Introduction

Dog walkers exercise pets on their owners' behalf, usually individually or in groups of no more than four dogs at a time. Dog walkers collect dogs from customers’ homes and drop them off after they have been walked, and must comply with local dog control and fouling regulations.

Many dog walkers are hired to walk dogs while their owners are at work, so they are often required to hold house keys and provide additional services such as feeding dogs and changing their water. Some dog walkers also offer additional related services such as training, pet sitting, grooming, home boarding and dog daycare.

Dog walkers in some locations are required by local bylaws to be licensed to trade. For example, dog walkers must hold a Professional Dog Walker's Licence in order to walk dogs in any of the eight Royal Parks in London.

This profile provides information about starting up and running a dog walking service. 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 start up and run a dog walking service, in practice it is essential for the proprietor to have experience and skills in dog handling, as well as an in-depth understanding of canine care and behaviour, personal health and safety and pet first aid. A good level of personal fitness is also beneficial.

Suitable courses for start-up dog walkers include:

- Various short courses and qualifications run by Animal Jobs Direct, which are held regularly in Buckinghamshire. They include the one-day Level 3 Dog Walking and Pet Sitting Certificate, which costs £270 and covers customer service skills, canine behaviour and dog health issues, and the four-day Dog Behaviour and Training Practical Certificate Course, which costs £850 and covers body language, calming signals and obedience techniques. Go to www.animal-job.co.uk/canine-courses.html for more information.

- The Pet Home Sitting and Dog Walking Skills distance learning course run by The Cambridge Institute of Dog Behaviour & Training (CIDBT), which costs £295 and covers dog characteristics, establishing leadership, marketing and basic bookkeeping. Go to www.cidbt.org.uk/cidbt-4119.html for more information.

- A range of short distance-learning courses run by the British College of Canine Studies, including the Professional Dog Walker Certificate Course and the Canine First Aid Certificate

- The online NarpsUK Pet Sitting and Dog Walking Business Course, which is accredited by Lantra and requires around 20 hours' self-study. The course costs £299 and covers topics such as setting prices, taking payment, insurance, branding, marketing and advertising, animal law and regulations, and forms and contracts for pet sitting (www.narpsuk.co.uk/static/pet-sitting-business-course).

- The Level 2 and 3 Certificates/Diplomas in Animal Care, which are accredited by City & Guilds, and cover aspects of animal feeding, handling, and safe working practices. 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) for details and to search for a local training provider.

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

Anyone starting up in business as a dog walker will benefit from training in general business and enterprise skills. Suitable courses include:

- Free webinars provided by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) covering 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.

- The Digital Marketing Institute online social media marketing course, which costs £349. The course covers the latest trends in social media marketing and using Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn for business. Go to http://digitalmarketinginstitute.com/uk/courses/social-media-marketing for more information.

**Sector awareness**

Dog walkers 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 resources, including:

- 'Pet Business World' (www.petbusinessworld.co.uk), which is an online trade journal that provides news and events and a directory of pet business suppliers.

- 'K9 Magazine' (www.k9magazine.com), a consumer publication providing news and updates on the dog care sector and dog health.

- A variety of professional development courses covering topics such as dog behaviour and health and safety run by The College of Animal Welfare (CAW, www.caw.ac.uk/cpd-revision-short-courses.aspx). Courses cost from around £165 to £295 and are held at various locations across the UK.

- PATS (www.patshow.co.uk), which is an annual pet trade show held each March at Sandown Park, Surrey. The event includes a seminar programme and demonstrations of new pet care products and accessories.
• **Glee Petindex** ([www.gleebrisbane.com](http://www.gleebrisbane.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 dog walkers and which can provide opportunities to network. These events include dog shows and obedience training clubs. Go to [www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities](http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities) for information.

• News and information about the pet care industry, which is provided for members by the Pet Industry Federation (PIF), Go to [www.petcare.org.uk](http://www.petcare.org.uk) for more information.

### What are the key market issues and trends?

Some of the current market issues affecting dog walkers are as follows:

• According to the Pet Food Manufacturers Association (PFMA), in 2014 there were approximately nine million dogs in the UK, with 24% of households owning at least one dog, a figure which has remained largely unchanged since 2009 ([www.pfma.org.uk/pet-population-2014](http://www.pfma.org.uk/pet-population-2014)).

