

## Guidance from Mid Sussex District Council on starting a food business

This information sheet is designed to help you if you are starting up a food business in Mid Sussex.

### Registering as a food business

- You are required to register your food business with us by completing a paper form or an on-line registration form that is available on the Council's website at <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8139.htm>
- If you are intending to produce foods containing meat, poultry, fish, dairy and/or egg products to be sold to other caterers or retail shops you may need to obtain an official approval from the Food and Safety Team before you start trading. Please contact us for further advice.

### When operating a food business you must:

- Ensure that you operate a clean food business.
- Make sure that you install all the necessary equipment and facilities in the premises, including sufficient wash hand basins in food production areas.
- Provide finishes to walls, floors and ceilings that are easy to clean and ensure that you keep the premises in good repair and decoration.
- Ensure high standards of personal hygiene are maintained by all food handlers.
- Ensure that you and your staff are properly supervised, instructed and trained in food hygiene matters. The Council runs training courses on the Level 2 Award in Food Safety Catering. Details are on the Council's Food Hygiene Training page <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8175.htm> or phone 01444 477292.
- Have in place a documented food safety management system which shows what you do to produce safe food. You will also be expected to keep records of the checks that you make to ensure that food is being produced safely. The Safer Food Better Business pack has been developed to help small catering and retail businesses. The packs can also be downloaded from the Food Standards Agency website <http://food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/sfbb/> Please contact us if you require any help in understanding or completing this pack.
- Prevent pests such as rats, mice, cockroaches and other insects getting into the premises.

### Inspections and Food Hygiene Ratings

We will inspect your food premises shortly after we receive your registration form. The premises will be given a rating based on a visit to your premises and assessment carried out by one of our Environmental Health Officers or Food Safety Officers. The rating is published on the Food Standards Agency website and a certificate and sticker are provided showing the rating which the owner of the food premises is asked to display. The ratings range from 0 (urgent improvement necessary) to 5 (very good).

### It is obviously not good for the reputation of your food business if you receive a low rating.

Three criteria are used for providing a rating:

- Food hygiene and safety- food handling practices, cooking, chilling, preventing cross contamination and temperature control.
- Structure and cleaning- cleanliness, layout, condition of the structure, lighting, ventilation, facilities etc.
- Confidence in management- the track record of the business, attitude of the present management towards hygiene and safety, hygiene and food safety technical knowledge available and satisfactory documented procedures.

For further information about starting up a food business or to arrange an advisory site visit, please contact the Food Safety Team, Mid Sussex District Council, Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1SS. Email [foodsafety@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:foodsafety@midsussex.gov.uk), tel: 01444 477433.

## Other Useful contacts before you start

- **Planning Department** at Mid Sussex District Council on 01444 477019 to check if you need planning permission, for example if there is a change of use of the property to a food business premises. See the planning page of our website <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8078.htm>
- **Building Control** at MSDC on 01444 477570 to check whether you need approval to make changes to an existing building in order to accommodate a new food business. See the Building Control page of our website <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8060.htm>
- **Food and Safety Team-** at Mid Sussex District Council on 01444 477433 for advice on the requirements for ensuring the health and safety of your staff and customers. The Health and Safety Executive website also includes help for new businesses on meeting your health and safety responsibilities <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>
- **West Sussex Fire and Rescue** on 01403 213280 for advice on the fire safety precautions that you will need to have in place at your premises.
- **Trading Standards** at West Sussex County Council on 01243 642124 for advice on the labelling and compositional standards of food produced for catering or retail.
- **Business Rates** at MSDC on 01444 477564 for advice on rates payable for operating a business either from your home or other location. See the Business Rates page of our website <http://revsandbens.centralsussex.gov.uk/290.htm>
- **Licensing Team** at MSDC on 01444 477419 who are responsible for licensing the sale/supply of alcohol, the provision of regulated entertainment (live/recorded music etc) and late night refreshment (supply of hot food or drinks between 23:00 and 5:00). If you are proposing to carry on any of these activities, you will need the relevant authorisation. Please see our website for further information <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8124.htm>
- **Street Trading**, if you are going to be selling food from a mobile vehicle within Mid Sussex you may require a street trading licence. Please see the street trading page of our website for further advice and an on-line application form <http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8159.htm>
- **OFSTED** on 0300 1231231 for looking after children or running nurseries or playgroups.
- **Care Quality Commission** on 03000 616161 for running a residential care home.

## Other Environmental Health issues

- Think about the environment and prevent smell and noise nuisance from affecting your neighbours.
- Ensure that food waste and oil is stored properly and collected from your business regularly by a licensed waste carrier who will provide you with waste transfer notes.
- Maintain your plumbing and drainage in good condition to prevent problems caused by foul water and waste. We would strongly recommend installing grease traps.