

# Your business rates

2025-26



# Ways to pay your business rates

You can choose to pay your business rates by instalments or all at once by Direct Debit, debit card, credit card or standing order. Direct Debit greatly reduces the Council's costs for handling your payments. However you choose to pay, all payments must be received by the first of the month and paying on time helps to keep costs down.

## Direct Debit

If you have a bank or building society account, Direct Debit is the easiest and safest way to pay with payments made directly from your bank or building society. We will tell you how much your payments are at the beginning of the year, you can choose to pay on either the 1st or 15th of the month. Once set up, you do not need to fill in another form or set up new payments each year: we will do this for you. If there is a mistake, you can get a refund immediately from your bank or building society. To pay by Direct Debit please call 020 8314 6150. Alternatively, you can set up a Direct Debit online at [lewisham.gov.uk/paybusinessrates](http://lewisham.gov.uk/paybusinessrates)

## Internet payment

You can pay by credit card (MasterCard or Visa) or debit card (Switch, Visa or Delta) through our secure website. Visit [lewisham.gov.uk/paybusinessrates](http://lewisham.gov.uk/paybusinessrates).

## By phone

It is quick and easy to pay by phone with a credit card (MasterCard or Visa) or debit card (Switch, Visa, Delta or Electron). Please call our 24-hour automated service on 020 8690 8707 and have your business rates account number and bank details ready.

## Post Office / PayPoint

You can only pay by cash at PayPoint, but you can pay by cash, cheque or debit card at the post office. All you need is a bill with a barcode on it.

Please go to [paypoint.co.uk/locator](http://paypoint.co.uk/locator) to find your nearest PayPoint outlet.

## By BACS

Our account details are:

Barclays Bank, 1 Churchill Place, London E14 5HP

Sort code: 20-00-00

Account number: 93380513

**Please ensure you quote your Business Rates account number.**

# About business rates

## Non-domestic rates

Non-Domestic Rates, or business rates, collected by local councils are the way that those who occupy non-domestic property contribute towards the cost of local services. Under the business rates retention arrangements introduced from 1st April 2013, councils keep a proportion of the business rates paid locally. The money, together with revenue from council taxpayers, locally generated income and grants from central government, is used to pay for the services provided by local councils in your area.

Further information about the business rates system, may be obtained at: [gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates](https://www.gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates) and on the Council's website [lewisham.gov.uk](https://www.lewisham.gov.uk).

## 2025/26 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) relief scheme

At the Autumn Budget on 30 October 2024 the Chancellor announced the extension of the business rates relief scheme for retail, hospitality, and leisure (RHL) properties, worth over £1.5 billion in 2025/26. This will support the businesses that make our high streets and town centres a success and help them to evolve and adapt to changing consumer demands.

The 2025/26 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Rates Relief scheme will provide eligible occupied retail, hospitality, and leisure properties with a 40% relief, up to a cash cap limit of £110,000 per business.

The total value of relief available per business, whether occupying one or more properties, is capped at £110,000. Any ratepayer who would be eligible for the sum of relief above £110,000 if there were no cap in place, should be awarded relief up to the value of £110,000 (as has been the policy in previous years).

Under the cash cap, no ratepayer can in any circumstances exceed the £110,000 cash cap across all their properties in England. Where a ratepayer has a qualifying connection with another ratepayer then those ratepayers should be considered as one ratepayer for the purposes of the cash caps.

## Business Rates Instalments

Payment of business rate bills is automatically set on a 10-monthly cycle. However, the Government has put in place regulations that allow ratepayers to require their local council to enable payments to be made through 12 monthly instalments. If you wish to take up this offer, you should contact us as soon as possible.

## National Non-Domestic Rating Multiplier

The local council works out the business rates bill for a property by multiplying the rateable value of the property by the appropriate non-domestic multiplier. There are two multipliers: the national non-domestic rating multiplier and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier.

The Government sets the multipliers for each financial year, except in the City of London where special arrangements apply.

Ratepayers who occupy a property with a rateable value which does not exceed £50,999 (and who are not entitled to certain other mandatory relief[s] or are liable for unoccupied property rates) will have their bills calculated using the lower small business non-domestic rating multiplier, rather than the national non-domestic rating multiplier.

The multiplier for a financial year is based on the previous year's multiplier adjusted to reflect the Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation figure for the September prior to the billing year. The current multipliers are shown on the reverse of your bill.