• Spending on pets has remained steady despite the recent economic downturn, according to 2012 research by Mintel. The research revealed that a third of pet owners claimed they would rather cut back spending on their own food before that of their pet. Eight in ten consumers changed their grocery shopping habits to save money, while only one in ten pet owners cut back their spending on pets. The research also found that 42% of respondents said they spoil pets with treats despite having tight budgets, with more than half of dog owners buying Christmas stockings for their dogs. Go to [http://store.mintel.com/pet-food-and-supplies-uk-march-2012](http://store.mintel.com/pet-food-and-supplies-uk-march-2012) and [www.independent.co.uk/property/house-and-home/pets/news/pampered-pets-uk-7717640.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/property/house-and-home/pets/news/pampered-pets-uk-7717640.html) for details.

• A 2013 survey by My Social Petwork found that a quarter of owners viewed their pet as more like a child than an animal, indicating that owners are likely to be concerned about their pet's welfare while they are away from home, which could potentially increase demand for dog walkers. The poll also revealed that 38% of survey respondents who regularly post images of their dogs on Facebook have also set up an account especially for their dog ([www.prweb.com/releases/2013/4/prweb10639067.htm](http://www.prweb.com/releases/2013/4/prweb10639067.htm)).

• Single person households are a key market for dog walkers. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), of the 26.4 million households in the UK in 2013, almost 30% were single person households. The number of single person households is expected to increase by 163,000 per year to 2031 ([www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/family-demography/families-and-households/2013/stb-families.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/family-demography/families-and-households/2013/stb-families.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, which could potentially reduce demand for dog walkers during holiday seasons. This was a rise of 15% when compared to 2012. The survey also revealed that 85% of people aged 55 or over would take their dog on holiday with them if possible ([http://gouk.about.com/od/travelbyinterest/qt/Survey-Pets-Deserve-A-Vacation-Too.htm](http://gouk.about.com/od/travelbyinterest/qt/Survey-Pets-Deserve-A-Vacation-Too.htm)).

• Increasingly busy lifestyles and record long working hours in the UK could potentially increase demand for dog walkers. According to a 2014 report published by the Trades Union Congress (TUC), British employees work the longest hours in Europe. The report
revealed that the proportion of employees working unpaid overtime is at its highest-ever level (21.2% of the UK workforce), while the average amount of unpaid overtime has also reached a record high of seven hours 48 minutes a week. London had the highest number of overtime workers, with 900,000 employees regularly working an extra eight hours per week (www.tuc.org.uk/workplace-issues/work-life-balance/jobs-recovery-and-rising-workpressures-have-led-record-levels).

- In 2014, The Telegraph reported that professional dog walkers had been accused of causing fear and intimidating the public by walking large numbers of dogs on Hampstead Heath, where dog walking licences do not apply and there is no cap on the number of dogs that can be walked. The report also revealed that some dog walkers considered that the increasing imposition of licences and dog control orders were hindering business, forcing them to increase their prices by a third, which deterred dog owners from using their services (www.telegraph.co.uk/lifestyle/pets/10780062/Police-to-target-dog-walkers-in-iconic-London-park.html).

- In August 2014, there were over 6,600 dog walkers listed on Yell.com in the UK, indicating the highly competitive nature of this sector.

- Home and pet sitting services that offer dog walking also provide competition for dog walkers. In August 2014 there were over 3,200 home and pet sitting services listed on Yell.com, indicating the highly competitive nature of the sector. The National Association of Registered Petsitters (National Petsitters) has also accepted more than 8,000 members for registration with the association since setting up in 1993.

**What are the main trading issues?**

Some of the main trading issues faced by dog walkers are:

**Dog control orders and regulations**

Dog walkers should be aware of, and comply with, the controls placed on walking dogs in public areas. Dog Control Orders were introduced in England and Wales under the Dog Control Orders (Prescribed Offences and Penalties, etc.) Regulations 2006 and the Dog Control Orders (Procedures) Regulations 2006, which replaced local byelaws. In Scotland and Northern Ireland dog control issues are covered by local authority byelaws.

The Orders and byelaws enable local authorities and parish councils to determine rules in their area.

Depending on the authority, Dog Control Orders can:

- Restrict where dogs can be walked.
- Ban dogs from designated areas.
- Require dogs to be kept on a lead.
- Restrict the number of dogs that can be walked at one time by one person.
- Set out how the local authority deals with dog fouling offences.

