

# THE BOTTOM RUNG

Noise: the challenges, trends, technologies, politics and opportunities

Looking forward; seeking solutions

Autumn 2022

## LONDON TOPS NOISY CAR LEAGUE AS PUBLIC BACK NOISE CAMERAS




A Freedom of Information request, submitted to all local authorities in the UK, revealed London topped the list with over 1500 complaints in 2020. London boroughs occupied the top four places.

Polling from ChooseMyCar shows 71% Britons support noise cameras in cities, and 67% back them in rural areas.

These findings will encourage the Government, which is looking to introduce trials of acoustic cameras. The cameras will identify number plates. No date has yet been set for the trials

Many residents can find 'boom' cars more disturbing than the noise of regular traffic. Boom cars often prowl the streets at night. Their 'souped up' engines, regularly accompanied by loud bass music, emit a disturbing low frequency noise absent from the standard car.



	 Local Authority	 Region	 Number of complaints
1	Islington	London	301
2	Redbridge	London	290
3	Kensington and Chelsea	London	232
4	Tower Hamlets	London	210
5	County Durham	North East	162
6	Leeds	Yorkshire & the Humber	156
7	Cherwell	South East	153
8	Cornwall	South West	146
9	Bradford	Yorkshire & the Humber	140
10	Northumberland	North East	129
11	Hounslow	London	100
12	Greenwich	London	90
13	York	Yorkshire & the Humber	89
14	Rhondda Cynon Taf	Wales	87
15	Leicester	East Midlands	82
16	Tunbridge Wells	South East	81
17	East Lothian	Scotland	79
18	Cardiff	Wales	74
19	Newham	London	72
20	Rugby	West Midlands	69
21	Cheshire East	North West	68
22	Liverpool	North West	61
23	East Devon	South West	60
23	Falkirk	Scotland	60
23	South Norfolk	East of England	60
24	Mid Sussex	South East	59
25	Shropshire	West Midlands	58

# **PUT THE BRAKES ON: no more zooming at 60mph through country roads**

**An abridged version of a piece by Nicholas Hellen which first appeared in The Sunday Times (7/8/22)**

Perched in the Surrey Hills in an area of outstanding natural beauty, the hamlet of Coldharbour is popular with day-trippers. Drivers coming from London must first watch their speed on the dual carriageway, yet once they enter Coldharbour they can let rip at 60mph. The twisting lane is plagued by joyriders on scrambler motorcycles and bangers who race to a cricket pitch up a rutted track, which, because it is a “byway open to all traffic”, also has a legal limit of 60mph.



This autumn, though, things will change. In what is claimed to be the first scheme of its kind, Surrey Council [in SE England] will pilot limits of 20mph and 30mph across about 80 square miles south of a line from Guildford to Dorking, on roads that now let traffic travel at 60mph. Surrey Council says the changes will “reduce the risk and severity of collisions ... reduce air and noise pollution, and make it safer, easier and more pleasant to walk, cycle and ride horses”. Local authorities have the power to change the speed limit but until now have done this piecemeal, in response to traffic accidents.

Rural roads now have the distinction of being the most dangerous, ten times worse than motorways, with an annual toll of about 10,000 deaths and serious injuries among motorists, cyclists and walkers. Most road deaths (57 per cent) in Britain occur on rural roads, even though they account for 43 per cent of traffic, according to the Department for Transport. Soon, other rural areas could mirror Coldharbour in reducing the speed limit. West Sussex has expressed an interest and other counties are expected to follow suit, according to Duncan Knox, the council official in charge of the project.

**The UK Noise Association writes: The measure will reduce noise.** Lower speeds, if properly enforced, mean less noise. Cutting default speed limits from 30mph to 20mph, as has happened in many places in the UK, will reduce traffic noise by around 3 decibels - 3dB(A) in the jargon – and up to 6 decibels at peak periods. A cut of 3dB(A) would half the noise. Yet, noise needs to be cut by about 10dB(A) before we *hear* it as half as loud, because of the way our brain processes noise. If lower speed limits were combined with steadier acceleration and braking, the results are even more dramatic. Aggressive acceleration increases noise by as much as 6 decibels. A 20mph limit, plus calmer acceleration, could cut noise by nearly 10dB. Cutting higher speed limits also reduces noise. A modelled speed limit reduction from between 60 and 70 mph to 40 mph on the M32 urban motorway in Bristol was predicted to cut noise by 3 - 5dB(A). A reduction from 60mph to 20mph or 30mph would therefore be significant. More information can be found at <https://www.20splenty.org/noise and speed>

