Boarding Kennels

Business Opportunity Profile
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Introduction

Boarding kennels provide temporary accommodation for dogs while their owners are away from home or unable to look after them. Kennel staff feed, exercise and generally care for the dogs in their owner's absence. Some boarding kennels also provide accommodation for rescued and abandoned dogs or offer related services such as grooming, daycare or obedience training.

Boarding kennels in England, Wales and Scotland must be licensed to trade by the environmental health department of the local authority in the area where they are located and in Northern Ireland by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD). The licensing conditions stipulate how the kennels should be constructed and operated. Many boarding kennels are set up by homeowners on land adjacent to their property, or as a farm diversification activity.

This profile provides information about starting up and running boarding kennels. It describes the skills required, the training available, the current market trends, and some of the key trading issues. It also identifies some of the main legislation that must be complied with and provides sources of further information.

What qualifications and skills are required?

While there are no mandatory qualifications required to run boarding kennels, in practice it is essential for the proprietor and kennel staff to have experience and skills in dog handling, canine behaviour, personal health and safety and canine first aid. The local authority's licensing conditions may also stipulate minimum training requirements for both the proprietor and staff of the kennels.

Suitable courses for boarding kennels proprietors and staff seeking to achieve formal qualifications include:

- The Level 2 and 3 Certificates/Diplomas in Animal Care, which are also accredited by City & Guilds, cover aspects of animal feeding, handling, and safe working practices. The Level 3 qualification provides the opportunity to specialise in the boarding of animals. Courses are delivered by training providers at locations across the UK and fees vary according to provider. Go to [www.cityandguilds.com/Courses-and-Qualifications/land-based-services/animal-management/0074-animal-care](http://www.cityandguilds.com/Courses-and-Qualifications/land-based-services/animal-management/0074-animal-care) for details and to search for a local training provider.

- The Level 3 Kennel and Cattery Management, which is run on a distance learning basis by the Animal Care College. The course covers the practical aspects of running boarding kennels, including legal and financial considerations, planning and design, environmental issues, employing and managing staff, working routines and procedures, advertising and PR. The course costs £432. Go to [www.animalcarecollege.co.uk/courses.php?course_ID=39](http://www.animalcarecollege.co.uk/courses.php?course_ID=39) for more information about the course.
• The Level 2 Caring for Animals in Kennels and Catteries Certificate, which is also provided on a distance learning basis by the Animal Care College. The course consists of six units covering legal issues, customer service, health and safety, anatomy of the dog, nutrition and diet, kennel routines and animal welfare issues. A minimum of 30 hours of practical training at boarding kennels is required during the course, which costs £372 (www.animalcarecollege.co.uk/courses.php?course_ID=21).

• The Health, Safety, Legal and Associated Issues distance learning course run by the Animal Care College, which must be completed by anyone studying the Level 2 Caring for Animals Certificate above. The course costs £144 and covers health and safety legislation and 'duty of care' issues under the Animal Welfare Bill 2006 (www.animalcarecollege.co.uk/courses.php?course_ID=40).

• The Level 3 Animal Care and Welfare Management Diploma is an online course that is accredited by NCFE and run by Animal Jobs Direct. It covers animal nutrition, disease and hygiene, companion animals and accommodation and care of the animal and costs £399. Go to www.animal-job.co.uk/animal-welfare-course.html for more information.

• The two-day Canine First Aid and Training Course, run occasionally by Animal Jobs Direct, is held at Biggar, Lanarkshire and in Peterborough. The course costs £199 and consists of two modules covering emergency first aid for dogs. Go to www.animal-job.co.uk/Canine-First-Aid-and-Training-Course.html for more information.

Anyone starting up boarding kennels will also benefit from training in general business and enterprise skills. Suitable courses include:

• HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) provides free webinars on topics including business expenses, self assessment online, VAT, self employment and becoming an employer. Go to www.hmrc.gov.uk/webinars/topics.htm for more information.

• Practical Training Professionals (PTP) runs a one-day Introduction to Buying course, which covers topics such as negotiation skills and understanding value and costs. The course is delivered regularly at training centres around the country, and costs £450 (excluding VAT). Go to www.ptp.co.uk/training-courses/introduction-to-buying for more information.

