

What can I do if dog barking is causing a nuisance?

We always suggest that you try and resolve the problem by talking to the dog owner. They might be unaware that their dogs are barking.

However if you don't feel confident to do this then phone Hart District Council on **01252 774421** where you can report it. Your details will be kept confidential. Please note that we do not investigate anonymous complainants.

We will contact the owner and make them aware that their dog is barking and causing a nuisance. During this time, as part of our investigation, you will be asked to keep diary sheets to record how the dog barking is affecting you.

If you have any questions regarding this information leaflet please contact Environmental Health on the number on the back of this leaflet.

For further information or advice please contact us:

Online by visiting www.hart.gov.uk

Emailing via eh@hart.gov.uk

Calling **01252 774421**

Hart District Council Environmental Health
Civic Offices,
Harlington Way,
Fleet,
Hampshire
GU51 4AE

For general information or advice about dogs please email

www.hart.gov.uk/dog-warden

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Hart District Council
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



BARKING DOGS

This leaflet provides information and advice on how to be a responsible dog owner, and how to avoid difficulties with dogs barking excessively and causing a disturbance to your neighbours. The council receives numerous domestic noise complaints each year and noise from barking dogs is one of the most common.

Dog Barking and the law

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) gives the council powers to investigate complaints received in relation to nuisance from barking dogs.

The outcome

If the barking is deemed to be a statutory nuisance the dog owner will be served an abatement notice to prevent the continuation of the nuisance. If the barking continues after the notice has been served, the dog owners may face the prospect of appearing before a Magistrates Court and could be fined up to £5000.

If the council doesn't deem the barking to be a statutory nuisance, private individuals can also take action under the EPA 1990 by complaining directly to a magistrates court.



Why do they Bark?

There are many reasons why dogs bark, a number of possible reasons are listed below;

- Dogs are pack animals and when they are left alone they will bark and howl to call the owners back home.
- Dogs may bark when left alone due to separation anxiety and fear.
- Protective breeds may bark when left alone when they hear a noise or see a bird, squirrel or cat.
- Dogs bark to warn people and other animals that they are getting too close to the boundaries of 'their' territory.
- Old age, mental health and deafness can cause dogs to bark.

Please note: These are reasons for dog barking and not excuses.

What can you do as an owner to stop barking?

It is best to only leave a dog alone for short periods of time. Dogs get used to a routine and provided that they have been well exercised before they are left they will sleep until you return. If you or a friend cannot regularly exercise the dog then you may wish to employ a dog walker.

You may wish to purchase occupational dog toys that have been developed to entertain dogs while you are away.

If you have to leave your dog outside then make sure it is not near a neighbour's fence or another place where it will be tempted to bark, for example next to a footpath.

You also may consider leaving a radio on during the day to keep the dog occupied, particularly a station with more talking than music. Remember to keep the volume to a reasonable level otherwise you are replacing one nuisance with another.

It may be worth talking to your vet. Sometimes a dog will bark because it is ill or is anxious. Your vet will check for any problems or may refer you to an animal behaviourist who can suggest ways to improve your dogs behaviour.

General advice can also be sought from the Council Dog Warden by emailing dog.warden@hart.gov.uk