

**SO you want to ...**

## **BECOME A CHILDMINDER**

**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.

A first point of contact should be the Childcare Information Service who can advise you about training and registration requirements, including Ofsted requirements. They will also put you in contact with 'Childminding Matters' and the Care Standards Officer for Early Years.

### **Do you need planning permission?**

Many people who operate as childminders don't need permission. It will depend on how many children in total are being cared for and the size of the dwelling. If you have no more than 6 children (including any of your own) then permission will not be required. If more than this number, whatever their ages, will be looked after or if another adult will be working with you, then you may require permission. If permission is needed, it will be important to assess the likely impact on neighbouring residents in terms of noise and disturbance from vehicles and the children in deciding whether the numbers proposed are acceptable in that location.

### **Check first before you start!**

Write to the Council's Development Control section in Planning Services with full details of the location of the site and type of use proposed, numbers to be employed 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 which 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 the scale of use proposed. If not, there may be a need to make certain alterations to meet technical requirements and 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.

### **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 which 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 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 in 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. For new parking areas, oil and fuel interceptors may be required on drainage gullies.

### **Other matters:**

You should also check with the Inland Revenue concerning you own taxation and, if you are proposing to operate from home, with 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 which 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:**

<b>Planning Services</b>	- Development Control	01508-533845
	- Building Control	01603 430100
<b>Environmental Services</b>	- Food Control	01508 533714
	- Pollution Control	01508 533708
	- Direct Services	01603 810441
<b>Economic Development</b>	- grants, loans, premises	01508 533666/ 533834
	- Tourism	01508 533816
<b>Licensing</b>	- 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:**

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