

SO you want to ...

RUN A BUSINESS FROM HOME

This leaflet should help you with some advice and useful contacts

South Norfolk Council Planning Services

Before you start

Consider whether the business is viable and what consents you may need.

Organisations exist which can help with starting a new business and grants or loans from South Norfolk Council may be available. Do you need help with a business plan or with general business advice? Contact Business Link, the Norwich Enterprise Agency Trust (NEAT) and the Economic Development Unit of the Council for further advice and assistance.

Do you need planning permission?

This will depend on the scale of business use proposed in relation to the overall size of the property and the impact of the use on the character of the dwelling. For example, if you have a four-bedroom property and you wish to use one bedroom for business use with no business visits made to the premises, it is unlikely that you will require permission. If you wish to use more of the dwelling or site for business purposes, will need to employ staff or the proposal will involve deliveries or customers visiting the site, then permission may be required.

Check first before you start!

Write to the Council's Development Control section in Planning Services with full details of the location and type of property, how much of the site or house you wish to use, the intended trading times, deliveries or visits likely to occur and the parking available. We will contact you to advise you whether you need planning permission.

What if permission is required?

You will need to make a formal application that will take about 6-8 weeks to process. More information is available about this process in separate leaflets.

Do you need Building Regulation approval?

Again, you may do. It will depend on whether the business use of your home is of a scale where a 'change of use' would occur. If so, there may be a need to make certain alterations to meet fire safety standards.

If you are writing to the Council to ask about any permission you may require, include the question about building regulation approval in your letter and we will provide a joint response.

Food regulations

If you are proposing to operate a business with any food processing element, you should also contact the Council's Environmental Services section as catering activity needs to

meet strict regulations and registration is necessary. Further advice and training is also available.

You will need to register as a Food Premises and your property will need to be inspected periodically to ensure that they meet current food hygiene regulations.

Other requirements

You should discuss the proposal with the Council's Pollution Team at an early stage, as there may be issues, such as noise, odour or drainage, which they would need to consider and they could recommend that conditions be imposed on any planning permission.

Separate consents may be required under the Environmental Protection Act, for example for paint spraying, and again you should contact the Council's Pollution Team for further advice.

Waste management

Arrangements for trade waste and recycling should be made with the Council's Direct Services organisation or another private refuse contractor. You should be aware of the waste management legislation that is enforced by the Environment Agency.

What about Business Rates?

This is considered and assessed by the Valuation Agency - part of the Inland Revenue. The use of rooms or part of the site exclusively is likely to attract Business Rates and you should contact the Valuation Agency to check first before you start.

Health and Safety

You should be aware of your responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act and may wish to contact the Health and Safety team of the Council's Environmental Services section for more advice in this respect.

Drainage

You will need to make sure that the existing drainage facilities are appropriate for the use. If new connections are proposed, Building Regulation approval is normally required and separate consent from the Environment Agency and Anglian Water may also be necessary.

Other matters:

You should also check with the Inland Revenue concerning your own taxation, your insurance company and with the utility providers as some, for example, phone and power companies may have a different tariff for business customers. It is also advisable to check the deeds on the property to ensure that there are not any restrictions that would prevent you from running a business from home. If the property is rented it is wise to gain the written permission of the landlord. If you have a mortgage on the property you will normally need to inform the mortgage provider.

ONE STOP SHOP SERVICE

South Norfolk Council Planning Services provides this service for small businesses. If you complete a questionnaire about your proposal we will contact the other sections likely to be involved within the Council and provide a co-ordinated response. This service, which takes about 4 weeks, provides advice at an initial stage only but can be useful prior to submitting a formal application. You should contact other agencies outside the Council separately.

Useful contacts:

South Norfolk Council:

Planning Services	- Development Control	01508-533845
	- Building Control	01603 430100
Environmental Services	- Food Control	01508 533714
	- Pollution Control	01508 533708
	- Direct Services	01603 810441
Economic Development	- grants, loans, premises	01508 533666/ 533834
	- Tourism	01508 533816
Licensing	- Alcohol & entertainment	01508 533692
	- Food	01508 533714
	- Animal	01508 533714

Norfolk County Council:

Economic Development	01603 222143
Planning – General enquiries	0844 8008020
Planning & Transportation	01603 222143
Trading standards	0844 8008013
Norfolk Fire Service	01603 810351
Social services	0844 800 8014

Other:

Environment Agency	08708 506506
Health & Safety Executive	01603 753800
Norwich Enterprise Agency Trust	01603 283465
Norwich Valuation Office - Business Rates	01603 241000
Women's Employment Enterprise & Training Unit	01603 767367
Norfolk Rural Business Advisory Service	01603 748844
Business Link for Norfolk	08457 218218
The Business Library, Norfolk & Norwich Millennium Library	01603 774760
Norwich Tourist Information Centre	01603 727927
East of England Tourist Board	01473 822922