

Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to read the Environmental and Consumer Services group public service standards.

These standards will give you an understanding of:

1. What services the group provides
2. What we will do
3. What we cannot do
4. How you can help us
5. Contact details for more information

The contents of these standards will be regularly reviewed and updates made at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/servicestandards

If you need more copies of these standards, or any in another format or language, or if you would like more information about the Environmental and Consumer Service group contact:

Environmental and Consumer Services
North Somerset Council
Somerset House
Oxford Street
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 1TG

Introduction

As a group we are committed to delivering an efficient, open and caring professional service based on high quality and value for money.

We provide a wide variety of services to North Somerset, which has around 200,000 residents and nearly five million annual visitors, based around:

- Building Control
- Crematorium and Cemeteries
- Environmental Protection
- Food and Health and Safety
- Licensing
- Trading Standards

See our Environmental and Consumer Services group structure in the Appendix.

If you contact us by telephone we will make sure that:

- We will answer your call within five rings
- We will let you know to whom you are speaking
- We will give you a clear and helpful answer
- If you are held in a telephone queue, our aim is not to keep you on hold for more than two minutes

If you write or email us we will make sure that:

- We will reply to your letter within 10 working days
- Wherever possible, we will use jargon free language in our replies

When required we will:

- Provide all documents in either a large print format, on tape, in another language, or in Braille
- Hold open meetings in an accessible location

All complaints will be fully and promptly investigated and the complainant will be given a written response within 10 working days of us receiving the complaint.

For more information about complaints please see the Complaints About Our Services service standard.

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Accident Investigations

A

Service summary

The Food and Safety team carries out investigations into accidents that occur in a place of work in North Somerset. The purpose is to establish the cause of the accident and to make sure that further accidents do not happen in the same way. We will also decide if formal action should be taken against the business for failure to implement health and safety.

What we will do

- Carry out an investigation into accidents which happen in a place of work and affect an employee, contractor or member of the public
- Require that an accident site is left undisturbed until further notice making sure there is no further risk to health
- Attempt to identify the cause or causes of the accident and advise how these may be corrected
- Review the company's on and off site safety procedures and get records that may relate to the investigation
- Provide written advice with requirements and recommendations and if necessary serve improvement notices for work to be carried out
- Collect evidence, take photographs and conduct interviews
- Prohibit unsafe practices, equipment, plant and structures and if necessary take steps to prevent their use
- Consider prosecution of anyone who breaks safety laws, although this will normally only be after previous advice and requirements have been ignored or if the matter is considered serious enough

What we cannot do

- Always determine the cause of the accident
- Obtain compensation for injured parties
- Guarantee that legal action will be taken in every case
- Act outside our authorised powers, for example we cannot arrest or detain a person

A

Accident Investigations

Service standards

We will:

- Aim to respond to accident notifications quickly. Depending on the seriousness of the accident this may be immediate, within 48 hours or within 10 working days
- Make all attempts to identify the cause and circumstances that led to the accident and advise those affected of the findings
- Take suitable action as a result of our investigation

Key service information

- An investigation may be carried out at any premises in North Somerset. In some cases an accident investigation may be referred to the Health and Safety Executive or may be led by the police
- Our action is guided by the North Somerset Enforcement Policy, Quality Assurance procedure and the Enforcement Management Model
- We may contact the owners of the business when an accident has been reported and ask them to leave the scene of the accident untouched. This is to help in the investigation to find the cause or causes of the accident. If someone tampers with the scene they will have committed an offence. Prosecution and prohibition procedures may be considered to close a business or make a process, or piece of machinery safe
- When a dangerous occurrence or serious injury has happened we must be contacted by telephone on 01934 634 726
- If a member of the public is taken to hospital or a member of staff is in hospital for 24 hours or more due to an accident, the business owner must complete an accident report form and submit it to us. This can be done online at www.riddor.com
- All business operators must maintain and use an accident book. These records must be made available to us if needed
- On visiting your premises the inspector will identify themselves and may require certain facilities to be made available, including access to the accident site, access to a room where people can be interviewed and access to any relevant health and safety information and records
- The inspector may decide to cordon off the accident site to obtain expert opinions on the accident. Any attempt to disturb the site or items within it is an offence
- The inspector may wish to make the site safe or disable equipment to make sure there is no continuing risk to the health of others

- The inspector may wish to remove items from site for analysis or testing
- Photographs, interviews and statements may be taken
- Following an investigation you may expect written confirmation within 10 working days with the inspector's initial findings. Should further action be needed the inspector will confirm details as soon as possible
- You will be given details of any action you need to take including how to keep to any improvement notices served
- Should any legal action be taken details will be confirmed by letter

More information

Email: foodandsafety@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 726

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/h&s

A

Air Quality

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team has a duty to review and assess air quality on a regular basis. This is done by an annual progress report or by an updating and screening assessment every three years. These reports are submitted to the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for scrutiny and approval. Road transport is the main source of local air pollution.

What we will do

- Monitor and measure air quality
- Monitor air quality in places where it can be changeable and may rise above acceptable levels, for example at industrial sites
- Add new monitoring locations if needed
- Provide information about the monitoring results
- Assess emissions from industrial sources

What we cannot do

- Compare indoor air quality to outdoor levels

Service standards

We will:

- Know current air pollution levels in North Somerset through monitoring and modelling
- Advise other council departments, for example those working in development control or transport planning, on air quality issues
- Encourage and support initiatives to improve air quality in North Somerset
- Get air quality considered in council plans such as the Local Plan or the Local Transport Plan
- Provide information on air quality and the potential health implications to the public and industry in a clear way
- Keep an updated public register of permitted industrial processes
- Publish details of air quality reports online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/airquality

- Work towards reducing CO2 emissions in line with Government targets
- Give information and technical advice on radon gas in North Somerset

Key service information

- The Government sets targets for improving national air quality
- We use progress reports and screening assessments to measure the air quality in North Somerset
- The National Air Quality Strategy gives details of what the air quality should be across the country
- If an area's air quality is not within the levels set out in the National Air Quality Strategy then we have to designate it an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
- Our test areas are based on those which are at risk of exceeding the levels set out in the National Air Quality Strategy

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/airquality

A

Air Quality – Complaints

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team investigates air quality complaints relating to both indoor and outdoor airborne pollution.

What we will do

- Monitor air quality in response to verifiable complaints
- Enforce conditions that are included in permits and planning consents relating to air quality
- Respond to complaints from outside North Somerset which are affecting our residents
- Work with other organisations to measure air quality in North Somerset

What we cannot do

- Become involved in neighbour disputes
- Investigate air quality problems outside North Somerset unless it is affecting the population of North Somerset

Service standards

We will:

- Make an initial response to all air quality complaints received within 24 hours
- Use the most appropriate technique to examine/monitor air quality
- Collect all necessary air quality samples within 36 hours
- Report all scientific investigations to the complainant as soon as possible and confirm in writing
- Give advice if there is an identifiable human health risk

Key service information

- All air quality samples must be collected by North Somerset Council officers
- Full records of sampling techniques will be available
- Further advice on air quality results will be available from recognised outside bodies if needed

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/airquality

A

Animal Health

Service summary

By law the Trading Standards team has to carry out inspections of premises in North Somerset to control the spread of animal diseases, including anthrax, avian influenza (bird flu), bluetongue and foot and mouth disease.

We also make sure the welfare of commercial farm livestock is maintained.

During inspections we may check the records, which must be kept by law, the reliability of how livestock is identified and how well looked after and healthy the animals are.

What we will do

- Visit premises, without notice, at any reasonable time to do an inspection and enforce UK and EU laws
- Take enforcement action where appropriate to ensure compliance with legislation
- Advise on aspects of trading law relevant to the business
- Offer confidential advice and guidance on all aspects of animal health law

What we cannot do

- Act outside our authorised powers

Service standards

We will:

- Be courteous and responsive and always show official identification if asked
- Do a programme of announced and unannounced inspections of premises to make sure legislation is being followed
- If asked, or if necessary, give a written report on the findings of each inspection, including detailed advice of improvements which are needed and a time limit for them to be carried out
- Provide a wide range of advice leaflets designed to help businesses and small holders comply with the law
- Annually inspect all premises deemed to be high risk

- Respond to allegations of welfare problems with commercial livestock within 24 hours with our partner organisation, Animal Health (formerly the State Veterinary Service)

Key service information

- Officers have powers of entry under most of the legislation we enforce and, generally, an officer may bring any other necessary people with them
- Under most statutes we have the authority to see and take copies of documents, take samples, speak to staff and inspect working areas and livestock
- In certain circumstances officers can seize records and other paperwork and take samples

More information

Email: trading_standards@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 888 634

Website: www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/northsomerset

A

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB)

Service summary

Anti-social behaviour covers a wide range of selfish and unacceptable activities. Terms such as 'nuisance', 'disorder' and 'harassment' are also used to describe some of this behaviour.

Examples include:

- Nuisance neighbours
- Graffiti and fly-posting
- People dumping rubbish and abandoned cars
- Vandalism, unreasonable behaviour and intimidating groups taking over public spaces
- People dealing and buying drugs on the street
- Begging and anti-social drinking
- The misuse of fireworks
- Reckless driving of mini-motorbikes

What we will do

- Be your key contact if the cause of the ASB is noisy neighbours, graffiti, fly-posting, dumped rubbish or abandoned vehicles
- If your main concern is about yobbish behaviour, people buying drugs, or any of the bottom five bullet points from the list above, these will be dealt with by the police
- We are aware that in reality people and communities experience a range of unacceptable behaviour. We will work with police and colleagues from other agencies to resolve the problem

What we cannot do

- Often people contact us with concerns that would best be dealt with by the police. We will always refer serious criminal matters to the police

- Although we have no powers to deal with tenancy issues we work closely with housing associations (for example North Somerset Housing) to deal with tenancy issues, but any tenancy related matters are referred to the landlords

Service standards

We will:

- Talk to you about your concerns
- Make sure you are aware of who your key contact will be
- Contact you on a regular basis to make sure you know what is going on
- Liaise with colleagues across the council and other agencies on your behalf
- Gather evidence and when we have evidence use our legal powers to resolve the ASB. This may involve sending warning letters, issuing fixed penalty notices, using parenting orders, issuing noise abatement notices, injunctions, using our dispersal powers or applying for anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs)
- Make sure that you feel supported

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 884 279

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/asb

B

Building Control Enforcement

Service summary

If building projects which need Building Regulations are started before consent is applied for or if the Building Control team determines that the building work contravenes the regulations we have to take action.

This could be information or advice, or we may issue notices to rectify infringements. If the notices are ignored we can involve the courts and prosecute and if found guilty the courts can impose substantial fines.

What we will do

- Take all contraventions seriously
- Do our best to resolve issues informally
- Issue cautions and or prosecute offenders who ignore the requirements or refuse to put right any contraventions
- If necessary employ contractors to rectify defective work and recharge in full for the cost of doing so

What we cannot do

- Allow building projects in North Somerset which do not meet the legal standards

Service standards

- We are completely independent and publicly accountable
- If we become aware of infringements of the regulations we will allow 28 days for the contravention to be put right
- We will wherever possible advise you of your right to appeal against our decisions and provide you with instructions which will help you do so

More information

Email: bc.info@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 884 550 or 01275 888 691 or 01275 888 685

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/buildingcontrol

Building Regulations

B

Service summary

The Building Control team make sure Building Regulations are complied with. The regulations apply to building work in England and Wales and set standards for design and construction to ensure the safety and health of people in or around buildings. They also include requirements to make sure fuel and power is conserved and facilities are provided for people, including those with disabilities, to access and move around inside buildings.

