



BARNET'S BUSINESS TOOLKIT

Caring for people, our places and the planet

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Welcome to Barnet's business toolkit!

This toolkit brings together many of the key services the council provides for local businesses in the borough.

We know that businesses are going through tough times. The cost-of-living crisis, effects of the pandemic and massive influence of the internet are pushing businesses to rapidly evolve how they work.

These forces are outside of the council's control, of course, but we're keen to ensure that our services don't add to your administrative burden, and that they are easily accessible to all. Businesses are an essential part of Barnet, and we want to work in partnership to deliver services that work for you.

This toolkit is part of Barnet's commitment to be a more effective and engaged council. We've listened to local businesses and taken on board feedback that council services can be confusing and hard to access at times. This toolkit complements the information Barnet provides on its website by putting our key business services in one place, at your fingertips.

It will tell you what Barnet offers, the benefits to your business and how each service is accessed. Like your priorities and the challenges you face this toolkit will evolve, but we're proud to deliver this new business resource for the first time in 2024.



Cllr Barry Rawlings,
Leader of Barnet Council



Cllr, Anne Clarke,
Cabinet member for
Community Wealth Building,
and Small Business Champion



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Business rates

◆ What are business rates?

Barnet Council collects business rates (also known as non-domestic rates).

Business rates are charged on most non-domestic properties like shops, restaurants, offices, pubs, warehouses, factories, holiday rental homes or guest houses.



Did you know? As a London borough, one third of the money collected goes to the Greater London Authority, one third to UK Government and Barnet council keeps the rest to fund lots of different council services.

◆ Who pays?

You'll probably have to pay business rates if you use a building or part of a building for non-domestic purposes. Certain properties are exempt from business rates, for example farm buildings or places used for the welfare of disabled people.

◆ What do you pay and when?

Barnet Council will send you a bill in March for the following financial year (1 April to 31 March).

How much you pay is based on your property's Rateable Value. This is set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) and based on the property's open market value on 1 April 2021.



If you think your rates are wrong use your business rates valuation account to tell the VOA that your property details (e.g., floor area sizes, parking) need changing. Estimate your business rates bill at www.gov.uk/calculate-your-business-rates



◆ Relief schemes

Some businesses in England are eligible for a reduction in their business rates bill. This is called business rates relief. You may be eligible for business rates relief if your property is unoccupied, is used for retail, hospitality or leisure, if your business is a small business or is a charity or a community amateur sports club. Visit the weblink at the bottom to find out more.

◆ How do I pay?

There are lots of ways to pay your business rates including direct debit and monthly instalments. These are mentioned on your bill and on Barnet's website: www.barnet.gov.uk/business/business-rates/pay-business-rates.



I've missed a payment or can't pay, visit

www.barnet.gov.uk/business/business-rates/arrears-and-debt-recovery

◆ Register for business rates

If you're new to Barnet or moving your business into a new property, or you didn't receive a bill, then you may need to register for business rates. Any change may affect the amount you need to pay. To avoid overpaying or having to pay more later, register at www.barnet.gov.uk/business/business-rates/business-rates-change-circumstances



How to find out more

www.barnet.gov.uk/business/business-rates

Call us: 020 8359 2735

Email us: businessrates@barnet.gov.uk



Planning permission



The Planning Portal provides an introductory description of the planning system. It explains how to apply for planning permission and much more at www.planningportal.co.uk



When do I need planning permission?

Planning permission may be required for a wide variety of developments, such as new building works or changes in the use of land or buildings.

Most changes to business premises do need formal planning permission from the Council, including:

- All shop and office extensions, including outdoor seating/decking
- Alterations to shop fronts
- External security shutters or grilles
- Adverts and signage
- Changes of Use: if you want to change the use of a building or a piece of land, you may also need planning permission.



When do I not need planning permission?

Planning permission is not usually needed when both the existing and proposed new uses fall within the same Use Class. The summary of the Use Classes Order will give you an idea of which class your use falls into. It is also possible to change uses between some classes without making an application.

Homeworking does not necessarily require planning permission: where the use of a small part of a dwelling-house for business purposes does not change the overall character of the property's use as a single dwelling. For example, the use by a householder of a room as an office or child-minding business. This is as long as it is complying with the Department of Health and Social Care's standard recommended ratios. This depends on:

- the number of visitors to the property
- whether anyone else is employed at the house
- whether any signage or advertising is installed at the property.



