

# Thank you for contacting **Barking Solutions**



## **BARKING SOLUTIONS PACK**

This document contains information to assist you and your neighbour to resolve the barking dog matter.

Please complete the “Barking Diary” on pages 4 and 5 of this information pack with as much detail as possible and then give it to your neighbour along with the “Information for Dog Owner” on page 8 and “Barking Prevention and Ways to Stop Nuisance Barking” on pages 9 and 10.

After completing the Bark Diary, keep a copy of the completed Barking Diary, as you may need to send it to the Council along with the Council letter on page 5 of this information pack if the problem barking continues.

This information can be given to your neighbour personally or anonymously by leaving it in their letterbox. Many dog owners are unaware that their dog may be nuisance barking whilst they are not at home.

We suggest allowing the dog owner enough time to digest the information and to deal with the matter. If after such time no result is achieved, you could consider contacting your local Council to pursue the matter further.

Yours faithfully

**Barking Solutions**

## COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

### Nuisance barking complaints are difficult to deal with for a number of reasons:

- ✎ Each individual person will have a different view as to what is a noise nuisance. This will vary from the location of the dog to the complainant, noise tolerance level of complainant, type of barking and time/length of barking.
- ✎ Information supplied by the complainant is based on personal recollection and findings, as to how the barking affects that individual.

### Nuisance Barking Can Be Defined As Follows:

- ✎ Dog regularly barking at every person or dog passing property or using part of the street, with barking continuing for a period of time.
- ✎ Dog regularly barking, howling or whining for periods in excess of 10 minutes when the owners are absent or ignoring the dog.
- ✎ Dog aggressively rushing, jumping, barking or growling at any of the fences.
- ✎ Dog regularly barking during the night.
- ✎ Dog regularly barking at the neighbours.
- ✎ Dog barking excessively for no reason or no apparent reason.
- ✎ The correctness of information relating to the reason, time, date and duration of barking is crucial if the matter is to proceed to court. If information collected is not accurate or legitimate, legal action may be lost. Video or audio taping of dog is usually not admissible in court.
- ✎ Identification of the dog barking is essential. Noise can and will travel in different directions. **Please ensure the location of the barking dog is correct.** Sometimes complainants make the mistake of accusing a dog for nuisance barking when it is really another dog causing the problem.
- ✎ In certain situations the complainant can unintentionally worsen the dogs barking. This can happen by one of the following actions:
  - ✎ Verbally abusing the dog in an aggressive manner.
  - ✎ Hitting the dog or fence.
  - ✎ Hosing or throwing objects at the dog.
  - ✎ Teasing dog through the fence (by children or neighbour).

- 🐕 Neighbour's cats entering the dog's property or walking along fence line (if this is the case the neighbour must restrain cats from around the dog's area).
  
- 🐕 Have the circumstances of the dog owner or complainant changed? Barking may increase if changes have been made to the dog's environment e.g. owners change of work hours, someone leaving house, new person in house, new neighbours, change in the number of dogs, new baby in house etc...
  
- 🐕 The complainant should consider doing everything within their power to ensure that they or something/someone within their control is not the cause of the nuisance barking. This in conjunction with the dog owner's efforts will help reduce the barking.
  
- 🐕 Some dog owners find it extremely difficult to believe that their dog is causing a nuisance by barking whilst they are not home. A dog will not usually be barking when the owner is arriving home. Dogs generally tend to bark less when their owners are at home.
  
- 🐕 The dog owner should be informed as soon as the barking becomes excessive. If the complainant is to directly approach the dog owner, it is important to be civilised when explaining to the dog owner the following:
  - 🐕 Date, time and duration of dog barking
  
  - 🐕 Reason for dogs barking if known
  
  - 🐕 Where dog is barking (i.e. front, back or side fence etc)
  
  - 🐕 Effect the barking is having on complainant's life
  
  - 🐕 Any other relevant information to assist the dog owner in dealing with the problem.

It is important that a barking dog issue is not made up out of hostility between two neighbours, a neighbourhood dispute or a dislike of the neighbour. The barking nuisance should be considered in detachment to all other matters and is not used as a form of revenge or retaliation against a neighbour, as the dog's life may be at issue here.