• Stonebridge Associated Colleges runs an online or paper-based distance learning course entitled Contracts of Employment, Recruitment and Selection, which may benefit boarding kennel proprietors new to recruiting staff. The course costs £69. Go to www.stonebridge.uk.com/course/contracts-of-employment-recruitment-and-selection-byte-size for information.

• Marketing Tom Media runs a one-day Social Media Marketing workshop covering topics including the principles of social media, using LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook for business, and business blogging. Workshops take place in London and Cardiff and cost around £200 (excluding VAT). Go to www.marketingtom.co.uk/training/social-media-marketing for more information.

**Apprentices**

Boarding kennel proprietors often employ apprentices, usually at Intermediate Level. The proprietor is required to provide appropriate training and mentoring, but the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will cover either 50% or 100% of the cost of training, depending on the apprentice’s age. Go to www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers.aspx for more information.
Industry awareness and continuing professional development (CPD)

Boarding kennel proprietors and their staff can keep up to date with news and developments in their sector and improve their awareness of trends by attending events and reading trade journals and industry resources, including:

• ‘Kennel & Cattery Management’ ([www.kennelandcattery.com](http://www.kennelandcattery.com)), which is a trade journal for kennels owner/managers. It provides articles and information on topics such as kennels construction and regulations, how to promote boarding kennels, and coping with an emergency. An annual subscription costs £22.

• ‘Pet Business World News’ ([www.petbusinessworld.co.uk](http://www.petbusinessworld.co.uk)), a trade journal that provides news and events and a directory of pet business suppliers.

• ‘K9 Magazine’ ([www.k9magazine.com](http://www.k9magazine.com)), a consumer publication providing news and updates on the dog care sector and dog health.

• The College of Animal Welfare (CAW, [www.caw.ac.uk/cpd-revision-short-courses.aspx](http://www.caw.ac.uk/cpd-revision-short-courses.aspx)) runs a variety of CPD courses covering topics such as caring for puppies, dog behaviour and health and safety. Courses cost from around £165 to £295 and are held at locations including Huntingdon and Leeds.

• Championship dog shows such as Crufts ([www.crufts.org.uk/trade-exhibitors](http://www.crufts.org.uk/trade-exhibitors)), which is hosted by the Kennel Club every March at the NEC, Birmingham. A trade exhibition featuring dog equipment suppliers and other related organisations runs alongside the show and provides opportunities for boarding kennel proprietors to learn about new products and unusual breeds of dog and network with other professionals in the sector.

• Glee Petindex ([www.gleebirmingham.com](http://www.gleebirmingham.com)), which is the UK’s largest pet trade show, is held each autumn at the NEC, Birmingham. The event includes a seminar programme and demonstrations of new pet care products and accessories.

• The Kennel Club provides a directory of events that are relevant to boarding kennels and which can provide opportunities to network. These events include dog shows and trials. Go to [www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities) for information.

What are the key market issues and trends?

Some of the key current market issues affecting boarding kennel proprietors are as follows:

• Dog ownership is increasing, according to figures published by the Pet Food Manufacturers’ Association. In 2014, there were nine million dogs in the UK, compared to 7.3 million in 2008. Dog ownership is highest among families and people aged between 35 and 64 years old. Go to [www.pfma.org.uk/pet-population-2014](http://www.pfma.org.uk/pet-population-2014) for more information.

• Demand for boarding kennels' services was affected by an increase in the number of pet owners taking holidays in the UK, or 'staycations', rather than going abroad during the recent economic downturn. However, according to Travel Weekly, while almost 20% of British people took a domestic holiday in 2013, less than 17% planned to do so in 2014, and 68% intended to take a holiday in 2014, spending around £2,000 on their break ([www.travelweekly.co.uk/Articles/2014/01/16/46656/brits+plan+to+spend+2k+on+holiday+as+consumer+confidence+picks+up.html](http://www.travelweekly.co.uk/Articles/2014/01/16/46656/brits+plan+to+spend+2k+on+holiday+as+consumer+confidence+picks+up.html)).
In 2013, Holiday Cottages UK reported that 20% of the holidaymakers it surveyed took their dog with them to stay in pet friendly holiday cottages. This was a rise of 15% when compared to 2012. In addition the survey revealed that 85% of people aged 55 or over would take their dog on holiday with them if possible, potentially affecting demand for the services of boarding kennels (http://gouk.about.com/od/travelbyinterest/qt/Survey-Pets-Deserve-A-Vacation-Too.htm).