What we will do

- Provide basic technical advice
- Guide you through the application process
- Make the process as pleasant as possible

What we cannot do

- Design your project for you
- Provide detailed technical advice
- Resolve disputes with neighbours
- Provide solutions to complicated problems
- Recommend architects, agents or engineers
- Provide services beyond our remit

Service standards

- We will register applications within four working days
- We will process your full plans application within 15 working days. In the majority of cases the time will be much shorter
- We are completely independent and publicly accountable
- We will assign the project to qualified and experienced surveyors
- We will advise you whether or not, in our opinion, you need to engage other building professionals such as structural engineers

Building Regulations

B

Building Regulations

- We accept national 'type approvals'. These relate to system designs which are duplicated in different parts of England and Wales. For example, once certified nationally a house design (providing it remains unchanged) will be accepted by all local authority building control bodies in England and Wales¹
- We retain the services of a highly regarded Structural Engineer who will analyse your structural design without delay
- We work with Avon Fire and Rescue Service and can arrange one to one consultations
- We aim to inspect your project on the day you request providing you contact us by 10am
- We can arrange meetings with a range of building professionals at short notice

Key service information

- Building Regulations apply to most building work, so it is important to know when approval is needed. Contact us if you are not sure
- The person carrying out the building work is responsible for meeting the requirements of the regulations. So if you are carrying out the work personally the responsibility will be yours. If you are employing builders the responsibility will usually be theirs – but you should check this at the very beginning of your building project. You should also be aware that, if you are the owner of the building, it is ultimately you who may be served with an enforcement notice if the work does not meet the requirements of the regulations, so it is important that you choose your builder carefully
- You will normally be required to apply for consent for:
 - New buildings
 - Extensions
 - Alterations to the building or its services such as drainage, heating or electric circuits (including lighting installations)
 - Rendering or plastering your building
 - Replacement windows
 - Cavity wall insulation
 - Underpinning foundations
 - Changing the use of the building

This list highlights the main types of building projects. It is not exhaustive. If you have any doubts contact us to discuss your proposal before starting work

- In the case of some minor works, the contractor may be able to self-certify the work. The law requires notice of the works to be given to us, but this is normally submitted by the responsible organisation²

Although there are a few exceptions, a charge is made for applications for Building Regulation consent. For details of our charges visit our Fees and Charges page at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/buildingcontrol

More information

Email: bc.info@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 884 550 or 01275 888 691 or 01275 888 685

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/buildingcontrol

More information can also be found online at:
www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/explanatorybooklet.pdf

¹ These 'type' approvals will be subject to local checks to identify issues such as contaminated land and public sewers etc. as well as statutory consultations.

² The following represent the current list of competent person schemes. For details visit the website:

www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/buildingregulations/competentpersonsschemes/existingcompetentperson/

APHC (Association of Plumbing and Heating Contractors (Certification) Limited

ATTMA

BINDT Limited

British Standards Institution (BSI)

Building Engineering Services Competence Accreditation (BESCA Limited)

CORGI Services Limited

ECA Limited

ELECSA Limited

FENSA (Fenestration Self Assessment Scheme)

HETAS Ltd (Heating Equipment Testing and Approval Scheme)

NAPIT Registration Ltd

NICEIC Group Ltd

OFTEC (Oil Firing Technical Association Limited)

Business Advice

Service summary

Trading Standards offers a free advice service to local businesses on Trading Standards law.

We will offer a similar service to any national company based in North Somerset.

What we will do

- Check product labelling to make sure it is legal before it is printed
- Advise on trading law relating to a company's products and business
- Offer confidential advice and guidance on product composition
- Check advertising material to make sure it complies with the law

What we cannot do

- Mediate between businesses and consumers
- Comment on proof labels, advertisements and other material the same day you send it to us
- Advise on contractual issues between two businesses

Service standards

We will:

- Be courteous and responsive
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Give information in a clear and concise manner
- Provide a wide range of advice leaflets designed to help businesses comply with the law
- Keep the service's website up-to-date to help businesses to comply with the law
- Answer telephone calls within 15 seconds
- Respond to all letters within 10 working days
- Respond to all complaints and enquiries within five working days and 95 per cent within three working days

- Complete 75 per cent of all business enquiries within 15 working days of receipt

Key service information

- There are more than 6,000 businesses, both local and national, that trade in North Somerset
- We offer advice to businesses on any of the 91 Acts of Parliament and more than 1,400 orders and regulations together with the ever growing number of EU Directives and Regulations that fall to the service to enforce

More information

Email: trading_standards@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 888 634

Website: www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/northsomerset



B

Business Advice

C

Charitable Collections

Service summary

The Licensing team issues permits for charitable collections in the street or at residential or business properties. The street collections, often known as flag days, are intended to raise money for a charity.

To hold a collection you need a permit from us, the duration of which may be a day or over a number of weeks. There are two types of permit, street collection permits and house to house collection permits.

Both are only valid in the North Somerset area.

Charitable collections made by people signing up for direct debits do not need a permit and neither do those which happen on private land, for example in supermarket foyers.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms
- Issue permits
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to charitable collections
- Investigate complaints about charitable collections taking place in the district
- Provide information on permits issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue permits where the legal application procedures have not been followed or for unsuitable activities

Service standards

We will:

- Issue unopposed applications within five working days
- Issue, where appropriate, opposed applications within six weeks

Key service information

- There are no fees for the issuing of street collection or house to house collection permits
- We keep a diary of applications made so collections do not take place in the same location on the same day. Organisations intending to carry out a collection should contact us at an early stage to make sure the location and time is suitable

Street collection permits:

- Collections include both the collection of money and sales of goods to raise money
- A collector must stay still and be at least 25 metres from another collector
- Collectors should not annoy individuals in the street
- Collectors must be at least 16 years of age
- Money collections should be made with sealed and numbered collecting boxes
- Collectors cannot receive payments
- Financial returns must be made to us within one month of the collection taking place

House to house collection permits:

- Certain charitable organisations have been exempted from the requirement to apply for collection permits (see the Charitable Collections section of the Appendix)
- These collections can include cash or other donations such as clothing
- The promoter of a collection has to:
 - Issue to collectors a certificate authorising them to carry out collections
 - Issue a badge giving details of the purpose of the collection
- If the collection made is for money, it shall be from a sealed box that has details of the collection on it and a number

- Collectors must be at least 16 years of age
- Collectors should not annoy individuals
- Envelope collections are allowed for organisations authorised by the Secretary of State, for example those exempt from the requirement to apply for collection permits (see the Charitable Collections section of the Appendix)
- Financial returns must be made to us within one month of the collection taking place

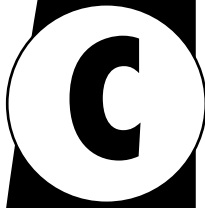
More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 426 800

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing

Commercial Noise – Complaints



Service summary

The Environmental Protection team investigates and, where necessary, takes action to resolve noise problems arising from commercial premises. This may include noise from fans, pumps, compressors, powered machinery, vehicles and equipment and loud music. Such noises may occur from workshops, building sites, pubs, night clubs, restaurants, takeaways and outdoor music events.

What we will do

- Investigate complaints about noise from commercial premises
- Provide advice to complainants and owners of commercial premises
- Where appropriate issue an abatement notice which means the venue must stop making the noise

What we cannot do

- Take action to control noise from road traffic
- Take action to control noise from trains
- Take action to control noise from aircraft

Service standards

We will:

- Respond to complaints about noise as soon as practicable and at least within five working days
- Make site visits to witness the noise being complained about
- Make an independent assessment of the noise being complained about using, where necessary, sound level measuring equipment
- Negotiate solutions to problems
- Where a statutory noise nuisance is established, use the powers contained in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to find a solution

You should:

- Keep a diary of the occurrence of the noise
- Speak to the people making the noise, they may not be aware they are causing a problem

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection

Complaints About Businesses

C

Service summary

The Food and Safety team can visit businesses in the North Somerset area to investigate complaints of poor hygiene practices, pest infestation, food poisoning / contamination, accidents, breaches of health and safety, rubbish accumulation, noise, odour and dirty premises. Action may be taken to enforce food and safety laws. In some cases legal action may be taken and in certain situations the complainant may be required to provide a witness statement.

What we will do

- Enter premises and investigate claims about food contamination and risks to personal safety and make sure premises are clean and comply with safety and hygiene laws
- Take the investigation further or dismiss it based on observations, evidence and any history of previous complaints
- Review and if necessary obtain paperwork and other evidence to help in the investigation of the complaint
- Gather evidence for a potential prosecution
- Advise business owners of their legal obligations and how to comply with the law
- Advise how to prevent food contamination
- Advise on the prevention of accidents

What we cannot do

- Always find evidence for a complaint, although an impartial view will be taken
- Take legal action without enough evidence
- Get compensation for you. In fact, the complaint may be difficult to pursue if compensation is accepted

Complaints About Businesses

Service standards

We will:

- Investigate a complaint, which has adequate evidence, within 10 working days, although for certain problems including pest infestation, rubbish accumulation, noise, smell and accidents a response within 24 hours is more likely
- Contact you by telephone or email to advise you of the initial outcome of the investigation
- Respond to you in writing with the outcome of the investigation and advise if further action may be taken against the business. For such action to go ahead, we may need more of your help
- Keep your details private from the business unless we have to reveal them in court

Key service information

- We will normally conduct an investigation into claims of poor food hygiene, health and safety risks and non-compliance with food and safety laws based on the evidence provided
- Investigations will be timely and impartial
- The officer's findings will be communicated to the complainant. Should other items be found during the investigation then these may not be revealed as part of the officer's report, but they will be followed up with the business owner
- Any formal action will be considered in line with the our Enforcement Policy which can be found online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/policies
- Normally for a prosecution to go ahead witness statements will be needed from whoever complained. They may also need to go to court as a witness

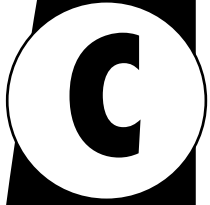
More information

Email: foodandsafety@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 505

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/h&s

Complaints About Our Services



Service summary

We are committed to the delivery of quality services that meet your needs. There may be times when things go wrong and you do not receive the standard of service you expect.

If you feel that you have good cause for complaint, then we need to know.

If you know which service your complaint is about, you should contact the relevant officer. If you are not happy with the response, you can contact Mandy Bishop, Environmental and Consumer Services Group Manager (contact details below).

You can also contact your local councillor who will take the issue up for you.

If you are still not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can take it up with David Turner, the Director for Development and Environment, at the same address as below or via email at david.turner@n-somerset.gov.uk. If you put your complaint in writing this will help the Director conduct a full investigation, but you can contact them in any way that is easiest for you.

If all other attempts to resolve your complaint have failed and you are still not satisfied you can take the matter up with the Chief Executive Officer. This is best done in writing.

Service standards

We will:

- Aim to reply to your complaint, whether it is posted, faxed or emailed, within 10 working days. If we cannot reply fully within that timescale we will write to you and let you know

If, after taking all these steps you are still not satisfied you can ask for your complaint to be examined by the Local Government Ombudsman.

There is a leaflet available to help people making complaints. For more information contact our Customer Services officer via email at customer.services@n-somerset.gov.uk or call 01934 426 826.

