



Barking Dogs

A guide for owners



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City of
Norwood
Payneham
& St Peters

Barking Dogs

A guide for owners

Dogs are an important part of our community and provide many residents with happiness and companionship. However, the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters occasionally receives complaints regarding nuisance noise from barking dogs. Excessive and prolonged barking, whining, or howling by dogs can become a nuisance to neighbours and other local residents.

The purpose of this guide is to assist dog owners to manage excessive dog barking and related habits.

Why do dogs bark?

Barking is a normal behaviour for dogs and is a form of communication with other dogs and with people. However, from time to time, dogs may bark excessively for a range of reasons such as:

- boredom, loneliness or a lack of entertainment
- discomfort from irritations such as fleas
- unsuitable yards, enclosures or kennel location
- lack of adequate food, water, exercise or training
- protecting territory or feeling threatened
- protecting their owner or family
- strange or new noises or fireworks
- thunderstorms or wailing sirens
- people passing or children playing nearby

Is your dog's barking affecting your neighbours?

If you are concerned about your dog's excessive or persistent barking, we suggest speaking with your neighbour(s) who may be affected.

If you don't feel comfortable approaching your neighbour(s) in person, you can use our 'Dear Neighbour Note' available at the end of this guide.

Council assistance

If you are unable to resolve your dog's excessive barking, whining or howling, you should consider contacting your local vet, dog behaviourist or the Council's Regulatory Services staff on 8366 4555 to discuss your concerns or email the Council at townhall@npsp.sa.gov.au.

Barking behaviours

On the following pages, different types of barking behaviours are listed, together with suggested ideas that may assist to resolve the barking. The suggestions are not exhaustive and you should be aware that some of the suggested actions may have a financial cost that you will need to bear if you choose to implement them.

Consider the triggers and signs outlined in this guide for each behaviour type to identify and hopefully resolve your dog's excessive barking behaviour.

Territorial or alert barking

Barking triggers

Dogs are territorial and alert by nature. This innate territoriality can manifest as barking at perceived threats and sometimes it can lead to aggressive behaviours. Some barking triggers can include passing movement outside the property i.e. vehicles; other animals in the vicinity, unfamiliar sounds and smells, and other dogs barking.

Suggested actions

Proper socialisation and training are crucial to manage and prevent territorial displays. Some suggested actions include:

- Increase your dog's physical, mental and social enrichment
- Block the view of your street or give your dog a view of your street
- Give your dog access to the family home e.g. install a doggy door
- Bring your dog inside at times when triggers are likely to occur
- Contain your dog in a different area of your property
- Interactive play with your dog at home when you return and rotate dog toys
- Call your dog to come to you and give them a treat—this reinforces to the dog that their job is done
- Feed your dog from slow-release food dispensing toys (treat balls), morning and night
- Provide problem solving activities such as hunting for food and scent games
- Create a sensory garden – different surfaces, heights and objects to encourage exploration and interaction
- Join a dog training school
- Book your dog in for doggy day care or engage a qualified dog walker

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Separation, distress or anxiety

Barking triggers

Dogs may bark when they experience separation, distress or anxiety. Some common barking triggers include being left alone while you are out; loss of a companion – human or animal and noise phobias such as thunderstorms and fireworks.

Some common signs to look for in dogs suffering from separation, distress or anxiety, may include refusing to go outside, unusual toilet behaviours, attempting to escape, following or shadowing a family member, not eating and destructive behaviour.

Suggested actions

- Visit a vet for diagnosis and treatment including prescribed medications

Old age or health issues

Barking triggers

Older dogs and dogs experiencing health issues may bark excessively due to the following:

- Age-related medical conditions or injuries, such as dementia, arthritis, anxiety, incontinence, vision loss or hearing loss, pain related
- Age related stress, confusion, frustration or fear
- Loss of a companion – human or animal
- No same or familiar place your dog feels it can retreat to

Suggested actions

- Visit a vet for diagnosis and treatment, including a suggested modification plan
- Administer medication as prescribed or recommended by a vet.
- Provide a safe and quiet place for your dog to go, such as a crate that is equipped with your dog's favourite things
- Give your dog access to the family home, e.g. install a doggy door
- Block the view of your street or give your dog a view of your street

Bored or seeking attention

Barking triggers

Bored and attention seeking dogs may bark excessively due to a lack of physical, mental and social enrichment, such as a lack of attention, lack of room to move around, lack of exercise or being chained or tied up.