## Rateable Value

Apart from properties that are exempt from business rates, each non-domestic property has a rateable value which is set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), an agency of His Majesty's Revenue and Customs. They compile and maintain a full list of all rateable values, available at [gov.uk/voa](https://gov.uk/voa). The rateable value of your property is shown on the front of your bill. This broadly represents the yearly rent the property could have been let for on the open market on a particular date specified in legislation. For the current rating list, this date was set as 1 April 2021.

To understand why your property has a certain rateable value you can read the VOA's guidance on how business rates are calculated at : Business rates: [How your rates are calculated - gov.uk](https://gov.uk/how-your-rates-are-calculated)

The VOA may alter the valuation if circumstances change. The ratepayer (and certain others who have an interest in the property) can also check and challenge the valuation shown in the list if they believe it is wrong. If you are concerned that your business rates may be incorrect, you can check and update your information using the VOA's Check and Challenge your business rates service at: [Check and challenge your business rates valuation: step by step - gov.uk](https://gov.uk/check-and-challenge-your-business-rates-valuation-step-by-step)

## Revaluations

All non-domestic property rateable values are reassessed at revaluations. The most recent revaluation took effect from 1 April 2023. Revaluations ensure that business rates bills are up-to-date and more accurately reflect current rental values and relative changes in rents. Frequent revaluations ensure the system continues to be responsive to changing economic conditions.

## Business Rate Reliefs

Depending on individual circumstances, a ratepayer may be eligible for a rate relief (i.e. a reduction in their business rates bill). There are a range of available reliefs.

Further details are provided below and at [gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates](https://gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates), at [lewisham.gov.uk](https://lewisham.gov.uk), on your rates bill, or by contacting the council.

## Temporary Reliefs

Some of the permanent reliefs are set out below but other temporary reliefs may be introduced by the Government at a fiscal event.

Further detail on current temporary reliefs is available at [gov.uk/apply-for-business-rate-relief](https://gov.uk/apply-for-business-rate-relief). You should contact the council for details on the latest availability of business rates reliefs and advice on whether you may qualify.

## Small Business Rates Relief

If a ratepayer's sole or main property has a rateable value which does not exceed an amount set out in regulations, the ratepayer may receive a percentage reduction in their rates bill for this property of up to a maximum of 100%. The level of reduction will depend on the rateable value of the property – for example eligible properties below a specified lower threshold will receive 100% relief, and you may receive partial tapered relief up to a specified upper threshold. The relevant thresholds for relief are set out in regulations and can be obtained from your local council or at [gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates](http://gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates).

Generally, this percentage reduction (relief) is only available to ratepayers who occupy either:

- (a) one property, or
- (b) one main property and other additional properties providing those additional properties each have a rateable value which does not exceed the limit set in regulations.

The aggregate rateable value of all the properties mentioned in (b), must also not exceed an amount set in regulations. For those businesses that take on an additional property which would normally have meant the loss of small business rate relief, they will be allowed to keep that relief for a fixed additional period. Full details on the relevant limits in relation to second properties and the current period for which a ratepayer may continue to receive relief after taking on an additional property can be obtained from the Council's website [lewisham.gov.uk](http://lewisham.gov.uk) or [gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates](http://gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates).

Certain changes in circumstances will need to be notified to the council by the ratepayer who is in receipt of relief (other changes will be picked up by the local Council). The changes which should be notified are –

- (a) the property falls vacant,
- (b) the ratepayer taking up occupation of an additional property, and
- (c) an increase in the rateable value of a property occupied by the ratepayer in an area other than the area of the local Council which granted the relief.

## Charity and Community Amateur Sports Club Relief

Charities and registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs are entitled to 80% relief where the property is occupied by the charity or the club and is wholly or mainly used for the charitable purposes of the charity (or of that and other charities), or for the purposes of the club (or of that and other clubs).

The local Council has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill. Full details can be obtained from the council's business rates team.  
Unoccupied Property Rate Relief

Business rates are generally payable in respect of unoccupied non- domestic property. However, they are generally not payable for the first three months that a property is empty. This is extended to six months in the case of certain other properties (for example industrial premises). Full details on exemptions can be obtained the Council's website; [lewisham.gov.uk/businessrates](http://lewisham.gov.uk/businessrates) or [gov.uk/apply-for-business-rate-relief](http://gov.uk/apply-for-business-rate-relief)

## Unoccupied Property Rate Relief

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## Transitional Rate Relief

At a revaluation, some ratepayers will see reductions or no change in their bill, whereas some ratepayers will see increases.

