



KEEPING YOUR DOG HAPPY

Dogs make wonderful pets and companions for people of all ages. But what do you do if your dog is becoming a nuisance to your neighbours due to excessive barking? Did you know that dog barking is one of the most commonly reported problems to Council?

Barking is a perfectly natural and common behaviour in dogs. However, excessive, prolonged or repetitive barking is an issue that needs to be addressed.

As a dog owner you are responsible for making sure your dog's barking does not become a problem. It is your responsibility to take control of the well-being of your dog, including its physical and mental well-being.

Common causes of barking

The most common causes of barking are:

- Boredom
- Separation anxiety
- Possible health issues
- Changes to a dog's life or lifestyle
- Disturbances
- Children or others teasing them
- Neighbourhood disputes
- Breeding

What can you do?

It is important to determine what is causing your dog to bark excessively and to then implement steps to reduce and alleviate the problem. These recommendations will not only help get your dog's barking under control but also keep them happy.

- Exercise your dog regularly as this may provide an active release of energy. Aim for 15 to 20 minutes a day in a variety of activities, including walking, training and playing
- Provide stimulation, which may include toys or treats, whilst the dog is left alone
- Have your dog's health checked by a veterinarian
- Enrol your dog for obedience training
- Involve your dog in family activities
- Behavioural therapy through consultation with your local veterinarian or dog behaviourist
- Behaviour modification collars

In most cases, the owners may not be aware that their dog is causing a nuisance. It is a good idea to contact the owner of the dog in a rational manner to advise them of the problem. If this does not solve the problem then contact one of the Dog Management Officers to discuss the matter.

There are several methods to try and overcome the nuisance caused by a noisy and disruptive dog. Ultimately, it is the owner's responsibility to resolve the issue and take appropriate action to remedy the nuisance. If Council becomes involved in an issue involving a nuisance or noisy dog, the matter can generally be resolved through mediation.

If the matter cannot be solved through mediation, Council may take other actions including:

- issue an expiation notice (\$105)
- issue a Control (Barking Dog) order which requires all reasonable steps to be taken to prevent the dog repeating the behaviour that gave rise to the order
- commence legal proceedings
- advise the complainant to take civil action

For more information contact Light Regional Council on 8525 3200 or visit www.dogsncats.asn.au

*Please note the information contained herein is intended as a guide only.
Further clarification may be obtained by contacting the Council on 8525 3200.*