



**Rob and Lael,**  
Registrars at the  
Old Marylebone Town Hall  
[#MyMarylebone](#)  
[#MyWestminster](#)

# Westminster Business Handbook

Information and support for your business

**2018 – 2019**



City of Westminster

# Introduction from Cllr Robert Davis MBE DL

Welcome to the 2018/19 Business Handbook.

A strong business community is a top priority for Westminster City Council and we are committed to investing in our services to you. Whether you are an established business or just starting out, the Council's Business Unit provides one front door for all your business needs, offering guidance and information on a wide range of issues.

Our ambition is for Westminster to be the best place in the UK to locate, start or grow a business and a place where enterprise makes a major contribution to the rich vibrancy of our neighbourhoods and communities.

Westminster is home to nearly 700,000 jobs across over 54,000 businesses. Many of these businesses already play an important and positive role – acting as a responsible business. However, research and discussion has shown that much of the impact is made outside of the City, in other areas of London, the UK or internationally. We have asked Westminster businesses and organisations with a stake in the City to make an active positive contribution to their communities by signing up to our Lions and Heart of the City programmes. These programmes will enable businesses to work on and showcase their corporate social responsibility activities that have a positive impact on Westminster communities.

We also want to create opportunities to help people get into work across the city. Our Westminster Employment Service will help ensure that they do, while at the same time help employers to access a wider, more diverse pool of talent.

I want to continue to work with you to see how businesses can make even more of a contribution to our communities. With your support, we can continue to realise the benefits of living and working in the heart of the nation's capital. By encouraging local residents to succeed, you can play a part in creating a City for All. Westminster City Council wants to support you and your business.



**Cllr Robert Davis MBE DL**

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member  
for Business, Culture and Heritage

✉ [business@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:business@westminster.gov.uk)



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**Bridgette,**  
Westminster Employment  
Service Coach

#MySoho  
#MyWestminster



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## Business Unit

Westminster City Council's Business Unit provides a single contact for all your business needs, making it easier to navigate through council and external services and get the information and advice you need.

Whether you're just starting out, or an established business looking to grow, the Business Unit will provide advice and guidance adapted to your needs.

The Business Unit can provide local economy and market intelligence, providing initial advice and ongoing support for your investment enquiries and introducing you to local stakeholders.

The Business Unit team can also introduce you to the network of enterprise spaces with levels of affordability, flexibility in tenure, fostering of peer-support business community, and a professional working environment.

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Visit our Business Unit website – [businesswestminster.com](https://businesswestminster.com)

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### Better Broadband for Businesses

Westminster City Council has secured £2.8m European Regional Development funding to deliver the Connect Westminster project.

The project aims to connect SME's in Westminster and the West End Partnership area of Camden with gigabit capable broadband connectivity.

You can apply for a voucher worth up to £2,000 to cover the installation cost for an upgraded connection with one of our 100+ registered suppliers.

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To find out if you are eligible, download the application form and view the available suppliers, at [businesswestminster.com/connect](https://businesswestminster.com/connect)

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### Apprenticeships

The economic value of Apprenticeships is compelling and we are passionate about Apprenticeships becoming an integral part of our city's future.

Through our dedicated Business Unit we are able to provide Westminster based businesses with free, high quality, impartial advice and support to help them engage successfully with Apprenticeships. We can guide employers through the process of hiring and training an apprentice and selecting an Apprenticeship provider.

The Business Unit would like to hear from Westminster businesses with established and exemplary apprenticeship programmes so that best practice can be shared. To access free and impartial advice about apprenticeships contact – [businessunit@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:businessunit@westminster.gov.uk)

## Business rates

Non-domestic rates, otherwise known as business rates, is a tax levied on non-domestic properties.

Westminster City Council collects around £2.2b in business rates per annum from its 37,000 non-domestic properties.

However, the council currently only retains a small proportion of this sum around £126m or 5.8% of what the council collects in Business rates.

From the £126m the Council receives it is spent on Adults Services (£33m); Children's Services (£32m); City Management & Communities (£31m); Growth Planning & Housing (£25m); and Corporate Services (£6m).

### Viewing and paying your business rates online

It's quick and easy to view your Westminster business rates online. The most convenient way to pay is by direct debit and you can apply online at [westminster.gov.uk/businessratesdd](https://westminster.gov.uk/businessratesdd)

You can also pay online using your debit/credit card, over the phone or by bank transfer.

You can also switch to paper-free e-billing or apply for exemptions and relief.