Transitional relief schemes are introduced at each revaluation to help those facing increases. This relief has been funded by limiting the reduction in bills for those who have benefitted from the revaluation. Transitional relief is applied automatically to bills.

Further information about transitional arrangements and other reliefs may be obtained from [lewisham.gov.uk/businessrates](http://lewisham.gov.uk/businessrates) or [gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates](http://gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates).

## Film studios – business rates relief

At the Budget on 6 March, the Chancellor announced that eligible film studios in England will receive a 40% reduction on gross business rates bills until 2034. The relief once implemented will be backdated to 1 April 2024. This is a tax cut worth around £470 million over 10 years.

Film studio rate relief is available for a chargeable day in the financial years 2024/25 to 2033/34 for a hereditament which for the chargeable day is:

- (a) Used (or if unused appears that when next in use would be used) for the production of films or television programmes and in whole or in part comprises sound stages or film sets, and
- (b) Valued by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) as a studio falling within one of the following VOA's valuation categories for film studios:
  - i. temporary or semi-permanent filming studios
  - ii. older filming studios, whether converted or purpose built
  - iii. modern industrial conversion filming studios (typically converted to film studios post 2010)
  - iv. modern purpose-built filming studios (typically built post 2010)
  - v. campus sites

Further information about Film studio relief may be obtained from the gov.uk website at [Business rates: Film studio relief - local authority guidance - gov.uk](http://gov.uk/business-rates-film-studio-relief-local-authority-guidance)

## Business Improvement Relief

Following a government consultation, the Business Improvement Relief is to become available from 1 April 2024, to support businesses who wish to invest in their properties.

The qualifying conditions are.

- i. you have increased the size of or improved the physical state of an existing property.
- ii. you have occupied the property every day since the improvement works started.

The relief will ensure that no ratepayer will face higher business rates bills for 12 months, as a result of qualifying improvements to a property they occupy.

Please visit the Councils website for more information on how to apply; [lewisham.gov.uk](http://lewisham.gov.uk)

## Local Discounts and Hardship Relief

Local councils have a general power to grant discretionary local discounts and to give hardship relief in specific circumstances. Full details can be obtained from [lewisham.gov.uk](http://lewisham.gov.uk).

## Subsidy Control

The new UK subsidy control regime commenced from 4 January 2023. The new regime enables public authorities, including devolved administrations and local authorities, to deliver subsidies that are tailored for local needs. Public authorities giving subsidies must comply with the UK's international subsidy control commitments. The subsidy control legislation provides the framework for a new, UK-wide subsidy control regime. Further information about subsidy control can be found on the gov.uk website at: [gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime](http://gov.uk/government/collections/subsidy-control-regime).

## Rating Advisers

Ratepayers do not have to be represented in discussions about their rateable value or their rates bill. However, ratepayers who do wish to be represented should be aware that members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS – website [rics.org](http://rics.org)) and the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation (IRRV – website [irrv.org.uk](http://irrv.org.uk)) are qualified and are regulated by rules of professional conduct designed to protect the public from misconduct.

Before you employ a rating adviser or company you should check that they have the necessary knowledge and expertise, as well as appropriate indemnity insurance. Take great care and, if necessary, seek further advice before entering into any contract.

## Information Supplied with Demand Notices

Information relating to the relevant and previous financial years in regard to the gross expenditure of the local Council is available at [lewisham.gov.uk](http://lewisham.gov.uk) [where information is published].

A hard copy is available on request by writing to the council.

# Greater London Authority

## **What is the Elizabeth line (formerly Crossrail) and how will it benefit your business?**

The Elizabeth line is London's newest railway. It connects the outer suburbs and Heathrow airport to the West End, the City and Canary Wharf. As such, it is vital to the future of London's economy. It was named the Elizabeth line in honour of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

The Elizabeth line has been the single largest investment in London's infrastructure for decades. At the peak of construction, it employed up to 14,000 people. The central section opened in May 2022. Six months later, direct Elizabeth line services into central London from Reading, Heathrow, Shenfield, and Abbey Wood began. The final timetable for the entire railway was introduced in May 2023. The increased earnings it has brought – from new jobs and faster journeys – are benefiting businesses across London.

To find out more, visit [tfl.gov.uk/modes/elizabeth-line](https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/elizabeth-line) or call the helpline on 0343 222 1234.

## **Developments in the funding of the Elizabeth line**

The previous Mayor of London agreed a funding settlement with the government in 2010 for the Crossrail scheme. The Mayor and the then Secretary of State for Transport agreed revised funding packages for Crossrail in December 2018 and November 2020.

