

A Guide for Home Businesses

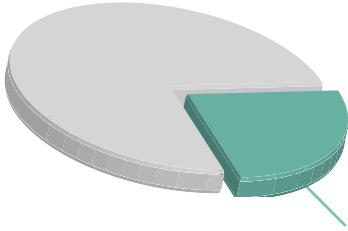


sustainable thriving achieving

East Dunbartonshire Council

www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Home Business facts



Scottish SMEs operated from their own home

In 2018, the Scottish Government found that 28% of Scottish Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) operated from their own home and had no separate business premises.

Research conducted by the Adam Smith Business School for the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) in 2018 shows that half of all Scottish businesses are home-based.

In 2019, East Dunbartonshire had a higher self-employment rate (6.6%) than in wider Scotland (5.9%). Since self-employed people are more likely to work from home, there are likely to be many home businesses operating in our local area.



Starting a business from home

Running your own business from home has many benefits, but there are also a lot of things to consider. First-time entrepreneurs may find it difficult to figure out where to start.

Work
Flexible
Hours

Spend
Less On
Travel

Be Your
Own Boss

Business Gateway East Dunbartonshire is run in-house by the Council and can provide you with practical advice on all aspects of setting up a business:

- Advice on market research, business planning and funding
- Online guides
- Referrals to other support agencies for advice (e.g. intellectual property, exporting)
- Free workshops on all aspects of running a business, including bookkeeping, social media, selling online and recruitment.

If you are still in the early stages of thinking about starting a business, there is a useful online guide that can help you decide if it's right for you, as well as helpful tips and links to more detailed guidance on various aspects, such as finance:

<https://www.bgateway.com/resources/start-a-business-from-home>



 **business gateway**
East Dunbartonshire

The Scottish Government has a guide that will help to ensure you have thought of everything when it comes to operating legally. This includes how to register your business, taxes and regulatory compliance, such as health and safety, and employment: <https://www.mygov.scot/home-based-business/>


Things you may need to consider:

Planning

You do not usually need planning consent in order to run a business from your own home, but this may change if it affects your neighbourhood in any way. You may need planning consent if your business:

- Has employees other than yourself or those living within your home
- Will result in a significant number of customers visiting your home
- Creates a possible nuisance to your neighbours or surroundings, such as noise, odour or dust
- Uses more than one room for the sole purpose of running the business.

For example, childcare businesses will generally not require planning permission, but dog boarding businesses usually will due to possible noise disturbance. If you are in any doubt, contact the Council's Planning department for advice.

 0141 578 8600


 Planning@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Housing

Depending on the ownership of your property, there are some things you may need to check when setting up your home business.

Council tenants: If you lease your property from the Council, you need to get permission to run a business from home. Your tenancy agreement will state that the Council will not withhold permission if your request is reasonable.

The Housing team will provide you with a form to complete, providing details of your business in order to assess your request. Please note, they will not contact other services within the Council such as Planning and Licensing. You will still be required to seek their advice or permission separately.

 0300 123 4510

 Housing@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Private tenants: If you rent privately, you will need your landlord's permission to run a business from home. Always check first as some tenancy agreements may explicitly prohibit it.

Property owners: If you own your property, you should let your mortgage and insurance providers know of your intention to start a home business. If you do not ensure you are compliant you may risk invalidating coverage.

Business Rates/Council Tax

In general, you do not need to advise the Council if you are starting a business from home. Non-Domestic Rates will not be charged if you are only using a small part of your home for your business – for example, working at your computer or selling goods by post. However, if you have customers coming to your house, you employ people to work at your home, or you make any changes such as turning a room into a hair salon or converting your garage, this may change the use of part of your home to business-only. In such cases you would be subject to paying Business Rates instead of Council Tax on that part of your house.

The Scottish Assessors Association can advise if you are unsure whether this applies to you and your business. You can contact the Assessor for East Dunbartonshire (Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Joint Valuation Board) for information.



0141 562 1200



<http://www.dab-vjb.gov.uk/>

Potential Support

If you are working from home, you may be eligible for tax relief - covering the likes of lighting, heating and vehicle use.

www.gov.uk/simpler-income-tax-simplified-expenses/working-from-home and www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home for more information.

Licensing

The Council covers both civil and liquor licences, and applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. The Licensing team can advise as to whether you need a licence, what type you will need, the processes involved, costs associated, criteria and potential barriers, and timescales.

It is advised that you find out whether you need a licence prior to carrying out any advertising for your business or buying any materials as it may present an additional cost not factored into your business plan. For example, you may not realise you could need a premises licence for alcohol depending on where you are storing and selling it.

If in any doubt as to whether or not you need a licence, you can contact the Licensing team. Please note that the team can only advise on licences required and cannot issue legal advice.

All licensing fees are available here:

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/business/licensing-and-permits>



0300 123 4510



Licensing@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Environmental Health

The Council's Environmental Health team can advise on whether or not you need to register your business with the Council or adhere to specific guidance.