# CERTIFIED FOR SOUND

Our winter edition carried an article by Marion Marincat, the CEO of Mumbli, the company which works with venues to keep the noise levels down. Below is more about the innovative company and, right, our visit to one of the venues to see for ourselves how it works.....

**Mumbli is a smart noise monitoring platform.** It addresses noise pollution in public social spaces to reduce the negative impact on revenue and enable an audio inclusive environment for staff and guests.

**Find out what sort of venue suits you:**

[Hearing Personality](#)

So here is how you discover your hearing personality, based on your atmosphere preferences and how you enjoy particular sounds.

**If you are a venue:**

[Book a demo](#)

- Step 1: At venue product demo and assessment of your space(s)
- Step 2: Installation of the sound monitoring devices
- Step 3: Weekly insight reports sent and discussed with you



Val Weedon and John Stewart from the UK Noise Association interview Mumbli's Marion Marincat and Olly Morton. Video will be in our next issue.

## Find out more about Mumbli

**How Mumbli works**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rfkNCqXuX4>

<https://app.mvpr.io/company/mumbli?preview=true>

**Hearing Festival**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGf3lnIFwFA>



# COFFEE AND CAKE AT SIGNORELLIS

*We saw – and heard – the future, and it's mellow*

The key attraction for the venue is the fact the improved ambience is good for business.



Mumbli installs unobtrusive devices which monitor and manage the noise

Signorellis is close to the Olympic Park in East London. It serves coffee and fabulous cakes and croissants. But what makes it so different from most venues is the lack of noise. It has been treated for sound. Mumbli has worked with the venue to install features, such as panels in the ceiling, to deal with the noise. There is background music playing but it doesn't interfere with conversation. The morning we were there the clientele were relatively young; many working on their laptops. When I returned to Stratford's Westfields Shopping Centre, with music blasting, it was like going back in time. In Signorellis I had seen – and heard –



the mellow future. Mumbli works with venues which are keen to reduce noise in and around their premises. The key attraction for the venue is the fact the improved ambience is good for business. It brings in more customers. A good market-led solution. When the work is complete the venue is able to display the Certified for Sound kite-mark. Our winter issue will feature visits to more venues certified for sound.

