



Noisedirect
08453 31 32 30
NATIONAL NOISE ADVICE LINE
www.noisedirect.co.uk

PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COUNCILS NOT RECOGNISING NOISE AS A PSYCHOLOGICAL HAZARD: NO SURPRISE FOR NOISE TZAR

During 2011, Noisedirect's(1) Noise Tzar made a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, to 98 Councils, including all London Boroughs, outer London Councils and all Councils in the South East. The request asked Councils to answer 6 questions.

The purpose of the request was to find out how Councils are complying with their duty under the Housing Act 2004; to inspect properties for psychological hazards from noise and take appropriate enforcement action, by serving Improvement or Hazard Awareness Notices. The request also sought to establish if Council's were carrying out any non statutory functions during Noise Action Week (between 26-30 April 2010; coordinated by EPUK) coinciding with the 15th annual International Noise Awareness Day, on 28 April 2010(Co-ordinated by the Centre for Hearing and Communication).

Noisedirect's Noise Tzar, Val Weedon MBE, said: "Noisedirect has been receiving more and more calls in recent years, with the majority of them simple noise nuisance cases that councils could've dealt with. Local authority cuts and the introduction of the Localism Act has now given councils an excuse to look at ignoring their statutory duties when it comes to noise complaint services. So the results from my enquiries about their duties in relation to the Housing Act came as no surprise. This is a real shame as the Housing Act was a useful tool when dealing with poor sound insulation, a problem that results in many noise complaints."

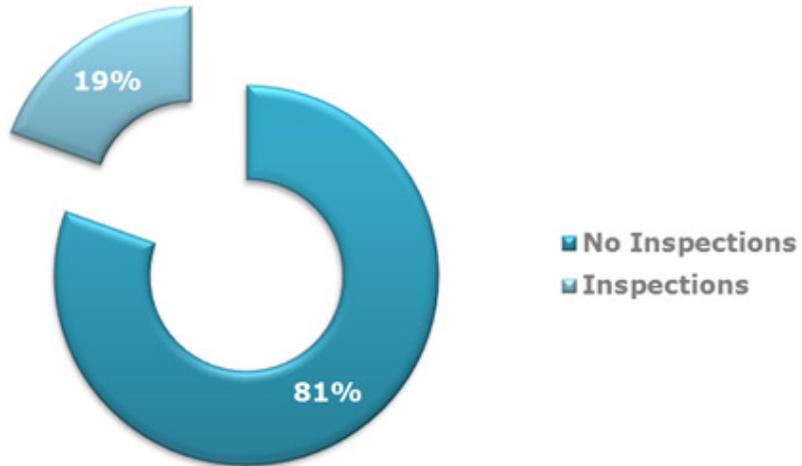
Out of 98 Councils approached only 89 responded. Not all Councils who responded answered all 6 questions.

From answers received, Noisedirect found that in 2010 Councils:

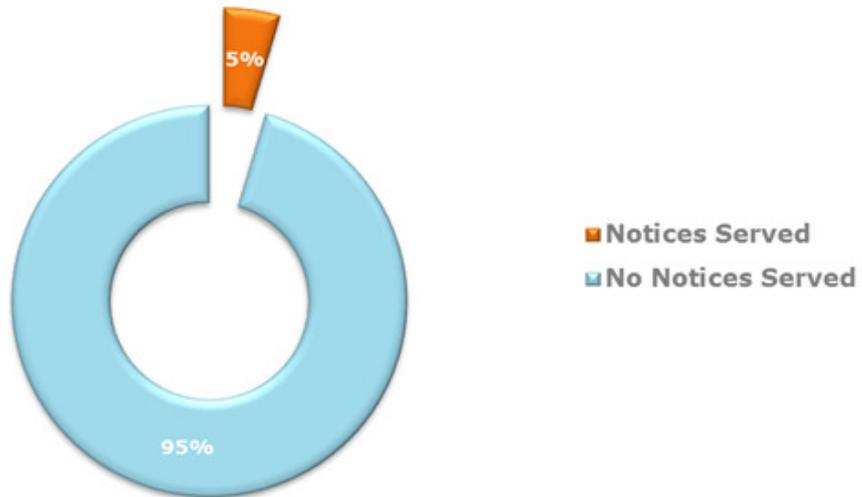
- Served, a total of 4 notices under the Housing Act 2004, for psychological hazards from noise.
- 1 Council responded to say that there are no psychological hazards from noise, in its area, which is why no inspections were carried out.

