

Your business rates

2019–20

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 www.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 www.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 www.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 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 1 April 2013, London Borough councils keep a proportion of the business rates paid locally. This provides a direct financial incentive for councils to work with local businesses to create a favourable local environment for growth since councils will benefit from growth in business rates revenues. The money, together with revenue from council tax payers and certain other sums, is used to pay for the services provided by local Councils in your area. Further information about the business rates system, including transitional and other reliefs, may be obtained at www.gov.uk.

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 officers of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), an agency of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. They draw up and maintain a full list of all rateable values, available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/valuation-office-agency. 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. For the revaluation that came into effect on 1 April 2017, this date was set as 1 April 2015.

The valuation officer may alter the value if circumstances change. The ratepayer (and certain others who have an interest in the property) can request a change to the

value shown in the list if they believe it is wrong, through the reformed Check, Challenge, Appeal (CCA) process introduced in April 2017. Full details on the CCA process are available from the VOA or from www.gov.uk. Lewisham Council can only backdate any business rates rebate to the date from which any change to the list is to have effect.

Further information about the grounds on which appeals may be made and the process for doing so can be found on the www.gov.uk website.

Further information about the grounds on which appeals may be made and the process for doing so can be found on the www.gov.uk website or obtained from your local valuation office.

National non-domestic rating multiplier

The Council works out the business rates bill by multiplying the rateable value of the property by the appropriate multiplier. There are two multipliers: the standard non-domestic rating multiplier and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier. The former is higher to pay for small business rates relief. Except in the City of London where special arrangements apply, the Government sets the multipliers for each financial year for the whole of England according to formulae set by legislation.

The current multipliers are shown on the reverse of your bill.

Business rates instalments

Payment of business rates bills is automatically set on a 10-monthly cycle. However, the Government has put in place regulations that allow businesses to require their local council to enable payments to be made through a

12-monthly instalments. If you wish to take up this offer, you should contact us as soon as possible.

Revaluation 2017 and transitional arrangements

All rateable values are reassessed at a general revaluation. The most recent revaluation took place effect from 1 April 2017. Revaluations make sure each ratepayer pays their fair contribution and no more, by ensuring that the share of the national rates bill paid by any one ratepayer reflects changes over time in the value of their property relative to others.

A £3.6billion transitional relief scheme limits changes in rate bills as a result of the 2017 revaluation and phase in changes in rate bills as a result of the 2017 revaluation. To help pay for the limits on increases in bills, there also have to be limits on reductions in bills. Under the transitional scheme, limits continue to apply to yearly increases and decreases until the full amount is due (rateable value times the appropriate multiplier). The scheme applies only to the bill based on a property at the time of the revaluation. If there are any changes to the property after 1 April 2017, transitional arrangements will not normally apply to the part of a bill that relates to any increase in rateable value due to those changes. Changes to your bill as a result of other reasons (such as changes to the amount of small business rates relief) are not covered by the transitional arrangements. The transitional arrangements are applied automatically and are shown on the front of your bill. Further information about transitional arrangements and other reliefs may be obtained from the Council or the www.gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates.

More information on the 2017 revaluation can be found at www.gov.uk/introduction-to-business-rates/revaluation.

Unoccupied property rating

Business rates will not be payable in the first three months that a property is empty. This is extended to six months in the case of certain industrial properties. After this period, rates are payable in full. In most cases the unoccupied property rate is zero for properties owned by charities and community amateur sports clubs. In addition, there are a number of exemptions from the unoccupied property rate. Full details on exemptions can be obtained on our website.

Please note that the three-or six-month exemption commences from the date that the property first became empty and will not be re-granted simply because of a change of ownership.

Partly occupied property relief

A ratepayer is liable for the full non-domestic rate whether a property is wholly occupied or only partly occupied. Where a property is partly occupied for a short time, the Council has discretion in certain cases to award relief in respect of the unoccupied part. Contact us for full details.

Small business rates relief

Ratepayers who occupy a property with a rateable value which does not exceed £50,999 (and who are not entitled to other mandatory relief 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.

In addition, generally, if the sole or main property is shown on the rating list with a rateable value which does not exceed £15,000, the ratepayer will receive a percentage reduction in their rates bill for this property of up to a

maximum of 100%. For a property with a rateable value of not more than £12,000, the ratepayer will receive a 100% reduction in their rates bill.

