



PARTY WALLS

IN ENGLAND & WALES

YOUR 4-STEP GUIDE

Find out if The Party Wall Act 1996 applies to you.

Does your building project or repair work include:

- working on a wall or other structure (such as a floor or ceiling) shared with another property?
- building on or up to the boundary of a neighbouring property?
- excavating within a few metres of a neighbouring property?

Find out **WHAT** you need to do, as well as **WHEN** and **HOW** to do it.

STEP

01

DOES THE WORK INVOLVE ...

- Cutting into a party wall or party structure to fit a beam, e.g. for a loft conversion?
- **Adding a damp proof course?**
- Raising or lowering the height of a party wall (or garden wall)?
- **Rebuilding a party wall, or building a new one?**
- Underpinning any part of one?
- **Cutting a flashing into an adjoining building?**
- Excavating lower than a neighbour's foundations if closer than 3 metres* away?
- **Demolishing a chimney breast?**

Did you answer YES to ANY of these? Then you must comply with the Act. **See Steps 3 & 4.**

The purpose is to let neighbours know the extent of the work and to provide a framework for preventing or resolving disputes. The Act is not intended to stop building work.

STEP

02

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ...

- rewiring work (unless there is significant chasing in)
- **other electrical repairs such as replacing sockets**
- replastering walls
- **fitting shelving or wall units**

This kind of work isn't structural and doesn't usually fall within the scope of the Act. If in doubt, always seek advice.

* closer than 6 metres in some cases

STEP

03

WHAT TO DO NEXT ...

- A **Party Wall Notice** should be sent to ALL affected neighbours **IN WRITING** at least 2 months before you plan to start work.
- **Excavation and new walls built up to or near the boundary of a neighbour's property require only 1 month's notice.**
- Ideally, talk to your neighbours about the work **BEFORE** giving them formal written notice, so it doesn't come as a surprise.



STEP

04

REACHING AGREEMENT ...

- If you get **WRITTEN** agreement from ALL affected neighbours **WITHIN 14 DAYS**, that ends the formal Party Wall process.
- **In this case, work may start.**
- If you don't get agreement (or you get no response), you'll need to appoint a Surveyor.
- **Your neighbour may agree to one Surveyor acting impartially for you both.**
- The Agreed Surveyor draws up a **Party Wall Award**.
- **This is a legal document which sets out details of the work, when and how it will be done, and who pays for what.**
- Alternatively, each owner may appoint their own Surveyor. In this case, both Surveyors (or a third Surveyor) agree the Award.

For detailed guidance read the explanatory booklet on Party Walls at www.gov.co.uk