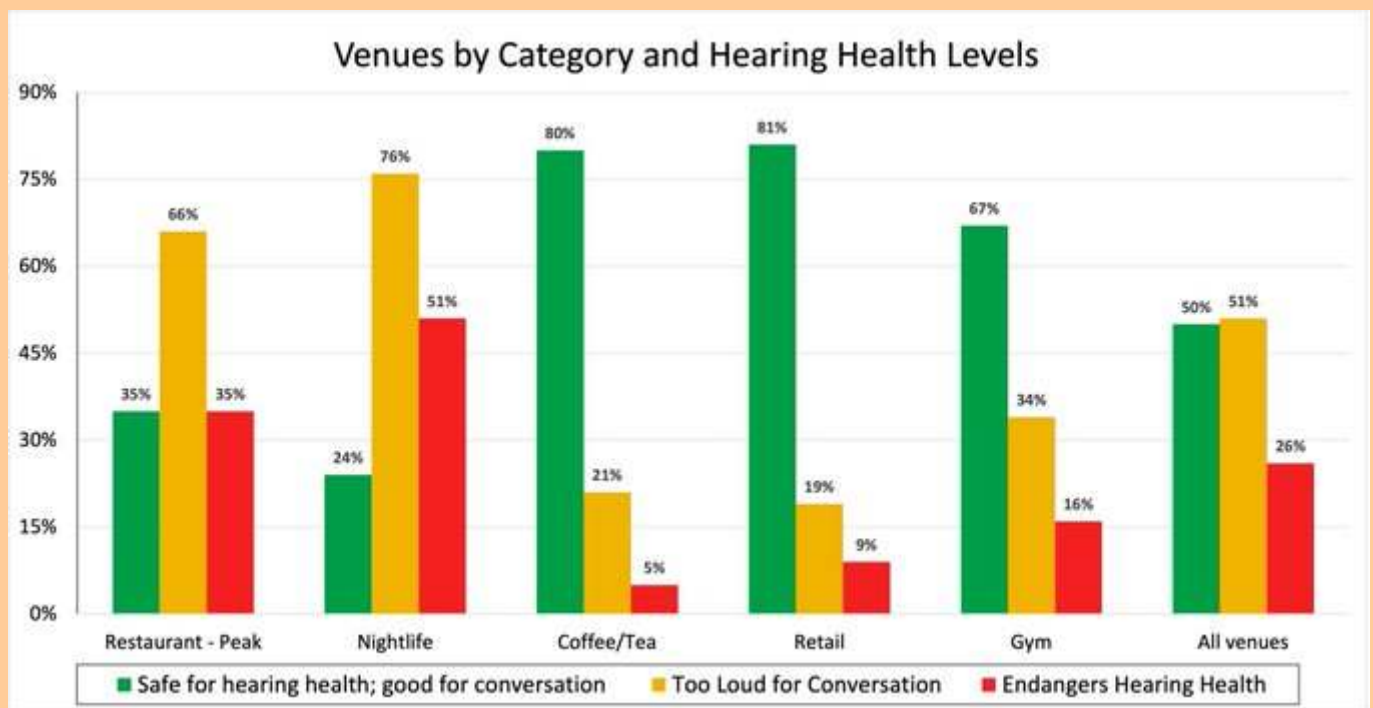
[www.signorelli.co.uk](http://www.signorelli.co.uk)



# THE APP WHICH ALLOWS YOU TO MEASURE THE NOISE IN A VENUE



Remember this from last year? The data collected by people in the venues they visited. Now SoundPrint, the company founded by Gregory Scott, a New Yorker with hearing loss, is launching its 2022 challenge.



## SoundPrint's 2022 Find Your Quiet Place Challenge!

Join SoundPrint this October for the second annual Challenge to promote Hearing Health Awareness in your community. Over 30 hearing health organizations are collaborating with SoundPrint to promote this important health effort. Participants will take sound measurements using the SoundPrint app decibel meter and submit the measurements to the app's database. The collection of sound level data will enable SoundPrint to advocate for safe noise levels, help communities find quieter places, and protect the public's hearing health. Prizes to be won while making the world a Quieter Place!

Find out more on the [FYQP webpage](#) or mail [info@soundprint.co](mailto:info@soundprint.co)

# TACKLING THE NEIGHBOUR NOISE EPIDEMIC

*You won't believe what a relief it is to hear from you and tell me the noise my family and myself are experiencing is unacceptable.*

*My comments as to how the noise was affecting me were very heartfelt and I was clearly in quite a dark place with it all (begging for help).*

## There is a complaint about noisy neighbours every 80 seconds

In 2019, nearly 424,000 noise complaints were made to local councils across the UK – the equivalent of one every 80 seconds.

Music and parties (28 per cent), domestic (14 per cent) and animal noise (13 per cent) were the top three causes for complaints over the past three years. London is the noisiest region, but Belfast, Newport and Coventry all make the top 10 noisiest local authorities. The figures are revealed in research from Churchill Home Insurance (1).

Despite the frequency of complaints, however, only one in every 54 resulted in a noise abatement notice (2) being issued. That is just a fraction over 2%. Some complaints can be resolved through a conversation with the neighbour. And some noise makers will stop after a warning. But this low figure must mean a lot of noise makers are escaping scot free. Local authorities can be reluctant to issue noise abatement orders because they need quite a high level of proof. Some have used anti-social behaviour orders instead since the process is simpler and quicker. But, nevertheless, it does seem that noise sufferers are not being well served.

A complaint every 80 seconds can only be described as a crisis; even an epidemic. It should not be left to local authorities to deal with this. Government needs to tackle the underlying causes. Government should also ensure that local councils have adequate resources to tackle the crisis.

