

UK NOISE ASSOCIATION MANIFESTO

PAPER 7:

NEIGHBOUR NOISE

11% of people in the UK are extremely disturbed by neighbour noise, with 54% bothered to some extent ⁽¹⁾.

There is legislation in place to deal with neighbour noise. The challenge is for the police and local authorities to find the resources and the will-power to use it effectively.

Key legislation:

Environmental Protection Act 1990 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents>

Noise Act 1996 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/37/contents>

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 - <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/contents/enacted>

Solutions:

1. Local authorities to be adequately funded and rigorously monitored

Local authorities have a big role in reducing noise. Many currently struggle with funding. Some performed badly even when they had funds. The House of Lords Committee recent examination of noise policy ⁽²⁾ recommended the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities should set out what resources local authorities should have to tackle noise effectively. That makes sense. The Committee also felt DEFRA (the Government department responsible for noise) “does not appear to be receiving the information it needs to conclude whether its policies are being effectively implemented by local authorities.” In our view, annual local authority performance tables should be published.

2. Crack down on noise offenders

This has been made a lot simpler by the 2014 Anti-Social Behavior legislation which allows noise offenders to be prosecuted more easily and quickly ⁽³⁾. It is time to get consistently tough on noise offenders. Sometimes a warning will suffice but the authorities should not hesitate to use their powers to confiscate their equipment or evict them, if required.

3. Give residents the right of appeal

When local authorities fail to crack down on noise offenders, there is little redress for noise sufferers. They can go to court (usually too 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.

4. Improve insulation of properties

Poor sound insulation is extensive. A nationwide programme to properly insulate all the UK's homes would be expensive. We recommend the worst affected should be done first as part of a 10 year programme to install effective sound insulation in all homes.

(1). file:///C:/Users/Dell/Downloads/12378_SummaryReportV1.0.pdf

(2). <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5803/ldselect/ldsctech/232/23202.htm>