More information

Mandy Bishop, Group Manager for Environmental and Consumer Services

Email: mandy.bishop@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 817

Consumer Complaints



Service summary

Complaints about goods or services from North Somerset consumers are first dealt with by Consumer Direct South West (CDSW), a partnership body between local Trading Standards services and the Department of Trade and Industry. The Trading Standards team can investigate more serious complaints referred to us by CDSW.

Officers can enter premises, undertake investigations and proceed with formal action through the courts where appropriate.

What we will do

In partnership with Consumer Direct South West we will:

- Give impartial advice on consumer law and your rights
- Suggest action you can take
- Advise on civil court procedure
- Investigate whether consumer law has been breached and take action where appropriate

What we cannot do

- Close businesses down
- Automatically obtain a refund for you
- Mediate on your behalf (other than in exceptional circumstances)
- Tell you which businesses to avoid
- Recommend businesses
- Tell traders what to charge for goods or services
- Take action when the criminal law has not been broken

Consumer Complaints

Service standards

We will:

- Help North Somerset residents deal with their consumer problems by offering relevant and accurate advice through Consumer Direct South West
- Be courteous and responsive
- Advise you of the officer in charge of your complaint or enquiry, what possible course of action we will take and outline of our enforcement policy
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Provide information to North Somerset consumers and businesses in a clear and appropriate manner
- Add details of certain complaints into our regional intelligence database
- Answer 95 per cent of telephone calls within 15 seconds
- Respond to all complaints and enquiries within five working days and 95 per cent within three working days
- Respond to all letters within 10 working days
- Complete 75 per cent of all complaints and enquiries within 15 working days of receipt

Key service information

North Somerset Trading Standards will investigate all complaints received about goods and services relating to:

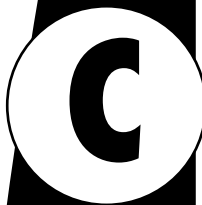
- Unsafe consumer products
- Misdescription and misleading claims about goods and services
- Misleading price marking and claims about prices and value
- Quality and composition of food and other goods
- Sales of age restricted products to children
- Unlicensed activities in relation to any Trading Standards legislation, for example, poisons, explosives and fireworks and petroleum storage
- Rogue trader activities

More information

Email: trading_standards@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 888 634

Website: www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/northsomerset



C

Contaminated Land

Service summary

The contaminated land service, which forms part of the Environmental Protection team, aims to make sure that contaminated land does not cause unacceptable risks to human health, property and the wider natural environment. Where land is causing such risks we will aim to secure appropriate mitigation or remediation.

What we will do

- Secure remediation of contaminated sites through enforcement
- Secure remediation of contaminated sites through redevelopment and planning
- Provide advice on general land contamination issues
- Respond to specific site enquiries
- Make sure pollution incidents and emergencies are dealt with correctly

What we cannot do

- Carry out site investigations
- Provide a consultancy service for contaminated land
- Give purchasing advice on properties built on potentially contaminated land

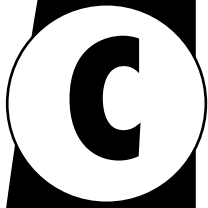
Service standards

We will:

- Respond to requests for contaminated land searches within 10 working days of receiving payment
- Prioritise and inspect our district for contaminated land in accordance with our Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy
- Maintain a public register of all regulatory activity

Key service information

- We must inspect land from time to time for the purpose of identifying contamination



- The main way for the remediation of land in North Somerset will be through redevelopment and planning
- Our Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy lays out how we identify and inspect land
- The strategy also outlines how to deal with land already identified as contaminated in North Somerset
- Sites which are potentially contaminated will be identified and assessed
- Contaminated land is an area which, when tested, shows it poses unacceptable risks to health
- Where a site is found to be posing unacceptable risks we will notify the appropriate person that the site has been determined as contaminated land
- In such cases appropriate persons will be held liable for the costs of any required remediation
- After three months, if remediation has not been carried out voluntarily, we will serve a remediation notice to make sure remediation is carried out

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 884 798

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection

Crematorium and Cemeteries General Enquiries

Service summary

The Crematorium and Cemeteries team is responsible for more than 7,000 service related enquiries each year, including:

- Family history searches
- Memorial enquiries
- Grounds maintenance enquiries
- Memorial mason enquiries

What we will do

- Provide you with copies from either the burial or cremation registers
- Provide you with a copy of the Garden of Rest or cemetery plans
- Provide you with a list of our current Approved List of Memorial Masons
- Provide you with literature about our memorial schemes

What we cannot do

- Complete a family history search without fairly accurate details for the deceased, in particular their surname and an approximate year of death
- Provide you with complete copies from the cremation register as some of the information is confidential and represents a breach of Data Protection Legislation

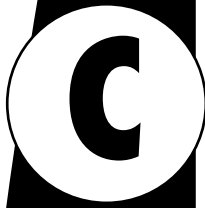
More information

Email: crem.office@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 427 333

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/crem

Criminal Record Disclosures



Service summary

The Licensing team is registered with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and acts on behalf of contracted organisations and employers to get criminal record disclosures. These are needed for people in certain jobs, such as those working with children and vulnerable people, taxi drivers and taxi operators.

An application for a criminal record disclosure has to be made on an official CRB form, available from us, and has to be supported by specified documents. Applications need to be submitted in person to our licensing office. They cannot be sent direct to the CRB by an applicant.

What we will do

- Issue CRB disclosure forms
- Give advice to applicants on completing application forms
- Process requests for CRB disclosures
- Enter into contracts with employers to provide CRB disclosures
- Forward CRB disclosures received to contracted organisations

What we cannot do

- Provide advice to employers on the suitability of applicants
- Investigate disputes on the accuracy of information disclosed, this is a matter for the CRB
- Provide a service for people who will be employed by the council. Our human resources section is separately registered and does its own checks

Service standards

We will:

- Check a disclosure application form within three working days
- Make contact with the client if the application form is incorrect within one working day
- Send a completed and verified disclosure application form to the CRB within five working days

- Send disclosure information to a client organisation that has been received from the CRB within one working day

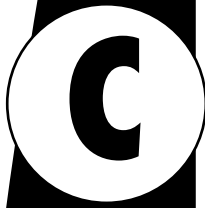
Key service information

- There are two types of criminal record disclosure. A standard disclosure, which gives information on any criminal convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings held on the Police National Computer as well as relevant information about the protection of children and vulnerable adults. An enhanced disclosure also gives this information plus any relevant local information held by the police. For costs see our fees and charges section
- An application must include documents which verify the identity of the applicant and their current address. The list of documents we can use for this is shown in the Criminal Record Disclosures section of the Appendix
- Documents produced by applicants must be originals and we cannot accept photocopies or print outs
- Applicants must give a full and continuous history of where they have lived for the last five years
- As a registered body with the CRB we have to follow strict rules. We work to the CRB's code of practice. A copy is available from the CRB's website at www.crb.gov.uk
- We have a policy for the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information. A copy is available from us on request
- Licensing staff who submit CRB disclosures have had CRB criminal record checks and have been approved by the CRB to make these enquires
- Before we submit disclosures on behalf of organisations we need a contract to be signed that sets out the procedures for provision, handling and use of criminal record disclosures
- An administration charge is payable to us to provide a CRB disclosure service for employers and other organisations. For costs see our fees and charges section

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 426 800
Website: www.crb.gov.uk

Customer Care



Service summary

Our Customer Care Charter sets out the standards of service you should expect from us. We want to provide you with the best possible service in a caring and efficient way.

Service standards

We will:

- Be welcoming, polite, courteous and helpful
- Listen in order to understand and respond to your needs
- Respect your right to privacy, confidentiality and safety
- Make sure that signs are easy to follow and that you can find us
- Keep our opening times clearly displayed and adhere to them
- Strive to make our services as accessible as possible
- Make sure the most appropriate officer is dealing with your enquiry
- Aim to keep to our appointments, and will let you know if we cannot
- Respond to your written enquiries within 10 working days – if we cannot we will write to you and tell you why
- Answer telephone calls within 15 seconds
- Provide an efficient and reliable service
- Use clear language and not jargon
- Tell you who you are speaking to
- Strive to make our services as easy to use as possible
- Contact you on a regular basis to let you know how we are progressing your enquiry

Key service information

You can help us by:

- Letting us know when we have done something well
- Treating us with courtesy and politeness as we are here to help you



C

- Making suggestions if you think there are ways we could improve our services

More information

Email: customer.services@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 426 826

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/customercare

Customer Care

Dangerous Structures

D

Service summary

The Building Control team has a duty to respond to reports relating to dangerous structures, including buildings, in a dangerous condition.

What we will do

- Visit the structure and assess the extent of the danger
- If the building owner is unwilling or unable to do so we will co-ordinate sufficient works to remove the danger
- Recover the cost of our involvement and that of any contractors and/or statutory bodies, such as the fire service, from the building owner. Normally these costs can be reclaimed from insurers providing adequate cover was arranged

What we cannot do

- Repair works
- Pay for the work involved in removing the danger. These costs are recharged in full to the building owner or responsible person. In the majority of cases they can be reclaimed from insurance companies

Service standards

We will:

- Respond to reports of dangerous structures within two hours
- Maintain a presence on site until the danger has been removed or has been handed over to an alternative agency
- Liaise with the emergency services and private contractors during the emergency works
- Periodically monitor the structure until it has been repaired
- Provide information wherever possible to the building owner to help with compensation claims

Dangerous Structures

D

Dangerous Structures

More information

Email: bc.info@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 884 550 or 01275 888 691 or 01275 888 685

Out of
hours: 01934 622 669

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/buildingcontrol

Demolition Notices

**D**

Service summary

In the majority of cases the person responsible for demolishing a building, or part of a building, must advise the Building Control team in writing six weeks before the work takes place. Written notice must also be given to all occupiers of adjacent buildings, the gas supplier and the electricity supplier.

What we will do

- Give you a list to make sure that the demolition works will not cause a danger or a nuisance to others
- Issue copies of your intentions to the gas and electricity suppliers, the fire service and the Health and Safety Executive. In turn they may need you to undertake certain works or prohibit you from doing certain things if, in their opinion, they could endanger other people or their infrastructure

What we cannot do

- Any demolition works unless they relate to dangerous structures
- Absolve anyone of their responsibility under other legislation such as the Health and Safety at Work Act etc

Service standards

- We will do all we can to reduce the time taken to administer the process. However this will be determined by the bodies referred to above

More information

Email: bc.info@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 884 550 or 01275 888 691 or
01275 888 685

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/buildingcontrol

Demolition Notices

D

Dog Fouling

Service summary

The dog wardens in the Environmental Protection team have powers to deal with dog owners that do not clear up after their dog has fouled in a public place.

Service standards

We will:

- Serve a fixed penalty notice or prosecute if the fouling is witnessed by a council officer
- If the fouling is witnessed by a member of the public, take a statement and look at the evidence to consider further action
- Look at areas that have a problem with fouling and if needed step up patrols in that area
- Put extra stickers/signs up in areas where there is a problem with dog fouling
- Organise special clean-ups in public areas where the fouling is very bad

You should:

- Report any owner you see not clearing up after their dog
- Make sure you have the owner's details
- Take a note of the time, date and description of the dog

If you make a report you will need to give us your name, address, telephone number or email address, as well as details of where the dog fouled and the address/index number of the dog's owners.

