



KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
your council, your community

Dog & Cat Issues

[Home](#) > [Residents](#) > [Pets & Other Animals](#) > [Dog & Cat Issues](#)

Hints for responsible

ownership

Barking Dogs

Barking dogs are the source of one of the most common complaints received by Council.

It is one of the most difficult and time consuming issues for our Rangers to deal with because:



- there are different perceptions as to what constitutes excessive barking
- gathering evidence can be time consuming and difficult
- our Rangers often need to consult with neighbours to ascertain whether indeed the barking is causing a nuisance
- the owners often are not aware that their dog is barking excessively.

Why dogs bark

Stopping a dog from barking can be as simple as taking care of their basic needs. Sometimes dogs bark because they are:

- not getting enough exercise
- neglected or are not getting enough attention
- lonely or bored
- sick or in need of veterinary attention
- chained to a fixed point or don't have enough room to move around
- being provoked deliberately or unintentionally by people or other roaming animals
- hungry or generally neglected
- lacking shelter or water
- suffering from separation anxiety.

What you can do

If you are worried that your dog is barking too much:

- make sure your dog has plenty of food, water and shelter from both the rain and the sun.
- give your dog plenty of attention when you are at home.
- exercise your dog. Dogs who have worked off their excess energy are less likely to bark from boredom. Exercise is also a good way to socialise your pet and reduce the possibility of aggression against other people
- leave toys out for your dog to play with when you're not there
- make sure your dog is regularly wormed and receives veterinary advice when necessary
- discipline your pet. Your dog will accept kind but firm discipline. Take it to obedience school or puppy school or get advice from your vet
- one thing you should never do is leave your dog on a chain for long periods. This can be the cause of behavioural problems. If you must chain your dog make sure it is on a running wire to allow some free movement and ensure it gets plenty of exercise when you are at home.

If your dog continues to bark excessively despite the fact that you have tried all of the suggestions, there are a number of things you can try:

- confine your dog to the backyard, away from interference or provocation by passing people or other animals
- restrict your dog's vision through the fence or gate - if they can't see passing traffic then they can't be provoked by it
- consider training. Talk to a specialist, reputable trainer or your local dog training club
- keep your dog inside or confined to the garage or a garden shed at night
- try one of the Citronella collars available from leading pet shops. These collars send out a spray of citronella each time the dog barks. Dogs don't like the smell and they soon learn to associate the unpleasant effects with the barking. Citronella collars may not work in all situations.

If you are being annoyed by a barking dog:

Barking is simply one way dogs communicate and can mean anything from playfulness to danger. Dogs that bark continuously can be annoying for both you and your neighbours.

1. Contact the owner of the dog first - they may not be aware their dog is barking particularly if it is only doing it when they are away.
2. Be courteous - your neighbours may not know how to go about fixing the problem so you might be able to assist with some information or suggestions.
3. Be specific - advise your neighbour if the dog is barking at certain times and give them an opportunity to correct the problem.
4. Contact Council on [02 4232 0444](tel:0242320444) if you can't resolve the situation.

Council encourages negotiation between neighbours in an attempt to resolve the problem. Such negotiations can be conducted between each party or with the assistance of an independent mediator through a forum such as a [Community Justice Centre](#).

[Back to top](#)

Cleaning up after your dog

It is the responsibility of every dog owner to ensure that they clean up after their dog. The problem of dog faeces on public roads and footpaths and in parks is a constant source of complaint received by

Council. Every time it rains, everything on our roads, footpaths and parks, washes down the stormwater drains and into your local waterways (including dog waste). The high nutrients in dog faeces contribute to toxic algal blooms and aquatic weeds. These algal blooms and weeds can harm the marine organisms that keep our waterways healthy.

What you can do?

- when walking your dog, carry bags to collect your dog's droppings and then put it in a bin
- don't let your dog out unsupervised to defecate on your neighbour's lawn or in the street
- take responsibility for your pet.

Not only does it affect our waterways, but dog droppings contain bacteria which can be harmful to humans. Dog faeces can contain infectious roundworm eggs that can cause serious illness for humans.

Our rangers can fine owners who don't clean up after their dog. The [Companion Animals Act](#) provides for a **\$275 fine** for failure to remove dog faeces.

Reducing cat threat

From time to time Council conducts cat-trapping campaigns in bushland areas where there is evidence that native wildlife is being threatened by feral cats. For this reason it is important that domestic cats are microchipped and identified with a collar and tag so that if they are trapped they can be returned to their owners.



As many native animals feed from dusk till dawn, it is at this time that they are most vulnerable to attack from roaming cats. To prevent these attacks, all residents are asked to make arrangements to confine their cats inside at night.

Cats that are well cared for and controlled by their owners seldom cause problems to the community. It is the stray and feral cats that we need to target and control. Residents can help by ensuring that their pets are kept separate from stray and feral cats to stop unwanted breeding and prevent the spread of disease.

Never feed stray cats unless you intend to care for it as a pet. Stray cats form a direct link between domestic and feral cats. If you have a problem in your area Council hires feral cat traps to the public.

Confining cats is quite easy

Cats should never be fed until it is time for them to be confined. Once you invite them in to be fed, keep them in for the night.

If your cat is well behaved you can let them roam freely inside. Shut the cat in a convenient room

where they have a bed and a litter tray if you need to.

For those who don't like cats indoors at all then the garden shed or garage is a suitable alternative for confinement.

Out and about

Do you love to take your pooch out and about? There are a number of [Dog Off-Leash Areas](#) in the Kiama Municipality.

Did you know dogs are now allowed in kerbside outdoor dining areas. Your dog can join you if they:

- are on a lead
- stay on the ground
- are not fed
- have the restaurant owner's permission.

Further Information

The [Department of Local Government](#) website provides a number of brochures and further information.

[Back to top](#)

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