And that:

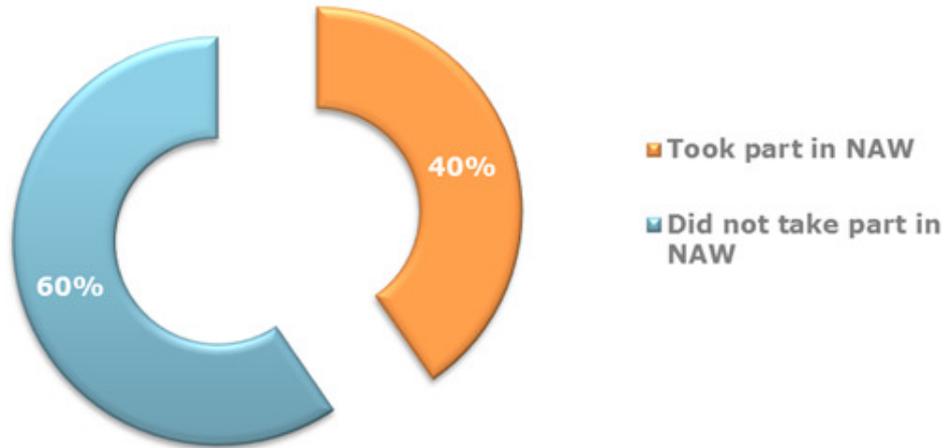
During 2010; 81% of Councils did not undertake any Inspections for psychological hazards from noise.



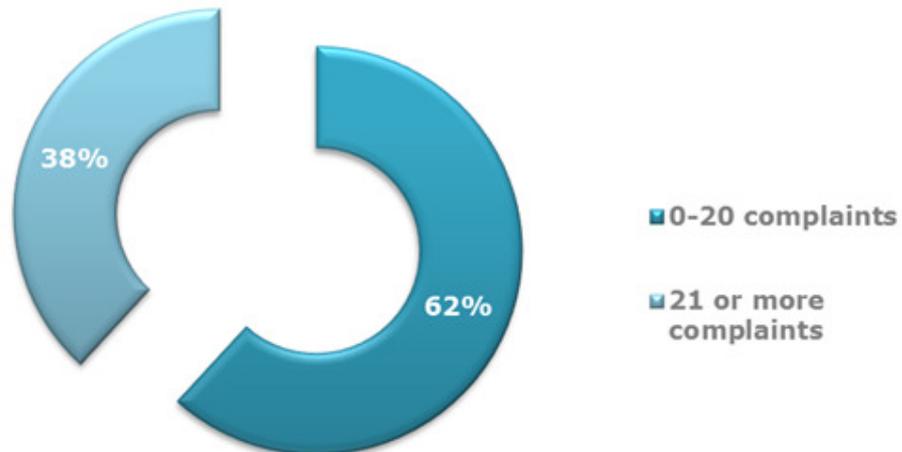
During 2010; 95% of Councils did not take any enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004 for psychological hazards from noise.



Only 40% of Councils took part in Noise Action Week between 26-30 April 2010.



During Noise Action Week 2010; 62% of Councils received between 0-20 noise complaints.



ENDS

Further information: Val Weedon 01634 686262 (media enquiries only) or 07887 940004
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1. Noisedirect is the UK's first independent, national noise advice line provided by Sanctum Consultants; an Environmental Health Consultancy. Noisedirect operates Monday to Friday.

Callers, whether noise makers or sufferers, can discuss any noise issue under a fixed fee of £39 for a 30 minute consultation and speak with a qualified and experienced Environmental Health Professional by phoning a low cost national number. www.noisedirect.co.uk

2. Val Weedon is a leading anti-noise campaigner since 1991 when she set up the Right to Peace and Quiet Campaign, a domestic noise support group and lobby campaign, working alongside the late comedian Spike Milligan, who was its patron. Val received an MBE in 1997. She then went onto be a founder member of the UK Noise Association. In 2011 Val Weedon was appointed to the role of Noise Tzar by Noisedirect National Noise Advice Line to promote the work of Noisedirect and help to challenge and dispel noise myths.

@ValNoiseTzar

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