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 £2,899.

The aggregate rateable value of all the properties mentioned in (b) must not exceed £19,999 outside London or £27,999 in London on each day for which relief is being sought. If the rateable value, or aggregate rateable value, increases above those levels, relief will cease from the day of the increase.

The Government has introduced additional support to small businesses. For those businesses that take on an additional property which would normally have meant the loss of small business rates relief, the Government has confirmed that they will be allowed to keep that relief for a period of 12 months.

Where a ratepayer meets the eligibility criteria and has not received the relief they should contact us. Provided the ratepayer continues to satisfy the conditions for relief which apply at the relevant time as regards the property and the ratepayer, they will automatically continue to receive relief in each new valuation period.

Certain changes in circumstances will need to be notified to the local council by a 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 ratepayer taking up occupation of an additional property, and
- (b) 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 Council has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill. For further details please contact us.

Relief for local newspapers

The Government is providing funding to Local Councils so that they can provide a discount worth up to £1,500 a year for 2 years from 1st April 2017. At Autumn Budget 2018, the Government extended the scheme for an additional year (2019/20). This scheme provides up to a maximum of one discount per local newspaper title and per hereditament, and up to state aid limits. The relief will be delivered through Local Council discretionary discount powers (under section 47(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988). Eligibility criteria for this relief is set out in a guidance note: "The case for a business rates relief for local newspapers", which can be obtained at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-case-for-a-business-rates-relief-for-local-newspapers

Spring budget 2017 relief scheme: supporting small business

Ratepayers losing small business or rural rate relief as a result of the 2017 revaluation will have their increases limited to the greater of either

- (i) a cash value of £600 per year, or
- (ii) the matching cap on increases for small properties in the transitional relief scheme. This relief will run until the next revaluation in 2021 and ratepayers will receive the relief until this date or they reach what their bill would have been without the relief scheme, whichever is first.

This relief will be delivered through local Council discretionary discount powers (under section 47(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988). Please contact us for further information.

Spring Budget 2017 Relief Scheme: Discretionary Scheme

The Government is providing £300 million of funding to local authorities over 4 years to 31st March 2021 to provide discounts to ratepayers in their area on a discretionary basis. Each authority has been allocated a share with which to design and implement a scheme to deliver targeted support to ratepayers.

Local authority allocations can be found at:
www.gov.uk/government/consultations/discretionary-business-rates-relief-scheme

This relief will be delivered through local Council discretionary discount powers (under section 47(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988). For further information please contact us.

Retail Discount

At Autumn Budget 2018, the Government announced a one-third discount for eligible retail businesses with a rateable value of less than £51,000, up to state aid limits. This scheme will run for two years from April 2019. This discount will be applied to the bill after the application of any reliefs, excluding any local discounts.

The Government has issued guidance on the operation of the scheme, which can be found at

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/discretionary-business-rates-relief-scheme.

This relief will be delivered through local Council discretionary discount powers (under section 47(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988). For further information please contact us.

Local discounts

The Council has a general power to grant discretionary local discounts. For further details please contact us.

State aid

The award of such discounts is considered likely to amount to state aid. However it will be state aid compliant where it is provided in accordance with the De Minimis Regulations EC 1407/2013. The De Minimis Regulations allow an undertaking to receive up to £200,000 'de minimis' aid over a rolling three year period. If you are receiving, or have received, any 'de minimis' aid granted during the current or two previous financial years (from any source), you should inform the local council immediately with details of the aid received.

Living Wage

In the borough the number of London Living Wage (LLW) accredited businesses has continued to rise over the last four years. The Council offers support to newly accredited businesses in a number of ways, this can include promotion of businesses via the Council website as well as the use of local news outlets and the Council magazine Lewisham Life. A key initiative for the Council is the business rates reduction for new LLW rate payers, we will be continuing this service in 2019/20 for any more information about this initiative or other support on offer please contact Economy and Partnerships on 0208 314 9306.

Hardship relief

The Council has discretion to give hardship relief in specific circumstances. For further details please contact us.

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 www.rics.org) and the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation (IRRV - website www.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, 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 with regard to the gross expenditure of the Council is available at www.lewisham.gov.uk/opendata. A hard copy is available on request by writing to the Council or at 020 8314 6150.