It is important that your business does not give rise to statutory nuisances which may affect others such as noise (including animal noise), dust, smoke, offensive odours and light pollution. The following advice relates to some common enquiries.

Animal boarding and dog breeding

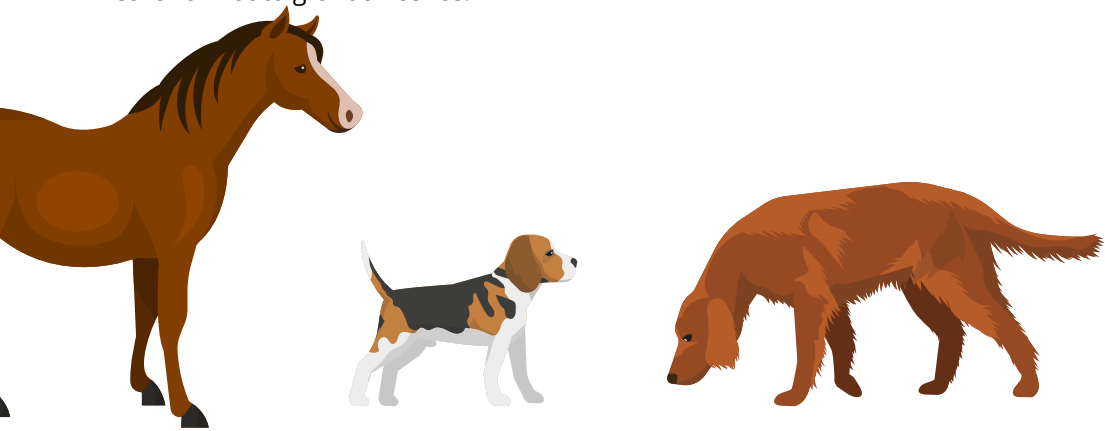
To run a boarding kennel/cattery or riding establishment (horses or ponies hired out or used for instruction) connected to your home, you need a licence from the Council. The Council may authorise an officer, veterinarian or practitioner to inspect licensed premises.

The home boarding of dogs is likely to be licensed and operators are advised to ensure they meet the required model standards:

<https://www.rehis.com/document/2011/11/animal-boarding-establishments-act-1963-home-boarding-dogs-licensing-conditions-and>

Anyone who is in the business of breeding and selling dogs needs to be licensed. You are considered to be running a breeding establishment when four or more litters are born to your dog or dogs within any 12-month period, while under your care or while someone else is looking after them for you. This means that you will still need a licence if your dogs are being kept by a relative or any person with whom you have a breeding arrangement.

Upon application for a dog-breeding license which has not previously been granted, the premises where the dogs are being kept must be inspected by a veterinarian and a Council officer. For subsequent applications, the Council has discretion as to whether the premises will require re-inspection. A report will be made following any inspections and the Council will use this to determine whether or not to grant a licence.



Skin piercing and tattooing

To offer any skin piercing treatments – defined as tattooing, acupuncture or ear and body piercing – both the person performing the treatment and the premises must be licensed by the Council. Environmental Health can advise on the structural, training and infection control requirements for businesses offering skin piercing treatments.



Food production & food safety

By law, food businesses based at home are required to register with their local authority. Licences are not required unless your business is that of a moveable street trader, such as a snack or ice-cream van.


If you are selling foodstuffs online, your products must also comply with the food labelling requirements, about which Environmental Health can give you further advice.

Food safety advice for childminders and anyone else who may prepare food for others as part of their business can be found online:

<https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/residents/environmental-health-residents/food-safety>

<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-childminders>



 0300 123 4510

 Environmental.Health@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Community Safety

Dog walking

Commercial dog walkers do not require a licence, but are legally obliged to keep the dogs under full control at all times in accordance with the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010.

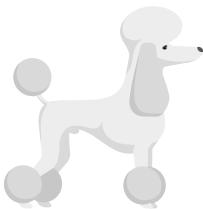
The Scottish Outdoor Access Code says access rights apply to dog walkers as long as dogs are kept under control. Your responsibilities are:

Farm animals: stay as far away from farm animals as possible and keep dogs on a short lead or under close control. Never let dogs attack or worry farm animals, or go into fields where there are young animals (e.g. calves or lambs). If cattle react aggressively and move towards you, keep calm, let the dogs go and take the shortest, safest route out of the field.

Crops: don't take dogs into fields of vegetables or fruit unless there is a clear path, such as a core path or right of way, and keep the dogs to the path.

Ground nesting birds: during the breeding season for birds (usually April-July) keep dogs on a short lead or close at heel in areas such as moorland, forests, grasslands, loch shores and the sea shore to avoid disturbing birds that nest on or near the ground.

Recreation areas and public spaces: avoid causing concern to others by keeping dogs close at heel or on a short lead. Pick up and dispose of dog waste.



Working Online

The Internet is helping to level the playing field for small businesses and start-ups by increasing the accessibility of powerful marketing and networking tools for minimal costs. There are also other products and services available online that can help with the day-to-day management of your business, even if your business itself is not being conducted on the Internet – such as online banking, data storage and research.

