

Sound Insulation Guidance

All of us are occasionally bothered by other people's noise. In many cases, everyday noises are audible between neighbours' homes because the building sound insulation is not up to today's standards.

Noises from general everyday living include:

- Footsteps
- Light switches being turned on / off
- General talking
- Doors closing
- Toilet flushing
- Babies crying
- Children playing

In cases such as these, the SRS Noise Team cannot help. Case law from the House of Lords states that noise from the ordinary use of residential premises cannot be considered a statutory nuisance.

Legal Requirements

New properties built before 1990, or properties converted before 1992 are not subject to the same standards as if they were built or converted today. Case law states that landlords, Housing Associations or builders are not liable to upgrade sound insulation within properties built before 1990 or converted before 1992.

Properties built after 1990 or converted after 1992 should meet the Building Regulations (Approved Document E) current at the time the work was executed. These are minimum standards and do not mean properties will be completely sound proof.

Further Advice

The Building Research Establishment (BRE) is an independent and impartial research-based consultancy. There is a free leaflet on improving sound insulation that can be downloaded from [BRE's website](#).