

Noise gripes increase dramatically

Dogs and drinkers on complaint list

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COMPLAINTS to the town hall about noisy neighbours have reached 800 since 2005, according to figures obtained by the Advertiser.

The data was released after a Freedom of Information request and revealed there had been an overall figure of nearly 2,900 noise complaints over the past four years.

Barking dogs was another irritant driving people to distraction - there were 451 pooch-related problems reported to the town hall since 2005 - while jets landing at Heathrow helped create the next biggest headache with 370 complaints about aircraft.

Elsewhere, there were 364 reported problems from shops and other commercial

premises and 278 complaints about noisy building sites.

Rowdy drinkers were behind some of the 282 complaints about pubs and bars, while industrial disturbances got 49 complaints and railway noise a further 13.

The figures chart every noise problem reported to the town hall from April 2005 to February this year.

Philip Turner, Royal Borough environmental protection team leader, said there were a numbers of measures the council could take to protect householders from nuisance noise.

He said: "If it was a particularly annoying problem potentially affecting human health, like an intruder alarm sounding, an officer would deal with this as soon as was practicable and wherever possible on the day of reporting. "The dog warden

would attend to dog barking issues and would usually visit the premises and may send a diary to the complainant to keep a record of the problem so a picture would emerge to assist their visiting at the right time to experience the problem."

Mr Turner said that although the Royal Borough had no statutory powers to protect people from aircraft noise, officials had opposed the development of Heathrow's fifth terminal and were currently engaged in plans to develop a third runway.

He added that in most cases complainants are sent a diary.

If necessary the town hall has powers to serve notices, which could result in fines of up to £10,000 for individuals and £20,000 for businesses.

SPANISH STYLE:
Jacob Gillett, five,
and Tadiwanashe
Mutambiranwa, five,
dance to some
Spanish music.
Ref:102459-2



Pupils love the limbo

DANCE styles from around the world were on display at a school in Cox Green on Tuesday last week as pupils learnt some new moves.

Children from the foundation stage of Wessex Primary School, in St Adrian's Close, were taught a range of dances by a professional dancer at the event.

Jane Douglass, a dance specialist from the Royal Borough, taught the youngsters, aged from three to five, dances from the Caribbean

islands, Spain, India and Africa.

Val Thomas, foundation stage team leader at the school, said all the children loved the event.

"We have been looking at the world around us, so we invited her to do some dances, so the pupils can understand more about countries," she said.

"They did the limbo and other moves. It was good for them to learn in a different way."



IN THE GROOVE: Tadiwanashe Mutambiranwa, five, Holly Clarke, four, Jacob Gillett, five, and Tommy Norcup, five, show of their Spanish dancing skills. Ref:102459-1

Church folk give up carbon for Lent

PARISHIONERS in Cox Green are on a mission to reduce carbon emissions over the Lent period.

More than 50 members of the Church of the Good Shepherd congregation, based at the Cox Green Community Centre, in Highfield Lane, are taking part in a carbon footprint challenge.

Rather than going without chocolate or crisps for the Easter period, members

have decided to do something that affects more people than just themselves.

Each participant has been given a lower carbon footprint card, where they will mark down all the relevant activities they carry out.

These include recycling, switching off lights, reusing papers and turning electronic equipment completely off.

Jo Hicks, vicar at the Church of the

Good Shepherd, said: "We just wanted to do something different this year for Lent, rather than people giving up chocolate or something else."

For details of the carbon fast initiative look at www.tearfund.org

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