

Facilities Management from A to Z



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Problems with the owners or occupiers of adjoining properties about boundaries, access, rights-to-light, or disturbance are no less common than they are with private homes and can be just as problematic. Such disputes can easily escalate through lawyers to the courts running up hefty legal bills and damaging any future prospect of neighbourly harmony.

Such conflict can be avoided with early, clear and honest communication between parties. There are many opportunities for mutual benefit through amiable co-location and practical collaboration and these are all lost if trust breaks down through a lack of flexibility and understanding.

In particular, adjoining properties have a raft of common security issues and opportunities that can be exploited. Perimeter security measures can be harmonised to increase effectiveness or even jointly purchased. CCTV systems can be synchronised to maximise effective coverage and security guards can be briefed to provide mutual aid and share information about suspicious people or incidents.

Such collaboration can be extended across the facilities remit. Shared market knowledge about local suppliers or warnings about potential problems with local transport or infrastructure can save a busy facility manager a great deal of time and trouble. Simply having another FM to talk to can be a boon for many facilities professionals from smaller organisations who are not part of a bigger team

Some facility managers in tightly knit communities like small business parks or industrial developments find great benefit in the formation of a residents' committee to provide a more formal structure to such communication. In some instances, such initiatives have gone further leading to the procurement of shared service contracts for services like guarding, waste or grounds maintenance. This can be a very efficient and effective solution for services that are more driven by the location than by the day to day activities of the organisation.

Business continuity, crisis management and disaster recovery plans are also crucial areas where a good understand of a neighbour's business activities and a free-flowing communication route at all times can be major contributors to success.

The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors provides a Neighbour Disputes Resolution service to deal with Property related issues between neighbours. For more details see www.rics.org.uk