## **How have London's businesses help fund the Elizabeth line?**

In April 2012, the previous Mayor introduced a Community Infrastructure Levy (MCIL) on new developments in London to finance Crossrail. The charging schedule changed in April 2019. The developer pays this levy.

Business ratepayers of larger properties have contributed through a special Crossrail Business Rate Supplement (BRS) since April 2010.

Under the current funding package, the GLA is expected to contribute a total of around £7 billion towards Crossrail. This is financed through the MCIL and the BRS. The BRS will need to be levied until the GLA's Crossrail related borrowing is repaid. This should be no later than March 2041, in line with the published Crossrail BRS prospectus.

## **Does my business have to pay the Crossrail BRS?**

Your rates bill makes clear if you are liable to pay the BRS. It applies only to assessments (for example business and other non-domestic premises) with a rateable value above £75,000. This threshold was increased from £70,000 to £75,000 on 1 April 2023 to reflect the impact of the 2023 business rates revaluation. This higher threshold means that at least 86 per cent of the capital's non-domestic properties are expected to be exempt from paying the BRS in 2025–26.

## **How much do I pay if my property's rateable value is above £75,000?**

The Crossrail BRS multiplier for 2025–26 remains at 2p per pound of rateable value. Reliefs for the Crossrail BRS will apply on the same basis and at the same percentage rate as for your national non-domestic rates (NNDR) bill. However, there is no transitional relief scheme for the BRS.

## **Keeping you up to date**

We will give ratepayers an annual update over the lifetime of the BRS.

## **For more information contact**

020 7983 4100;

[crossrail-brs@london.gov.uk](mailto:crossrail-brs@london.gov.uk); [london.gov.uk/crossrail-brs](https://london.gov.uk/crossrail-brs)



# Support services for businesses

## Business advice

- Are you looking to grow and develop your business?
- Do you need help with your marketing and web presence?
- Looking for access to loan finance to grow?
- Would you like to win new contracts?

Lewisham Council works with partners to provide business advice services to small and medium sized enterprises (SME) and new start-up businesses in the borough. For further information on our current partners, please visit our website: [lewisham.gov.uk/business](https://lewisham.gov.uk/business) or email [business@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:business@lewisham.gov.uk)

## New Cross and Deptford Creative Enterprise Zone and SHAPESLewisham.

Lewisham was chosen as one of the capital's first-ever Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ) by the Mayor of London as part of a ground-breaking initiative to support artists and creative businesses with affordable workspaces, upskilling and enterprise growth, and pro-creative policies. It supports the growth of the Creative and Digital Industries across the borough. It co-launched in May 2019 with the delivery of 86 new artist studios in Deptford and recently delivered new workspace in 2023 at Cockpit Deptford. SHAPESLewisham is used to promote, celebrate and connect the creative community across Lewisham with online exchange network and themed events. It has also supported 139 young participants with CDI career advice, who took part in 13 industry intensive workshops and talks, as part of Lewisham Live'19.

If you are a creative or digital business and would like to raise your profile and business network or to find out more of what's coming next with our CEZ, please visit [shapeslewisham.co.uk](https://shapeslewisham.co.uk).

## BIPC Lewisham

Are you an aspiring business owner with an idea you want to turn into a business? Or a founder who would like support to grow your business?

BIPC Lewisham is a fully funded service, based within our hub libraries at Catford, Deptford and Downham, and accessible to all residents and businesses operating in the borough. BIPC Lewisham is a partnership between Lewisham Library Services, the Economy, Jobs and Partnerships department and the British Library. Some services and resources require a Lewisham Libraries card.

BIPC Lewisham is part of the British Library's National Network and aims to extend the provision of business support in the Borough of Lewisham, by helping aspiring entrepreneurs, start-ups and established businesses to increase their entrepreneurial skills and confidence, as well as providing access to business information and resources. BIPC Lewisham also facilitates a variety of expert led workshops, one-to-ones, and networking events within the local business community.

Contact the BIPC Lewisham team at [BIPC@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:BIPC@lewisham.gov.uk)

## Apprenticeships

Changes have been made to the way apprenticeship funding works, including:

- introducing the apprenticeship levy (the levy is a fee charged to all businesses with a pay bill over £3million)
- Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS) this is an online service that allows employers to choose and pay for apprenticeship training more easily
- introducing a new 'co-investment' rate to support employers who don't pay the levy ('co-investment' is when employers and government share the cost of training and assessing apprentices)

Apprenticeships can be used to recruit either a new member of staff to your business or to upskill an existing member of staff. The Lewisham Apprenticeship Team are available to provide information, advice and guidance on the new changes as well as support to businesses to recruit or access the funding available.