📄 [westminster.gov.uk/businessrates](https://westminster.gov.uk/businessrates)

#### Sign up to our business newsletter

Filled with the latest business news, special offers and training, the business newsletter will provide you with the information you need to promote and grow your business in Westminster.

📄 [westminster.gov.uk/business-e-newsletter](https://westminster.gov.uk/business-e-newsletter)



**Sylvia,**  
works for Recruit London

#MyVictoria  
#MyWestminster

# **WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL AND THE POLICE WORK HARD TO TACKLE GRAFFITI. BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP.**

GRAFFITI IS CRIMINAL DAMAGE WHICH SERIOUSLY AFFECTS THE IMAGE OF YOUR BUSINESS AND LOCAL AREA. JUST AS YOU'D REPLACE A BROKEN WINDOW, **YOU HAVE A DUTY TO ENSURE GRAFFITI IS REMOVED FROM YOUR PROPERTY IN A TIMELY MANNER.**

**FOLLOW THE BELOW STEPS TO ENSURE YOUR AREA AND BUSINESS REMAIN GRAFFITI FREE.**

**Avoid painting accessible walls in light colours, as this acts as a canvas. Graffiti proof paint will significantly lower the costs of cleaning.**

**Some insurance policies will cover the cost of removing graffiti. Check with your providers, who can manage your claim.**

**Westminster's Planning team enforce graffiti on businesses. Under Section 224 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 you could receive a £2500 fine and £250 per day should they continue to be displayed.**

**For more information or a quote about removing graffiti from your business contact the Commercial Waste Service:**

T: 020 7641 6180  
E: [commercialwaste@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:commercialwaste@westminster.gov.uk)  
W: [westminster.gov.uk/graffiti-flyposting](http://westminster.gov.uk/graffiti-flyposting)



**City of Westminster**  
COMMERCIAL WASTE

# Westminster Employment Service

Westminster Employment Service is a free to use recruitment service for Westminster businesses and residents. The service is managed by Westminster City Council and supported by local agencies. The service aims to work with businesses to help our residents to get back to work and stay in employment.

We work with local employers to fill a wide range of vacancies ensuring that residents benefit from opportunities on their doorstep. We've already helped over 2,000 people into work in the last three years.

Our team is made up of people that care about helping you find the right staff, whilst also helping you make a positive contribution in your community and your corporate social responsibility programme.

We offer the following services to help your business:

- free local recruitment offer – delivered through our Recruit London programme
- make a difference in your community – by providing people with work experience, job tasters and employer led workshops for job-seekers.

To find out how the Westminster Employment Service could benefit your business visit [westminster.gov.uk/ememployment](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/ememployment)

  
City of Westminster

**Westminster  
Employment  
Service**



**Jaspal,**  
Westminster Employment  
Service Coach

#MyPaddington  
#MyWestminster



# Direct debit your **business rates**

The easiest and most convenient way to pay your business rates

- easy to set up  
online **[westminster.gov.uk/businessratesdd](https://westminster.gov.uk/businessratesdd)**  
or phone **020 8315 2050**
- saves time
- eBilling possible for direct debit payers
- prevents late payment and reminders
- secure and protected by the direct debit guarantee
- three direct debit dates to choose from 1st, 5th, 15th

## Become a healthy workplace business

Westminster City Council is offering free support to help your business develop a wellbeing culture in your organisation and, as a result, boost performance through the London Healthy Workplace Charter.

The Healthy Workplace Charter is a framework for action that helps employers build good practice in health and wellbeing in their organisation.

There are many benefits of having a healthy and happy workforce including:

- saving money
- enhancing engagement
- improving productivity
- lowering sickness absences
- heavily discounted mental health and wellbeing training for managers
- free local support from a healthy workplace advisor
- prestigious accreditation to help you stand out.

To get involved – sign up at [westminster.gov.uk/healthy-workplace-charter](https://westminster.gov.uk/healthy-workplace-charter)



**Lael,**  
works in Marylebone

#MyMarylebone  
#MyWestminster

# Contact the council

Contact the council to get the information you need on everything from licensing and training, health and safety, commercial waste, business rates and more.

You can also go online to find the information you need quickly and at a time that suits you.

Call our Business Unit which is dedicated contact centre for businesses, on **020 7641 2070**.

📧 [businesswestminster.com](http://businesswestminster.com)

## Useful websites

### Business rates

📧 [westminster.gov.uk/businessrates](http://westminster.gov.uk/businessrates)

Pay your business rates online, notify us of a change of address and apply for exemptions and relief.