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/dogs

Domestic Noise Nuisance

D

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team gives advice and investigates complaints of noise nuisance from domestic premises. Where appropriate, action will be taken to resolve noise nuisance by enforcement.

What we will do

- Investigate complaints about noise from domestic premises
- Give advice about how we can help
- Where appropriate, issue an abatement notice to stop the noise

What we cannot do

- Deal with noise due to domestic violence, drunk and disorderly individuals or public order offences as these are matters for the police
- Take action to control noise from people in streets
- Investigate complaints of road traffic noise
- Provide a formal mediation service
- Investigate anonymous complaints
- Take further action if there is not enough evidence

Service standards

We will:

- On receipt of your complaint contact you to confirm the details you have provided and ask for further information
- Where appropriate, send letters to the person allegedly causing the disturbance
- Ask you to complete a diary record, giving details of any further disturbance
- Try to witness the problem, however, when noise disturbance is intermittent or without a pattern we will use monitoring equipment

- If there is an issue, serve a noise abatement notice on the person causing the problem. Failure to comply with the notice is an offence
- If the nuisance continues we will try to witness a breach by arranging a visit

You should:

- Only contact us about unreasonable noise
- Keep an accurate diary of the nuisance
- Approach your neighbour, explaining that you are being troubled by noise, if you feel that it is safe to do so

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection

Doorstep Crime

D

Service summary

Trading Standards enforces a range of legislation aimed at helping to reduce doorstep crime. This includes distraction burglaries, where a caller keeps the householder talking at the door while an accomplice carries out the burglary, and fraudulent traders.

We have a range of ways to help North Somerset residents avoid the pitfalls of doorstep selling and related issues.

What we will do

- Provide 'No Cold Calling' stickers for residents' doors
- Work on ways to reduce the levels of doorstep crime in North Somerset
- Offer advice, either directly or via Consumer Direct South West, to residents on how to avoid doorstep selling problems and crimes that can be related to this selling method
- Work with police to help groups of residents set up No Cold Calling Zones
- In some cases we can respond to calls from concerned vulnerable residents who have doorstep sellers or contractors in their homes
- Advise doorstep traders on their legal obligations and responsibilities

What we cannot do

- Close legitimate businesses down
- Mediate between residents and traders
- Obtain a refund from traders (particularly unidentified traders with no fixed place of businesses)

Service standards

We will:

- Be courteous and responsive and always show official identification when asked
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Provide information to consumers or traders in a clear and concise manner

D

- Respond to calls for help when we can, depending on our resources
- Promote and encourage locally supported 'No Cold Calling Zones'
- React to problems depending on how serious they are

More information

Email: trading.standards@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 888 634

Website: www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/northsomerset

Drainage

D

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team makes sure drainage systems in North Somerset are maintained correctly by whoever is responsible for them. This includes drains, sewers, septic tanks and cesspools. We provide information, advice and assistance to residents experiencing problems with private drains and sewers. We also have enforcement powers to deal with private drainage problems in cases where the people responsible do not carry out necessary works.

What we will do

- For a defective private sewer we can serve a notice on the owners of properties upstream of the problem requiring remedial works to be carried out
- If the notice is not complied with then we will appoint a private contractor to carry out the repair and charge those responsible for the cost
- For a blocked private sewer we can serve notice on the owners of those properties upstream of the blockage to remove obstructions from the private sewer within 48 hours. The notice will indicate all other parties involved
- If the notice is not complied with, the blockage will be cleared by us and the cost for the works will then be charged to the homeowners responsible on a proportional basis
- If access is denied onto a private property to investigate a drainage problem we have the power to enter the property at any reasonable time to assess the extent of the problem

What we cannot do

- Clear parts of the public sewer as this is the responsibility of the local water authority, in our area this is usually Wessex Water. To report a problem you can call 0845 600 4 600
- Provide a drain or sewer clearing or repairing service

Drainage

D

Service standards

We will:

- Make sure blocked and/or foul smelling private sewers are cleared
- Where possible, during the normal working week, respond to complaints of blocked drains, private sewers, septic tanks and cesspools within the same working day
- Help you identify who is responsible for a private sewer if you are having problems and difficultly finding out who is responsible for maintaining it
- Provide advice and support and enforcement action to neighbours who are unable to agree how a blocked sewer should be repaired

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Wessex Water: 0845 600 4 600

Environment Agency Incident hotline: 0800 807 060

Environment Agency Customer Services: 08708 506 506

North Somerset Housing: 0800 056 2758

Enforcement

E

Service summary

There are times when we have to take formal action to resolve public health, safety and nuisance issues, and to protect the local environment. This action may be a formal notice requesting someone to do or stop doing something, a prosecution via the courts, seizure of goods or a fixed penalty notice.

Service standards

We will:

Make sure officers are properly trained in the use of their legal powers and any action we take is reasonable and fair and is:

- Proportionate – If officers consider there are immediate risks to public safety or action is necessary to secure the local environment, a firmer approach will be taken
- Consistent – Arrangements are in place to ensure that officers take a similar approach in similar circumstances
- Transparent – We will help customers and businesses to understand what is expected of them and what they can expect from the service. We will also be clear about why it has been necessary to take enforcement action
- Targeted – We will prioritise our work according to the risks posed and bearing in mind the scale of the issue

Like the police we follow the Code for Crown Prosecutors. Any decision to prosecute an individual or business is taken after we have given due consideration to the seriousness of the offence, the evidence available, the intent of the defendant and whether a prosecution is in the public interest.

Key service information

You can help by:

- Making sure that, if you are subject to enforcement action, you keep in regular contact with officers and keep us updated as to how things are progressing

More information

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/policies

Enforcement

Environmental Protection General Enquiries

Service summary

We can answer your questions about issues relating to the work of the Environmental Protection team.

What we will do

- Give information about air quality, contaminated land, drainage, dogs, fly-tipping, pests, public health funerals and statutory nuisance

Service standards

We will:

- Attempt to answer your query at the time you contact us
- Provide you with accurate and up-to-date information and advice
- Get back to you with information if it is not available at the time of your call
- Arrange for one of our officers to call you back if you need specialist information
- Provide you with contact details for other organisations that may be able to help

You should:

- Be as specific as possible about what information you need
- Be patient if information is hard to find

Key service information

- For information about refuse and recycling collection and abandoned vehicles contact Streets and Open Spaces on 01934 888 802
- For information about aircraft noise contact Bristol Airport on 01275 473 799 or the Civil Aviation Authority on 01293 567 171
- For information about problems with food premises contact the Food and Safety team on 01934 634 603

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection



Environmental Protection General Enquiries

E

Exhumations

Service summary

The Crematorium and Cemeteries team is responsible for carrying out exhumations in the Crematorium and Cemetery, Ebdon Road, Worle, Clevedon Cemetery, Old Church Road, Clevedon, Portishead Cemetery, Clevedon Road, Portishead, and the Garden of Rest, Stockway North, Nailsea.

What we will do

- Provide you with an exhumation application form and help you to complete it
- Advise you about the exhumation process
- Make the necessary arrangements as specified in the Exhumation Licence
- Carry out the exhumation on your behalf
- Allow you or a family representative to watch the exhumation

What we cannot do

- Ignore the Exhumation Licence requirements
- Allow anyone other than suitably qualified staff to carry out the exhumation

Service standards

- We have to follow the legal requirements in the Exhumation Licence

More information

Email: crem.office@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 427 333

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/crem

Food Complaints/ Food Poisoning

A large, bold, black letter 'F' is centered within a white circle. The circle is set against a black background that forms a vertical banner on the right side of the page.

Service summary

The Food and Safety team investigates instances of food poisoning or contamination. We can enter food premises to investigate complaints and to take legal action if needed.

What we will do

- Investigate claims of food contamination or poisoning
- Enter and investigate any food premises in the UK or request an investigation is carried out by other local authorities on our behalf
- Bring prosecutions against business owners or employees when we have enough evidence
- Seize or keep consignments of food samples to carry out tests to make sure food is safe
- Liaise with the Food Standards Agency, for widely distributed foods, where there is a risk to public safety to prevent further risk and, if necessary, issue food withdrawal advice
- Work with the Health Protection Agency to control the spread of a food poisoning outbreak

What we cannot do

- Always find evidence to support the complaint, although we will take an impartial view
- Take legal action without enough evidence
- Compensate you for any loss or damage
- Guarantee formal action will be taken. The decision as to the type of action will be made with reference to the North Somerset Council enforcement policy which is available online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/policies

Food Complaints / Food Poisoning

Service standards

We will:

- Investigate complaints with adequate evidence within 10 working days, although allegations of certain food poisonings and food complaints will be responded to within 24 hours
- Liaise with you about the progress of the investigation and request your help when needed. This is particularly important in cases of suspected food poisoning
- Write to you explaining the conclusion of the investigation
- Keep your details private except if you need to give a witness statement for a court case
- Enforce the law that food must be free of contaminants that may harm consumers

Key service information

- We will investigate claims of food contamination and poisoning
- If the complaint is about natural hazards, for example insects in vegetables, we advise contacting the manufacturer or retailer directly, unless it is a heavy infestation
- Response will be prompt and the investigation carried out impartially
- If a legal case is to be taken then you will be informed in writing and asked to complete a statement form and you may need to attend court. Any case will be presented within 12 months, however most cases will be heard within six months
- The aim is to make sure food contamination is controlled and food poisoning is contained and any further risk is prevented
- Formal action will be considered with reference to our enforcement policy which is available online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/policies

More information

Email: foodandsafety@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 603

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/food

Food Premises Inspections

F

Service summary

The Food and Safety team must carry out inspections of food premises in North Somerset to provide hygiene information for the business owner and check compliance with food safety regulations.

What we will do

- Provide advice on safe production of food and the law
- Give help on how to manage food safety in your business and provide documents you can adapt for your own needs
- Provide a wide range of advice leaflets for existing and proposed businesses
- Register the business and give free food safety advice for a new food business
- Visit premises at any reasonable time, without notice, to carry out an inspection and enforce food hygiene laws
- Collect evidence, take photographs and interview people under caution
- Prosecute anyone who breaks food hygiene law, often after our advice has been ignored

What we cannot do

- Complete or write a food safety management system for the business
- Act as consultants for a food business
- Act outside our legal powers

Service standards

We will:

- Aim to carry out food safety inspections, prioritising from highest risk to lowest. We can work with you to make sure you comply with safety laws
- Aim to do inspections within 28 days of the set inspection date
- Provide free advice on food law

- At a cost, provide copies of the register of food premises in North Somerset – see the fees and charges section for details
- Be courteous and professional during visits. Officers will leave a written summary of the inspection and give details of anything you need to do to comply with the law
- Send you written confirmation within 10 working days highlighting anything you need to do following an inspection
- Confirm the details in writing should any legal action be taken by the local authority

Key service information

- Inspections may be carried out at any premises selling or providing food for public consumption, including hotels, restaurants, public houses, care homes, roadside vendors, outdoor events, markets and in some cases caterers' homes
- Officers will provide good practice advice or consider use of more formal powers including written legal requirements or improvement notices
- Prosecution and emergency prohibition to close a business may also be considered as a final option to safeguard public safety
- Food businesses must register with us 28 days before opening. The form and registration process is free and the form is available by contacting us
- All food business operators must provide a suitable documented food safety system. A free template model called "Safer Food Better Business" is available from us or can be downloaded from the Food Standards Agency's website at www.food.gov.uk

More information

Email: foodandsafety@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 603

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/food

Funeral Arranging



Service summary

The Crematorium and Cemeteries team is responsible for approximately 1,650 cremations and 300 burials each year at the Crematorium and Cemetery, Ebdon Road, Worle, Clevedon Cemetery, Old Church Road, Clevedon, Portishead Cemetery, Clevedon Road, Portishead, and the Garden of Rest, Stockway North, Nailsea.