Music and parties account for a huge 28% of complaints. There will undoubtedly be persistent offenders. Motorists who break the rules get points on their licences, leading to a ban. Why not introduce a similar scheme for those who persistently those who repeatedly annoy with their music. These offenders and was



The comments above are two of the many we receive about neighbour noise. And they form just a small part of the wider picture. In 2019, nearly 424,000 noise complaints were made to local authorities across the UK – the equivalent of one every 80 seconds. (The image above is part of a story we ran in an earlier newsletter). Local councils are responsible for noise enforcement, though housing associations have a part to play. The Police have a more limited role.

The frustration is, although legislation is in place to tackle neighbour noise, it is not being used effectively. Local authorities are the weakest link. Correctly, they point to a lack of resources but, in truth, many were not effective in more prosperous times. Some of course performed well but many let people down. In 2019 only just over 2% of complaints led to a noise abatement notice being served.

## Legislation

There is legislation in place to deal with neighbour noise.

- The Environmental Protection Act 1990 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents>
- The Noise Act 1996 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/37/contents> (which deals largely with night noise)
- The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/contents/enacted> This allows noise offenders to be prosecuted more easily and quickly as the burden of proof is less than required by the other pieces of legislation.

## Where to look for help

*The ASB App has given me the opportunity to show the council just how much of a nuisance my neighbour is. This has been ongoing for a long time now, but we have never had the evidence to prove it happening. Hopefully that will change now. It's really easy to use and I'm over the moon I now have it on my phone*



This was a response to **ASB Help**, a charity which provides information and advice to victims of anti-social behaviour. You can record the neighbour noise on your phone: <https://asbhelp.co.uk/noise-2/>

### **There are other Apps as well:**

**EchoBarrier:** sophisticated apps that allow you to measure indoor and outdoor noise, including traffic  
<https://blog.echobarrier.com/blog/6-best-ios-apps-to-measure-noise-level-decibel-meters>

**The Healthy Hearing Website** has a wide range of apps to record noise  
<https://www.healthyhearing.com/report/47805-The-best-phone-apps-to-measure-noise-levels>

**The Noise App**  
<https://noisenuisance.org/noise-app/>

**Apps** recordings can be sent to the authorities  
<https://www.believehousing.co.uk/in-your-neighbourhood/anti-social-behaviour/the-noise-app/>

### **Telephone advice:**

**The Noise Abatement Society** <https://noiseabatementociety.org/> Helpline on 01273 823 850; email [info@noise-abatement.org](mailto:info@noise-abatement.org)

**Noise Direct** 08453 313230  
Independent, impartial advice line from noise professionals (there is a small charge)  
<https://noisedirect.co.uk/>

**At the UK Noise Association we do not specialise in giving detailed advice.**

We focus on lobbying for existing legislation to be properly enforced. We argue that for this epidemic to be tackled effectively it is time to get tough on noise offenders. Sometimes a warning will suffice but the authorities should not hesitate to use their powers to confiscate equipment or evict persistent offenders. At present when local authorities fail to crack down on noise offenders, there is little redress for noise sufferers. They can go to court (expensive) or the Ombudsman (whose remit is often too narrow to deal with many of these cases). An Independent Appeals Panel needs to be set up.



# EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT 'RUHEZEIT' IN GERMANY

In Germany neighbour noise is dealt with much more effectively. This article by Adriana Stein is an eye-opener to a UK audience. It first appeared on the Lingoda website (5/7/22).

**Sunday, the best day of the week to catch up on laundry, vacuum, clean your car...except not in Germany due to "Ruhezeit."** Otherwise known as "quiet hours," *Ruhezeit* is the time when you are legally obliged to keep the noise levels down. While this may be new to some, Germans are quite strict in upholding the *Ruhezeit* rules. Here is an overview on how it works.

## What is Ruhezeit in Germany?

Newcomers to Germany might have noticed something very peculiar that happens on Sundays: nothing. The majority of shops are closed, most people aren't working, and it feels a bit like a ghost town. This is known as "*Ruhezeit*," which means on Sundays (and weeknights after 10pm) that making noise is legitimately legally forbidden. Run the washing machine, mow your lawn, or vacuum your house on a Sunday and you might end up with a complaint from your neighbours, a fine, or in the worst case scenario, even end up in court.