### Commercial waste and recycling

📧 [cleanstreets.westminster.gov.uk](http://cleanstreets.westminster.gov.uk)

Sign up to our commercial waste services, order more bags and find out how to dispose of bulky items.

### City promotions, events and filming

📧 [westminster.gov.uk/events-and-filming](http://westminster.gov.uk/events-and-filming)

Apply to film or hold an event.

### Food safety

📧 [westminster.gov.uk/food-safety-businesses](http://westminster.gov.uk/food-safety-businesses)

Register your food business with the council, report a concern about food safety and sign up for food safety training.

### Health and safety

📧 [westminster.gov.uk/health-and-safety](http://westminster.gov.uk/health-and-safety)

Report health and safety concerns, sign up for training courses and find the latest advice.

### Licensing

📧 [westminster.gov.uk/licensing](http://westminster.gov.uk/licensing)

Apply for a licence, request pre-application advice and pay your annual fee.

### Noise

📧 [westminster.gov.uk/noise](http://westminster.gov.uk/noise)

Report noise concerns and find the permitted hours at which work can be carried out.

### Parking

📧 [westminster.gov.uk/parking](http://westminster.gov.uk/parking)

Apply for a trade parking permit, parking bay suspensions and skip licences.

### Pest control

📧 [westminster.gov.uk/pest-control](http://westminster.gov.uk/pest-control)

Request advice and treatment to get rid of pests, rodents and other potential health hazards.

## Report It

📱 [westminster.gov.uk/report-it](https://westminster.gov.uk/report-it)

Go online to report problems with the streets around your business directly from your mobile phone or tablet. Just fill in a few details using our Report It tool, upload a photo of what you have seen and send it to us.

## Planning

📱 [westminster.gov.uk/planning](https://westminster.gov.uk/planning)

Apply for planning permission, comment on planning applications and apply for a temporary structure, road closure or crane licence.

## Street cleansing

📱 [westminster.gov.uk/street-cleansing](https://westminster.gov.uk/street-cleansing)

Find your street's cleaning schedule and report street cleansing issues.

## Street trading

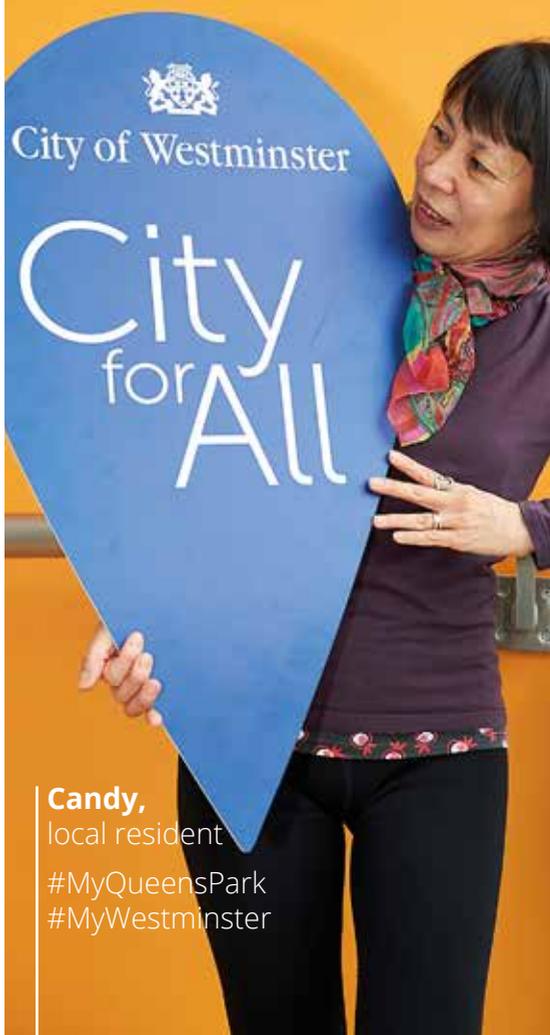
📱 [westminster.gov.uk/street-trading](https://westminster.gov.uk/street-trading)

Become a licensed market trader, pay market pitch fees and apply for a tables and chairs licence.

## Trading standards

📱 [westminster.gov.uk/trading-standards](https://westminster.gov.uk/trading-standards)

Get advice and guidance on consumer protection legislation affecting your business and protect your business from scams.