Crossrail business rates supplement

What is Crossrail and how will it benefit your business?

Crossrail is London's newest railway. It will connect the outer suburbs and Heathrow airport to the West End, City and Canary Wharf. As such, Crossrail is vital to the future of London's economy. The increased earnings it will bring – from new jobs and quicker journeys – will benefit businesses across London. When it opens, it will be named the Elizabeth line in honour of Queen Elizabeth II.

Crossrail is the single largest investment in London's infrastructure for decades. It employed up to 14,000 people at the peak of construction. Work is now continuing to complete the project and stations along the route as soon as possible.

To find out more, visit www.crossrail.co.uk, call the Crossrail 24 hr Helpdesk on 0345 602 3813 or email helpdesk@crossrail.co.uk.

Developments in the funding of Crossrail

The previous Mayor of London agreed a funding settlement with Government in 2010 for the Crossrail route. In August 2018, it was announced that the project opening date would be delayed. The Mayor and Secretary of State for Transport announced a revised funding package for Crossrail on 10 December 2018.

How will London's businesses help fund Crossrail?

In April 2012, the last Mayor introduced a Community Infrastructure Levy (MCIL) on new developments in London to finance Crossrail. This is paid for by the developer.

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

Under the revised funding package, the GLA's total contribution towards Crossrail financed through the MCIL and BRS is expected to be around £6.1bn. The BRS will need to be levied until the GLA's Crossrail related borrowing is repaid. This is expected to be some time in the mid to late 2030s, in line with the published prospectus. The policies for the BRS in 2019-20 remain unchanged from last year.

Does my business have to pay the Crossrail BRS?

Your rates bill makes clear if you are liable to pay the BRS. The Crossrail BRS is applied only to assessments (for example business and other non-domestic premises) with a rateable value of over £70,000 on the local rating lists of the 32 London boroughs and City of London Corporation. This threshold means that around 85% of non-domestic properties in London will be exempt from the BRS in 2019-20.

How much do I pay if my property's rateable value is above £70,000?

The Crossrail BRS multiplier for 2019-20 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, no transitional relief is provided for the BRS.

Keeping you up to date

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

Contact for more information

020 7983 4100 ♦ crossrail-brs@london.gov.uk;
www.london.gov.uk/crossrail-brs

Finance, GLA, City Hall London SE1 2AA

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: www.lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/business/Pages or call the Economy & Partnership team on 020 8314 6700.

To join-up business support activity in the borough, Lewisham has established a 'Business Support Providers' (BSP) Forum comprising all the key stakeholder agencies operating in the borough who deliver support services to local businesses. The members of this forum include High Street Banks, the Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Business, Nwes, Goldsmith University to name a few. A key role of this forum is to ensure that business support services in Lewisham are coordinated and complementary whether funded publicly or privately.

Lewisham Dek Enterprise Hubs

Are you a new start business looking to move into your first commercial workspace? If so Lewisham's three enterprise hubs based at Catford Old Town Hall, Deptford Lounge / Library and Place Ladywell provide affordable, high quality space, which has been specifically designed to help small businesses to network, collaborate and grow.

Across the Enterprise Hub network workspace and facilities include:

- ▶ Co-working space
- ▶ Small business units
- ▶ Creative studios
- ▶ Retail 'pods'
- ▶ Access to meeting rooms
- ▶ Events and networking opportunities
- ▶ Business support and advice
- ▶ Business mentoring
- ▶ Comprehensive workshop programme

For more information please visit our website: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/dek>

For new start 'retail pods' and co-working space at Place Ladywell please contact Meanwhile Space on 020 7737 4136 or e-mail to info@meanwhitespace.com

deK Business Growth Programme

Creative and digital firms can grow their businesses using academic expertise as part of a new £2million programme to nurture SMEs in London.

The deK Growth project aims to deliver strategic, practical and innovative support for SMEs across the capital, with a particular focus on south London businesses.

Experts from Goldsmiths, and London South Bank University are delivering free masterclasses to enhance firms'

skills and knowledge to create capacity and environment for growth, as well as maintaining or improving profitability.