[apprenticeships@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@lewisham.gov.uk)

020 8314 6452

## Business Awards

The Mayor of Lewisham business awards are an annual opportunity for local businesses to celebrate their successes and to increase their profile within the community. The awards are open to any business in the borough.

Winners will be able to use the 'Mayor of Lewisham Business Award winner' logo in promotion and the Council will promote award winners.

Nominations can be made by the business themselves, or on behalf of the business by customers, suppliers, or partners. Nominations windows are annually held in the summer at [lewisham.gov.uk/businessawards](http://lewisham.gov.uk/businessawards). All nominations will be considered by a judging panel that includes people from business and professional business advisers.

# Preparing your business for emergencies

If you manage or own a business, you need to plan for the potential risks that might impact you. This could include fires, severe weather, disruption to your IT systems, cyber-attacks, or supply chain issues.

Understanding these risks and having a plan in place to deal with them when they happen will reduce the impact of an emergency and improve the resilience of your business.

To assess how prepared your business is please see the link below for useful checklists and guidance on what you can do to prepare.

[london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/fire-and-city-resilience/london-resilience-partnership/preparing-your-business-emergencies](https://london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/fire-and-city-resilience/london-resilience-partnership/preparing-your-business-emergencies)

For advice on what to do in an emergency visit: [lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/publicsafety/emergencies/what-to-do-in-an-emergency/advice-in-an-emergency](https://lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/publicsafety/emergencies/what-to-do-in-an-emergency/advice-in-an-emergency)

Email: [businesscontinuityplanning@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:businesscontinuityplanning@lewisham.gov.uk)

## Building control

Constructing new buildings or adapting existing ones can be a difficult process, bearing in mind the many statutory requirements of building regulations.

Whether you're planning a small extension or a full-scale new building, or just changing the use of your premises for any reason, talk to us before you do anything. We can provide you with top quality advice on all construction matters.

We offer the following information free of charge:

- building regulations (government explanatory booklet)
- building regulations and fire safety
- procedural guidance
- guidance on LABC System Type Approval
- pre-application advice

### For more details contact:

#### Building Control Services

Fourth floor, Laurence House, Catford SE6 4RU

Opening hours: Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm

Call: 020 8314 8233 for an appointment.

## Business safety

Lewisham Council works with a number of partner agencies to reduce crime in the borough. The Safer Lewisham Partnership Board (SLPB) includes a number of agencies, such as the Metropolitan Police, London Probation, Integrated Care Boards amongst others.

The SLPB has always regarded the safety and security of retail and commercial areas in the borough as a high priority and has taken a broad range of measures to decrease the crime in the Borough. Some of the schemes Lewisham Council runs or supports are:

### Anti-Social Behaviour/Statutory Nuisance Team

The Anti-Social Behaviour and Statutory Nuisance Team are focused on reducing anti-social behaviour, and fear of antisocial behaviour throughout the Borough. The team works closely with the Police, Council enforcement services, Council support services and external outreach organisations to support both the business community and the boroughs communities to create a safe environment for people to live, work, shop and learn in.

## CCTV

The Council has developed an extensive network of Public Space CCTV cameras, situated predominantly in town centers across the borough including New Cross, Deptford, Lewisham, Catford, Forest Hill and Sydenham. The CCTV system has 168 cameras throughout the borough. The Public Space CCTV system has been enhanced by the upgrading of the equipment, including a digital transmission network and High Definition (HD) Internet Protocol (IP) cameras across the whole system. The control room also operates a two-way business radio network in Lewisham and Catford centers which allows retailers to communicate effectively with the CCTV operators, police, and each other. The Safer Lewisham Partnership deploys a number of rapid deployment mobile cameras to tackle specific issues, often in areas where there are no established Council managed Public Space CCTV cameras.

In addition, the SLPB supports the work of Safer Lewisham Business Partnership, a not-for-profit initiative. This enables businesses from all sectors that trade or provide services in Lewisham to work together and in partnership with the Police, Lewisham Council and other key agencies to reduce business crime and make Lewisham a safer place to be, for business, employment and tourism.