**Candy,**

local resident

#MyQueensPark

#MyWestminster

## Could your business benefit from up to £2k towards better broadband and ultrafast capable connectivity?

### To qualify for your £2,000 broadband voucher you must meet the following criteria

- Employ fewer than 250 people
- Annual turnover is below €50m
- Your balance sheet is below €43m
- Your business is not a subsidiary and/or under the control of a larger SME entity (25 threshold)
- Must comply with European State Aid rules
- Have received less than €200,000 in other grants in the current and two previous financial years.

To check if your business is eligible, view the suppliers list and to register your interest, visit our new Business Unit website

**[businesswestminster.com/connect](https://businesswestminster.com/connect)**

**For more information visit [businesswestminster.com/connect](https://businesswestminster.com/connect)**

Or contact us on:

**Tel 020 7641 2070**

**Email [connectapplications@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:connectapplications@westminster.gov.uk)**

# Business support

## Support and networking

### Business Improvement Districts

📄 [westminster.gov.uk/westminster-bids](https://westminster.gov.uk/westminster-bids)

The Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are business-led and business funded bodies formed to improve a geographically defined area. The BIDs provide your business with a voice in creating a more appealing environment and promoting and marketing your local area.

### Business Information Points

📄 [westminster.gov.uk/bip](https://westminster.gov.uk/bip)

Located in libraries across Westminster, Business Information Points provide a range of high-quality resources to help you develop and build your business – all for free. Access market research databases including Mintel, regular events and workshops with guest speakers, and fantastic networking opportunities

### Federation of Small Businesses

📄 [fsb.org.uk/benefits](https://fsb.org.uk/benefits)

🐦 [@FSB\\_Policy](https://twitter.com/FSB_Policy)

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) promotes and protects the interests of the self-employed and owners of small firms. Members can make use of a wide range of member benefits including networking events, legal protection insurance and a financial health check.



### Jeremy,

works at the Entrepreneurship Institute at King's College

#MyWestEnd

#MyWestminster

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## London Chamber of Commerce

📄 [londonchamber.co.uk](http://londonchamber.co.uk)

🐦 @LondonChamber

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) is the capital's largest independent networking and business support organisation. Representing the interests of thousands of companies, we connect thousands of business people every year and offer our members a wide range of practical and professional services.

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## National business support initiatives

📄 [greatbusiness.gov.uk](http://greatbusiness.gov.uk)

🐦 @BusinessisGreat

Connect to expert advice and sources of information to help you build and grow your business through the government's Great Business programme.

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## Westminster Business Council

📄 [westminsterbc.org.uk](http://westminsterbc.org.uk)

🐦 @WestminsterBC

A membership organisation helping business to grow through meetings with potential clients, industry insights, networking and mentoring. Companies with a turnover of less than £1m a year can apply for free SME membership.

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## King's College

📄 [businesswestminster.com/business-enterprise/westminster-business-unit](http://businesswestminster.com/business-enterprise/westminster-business-unit)

King's College is offering a variety of support services for businesses within Westminster. The King's Legal Clinic is a new free legal advice service offered by the Dickson Poon School of Law at King's College London. The King's Business School is providing free business consultancy to businesses within Westminster covering topics like strategy, business planning, financial analysis, marketing, recruitment and data analysis.

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## Entrepreneurship Institute

📄 [kcl.ac.uk/innovation/business/index.aspx](http://kcl.ac.uk/innovation/business/index.aspx)

King's College London has collaborations with local businesses and the Westminster community. These include activities from the Entrepreneurship Institute to help school and college students develop enterprise skills as part of Westminster Enterprise Week and initiatives for university Business School students to help solve local business challenges.

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## Places of work – Enterprise Spaces

The council is committed to offering the right support and environment for start-up businesses. Through our network of enterprise spaces, we've been able to create workspace for residents with entrepreneurial aspirations, job opportunities for local residents, and space for new and early stage businesses who aren't in a position yet to afford mainstream workspace.

You can find a range of workspaces across the City of Westminster at:

📄 [businesswestminster.com/business-enterprise/world-class-location-business/](http://businesswestminster.com/business-enterprise/world-class-location-business/)

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## Great Western Studios

📄 [greatwesternstudios.com](http://greatwesternstudios.com)

🐦 @GW\_Studios

Over 100 studio spaces with a café and gallery space in Westbourne for a thriving cluster of creative industry businesses.

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## Somerset House Studios

📄 [somersethouse.org.uk](http://somersethouse.org.uk)

🐦 @somersethouse

The council sponsored the development of the studios, which offer affordable creative industry studio space services and connect start-ups with audiences.

