



Sound Solutions

A Guide for Businesses
Providing Musical
Entertainment on
Neighbourhood Noise.

Public Protection Division

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of premises providing music entertainment. The growth of premises providing high levels of amplified music, has led to increasing concern by Local Authorities and the general public to the potentially adverse impact on the local environment.

There have also been significant advances in the design of sound systems that produce greater sound power output without distortion. All too often, little or no regard is given to the consequences and it may not be too long before complaints are being made. Residents who may previously have been oblivious to the venue's operation will become aware of the music and complaints may arise.

WHAT CAUSES A PROBLEM?

Some of the reasons for complaints of this type are:

1. Music noise usually occurs until early morning when residents may be attempting to go to sleep or are sleeping. Problems are worse in the summer when windows and doors may be open for ventilation purposes.
2. Music levels may increase as an event progresses whilst noise levels in the locality may fall, particularly at night.
3. Music often contains a high bass content (low frequency) which is poorly insulated by building structures. This can result in a disturbing bass 'boom' at nearby properties.
4. Greater disturbance can result from outside as there is no building structure to insulate the sound. Examples are receptions held in marquees and open-air parties held on pub and other similar premises.

5. Noise problems can arise from using play areas both inside and outside buildings. Problems can also arise from bouncy castles and other similar transportable attractions, particularly where the play areas are open into the late evening.
6. Ventilation and air conditioning systems are essential to maintain a comfortable environment. Chiller-units are also required to maintain food and drink at required temperatures. Many of these units switch on and off at random, both during the day and night, making the noise more noticeable.
7. Where noise sensitive premises are structurally attached to a venue, vibration problems may also occur.
8. Rowdy behaviour usually occurs at the end of entertainment events or at 'closing time' when people will often disperse on foot and in vehicles. Rowdy behaviour inside premises can also result in noise problems particularly if noise sensitive properties are structurally attached, e.g. flats above a pub or club.
9. Noise from car parks will include the use of 'in car' entertainment systems, slamming of car doors, screeching of tyres, excessive engine revving and other undesirable activities. Additional problems can occur when taxis and buses arrive to pick up staff and customers, tooting horns and leaving engines running.
10. Premises will have vehicles visiting from time to time, to deliver goods and remove refuse. Visits may occur in the early morning. The use and collection of bottle banks sited on premises may also cause noise problems.





WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Noise control should be an essential part of all business plans and businesses should assess the potential for noise problems from their premises. The form of assessment will depend upon the size of a business and may vary from simply listening to see whether or not noise could be intrusive to nearby noise sensitive premises, to the use of specialised noise measurement equipment. As part of such an assessment appropriate noise control measures should be identified and implemented.

Noise assessments should be carried out:

- **if noise sources have not been assessed before;**
- **prior to and immediately after the introduction of a new entertainment activity;**
- **when planning alterations to a premises and after making these alterations;**
- **routine reviews should be undertaken periodically and**
- **following the receipt of a complaint of noise from the premises.**

BUSINESSES SHOULD ENSURE



- **an internal procedure for dealing with noise issues;**
- **logging and responding to noise complaints;**
- **general advice and training on noise control to employees.**

In addition, and where applicable, the following measures should also be considered:

- **reducing the music level and/or playing slower, more calming types of music at the end of an event;**
- **maintenance contracts to prevent noise problems occurring from ventilation and other plant and machinery;**
- **providing visual monitoring devices eg CCTV in outside areas where noise disturbances may occur;**
- **screening of outside areas by constructing a solid wall or full boarded fence and the use of traffic calming techniques to slow down traffic and thus to control noise from vehicles;**
- **positioning of building exits, access roads and car parks to minimise noise disturbance;**
- **posting notices close to building exits and car parks requesting patrons to leave the premises quickly and quietly;**
- **change the frequency content of the music etc. at source; and/or**
- **improve the building structure to enhance the containment and attenuation of sound.**

Advice on control should be obtained from a competent person. The installation of a noise limiter to control internal noise levels may not necessarily be a cure for noise problems, particularly if, to prevent these problems, the device has to be set so low that a music event is not viable. **TAKE GOOD ADVICE!!**