The Programme offer includes:

- ▶ Business Start-up Advice
- ▶ Business diagnostics and support
- ▶ Accounting and Finance
- ▶ Marketing and Promotion including Social Media
- ▶ Business Mentoring and Networking
- ▶ Staff Development
- ▶ Product and Service Development
- ▶ Innovation and Culture Change
- ▶ Creating and Managing Growth
- ▶ International Trade (South Korea)

1. Lewisham's deK Growth Programme is led by the London Borough of Lewisham and in collaboration with Goldsmiths University, London Southbank University and London Small Business Centre/Nwes. It is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and part-funded by the Lewisham Council. Please click here to find out more: deklondon.com.
2. The deK Growth Programme exists to promote and grow the CDI sector in London, with a particular focus on south London borough like Lewisham. The emphasis will be on developing investment-ready SMEs, and fostering collaboration.
3. The project was launched in November 2017.

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)
- ▶ introducing the apprenticeship service - 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

020 8314 6452

Lewisham's Enterprise Hubs

We are establishing in Spring 2016 three new business enterprise hubs in Catford, Deptford and Lewisham town centres. These Hubs will provide affordable, high quality space, which has been specifically designed to help small businesses to network, collaborate and grow.

Local entrepreneurs and businesses will be able to access space and facilities across the hub network including:

- ▶ co-working space
- ▶ small business units
- ▶ creative studios
- ▶ access to meeting rooms
- ▶ networking and events
- ▶ business mentoring
- ▶ advice and support for start-ups

To register your interest in Lewisham's Enterprise Hubs go to www.lewisham.gov.uk/my services/business/enterprise-hubs/Pages/default.aspx

Business Awards

The Mayor of Lewisham business awards are an 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 or suppliers or partners. Nominations can be made at any time. Simply go to www.lewisham.gov.uk/businessawards and complete the form. All nominations will be considered by a judging panel that includes people from business and professional business advisers. The panel meets three times a year.

Emergency planning for businesses

Business continuity management (BCM)

If you manage or own a business, you need to plan for unexpected emergencies to minimise the likelihood or impact of any disruption to your business or organisation.

A robust, comprehensive and exercised Business Continuity Management Plan (BCM) greatly increases the chances of your business surviving a major incident.

Why should I plan for business disruptions?

A disaster can strike any organisation, large or small. It can arrive in the shape of storm, flood, fire, a terrorist bomb, action by pressure groups, or product contamination.

Around half of all businesses experiencing a disaster with no effective plans for recovery fail within the following 12 months. Assess how prepared your business is in our online Business Preparedness Tool or download our Business Preparedness Checklist.

Useful websites

www.london.gov.uk/about-us/organisations-we-work/london-prepared/ www.lewisham.gov.uk/bcm

Useful contacts

Emergency Planning, Fifth floor, Laurence House, Catford SE6 4RU

Email: emergencyplanning@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.

Lewisham Council's building control service can help businesses through this process.

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, 9–5pm

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 (SLP) includes the Metropolitan Police, London Probation, Lewisham Victim Support Scheme and the NHS.

The SLP 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 maintain Lewisham's longstanding position as one of the lowest crime boroughs in inner London. Some of the schemes Lewisham Council runs or supports are:

Crime, Enforcement & Regulation Service

Three area-based teams of officers that cover the entire borough. They are focused on reducing crime, fear of crime and antisocial behaviour. They often act as the Council's Crime Reduction Division's first point of contact within the communities where they are based.

CCTV

The Council has developed an extensive network of CCTV cameras, situated predominantly in town centres across the borough including New Cross, Deptford, Lewisham, Catford, Forest Hill and Sydenham. The CCTV system has almost 200 cameras throughout the borough. CCTV has been enhanced by the development of a two-way business radio network in Lewisham and Catford centres which allows retailers to communicate effectively with the CCTV operators, police, and each other. The Safer Lewisham Partnership deploys a number of mobile cameras to tackle specific issues.

In addition, SLP 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 in for business, employment and tourism.

For more details contact:

Lewisham Crime Reduction Service

020 8314 7237

CER@lewisham.gov.uk

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
London 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 second hand market too. All three markets benefit from easy access for those arriving either by car or public transport.

If you are considering becoming a trader we also offer discounted prices for new traders to our street markets. Street trading can be an ideal way to start-up a new business at low cost. Please contact the markets team below for further information.

