

ENJOYING OUTDOOR CELEBRATIONS

Everybody loves a party, especially a celebration of a family event such as a wedding or birthday. The Noise and Pollution Control Team often get complaints from residents affected by the noise. However, if the party is indoors, not too loud, nor too late, hopefully we will not need to be “party poopers” and interrupt the party at the time.



Parties that spill out into the garden or take place entirely outdoors e.g. in a marquee, tend to be more of a problem. Music from such events may be a nuisance to many local residents, even if music is played at quite a moderate volume. Louder music, especially if a live band is playing, can cause a serious nuisance to residents over a large area. It is in these cases that the Noise and Pollution Control Team is more likely to take action.

This leaflet offers advice on how to prevent such action being necessary.

GARDEN PARTIES

In most areas of the city it is not appropriate to hold any garden event that includes live or amplified music, in particular any drums or other percussion instruments. Where such an event takes place and we receive one or more complaints, the Noise Officer will visit the complainant to assess the volume of music and decide whether action needs to be taken to reduce noise levels.



NOISE OFFICER VISIT

The Noise Officer may decide to visit the house where the party is taking place, usually with a Police Officer. They will want to speak directly to the householder, requesting that the volume is reduced and kept at a low level. We do not wish to disrupt any family celebration and will only do so if we feel that this is unavoidable because noise levels are simply too loud. Formal action may be taken if the noise nuisance continues after our visit.

PREVENTING COMPLAINTS

Since we respond to complaints, steps should be taken to ensure that neighbours do not feel the need to contact the Noise and Pollution Control Team during the event. The measures that can be taken include:

1. Notify neighbours of the event well in advance. Take care to include neighbours on all the streets that may be affected. You may wish to provide a contact number should neighbours have any queries before the event.

Advise your neighbours of the start and finishing times and subsequently ensure that these times are adhered to during the event. 11.00pm should be the latest time that music is played.

2. It is a good idea to have one or two volunteers who have responsibility for managing noise levels by checking how loud the music is in surrounding streets. This may not be a popular job and should be allocated to suitably responsible members of the family. With careful planning these people can enjoy the event along with the other guests.
3. Before the event starts, the amplifier should be set using a brief "sound check" to minimise disturbance to neighbours. This can be done by checking the noise levels in the area are not too loud. Mark the volume (or note any number on the control) to ensure that the volume remains unchanged throughout the celebration. Checks should again be made on the noise level during the event as it may be necessary to reduce the level further.
4. Slower, quieter tracks should be played during the final 20 minutes of music. We sometimes get complaints about loud talking and shouting after music has stopped because guests haven't adjusted to a quieter environment.
5. Remember that nobody outside of your garden needs to hear amplified announcements. Neither a DJ nor members of the family need to shout into a microphone.
6. It would be helpful if you provide us with a contact number, probably a mobile phone number that we can use to contact you if we receive complaints during the event. This would only be used by the Noise Monitoring Service duty officer and not passed to anybody else.

We hope that the above advice is discussed beforehand and then implemented by those involved in the celebration. As a result, hopefully the Noise and Pollution Control Team will not receive any complaints and will not need to become involved in what should be a happy and enjoyable occasion. This is not something that we would want to do.

CONTACT US

To discuss your planned event with the Noise and Pollution Control Team, please telephone 0116 454 3141 during office hours and ask to speak to the Duty Officer. Alternatively, please email us at noiseteam@leicester.gov.uk