

***Planning advice for
businesses during
the Coronavirus
pandemic***



July 2020

During the current coronavirus pandemic Dartmoor National Park Authority understands that businesses may look to change their business model and diversify their activities. This planning advice note answers some common questions you may have about when planning permission is and isn't required for certain activities.

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Can I serve takeaway food from my restaurant, café or pub?

The government have introduced a temporary permitted development right which means planning permission is not required for restaurants, cafes (Class A3), and drinking establishments (Class A4) to additionally provide a takeaway or delivery service for hot or cold food. This will last until March 2021.

Can I sell goods from my shopfront?

Planning permission is not required to sell goods from your shopfront or business doorway. You should however think about your impact on traffic flow and people's ability to keep their distance.

If alterations to the shopfront are required to facilitate this, then permission is likely to be required, including for canopies.

Can I use space outside my shop for seating or to sell products?

Temporary street trading on the public highway does not require planning permission, but must have the consent of the relevant Council and may require a street trading licence.

Outside tables and chairs normally require planning permission to ensure they are appropriately designed and located and a licence from [Devon County Council where they are located on the public highway \(e.g. pavement\)](#).

The Government have introduced a streamlined application process for the placing of removable furniture over the public highway by businesses selling food and drink for consumption on or off the premises. Pavement licenses provide planning and licensing consent for up to a year (not beyond September 2021), at a cost of £100 and applications are determined within 5 days. Clear access routes will need to be maintained to support social distancing and the needs of all users. Further guidance is available on the [Government Coronavirus website](#).

Can I put extra signs out to advertise my business?

Additional outdoor signage can be shown on forecourts or enclosed areas in front of businesses which are not part of the public highway without the need for consent.

Advance signs, showing directions to a business, should be in the form of brown tourism signs, see [Devon County Council's website](#) for guidance.

Most other non-standard signage types will require consent. Our [Design Guide](#) provides tips on appropriate signage design in the National Park.

A-boards on the public highway require advertisement consent as well as consent from the relevant Council. A-boards are generally resisted because they impede pedestrian movement, which is now very important for maintaining social distancing guidelines.

[Full guidance on consent required for outdoor advertisement and signs](#)

Can a group of businesses hold an outdoor market together?

The Government have announced that Outdoor markets will be able to reopen from 1 June, provided they meet COVID-19 secure guidelines to protect shoppers and workers.

Planning permission is not required for a market, provided no development is needed to facilitate it and it is not being held for more than 28 days in any calendar year.

The permission of the landowner will be required and it will be necessary to obtain a licence from your local Council.

Can I erect a canopy or awning?

Planning permission may be required for a canopy or awning depending on the area it is covering, its height, the type of building it is attached or related to. We would

always encourage you to ask us if permission is required and have the permission of the landowner before installing any canopy or awning.

Do I need permission to work or operate my business from home?

Planning permission is not needed to work from home where the overall character of the dwelling will not change as a result of the business, for example the usual residents working from a computer.

If the answer to any of the following questions is 'yes', then permission will probably be needed:

- Will your home no longer be used mainly as a private residence?
- Will your business result in a marked rise in traffic or people calling?
- Will your business involve any activities unusual in a residential area?
- Will your business disturb your neighbours at unreasonable hours or create other forms of nuisance such as noise or smells?

Whatever business you carry out from your home, whether it involves using part of it as a bed-sit or for 'bed and breakfast' accommodation, using a room as your personal office, providing a childminding service, for hairdressing, dressmaking or music teaching, or using buildings in the garden for repairing cars or storing goods connected with a business - the key test is: is it still mainly a home or has it become business premises?

Can I use land temporarily for different uses?

The Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA) already allows for the use of any land for any purpose for up to 28 days in total in any calendar year and the provision of any moveable structure associated to that permitted use. This is subject to the site not being within the curtilage of a building.

In June 2020, Class BA was introduced to the TCPA, which allows for the use of any land, in addition to that above, for any purposes for not more than 28 days in total during 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 and the provision of any moveable structures for the purpose of the permitted use. This is subject to the site not being within the curtilage of a listed building.

Therefore, until 31 December 2020:

- Land that is not within the curtilage of a building can operate a temporary use for 56 days
- Land that is within the curtilage of a non-listed building can operate a temporary use for 28 days.
- Land within a curtilage of a listed building has no temporary use rights.

Have any of the Authority's planning policies changed in response to the coronavirus lockdown?

The Authority's policies remain the same and in general we do not see reason to change our approach to planning decisions in the current circumstances. However, we remain alert to the unique pressures the current circumstances are putting on businesses and will happily balance these against our policies where there is robust evidence and justification.

Our Local Plan is being reviewed and we are about to submit our [Draft Local Plan](#) for examination. When we do this we will publish a list of policies that we are beginning to use for decision making.

How do I get further advice?

Our officers are working from home but are still contactable and happy to provide advice on all planning matters. You can contact us Monday to Thursday between 9am and 5pm, and Friday 9am to 4.30pm on:

01626 832093

planning@dartmoor.gov.uk