And, for the most part, we are talking about your average person who led a fairly typical life until the noise hit.** Some will be amongst the 10% of people the German psychologist Rainer Guski identified as particularly noise sensitive. Many will not.

**Most noise sufferers are not good, certainly initially, at solutions.** They just want rid of the noise. But they often don't know how to go about it. They have not been in this situation before. They are not campaigners or politicians. But the drive to get rid of the noise means many find themselves doing things they never imagined they would: going to rallies; attending public meetings; taking part in demonstrations; writing letters; speaking with lawyers; neglecting family; foregoing a social life. I once said to a noise sufferer "I'll buy you a drink if you win your battle". He replied: "I'm glad you offered. I've forgotten how to go to the bar!" Noise. Driving ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

**Millions around the world are not just irritated by noise but deeply disturbed by an aspect of it.** Many don't have the choice to move away. The real tragedy is that the solutions do exist to cut noise.

**And it's why the UK Noise Association exists.**