



Barking dogs in our Neighbourhood

We are asking resident dog owners to please help their dogs be good neighbours.

Dogs bark for many different reasons... a dog may bark to express how they're feeling – for example, when they're excited, frustrated, bored or scared. If a dog feels threatened, they may bark to tell somebody to stay away or to leave.

Other times, dogs may bark because they want something in particular, such as their favourite toy.

Dogs may also bark when they're in distress – for example, when they're left alone.

Barking is a form of communication and is a completely normal dog behaviour.

However, if the amount your dog barks increases or becomes excessive, it can be a sign that something isn't right and it may also cause problems for other people.

If this happens, it's important to address any underlying problems which could be causing your dog to bark more.

The request comes in response to concerns from local residents who live adjacent to or close to where there are dogs with excessive barking issues.

While all dogs bark sometimes, constant barking and whining can be a burden to people living close by and has been linked with health conditions including stress and high blood pressure.

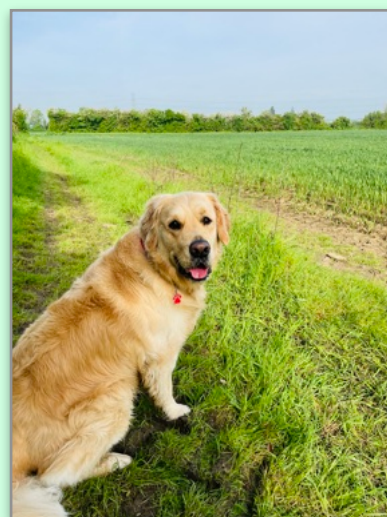
Dog owners are asked to consider what impact their dog's barking may have on their neighbours and to do what they can to keep noise to a minimum - particularly if they leave their pet alone.

Suggested techniques include early training, making sure they have adequate exercise and play time, and not leaving them outside.

Owners are also encouraged to walk and feed their dog before going out and to make sure they have a comfortable bed and have toys available for them to play with.

Dogs which bark when they are left alone may also benefit from a radio being left on at low volume and from doors and windows being screened.

Where possible owners are advised not to leave their dog alone for extended periods, but where this is unavoidable, to arrange for someone to call round to walk them or briefly let them outside.



What Dog Owners can do

Dogs are intelligent, active and social animals so they need lots of exercise, things to do and company to keep them happy and healthy. If your dog is bored, they might spend more time barking.

Make sure your dog has enough to do every day to stop them from getting bored.

- Establish a good routine – your dog may be barking to communicate that they want to play, want food or need attention. Make sure that you have a daily routine in place for your dog which includes meal times as well as play and exercise, at around the same time each day. A good routine can help your dog to know what activities and going to happen and when. This may stop them from barking for things at other times.
- Research shows that eight out of 10 dogs experience stress when left alone, and may show this stress through barking. Find ways to help your dog feel calmer and more relaxed when they're alone, such as leaving a special toy, using a dog-sitting service or getting the help of a specialist.
- Dogs bark for so many different reasons and so it's necessary to discover what the cause is. Asking for advice from an expert can help you to understand what is causing the behaviour and they'll also be able to point you in the right direction for help.

For expert guidance, contact a clinical animal behaviourist who'll be able to put a treatment plan together for you and your dog.

Reporting a barking dog

The occasional bark or 'woof' is usually not a problem for neighbours and others in the community but when barking becomes disruptive, it's often considered unacceptable and unpleasant to many people. The dog's welfare may also be compromised, but the owner may not realise that their dog has been barking if they're not around at that time.

If you're concerned about a dog barking excessively near you, there are things you can do:

1. **Talk to your neighbour:** Start by having a conversation with your neighbour about the barking; they may not be aware of the issue or be willing to take steps to address it. If this doesn't resolve the issue, you can report it to your local council as a noise nuisance.
2. **Document the barking:** Keep a noise diary to document the barking, which can help if you need to escalate the matter to the Council, record the times and duration of the barking, including dates, times, and frequency.
3. **Report to the local council:** The noise could be classed as a noise nuisance if the barking continues, this should be reported it to the Tewkesbury Borough Council Environmental Health Department. They can investigate and take appropriate action.
4. **Consider mediation:** If you and your neighbour are unable to resolve the issue on your own, you can seek mediation services from your local council or a third-party mediation service.
5. **Involve the RSPCA:** Unless there is any evidence of the dog being mistreated then the RSPCA will not be able to help. If you do believe that the dog is being mistreated, you can contact the RSPCA via their telephone number 0300 1234 999
6. **Legal action:** If all other attempts to resolve the issue fail, you may have to consider taking legal action. However, this should be a last resort after exploring other avenues.