Once the non-residential use of the property is the main use of the property, planning permission is likely required. This would be a material change of use of the property, requiring planning permission.

! It is always worth checking if you need permission before you undertake any work.

◆ How do I apply for planning permission?

1. Get pre-application planning advice - charges apply depending on the size and type of your plans
2. Check local constraints and site history
3. Check local policies
4. Submit your planning application online
5. Make the correct payment. Pay online or over the phone
6. Wait to hear. Most applications take less than 8 weeks to determine, depending on their type. This starts once the application has been validated (all documents have been checked).



How to find out more

www.barnet.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning

Email us: planning.preapp@barnet.gov.uk



Licences, permits and registrations

Depending on your business, you might need a licence to run some activities or operate certain parts of your business. Although not all businesses need one, each licence is designed to keep owners, clients and customers safe, as well as hold businesses accountable for their actions.



It is your responsibility to check which licences your business needs. Find out what business, event or other type of activity licence you may need at www.gov.uk/find-licences



For food and drinks businesses

Any business that stores, prepares, distributes or sells food as a business in Barnet must register. This includes restaurants, cafes, hotels, shops, canteens, market stalls, mobile catering vans and food delivery vans, plus catering businesses run from home.



Register a food business



There's no charge for registration, but you need to register at least 28 days before you start trading at <https://register.food.gov.uk/new>

Food safety inspections: an inspection is to ensure that food is being handled and produced hygienically and that staff are properly trained. Inspections can happen at any time and their frequency depends on food safety risks and how they are controlled.

If you want to sell alcohol, open late, trade on the street or play music, other licences will be needed.

Further guidance at www.food.gov.uk/here-to-help



◆ **For retailers**

From nail technicians to estate agents and boutique owners, you will need a licence to play background music or have a TV on, use pavement or street display signs, and more.

If you provide special treatments from a commercial unit or a residence you may require a licence too. Special treatments include massage, manicure, acupuncture, tattooing, cosmetic piercing, sunbeds and more.

◆ **For street traders**

Street trading is the selling, offering or exposing for sale of any item or service in the street. This includes stalls (e.g., market stalls), shop-front displays, cafe tables and chairs with service, mobile traders and advertisement 'A' Boards. You'll need a licence to trade on the public highway, including the pavement or any other area (not within a permanently enclosed premises) that is within seven metres of any road or footway. The above includes permanent and temporary street trading.

◆ **For trades and construction**

Whether you're a painter and decorator, carpenter, plumber or electrician, before you carry out any works, common business licences you'd need to consider are skip licences, good vehicle operator licence, scaffolding and hoarding licence, register to carry out gas works, and street works licences.

◆ **How do I get (or renew) a licence?**

1. Check what licence you need at www.gov.uk/find-licences
2. Visit Barnet's website to find out how to apply
3. Pay the licence fee where it applies.



How to find out more

www.barnet.gov.uk/licences-permits-and-registrations

Email us: licensing@barnet.gov.uk



Procurement

Barnet Council manages more than 1,000 contracts worth more than £1.3bn combined. We are a key player in the market and have a role generating private-sector growth through our supply chain.

We procure from a wide range of businesses including small enterprises and voluntary sector organisations. We are keen to encourage a diverse range of local suppliers to bid for opportunities.

◆ How to work with Barnet

1. Register on Barnet's e-portal as a supplier: www.barnetsourcing.co.uk¹
2. Tell us what categories of service/supply you provide as this will support sourcing activity and ensure that you are alerted when adverts are placed on the portal in that category
3. Barnet opportunities are also visible on the portal and an expression of interest can be made against those current opportunities

Adverts for requirements above £25,000, that are not subject to an approved supplier list, will be published on Contracts Finder website at www.gov.uk/contracts-finder

◆ Social value

Social value is the community benefits that are generated from a contract. These benefits include reduced poverty and inequalities, more local jobs, more upskilling opportunities, local suppliers utilised, an improved environment and biodiversity, a new community space and much more.

All tenders for council contracts are assessed on three categories: quality, price and social value. Quality and price each hold a 40% weighting, social value is 20%. So getting it right is important to council suppliers.

