

PARTY WALL SERVICES

The "Party Wall etc Act 1996" applies throughout England and Wales.

The Act covers:

- 1.** New Building works at or astride the boundary between two properties.
- 2.** Structural work affecting an existing shared/party wall, including repairs, alterations, extending or reducing the wall, cutting into the wall and underpinning.
- 3.** Excavating, or constructing foundations within three metres of a neighbour's building where the new foundations will go deeper than the neighbour's.
- 4.** Excavating, or constructing foundations within six metres of a neighbour's building where the new foundations will cut a line drawn downwards at 45 degrees from the bottom of the neighbour's foundations.

If you are the owner proposing to have the works carried out, you must identify whether the works are governed by the Act. If so, you must serve statutory notice (one or two months depending upon which part of the building is affected) on the adjoining owners and get agreement to the building programme, before you start.

If your neighbours do not agree in writing, the preferred solution would be to appoint one surveyor to draw up a Party Wall Award. This surveyor should be independent and should not be involved in the design or specification of the works. If you cannot agree a surveyor, then each side should appoint their own surveyor. The Party Wall Award will set out what can and cannot be done in accordance with the Act.

If you are the adjoining owner and receive a party wall notice, you may agree to the proposed works if you are entirely happy that there will be no damage or consequences to your property. Otherwise, if you do not agree or if you ignore the notice, then you must agree to a single surveyor being appointed, or appoint your own. If you do neither then a surveyor should be appointed for you by the owner carrying out the works. Where a surveyor is appointed, a schedule of condition of your property will be prepared (in case any damage is caused) and a Party Wall Award will be prepared.

The owner who is carrying out the works normally pays the fees of the surveyors. Fees for such services vary according to the nature and extent of the works.

We can provide Party Wall Surveying Services.

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