There are opportunities for boarding kennels to provide quarantine accommodation for dogs that have been brought into the UK from abroad but need to be kept isolated to ensure that the dogs have not contracted (or are carrying) rabies before their owners take them home. In order to provide quarantine facilities, boarding kennels must be authorised by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Out of the 3,800 boarding kennels in the UK listed on Yell.com in May 2014, there are only 39 quarantine kennels authorised by Defra. For a full list of authorised quarantine kennels go to www.gov.uk/pet-travel-quarantine#premises.

Demand for quarantine boarding could be affected by the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS), under which dogs can be brought into the UK without the need for quarantine, provided they meet the PETS requirements, which include vaccinating dogs against rabies (www.gov.uk/take-pet-abroad).

Opportunities for traditional boarding kennels also include accommodating rescue dogs on behalf of animal charities such as the RSPCA (www.rspca.org.uk/home) and Blue Cross (www.bluecross.org.uk), which seek to re-home rescued dogs. Many charities work in partnership with local boarding kennels in areas where the charity does not have its own kennel facilities, and pay to accommodate rescued dogs while they are awaiting re-homing. Much of the funding raised by local branches of animal charities is spent on animal boarding. For example, go to http://217.196.1.21/~rspcanw/fundraising.php.

Franchises provide both opportunities and competition for boarding kennels. Initial franchise investment fees typically range from around £12,500 to £15,000 (excluding VAT) and franchise packages include marketing services, equipment, supplies, training and ongoing business advice and support. Examples of boarding kennels franchises include Barking Mad (www.barkingmad.uk.com/franchising/become-franchisee) and Petpals (www.petpals.com/franchise/index.php).

In May 2014 there were over 3,800 listings on Yell.com in the boarding kennels category and nearly 2,300 listings under the dog daycare category. There were also over 3,100 home and pet sitters who represent indirect competition for boarding kennels.

In May 2014 Daltons Business listed around 100 boarding kennels for sale, typically including a domestic property on the same site, with prices starting from around £250,000 for a freehold property.

What are the main trading issues?

Some of the main trading issues faced by boarding kennel proprietors include:

Licensing and regulation

Under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 in England, Wales and Scotland, before starting to trade, all aspiring boarding kennel proprietors must apply for an Animal
Boarding Establishment Licence from their local authority. Licences are usually issued by the environmental health department following an inspection of the proposed kennel premises and must be renewed annually. It is an offence to operate boarding kennels without a licence. A boarding establishment is defined under the Act as any premises, including a private dwelling, which provides accommodation for other people's animals. For more details, go to www.gov.uk/animal-boarding-establishment-licence.

In Northern Ireland an Animal Boarding Establishment Licence is also required under the Animal Welfare (Northern Ireland) Act 1972 and licences are issued by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD). The application process involves a veterinary officer from the local Divisional Veterinary Office (DVO) inspecting the proposed kennel premises before a licence is granted. For more information, go to www.gov.uk/animal-boarding-establishment-northern-ireland.

Boarding kennel proprietors in England and Wales must comply in full with the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which requires pet owners to ensure that their animals are cared for appropriately. The Act extends to boarding kennel proprietors who are temporarily responsible for animals while they are in their care. The Act also partly applies in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Go to www.gov.uk/government/publications/animal-welfare-act-2006-it-s-your-duty-to-care for more details.

Animal Boarding Establishment Licences also include conditions to ensure the health, welfare and safety of animals while they are boarded at kennels.

The cost of an Animal Boarding Establishment Licence varies, but is typically between £70 and £100.