Signs to look for include:

- Digging holes
- Trying to escape
- Destructive chewing
- Jumping on the boundary fence
- Intense and excessive on-patrol barking
- Overly energetic

Suggested actions

- Give your dog a view of the street
- Block the view of your street
- Regular exercise away from home
- Make more time to play with your dog at home and rotate the dog's toys
- Feed your dog from slow-release food
- dispensing toys (treat balls), morning and night
- Problem solving activities, such as hunting for food and scent games
- Create a sensory garden – different surfaces, heights and objects to encourage exploration and interaction
- Give your dog access to the family home e.g. install a doggy door
- Join a dog training school
- Socialise your dog with a known, friendly dog
- Dog day care or engage a qualified dog walker
- Ask family and friends to dog sit
- Include your dog in family outings

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Sensitive to sound

Barking triggers

Some dogs bark excessively when they are exposed to loud and strange sounds such as fireworks, thunder, sirens or loud noises.

Suggested actions

- If the triggers are loud and nearby (eg. a jack hammer next door), temporarily remove your dog from the location/property
- Provide a safe and quiet place for your dog to hide
- Reduce anxiety by administering over the counter medications
- Administer medication prescribed by your vet
- Be aware and prepared of upcoming fireworks or thunderstorm activity
- If you are at home whilst a trigger noise is occurring, massage, touch or hug your dog to provide security and reassurance

A Good Behaviour Guide for Dogs is provided within this document. The Guide has been prepared by the Dog and Cat Management Board and includes general information about excessive barking and what may occur if a complaint is lodged with the Council.

What's next

If you're still unsure what is causing the barking behaviour, try filming your dog when you are not at home.

Monitoring the dog's progress

Once you have identified your dog's barking triggers, monitor their progress by:

- Keeping a diary of your dog's behaviour
- Seeking feedback from neighbours through weekly check-ins

Sometimes neighbours have a good idea of how your dog is behaving, especially if the barking occurs while you are away from home.

Medication

When trialling medication that has been prescribed by a suitably qualified person, you may need to allow up to six weeks before behaviour change occurs.

This information may need to be relayed to your neighbours/council, if you are working with your neighbours and or council to resolve a barking issue.

Positive reinforcement

Always remember to reward your dog with treats, praise or play for quiet behaviour.

Rewarding their good behaviour reinforces the training and importance of what they've learnt.

What happens if there is no improvement?

You may need to consider seeking professional advice from your vet or a certified dog behavioural trainer.

Barking dog complaints lodged with the Council

Initial investigation

Following receipt of a report about a dog that is causing a barking nuisance, Council staff will undertake an initial investigation and gather information to understand the dog's behaviour, why the dog is barking, how often, when and for how long. This may involve:

- meeting the complainant and assessing the situation from their property
- recording the dog barking
- speaking with or visiting other neighbours to gather additional information.

Estimated time: about 7 days

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Dog owner notification

Council staff will contact you to advise of the complaint and provide suggestions to assist you to confirm the cause and extent of the barking and resolve your dog's barking, based on the most likely cause.

Monitor behaviour change

Council staff will seek to confirm your action plan for you to resolve the complaint and weekly feedback will be sought from your neighbour(s) to ascertain for example:

- whether the barking reduced, increased or stayed the same
- what changes are you implementing that are and are not working

Estimated time: 3–5 weeks

The monitoring stage may be extended to allow for continuous improvement of the dog's behaviour to be recognised.

What if there is no improvement ?

If you are unable or unwilling to address your dog's nuisance behaviour and there is evidence of persistent nuisance, the Council may serve you with a Control (Barking Dog) Order.

A Control (Barking Dog) Order is a legally-enforceable way in which a council can place restrictions and/or requirements on the owner of a dog. A Control (Barking Dog) Order requires you to take all reasonable steps to prevent nuisance barking including engaging a behaviourist and/or undertaking a training course.

Any information you provide that may prove that you are using best endeavours to reasonably resolve the complaint will assist Council staff to determine whether a Control (Barking Dog) Order should be served.

If a Control (Barking Dog) Order is served, supporting evidence will have been gathered to prove persistent unreasonable barking and its impact on neighbours. This may include diary evidence, audio and or video recordings, impact statements from complainants or a combination of all of these.

Prior notice will be given before a Control (Barking Dog) Order is served.

Estimated time: 2–4 weeks

If a control order is served

A Control (Barking Dog) Order can be served by the Council or a representative of the Dog and Cat Management Board.

If a Control (Barking Dog) Order is served, you are required to take all reasonable steps to prevent your dog repeating the behaviour. You may be directed to engage a dog behaviourist and complete training with your dog.

Estimated time: Completing training may take 1–2 months.

If you are directed to engage a dog behaviourist and complete training with your dog, there are several training providers that are approved by the Dog and Cat Management Board, please refer to the following page.