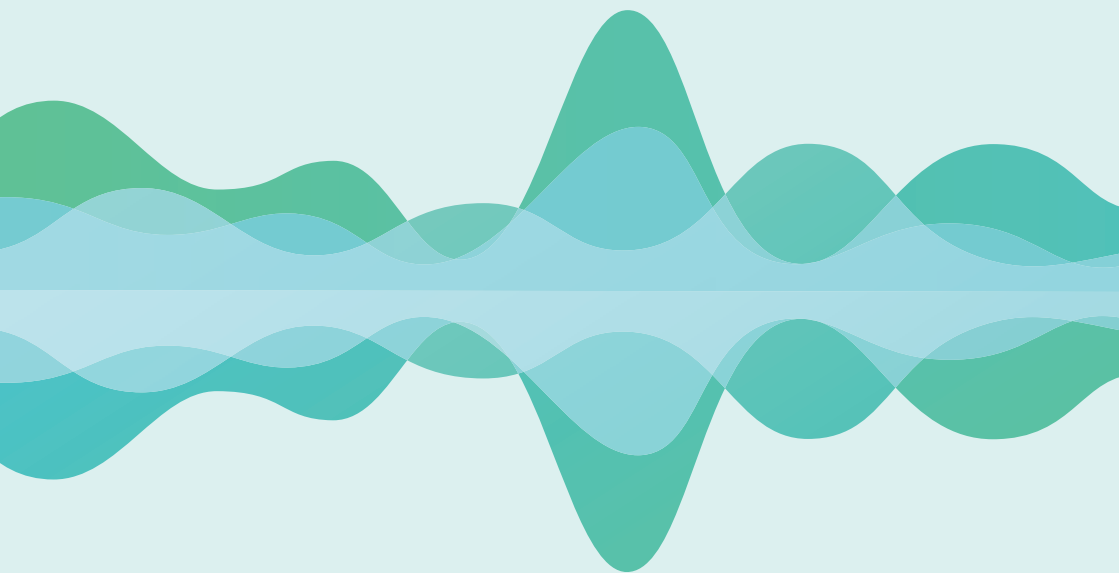
It is generally inadvisable to hold regular outdoor events at premises which are in noise sensitive areas. Where these do take place, speakers can be pointed away from the most noise sensitive buildings, stages can be placed as far away as possible from these buildings and use can be made of screening provided by existing non-sensitive buildings, barriers and the lie of the land itself.

An effective, acoustically complete screen should be provided, if necessary, to boundaries with noise sensitive premises. Before erecting such a screen the local planning authority should also be consulted.

In noise sensitive areas the provision of late night garden lighting is undesirable, unless required for health and safety or security purposes, as it may encourage the use of these areas at inappropriate times. Also ensure that your premises licence covers all areas, in and out where alcohol is consumed.

Plant and machinery should be positioned in such a way that the building structure provides as much screening as possible to noise sensitive premises. Where such equipment is necessary, acoustic enclosures, louvers, silencers or additional acoustic screening can be adopted. Building vibration isolation may also be required.

In situations where noise sensitive premises overlook the main entrance of licensed premises, then an alternative exit route, possibly onto a rear or side street or a car park, may help to minimise disturbance.

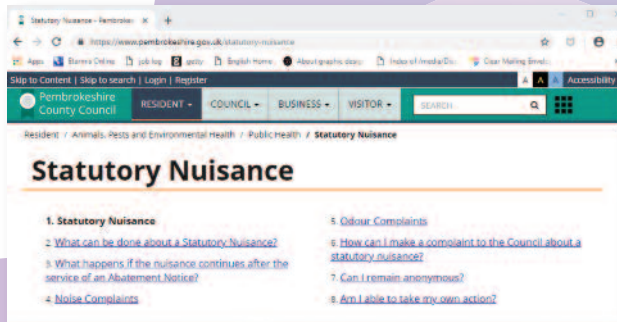




Useful Contacts:

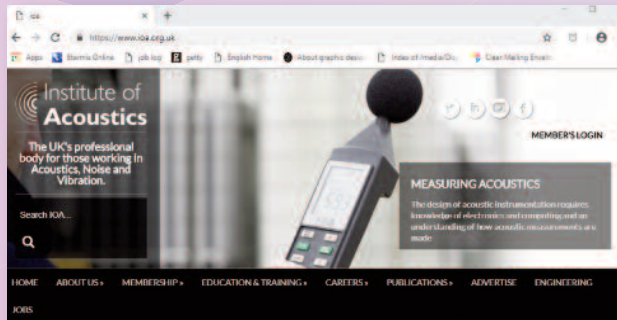
Pembrokeshire County Council Noise Advice

<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/statutory-nuisance>



Institute of Acoustics

<https://www.ioa.org.uk/>



British Beer and Pub Association

<https://beerandpub.com/licensee-guidance/noise-control/>