**Licensing conditions**

Many local authorities use the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health's (CIEH) 'Model Licence Conditions and Guidance for Dog Boarding Establishments' when inspecting boarding kennels and deciding whether to grant or renew a licence.

The Model Licence Conditions set out a range of requirements to ensure that:

- Dogs are kept in accommodation that is suitable in relation to size, temperature, lighting, ventilation and cleanliness.
- Dogs are supplied with food and drink and are visited at regular intervals.
- Dogs are kept secure.
- Precautions are taken to prevent the spread of infectious diseases among dogs, staff and visitors, for example by accommodating stray dogs, those that are ill, and especially dogs that are in quarantine, in isolation units away from other boarded pets.
- Appropriate steps can be taken in event of a fire or another emergency. For example there should be an evacuation plan in place so that dogs can be moved to a place of safety.
- A consistent standard of management is maintained.

To read the full 'Model Licence Conditions and Guidance for Dog Boarding Establishments' go to www.cieh.org/policy/dog_guidance.html.
Premises and planning permission

The CIEH Model Licence Conditions also set out the requirements for the construction of boarding kennels. These relate to the materials that should be used to construct the kennels, as well as the minimum requirements for kennel size, layout, exercise facilities, temperature and ventilation.

Kennel proprietors will need to budget for the costs associated with adapting, building, leasing or buying premises. The cost of building kennels varies widely depending on the number of dogs the kennels will accommodate and the range of facilities provided. For example, a single wooden kennel can cost from around £600, while larger mesh kennels can cost upwards of £1,500 each. Kennel manufacturers such as Mitton Hall (www.mittonhallkennelsystems.org) and Lindee Lu (www.lindee-ru.co.uk) provide itemised price lists and quotations for the design and construction of boarding kennels.

Proprietors should contact their local authority to find out whether they will also need to apply for ‘change of use’ planning permission for the land or property where they are proposing to establish the kennels. Anyone intending to establish and run boarding kennels from a residential property should also inform their mortgage company or landlord and check that they are allowed to do this under the terms of their mortgage or tenancy agreement.

Landlords and local authorities may be unwilling to grant permission if, for example, there will be nuisance to neighbours caused by excessive noise made by the dogs and smell from the premises, or parking problems caused by customers and delivery vehicles visiting the kennels.


Land & Property Services (LPS), part of the Department of Finance and Personnel, is responsible for determining business rates in Northern Ireland. Go to www.dfpni.gov.uk/lps/index/property_rating.htm for more information.

It is also important to hold adequate insurance cover both for the home and for business purposes.

Sourcing supplies and equipment

Boarding kennel proprietors need to budget for and source a wide range of dog food, pet care products, specialist equipment, and cleaning materials from reliable trade suppliers.

A typical budget for equipment (excluding VAT) is as follows:

- Dog beds and bedding (from around £6 for a mattress and £20 for an antibacterial bed).
- Collars and leads (from around £5 to £10 each).
- Muzzles (from around £5 to £15 each).
- Dog bowls (from around £2 for a basic plastic bowl to around £8 for a non-spill dual feeder).
- Dog brushes (from around £6 for a basic brush to £20 for a coat stripper to remove dead hair).
- Dog toys (from around £2 to £10 each).

The CIEH Model Licence Conditions require vehicles used by boarding kennels to carry dogs to be fitted with a dog cage or divider. Dividers cost between £10 and £20, while cages cost between £70 and £150, depending on the size and specification. For examples of dog cage suppliers go to www.croftonline.co.uk or www.doggiesolutions.co.uk.

Regular supplies of a range of dry ‘complete’ dog food and wet tinned food, including food for dogs that require special diets, will need to be kept in stock. For example, a 15kg bag of complete dog food ranges in price from around £10 to over £50 depending on variety, while a bag of six large dental chews cost around £2.

A 15kg bag of complete dog food will usually feed four medium to large sized dogs, such as Labradors, for around a week. Kennels accommodating 12 dogs of this size would need to budget for three 15kg bags of dog food per week, which, at an average price of £25 per bag, would cost £75 per week or around £300 per month. For an example of a dog feeding calculator, go to www.wellbeloved.com/ideal-bodyweight/dog-feeding-guides.