If barking continues after a Control (Barking Dog) Order is in effect

If the barking dog complaint remains unresolved, further evidence will be gathered of the breach, including how often, how long and what impact it's having on neighbours.

Failure to meet the requirements of the Control (Barking Dog) Order may result in the following:

- an expiation notice may be issued
- prosecution may be initiated through the Magistrates Court which, can lead to strict controls being imposed on the dog.

Estimated time: Briefing a matter before the court for prosecution or court ordered directions may take 12–18 months.

Resolution of the Complaint

The Council will determine the barking complaint resolved once persistent barking has been addressed and the barking no longer persistently interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of a person.

Once the barking issue is resolved, a letter of acknowledgement will be sent to you as the dog owner and neighbours and the complaint investigation will be closed. If nuisance barking re-commences the Council may re-open the investigation, starting at the relevant stage.

Approved Training Courses

Dog and Cat Management Board Approved Trainers for Control Orders

When issuing control orders, Councils can instruct the owner to attend an *approved training course*. An *approved training course* is approved by the Dog and Cat Management Board for the purposes of s50 of the *Dog and Cat Management Act*. The following people are approved by the Board to deliver approved training courses:

Approved trainer	Orders	Locations Serviced	Expiry
Sharon Crichton Positive Dog Training 0418 886 698 sharon@positivedogtraining.com.au	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking		28 February 2029
Dr. Lizzie Davis South Coast Animal Hospital 8384 4363 staff@scah.com.au	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (all suburbs), Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light & Lower North, Eyre Peninsula, Far North, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray & Mallee, Yorke & Mid North, Online	28 February 2029
Jennifer Fry JS Dog Behaviour Consulting Services 0423 787 998 jsdogbehaviour@yahoo.com South Coast Animal Hospital 8384 4363 staff@scah.com.au	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance	Adelaide (all suburbs), Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light & Lower North, Eyre Peninsula, Far North, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray & Mallee, Yorke & Mid North, Online	28 February 2029
Tracy Irons 0429 066 797 tracyiron73@gmail.com	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (all suburbs), Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light & Lower North, Eyre Peninsula, Far North, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray & Mallee, Yorke & Mid North, Online	28 February 2029
Sara Martin Positively Pawsome Training Solutions 0437 795 520 smartin@internode.on.net	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (Eastern, Northern, Western), Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light & Lower North, Online	23 September 2027
Charlotte Mathe Pawly Understood 7078 6803 pawlyunderstood@gmail.com	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (all suburbs), Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light & Lower North, Eyre Peninsula, Far North, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray & Mallee, Yorke & Mid North, Online	20 February 2028

Approved Training Courses

Dog and Cat Management Board Approved Trainers for Control Orders

Approved trainer	Orders	Locations Serviced	Expiry
Kimberley Nicolle Pawly Understood 7078 6803 pawlyunderstood@gmail.com	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (all suburbs), Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light & Lower North, Eyre Peninsula, Far North, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray & Mallee, Yorke & Mid North, Online	21 April 2029
Lena Logan Paws & Reward 0432 885 874 info@pawsandreward.com.au	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (Easter, Southern, Western), Adelaide Hills, Online.	20 February 2028
Tenelle Rosser Pawly Understood 7078 6803 pawlyunderstood@gmail.com	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (all suburbs), Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Light & Lower North, Eyre Peninsula, Far North, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray & Mallee, Yorke & Mid North, Online	30 May 2028
Dr. Emma Vermeeren Animal Behaviour Coaching 8755 1732 admin@animalbehaviourcoaching.com.au	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Kangaroo Island, Limestone Coast, Murray & Mallee, Online.	28 February 2029
Scott Corcoran Adelaide K9 Services 0413 067 769 scott@adelaidek9.com.au	Dangerous, Menacing, Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (all suburbs)	10 September 2026
Luke Tucker https://gentleguidancedogtraining.com.au 0437 161 243 Luke@gentleguidancedogtraining.com.au	Nuisance, Barking	Adelaide (all suburbs)	28 October 2026



Does my dog bark excessively?

When barking becomes an issue

Barking is a normal part of your dog's behaviour. Your dog might bark for a number of reasons. It can be playful, a sign your dog is happy to see you, or show anxiety, or an attempt to defend its territory.

Sometimes, however, your dog's barking, if excessive, can be a problem for your neighbours. Causing stress, anxiety and even loss of sleep. Excessive barking (as defined by the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*) is when a dog creates a noise, by barking or otherwise, which persistently occurs or continues to such a degree or extent that it unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of a person. Excessive noise is one of the most frequent concerns raised with councils.

We understand...

...most owners are willing to work with the council to find ways to stop their dog from barking excessively.

