

8 November 2023

## Barking Dogs - Responsible Animal Ownership

Barking dogs can cause concern across the community, Council is seeking help from the community to ensure their dogs and animals are being responsibly cared for.

“With a large number of dogs and pets being owned across the Shire, it is important for animal owners to be responsible and ensure their pets are not causing concern for other animals, pet owners and surrounding property owners,” said Warrumbungle Shire Council Mayor, Councillor Ambrose Doolan. “Barking is a natural behavior for dogs and a method of communication, but when the barking becomes excessive, it is the responsibility of the dog’s owner to ensure this behavior does not become a concern to others in the community.”

Excessive barking can be caused by a number of reasons including provocation from people or other dogs (whether intentional or not), not enough exercise, lonely, bored, sick, hungry, thirsty or being kept in a small or confined space. As a dog owner, please make sure your dog is adequately cared for and you can recognise signs that your dog may be distressed.

If you are a dog owner, consider reasons your dog may be barking excessively. Here are some simple tips to reduce excessive barking;

- Give your dog regular exercise
- Provide chew toys to keep your dog occupied while you are away
- Stimulate your dog to avoid them barking to attract attention
- Restrict your dog’s view outside your fence
- Make sure your dog has adequate shelter, food and water
- Yelling or shouting at a barking dog will reinforce the behaviour – encourage good quiet behaviour

“If you are concerned by excessive dog noise, the most effective way to manage this is to contact the owner of the dog directly. Neighbours can assist in identifying the reasons for excessive barking by noting what is happening in the district when the dog is barking. A neighbour may be in the position to offer to exercise a dog when its owner is unable due to work commitments, illness or other reasons,” Cr Doolan explained.

Owners are encouraged to talk with the neighbour/owner of the nuisance dog – if that does not work, then there is a process to be followed before Council can act effectively to deal with the nuisance. Allow sufficient time for the problem to be addressed by the owner and if it still persists you may contact Council to make an official complaint on (02) 6849 2000.

If you are concerned by dog noise and suspect a dog is being mistreated, contact an RSPCA inspector on 1300 278 3589.

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