Failure to comply with Orders can result in fines of up to £1,000. For more information about Dog Control Orders, go to www.gov.uk/local-environmental-quality.
Further legislation applying to the control of dogs includes the Road Traffic Act 1998, which makes it an offence for a dog walker to allow a dog to be on, or adjacent to, a 'designated road' (a length of road designated for this purpose by the local authority) without it being held on a lead. Under the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991, a dog walker is guilty of an offence if a dog in their care is dangerously out of control in a public place, or if they allow it to enter private property where it injures someone or appears likely to do so.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 also applies to dog walkers and stipulates that anyone caring for an animal, including proprietors of dog walking services, must ensure the animal has a suitable environment and diet, and is protected from pain, suffering and injury.

**Royal Parks Professional Dog Walking Licences**

Anyone trading as a dog walker and walking dogs in any of the eight Royal Parks in London must hold a Royal Parks Professional Dog Walking Licence issued by the Royal Parks Authority.

Applicants for a Licence must apply four weeks before they intend to start trading and will be committing an offence under the Royal Parks and Other Open Spaces Regulations 1997 if they walk a dog in a Royal Park without holding a Licence.

Applicants for a Dog Walking Licence must hold public liability insurance providing a minimum of £2 million cover and must provide details of a current risk assessment and method statement, as well as evidence of first aid provision and their process for accident reporting.

Dog Walking Licences are issued annually for a calendar year from 1st January and cost £300 (excluding VAT) per walker. Dog walkers employing staff must apply for a licence for each individual walker.

Licensed dog walkers must adhere to the Royal Parks' terms and conditions and Code of Conduct for walkers, which require dog walkers to, for example:

- Wear a Licensed Operator Identification armband provided by the Parks Authority.
- Walk no more than four dogs at a time.
- Ensure that each dog they walk wears a collar and prescribed identification.
- Have a lead for each dog being walked.
- Clean up any dog waste and place it in dog waste bins.

Go to [www.royalparks.org.uk/business/professional-dog-walking-licences/about-the-professional-dog-walking-licence](http://www.royalparks.org.uk/business/professional-dog-walking-licences/about-the-professional-dog-walking-licence) for more information.

**Sourcing supplies and equipment**

Dog walkers need to budget for and source a range of pet care products, specialist equipment and consumables from reliable trade suppliers.

A typical budget for dog-related equipment (excluding VAT) is:

- Collars and leads (from around £5 to £10 each).
- Non-pull harness (from £6 to £10).
- Lead splitters (from £5 to £15).
- 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).
- Dog 'poop scoops' (from £1 each for a plastic shovel to around £45 for a telescopic scoop with integrated dog lead and disposal bags).
- Dog waste bags (from around £7 for 250 to £20 for 1,000).

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

Examples of suppliers also include Pet Planet (www.petplanet.co.uk), Pets at Home (www.petsathome.com) and Pet Supermarket (www.pet-supermarket.co.uk).

Vehicles used by dog walkers to carry dogs should 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.

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

Many dog walkers wear a branded uniform while out walking dogs. Examples of uniform suppliers include Matrix Uniforms (www.matrixuniforms.co.uk), Simon Jersey (www.simonjersey.com) and NextGen Clothing (www.nextgenclothing.co.uk).

Typically, for the first few months’ trading, suppliers 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 trade accounts. This includes taking up references, reviewing published accounts (if available) and checking public registers such as County Court Judgments.

**Disclosure checks**

Dog walkers’ customers and licensing authorities such as the Royal Parks Authority must be satisfied that dog walkers are ‘fit and proper’ either to look after pets or to be licensed to run a dog walking service. While criminal record or ‘Disclosure’ checks are not compulsory, it is good practice to apply for one, particularly as the dog walker may hold keys to customers’ homes. Some trade bodies require prospective members to hold a Disclosure check as a condition of membership.

In England and Wales, this is known as a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Individuals cannot apply directly for DBS checks, but can apply for basic checks via ‘umbrella bodies’, such as APCS CRB Checks (www.criminalrecordchecks.co.uk). Go to www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service for details.

Criminal records checks in Scotland and Northern Ireland are referred to as ‘Disclosures’ and carried out by Disclosure Scotland (www.disclosurescotland.co.uk) and Access Northern Ireland.
Consumer contracts regulations and terms and conditions (Ts and Cs) of business

Under the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 (CCRs), dog walkers are required to provide consumers with specific pre-contractual information before accepting a booking for dog walking and entering into a contract with them.

Dog walkers can make consumers aware of this information by including it in their standard terms and conditions (Ts and Cs), which can be provided to dog owners with the booking form before the booking is confirmed.

