

**CONTACT**

Dan Tapscott
07768 701111
dan.tapscott@rapleys.com

Proposed developments can cause uncertainty, even hostility, amongst neighbours, be it residents or businesses. If information is scarce, people often assume the worst. Dan Tapscott, who heads up Rapleys' Neighbourly Matters service, has many years experience acting on behalf of both developers and neighbours, often dealing with complex and sensitive negotiations. This helps facilitate communication, avoid costly delays and even maximise development potential on sites.

Here are Dan Tapscott's top 'neighbourly' tips when undertaking a construction project:**1. Know your neighbours**

During planning, objectors will identify themselves; don't ignore them and hope they'll go away – the chances are they won't. Understand why they are objecting and address their concerns. Using a neighbourly matters consultant can bring both expertise and impartiality when dealing with emotive situations.

2. Be neighbourly

First impressions matter. Take people's concerns seriously and see if steps can be taken to alleviate them; painting a fence, trimming a hedge or adding some 'business as usual' signage can go a long way. A professional, such as a party wall surveyor, is well placed to listen and relay concerns back to a developer accordingly.

3. Know your legal obligations

Issues around access, proximity to boundaries and permissions to erect scaffolding, hoardings or oversailing cranes commonly crop up. Ignoring the law around these could lead to a costly injunction and time critical delays to a development. Employing an access arrangements adviser with knowledge of the relevant legislation can avoid these pitfalls.

4. Watch out for spurious claims of damage

There will always be those who will 'have a go' to see what they can get out of a developer. Keeping a photographic record of condition from the outset can allay fears on both sides and provide valuable information in the event of a dispute arising. Using an independent professional to undertake this work builds reassurance and trust.

5. Avoid conflicts before putting a spade in the ground

A well thought out design can go a long way in tackling potential issues before they arise and therefore can greatly help in keeping neighbours 'on side'. For example, using a 3D digital model of the development during the design phase can produce a 'design envelope' which takes into consideration aspects such as rights to light and daylight & sunlight, thereby reducing the risk of these issues occurring at a later stage.

In summary, think ahead and be considerate and proactive but, if you miss any of these steps, Rapleys are here to help.

For more information on Rights to Light, Daylight & Sunlight Amenity, Party Wall and Access Arrangements please contact neighbourly matters expert Dan Tapscott.