Boarding kennels should also have a basic first aid kit suitable for dogs, typically costing around £12 to £15. For an example of a suitable kit, go to www.petsathome.com/shop/en/pets/dog/dog-healthcare/dog-first-aid.

For examples of wholesale pet food and accessories suppliers, go to www.trustpet.co.uk and www.berriewoodwholesale.co.uk.

Regular supplies of commercial cleaning products will be required for daily cleaning and disinfecting of the individual kennels after removal of faeces and urine. For examples of commercial cleaning product suppliers, go to www.clickcleaning.co.uk and www.express-cleaning-supplies.co.uk.

Typically, for the first few months' trading, wholesalers will only deal with new trade customers using pro forma invoices. Payments must be made upon purchase and before delivery of supplies and equipment. Suppliers usually carry out credit checks on new customers applying for a trade account. This includes taking up references, reviewing published accounts (if available) and checking public registers such as County Court Judgments.

**Sourcing suppliers of specialist pet services**

Proprietors of boarding kennels occasionally need to engage specialist pet services, including veterinary services, in case dogs in their care become ill or die.

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons has published a searchable directory of vets, which can be viewed at http://findavet.rcvs.org.uk/find-a-vet.

**Storage and preparation of food and medication for dogs**

The CIEH Model Licence Conditions require that separate hygienic ‘kitchen’ facilities must be provided for the storage and preparation of food for dogs. There must also be two sinks, one for washing up dog bowls and a separate one for staff hand washing.
Dog food must be stored in a secure and vermin-free environment, with refrigeration facilities for any fresh food or opened tins of wet food, and, if appropriate, for any medication that is to be administered to a dog.

Some owners supply kennels with dog food if their pet has a special diet. This should be clearly labelled by kennel proprietors to ensure that it is fed to the correct dog.

**Providing quarantine facilities**

Some boarding kennels provide quarantine accommodation for dogs that have been brought into the UK from abroad and which must be kept in isolation before their owners are allowed to take them home. This is to ensure they have not contracted or do not carry the rabies virus. In order to provide quarantine facilities, boarding kennels must be authorised by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). For a full list of authorised quarantine kennels and more information about quarantine requirements, go to [www.gov.uk/pet-travel-quarantine#premises](http://www.gov.uk/pet-travel-quarantine#premises).

**Waste disposal**

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in England, Wales and Scotland, and the Controlled Waste (Duty of Care) Regulations (Northern Ireland), boarding kennel proprietors have a duty of care to ensure that any trade waste they produce in the course of their business is properly and safely disposed of.

The Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 stipulate that animal faeces is classified as clinical waste and must be disposed of without causing harm either to humans or the environment. In Scotland the Special Waste Regulations 1996 and Special Waste Amendment (Scotland) Regulations 2004 apply, and in Northern Ireland the Hazardous Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 apply.

Animal faeces and any swabs or dressings used to treat dogs at the kennels (also classified as 'clinical waste') must be taken to an authorised disposal site by a licensed clinical waste carrier. Most local authorities provide clinical waste collection services. Alternatively, kennel proprietors can engage a specialist clinical collection service such as [www.clinicalwasteservices.com](http://www.clinicalwasteservices.com) or [www.cliniserve.co.uk](http://www.cliniserve.co.uk).


Under the Water Industry Act 1991, all waste water produced by boarding kennels is classed as 'trade effluent' and proprietors may require formal consent from their water company to sluice this waste water down the freshwater drains at their premises, depending on the scale of their activities.

In England and Wales they should find out whether they need trade effluent consent by contacting their local water company, for example Northumbrian Water ([www.nwl.co.uk/business/trade-effluent.aspx](http://www.nwl.co.uk/business/trade-effluent.aspx)) or Welsh Water ([www.dwrceymru.com/en/Business/Trade-Effluent.aspx](http://www.dwrceymru.com/en/Business/Trade-Effluent.aspx)). In Scotland this is handled by Scottish Water ([www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/](http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/)).
Record keeping and specialist software

The CIEH Model Licence Conditions require boarding kennel proprietors to keep a register of all dogs boarded. The register must include:

- The date of arrival, anticipated date of departure and actual date of departure.
- The name of the dog and any identification, such as a microchip or tattoo.
- The dog's breed, age and gender.
- The name, address and telephone number of the animal's owner and the contact person, if different from the owner.
- The name, address and telephone number of the animal's usual veterinary practice.
- Any health, welfare or nutritional requirements.