What we will do

- Help you if you choose to arrange a burial or cremation without the services of a funeral director
- Provide you with the necessary contacts, for example to purchase a coffin, arrange notices in local papers, arrange floral tributes, organise music and design the order of service
- Give you the necessary paperwork and help you complete it where applicable
- Advise you of the different documents and certificates that are needed and where you can get them
- Advise you of the costs involved and who they are payable to
- Make the booking for you, either for a cremation or a burial

What we cannot do

- Arrange to collect or transport the deceased on your behalf
- Make any funeral related purchases on your behalf
- Influence your decision between cremation or burial

Service standards

- We aim to meet your needs while keeping within relevant legislation

More information

Email: crem.office@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 427 333

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/crem

Funeral Arranging

G

Gambling Permits

Service summary

The Licensing team issues gambling permits for:

- Clubs
- Family entertainment centres that do not have premises licences
- Premises selling alcohol
- Small society lotteries
- Prize gaming

There is no consultation for this kind of permit and where we consider an application is inappropriate it will be referred to the licensing committee to make a decision. If an application is refused, it can be appealed at the Magistrates' Court. The different types of machine categories are shown in the Gambling Permits section of the Appendix.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms on request
- Issue permits
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to gambling premises and organisations
- Investigate complaints about gambling premises and organisations
- Provide information on permits issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue permits where the legal application procedures have not been followed
- Deal with matters that are the responsibility of the Gambling Commission

Service standards

We will:

- Issue unopposed permits within four weeks
- Issue, where appropriate, opposed applications within nine weeks

Key service information

- The fees for gambling permits are shown in the fees and charges section

Clubs permits:

There are two kinds of club permits:

- Club gaming permit – this allows up to three category B, C or D gaming machines plus facilities for specified gaming. These types of permits are issued to members' clubs
- Club machine permit – this allows up to three category B, C or D gaming machines with no other forms of gaming being authorised. These types of permits are issued to both members' and commercial clubs
- A club permit lasts for 10 years and is subject to an annual charge

Family entertainment centre permits:

- These permits are for category D gaming machines, which have a maximum payout of £5 cash or £8 in prizes. Higher category machines cannot be used. Other low risk gaming machines, not categorised under the Gambling Act, can also be used. This includes money pushing machines
- There is no age restrictions for these types of premises
- The permit lasts 10 years and there are no annual charges

Licensed premises gaming machine permits:

- These permits are issued to pubs, and other places selling alcohol, for gaming machines
- For a permit to be issued, a licence to sell alcohol has to be in force
- The permit covers two category C or D gaming machines but more can be applied for
- The permit has an unlimited life but an annual charge is payable for premises with more than three gaming machines



Small society lottery permit:

- A small society lottery is a single lottery with proceeds not exceeding £20,000, or lots of lotteries from a single organisation where the proceeds are not more than £250,000 a year
- The maximum prize in a small society lottery is £25,000
- The organisation promoting the lottery for these types of permits has to be non-commercial, for example a sports club or charitable group
- Tickets used for lotteries must include details of the society promoting the lottery, the price, name and address of a person responsible for promoting the lottery and the date of the draw
- Not all lotteries require permits. There are exemptions for:
 - private lotteries (held within a closed group/organisation with no public sales)
 - work lotteries (for employees only)
 - a residents' lottery (for residents only)
 - a customer lottery (aimed at customers of the property occupier)
- The permit has an unlimited life but an annual charge is payable

Prize gaming permit:

- Prize gaming is where there is a fixed prize regardless of the number of people playing or the amount paid
- These permits allow gaming at premises with prizes, such as prize bingo
- The permit lasts for 10 years and there are no annual charges

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 426 800
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing

Gambling Premises Licences



Service summary

The licensing team issue licences for the following types of premises:

- Casinos
- Betting premises (betting offices and race tracks)
- Amusement arcades
- Bingo

A licence lasts indefinitely but is subject to an annual charge.

New applications must go through a 28 day consultation with statutory bodies that include the police. Local residents can also comment. Where objections are raised the application has to be determined by the licensing committee.

Before we can issue a licence the applicant must also get an operating licence and a personal licence from the Gambling Commission.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms
- Issue licences
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to gambling premises
- Investigate complaints about gambling premises
- Provide information on licences issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue licences where the legal application procedures have not been followed

Gambling Premises Licences



- Deal with matters that are the responsibility of the Gambling Commission, for example gaming machine supply, internet betting and issues relating to operating licences and personal licences

Service standards

We will:

- Issue unopposed licences within six weeks
- Issue, where appropriate, opposed applications within nine weeks

Key service information

- The fees for gambling premises licences are shown in the fees and charges section
- Licences are subject to national law and sometimes local conditions set at licensing hearings
- The licensing objectives under the Gambling Act 2005 aim to:
 - Prevent gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime
 - Make sure gambling is carried out in a fair and open way
 - Protect children and other vulnerable people from being harmed or exploited by gambling
- Adult Gaming Centres:
 - Can only be used by people aged over 18
 - Can have a maximum of four £500 payout machines
 - Can have unlimited number of machines with £35 payouts
 - Must have a separate access to the premises
- Family Entertainment Centres can:
 - Be used by adults and children
 - Have machines with a £5 maximum payout
 - Have areas with £35 payout machines but these have to be segregated and can only be used by people over 18
- Betting offices can only be used by people over 18 and may have up to four £500 maximum payout gaming machines. They can normally open from 7am–10pm daily. Alcohol cannot be sold or consumed on the premises

- Children and adults can go into bingo premises. They can also have adult gaming machines, but they have to be segregated so only over 18s can use them. The premises are normally allowed to open from 9am–midnight daily

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 426 800

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing





Health and Safety Premises Inspections

Service summary

The Food and Safety team is required to carry out inspections of business premises in North Somerset to provide information for the business owner and check compliance with safety laws.

What we will do

- Provide a wide range of advice on health and safety policies, risk assessments, safe working practices, safety in the workplace and compliance with the law. We also encourage a safety culture in the workplace and advise owners to make sure all employees are aware of the rules and their responsibilities
- Provide free leaflets and other literature to help set up safety management systems, risk assessments and policies
- Comment on health and safety at events in North Somerset
- Maintain details of businesses on our database and provide advice when a new business is established
- Visit premises at any reasonable time, without notice, to carry out an inspection and enforce safety laws
- Visit premises to investigate complaints, accidents and allegations of unsafe practices, equipment or structures
- Provide written advice with requirements and recommendations and if necessary serve improvement notices
- Collect evidence, take photographs and interview people
- Prohibit unsafe practices, equipment, plant and structures and if necessary take steps to prevent their use
- Prosecute people who break safety laws, often after our advice has been ignored or if the matter is considered serious enough

What we cannot do

- Complete or write a safety policy or safety management system for businesses



- Act as consultants for a business
- Act outside our legal powers

Service standards

We will:

- Aim to carry out safety inspections, prioritising from highest risk to lowest
- Carry out inspections within 28 days of the set date
- Provide free advice on the law to achieve compliance within a food business
- At a cost, provide copies of the food registered premises within North Somerset – see the fees and charges section for details
- Be courteous and professional during visits. Officers will also leave a written summary of the inspection

Key service information

- Inspections may be carried out at any premises within North Somerset at offices, shops, hotels, restaurants, public houses, residential care homes, workshops, garages, tyre fitters animal boarding establishments, outdoor events and markets
- The officer(s) will give advice or consider use of more formal powers including written legal requirements and improvement notices
- Prosecution and prohibition may be considered to close a business or make a process, or piece of machinery safe
- Some health and safety work is carried out with the Health and Safety Executive
- All business operators must provide a suitable safety policy and if the business has more than five employees then the policy must be written. Risk assessments should also be produced for potentially hazardous activities in the business and staff made aware of the findings. Free templates are available to help you write these documents and we can advise you on the areas to concentrate on
- Following an inspection you may expect written confirmation within 10 working days with details of anything you need to do to comply with the law. If we have served improvement notices specific details will be included on the notice and what you need to do
- Should any legal action be taken then details will be confirmed by letter



Health and Safety Premises Inspections

More information

Email: foodandsafety@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 726

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/h&s

Litter and Fly Tipping

L

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team can issue fixed penalty notices for littering and prosecute anyone who does not pay the penalty.

We investigate incidents of fly tipping and, where there is sufficient evidence, prosecute fly tippers and charge clearance costs to the perpetrator.

We can make sure occupiers of commercial premises control litter outside their properties.

What we will do

- Issue on-the-spot fines for littering
- Investigate problems with littering outside businesses
- Investigate complaints about rubbish on private land and contact the land owner

What we cannot do

- Respond to anonymous reports of fly tipping
- Remove fly tipped waste from private land
- Carry out waste collection from private land

Service standards

We will:

- Respond to complaints and reports of fly tipping within 10 working days
- Investigate all reports of fly tipping
- Liaise with the police and the Environment Agency and other organisations while investigating incidents of fly tipping
- Advise as to who has responsibility of clearing fly tipped waste
- Charge the clear up costs to whoever is responsible following successful prosecution for fly tipping

- Liaise with commercial premises to control littering problems

You should:

- Report fly tipping incidents giving the exact location, the time and date of the incident as well as descriptions of the perpetrators including height, build, vehicle registration details and what you saw and heard
- Provide a witness statement and be prepared to go to court if necessary
- Take photographs if appropriate and safe to do so

Key service information

- For information about waste removal from public land contact Streets and Open Spaces on 01934 888 802
- If the fly tipped waste is more than 20 tonnes, or in rivers or watercourses contact the Environment Agency on 0800 807 060

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/recycling (Refuse section)

Memorials



Service summary

The Crematorium and Cemeteries team is responsible for a range of memorials at the Crematorium and Cemetery, Ebdon Road, Worle, and the Garden of Rest, Stockway North, Nailsea.

What we will do

- Explain the various memorials and if necessary walk around the Gardens of Rest to show you where they are and what they look like
- Explain the costs and help you with the wording to go on plaques
- Help to arrange the memorial delivery to coincide with an interment of ashes
- Fix the memorial when it arrives and place it in the correct position
- Record both your details and the details of the memorial on a plan and a database

What we cannot do

- Allow you to purchase or make your own memorial
- Allow you to fix or place your own memorial

Service standards

- We aim to provide memorial schemes that offer a choice of location, design and cost

More information

Email: crem.office@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 427 333

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/crem

Memorials

M

Memorial Permits

Service summary

The Crematorium and Cemeteries team is responsible for issuing memorial permits for masons to carry out work in the Crematorium and Cemetery, Ebdon Road, Worle, Clevedon Cemetery, Old Church Road, Clevedon, and Portishead Cemetery, Clevedon Road, Portishead.

