

Examine the
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neighbourly relations
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friendly di...



Most properties in the UK have distinct physical boundaries, for example, borders, hedges, fences or walls, most people respect these boundaries. We have them as a protection from others around us, so we can sit or sunbathe without onlookers, if someone were to pop their head over our fence this would, to most, be seen as intrusion. Many people have a relationship with their neighbours, most of them keeping a distance, not becoming too friendly, maybe borrowing a power tool or signing for a parcel and dropping it round when they finish work.

Willmott, 1986, said neighbours are expected to have a 'general disposition towards friendliness' while, at the same time, respecting others 'need for privacy and reserve'. This suggests the general feeling towards how a neighbour should be is friendly when seen but to respect the privacy and need for space. It is not just the UK who adapt this attitude, although there are other countries in which its residents adopt a much more relaxed attitude about neighbourly relations.

Many north African countries, for example Gambia, sit outside the front of their 'houses' and share food and drinks, money passes through them when others are in need, children are assumed to be looked after by all neighbouring adults, something which would likely be a shocking thought to most in the UK. Multi cultural areas can often see problems, as way of life for individuals who have come from, say, a far east country will differ considerably in how they portray way of life with neighbours. Brandes, 1975, p. 45 describes an interesting account of how different neighbours behaved in Beccadas, to him, strangers were entering his property to help unpack his personal belongings without invitation, although they were friendly in

introduction with it, making them feel like they were part of a family. A likely introduction among neighbours in the UK on moving day would probably be a cup of tea and a plate of biscuits with a brief introduction. We all adapt certain attitudes and personalities when in the company of different individuals, we are more relaxed around friends than we would be ur bosses or GP's, neighbours are somewhere in between these types of relations, most people are polite and courteous, because we think this is how we should behave to people we live alongside, perhaps offering to put a bin out whilst they are away or feed the cat, borrowing a power tool or a pint of milk are likely things that neighbours feel comfortable in asking for, it is when people don't have this attitude that neighbourly relations can go sour.

Noise is one of the biggest problems when it comes to complaints, aswell as space, for example, parking spaces, boundaries and the like. (Citizens advice) Some people find loud music socially acceptable because they enjoy it, however an elderly neighbour or one with young children may find it a problem. Approaching neighbours in regards to these problems can prove difficult for some people initially as we are aware of how neighbours are supposed to live together, when a problem arises it can make people feel uncomfortable and end up causing issues and rifts between them.

Elizabeth Stokoe (2006) draws on a complaint of 'intimate noise' in that the accused didn't make steps to reduce the noise coming from the house and although it wasn't antisocial like loud music would have been, it stopped her neighbours from carrying on with their routine and this is what caused the issue.

Had it of been loud music late into the night, chances are the neighbour offended would have knocked and politely asked to keep the noise down, but due to the nature of the noise, this undoubtedly would cause embarrassment to at least one of them, thus possibly making them defensive and the possibility of more issues arising as a defense mechanism.

Some neighbours who have issues are able to amicably resolve their differences, whereas others cannot, in these cases, formal complaints are made which involves people from local authorities becoming involved to try and solve the dispute with the need to take it any further, for example, it needing to go to court.

These situations can often depend on the neighbours attitudes and respect for one another, if people have come from a different area, where, there was little thought for others and they then move to a community where people do try to live together as many expect, this can be where some problems come about, because some may not understand the need for friendly neighbourly interaction, especially if they, perhaps spent years living next door to people who were often noisy and hostile.