### For more details contact:

#### Lewisham Safer Communities Service

Holbeach Office, 9 Holbeach Road, Catford SE6 4TW

[lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/publicsafety/antisocial-behaviour](https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/inmyarea/publicsafety/antisocial-behaviour)

## Food safety

If you're in the food business, then it's essential that you know and comply with your legal responsibilities regarding food safety. These are designed to protect your interests as well as those of the consumer. You are also obliged by law to register with Lewisham Council as a food business (there is no charge).

We will be happy to advise on any of the following:

- food hygiene standards and safety
- food premises design and construction
- food safety management systems
- any other matter relating to food law

We also run the CIEH Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering.

### **For more details contact:**

#### **Food Safety**

Environmental Health Department  
Wearside Service Centre, Wearside Road Ladywell SE13 7EZ

020 8314 2170

## Street markets

Lewisham has three vibrant street markets, each with its own individual style and full of items not found in high street shops. Lewisham, Deptford and Catford markets have stalls selling fresh food, fashions, flowers and more and in Deptford there is a thriving secondhand market too. All three markets benefit from easy access for those arriving either by car or public transport.

Street trading can be an ideal way to start-up a new business at low cost. We offer discounted prices for new traders to our street markets. Please contact the markets team below for further information.

### **For more details contact:**

#### **Lewisham Markets Service**

Wearside Service Centre, Wearside Road, Ladywell SE13 7EZ

020 8314 2050

[markets@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:markets@lewisham.gov.uk)

## Health and safety in the workplace

If you run a business then it's essential that you know and comply with your legal responsibilities regarding Health and Safety for you, your employees, anyone that visits your premises, or may be affected by your work activities. We will be happy to advise on any of these aspects, in relation to your business.

### **For more details contact:**

#### **Health and Safety**

Environmental Health Department Holbeach Office  
9 Holbeach Road Catford SE6 4TW

# Housing conditions and private sector housing

Under environmental protection and housing legislation, landlords have wide responsibilities on housing and living conditions.

We can advise you of your legal requirements in all areas such as:

- general housing conditions and minimum standards
- the assessment of houses and flats under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)
- houses in multiple occupation, bedsits and hostels
- fire safety and amenity standards
- licensing schemes and enforcement procedures.

Providing and managing good quality rented living accommodation can be difficult. We want to support and encourage all residential landlords in Lewisham to understand and fulfil their obligations. Whether you rent out a flat, a shared house or a portfolio of properties, or you are thinking of buying to let, you need to get a license from us. This is required for all private rented homes in Lewisham. We can provide advice to guide you through these requirements. More information about landlord licensing is available on our website [lewisham.gov.uk/landlords](http://lewisham.gov.uk/landlords).

We encourage accreditation to recognise good practice in the private rented sector and eliminate rogue landlords.

Our enforcement team takes action against landlords who break the law and exploit their tenants. You can find details about reporting any suspected rogue landlords below.

## **For more information contact:**

### **Private sector housing agency**

Civic Suite, Catford Road SE6 4RX

020 8314 3316

[pshe@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:pshe@lewisham.gov.uk)

### **Rogue landlord reporting**

Civic Suite, Catford Road SE6 4RX

020 8314 8688

[roguelandlords@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:roguelandlords@lewisham.gov.uk)

## **Letting and leasing private rented properties**

Our Private Sector Leasing team works with a number of landlords and estate agents. We offer a range of products to suit the business needs of every landlord.

## Tenant finder service

The tenant finding service introduces landlords to prospective tenants who are looking for accommodation in the private rented sector. Under the scheme, we can offer landlords a one-off cash incentive of up to £4,000.

Further benefits of the scheme include:

- no costly agency fees
- tenants who have passed an affordability assessment
- meeting and choosing from a range of tenants
- empty property grant
- a tenancy agreement prepared and provided by us
- tenant and landlord support for the length of the tenancy
- beyond reasonable fair wear and tear.

## Private Sector Leasing

We lease residential properties in the borough from landlords for a fixed term of three to nine years. The Council becomes your tenant, and we then let your properties to homeless families in need of long-term or temporary accommodation.

We offer guaranteed rent and a full housing management service. Upon termination of the lease, your property will be returned to you in good condition – less reasonable wear and tear – and with vacant possession.