***The complainant should remember that as much as the barking may be disrupting their life, the dog owner would need sufficient time to deal with the problem. The complainant's support and information will greatly assist the dog owner in this area.***

# BARKING DIARY

It has been noted when the dog barks and findings are expressed as follows:

1. Dog is barking regularly during the: (please circle)  
  
Day - morning/noon/dusk  
Night - early evening/late night
  
2. Barking occurs: One/twice/several times
  
3. Barking may last up to: \_\_\_\_\_ minutes \_\_\_\_\_ hours
  
4. Barking increases when: You are out/you are at home  
Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Barking starts as soon as you leave home:  
  
No/Yes  
Usually within \_\_\_\_\_ minutes \_\_\_\_\_ hours
  
6. Dog is barking at:  
  
People and or dogs passing the property  
Neighbour and/or neighbour's dog  
Birds /cats / other small animals  
Postman  
Unknown/nothing  
Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Dog is barking at the: Front / back / side / or fence line  
Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. When dog is barking it will: Run along fence line - front/back/side.  
Sit or stand in one spot  
Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. If more than one dog: Does one dog bark more than other \_\_\_\_\_  
Barking increases when playing / fighting  
Other \_\_\_\_\_
  
10. Any other relevant information: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
  
ADDRESS OF OFFENDING DOG/S: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_

Note: If the barking problem has not been resolved within 14 days - please fill in the Council letter and forward it with a copy of the Barking Diary to your local Council Environmental Health Dept.





COUNCIL LETTER

TO: Council Environmental Health Department

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Dear Sir/Madam

### **RE: BARKING SOLUTIONS PACKAGE**

We have obtained a copy of the Barking Solutions Package and followed the instructions contained within.

I/we have notified our neighbour of the problem we are experiencing with the barking dog. As fourteen (14) days have now passed and the problem has not been resolved, we are now passing the problem to the Council Environmental Health Office for your assistance in this matter.

A copy of this Barking Diary and Information for the Dog Owner has been supplied to the dog owner on \_\_\_\_\_(date).

Please find attached a diary showing the dates and times of barking.

Yours faithfully,

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



NEIGHBOUR LETTER

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Dear Neighbour,

**RE: UNNECESSARY DOG BARKING**

Unfortunately we have to report to you that it appears that your dog is causing a nuisance by barking/howling at certain times of the day/night.

We are unsure if you are aware of this problem. Therefore we would like to assist you, initially, in seeking information on ways to deal with this matter.

We would appreciate that you take action as soon as possible to ease the situation.

We would prefer to give you the opportunity to resolve the situation rather than making a formal complaint to the Council.

Enclosed is a copy of the Barking Diary noting the common barking times and information and options for dealing with a barking dog. We hope this will provide you with the information needed to help to resolve the situation.

Kind Regards,

**Your Neighbour**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(This information can be anonymous)

# INFORMATION FOR DOG OWNER

## Ways to Verify a Barking Complaint



It is important that the dog owner investigates the barking and not just relies on the complainant's information. This will assist you in identifying if your dog is causing a nuisance and will help if/when dealing with barking dog. Below are some guidelines to help authenticate or dispute the barking complaint:

- 🐕 Firstly check with all surrounding neighbours to establish if, when and why the dog may be barking. Establish if the dog is causing a nuisance to other neighbours.
- 🐕 Have another neighbour record (diary) detail of the dog barking.
- 🐕 Leave a voice-activated tape recorder on when you are out.
- 🐕 If possible check on the dog regularly at the time(s) of the alleged barking (ensure that the dog does not notice you). If you are returning home it may be better to park your car away from the home as dogs know the sound of their owner's cars and often stop barking when the owner arrives home.
- 🐕 One option should be to secretly take the dog to a boarding kennel for a few days to a week. During this period request the council check with the complainant (if an official complaint has been made) regarding the activity of the barking dog. A signed receipt from the kennel should be obtained.

### POINTS TO REMEMBER

The Facts:

- 🐕 A good guard dog is a dog that only barks when it has reason to i.e. intruders, danger, fire etc. A dog that continually barks will be ignored and become a nuisance. Just like the continual sounding car alarm.
- 🐕 A dog will generally bark more when its owner is out rather than at home.
- 🐕 De-sexing will not decrease the barking or other behaviour problems of this type.
- 🐕 It is not normal for a dog to bark excessively or for a long period of time.
- 🐕 Encouraging a dog to bark at passersby outside your home or to guard your home could lead to nuisance barking when you are out.

