

Darlington Public Event Safety Advisory Group
A11A Fireworks Display



A firework display can make an event or party exciting and memorable. However they can cause considerable nuisance, distress and danger particularly to those who have children or pets who have not been advised, or considered, in the planning of an event.

The Health and Safety Executive have published guidance HSG 124 for firework displays and this can be accessed free of charge from the internet <https://www.hse.gov.uk/explosives/fireworks/using.htm>

Issues that relate to public nuisance (noise; odour; litter /waste; and light pollution) also needs to be managed at any event.

Ideally firework displays should finish, as early as possible. With a few exceptions (Diwali Night, Chinese New Year, Bonfire Night and New Year's Eve) it is illegal to let fireworks off between 11pm and 7am. The Police enforce these powers and you may receive a fine of £5000 or 6 months in prison if you break the law.

Preventing Noise Nuisance

Noise may originate from amplified music, fireworks, fairgrounds, public address systems and electrical generators. If residents find this noise unreasonable it can cause them to make complaints to the Police and Council. If a statutory noise nuisance is caused the Council is obliged to serve an Abatement Notice on the organiser or person causing the nuisance. Failure to comply with the Notice could result the seizure of the amplification equipment and/or prosecution.

Neighbourhood Noise Checklist

- Make one person responsible for dealing with all noise issues. Be reasonable and try to negotiate through any problems.
- Inform those nearby (particularly elderly people or people with children and animals) about the nature, timing and duration of the event and tell them what to expect by a letterbox drop, notices in local shops / community centre etc. This prepares people and allows them to make arrangements to be elsewhere or to have their pets sedated if necessary
- Provide a contact telephone number to receive information/complaints from residents.
- Be considerate about how loudly music is played, particularly late at night.
- Keep windows and doors closed if the noise source is inside a building.

- Bass level noise is the most intrusive - lowering the volume of the bass will help to reduce how far it carries.
- Some neighbours could be working or sleeping, try to encourage those attending or working at the event and leaving late to leave as quietly as possible.
- Gate crashers can spoil an event and cause rowdiness, so try to control tickets and the entrance to your event.
- Consider the timing of your event?
- Events may not be as well tolerated or acceptable if they run late or are particularly noisy. Please make every effort to talk to your neighbours, as it will reduce complaints.

In most residential locations the use of 'mortar shells' and similar high noise fireworks is not generally considered appropriate.

Litter and waste

- Provide litter bins are provided at suitable locations for the audience to use.
- With fireworks what goes up must come down and all so firework debris will need to be collected and disposed of safely.
- Litter pick the area when it is safe to do so.