Our social value policy was updated in October 2023 and introduced clearer guidelines for suppliers and a new list of Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) that reflect our corporate priorities.



We recommend that businesses read the TOMs and our Social Value Toolkit for guidance on approaching social value with Barnet Council.

◆ Tender-ready workshops and meet the buyer events

We offer tender-ready training and workshops, depending on demand. The intention is to develop suppliers' understanding of what Barnet expects when bidding for contract opportunities – this includes social value.

Barnet works with developers and property managers to ensure that opportunities are accessible by our local construction supply chain. Meet the buyer events give local companies the chance to hear about these first hand and receive invitations to bid.

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- 1 Barnet will switch to a new procurement portal provider in 2024. Suppliers should register as indicated but will be alerted when the new provider is available. Please contact procurement@barnet.gov.uk if you have questions.



How to find out more

www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/finance-funding-and-pensions/procurement-tenders-and-contracts

Email us: procurement@barnet.gov.uk



Commercial waste and recycling

Barnet's recycling and waste services are available to all businesses, charities and schools in Barnet. By choosing us, you get a reliable, local, low-cost service whilst supporting the services we provide as a local authority through the cost of your contract.

◆ Bins, sacks and cardboard strips

Barnet's Commercial Waste team works closely with businesses to offer you a bespoke service. Different options are available depending on your business's needs, and Barnet offers free waste audits to help you decide.

- We offer a range of bins for recycling and refuse from 240 to 1,100 litres. A small lock can be added for an additional fee
- Sack collection services are available on a pay-as-you-go basis, ideal for businesses with limited storage and as an alternative to having bins
- Cardboard strips can be ordered to help bundle flattened cardboard and save you space in your waste sacks
- We offer large skips for businesses with large clearances and bulky waste collection services to remove large items.

◆ Recycling

Recycling and Food Waste services are available to help your business save money and reduce your environmental impact. Waste collected that can't be recycled is taken to a facility which produces energy from waste. Garden waste collection is also available.



◆ Your responsibilities

Whether you operate out of a shop, office, restaurant, van, market stall or home-based business, you need to make sure you're using the right bins and have your waste collected by a licenced waste carrier.

Every business has a duty of care to responsibly deal with waste produced.

Business waste must be collected and disposed of by an authorised business, such as a licenced disposal site or a licenced waste carrier. Those who do not have a Waste Transfer Note to show this may be fined.

◆ Ground Maintenance and Green Space Management Service

We offer a wide range of green spaces management services including:

- Grass and hedge cutting
- Sports pitch maintenance
- Shrub maintenance
- Overgrown area clearance
- Litter and fly tip removals



How to find out more

www.barnet.gov.uk/recycling-and-waste/business-recycling-and-waste

Email us: csi@barnet.gov.uk

Call us: 020 8359 5051



Business Support

Barnet has almost 26,000 businesses. Many of them are micro or small businesses with a wide variety of needs. The council aims to help as many of these businesses as possible by providing a wide array of support.

◆ Skills, training and resources for business owners and managers

- Instore and online workshops and one-to-one mentoring available in specific town centres
- Briefings from key services like business rates, planning and procurement to keep you up to date on changes and help you get the most from these services
- Help sheets and recorded webinars on business planning, sales and marketing, and sustainability
- Free expert business advice from Enterprise Enfield on the phone or online.

◆ Construction supply chain support

Workshops, one-to-one mentoring and opportunities to meet buyers for small Barnet-based businesses that are in or supplying the construction and property maintenance sector at <https://barnetconstructionsupplychain.net/>

◆ Help finding your next business premises

Find out what Barnet has to offer and tell us about your requirements

- Take advantage of our property matching and council concierge service for growing businesses
- View available council-owned properties and our map of offices and workspaces
- Get free property advice if you're thinking of moving or want to get more from your current base www.barnet.gov.uk/findyourpremises

Join Barnet's business mailing list for monthly news, resources and events.





◆ Recruitment support

Find your next employee with our local recruitment support services

- Vacancy advertising, shortlisting support and in-work support for successful candidates from Barnet BOOST at <https://barnetboost.org>
- Apply for funding to pay for an apprenticeship to upskill an existing employee or for training to hire someone new
- Take on a free, high-calibre 16–19-year-old through the t-level or school placement scheme.