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## Maida Hill Place

📄 [maidahillplace.co.uk](http://maidahillplace.co.uk)

🐦 @MaidaHillPlace

Maida Hill Place is a not-for-profit social enterprise set up to provide training and support for early stage food businesses, with affordable kitchen and menu-testing space. It was set up to be a sustainable hub on the high street and encourage economic growth in the local area.

Westminster City Council won a business friendly council award from the Federation of Small Business' based on our support of this initiative.

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## Westminster Enterprise Centre

📄 [westminster-enterprise.org.uk](http://westminster-enterprise.org.uk)

🐦 @EnterpriseW9

Affordable hot-desking space with meeting rooms for entrepreneurial residents combined with affordable, and sometimes free, business information, advice and guidance.

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## Financial support and grants

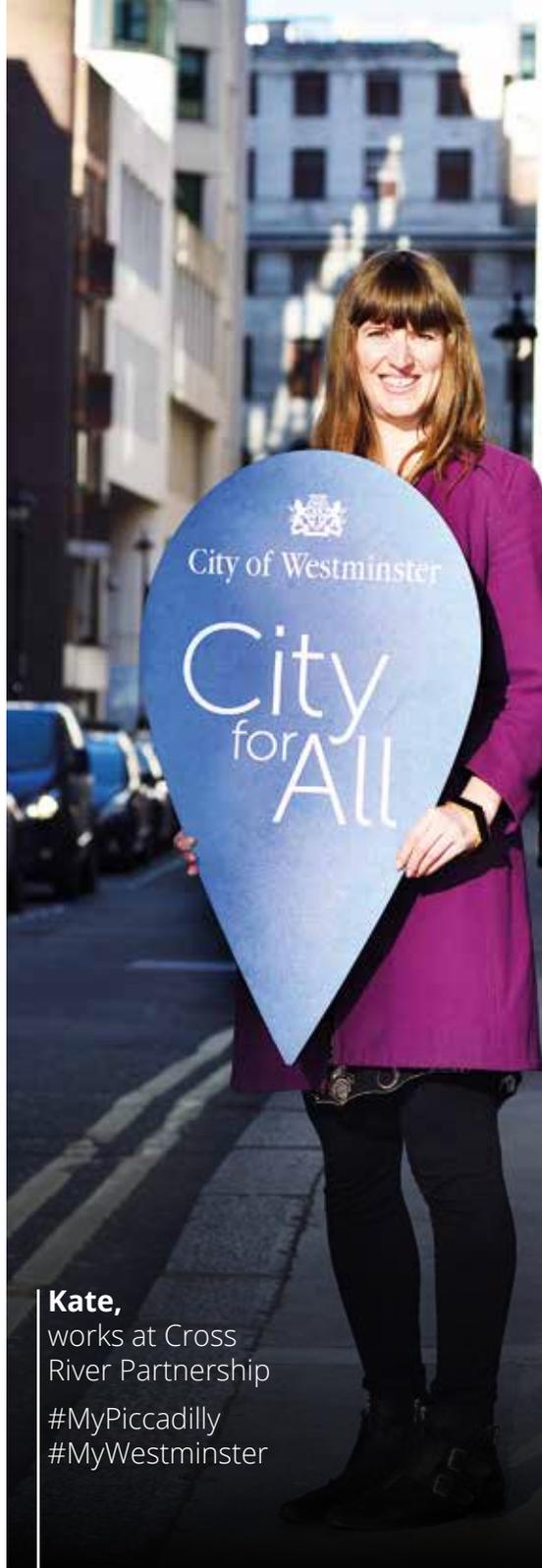
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### Creative Industry Finance

📄 [creativeindustryfinance.org.uk](http://creativeindustryfinance.org.uk)

🐦 @CIFinance

Free expert business advice and access to loan finance from £2,500 to £2.5m+ for creative enterprises.



**Kate,**  
works at Cross  
River Partnership  
#MyPiccadilly  
#MyWestminster

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## Start Up Loans

[📄 startuploans.co.uk](https://startuploans.co.uk)  
[🐦 @StartUpLoansUK](https://twitter.com/StartUpLoansUK)

Work with Start Up Loans' partners to develop a business plan before securing a loan to build your business. Once you have your loan you'll also be given access to an expert mentor, free training courses and business offers.

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## Green growth

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### Cycling courses

[📄 westminster.gov.uk/cycling](https://westminster.gov.uk/cycling)

Help your employees to cycle with confidence with free one-to-one City Cycle courses and bike checks.