The specific pre-contractual information required under the CCRs includes:

- Details about the main aspects and provisions of the dog walking service.
- Details of the dog walker's trading name, address and telephone number.
- The total price for the service and any other additional items, including pet collection and delivery or grooming charges.
- Arrangements for payment, including whether fees are charged by the hour or per walk.
- A reminder to the consumer that the services supplied by the dog walker must conform to the contract and be in accordance with the consumer's rights.

In addition to consumers' statutory rights under the CCRs, it is best practice for dog walker's Ts and Cs to include specific information about any other specific trading policies and procedures. It is also best practice for dog walkers to discuss individual dogs' requirements and behaviour with their owners before walking them for the first time.

For example additional Ts and Cs should include:

- A clause stipulating that all dog owners must show dog walkers an up-to-date vaccination certificate for their dog before the pet is walked.
- Policies on how aggressive or distressed dogs will be managed while in the care of the dog walker.
- A clause stating that if an animal becomes ill while in the dog walker's care, it will be treated by a vet but that pet owners will be liable for any vets' bills for such treatment.
- Arrangements for the exchange and safe-keeping of house keys.
- Details of public liability insurance held by the dog walker.
- Details of the booking cancellation policy.

For examples of dog walker Ts and Cs, go to [www.dogwalking4u.co.uk/html/terms_and_conditions.html](http://www.dogwalking4u.co.uk/html/terms_and_conditions.html) and [www.dogwalkerbrighton.co.uk/content/termsandconditions](http://www.dogwalkerbrighton.co.uk/content/termsandconditions).

It is worthwhile having a solicitor examine Ts and Cs to ensure they comply with the law.
Go to www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/advice/guidanceforbusinessontradingstandardslaw.cfm for guidance and further details about the Regulations, which apply to contracts entered into both on and off the dog walker’s premises, as well as to bookings made online or on the phone.

**Pricing and VAT**

Prices charged by dog walkers vary widely depending on the breed of dog and the level of demand and competition in their local area.

Dog walkers typically charge between £7.50 and £10 per dog for a walk lasting around 45 minutes to an hour. Discounts are often offered for walking two or more dogs from the same household. The National Association of Registered Pet Sitters (NARPS) recommends that its members walk no more than four dogs at a time.

Some dog walkers apply a mileage charge for collecting and dropping off dogs outside a certain radius. Many also charge a small fee for additional services such as drying the dog after the walk and changing the dog’s food and water.

Dog walkers’ services are standard-rated for VAT and proprietors must register for VAT once their turnover reaches the mandatory threshold. Go to www.hmrc.gov.uk/vat/forms-rates/rates/goods-services.htm for more information about VAT rates.

**Taking payment**

Some dog walkers require customers to pay for the service in advance, while others invoice customers monthly for the cost of regular daily visits to pet owners’ homes to walk dogs.

Cash and cheques are accepted and 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 each location where they carry out work (such as walking dogs) 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.

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, 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) and separate but similar legislation in Northern Ireland, dog walkers must have health and safety measures in place to protect themselves, any employees and customers from health risks. They include risks arising from exposure to potentially harmful infections passed on to humans by dogs.
Dog walkers are at an increased risk of dermatitis and skin disease through regular contact with soap and water as they need to wash their hands frequently. The HSE provides guidance and advice about preventing dermatitis at [www.hse.gov.uk/skin](http://www.hse.gov.uk/skin).

**Waste disposal**

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in England, Wales and Scotland, and the Controlled Waste (Duty of Care) Regulations (Northern Ireland), dog walkers have a duty of care to ensure that any waste produced by dogs 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.

Dog faeces must be bagged and placed in designated dog waste bins provided in parks and other public places in order to comply with local byelaws.

**Trade associations**

Membership of a professional association can provide a wide range of individual and business benefits. Relevant associations include:

- The National Association of Pet Sitters and Dog Walkers (NarpsUK, [www.narpsuk.co.uk](http://www.narpsuk.co.uk)), which provides members with benefits including discounted public liability insurance, help with applying for a Disclosure check and listing in the NARPS members’ directory. There is an initial joining fee of £120 and ongoing membership costs £6.50 per month.

- The National Association of Registered Petsitters (National Petsitters, [www.dogsit.com](http://www.dogsit.com)), which is a trade body representing pet and house sitters. Membership benefits include template contracts, listing on the National Register of Petsitters and discounts on training courses. Membership costs £400 for the first year, with a £100 annual renewal fee.

