

## Introduction

A dog can become a nuisance when it barks excessively. The dog owner can be taken to court if he does nothing to stop the nuisance, and be prosecuted under Section 79 (1) (g) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The only time barking can really be called reasonable is when the dog barks for an acceptable reason i.e., when someone knocks on the owners door. Barking for long periods of time is not acceptable, especially during the night. This leaflet explains why your dog may bark and how to prevent your dog from causing a nuisance.

## Why dogs bark

There are many reasons why your dog may bark but the most common causes are:

- loneliness,
- boredom and frustration,
- attention seeking,
- defending the territory
- medical reasons.

## How can I prevent my dog from barking?

Try not to leave your dog for long periods. If you have to, see if there is someone who can look in during that time. Maybe that person could take your dog for a walk or let him out into the garden.

If you do have to leave your dog for long periods:-

- Do not leave the dog outside where the dog barking can more easily penetrate the neighbourhood
- Feed and exercise your dog immediately before you go out to encourage him to sleep
- Make sure his bed/basket is comfortable and leave him with all his favourite toys and possibly a bone to prevent boredom
- Leave a radio or television on at a low volume to keep the dog company
- If you are not coming back until after dark, leave a light on
- If it is possible to actually catch the dog in the act of barking he can be scolded but under no circumstances should you punish the dog unless you catch him barking
- Train your dog not to bark at anything that moves. A well-trained dog should be able to tell the difference between people who are allowed into the house and people who are intruders
- Some dogs just don't want you to go out, they do not want to be left on their own, particularly if it is a busy and noisy household. Try putting your dog on his own in another room - at first for a few minutes, then gradually build up the time you leave your dog alone. Do not return to your dog until he is quiet for a period. When you return, praise him for being quiet.

Each case of barking must be dealt with on its merits and the information in this leaflet is merely a guideline. If you require further help, please contact your Dog Warden who will be happy to advise you. The Dog Warden Service aims to help with ALL dog problems, not just the obvious ones.

For all dog related problems  
contact your Dog Warden

**Braintree District Council**  
**Causeway House**  
**Bocking End**  
**Braintree**  
**Essex CM7 9HB**  
**Tel: (01376) 551414 Ext 2217**

# Coping with your barking dog



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