Further benefits of the scheme include:

- guaranteed rental income for the lease period – even if the property is empty
- no admin or management fees
- rent paid a month in advance
- empty property grant
- professional property management service
- a one-off cash incentive at the start of the tenancy
- guaranteed vacant possession at the end of the lease

**For more details contact:**

### Private Sector Leasing

Fourth Floor Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, Catford, SE6 4RU

020 8314 6733

[psl@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:psl@lewisham.gov.uk)

## Private landlord grants

If you are a private landlord, we offer grants to help you:

- Bring your property up to a decent home standard
- Resolve any category one or two hazards included on an Improvement or Prohibition Notice served by London Borough of Lewisham
- Provide adequate kitchen, bathroom and/or amenities as required within a licensed home of multiple occupation (HMO)
- Provide loft insulation to the current building regulations and cavity wall insulation, where appropriate

The grant will cover 50% of the eligible cost of work, up to a maximum of £3,000. The maximum grant limit will be increased to £6,000 for licensed HMOs or properties where an application is pending, and the HMO is subject to licensing on completion of the building work.

## Empty homes grants

We also offer a grant to help you:

- Bring your property up to current rental standards in order to let the property.
- Convert your property into a self-contained flat or maisonette
- The grant will cover 50% of the cost of eligible works, up to a maximum of:
  - £15,000 per individual unit and up to a maximum of £50,000 per scheme
  - For studio flats the grant will be capped at £7,000 per unit
  - Large scheme applications, above the maximum level of assistance will be considered on a case by case basis

Please note our grants have terms and conditions attached. Evidence is required at the application stage.

If you are interested in making a grant application or you require further information, please call or email our Housing Assistance Team (HAT). Our grants coordinators respond to emails within 2 working days.

020 8314 6622

[housingassistance@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:housingassistance@lewisham.gov.uk)



# Licensing and registration

Your business may need a license or may be required to register with the Council to comply with legal requirements. Please check in with us as we can advise you on your legal responsibilities in all areas, including:

- premises licenses for the sale of alcohol, provision of regulated entertainment and late-night refreshments
- temporary event notices for one off events for the sale of alcohol, provision of regulated entertainment and late-night refreshments
- personal licenses for individuals to authorise the sale of alcohol
- premises licenses for betting shops, adult gaming centres, bingo premises and family entertainment centres
- gaming machines and small lotteries
- animal licenses for pet shops, boarding establishments, dog breeders, dangerous wild animals, riding establishments, zoos, etc.
- mixed explosives, e.g. fireworks, storage of air bags, and detonators
- licenses for marriages on approved premises
- licenses for scrap metal dealers and collectors
- pavement licenses for tables and chairs on the highway adjacent to premises

**For more details contact:  
Safer Communities Service**

Holbeach Office, 9 Holbeach Road, Catford SE6 4TW

[licensing@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@lewisham.gov.uk)

[lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/business/licences-and-street-trading/licences-issued-by-the-licensing-team](https://www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/business/licences-and-street-trading/licences-issued-by-the-licensing-team)



# Parking

Parking facilities are provided throughout the borough. Controlled parking zones (CPZs) provide flexible on-street parking in many areas, and off-street car parks offer additional parking facilities such as longer-stay tariff parking. Cashless parking is now available in all of the borough's CPZ's, where visitors can pay for parking via their mobile phone.

If your business is located within the boundary of a CPZ, your business can purchase a business permit to suit your needs. Options include:

- parking in selected car parks
- parking in on-street shared use parking bays within our CPZs

Parking enforcement across the borough is currently provided on behalf of the Council by NSL Services Ltd.

A new contract was awarded to NSL in July 2013 for an initial period of six years. Transport for London are responsible for the red routes within the borough, which are enforced by the Metropolitan Police traffic wardens.

## **These are:**

A2 Blackheath – Deptford – New Cross  
A20 Lee Green – Lewisham – New Cross  
A21 Downham – Catford – Lewisham  
A205 Lee Green – Catford – Forest Hill (South Circular)  
Molesworth Street (off Lewisham High Street)

Blue badge holders may park free of charge in any paid-for designated parking place both on and off street for an unlimited period. Badge holders may also park on yellow lines where waiting and loading is permitted for a maximum period of three hours. Blue badge holders are not entitled to park in parking bays designated for specific use, such as 'resident only' bays. If badge holders wish to take advantage of the parking concessions a valid blue badge must be displayed in the vehicle in accordance with the blue badge instructions.



# Planning

Help and advice can be provided to businesses on the construction of new buildings or the alteration, extension or change of use of existing buildings.

Planning officers are available to discuss customers' individual proposals prior to submission and to help negotiate the best possible scheme, ensuring plans are in line with the planning policies of Lewisham Council and the Government.

