

Guidance notes for completing the high hedges complaint form

General notes

These guidance notes are to help you fill in the form to make a complaint about a neighbouring high hedge. You should also read [GOV.UK - Over the garden hedge](#)

Consideration of your complaint will be delayed if you do not complete the form properly or do not provide the information requested.

Section 1. Parties concerned

We need all these names and addresses because there are some documents that we are required, by law, to send to the owner **and** occupier of the land on which the hedge grows. These include our decision on the complaint.

Where the hedge is growing

This is the location of the problem hedge and the person you have talked to when you tried to find a solution to your hedge problems. We need this information because we will have to get in touch with this person to arrange to visit the property so that we can see the effect of the hedge. If the site where the hedge is growing does not have a postal address, describe as clearly as possible where it is, for example 'Land to rear of 12 to 18 High Street' or 'Park adjoining Main Road'.

Complainant's details

Even if someone else is acting on behalf of the complainant, it is important that we have the complainant's contact details. **A person indicated as acting on behalf of the complainant will be our main contact on all matters relating to this complaint.** We will direct all queries and correspondence to them. Please bear this in mind. If you indicate that you wish to be contacted by email, we will conduct all business relating to this complaint in this way. But we cannot send documents to you electronically unless you agree.

Owner of hedge

We need this information because we will have to contact these people for their comments, and to arrange to visit the site where the hedge is growing. 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 (313) is on their website ([GOV.UK - HM Land Registry](#)) or can be obtained from the local office, if you know the full postal address of the property. Alternatively, Land Register Online ([Online Land Registry](#)) provides easy access to details of registered properties in England.

Section 2. Attempts to resolve the complaint

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

It is not necessary to send copies of all correspondence with your neighbour about the hedge - especially if the dispute is a long-running one. You need only provide evidence of your latest attempts to settle it.

Section 3. Criteria for making a complaint

Who can complain

You must be the owner **or** occupier of the property affected by a high hedge to make a formal complaint to the council. If you do not own the property (for example because you are a tenant or a leaseholder), you can still make a complaint. But you should let the owner (for example 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 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.

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 (for example size of garden, distance between the hedge and any windows affected). All measurements must be in meters (m).

Section 4. Declaration and next steps

Please make sure you have included all the requested documentation. If you have added 'other relevant documents', please list these documents by date and title (for example January 2005 - surveyor's report). This will help us to check that we have got everything.

Please send your form and all enclosures by email to Planning.enforcement@westsuffolk.gov.uk