Excessive Barking: the facts

Many factors can cause a dog to bark excessively:

- Boredom, loneliness or a lack of entertainment
- Discomfort from fleas, worms or other irritations
- Unsuitable yards, enclosures or kennel location
- Lack of adequate food, water, exercise or training
- Guarding or protecting territory or feeling threatened
- Protecting their owner or their family
- Strange or new noises or fireworks
- Thunderstorms, high altitude planes or wailing sirens
- People passing or children playing nearby.

If your dog barks excessively and it becomes an issue for others or for council, it is reviewed and resolved through:

- Working with the owner informally with education, monitoring the situation and/or mediation
- Issuing the dog's owner with an expiation notice for excessive barking
- Issuing the owner with a 'Control Order' (barking) under the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995*.

We understand...

...excessive barking, is distressing for everyone. That's why it's important to manage the situation and your dog.



If a complaint is lodged with council

The first task of the council is to determine if the complaint is valid. Sometimes the wrong dog is blamed. Sometimes the complaint is the result of a neighbourhood dispute. And sometimes, one neighbour is overly sensitive to barking while others don't notice it.

Mediation to find a solution

Not all noise nuisances require legal solutions. If the owner and neighbour, working with their local council, are unable to resolve the complaint informally, then the council will conduct a full investigation. This may include providing diary sheets, talking to neighbours, the complainant and the dog owner. Information collected at this time is vital and may be admissible as evidence if the matter is prosecuted.

When no solution is agreed on

Councils can issue a 'control order' (barking) to require an owner to control their dog. Usually, an explanatory letter will be sent allowing up to 21 days to rectify the problem. If not corrected, council may issue a control order and expiate.

When a Control Order is issued

If issued, and if the dog continues to create further excessive noise, councils can instigate prosecution against the owner if they refuse or cannot comply with the control order.

If found guilty, the court may impose a penalty that requires the owner to implement strict controls on their dog or remove the dog from the property.

Contravention of an order is a serious offence.

When no solution is found legally

Residents have the right to take civil action against a dog owner to alleviate a noise nuisance.

If the complainant believes council has not handled the matter in accordance with its obligations, the issue can be taken to the office of the State Ombudsman.

Excessive barking: a good owner tip

You should always take noise and barking dog complaints seriously, however difficult it may be to investigate or resolve.

Councils can provide information about reducing dog noise problems and may refer you to an expert, such as a vet or dog behaviourist.

To find the facts and other tips on how to be a good dog owner, visit dogandcatboard.com.au



An initiative of the **DOG AND CAT MANAGEMENT BOARD** and your local council. Council information and contact details can be located at www.lga.sa.gov.au View the *Dog and Cat Management Act 1995* along with Information Sheets on selection, health, behaviour and care at www.dogandcatboard.com.au

Date _____

Dear Neighbour,

I've been concerned that my dog(s) might be causing some disturbance, and I'm hoping to understand what might be triggering the behaviour so I can address it properly.

I'd really appreciate your help by answering the questions below.

Is my dog's excessive barking causing you concern?

☐ Yes ☐ No

What Noises do you hear my dog making?

☐ barking ☐ howling
☐ crying/whining ☐ growling

Time of day this occurs:

☐ morning ☐ daytime ☐ evening/night

This is worse when you are:

☐ home ☐ not home

Other Comments:

Please return this card to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

If you would like to provide me with further feedback,
please phone me on: _____



MORE INFO

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City of
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Barking Dog Noise Diary



City of
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Complete the following diary by recording the noise times during a 14 day period. Ensure that this sheet is signed and dated on each page where indicated. Be accurate and precise in recording times.

Dogs Location: _____

Completed By: _____

Address: _____

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Sign: _____

Date: _____

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Sign: _____ **Date:** _____

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Sign: _____ **Date:** _____

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Sign: _____ **Date:** _____

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Day: _____ **Date:** _____

Start Time	Time Ceased	Reason for Noise	Noise Level	Intermittent/Constant

Legend

Noise Level	Reason for Noise (if known)
Loud	Nothing
Whining	People walking by
Yapping	Bored
Muffled	Owner Out
Unknown	Unknown

Additional Comments

Sign: _____ **Date:** _____

I acknowledge that the information provided by me in this Complaint Form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that in making this complaint and any related statement that:

- I may be required to attend a Court or Tribunal as a witness; and
- this information may be disclosed by the Council to a third party as required by law, including for use in connection with prosecution or other legal proceedings.

YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW INDICATES THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO GIVE EVIDENCE IN COURT IF NECESSARY.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Please return this completed and signed form by either of the following methods:

- In person at the Norwood Town Hall, 175 The Parade, Norwood
- By email to townhall@npsp.sa.gov.au
- By post to PO Box 204, Kent Town, 5071



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