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### Electric vehicles

[📄 westminster.gov.uk/electric-vehicles](https://westminster.gov.uk/electric-vehicles)

Vehicles that run on electricity benefit from discounted parking in Westminster and no congestion charge.

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## Tendering for council services

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### capitalEsourcing

[📄 capitalEsourcing.com](https://capitalEsourcing.com)

Stay on top of opportunities to supply services, goods or works to the council and other London boroughs by registering your company details at capitalEsourcing.

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## Training

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### Food safety, health and safety, licensing

[📄 westminster.gov.uk/training-programme](https://westminster.gov.uk/training-programme)

The council offers professional training courses in food safety, health and safety,

licensing and more to equip you and your team with the knowledge to protect your customers and business. Online and bespoke courses are also available.

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## Westminster Adult Education Service

[📄 waes.ac.uk](https://waes.ac.uk)

Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES) is Westminster's adult college, offering tailored, affordable training programmes, workplace learning and apprenticeships to help small and medium businesses upskill their workforce and face business challenges.

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## Recruitment

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### Recruit London

[📄 westminster.gov.uk/employment/business](https://westminster.gov.uk/employment/business)

Recruit London is a free local recruitment service for businesses supported by Westminster City Council and its partners, as part of our Westminster Employment Service. Recruit London is designed, delivered and managed by regeneration agency Cross River Partnership (CRP).

Recruit London's workplace coordinators train and place out of work residents into jobs across Westminster and central London. With over 1,600 residents placed into work with flagship stores, hotels and restaurants across the West End, Recruit London can help you find candidates with great potential who live in Westminster and are ready for work.



**Open Age, QPHR Hub**

Westminster residents

#MyQueensPark

#MyWestminster

# WESTMINSTER city save

## PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS

Over 600 businesses and leading attractions across Westminster and London have provided fantastic offers and great savings to those who live, visit and work in Westminster as part of the council's award-winning City Save scheme.



Westminster City Save already has over 80,000 members and this number is growing daily.

Promote your business for free, whether it's a new service, an event or your existing offer. Increase enquires, sales, web hits and attendees at events. Choose from long term or short term offers, and choose the terms and conditions that suit you.

## ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

Advertise your business in one of our award-winning magazines. Opportunities include our quarterly Reporter magazine to all homes in Westminster, as well as Children First for parents of young children, Edit for teenagers and Westminster Plus for the over 65s.

📄 [westminster.gov.uk/advertising-opportunities](http://westminster.gov.uk/advertising-opportunities)

**Provide an offer or discount to Westminster residents, and your business could be seen by:**

- 66,000 subscribers to our fortnightly e-newsletter
- over 35,000 visitors to the City Save website each month
- over 22,000 followers on social media
- thousands of households across Westminster that subscribe to our publications.

📄 [westminster.gov.uk/citysave](http://westminster.gov.uk/citysave)



# Westminster Lions

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## Westminster Lions

We have identified ways your local businesses can make a real difference to our residents and communities, through enhancing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) schemes and we are happy to provide you information to get you started.

We want to recognise businesses who work hard to make a positive impact which is why we have recently launched the Westminster Lion a form of accreditation that businesses can display to the wider corporate world identifying them as a responsible Westminster business. Those accredited businesses (Westminster Lions) will have the opportunity to apply for our new award called the Lion awards, which will offer them the recognition they deserve. We are particularly interested in hearing from businesses who can offer opportunities to young residents, linking in with our exciting new City Lions club for local youngsters.

Westminster is a place of opportunity where aspirations can become reality for a great number of people. We are asking everyone who has a stake in Westminster to help keep Westminster the productive and attractive city it is. Businesses are important stakeholders in the Westminster community and with your support we can help residents realise their aspirations and ensure all can share in Westminster's economic success and the opportunities this great city has to offer.

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### Heart of the City Westminster

We also want to ensure that smaller businesses can get involved in corporate responsibility and have launched a free new programme for those who are either starting out on their corporate responsibility programme called Heart of the City Westminster. It can help you to get involved in local community and charity projects, reduce your carbon footprint, think about your staff well-being and will give you the tools and knowledge you need to support you on your responsible business journey.

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To find out more about Westminster Lions or the Heart of the City scheme please visit – [businesswestminster.com/csr](https://businesswestminster.com/csr)



City of Westminster  
COMMERCIAL WASTE

Prices from

**75p**

for waste and recycling

**collection  
and disposal\***



\*based on one bag of recycling

**CALL: 020 7641 6180**  
[westminster.gov.uk/commercialwaste](http://westminster.gov.uk/commercialwaste)

