Barking Dogs & Noise Nuisance

Constant barking can be avoided despite barking being natural to dogs.

The constant barking or whining of a dog can be very disturbing or annoying for your neighbours. Often this problem occurs when you are out of the house so you do not realise it is a problem or how bad it is until someone complains.

In law a barking dog can be a ‘statutory noise nuisance’. You as the owner could be taken to court if you do nothing to stop the nuisance.

Don’t blame the dog and think that you will solve the problem by replacing him with another. All dogs bark and unless you change at the same time, the problem could still be there.

Why Dogs Bark
Dogs are not by nature solitary animals, they need the security of a family group. Pet dogs regard their owners as a substitute family and can soon become distressed when left alone. Your dog may bark due to:–

- Loneliness
- Boredom or frustration
- Attention seeking
- Defending territory
- Medical problem

Training
Training is important so that your dog does not bark at anything that moves. A well trained dog should be able to tell the visitors allowed into the house and the people who are intruders.

Good training is essential at an early age, this combined with affection and companionship should mean that your dog will not develop these bad habits. Start as you mean to go on.

Some simple things to try
Some dogs just don’t want you to go out. Your dog may get used to the idea if you:

- Leave at different times of time the day and for different periods. That way he might not be so concerned each time you leave. Don’t make a fuss of your dog when you leave him.
- Try putting the dog on his own in another room for a few minutes then gradually build up the time you leave your dog alone. Do not return to the dog until he is quiet for a period. When you return praise him.
- Some dogs bark because they want to join in with what is going on outside. If this is the problem, try leaving your dog where he cannot see outside.
- Some dogs will settle if they can hear a human voice, leaving the radio or television on at a low volume may help.
- Try not to leave your dog for long periods. But if you have to, try and organise someone to look in during that time or possibly take the dog for a walk or let them out into the garden. If your garden is secure you may consider fitting a dog door but be mindful of other problems this may cause.
If you do have to leave your dog for long periods:

- Feed and exercise him before you go out and leave fresh water to drink.
- Make sure that the room is not hot or too cold and there is adequate ventilation.
- Make sure his bed or basket is comfortable and not in a draught or direct sunlight.
- Leave a large marrow bone to chew and some favourite toys to play with.
- If you are not returning until after dark, either leave a light on or use a night light that comes on automatically when it gets dark.
- You could also consider taking your dog to a licensed boarding kennel that offers day care.

If you leave your dog outside all day:

- Ensure the garden is completely secure to prevent your dog from straying and causing problems.
- Try not to put the kennel near a neighbour’s fence where the dog may be tempted to bark.

Considering a second dog for company may help, but think about this carefully, do you have the space and can you afford it? A second dog could result in more not less problems.

Further help and Information

- A visit to your vet may find that your dog is ill or anxious. You can ask your vet to refer you to an animal behaviourist who can suggest ways to improve your dog’s behaviour.

- The council’s dog warden may also be able to offer some advice and can be contacted on 0115 907 2244.

- A leaflet ‘Is your dog barking too much?’ is available on the internet at www.gov.uk. You can find it by putting the title in your search engine.

Action by the Council

The Council has a policy on noise complaints which details how a noise complaint will be dealt with. The policy explains:-

- The law which applies how we decide whether the noise complained of is, or is not, a statutory nuisance.
- How we go about investigating a complaint about noise.

A copy of the full policy is available:-

- on our website at:- www.erewash.gov.uk / Environment and Waste / Noise and Nuisance
- by calling 0115 907 2244 ext 3820 to request a hard copy
- or emailing environmentalhealth@erewash.gov.uk