

Ensuring a peaceful time for all this Christmas

Christmas is traditionally known as a time of peace and goodwill to all. It is also a time when people like to celebrate and party. However, getting a balance between these two aspects of Christmas can be a little tricky and requires tolerance of one another. However, if you do plan to hold a party at Christmas, please enter into the spirit of goodwill to all and consider your neighbours who may be planning a slightly more peaceful Christmas. Late night parties can cause considerable stress to other people, as well as loss of sleep and sometimes illness. The following 10 tips should help anyone planning a party to ensure that everyone is happy during the season of peace and celebration:

1. Inform neighbours and everyone who may be affected that you are going to have a party, giving a few days notice.
2. Don't let your party go on into the early hours of the morning and let the neighbours know when it will finish.
3. Keep the noise level reasonable. Go outside regularly and check on the noise level, being aware of what your neighbours can hear.
4. Try and keep windows closed. Have a separate room where no music is playing where windows can be open for fresh air.
5. Keep speakers away from walls and off floors if you are in a flat. Control the bass level - the noise from the bass carries further.
6. Turn the music down so that it is not audible outside of your home after 11pm at the latest. Remember many people, especially children, will be in bed well before this time.
7. Don't let the party spill out onto the street or into communal areas. If people go into your garden ensure they are quiet and considerate.
8. Know who all your guests are. Do not allow gate crashers.
9. Ask guests to leave quietly at the end of the evening. Shouting goodbyes and sounding car horns or banging car doors can be just as disturbing as loud music.
10. Remember, you are responsible for your party and all your guests. It is up to you to ensure the party does not affect your neighbours. If your guests cannot respect that, then do not let them stay.

Also remember that if you are walking home from Christmas celebrations late at night, be quiet as you go. You may have had a merry time, but be considerate of others who are sleeping in their homes so that they too can have a merry Christmas without losing out on their sleep.

A leaflet about noise can be found at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/bothered-by-noise.pdf> or call the council on 01344 352000 for more information, including how to report problems with noise.