



High Hedges Complaint Form

Use this form to submit a complaint to the Council about a high hedge, under Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. Guidance notes are at the end of the form.

Once you have completed the form please print and return with the fee and documents to:

High Hedges Officer, Dover District Council, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover CT16 3PJ

Fees (please make cheques payable to Dover District Council):

- £350 or
 - £175 if on a 'means tested' benefit.
- If you believe you qualify for the reduced fee level (for example if you are in receipt of a means-tested benefit) you must also submit a completed 'High Hedges - Benefits Declaration Form'.

Documents to enclose:

- A photo of the hedge
- A location plan of the hedge and surrounding properties
- Copies of correspondence with your neighbour about the hedge
- Copies of any other documents that you mention

The Council will rely on the information you provide so please make sure it is clear and accurate.

Your Details

Name		
Address including post code		
Telephone		
Email		
Are you making the complaint on behalf of someone else?	Yes	No
If yes please add the name and address of the complainant		

Location and Owner of the Hedge

Address of the hedge	
Owner's name	
Owner's telephone	
Owner's email	

About the Hedge

Is the hedge - or the portion that is causing problems - made up of a line of 2 or more trees or shrubs?	Yes	No
Is it mostly evergreen or semi-evergreen?	Yes	No
Is it more than 2 metres above ground level?	Yes	No
Even though there are gaps in the foliage or between the trees, is the hedge still capable of obstructing light or views?	Yes	No
Is the property residential?	Yes	No

If you have answered 'No' to any of the questions in this section, the criteria have not been met and so the Council cannot consider your complaint.

Have you:

Asked the hedge owner to discuss the problem?	Yes	No
Asked the hedge owner to discuss the problem?	Yes	No
Asked the hedge owner to try mediation?	Yes	No
Informed the hedge owner of intention to complain to council?	Yes	No

If you have not tried all the above steps, the Council might not proceed with your complaint.

Attempts to resolve the complaint

Please describe what you have done to try to settle this matter. Give dates and say what the result was. Please provide copies of any letters that you mention.

Grounds of complaint

Please describe the problems actually experienced as a result of the hedge being too tall, and say how serious they are. It will save time and help your case if you stick to the facts and provide all relevant information to back up the points you are making.

Previous complaints to the Council

Has a formal complaint been made to the Council before about this hedge?	Yes	No
If yes please provide the following information (if available)	Date	
	Ref number	
What has changed since the Council last looked at this?		

If nothing has altered, the Council may not proceed with your complaint.

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided is accurate

Signed

Date

Guidance notes

If you are unsure how to answer any of the questions, please contact Community Safety Unit on 01304 872220 during office hours (9am to 5pm), or email csu@dover.gov.uk.

Attempts to resolve the complaint

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

- 12 March 2015 - phoned to ask if we could discuss hedge. Met on 19 March but we couldn't agree a solution
- 15 April - mediators visited
- 29 April - met neighbours and mediators. But still couldn't find an answer we were both happy with
- 14 May - wrote to inform neighbour would be complaining to council.

Criteria for making a complaint

- 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 (eg because you are a tenant or a leaseholder), you can still make a complaint. But you should let the owner (eg landlord or management company) know what you are doing.
- The property does not have to be wholly residential but must include some living accommodation otherwise we cannot consider the complaint.

Grounds of complaint

- It will help if you provide as much information as you can but keep it factual. Remember that a copy of this form will be sent to the person who owns the site where the hedge is growing, and to the person living there if they are different people.
- Concentrate on the hedge and the disadvantages you actually experience because it is too tall.
- We cannot consider problems that are not connected with the height of the hedge. For example, if the roots of the hedge are pushing up a path.
- Nor can we consider things that are not directly about the hedge in question. For example, that other people keep their hedges trimmed to a lower height; or that the worry is making you ill.
- Please also provide a photo of the hedge and a plan showing the location of the hedge and surrounding properties.
- When drawing your plan make sure that you:
 - Mark and name surrounding roads.
 - Sketch in buildings, including adjoining properties. Add house numbers or names.
 - Mark clearly the position of the hedge and how far it extends.
 - Mark which way north is.

Please include copies of any professional reports that you may have had prepared. If you are complaining about the hedge blocking light, please mark which way is north on your plan and provide relevant measurements (eg size of garden, distance between the hedge and any windows affected). All measurements must be in metres (m).

Previous complaints to the council

- We only need to know about formal complaints, made under the high hedges part 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 your hedge problems.

Location of the Hedge

If you are in any doubt about who owns the property where the hedge is situated, you can check with the Land Registry. The relevant form is on their website (www.landregistry.gov.uk) or can be obtained from the Local Office.