## Why does Germany have these rules?

The concept of *Ruhezeit* stems from the Grundgesetz (basic laws) for Germany, in combination with the church. Traditionally speaking, Germany was a heavily religious country and in order to make sure people could attend church, the government de-emphasised working on Sundays so people had time to go to church and later on spend time with family.

As the population density in Germany grew (currently at nearly 84 million) so too did the noise, especially considering that most people lived in multiple housing units. Based on that and Germany's love for abiding by the law, noise regulations became a legitimate legal matter. Germans prioritise a healthy work-life balance so *Ruhezeit* ensures that Sundays are truly a day of relaxation.

## When do you need to be quiet?

The commonly agreed upon quiet hours in Germany are from 10pm and 6am, or 7am on weekdays and the entire day on Sundays, although there can be some exceptions in different cities or if your landlord imposes other rules as well. *Ruhezeit* also applies to all public holidays for the entire day. In some cities or states, there are further restrictions for lunchtime too, though that has become less common.

## What types of noise are forbidden?

The general rule of thumb is that you can make noise up to normal room volume (up to 50 decibels), but anything beyond that is illegal.

The following noises are forbidden during *Ruhezeit*:

- Vacuuming of any kind
- Washing your car
- Mowing your lawn
- All gardening with loud electric tools
- All construction work with loud electric tools
- Leaf blowers
- Snow blowers
- Water powered pumps
- Loud music
- Loud gatherings and parties
- Hammering



## What should you do if your neighbours complain about you making noise?

There are three ways that people typically handle noise issues in Germany.

First off, if it's a small disturbance, it's common to leave your neighbour an anonymous note asking them to keep the noise down. If you get such an anonymous note, take that as a serious word of warning. If you cause a second disturbance, your neighbour may directly call the police or complain to your landlord, which you definitely want to avoid.

Secondly, they might come and knock directly at your door, especially if it's the middle of the night and they want the issue resolved then and there. Although I have never had an issue where a neighbour complained to me about noise, I did have a neighbour complain about dirt falling from my balcony down to his.

Third, if you get a really strict person, they may call the police and not talk to you whatsoever. As mentioned above, if the police get involved, you can end up with a fine for a few thousand euros (they're legally allowed to issue this), but often it's a smaller fine if it's your first time getting in trouble.

## What should you do if your neighbours aren't following Ruhezeit rules?

The advantage to *Ruhezeit* rules is that you are also allowed to complain if your neighbours don't follow the rules using the same methods described above. For me personally, I tend to use the anonymous note method often, because people can't get upset back at you. Yes, it's a bit passive-aggressive, but it does work and makes sure your building stays peaceful and without confrontation.

## Silence in the city

**It's official. The world is getting louder.** The World Health Organisation says that people living in cities like Mumbai, New York, Paris, Tokyo and Buenos Aires are being exposed to far more than the recommended 40 decibels (dB) of noise at night. For comparison, 20dB is similar to the rustling of leaves. A quiet rural area tends to clock in at 30dB, while restaurant conversation is 60dB and a lawnmower is 90dB. Anything louder than 85dB for extended periods can cause permanent hearing loss. Over time, however, regular noise over 50dB is linked to a multitude of health issues, ranging from disturbance to problems learning and even cardiovascular disease. "There are no 'earlids' that can project your brain from noise," says Nick Antonio, an acoustic consultant who has contributed to the British and international standards for noise.

**Washington DC has banned petrol-powered leaf blowers;  
San Francisco has instituted quiet hours**

**Several cities are working to turn the volume down.** In 2004, the office of the mayor of London published a report called *Sounder City*. The strategy highlighted issues surrounding both industrial and transport-related noise, and how to manage it. Other cities are taking note – introducing noise-reducing road coatings, for instance, alongside greenery that muffles the sound. Some solutions are more specific: Washington DC's ban on petrol-powered leaf blowers came into effect this year, while San Francisco has instituted quiet hours, with excessive noise prohibited between 10pm and 7am in residential areas. In New York City, legislation was recently approved to fine people who modify their vehicles to make them noisier. Antonio says the Covid-19 pandemic led to quieter streets, with some roads being handed over for use by pedestrians and restaurants. "People are seeing the benefits of these more quiet environments in their cities," he says. "I expect we will see much more of this in the future."