- The Pet Industry Federation, which provides membership benefits including access to a range of services such as 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 [www.petcare.org.uk/index.php/join-the-bdga](http://www.petcare.org.uk/index.php/join-the-bdga) for more information.

**NarpsUK terms and conditions**

NarpsUK members must adhere to their terms and conditions, which require them to:

- Hold public liability insurance.

- Have received a recent Disclosure check if they are to hold keys or have access to customers’ properties for the purposes of dog walking and pet sitting.

- Walk no more than four dogs at a time.

For more information, go to [www.narpsuk.co.uk/static/terms-and-condition](http://www.narpsuk.co.uk/static/terms-and-condition).
Promotion

Opportunities for promoting dog walking services include:

- Listing in specialist directories such as:
  - The National Pet Register (www.nationalpetregister.org), which provides free basic listings.
  - All Pet Services (www.allpetservices.co.uk), which provides free basic listings.
  - PetsLocally (www.petslocally.co.uk/uk/dog-walking), which provides free basic listings.
  - DogWalkerDirectory (www.dogwalkerdirectory.co.uk), which provides free basic listings.

- Building relationships with other local pet care services, including vets, breeders, pet shops, and dog trainers.

- Attending regional events, including county and national dog shows, which can provide opportunities for dog walkers to network with dog owners and others in the pet care sector. Go to www.thekennelclub.org.uk/activities for information about national events, dog shows and regional dog agility and obedience competitions.

- Displaying the name of the dog walking service with contact details on business vehicles.

- Creating a five-minute video presentation about the dog walking service, 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 and enter ‘dog walking service UK’ in the search box for examples of other dog walkers doing this.

- Creating a Facebook business page to encourage customer referrals. Facebook pages can be customised with the dog walker’s name, logo and other information and regularly updated with photos, articles and special offers. Go to www.facebook.com/StardustDogWalking and www.facebook.com/pages/Henry’s-Dog-Walking-and-Pet-Sitting-Services/281205425323910 for examples of dog walkers with Facebook business pages.

- Advertising in the hard copy and online versions of local business directories such as Yellow Pages (www.yell.com) and Thomson (www.thomsonlocal.com). Google Places (www.google.com/lbc) provides free listings for services such as dog walkers by location.

Insurance

Dog walkers require a range of insurance policies, including:

- Public liability insurance, which covers a dog walker 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 a dog walker against claims of negligence, loss of documents (such as vaccination certificates) and breach of confidentiality (for example disclosing that a customer is out at work for many hours each day, which may lead to them being burgled).

- Employers’ liability insurance, which is mandatory as soon as the business employs staff.
• Cover for equipment and other business contents such as office and IT systems, premises fixtures and fittings, against accidental damage, 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 dog walkers, 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.cliverton.co.uk/insurance-products/pets-animal-trades/dog-walking-pet-sitting-and-pet-taxi and www.petplansanctuary.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 a dog walker. Professional advice about the impact of legislation should always be taken before making any business decisions. Relevant legislation includes:

• The Animal Welfare Act 2006 stipulates that anyone caring for an animal, including proprietors of dog walking services, must ensure the animal has a suitable environment and diet and is protected from pain, suffering and injury.

• 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.

• In Scotland the Special Waste Regulations 1996 set out procedures for disposing of hazardous waste such as animal faeces.

• The Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 govern all types of contract between traders and consumers and place particular obligations on providing consumers making a booking off-premises and online or over the phone with pre-contractual information.

• The Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982 stipulates that it is an implied term of any contract for services that they must be carried out with reasonable skill and care, within a reasonable time and at a reasonable charge. Some provisions of the Act have been introduced in Scotland through the Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1994. However, common law in Scotland has a similar effect to the Act.
Further information

To access hundreds of practical factsheets, market reports and small business guides, go to:
Website: www.scavenger.net

UK Market Synopsis 18 Pet Care and Pet Services
BOP 37 Pet Grooming Service
BOP 48 Boarding Kennels
BOP 170 Pet Shop
BOP 382 Pet Sitter/Home Boarding Service
BOP 425 Pet Dog Trainer

Useful contacts

National Association of Pet Sitters & Dog Walkers (NarpsUK)
Tel: (01322) 683564
Website: www.narpsuk.co.uk

National Association of Registered Petsitters (National Petsitters)
Tel: 0845 230 8544
Website: www.dogsit.com

Pet Industry Federation (PIF)
Tel: (01234) 273933
Website: www.petcare.org.uk

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

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