Register records must be kept for at least 24 months and be shown to local authority environmental health officers if requested.

Many boarding kennel proprietors use specialist software that enables staff to keep records of customers and their animals, view customer booking details, print and e-mail invoices and booking confirmations and store vet contact details and vaccination information about dogs.

For examples of boarding kennels software suppliers and details of prices for licences (which all exclude VAT), go to www.petadmin.com (which charges from £275 for a software licence) and www.pet-base.co.uk (which charges from £99 for its software package).

Dog collection and delivery

Under the Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 2006, if the kennel proprietor intends to use their vehicle to take dogs over distances greater than 65 km (around 40 miles), for example for a visit to a veterinary practice, they must apply for Animal Transporter Authorisation from Defra. Type 1 Transporter Authorisation is required for journeys of eight hours or less. Go to www.gov.uk/government/publications/welfare-of-animals-during-transport for more information about Transporter Authorisation.

Boarding charges

Boarding kennels typically operate a scale of charges that depend on the length of time the dog is boarded and the size of the dog. Kennels often charge extra, usually a mileage charge, for using their vehicle to transport dogs to and from their owners.

It is common for boarding kennels to operate a higher scale of charges during peak periods of demand, such as during the school summer holidays, Christmas and Easter. Extra charges may also apply if the owner is late in collecting their dog, or for short-notice bookings.

Charges typically start at between £8 and £12 per night for small dogs, such as Chihuahuas and small terrier breeds, rising to around £15 per night for larger breeds, such as Newfoundlands and Saint Bernards. Some kennels charge a fixed rate for all types of dog, which is often around £14 per night.
Some boarding kennels apply additional charges for services such as grooming or obedience training. For example, grooming is often charged at around £20, depending on the breed. Charges for obedience training are usually added to the basic boarding rate, and start from around £12 per training session, although many kennels provide quotations for training on an individual basis.

As best practice, kennel proprietors should ensure that all pricing is clearly stated on the boarding kennels’ website, and is prominently displayed in the reception area along with their standard Terms and Conditions (Ts and Cs).

**Booking terms and conditions (Ts and Cs)**

It is best practice for kennel proprietors to issue all customers with their standard Ts and Cs at the time of booking. These will effectively form a contract once accepted by the customer. Ts and Cs should be published on kennels' websites and clearly displayed in the kennel's reception area.

Ts and Cs should include:

- A clause stipulating that all dogs must have an up to date vaccination certificate, which must be produced on arrival at the kennels.
- Details of time limits relating to vaccinations, for example puppies must have had their last vaccination at least two weeks before arriving at the kennels.
- A disclaimer stating that animals are boarded at the owner’s risk.
- A clause stating that if an animal becomes ill while at the kennels, it will be treated by a vet under the kennel's insurance policy but that pre-existing conditions will not be covered and owners will be liable for any vets' bills for such treatment.
- A clause stating that fees are charged by the day and include a charge for the day of arrival and departure.
- A clause stating that extra charges for grooming, collection and delivery or insurance to cover vets' bills will be added to the boarding fee.
- Details of any deposits charged and whether they will be refunded if the booking is cancelled.


**Taking payment**

A till (from around £50) will handle basic transactions. Go to www.cashregistergroup.com and www.buyatill.co.uk for examples of suppliers.

A Chip and PIN machine will be required to process credit and debit card payments. Examples of providers include www.lloydsbankcardnet.com, www.streamline.com and www.chipandpinsolutions.com. Alternatively they can be leased from banks. Equipment rental costs between £15 and £35 a month, plus per-transaction charges of around 2%.