- This is a slightly abridged version of an article which appeared in the *New Scientist* (134/8/22)

# MAJOR CONFERENCE ON AVIATION NOISE

As the aviation industry recovers post-Covid the skies are becoming noisier again. And a number of airports in the UK are putting in expansion plans: Gatwick, London City, Manston, Luton and Bristol. Expansion at Southampton has been approved. More planes are likely to mean more noise for most communities (unless respite is introduced) as aircraft are not expected to become noticeably quieter over the coming decade.

The online conference is being put on by UECNA, the Europe-wide network of communities impacted by aircraft noise. It will take place on **5th November** from **2.00 - 6.30pm** (Brussels time). It is free and translation facilities will be offered if required.

The keynote speaker will be Marco Paviotti, who heads up the noise team at European Commission.

The purpose of the conference is three-fold:

- To provide up-to-date information on key aviation developments in Europe and beyond
- To enable campaigners to meet with, and learn from, each other
- To identify areas where campaigners can work together

To register: [www.uecna.eu](http://www.uecna.eu)



## INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE

5<sup>th</sup> November (online)

### TACKLING AVIATION NOISE

2.00pm (Brussels time)

Welcome Dominique Lazarski, President UECNA

**2.05 Aviation Overview:**

Dominique Lazarski: an update on the work of ICAO and EASA  
John Stewart, Vice President UECNA, the latest on flight paths, metrics, night flights, good practice  
Eleftheria Emfietzi, UECNA Treasurer and health specialist: an update on health issues

**2.40 International Panel Discussion: Campaigning Across Continents**

Campaigners discuss the issues they face

Rogério Carneiro de Miranda (Belo Horizonte, Brazil)  
Sean Foley (Brisbane Australia)  
Elaine Miller (New York, USA)  
Anna Serdari (Athens, Greece)  
Wouter Looman (Schiphol, Netherlands)

The panellists will not give formal presentations but will take part in a discussion facilitated by **John Stewart**, about the situation at their airports. After some initial panel discussions, we open the floor to all the participants to ask questions and talk about how the points made by the panel and from the floor relate to their own airport.

**4.00 BREAK**

**4.30 Eleftheria Emfietzi** welcomes people back and introduces Marco Paviotti

**4.35 Update on EU Developments:** Marco Paviotti, Policy Officer European Commission with responsibility for noise followed by questions

Dr Arline Bronzaft, Professor Emerita of the City University of New York and long-time campaigner on noise, will chair this part of the meeting

**5.15 The Best Metrics to Use:** Tim Johnston, Director Aviation Environment Federation, followed by questions

**5.45 German campaigners vision for the future:** a presentation followed by questions

**6.05 Moving Forward: Make Change Happen** A final short session, chaired by Dominique Lazarski, highlighting key things we could all campaign on.

**6.30 Close**

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# I want my fireworks silent

As November 5<sup>th</sup> approaches a very readable, indeed entertaining, piece by Caitlin Moran which first appeared in the Times (31/10/20)

*'The bangs make them more exciting? Yes, but so would cocaine'.*

There are several things that we think of as “totally normal” that, did they not already exist, we would never invent now. Pudding, for instance. Pudding is berserk. You eat a whole meal of meat, and then another whole meal of cake? That’s too much. Why not keep going and have a third meal of ham, and then a fourth of beans? You’re already being ludicrous. No one would invent “Second Lunch: Cake” now. It’s a mad remnant of the past. Likewise, ties. They’re basically a chest pelmet, to cover up the buttons on your shirt. What mad, prudish era did we have to live through when buttons needed a petticoat to cover them? And why are we still doing it?

And so it is with fireworks. Or, more specifically, the BANG in fireworks. We’re currently at the beginning of Fireworks Season – these days, it starts around Halloween, continues over both weekends around Bonfire Night and then redoubles at Diwali and New Year’s Eve.



