It’s all dependent on the individual circumstances of the case.

But don’t worry - we won’t tell your neighbour who has complained.

However, if our investigation suggests that there is a statutory nuisance problem, then we’ll need you to be a witness if the matter is heard in court. Cases don’t always go to court – but they often can after we serve a notice forcing your neighbour to stop the noise. At this stage we can’t protect your identity – but we will talk you through the exact process if it gets to this stage.

If our investigation doesn’t find that there’s a statutory nuisance then we’ll be in touch with you to explain why.

Useful Information
You may find the following information useful:

**Bothered by Noise?**

**Is your dog barking too much?**
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/is-your-dog-barking-too-much

We have also published leaflets on various types of noise problems at
https://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/crime-nuisances/nuisance-advice-leaflets.cfm

**Who to contact at the council**
If you need any help or more advice then please get in touch with us...

**t:** 01902 696000  
**e:** envprotection@sstaffs.gov.uk

Or write to us at:
*Environmental Protection Services*  
*South Staffordshire Council*  
*Council Offices*  
*Wolverhampton Road*  
*Codsall*  
*South Staffordshire*  
*WV8 1PX*

*There is also an on-line form for complaints on our website.*

*Why not visit our website at www.sstaffs.gov.uk*
All of us, at sometime, get irritated by noise - usually other people's noise. It can annoy us, disturb our peace and quiet, and even our sleep.

• Noise can cause problems depending on how loud it is, how long it lasts, how often and when it can be heard.
• All of us make noise from time to time which affects other people, and a lot of this noise can be avoided.

We get hundreds of complaints about noisy neighbours every year so we’ve got lots of experience in dealing with these problems.

What can we do?

We can only deal with what’s called ‘statutory nuisance’ – that’s noise that has a significant and substantial impact on your life.

Whilst barking dogs can be irritating, it’s unlikely to be a ‘statutory nuisance’ if it only barks occasionally during the day.

And although children playing, in the garden or in the house, might disturb you and be annoying – it’s normally not classed as a statutory nuisance.

Our approach to neighbour noise complaints

When you first contact us about a neighbour-noise problem we’ll ask you about the type of noise, when it happens and how long it goes on for.

We’ll then decide how to deal with your complaint. One of three things will normally happen:

1. If the information you’ve given us indicates an urgent problem (e.g. burglar alarm going off overnight) then we’ll be in touch with you straight away to discuss the next steps.

2. We might not be able to help you. These will be cases where we can’t deal with the type of noise you’re complaining about.

If this happens we’ll be in touch with you to tell you why.

3. If the information you’ve given us suggests there’s a potential noise problem then we’ll send you out a diary record form and ask you to keep a record of the times and duration of the noise and, most importantly, how it affects you.

You’ll need to record at least two weeks of incidents and then return the sheets to us. We’ll then review the information in the diary and contact you to discuss the next steps.

If the forms aren’t returned within four weeks we’ll close the case.

The next steps

Once we’ve talked to you, if the information you’ve given us shows that there is a potential problem we’ll visit your neighbour, explain that we’ve had a complaint and that the information we’ve been given indicates there’s a possible problem. We’ll then give them advice on what they should be doing (or not doing) and give them a reasonable time to sort things out.

We will continue to collect evidence and we will probably ask you to keep filling out diary forms. We may ask you to use recording equipment, or allow an officer to witness the noise from your property.