Payment is increasingly being taken via smartphone apps and keypads. Examples of providers include iZettle (www.izettle.com), which charges variable rates on a percentage basis depending
on sales figures, and WorldPay Zinc, which charges around £60 for a chip and pin keypad and 2.75% per payment with no monthly fees. Go to www.worldpayzinc.com for details.

A safe (from around £75) can be used to keep small amounts of cash secure up to the limits of insurance cover for cash held on the premises. Typical policies provide cover for £1,000 kept in a safe and a further £500 out of the safe. Cash should be banked regularly to keep the amount on site to a minimum. For examples of suppliers of safes go to www.securesafe.co.uk and www.acesafes.co.uk.

**Health and safety**

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, all employers, including those who are self employed, are required to undertake a risk assessment of their workplace and provide employees with adequate health and safety training. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publishes a guide to carrying out a risk assessment at www.hse.gov.uk/risk/fivesteps.htm.

The CIEH Model Licence Conditions require kennel proprietors to establish safe systems of work for staff, particularly when involved in dog handling. Anyone handling dogs is at increased risk of being bitten or contracting illnesses typically passed on through dog faeces such as hydatid disease, giardiasis and toxocariasis. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published information about zoonoses, which are diseases that are passed on by animals, and this can be viewed at www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/topics/zoonoses.htm.

More information about toxocariasis can be viewed at www.nhs.uk/conditions/Toxocariasis/Pages/Introduction.aspx.

Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), boarding kennel proprietors must have health and safety measures in place to protect themselves, any employees and customers from health risk. They include risks arising from exposure to potentially harmful infections passed on to humans by dogs and from irritants in substances such as cleaning fluids.

According to guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), kennel proprietors must ensure areas used for storing substances such as cleaning fluids are well organised and well ventilated. Containers should be clearly labelled and heavier containers stored on lower shelves. Go to www.hse.gov.uk/pubs/guidance/ocm8.pdf to view the guidance.

Kennel staff are at an increased risk of dermatitis and skin disease through regular contact with water and cleaning chemicals. The HSE provides guidance and advice about preventing dermatitis at www.hse.gov.uk/skin.

**Trade associations**

Membership of a trade association can provide a wide range of individual and business benefits.

The UK Kennel & Cattery Association is a specialist trade body that comes under the umbrella of the Pet Industry Federation. Membership benefits include access to a range of services, including discounts on fuel cards and chip and pin machines, advice, training, free animal welfare insurance and legal and tax helplines. The membership fee varies according to turnover and starts from £135 (excluding VAT). Go to www.petcare.org.uk/index.php/membership/membership-benefits/1371-uk-kennel-a-cattery-association for more information.
Promotion

Opportunities for promoting boarding kennels include:

- Listing in specialist business directories such as:
  - Boarding Kennels UK ([www.boardingkennels.org/UK](http://www.boardingkennels.org/UK)), which charges £29 per month.
  - The National Pet Register ([www.nationalpetregister.org](http://www.nationalpetregister.org)), which provides free basic listings.
  - All Pet Services ([www.allpetservices.co.uk](http://www.allpetservices.co.uk)), which provides free basic listings.
- Building relationships with other local pet care services, including vets, breeders, pet shops, dog walkers and dog trainers in the area.
- Attending regional events, including county and national dog shows, which can provide opportunities for proprietors to network with dog owners and others in the pet care sector. Go to [www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities) for information about national events, dog shows and regional dog agility and obedience competitions.
- Displaying the name of the boarding kennels and contact details on business vehicles.
- Creating a five-minute video presentation about the kennels, uploading it onto online video sharing websites such as YouTube and including a link back to the business' website. Go to [www.youtube.co.uk](http://www.youtube.co.uk) and enter 'boarding kennels uk' in the search box for examples of other kennels doing this.
- Creating a Facebook business page to encourage customer referrals. Facebook pages can be customised with the kennel’s name, logo, and other information and regularly updated with photos, articles and special offers. Go to [www.facebook.com/pages/Lower-Mill-Boarding-Kennels-and-Cattery/273084372760355](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Lower-Mill-Boarding-Kennels-and-Cattery/273084372760355) and [www.facebook.com/pages/rathmore-boarding-kennels/337559595288](http://www.facebook.com/pages/rathmore-boarding-kennels/337559595288) for examples of boarding kennels with a Facebook business page.
- Advertising in the hard copy and online versions of local business directories such as Yellow Pages ([www.yell.com](http://www.yell.com)) and Thomson ([www.thomsonlocal.com](http://www.thomsonlocal.com)). Google Places ([www.google.com/lbc](http://www.google.com/lbc)) provides free listings for services such as boarding kennels by location.