What we will do

- Give you a copy of our approved list of memorial masons
- Explain what a memorial permit is and what it costs
- Discuss memorial options with you or your memorial mason

What we cannot do

- Advise you which memorial mason to use
- Allow any memorial to be installed in any cemetery that does not have a memorial permit

Service standards

- Masons on our list of approved memorial masons have all signed up to the National Association of Memorial Masons (NAMM) Code of Working Practice

More information

Email: crem.office@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 427 333
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/crem

Memorial Safety



Service summary

The Crematorium and Cemeteries team is responsible for memorial safety in Clevedon Cemetery, Old Church Road, Clevedon, and Portishead Cemetery, Clevedon Road, Portishead.

What we will do

- Carry out a regular memorial inspection programme in each cemetery
- Explain the testing procedure either verbally or in writing
- Arrange for you to see the testing taking place
- Stake unstable or potentially dangerous memorials
- Lay flat imminently dangerous or broken memorials

What we cannot do

- Ignore dangerous memorials
- Arrange for the memorial to be repaired

Service standards

- We use the memorial inspection process recommended by the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM)

More information

Email: crem.office@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 427 333
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/crem

Memorial Safety

Personal Licences

P

Service summary

The Licensing team issues personal licences to people who sell or supply alcohol. Licensees must be over 18, have a relevant licensing qualification and no criminal convictions. Personal licences last for 10 years and are renewable.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms
- Update licences when holders have moved address
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to personal licences
- Investigate complaints about personal licence holders
- Provide information on licences issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue personal licences where the legal application procedures have not been followed, for example if applications are not completed correctly
- Make objections to an application (the police has this responsibility)

Service standards

We will:

- Acknowledge applications, in writing, within three working days
- Issue unopposed licences within six weeks
- Issue, where appropriate, opposed applications within nine weeks
- If there are relevant criminal convictions, hold a licensing hearing within 20 working days after the completion of the statutory 14 day police consultation period
- Make available application registers during opening hours

P

Personal Licences

Key service information

- For application costs see the fees and charges section
- We can only issue personal licences to people living in North Somerset
- An applicant for a personal licence must:
 - Be over 18 years of age
 - Hold an approved licensing qualification
 - Have none of the criminal convictions given in the Licensing Act 2003
 - Not hold a personal licence issued by another licensing authority, or have made an application to another licensing authority for a personal licence
- You must send in the following documents with an application:
 - Two photographs (one of which is endorsed with a statement verifying the likeness of the photograph to the applicant by a solicitor, notary, a person of standing in the community (a bank or building society official, a police officer, a civil servant or a minister of religion) or any individual with a professional qualification)
 - Either a criminal conviction certificate, criminal record certificate or the results of a subject access search under the Data Protection Act 1998(b) of the Police National Computer by the National Identification Service
 - A declaration statement about the absence or presence of relevant criminal convictions or foreign offences
- If a personal licence holder moves address they must notify us of their new address
- Personal licence holders must declare the licence to a court if they are prosecuted for a relevant offence under the Licensing Act 2003
- For replacement licences or identity badge costs see the fees and charges section

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 426 800
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing

Pest Control – Commercial

P

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team can provide advice and information on a range of pest species commonly found in and around businesses. We also provide pest control treatments and contracts if the pest is posing a health risk or is likely to cause damage to stock or premises.

We are responsible for making sure, as far as possible, the district is kept free from rats and mice. This means we respond to reports of pest problems in businesses. If a pest control issue is found, which can include insects, parasites, their eggs, larvae and pupae, we can tell business owners or occupiers to have them removed.

What we will do

- Provide advice and guidance on pests commonly found in commercial premises
- Provide pest control treatments for rats, mice, wasps, cockroaches, woodlice, black ants, fleas, carpet beetles, bedbugs and flies
- Consider the treatment of other species on a case by case basis
- Investigate complaints relating to rats and mice
- Investigate complaints relating to vermin
- Enforce the law relating to pest control
- Provide pest control on a contract basis

What we cannot do

- Provide pest control treatments for birds, pharaoh ants, woodworm, feral bees, rabbits, snakes, badgers, squirrels, water voles, moles, foxes, bats or cats
- Carry out a treatment at a property without the consent of the owner or occupier, unless through enforcement action

Key service information

- The costs for pest control for commercial properties during office hours are show in the fees and charges section

P

Pest Control – Commercial

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection

Food Safety: 01934 634 603

Health and
Safety: 01934 634 726

Pest Control – Residential

P

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team can give advice and information on a range of pest species commonly found around the home. We also provide pest control treatments in cases where the pest is causing a health risk or is likely to cause damage.

We are responsible for making sure, as far as possible, the district is kept free from rats and mice. This means we can tell homeowners or occupiers to get rid of rats and mice on their land as well as insects, parasites, their eggs, larvae and pupae.

What we will do

- Give advice and guidance on pests commonly found in the home and garden
- Provide pest control treatments for rats, mice, wasps, cockroaches, woodlice, black ants, fleas, carpet beetles, bedbugs and flies
- Consider the treatment of other species on a case by case basis
- Investigate complaints relating to rats and mice
- Investigate complaints relating to vermin
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to pest control

What we cannot do

- Provide pest control treatments for birds, pharaoh ants, woodworm, feral bees, rabbits, snakes, badgers, squirrels, water voles, moles, foxes, bats or cats
- Carry out a treatment at a property without the consent of the owner or occupier unless through enforcement action

Key service information

- The costs for pest control for residential properties during office hours are show in the fees and charges section

Pest Control – Residential

P

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 682

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection

Pest Control – Residential

Planning Consultations

P

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team is consulted on planning applications and pre-planning applications and we can offer advice to those who want to put in an application.

What we will do

- Give advice on environmental health issues which may be caused by new developments
- Offer advice to anyone who may be affected by new developments or changes in existing developments

What we cannot do

- Decide planning applications. This is done by a planning officer or committee
- Carry out environmental surveys, for example for noise, drainage or lighting, for an applicant
- Investigate breaches of planning conditions

Service standards

We will:

- Give advice on how applicants can solve environmental health problems which could be caused by new developments
- Give advice on planning conditions that can be imposed to prevent environmental health problems
- Offer our comments within 10 working days of being notified by Development Control

You should:

- Submit as much information as you can

P

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection

Planning Consultations

Premises Licence

P

Service summary

The Licensing team issues premises licences and club premises certificates for alcohol sales, public entertainment or late night refreshment. This includes pubs, members' clubs, night clubs, restaurants, takeaways, outdoor music events and shops or stores selling alcohol. We take into account comments made by statutory bodies and residents before we issue a licence. New applications are subject to consultation with specified organisations called responsible authorities (the police, fire service, Environmental Protection, Health and Safety, Trading Standards and Children and Young People's Services). Licences last indefinitely but are subject to an annual charge.

What we will do

- Issue premises licences and club premises certificates
- Provide advice to applicants and licence holders on complying with the law and the completion of application forms
- Process variation and transfer of licences and club certificates
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to premises licences and club certificates
- Investigate complaints about licensed premises
- Provide information on applications made and licences or certificates issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue licences or certificates where the legal application procedures have not been followed, for example no advertising or consultation is carried out or the application is incomplete
- Make objections to an application

Service standards

We will:

- Acknowledge, in writing, receipt of applications within three working days

P

Premises Licence

- If required, hold a licensing hearing within 20 working days after the completion of the statutory 28 day consultation period
- Issue unopposed licences within six weeks
- Issue, where appropriate, opposed applications within nine weeks
- Make available public licensing application registers during the opening hours of our reception desk

Key service information

- Licence fees are based on the non-domestic rateable value of a property – there are different fee levels which are shown in the fees and charges section
- For large outdoor events there are additional fees on a sliding scale for those attended by more than 4,999 people
- There are some groups which do not have to pay, including community buildings and schools
- A premises licence must have a named Designated Premises Supervisor (DPS). This person must hold a personal licence. A private members' club does not need a DPS
- We have a licensing policy which explains how we carry out our duties under the Licensing Act 2003. Copies are available online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing (in the alcohol and entertainment section)
- Our four main licensing objectives are:
 - Preventing crime and disorder
 - Public safety
 - Preventing public nuisance
 - Protecting children from harm
- Licences and club certificates can be reviewed if any of the above objectives are not being met and a responsible authority or an affected resident requests a review
- Applicants must consult with the responsible authorities, which are the police, fire service, Environmental Protection, Health and Safety, Trading Standards, Planning, and Children and Young People's Services
- The person making the application must:
 - Serve a copy of the licence application on the responsible authorities

- Display a notice at the premises for 28 consecutive days giving details of the application
- Publish details of the application in a notice in a local newspaper
- If valid concerns are made about an application a licensing hearing will normally be held. Anyone who made comments can attend and speak at the hearing. If the application is refused an appeal can be made at the Magistrates' Court

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 426 800

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing



Premises Licence Applications Consultations

Service summary

When a premises licence is applied for the Environmental Protection team is consulted. We will assess the application in relation to the Prevention of Public Nuisance, for example we will look at expected noise levels.

What we will do

- Provide advice to applicants and licence holders on complying with the law
- Object to an application if we feel it is likely to cause public nuisance
- Attend the Licensing Committee to give expert advice on an application
- Assist residents suffering nuisance from licensed premises

What we cannot do

- Complete the relevant section of a premises licence application on behalf of the applicant
- Close a premises down, our role is to get evidence and report the matter to licensing

Service standards

We will:

- Respond to licensing within 28 days with comments on applications
- Where possible work with the applicant to resolve public nuisance issues to prevent objections to the application
- Investigate and respond within 10 working days to all complaints made by members of the public in relation to public nuisance arising from licensed premises
- Report to licensing any premises found not complying with any licence conditions relating to public nuisance



You should:

- If you are the applicant, make sure you have considered public nuisance and specified suitable measures in the application to control the outbreak of noise
- If you are bothered by nuisance arising from licensed premises keep an accurate log of the dates and times when you are disturbed to help any investigation

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection

P

Private Hire Operators' Licences

Service summary

The Licensing team issues private hire operators' licences. These are needed by anyone who takes bookings for private hire vehicles. These licences are for companies which have offices that take calls for the hire of licensed vehicles. Some of the premises have public waiting areas. Individuals who operate single vehicle companies from home addresses also need this type of licence.

A private hire operator must give an efficient service to members of the public and make sure vehicles are dispatched on time to meet the needs of customers. A private hire operator's licence lasts for three years.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms
- Issue private hire operators' licences
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to operators' licences
- Investigate complaints about services provided by operators
- Provide information on licences issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue operators' licences where the legal application procedures have not been followed, for example if we are sent incomplete applications or the applicant is unsuitable

Service standards

We will:

- Acknowledge in writing, within three working days, applications made
- Issue unopposed licences within six weeks



- Issue, where appropriate, opposed applications within nine weeks
- Make available a register of licensed operators during opening hours

Key service information

- For the annual fees for operators' licences see the fees and charges section
- An applicant for an operator's licence must provide a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) disclosure
- A CRB disclosure is needed every three years to renew the licence
- Anyone who has been disqualified from running a business due to bankruptcy will not be considered for a licence, or if licensed, will have their licence revoked
- If you are using a premises to operate a private hire business it is your responsibility to make sure you have the correct planning permissions
- The following conditions are attached to licences:
 - Operators must make sure hired vehicles arrive promptly
 - Premises used by the public as waiting rooms must have adequate seating and be kept clean, heated and well ventilated
 - Records have to be kept by the operator for a minimum of 12 months with details of private hire bookings made, vehicles being used and drivers employed
 - Insurance has to be maintained by the operator for all vehicles being used and premises to which the public have access
 - If a complaint about the level of service received is made to an operator, the operator must notify us within 72 hours
 - If an operator moves address they must tell us within seven days

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 426 800

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing

P

Private Water Supplies

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team has a duty to take and analyse samples from private water supplies to make sure they are free from any element or organism that may cause health problems.

