



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETING THE HIGH HEDGES COMPLAINTS FORM

General Notes

These guidance notes are to help you fill in the form to make a complaint regarding a neighbouring high hedge. You should note that consideration of your complaint may be delayed if you do not complete this form properly or do not provide the information requested. Please complete all fields marked as mandatory.

Section 1: The Parties

We need all the names and addresses because there are documents that we are required, by law, to send to the owner and occupier of the land on which the hedge grows.

Q1. Even if someone else is submitting the complaint on your behalf, it is important that we have your contact details. Please tick the 'yes' box if you are happy to be contacted by email as we cannot send you documents electronically if you do not agree.

Q2. You will need to complete this section if the complainant does not live in the property affected by the hedge (e.g. complainant is a landlord). We need this information as we will have to contact the occupier to arrange to visit the property.

Q3. Complete this section if you are a professional adviser, relative, friend or other representative. **You will then be our main contact on all matters regarding the complaint.** We will direct all queries and correspondence to you. Please tick the 'yes' box if you are happy to be contacted by email as we cannot send documents electronically if you do not agree.

Q4. This will normally be the person you talked to when you tried to resolve the problems with the hedge. If the site where the hedge is growing does not have a postal address, use this section to describe as clearly as possible where it is (e.g. land to the rear 12-18 High Street or park adjoining Tower Road). We need this information because we will have to contact them for any comments and to arrange a site visit.

Q5. If you are in any doubt as to who owns the property where the hedge is situated, you can check with the Land Registry. The relevant form (313) is on their website (www.landregistry.gov.uk). Alternatively, Land Register Online (www.landregisteronline.gov.uk) provides easy access to details of registered properties in England. There is a fee for this service.

Section 2: Attempts to resolve the complaint

Please keep the descriptions brief but say how you made the approach (e.g. face to face, phone, letter) and what the result was.

Example 1

12 March 2005 – phone neighbour (Mr Bloggs or 12 High Street) to ask if we could discuss the hedge.

19 March – met with Mr Bloggs but we couldn't agree a solution

15 April – mediators visited

29 April – met Mr Bloggs and mediators, but still unable to find solution we were both happy with

14 May – wrote to inform Mr Bloggs that we would be complaining to the council.

Example 2

12 March 2005 – wrote to neighbour (Mr Bloggs of 12 High Street) to ask if we could discuss problem hedge. 2 weeks passed and received no reply

9 April – wrote to ask if would be prepared to meet with mediator. 2 weeks passed with no reply received

7 May – wrote to inform Mr Bloggs that we would be complaining to council.

SECTION 3: Criteria for making complaint

Q7. You must be the owner or occupier of the property affected by a high hedge in order to make a formal complaint to the Council. If you do not own the property (e.g. you are a tenant), you can still make a complaint, but you should let the owner know you are doing so.

The property does not have to be wholly residential in use, however it must include some element of living accommodation for us to be able to consider the complaint.

SECTION 4: Grounds for complaint

It will help if you can provide as much information as you can, but remember to keep it factual.

Concentrate on the hedge and disadvantages you experience because of its height. We cannot consider problems that are not connected with the height of the hedge.

N.B. A copy of this form will be sent to the person who owns the property where the hedge is growing and to the person who lives there (if they are different people).

SECTION 5: Previous Complaints to the Council

We only need to know about formal complaints, made under Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. You don't need to tell us about telephone calls or other informal contact with the Council about the hedge problem.

SECTION 6: Supporting Documents

Please make sure you have ticked all of the relevant boxes. If you have ticked to say you have enclosed any other documents can you please list these in date order. If you are submitting this form by email, but intend on posting supporting documents, please ensure that they clearly include your name and address so that we can match them up.

Please also include copies of any professional reports that you may have had prepared, and of any other documents you wish the Council to consider.

SECTION 7: Sending the Complaint

Please ensure you enclose the fee of £510 when submitting your application.

SECTION 8: Sketch Sheet

Please use this section to show the hedge in relation to the surrounding buildings. When drawing your plan, please make sure that you:

- Mark and name surrounding roads;
- Sketch in buildings, including adjoining properties and include house names/numbers;
- Mark clearly the position of the hedge and how far it extends.

If your complaint relates to loss of light as a result of a high hedge, please also show:

- Which way is North;
- The position of any windows affected by the hedge;
- Relevant measurements in metres (e.g. size of garden, distance between hedge and windows).