

Who is this Guide for?

This document is intended to provide a simple, non-technical guide for managers of pubs, clubs and other venues who provide entertainment, such as live music, DJs, karaoke etc, to help manage noise and avoid complaints from neighbours. If you intend to hold a large-scale event or are thinking of installing a sound system to provide regular entertainment you may need to obtain specialist advice, although the advice here will still be relevant.

Get the Licences you need.

If you regularly provide entertainment to the public you may need a Premises Licence, although a licence is not required for:

- playing unamplified live music anywhere between 8am and 11pm.
- playing amplified live music in licensed premises, or other workplaces, between 8am and 11pm, to audiences of less than 200 people.
- background or incidental music.

If you want to put on an event, but don't have a premises licence you can submit a Temporary Event Notice (TEN).

Further advice on Premises Licences or TENs can be obtained from the Council's Licensing Team: Tel 01924 302932, e-mail: LicensingOffice@wakefield.gov.uk

If you play or perform music which is protected by copyright you may also need a Performing Rights Licence. [PPL-UK](#) and [PRS for Music](#) are two licensing organisation who can organise the necessary licences designed to protect the rights of music creators and performers.

Managing Noise from Events

There are three basic concepts to managing noise:

- Reduce noise at source.
- Prevent noise escaping.
- Noise Management.

Reduce Noise at Source

Volume Control

It sounds simple, but one of the best ways of controlling noise is keeping the volume level down. The basic form of this is simply turning the control on sound amplification systems down. More complex sound control systems may have sound compression systems and mixing decks and different controls for bass or treble (low and high frequency sound). It is more important to reduce bass, as this travels through building structures more easily and causes the "thump-thump" beat which can cause disturbance. If you have difficulty managing the volume control a sound-limiting device can be used help to manage the noise level automatically.

Loudspeakers

Choose speakers that are right for the type of venue and entertainment that you wish to provide. There is no need to get an over-size powerful speaker for smaller venues, and it is often better to have more, lower-power speakers positioned and directed to achieve the best result for the audience than one or two powerful speakers.

Position speakers away from windows, doors and other openings and don't mount directly on walls or other parts of the structure – use proper mounting-stands wherever possible.

Vocals / PA system

It is often the vocal element of music which can be most disturbing and so if you find this to be a problem you may need to use a compression system to provide more control over the volume and quality of the sound: specialist advice should be sought for this.

Prevent Noise Escaping

Again it's simple, but containing the noise inside a premises will reduce the risk of complaints from neighbours. Look for acoustically weak areas in the structure: usually windows, doors, vents and other openings, and especially ones that open on to residential properties. Some simple things you can try:

- Keep windows and doors closed.
- Have a two-door, lobby arrangement for the entertainment room, or entrance to the premises and keep one set of doors is closed.
- Don't prop doors open during entertainment.
- Control patrons opening windows and doors.
- Specialist "glass bolts" can help control fire exit doors being opened.
- Provide acoustic louvres over vents, which allow air to flow through, but reduce noise.
- If it gets too hot with windows / doors closed, then you may need to consider alternative cooling, such as air conditioning.
- Consider if noise is escaping through the roof as this may not be obvious if you listen to noise at ground level. This can be a particular problem with flat roofs. You may need to improve the amount of sound insulation in the ceiling or roof space.
- Remember: the best noise insulation is made of a dense material and doesn't have any gaps, so simple thermal insulation may not be sufficient.
- If you are physically attached to another premises you need to consider how the noise will travel through the walls and structure – speak directly with your neighbour about this. Make sure you don't fix speakers directly to the structure.

Noise Management

Taking noise seriously is just another aspect of good management practice. Here are some simple suggestions to help manage noise effectively:

- Consider the impact on neighbours before booking or organising an event: letting neighbours know what you are planning and taking on board their views is a good idea.

- Do a “sound-check” before an event starts and set a volume level for the sound system that shouldn’t be exceeded. You may need to set a quieter level if the event will go on after 11pm.
- Make sure the performer knows what volume level has been set and what time the performance needs to end.
- Manage access to volume controls on the amplifier, compression system or mixing deck and consider a sound-limiting device if you have problems managing the volume level.
- Monitor noise levels during the performance – our simple checklist at the end of this Guide may help. Remember, if you have come from a noisy environment this will affect your hearing, so the noise not may appear as loud to you as it will to neighbours.
- Take action to reduce noise if you think it’s too loud and record what you have done.
- Avoid allowing patrons to use external areas, such as beer gardens and smoking shelters late at night.
- Put signs in prominent places asking patrons to be quiet when leaving the venue.
- Playing more gentle tracks at the end of the performance can help calm the mood and mean patrons will be less noisy as they leave.
- Take any complaints from neighbours seriously and let them know what you have done to control noise.

Further Advice

[Noise council Guide on Noise from Pop Concerts](#) (for all types of outdoor events and festivals)

[British Beer & Pub Association Guide on Noise Control.](#)

Good Practice guide on the Control of Noise from Pubs and Clubs (available from the IoA – see below)

Professional Services:

Association of Noise Consultants: <http://www.association-of-noise-consultants.co.uk/>

Institute of Acoustics: <http://www.ioa.org.uk/home/default.asp>

Event Noise Monitoring Form

Premises: _____ Event: _____

Date: _____ Event start time: ____:____ Event end time: ____:____

Pre-Start Checklist:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Sound-Check" and set volume level | <input type="checkbox"/> Check windows and doors | <input type="checkbox"/> Agree who will do monitoring checks and when |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Set end-time with performer | <input type="checkbox"/> Check sound limiter (if fitted) | <input type="checkbox"/> Complete monitoring form |

Noise Assessment Guide		
Assessment	Description	Guide
A Not audible.	No noise can be heard.	Okay
B Just audible:	Muffled sound, vocals / music not clear, easily masked by other noise in area.	Okay but aim to lower after 11pm.
C Clearly audible:	Clear vocals / music, and likely to be heard by neighbours.	Aim to reduce and not after 11pm.
D Loud:	Vocals / music are dominant sound and would be clearly heard by neighbours.	Never

Monitoring Locations:							
Choose one or more monitoring locations as near to neighbouring properties as possible.							
Locations:	1		2		3		4

Monitoring

How often you monitor will depend on how much of a problem noise is likely to be. If you regularly have the event with no problem then monitoring will be minimal, but if you have had noise complaints or it's a new event which you're unsure how much noise will be made then do more monitoring. We always recommend monitoring between 10:45 and 11pm.

Time	Location	Assessment	Any corrective action taken / Other observations?	Initials		
____:____	1	A	B	C	D	
	2	A	B	C	D	
	3	A	B	C	D	
	4	A	B	C	D	

CARRY ON OVERLEAF

Time	Location	Assessment	Any corrective action taken / Other observations?	Initials
____:____	1	A B C D		
	2	A B C D		
	3	A B C D		
	4	A B C D		

Time	Location	Assessment	Any corrective action taken / Other observations?	Initials
____:____	1	A B C D		
	2	A B C D		
	3	A B C D		
	4	A B C D		

Time	Location	Assessment	Any corrective action taken / Other observations?	Initials
____:____	1	A B C D		
	2	A B C D		
	3	A B C D		
	4	A B C D		

Time	Location	Assessment	Any corrective action taken / Other observations?	Initials
____:____	1	A B C D		
	2	A B C D		
	3	A B C D		
	4	A B C D		

Time	Location	Assessment	Any corrective action taken / Other observations?	Initials
____:____	1	A B C D		
	2	A B C D		
	3	A B C D		
	4	A B C D		