

## MY FIRST FLAT

I couldn't wait to leave home and I did so at the first opportunity. I love my parents, but having to share a room with my younger brother was driving me mad. Mum and dad said that if I waited till my twentieth birthday I could move out. They even said they would help me with the rent, which was great.

After a few months of flat hunting, I eventually found a place in Edmonton. It was ideal, aside from one thing. My upstairs neighbours.

That first night I couldn't sleep for the noise they were making. Right above me. Creak! Creak! Creak! They were at it all night long. I thought their bed was going to come through the floor.

Fortunately, the next day was a Saturday and I could enjoy a lie in. But, would you believe it, they were at it again! Those bed springs were really taking a beating.

Now, don't get me wrong, I'm as liberal as the next person, but this was driving me crazy.

Creak. Creak. Creak.

It was unbearable.

Where did they get their energy from?

Sometimes I could hear a male voice shouting what sounded like words of encouragement. As if any were needed. And then a female voice saying something like, "that was great".

In the end I went out and bought some ear plugs, but I could still hear the springs creaking above my head.

By two o'clock on the Sunday afternoon I'd only had a few hours of sleep and I couldn't take it any longer.

I phoned my parents asking for their advice.

"You wanted to leave home," said my mum, not very sympathetically I thought.

Dad's response was even worse.

"You're twenty years old now. We've done our bit. It's time for you to fight your own battles. Sort it out for yourself, son."

I thought about going to the police but what could they do? I didn't think their remit extended to sorting out people's sex lives! I wondered about telling my landlord, but I doubted if he'd care as long as he was getting his rent.

There was nothing else for it. I would have to confront my neighbours myself. Maybe they would listen to reason?

I marched upstairs and thumped on their front door. It was opened by a slim young woman in skimpy shorts and one of those sports bras. She didn't seem at all surprised to see me.

"Are you joining us?"

I was flabbergasted. "What?"

"Come on in!"

Before I could reply, she had wiggled off down the hallway expecting me to follow.

And what a sight met my eyes! A huge trampoline with a bunch of people bouncing up and down. And, as they did so, I heard the "creak, creak, creak" that had been driving me mad.

A trampoline club! Who knew?

I've now moved out of my flat and taken another across the landing – one that isn't underneath a sports centre.

And, what's more, I've become a member of the trampoline club.

If you can't beat them, join them. Right?