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BARKING DOG INFORMATION KIT & DOG DIARY

Note: If the enclosed diary is not returned within 21 days from date of issue, Lower Eyre Council will be of the understanding that the barking is no longer a nuisance to you and the matter will be closed.

Introduction

Dogs are an important part of our community, but dogs that bark excessively can become a source of irritation. The Lower Eyre Council receives numerous complaints regarding nuisance noise from barking dogs. Approaching the dog's owner in a neighbourly manner and discussing your concerns with them can easily resolve this type of complaint.

It is worth keeping in mind that the dog's owner may not realise their dog is barking or that the barking has become a nuisance to other people.

Why dogs bark

Barking is one of the ways dogs communicate. It can signify anything from playfulness to anxiety however, owners can sometimes overlook that their dog's barking can affect others. Reasonable barking, such as when the family returns home or to protect their property is acceptable. Barking at normal movements or noises from adjoining properties should be considered unacceptable behaviour.

Excessive barking (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.

Many factors can cause a dog to bark excessively including:

- Boredom and loneliness
- Discomfort from fleas, worms, or other irritations
- Unsuitable yards, enclosures, or kennel location
- Lack of adequate food, water, exercise, or training
- Protecting territory, family or feeling threatened

Neighbourhood communication

Neighbours can help solve barking problems by communicating with each other, identifying the reasons for excessive barking, and noting what is happening in the area when the dog is barking. If you feel comfortable doing so, consider approaching your neighbour and offering to meet the dog. This can help build your relationship with your neighbour and the dog.

Try the following steps to attempt to resolve the issue in a neighbourly manner:

- Approach the dog's owner when the problem arises and state your case clearly and politely. He or she may not be aware of the barking situation.
- If the dog owner is unapproachable or you are not comfortable approaching them, try placing the 'Dear Neighbour' letter contained in this kit into their letterbox. In most cases the solution can be found by communication between neighbours and should be sought prior to lodging a complaint with Council.

Council's barking dog complaint process

- Initial complaint received by Council.
- A barking dog information kit will be sent to the complainant.
- The complainant is to contact the dog owner, either in person or via a 'Dear Neighbour' letter (example within kit).
- If the barking continues, the complainant is to return the barking dog diary (included in the kit) to Council within 21 days.
- Council will assess the completed diary.
- If the barking is deemed to be a nuisance an Authorised Officer will contact the dog owner and will advise the complainant when contact has been made.
- The complainant will be requested to monitor the situation for a further 14 to 21 days and report back to Council.
- The Authorised Officer will assess feedback and consider appropriate action.

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Dear Neighbour,

You may not be aware, but your dog is causing a noise nuisance in the neighbourhood by barking excessively.

I have discussed this problem with the Lower Eyre Council who suggested that, as a first step, I express my concern to you to so you can investigate what may be causing the barking and have the opportunity to find an effective solution.

Examples of the barking are:

Dates	Times	What happened

Thank you in advance for taking steps to reduce the noise your dog is causing and avoiding the complaint progressing any further.

An Authorised Officer at Lower Eyre Council can be contacted on 8623 0600 to assist you with this matter.

Kind regards,
Neighbourhood resident

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

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7-DAY BARKING DOG DIARY

I, _____
(Your full name)

Of _____ (Your address)

Phone (H) _____ (W)_____

Hereby state that the dog/s namely
(1) _____ (Breed/s and name/s if known
(2) _____
(3) _____

usually kept at: _____
(address where dog/s is/are kept)

Creates a nuisance to me by barking excessively during the times listed below.

DIARY EXAMPLE
Please note that the barks must be indicated in a numerical value.

Date	*Time*	*Barks (numerical value)*	*Time finished*	*Total*	*Reason*
20/04/2019	*0901 (1)*	*1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1*	*0904*	*10*	*Neighbour leaving*
	0910	*1 1 1 1*	*0911*	*4*	*Children passing by*
21/04/2019	*1645*	*1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1*	*1649*	*8*	*Loud car*
	1832	*1 1 1 1 1*	*1838*	*5*	*No reason apparent*

It is essential that you complete the diary as set out in the example above for Council to pursue this matter on your behalf.

DATE	TIME START	NUMBER OF BARKS	TIME FIN	TOTAL	REASON

DATE	TIME START	NUMBER OF BARKS	TIME FIN	TOTAL	REASON