As has been pointed out for many, many years, Fireworks Season is a nightmarish time for people with dogs, small children and those who were in the military or have PTSD. And no wonder – at any time between sundown and 1am, any night of Fireworks Season can suddenly erupt into what sounds like the Valentine’s Day Massacre or a small war. Last year, our dog was so scared that she would climb up inside my jumper and stay there all evening, shaking uncontrollably and crying actual dog tears. In the end, I had to hold my hands over her ears and sing to her. No dog wants that.

In a way, it’s weird we’re not all freaked out by fireworks: after all, there are no other instances in life where hearing a series of loud explosions is good. Unless you’re a former gold prospector with a very specific backstory about dynamiting Last Chance Gulch in 1879 and subsequently finding the mother lode, whenever humans hear a “BANG!” it tends to mean “visits to A&E”, “dealing with a lot of rubble” and “wondering where your leg has gone”. It never bodes well.

*'Last year, our dog was so scared that she would climb up inside my jumper and stay there all evening, shaking uncontrollably and crying actual dog tears. In the end, I had to hold my hands over her ears and sing to her. No dog wants that.'*



**Why, in 2020, do fireworks still have a “bang”? We wouldn’t invent them like that now.** If someone had only just devised a way to light up the sky with vast, phosphorescent chrysanthemums, everyone would be like, “Cor, this is gorgeous! You have turned the heavens into a celestial city of ecstatic sparks! Well done, you, Edward Firework!” But if Edward Firework then went on to explain that this transcendent manmade aurora borealis came with the mandatory accompaniment of, essentially, the first 23 minutes of Saving Private Ryan, everyone would be like, “No. Just... don’t. Why ruin it?” And indeed, why? Making beautiful fireworks go “bang” is genuinely demented – like inventing fairy lights that scream, or balloon animals that emit a low, tortured groan of, “I’m dying.”

**No other beautiful, visual thing we’ve invented is accompanied by abhorrent noises:**

*The Louvre doesn’t insist the Mona Lisa be displayed in a room that permanently plays ‘We Like to Party’*

The Louvre doesn’t insist the Mona Lisa be displayed in a room that permanently plays We Like to Party! by Vengaboys; Sissinghurst doesn’t have a resident banshee in a gazebo; St Paul’s doesn’t repeatedly retch.



**I’m trying to work through every possible reason to keep the BANG in fireworks, but it’s proving pretty easy to dismiss them all.** “People might not notice the fireworks are going off if they’re not accompanied by a BANG!” Just... pointing could work? Also: THE SKY IS “The bang makes it more exciting!” Yes, but so would cocaine, and we don’t include that in the box. Those who would like a bang are more than welcome to pop on their headphones and download the audio of chimney stacks being demolished, or people dynamiting dead whales on beaches. It could be like silent disco. Or, here’s an idea, instead of a bang you could have something genuinely exciting, like John Lennon screaming Twist and Shout, Kate Bush singing Wow, or Han Solo shouting, “Hit it, Chewie!” And presumably it would be cheaper to make fireworks that didn’t have a cannon attached, which highlights the class element to this.



Season: When Dogs Cry.

**Basically, the only way to let off noisy fireworks without massively inconveniencing hundreds of other people and their pets is if you live on a vast estate and can pay your butler to take your dogs somewhere quiet for the night.** For everyone else – with neighbours, a social conscience and a limited budget – much cheaper, silent fireworks are A Thing That Needs Inventing As Soon As Possible. As things stand, however, I’m bracing myself to spend the next two weeks with a cockapoo up my jumper, to whom I will sing that perennial Prince classic about Fireworks

**For details of the energetic group lobbying on fireworks:**

The Firework Campaign

<https://fireworkcampaign.com/>



# I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW.....

## 1. Our most-read article from all the issues of *The Bottom Rung* was not about noise!

It was the exclusive interview in our winter 2022 edition with David Smith ('Little Ninja') who has become one of the most prominent and articulate opponents of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs). His passion is air pollution. He argues LTNs push traffic on to boundary and main roads, adversely affecting poor people and BAME communities. But the interview is more than that. It is an articulate critique from a black environmentalist of the systemic failings of the mainstream environmental movement that is excluding BAME voices. You can re-read it here:

[http://www.uknoiseassociation.com/uploads/4/1/4/5/41458009/david\\_smith\\_interview.pdf](http://www.uknoiseassociation.com/uploads/4/1/4/5/41458009/david_smith_interview.pdf)