For more details contact:

Lewisham Markets Service
Wearside Service Centre
Ladywell
SE13 7EZ
020 8314 2050
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
Crime Enforcement & Regulatory Services
Environmental Health Department
Holbeach Office
9 Holbeach Road
Catford SE6
cer@lewisham.gov.uk
020 8314 7237

Housing conditions and private sector housing

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

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

- ▶ general housing conditions
- ▶ 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, bearing in mind all the changes in statutory requirements. We are keen to encourage all residential landlords in our area to understand and comply with their obligations. Accreditation with a National Residential Landlords Association which offers continual professional development training is encouraged. The Council is also strongly committed to maintaining standards in the sector and works proactively across departments and with a wide range of other enforcement agencies such as HMRC to share data, to enhance our capacity for driving rogue landlords out of business in our borough. Lewisham's Environmental Health Residential Team can help to keep businesses informed of all these changes.

Whether you currently rent out just one flat, a shared house or a portfolio of properties, or you are thinking of buying to let, please contact us to find out more. You may need to obtain a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) license. This is required for all private landlords letting out flats or houses with shared facilities, occupied by more than one family or by non-related single people, on three or more storeys and with five or more occupants. We can provide top-quality advice to guide you through these requirements.

A landlord's guide to HMO licensing is available free of charge from the Council's website. Go to www.lewisham.gov.uk and search for 'licensing guide for landlords'.

The team also support the Council's Rogue Landlord Taskforce, the objectives of which is to co-ordinate enforcement action against landlords who knowingly and repeatedly break the law and exploit their tenants. The Rogue Landlord hot line and email in-box for reporting suspected rogues us as below.

For more details contact:

Environmental Health Residential
1a Eros House, Brownhill Road, Catford SE6 2EG

020 8314 3316

pshe@lewisham.gov.uk

Rogue Landlord hot line: 020 8314 8688

Email: 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, plus the choice of a bond instead of the usual cash deposit*.

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
- ▶ option of a bond to cover property against damages
- ▶ 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
1a Eros House, Brownhill Road, Catford SE6 2EG

020 8314 6733

psl@lewisham.gov.uk

Licensing and registration

Your business may need a licence or may be required to register with the Council in order to comply with legal requirements.

Please check with us – we can advise you on your legal responsibilities in all areas such as:

- ▶ premises licences for the sale of alcohol
- ▶ provision of regulated entertainment and late-night refreshments
- ▶ personal licences for individuals to authorise the sale of alcohol
- ▶ premises licences for betting shops, adult gaming centres, bingo premises and family entertainment centres
- ▶ special treatment premises such as massage, electrolysis, tattooing, ear piercing, nail techniques, sun beds, hairdressers etc
- ▶ animal licences for pet shops, boarding establishments, dog breeders, dangerous wild animals, riding establishments, zoos, etc
- ▶ mixed explosives, e.g. storage of air bags and detonators
- ▶ gaming machines and small lotteries
- ▶ marriages on approved premises.

For more details contact:

Crime, Enforcement & Regulation Service
9 Holbeach Road, SE6 4TW

020 8314 7237

licensing@lewisham.gov.uk

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 Lewisham Council's and the Government's planning policies.

Information is available from the Planning Information Office or from www.lewisham.gov.uk/planning, including:

- ▶ Local Development Framework: www.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: www.lewisham.gov.uk/planningapplications
- ▶ information on major applications
- ▶ planning enforcement
- ▶ regeneration plans
 - Lewisham town centre
 - Deptford/New Cross.

For more details contact:

Planning Information Office
Business Centre
Ground floor, Laurence House
Catford SE6 4RU

020 8314 7400.

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 seven working days. If you are in dispute with a customer and need advice on dealing with the matter, please contact our advice partner, Citizens Advice consumer helpline, on 08454 040506. Customers can also be given this number.

For more details contact:

020 8314 2288

020 8314 3138

tradingstandards@lewisham.gov.uk

CER@lewisham.gov.uk

www.lewisham.gov.uk/tradingstandards

www.everythingregulation.org.uk

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 www.netregs.gov.uk and search for 'duty of care'.

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

www.lewisham.gov.uk/commercialwaste