

NOISE BARKING DOGS



BARKING DOGS

Barking comes naturally to dogs but the noise from barking or whining can become a nuisance to neighbours.

Often the problem occurs when the owner is out, or while the dog is out of earshot, so the owners don't even know about it until someone complains to Environmental Health.

This leaflet will look at reasons why a dog may bark and attempts to suggest solutions to minimise the noise.

WHY DO DOGS BARK?

Dogs are not by nature solitary animals, they need the security of a family unit. Pet dogs regard their owners as a substitute pack and will become distressed when they are isolated.

A dog may be barking for a variety of reasons that include:

- They are bored and lonely.
- They are left alone for long periods of time.
- The dog may be guarding its territory against what it sees as an intruder, e.g. other animals, passers-by.
- You have encouraged your dog to be responsive to outside noises.
- They are afraid of loud noises, e.g. thunderstorms, construction equipment.
- Your dog is unwell; anxiety often causes barking.

HOW TO STOP YOUR DOG BARKING

Do not punish your dog for barking as it is likely to make the problem worse. This will usually lead to a volume contest. The key is to find out why the dog is barking and try to resolve the problem.



Most dogs don't like being left alone for long periods of time. If possible vary the times of day you leave and the duration, this way your dog should not be too upset when you go.

When your dog has been quiet for a time, return and give them praise. Do not make a fuss of your dog when you leave them.

A dog may bark if they want to join in with something that is going on outside. Try leaving the dog in a room where they cannot see outside. Leaving a radio/television on quietly may also settle the dog as they like to hear human voices, but make sure it is not too loud!



Before you go try and take your dog for a walk and give them some exercise. This will hopefully tire them so they may sleep while you are out!

Ensure your dog gets plenty of exercise. Working breeds require more than others.

If you are going out for a long period of time, then leave a piece of your clothing on the inside of the door so the dog feels like they have company. Also, leave

a light on if you are coming back after dark.

Leave your dog something to do - give them a toy, a comfortable bed and enough food and water. If you are away for a long period ask a neighbour to look in on them and maybe let them out into the garden.

Try a Citronella collar; when a dog starts to bark the collar releases a puff of lemon scent which the dog dislikes. This is designed to stop them barking unnecessarily.

If your dog lives outside, try and position the run away from a neighbour's house or where they may be tempted to bark at passers-by.



AND FINALLY

There is no reason for a dog to bark excessively, however this can be as a result of boredom, loneliness or because they are in pain.

Most dogs can be trained, it is easier when a dog is younger but older dogs can still learn.

If you require information or advice please contact your vet or an animal behaviourist for advice.

For further information regarding nuisance please contact the Environmental Protection Team during normal office hours on:



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