**2. Our most-watched video surprised us.** It was a 12 second video of the noise of a typical junction in the town of Bury, consistently ranked as one of the worst places for road and rail noise in the UK: [https://www.youtube.com/shorts/dVN4\\_qHrjQc](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/dVN4_qHrjQc). It has had nearly 3,000 views. We featured Bury on pages 3 & 4 of our last newsletter:

[http://www.uknoiseassociation.com/uploads/4/1/4/5/41458009/the\\_bottom\\_rung\\_summer\\_2022\\_updated.pdf](http://www.uknoiseassociation.com/uploads/4/1/4/5/41458009/the_bottom_rung_summer_2022_updated.pdf)

**What both the article and video have in common is that they feature noise on main roads.**

**Bury also took second and third place amongst our most-watched videos.** The M66 runs through the middle of the Dicky Bird estate, in the top 1% of the most deprived areas in the UK. The noise barriers deaden the roar of the traffic but the noise – and vibration – is constant for the residents: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/V9v9503f6uo>. In third place was our recording on a typical main road in Bury: <https://youtube.com/shorts/vk2XcnV3l>.

**The videos of our webinars also featured in the top 10:**

**Noise and health** with Professor Stephen Stansfeld: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it25\\_XRardY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it25_XRardY)

**Noise and the Law** with Emeritus Professor Frank McManus: <https://youtu.be/o6L3AZNlivk>

**Campaigning against Noise** with Val Weedon MBE: <https://youtu.be/j7l2wlpzMwE>

**3. This summer we chose Dungeness rather than Brighton for a day out at the seaside because the beach beside the nuclear power station was quieter!**



We picnicked peacefully beside a power station. More in the next issue!



# Listen Out!

Our regular slot that gives you the chance to sound off!

## My letter to Liz (Truss)

Dear Liz,

Congratulations on becoming Prime Minister.

You have a lot of things filling your in-tray. I don't envy you! But here's something you could do quickly and cheaply. And all your ancient Tory members, of which I'm one, would be waving their walking sticks in appreciation.

Crack down on stereo-systems in parks.

During this long, hot summer in London I can't recall a single day when in some park I was in somebody turned on a stereo-system. Some people of course liked it. But that is beside the point. It is imposing noise on others. It is thoughtless and selfish. It is against the law. Most parks have by-laws forbidding it.

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### Crack down on stereo-systems in parks from day one

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Send the Truss troops into action! The police are usually around. They should insist the offenders reach for the off-switch. There should be a crackdown on persistent offenders. I hope I'm not being vengeful in wanting to see their equipment confiscated.....for good!

It never used to be like this. You could go to a park and more or less guarantee it would be as God intended it to be. I bet there was no sound system in the Garden of Eden!

It is doing us no good at all. It deters some of us from going out. It adds to the noise of an already noisy world. It reduces the number of tranquil areas. So, Liz, do us a favour and act now! Give us our summers back. Or else us oldies will only be able to go to parks in winter with Jack Frost for company...and you know what he does to us!

Summertime Blues

## New Website Address

We have got a new website address:

<http://www.uknoiseassociation.com/>

With new features

Check it out!

## Help! I've got a noise problem!

You can contact:

**The Noise Abatement Society**

<https://noiseabatementociety.org/>

Helpline on 01273 823 850;

email [info@noise-abatement.org](mailto:info@noise-abatement.org)

The Noise Abatement Society also carries out a range of activities including research and lobbying

Or contact **ASB Help**, a charity which aims to provide information and advice to victims of anti-social behaviour

<https://asbhelp.co.uk/noisy-neighbours-noise/>

**Noisedirect**  
**08453 31 32 30**

Independent, impartial advice line from noise professionals

*The Bottom Rung* is a quarterly journal published online by Cut Noise:  
<http://www.uknoiseassociation.com/>

We are always looking for contributions, be it articles or opinion pieces.

Email [johnstewart2@btconnect.com](mailto:johnstewart2@btconnect.com)

Our blog site is at:

<https://www.cutnoise2day.co.uk/>

Twitter: @cutnoise