



Party Wall etc. Act 1996

If you are planning to work on or near a wall or boundary shared with your domestic, commercial or industrial neighbour(s) you need to understand whether the work you propose to carry out falls within the remit of the Party Wall etc. Act, before you start. The legislation might sound daunting, but it's designed to enable development whilst protecting both you and your neighbour(s) during construction projects. So what is involved?

1 What is a Party Wall?

A party wall is a wall or structure used by more than one 'owner'. It can be a dividing wall between two properties, a boundary wall (party fence wall) or a floor between two flats (party structure). It's important to note that this doesn't just apply to internal structures – garages, outbuildings and other structures may mean you are governed by the provisions of the Act.



2 Why Are Party Wall Services Necessary?

The Party Wall etc. Act 1996 in England and Wales exists to protect Adjoining Owners and Occupiers whilst also enabling the Building Owner to carry out proposed construction works (within reason); it is not there to frustrate. If you do not follow the obligations set out in the Act, you may be liable for any damage to your neighbour's property or liable to an injunction to stop works.

3 Your Rights and Responsibilities

- Building Owners - have the right to carry out lawful work, but must follow the procedures set out in the Act.
- Adjoining Owners - have the right to appoint a Surveyor to ensure necessary measures are taken to limit the risk of damage to your property.



4 Key Recommendations

- Do not start work without seeking advice – it may lead to delays and legal difficulties later.
- If a dispute does arise, the Act provides solutions to resolve them amicably.

If you're unsure whether your project falls within the scope of the Act or need help navigating the processes set out in the Act, contact our building surveying team for advice and guidance.



If you would like expert Building Surveying advice, contact:
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