What we will do

- Take details of new private water supplies to enter them onto the Private Water Supplies public register and make sure they are monitored
- Take samples from a private water supply for analysis
- Charge for sampling and analysis of the supply
- Retest free of charge after a failure
- Recommend suitable treatment/repair works to be done in the case of a failure
- Serve a notice under the law to make sure work is carried out to correct any problems
- Sample a public water supply if requested

Service standards

We will:

- Send a letter detailing the water quality results as soon as they are received
- If a test is failed, give the results over the telephone so that the problem can be solved quickly
- Make sure that regular monitoring is undertaken
- Make sure the Private Water Supplies public register is regularly updated and available during normal office hours
- If requested, sample any private water supplies that are currently not used, for quality purposes

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882



Private Water Supplies



Safety at Sports Grounds

Service summary

The Building Control team conducts safety checks at regulated sports grounds in partnership with Avon Fire and Rescue Service, the ambulance service and the police. The checks are carried out every two years and are designed to make sure the grounds are safe and serious incidents are prevented.

More information

Email: bc.info@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 884 550 or 01275 888 691 or 01275 888 685

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/buildingcontrol

Skips, scaffolding, hoardings and builders' materials on highways

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Skips, scaffolding, hoardings and builders' materials on highways

Service summary

The Licensing team issues permits for skips, scaffolding, hoardings and builders' materials on the highway. We make sure there are no problems caused for the safety of road users or pedestrians.

A permit lasts for a maximum of 28 days and can be extended. Shorter permits can also be issued.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms
- Issue permits
- Enforce legal requirements relating to the permits
- Investigate complaints about the placing of skips, scaffolding, hoardings and builders' material on a highway
- Provide information on permits issued

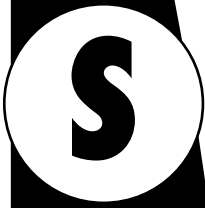
What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue permits where the legal application procedures have not been followed or are for unsuitable sites

Service standards

We will:

- Visit the proposed site within three working days of an application being made to assess its suitability



- Within five working days of an application being made, notify the applicant verbally or by fax of the suitability of the site and where approved, issue the required permit

Key service information

- The fee for permits can be found in the fees and charges section

Skips on highways:

- Builders' skips should not be more than five metres long and two metres wide
- The skip has to have the owner's name permanently displayed on it
- The ends of the skip have to be painted yellow and include vertical red and yellow reflective markings on the side
- Cones and lights have to put in front of the skip facing oncoming traffic
- The skip has to have lights on when it is dark
- The skip cannot be placed within 15 metres of a road junction, in major shopping centres or near public meeting places, for example churches, schools or football grounds
- The skip should not contain flammable, explosive, noxious or dangerous materials

Scaffolding on highways:

- There must be a minimum of 2.3 metres unobstructed headroom for pedestrians
- All scaffolding below 2.3 metres shall either be painted white or covered in high visibility reflective red/white tape
- A minimum unobstructed footway of 1.5 metres has to be maintained in busy pedestrian areas
- Where pedestrians have to be diverted onto the road, a minimum walkway of 1.3 metres has to be provided
- The scaffolding has to be suitably lit at night
- The name, address and telephone number and out of hours emergency contact number has to be displayed on a sign fixed to the scaffolding

Hoardings on highways:

- The bottom two metres of the hoarding and support structures have to be painted white
- The hoarding has to be suitably lit at night

- The hoarding should not obstruct the highway

Builders' materials on the highway:

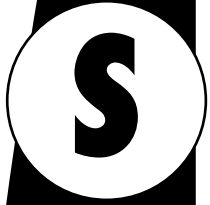
- At least five traffic cones should be placed around the materials
- The materials should not be more than five metres long and two metres wide
- Warning lamps should be around the materials and switched on at night
- Inflammable, noxious or dangerous materials cannot be put on the highway
- Gulleys and manholes should not be obstructed and the area used for the materials has to be swept up after use and nothing left on the highway

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 426 800

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing





Smokefree

Service summary

Smokefree laws made it illegal to light up in enclosed public places from July 2007 and we are here to help businesses comply with the legislation. We give advice and help about the rules and can give information about how to produce a smoking policy.

We also work closely with North Somerset Primary Care Trust to promote their Support to Stop Smoking service and the dangers of lighting up, both to the smoker and those around them.

What we will do

- Give advice on the smokefree legislation and how to comply
- Give advice on how to produce and implement a smokefree policy
- Enforce the smokefree laws
- Investigate complaints about breaches in the law

What we cannot do

- Provide no smoking signage

Service standards

We will:

- Contact businesses to offer advice and support following complaints
- Give advice and support to businesses which contact us for guidance about the smokefree laws
- Refer those who want help to quit smoking to the North Somerset Primary Care Trust's Support to Stop service

Key service information

- We work within the Smokefree Regulations which can be downloaded from www.smokefreeengland.co.uk
- We also work in partnership with the North Somerset Primary Care Trust Support to Stop service. The team can be contacted on 01275 546 744 or via email at sts@nsomerset-pct.nhs.uk

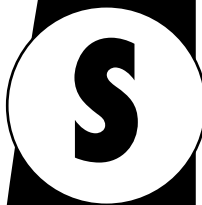
- For advice and help with noise and other disturbance related issues, such as litter, caused by groups of smokers outside venues contact the Environmental Protection team on 01934 634 882
- For advice on planning issues related to building smoking shelters contact 01934 426 359

More information

Email: smokinglaw@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 633

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/smokinglaw



Smokefree

Statutory Nuisance (except noise)

Service summary

The Environmental Protection team investigates complaints of nuisance.

What we will do

Investigate complaints about:

- Smoke
- Light
- Dust / steam or smell
- Fumes or gases
- Accumulations
- Insects

Service standards

We will:

- Respond to complaints as soon as we can and at least within 10 working days
- Make site visits to witness the problem
- Make an independent assessment of the problem using monitoring equipment where necessary
- Negotiate solutions to problems
- Where a statutory nuisance is established, use our powers, including taking enforcement action if needed, to find a solution

You should:

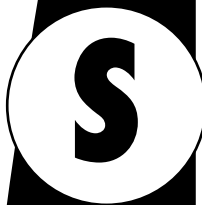
- Keep a diary of the problem and how often it happens
- Speak to the people causing the problem as they may not be aware they are causing a problem

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/environmentalprotection



Statutory Nuisance (except noise)

Stray Dogs

Service summary

The dog wardens, who are part of the Environmental Protection team, have powers to seize and retain stray dogs.

Service standards

We will:

- Check all dogs seized for identification including tags, microchip implants or tattoos
- Reduce the fee for dogs that are reunited with their owners in under 30 minutes
- Place dogs in kennels and return them to their owners when fees are paid covering the cost of their seizure, transportation and kennelling
- Keep registers of all dogs reported as lost and all dogs seized by the wardens
- Re-home any dogs not claimed within seven days
- Not destroy dogs and only put them to sleep on the advice of a vet

You should:

- Report any dogs lost to us as soon as possible
- Report any stray dogs to us as soon as possible, giving us the exact time and location you saw the dog
- Give us your name, address, telephone number, or email as well as details of the problem and where it is

More information

Email: environmental.protection@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01934 634 882

Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/dogs

Street Trading Consents

A large, bold, black letter 'S' is centered within a white circle. This circle is positioned at the top of a black vertical banner that runs down the right side of the page.

Service summary

The Licensing team issues consents and licences for street trading in North Somerset. Street trading is the selling, exposing or offering for sale of anything (including a living thing) in any street. A street includes roads, footways, beaches or other areas to which the public has access without payment. We have a district wide scheme comprising of designated:

- Consent streets, where street trading cannot take place without a consent
- Licence streets (High Street and Big Lamp Corner in Weston-super-Mare) where street trading cannot take place without a licence

Consents and Licences last for a maximum of 12 months but can be given for shorter times, for example monthly, weekly or daily.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms and information guides
- Issue consents
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to street trading
- Investigate complaints about street trading
- Provide information on consents and licences issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue consents or licences where the legal application procedures have not been followed, for example if we receive incomplete applications or no fee

Service standards

We will:

- Acknowledge the application within three working days

- Carry out consultations within five days of receiving the application
- Allow 28 days for any comments from consultees on applications
- Notify an applicant within five working days of the end of the consultation period of the outcome
- Hold a licensing hearing within 20 working days of the end of a consultation period, if required
- If the application is uncontested, make contact with the applicant within five working days from the end of the consultation period
- Where the application is contested, notify the applicant of the outcome of the licensing hearing in writing within five working days from the date of the hearing

Key service information

- For cost relating to street trading see the fees and charges section
- The fees are payable for each unit and/or site permission granted
- The fees can be paid in instalments and are due on 1 April, 1 July, 1 October and 1 January
- A deposit of 25 per cent of the full fee must be paid at the time of submitting an application. Fees for consents for less than 15 days will need the full fee with the application
- For unsuccessful applications, 50 per cent of the deposit is retained
- An administration charge of £25 is made when refunding fees for licences that have been either surrendered or revoked
- Farmers' Markets are subject to an administration fee for each consent but are exempt from the annual/weekly fee
- There are a number of exemptions for having to apply for a Street Trading Consent and these are shown in the Street Trading Consents section of the Appendix
- Full details of the street trading scheme are included in the Street Trading Application and Information Guidelines document which is available from us or online at www.n-somerset.gov.uk/streettrading

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 426 800
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/streettrading

Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licences

1

Service summary

The Licensing team issues licences for hackney carriages (taxis) and private hire vehicles. A hackney carriage can be hailed in the street or hired from a taxi rank. It can also be pre-booked. It has a meter and fares are normally charged according to the tariff shown on the meter. We set rates for the meters, which are the maximum tariffs that can be charged.

A private hire vehicle can only be hired on a pre-booked basis through a licensed operator. They cannot be hailed or work from taxi ranks. Fares within private hire vehicles are not set and are negotiable with the vehicle operator. Some private hire vehicles are fitted with meters, but the rates on the meters are not set by us.

Licensed vehicles have to comply with strict safety standards and are tested before we licence them, and then again annually. The vehicle has to display licence plates and can only be driven by a licensed person.