◆ Entrepreneurs and start-ups

Get practical information on how to get started in business including business planning and sources of finance, plus mentoring and advice.



Barnet runs a start-up school and partners with Middlesex University to deliver the BarNET ZERO Entrepreneurial Challenge for anyone who lives, works or studies in Barnet.

www.barnet.gov.uk/business/starting-your-business



How to find out more

www.barnet.gov.uk/business

Email us: barnetbusiness@barnet.gov.uk



Becoming more sustainable

Barnet Council is working to create and support more green businesses, jobs and skills in the borough. This is part of our journey towards net zero carbon as a borough by 2042.

◆ The benefits

Being more sustainable can be great for businesses. It can:

- Help you make progress towards net zero carbon
- Lower the costs of running your business
- Grow your revenue
- Help staff build their skills to support your business
- Access new partnerships and business investment
- Enhance your business's reputation

◆ Where to start

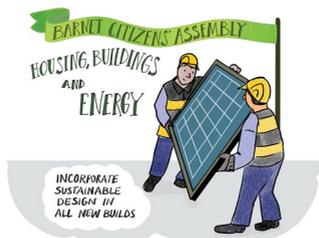
Many businesses might be interested but don't know where to begin. Here are some tips to support your business in becoming more sustainable:

- Build awareness of sustainability with your employees: make sustainability part of your culture, both in and out of the office, to embed this way of thinking into your organisation
- Cut down on waste: for example, can you reduce paper/printing, can you ban single-use plastics, bags or takeaway containers?
- Recycle more to make a big impact: as well as recycling your own waste, it's best practice to invest in recycled resources as well
- Change your travel to cut pollution: reducing the number of cars on the road cuts back on pollution and carbon emissions. If you have to travel into the office or to meetings, can you take public transport, car share or cycle?



- Choose environmentally conscious suppliers: If you're a small business, find other businesses that value sustainable suppliers too. Look at your supply chain - do your values align? Using local suppliers is great to support your local economy
- Be more energy efficient: Turn off electric appliances, computers etc at the plug socket when not in use. This will save energy and money on your electricity bills
- Switch your lighting to LED lightbulbs: To save 75% energy compared to traditional light bulbs
- If your business delivers: Think about whether you can make the transition from petrol and diesel, to investing in an electric vehicle or using a cargo bike for local deliveries
- If you have off-street parking: apply for the **Government's Workplace EV Charging Scheme**
- "Green" your workplace: If you are able to, add more plants to outdoor and indoor spaces to improve the air quality around your business
- Fit solar panels or improve building insulation: access government support to retrofit your building and reduce your energy bills

BARNET-ZERO.



How to find out more

www.barnet.gov.uk/sustainability

Email us: sustainability@barnet.gov.uk



Networking, events and external resources

There are lots of networks and events available to you and your business. They can help you promote your product and services, find new local business partners, share ideas or just get better connected.

◆ Council and local opportunities

- Barnet runs free breakfast briefings for local businesses to meet council leadership, share news and hear about business priorities
- Many of Barnet's town centres have a partnership board, town team or business/trader association. Edgware has Barnet's first Business Improvement District. These provide platforms for businesses to have a say in shaping their local areas.

◆ North and West London sub-region

- The North London Federation of Small Businesses run a wide range of support including free monthly networking sessions for small businesses, open to members and non-members
- Join North London Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise to access events, business advice and profile-raising opportunities
- Be a part of West London Business gain new insights, build your local network to raise the profile of your sub-region.





◆ London-wide

- London Business Partnership: free over-the-phone business consultations and property advice, plus access to longer at-cost support programmes and in-person mentoring
- Business for London: free digital skills support to help grow your business
- British Library Business & IP Centre: insights and access to free resources, training and events – both online and in-person – to help you start or develop your business
- Grow London Local: wide range of online workshops and access to a free personalised business action plan.

News and upcoming events



Subscribe to Barnet's Business Buzz – a monthly e-newsletter with updates, events and training opportunities www.barnet.gov.uk/business/business-news-and-events



How to find out more

www.barnet.gov.uk/business

Email us: barnetbusiness@barnet.gov.uk



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Email us: barnetbusiness@barnet.gov.uk

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Page 5: Cricklewood coffee – photo courtesy of John Sturrock.

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