Insurance

Boarding kennels require a range of insurance policies, including:

- Public liability insurance, which covers a business against claims from customers, suppliers and members of the public injured or adversely affected as a result of its activities, for example as a result of being bitten by a dog.
- Professional indemnity insurance, which covers boarding kennels against claims of negligence, loss of documents (such as vaccination certificates) and breach of confidentiality (for example disclosing that a customer is away from home, which may lead to them being burgled).
- Employers' liability insurance, which is mandatory as soon as the business employs staff.
• Contract dispute insurance, which covers a business against claims arising from contractual or commercial disputes with suppliers such as promotional directories, equipment suppliers or third parties such as landlords.

• Cover for equipment and other business contents such as office and IT systems, kennel fixtures and fittings, and dog food against accidental damage, spoilage, fire, flood, theft and any business interruption arising as a result.

• Cover for use of any vehicles for business purposes, which must include a minimum of third party cover.

Specialist insurance is available for boarding kennels, which provides care, custody and control cover, cover for vets’ fees, personal accident cover and cover for the death or loss of an animal. For examples of specialist policy providers go to www.eandl.co.uk/pet/kennel-and-cattery-insurance and www.petplanssanctuary.co.uk/petplan-sanctuary/product-range/other-pet-boarding-insurance.

Legislation

This section is intended as a starting point only. It provides an introduction to some of the key legislation that regulates the activities of boarding kennels. Professional advice about the impact of legislation should always be taken before making any business decisions. Relevant legislation includes:

• The Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 requires proprietors of boarding kennels, including anyone providing temporary accommodation for animals in or at their own home, to be licensed by their local authority.

• The Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 requires a veterinary officer from the local Divisional Veterinary Office (DVO) to inspect the boarding premises before a licence is granted.

• The Animal Welfare Act 2006 stipulates that anyone caring for an animal, including proprietors of boarding kennels, must ensure the animal has a suitable environment and diet, is protected from pain, suffering and injury and addresses the dog’s need to be accommodated with, or apart from, other animals.

• The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers and self-employed people to carry out a risk assessment of their workplace and provide adequate health and safety training for employees. In Northern Ireland, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 apply.

• The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) require employers to reduce the risk posed to employees and customers by identifying health hazards, introducing controls and monitoring their effectiveness. In Northern Ireland, the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 (COSHH) apply.

• The Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005 stipulate that animal faeces is classed as clinical waste and must be disposed of without harming human health or the environment. In Northern Ireland the Hazardous Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 apply.
• The Special Waste Regulations 1996 in Scotland set out procedures for disposing of hazardous waste, such as animal faeces.

• The Environmental Protection Act 1990 stipulates that boarding kennels proprietors have a duty to ensure that any noise from business premises, such as dogs barking, does not cause a nuisance to neighbours.

• The Water Resources Act 1991 applies in England and Wales and makes it an offence to pollute controlled waters. In Scotland the Water Environment and Water Services (Scotland) Act 2003 applies and in Northern Ireland the Groundwater Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 apply.

Further information

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UK Market Synopsis 18 Pet Care and Pet Services
BOP 37 Pet Grooming Service
BOP 83 Cattery
BOP 170 Pet Shop
BOP 261 Veterinary Surgery
BOP 308 Dog Walker
BOP 382 Pet Sitter/Home Boarding Service
BOP 425 Pet Dog Trainer

Useful contacts

The UK Kennel & Cattery Association
Website: www.petcare.org.uk

The Kennel Club
Tel: 0844 463 3980
Website: www.thekennelclub.org.uk

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