# Barking prevention and ways to stop Nuisance Barking



Because a lot of people today buy a dog for protection as well as a companionship, it is important that we understand the distinct differences between a good watchdog and a nuisance barker. Allowing your dog to bark at anything it likes is not the correct way to teach it to be a “good watch dog”.

## **NUISANCE BARKING**

A dog that barks at birds, noises, neighbours, passing pedestrians or other dogs is not actually a good watchdog. A dog like this is similar to a car alarm that keeps going off for no reason. People will eventually take no notice when it goes off for a legitimate reason and it will also be annoying to your neighbours.

## **A GOOD WATCH DOG**

A good watchdog is a dog that only barks when someone attempts to enter your property or there is imminent danger (intruder, house fire etc...). Good barking habits can be trained into your dog easily, providing you are clear about exactly what you want your dog to bark at. By doing this, it will teach you to respond to your dog's bark because it will be a warning sign and not any everyday noise.

## **BARKING PREVENTION AT THE PUPPY STAGE**

A young pup that barks at people or noises is a good indication that you have a budding nuisance barker developing. This could be a sign of a nervous pup that worries about everything. A well-adjusted pup will not usually start barking unnecessarily unless encouraged to do so.

If you have a pup that is starting to bark at everything that moves, correct him with stern “BAD” at the precise moment he starts. Praise him as soon as he responds. Clapping your hands at the same time and lowering your voice tone whilst using your correction word should help to cease any premature barking. A puppy that persists even after your correction could need some socialising. Try a Puppy School or seek professional help from a Bark Busters Therapist.

## **TIPS ON CURING NUISANCE BARKING**

If you are home and your dog is outside barking, firstly go out and correct him with a stern “BAD”. Using this short word consistently will learn your dog that the correction is directed to him and not at whatever he is barking at. You may have to raise your voice over the barking in order for your dog to hear you. You should not have to continually shout at your dog. If you use the “BAD” word every time your dog does something wrong it will soon catch on. Be sure to praise your dog as soon as he stops what he is doing wrong. Monitor the barking and only correct him for those things that do not constitute a good watch dog, i.e. birds, noises, the neighbours, passing pedestrians and other dogs, etc.

## **WHEN YOU ARE OUT**

Because dogs are pack animals they can become stressed when the pack (their family) leaves them alone or leaves without them. Some of the reasons can be:

- 🐾 Separation Anxiety; usually identifiable by barking as soon as you leave. This is a serious problem and can cause a great deal of stress for your dog. This can be caused for many reasons and it is important to get to the root cause of the problem. You probably should seek help from a behaviour professional in dealing with Separation Anxiety.
- 🐾 Apprehensive/Fearful; usually found in the nervous, confidence-lacking dog that barks out of the fear of the unknown. Also the fact that he is the only one home and he is not corrected for the barking when the owner is out. Your dog needs to be socialised and you may need to seek professional help to deal with any serious fears your dog may have.
- 🐾 Boredom; usually identifiable in the fact that your dog will bark, dig and chew. To help fill some of your dog's day, buy a large recreational bone. A Kong™ filled with tasty treats and frozen or a similar object to keep your dog occupied whilst out can act as a great deterrent to barking. Also consider a "dog walking service".
- 🐾 Territorial; this type of dog is normally a confident and assertive type and as a rule is not the worst culprit of nuisance barking. However, if you have problems with this type of dog, you will need to seek professional help from behaviour professionals.

## **GENERAL TIPS OF GOOD DOG MANAGEMENT**

1. De-sex your dog at an early age (but it is never too late).
2. Micro-chip your dog as soon as possible.
3. You should never comfort a dog that is showing his fear aggressively towards you or barking at you. The owner should correct the undesirable behaviour and only praise the good behaviour.
4. Do not allow your dog to bark at things that are not a threat to your security, such as passing pedestrians, the postman, neighbours, stray dogs, birds etc.
5. Be a responsible dog owner and remember a good watchdog makes for a happy neighbourhood.
6. Seek professional help if your dog is too difficult for you to handle, and if so, don't feel like you have failed. Humans are naturally human trainers and it takes special skills to be able to train dogs successfully.
7. Always walk your dog on a lead in a public place and pick up any droppings.
8. Wherever possible reduce the space your dog has at night and confine him to reduce any annoyance to your neighbours. Consider crate training.

## **WHERE TO GO FOR HELP**

If you have tried all of these techniques and are still having problems, you should contact a dog behaviour professional for help. Dog Training books and videos may also be available through your local library, contact your Council for a list of the outlets where available.