Online marketing: the Internet can connect you instantly with customers, suppliers and business partners from all over the world. In addition to exploring the traditional route of setting up your own website, you might want to think about whether social media could be a useful tool for promoting your goods and services. Many small businesses also use the Internet to boost their finances through passive income streams, such as selling advertising space on their websites.

Buying and selling products online: if your business plan involves buying and/or selling products online, you will need to look into the legal and financial implications of importing and exporting goods, which will vary depending on the countries involved. Any goods, whether they were manufactured by you or bought from another supplier, will need to meet the legal and quality standards of the country they are entering. You will also need to consider the costs associated with packaging and delivering products, import taxes, converting currency and any commission you need to pay if you are selling your products through another company's website.



'Get Rich Quick' schemes: spend any time online and you are bound to come across unsolicited adverts, a popular variety of which offers the chance to 'make easy money working from home'. Be suspicious of anything that looks too good to be true – it could be an illegitimate website attempting to trick you into sharing personal information or it might be someone trying to recruit you for a risky multi-level-marketing scheme. Such schemes operate by hiring people to market and sell products, which they must initially buy themselves, often with a membership fee. Although these schemes are not strictly illegal, they are unlikely to live up to the claims made in their advertising. Sellers risk losing their own money if the product fails to sell, while the parent companies make their profit from recruiting as many sellers as possible.


Staying safe online: there are precautions that you can take to keep your business as safe as possible online. Make sure that your Internet connection is secure and do not work with sensitive information while connected to public Wi-Fi. You also might want to set up a firewall and virus protection software on your computer or device.

Business Gateway East Dunbartonshire offers further advice, workshops and step-by-step tutorials that can help you get the most out of using the Internet for your business: <https://www.bgateway.com/resources/digitalboost>



Trading Standards

Products and services provided by all types of businesses must comply with a set of legal requirements designed to protect consumers. These include laws and regulations relating to: age-restricted sales; weights and measures; product safety; and fair trading. For further information on how you can ensure your business is legally compliant, contact Trading Standards.


 0300 123 4510


 trading.standards@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Business Waste

Council Tax only includes the cost of your household waste. If you are running a business from home, you will most likely be required to set up an account with the Council to cover the costs of providing you with additional bins and collecting your business waste.

Contact the Council's Waste team to discuss the specific waste disposal requirements of your business and they can give you details of charges, bin types and collection schedules.

 0300 123 4510

 Wasteservices@eastdunbarton.gov.uk

Working Space

The 2015 FSB study 'Home Truths: The true value of home-based businesses' found that 19% of home businesses use flexible workspace and around half of those that don't, say it is because there is nothing near to their home. Those who do use flexible working space give their main reasons for doing so as meeting people, networking and co-working.

At the moment, there is no designated flexible workspace for businesses in East Dunbartonshire. However, there are enterprise centres in Milngavie, Lennoxton and Kirkintilloch with small office space available and start-ups have access to rates relief. The Council is open to the possibility of creating workspace or hot-desking accommodation if there is evidence of sufficient demand – if you would like to see this become available, please contact Business Gateway and let us know where you would prefer it to be located.

Membership organisations

Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce offers advice for businesses of all sizes and the opportunity to participate in local networking events:

<https://www.dunbartonshirechamber.co.uk/>

The Federation of Small Businesses is an apolitical, non-profit organisation providing advice and advocacy services to small businesses across the UK:

<https://www.fsb.org.uk/>

Access support

East Dunbartonshire Council: for further advice, please phone East Dunbartonshire Council on 0300 123 4510 and request to be put through to the relevant department.

Business Gateway: whether you have an idea for a business and want to work for yourself or you already run a well-established business and have aspirations to grow, Business Gateway can help enterprises at all stages of their development. They can also act as your first point of contact and put you in touch with other organisations that may help your specific business needs or advise on access to funding and training opportunities. Please contact an advisor by calling 0141 578 8530 to discuss how they can help you.

Other useful links

Business Gateway East Dunbartonshire

For local support and workshop information, visit:

<https://www.bgateway.com/local-offices/east-dunbartonshire/local-support>

Legal structures

To learn about how legal structures will affect the way you do business, visit:

<https://www.bgateway.com/resources/legal-structures-the-basics>

Trading Standards

For advice and support from Trading Standards, visit:

<http://www.tsscot.co.uk/business-advice>

Public Liability Insurance

To find out what insurance your business may need, visit:

<https://www.mygov.scot/business-insurance/>

HMRC

For information about tax, visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs>

Health and Safety Executive

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/business/index.htm>

If you are considering starting a Social Enterprise:

East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action

<https://edva.org/>

Just Enterprise

<https://justenterprise.org/landing-page/>

This document can be provided in large print, Braille or in audio format and can be translated into other community languages. Please contact the Council's Communications Team at: East Dunbartonshire Council, 12 Strathkelvin Place, Southbank, Kirkintilloch, G66 1TJ
Tel: 0300 123 4510

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