Information is available from the Planning Information Office or online at [lewisham.gov.uk/planning](http://lewisham.gov.uk/planning), this includes:

- Local Development Framework: [lewisham.gov.uk/LDF](http://lewisham.gov.uk/LDF)
  - statement of community involvement
  - residential development standards
- design practice guides
  - building extensions and roof additions
  - shop fronts and roller shutter grilles
  - signs and advertisements
  - trees
- planning briefs
- conservation
  - windows
  - roofs
  - listed buildings

- planning and related application forms
  - application guidance
  - design and access statement guidance
- planning 'weekly lists'
  - public notices
  - planning committee agendas
- searchable database of planning applications, decisions, and appeals: [lewisham.gov.uk/planningapplications](http://lewisham.gov.uk/planningapplications)
- information on major applications
- planning enforcement
- regeneration plans
  - Lewisham town centre
  - Deptford/New Cross.

**For more details contact:**

020 8314 7400

[planning@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:planning@lewisham.gov.uk)

# Trading standards

We want to promote and maintain high standards of trading for the benefit of all those who live, work, shop and do business in Lewisham. We can offer advice to local businesses on the legal requirements relating to a vast range of trading areas including:

## Consumer rights

- faulty or unsatisfactory goods and services
- uncollected goods
- refunds and disputes in consumer contract
- unfair contract terms.

## Quantity and price

- weights and measures matters, including quantity marking and metrication
- accuracy testing of equipment
- price marking and misleading price indications.

## Safety

- general safety of consumer products including toys, cosmetics and electrical goods safety of second-hand goods
- safety of second-hand goods
- sales of tobacco products, alcohol, knives, solvents and fireworks etc to children.

## Fair trading

- misleading advertisements
- accuracy in sales descriptions used
- disclosure of business names
- statements restricting consumer rights
- product counterfeiting and trademarking matters
- video recording matters
- estate agents and travel agents

- informative labelling requirements (excluding food) – distance selling (e.g. selling via the internet)
- street trading

## Consumer credit

- licensing requirements
- credit advertisements and the content of agreements.

Our services include:

- accuracy testing of some types of weighing and measuring equipment
- initial assessment of consumer products for compliance with legal requirements
- information leaflets – advice on European consumer legislation and enforcement of criminal consumer laws

We promise to provide a meaningful response to all enquiries within ten working days. If you are in dispute with a business and need advice on dealing with the matter, please contact our advice partner, Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 08454 040506.

[citizensadvice.org.uk](https://citizensadvice.org.uk)

## For more details contact:

### Safer Communities Service

Holbeach Office, 9 Holbeach Road, Catford SE6 4TW

[1tradingstandards@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:1tradingstandards@lewisham.gov.uk)

[lewisham.gov.uk/my-services/business/trading-standards/what-we-do-in-trading-standards](https://lewisham.gov.uk/my-services/business/trading-standards/what-we-do-in-trading-standards)

[businesscompanion.info](https://businesscompanion.info)

# Commercial waste and recycling

## What are your responsibilities as a business?

All businesses have to ensure that their waste disposal methods comply with duty of care legislation, including having a trade waste agreement with Lewisham Council or another provider. Under this legislation you are legally responsible for ensuring that you produce, store, transport and dispose of your business waste without harming the environment.

### As a business you must:

- store and transport your waste appropriately and securely
- check that your waste is transported and handled by an authorised waste carrier
- complete waste transfer notes to document all waste you transfer.

Failure to ensure the above takes place may result in legal action being taken. For more information on your duty of care you can visit

[gov.uk/environmental-management/waste](http://gov.uk/environmental-management/waste).

## What waste and recycling services does Lewisham Council provide for businesses?

Lewisham Council provides a commercial waste and recycling service which will help you to both control costs and fulfil your legal and business obligations. We deliver a professional, tailor-made service to over 3,000 businesses from every sector across Lewisham each week. We offer competitive pricing and with vehicles in the local area operating five days a week and being able to collect from 6am until 10pm we can be responsive to your needs. Our customers have access to high standard and varied choice of containers, ranging from bags to 240-litre lockable bins to larger wheeled bins including 1100-litre bins.

Recycling with Lewisham Council offers our commercial clients even more value as collection charges are significantly lower than those for general waste. We can help you introduce a business recycling scheme and provide advice on how businesses can save money by becoming greener.

If you have difficulty understanding this document in English please call the number below.

Contact us today to arrange an appointment to discuss your waste management needs.

020 8314 2104

[Commercialwaste@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Commercialwaste@lewisham.gov.uk)

[lewisham.gov.uk/commercialwaste](http://lewisham.gov.uk/commercialwaste)