Vehicle licences last for one year.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms
- Issue hackney carriage and private hire vehicle licences
- Transfer licences when vehicles are changed by operators
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to vehicle licences
- Investigate complaints about licensed vehicles
- Provide information on licences issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue vehicle licences where the legal application procedures have not been followed, for example an incomplete application form or one for unsuitable vehicles

Service standards

We will:

- Acknowledge applications, in writing, within three days
- Issue unopposed applications within four weeks
- Issue, where appropriate, opposed applications within nine weeks
- Make available vehicle registers during opening hours

Key service information

- The costs relating to vehicle licences can be found in the fees and charges section
- Licensed vehicles can only be tested at our approved garages:
 - Coombs Coaches, Searle Crescent, Weston-super-Mare
 - BRM Motors, Kenn Road, Clevedon
- A vehicle has to meet an approved vehicle specification, details of which are available from the Licensing team
- For first time licensing, a vehicle must be less than eight years old unless it is a purpose built taxi or a specialist vehicle
- Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles cannot be licensed to carry more than eight passengers. Vehicles that carry more than eight, for example buses and mini buses, are licensed by the Vehicle Operator Services Agency (VOSA)
- Vehicles previously exempted from being licensed as private hire vehicles are now required to be licensed. This includes chauffeur services, limousines and hospital transport cars
- Vehicles used solely for weddings and/or funerals are exempt from the need to be licensed
- If a licensed vehicle is involved in an accident, regardless of whose fault, the details of the accident must be reported to us as soon as possible and no later than 72 hours after the accident
- If a vehicle is found to have serious defects, for example worn tyres, licensing officers can take action to immediately stop the vehicle operating

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 426 800
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing

Taxi Drivers' Licences

1

Service summary

The Licensing team issues driver licences for hackney carriages (taxis) and private hire vehicles. To drive these licensed vehicles you must hold a driver's licence. For this to be issued checks are done, which are set out below in the key service information section. As a minimum you must have held either a full UK or European driving licence for at least one year before you can be considered for a taxi driver's licence. Drivers' licences last for three years and then need to be renewed.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing application forms
- Provide application forms
- Issue hackney carriage and private hire vehicle drivers' licences
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to vehicle licences
- Investigate complaints about licensed vehicles
- Provide information on licences issued

What we cannot do

- Complete application forms or provide a consultancy service for applicants
- Issue drivers' licences where the legal application procedures have not been followed, for example if there is an incomplete application or an unsuitable applicant

Service standards

We will:

- Acknowledge applications in writing within three working days
- Issue unopposed applications within four weeks
- Issue, where appropriate, opposed applications within nine weeks
- Make available registers of licensed drivers during opening hours

Key service information

- For costs relating to taxi drivers' licences see the fees and charges section
- The minimum age limit for applicants for driver's licences is 18 years of age
- Before a driver's licence can be issued the applicant must:
 - Do a driving assessment
 - For hackney carriage drivers, do a written test which assesses their knowledge of:
 - (a) Local geography
 - (b) The Highway Code
 - (c) The Hackney Carriage bylaws
 - Have a medical examination
 - Have an enhanced criminal record check
 - Have a DVLA driving licence check
- Driving assessments are carried out by the Driving Services Agency on our behalf. The assessments are carried out locally and need to be booked directly with the Driving Standards Agency on 0870 01 01 372
- An applicant must have an examination by their own doctor (or doctor from the applicant's practice), who should complete a medical examination form which is available from us. New applicants will be examined to the Group 2 medical standard
- We are registered with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and can provide criminal record disclosures
- There are bylaws which govern the conduct of hackney carriage drivers and we can provide copies
- An applicant must be a 'fit and proper person' to hold either a hackney carriage or private hire driver's licence. We assess people with criminal records and each case is considered on its merits. A criminal record will not automatically prevent anyone from applying for a licence. If you have a criminal record you should contact us before you make an application

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 426 800
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing

Temporary Events Notices (TEN)

1

Service summary

The Licensing team must be notified of temporary events involving alcohol sales, public entertainment or late night refreshments. The person intending to hold an event, typically at premises that do not have a permanent licence, usually applies for a temporary events notice (TEN). We do not issue a licence, but acknowledge the event. There are a number of limitations on the size and length of the event or activity where a TEN can be used. A TEN notification must be made to us and the police. Police can object to a proposed event if there are concerns about crime or disorder.

What we will do

- Give advice on complying with the law and completing TEN notification forms
- Provide notification forms
- Object to proposed events when the legal number of notifications have been exceeded
- Enforce the legal requirements relating to temporary events
- Investigate complaints about temporary events

What we cannot do

- Complete notification forms or provide a consultancy service for event organisers
- Give fee reductions
- Accept notifications made within 10 working days of the event taking place

Service standards

We will:

- Acknowledge, in writing, receipt of notifications within one working day
- If required, hold a licensing hearing within seven working days after receipt of an objection from the police

- Make available notification registers during opening hours

Key service information

- The cost of a TEN notification can be found in the fees and charges section
- A personal licence holder can apply for up to 50 events in a year. Non personal licence holders may make a maximum of five notifications in a year
- A premises cannot be used more than 12 times in a calendar year
- The temporary event may not last longer than 96 hours
- No more than 499 people can attend the event
- Premises cannot be used for temporary events for more than 15 days during one calendar year
- There must be a minimum of 24 hours between events
- A TEN may only be given to an individual and not, for example, to an organisation, club or business
- Premises is any place, which means it is not always a building with a formal address and postcode. Premises can include, public parks, recreation grounds and private land
- You must send us two copies of the notice at least ten working days before the beginning of the event. We will endorse one of the copies and return the second as an acknowledgement
- The 10 working days' notice period does not include the day we receive the notice or the day on which the event takes place. Bank holidays are also not included as working days
- If alcohol is served at a TEN event it will be under the authority of the named premises user in the temporary event notification
- If the premises is used mainly or only to sell or supply alcohol then children under 16 attending the event must be accompanied by an adult

More information

Email: licensing@n-somerset.gov.uk
Telephone: 01934 426 800
Website: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/licensing

Trading Standards Inspections

1

Service summary

The Trading Standards team has to carry out inspections of premises in North Somerset by law.

Inspections may be made to check the quantity, quality, composition and prices of goods at any stage in the supply chain. Checks on equipment used for trade may also be done.

What we will do

- Visit premises at any reasonable time without notice to do an inspection and enforce UK and EU laws
- Take enforcement action where appropriate to ensure compliance with legislation
- Advise on trading law relevant to the business' products and services
- Offer confidential advice and guidance on product composition, labelling, advertising and marketing

What we cannot do

- Act outside our authorised powers

Service standards

We will:

- Be courteous and responsive and always show official identification when asked
- Do a programme of announced and unannounced inspections of premises to make sure they are following the law
- Give a written report on the findings of each inspection, including detailed advice of improvements which are needed and a time limit for them to be carried out
- Provide a wide range of advice leaflets designed to help businesses comply with the law
- Annually inspect all high risk premises

- Do a programme of test purchases for age restricted products such as alcohol, tobacco and fireworks

Key service information

- We have the right to enter premises under most of the laws we enforce. We may also bring other people with us who could help, for example police
- Most laws say we can see and take copies of documents, take samples, speak to staff and inspect working areas and goods
- In certain circumstances officers can seize goods and take samples without payment

More information

Email: trading.standards@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 888 634

Website: www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/northsomerset

Trading Standards Licensing and Registration

1

Trading Standards Licensing and Registration

Service summary

Trading Standards issues licences for a number of things including explosives, fireworks, petroleum, poisons and performing animals.

We record certain commercial livestock movements on the Government's AMLS database.

We register premises, for example, farms, under the Feed (Hygiene and Enforcement) Regulations and we may be asked by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to carry out checks of businesses that apply for a licence.

What we will do

- Issue licences as soon as possible after we have done any necessary investigations
- Charge a fee for licences in line with national or local rules

What we cannot do

- Charge a fee which is more than is set by the national or local rules
- Licence activities that are not allowed by law
- Issue a licence to individuals or businesses which are unfit to hold the licence
- Refuse to issue a licence without a valid and legal reason

Service standards

We will:

- Be courteous and responsive
- Maintain confidentiality at all times
- Provide information in a clear and concise manner
- Issue an individually signed licence to each approved applicant
- Process licence applications within 10 working days of receipt

- Record livestock movements within three working days of receipt

Key service information

- We can issue licences on behalf of North Somerset Council and we can make enquiries to make sure the individual or business that applies for a licence is suitable
- The Government pay for our Animal Health Inspectors to record the movements of certain commercial livestock on its AMLS database

More information

Email: trading.standards@n-somerset.gov.uk

Telephone: 01275 888 634

Website: www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/northsomerset

Appendix

Charitable Collections

Organisations exempted from having to hold Charity Collection Permits for House to House Collections

Action Aid	Mental Health Foundation
Adventist Development and Relief Agency	National Blind Children's Society
Alexandra Rose Day	NCH Action for Children
Asthma UK	National Council of YMCAs
Barnardos	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
British and International Sailors Society	Oxfam
British Heart Foundation Association	People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA)
British Leprosy Relief (LEPRA)	Royal Air Forces Association
British Red Cross Society	Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal
British WIZO	Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)
Cancer Research UK	Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)
Children's Society	Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen
Christian Aid	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
Cystic Fibrosis Research Trust	Save the Children Fund
Help the Aged	Scope
Kidney Research UK	Shelter
Leukaemia Research Fund	World Cancer Research Fund
Little Sisters of the Poor	World Wide Fund for Nature
Macmillan Cancer Relief	
Marie Curie Cancer Care	

Criminal Record Disclosures

List of documents that need to be produced on application

One document from Group 1 plus any two from Groups 1 or 2, **or** five documents from Group 2

Group 1	
Passport	EU National Identity Card
Driving Licence (UK) (full or provisional) -England/Wales/Scotland/Northern Ireland/Isle of Man; either photo card or paper (a photo card is only valid if the individual presents it with the counterpart licence)	Birth Certificate (UK) – issued within 12 months of date of birth – full or short form acceptable
HM Forces ID Card (UK)	Firearms Licence (UK)
Adoption Certificate (UK)	

Group 2	
Marriage/Civil Partnership Certificate	Financial statement** - e.g. pension, endowment, ISA
Birth Certificate	Vehicle Registration document
P45/P60 Statement (UK)**	Mail Order Catalogue statement*
Bank/Building Society statement*	Court Claim Form (UK)** – documentation issued by Court Services
Utility bill* – electricity, gas, water, telephone – including mobile phone contract/bill	Exam certificate e.g. GCSE, NVQ
TV Licence**	Addressed payslip*
Credit Card statement*	National Insurance card (UK)
Store Card statement*	NHS card (UK)
Mortgage statement**	Benefit statement* – e.g. Child Allowance, Pension

Insurance Certificate**	Certificate of British Nationality (UK)
Council Tax statement (UK)**	Work Permit/Visa (UK)**
A document from Central/ Local Government/ Government Agency/ Local Authority giving entitlement (UK)*: e.g. from the Department for Work and Pensions, the Employment Service, Customs and Revenue, Job Centre, Job Centre Plus, Social Security	Connexions Card (UK)

*documentation should be less than three months old

**issued within past 12 months

All documents must be in the applicant's current name. At least one document must confirm the applicant's current address and at least one document must confirm the applicant's date of birth.

Gambling Permits

Gambling Machine Categories

Category of machine	Maximum stake	Maximum prize
A	Unlimited	Unlimited
B1	£2	£4,000
B2	£100 (in multiples of £10)	£500
B3A	£1	£500
B3	£1	£500
B4	£1	£250
C	50p	£35
D	10p/30p	£5/£8

Street Trading Consents

Street trading activities that do not require a Consent from the council

- a. Trading by a person acting as a pedlar under the authority of a pedlar's certificate
- b. Anything done in a market or fair established by charter or legislation
- c. Trading in a trunk road picnic area provided by the Secretary of State
- d. Trading as a news vendor
- e. Trading which:
 - i. is carried out on a forecourt of a petrol filling station; or
 - ii. is carried out in a street adjoining premises used as a shop provided the trading is part of the business of the shop.
- f. Selling, offering or exposing items for sale, as a roundsman (but not ice cream vans)
- g. Placing of permitted tables and chairs on a highway (for example street cafes)
- h. The operation of facilities for recreation or refreshment under the Highways Act 1980
- i. Permitted street charity collections.