

## FACT SHEET

*This fact sheet provides information and advice to people in dispute about matters outside of Council's jurisdiction*

### Most common neighbourhood disputes include:

- Dividing fences and attachments: refer to <https://www.qld.gov.au/law/housing-and-neighbours/disputes-about-fences-trees-and-buildings/resolving-tree-and-fence-disputes>
- Overhanging branches
- Unreasonable noise from people and motor vehicles
- People smoking along property boundaries
- Overland water flow

### Tips to Resolving Neighbourhood Disputes with your Neighbour:

#### Talk to your neighbour in the first instance

Approach your neighbour to discuss the issue and its impacts; they may not be aware of the problem. Choose a convenient time to have a friendly discussion about the issue. Use impersonal language that clearly explains the problem and the effect that it causes. Avoid name calling or inappropriate behaviour.

#### Provide constructive solutions and offer assistance or resources where possible

Your neighbour may not know how to go about fixing the problem and helping or assisting them may get a cost-effective and fast, efficient solution. Allow the person time to think about the problem before compelling them to commit to an agreement.

#### Expect compromise

Both parties may need to alter their expectations as to the desired outcome. Both parties need to have a clear understanding of what is agreed to, and what is expected of each party. You may have to review the effectiveness of a temporary or partial solution to work towards a final or alternative solution at a future date.

#### Give feedback

When the matter is resolved, give feedback and thank your neighbour for their cooperation.

## Options When You Can't Resolve a Neighbourhood Dispute:

### Neighbourhood Mediation: Wide Bay Dispute Resolution Service – Department of Justice

Queensland Government Department of Justice offers mediation services through the local Dispute Resolution Service. Mediators guide the conversation to help you, and your neighbour discuss your differences, voice any concerns, and find solutions that work for both of you. Mediation is voluntary. In most cases this is a service that is provided at no cost to both parties.

The Wide Bay Dispute Resolution Service is located at:  
Level 1, Brendan Hansen Building  
50-54 Main Street, Pialba QLD 4655  
Ph: **1800 017 288**

More information is available at:

<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/legal-mediation-and-justice-of-the-peace/settling-disputes-out-of-court/mediation-services/neighbourhood-mediation>

### QCAT

The Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) is an independent, accessible tribunal that efficiently resolves disputes and makes decisions on a range of matters including:

dividing fences; trees on adjoining property boundaries; community living and body corporate disputes.

Please visit: <https://www.qcat.qld.gov.au/> for more information.

Note: Fees are involved for applications to QCAT.

### For legal advice:

- Contact the private solicitor of your choice or use Queensland Law Society's 'Find a Solicitor' service available at: [youandthelaw.com.au/directory](http://youandthelaw.com.au/directory)
- Contact Legal Aid Queensland on **1300 65 11 88**
- Contact Wide Bay Burnett Community Legal Service for a consultation for advice on resolving your dispute on **(07) 4194 2663** or visit: <https://wbbcls.com.au/community-legal-service/>