

Appendix 1:

Service Review 2019-2020

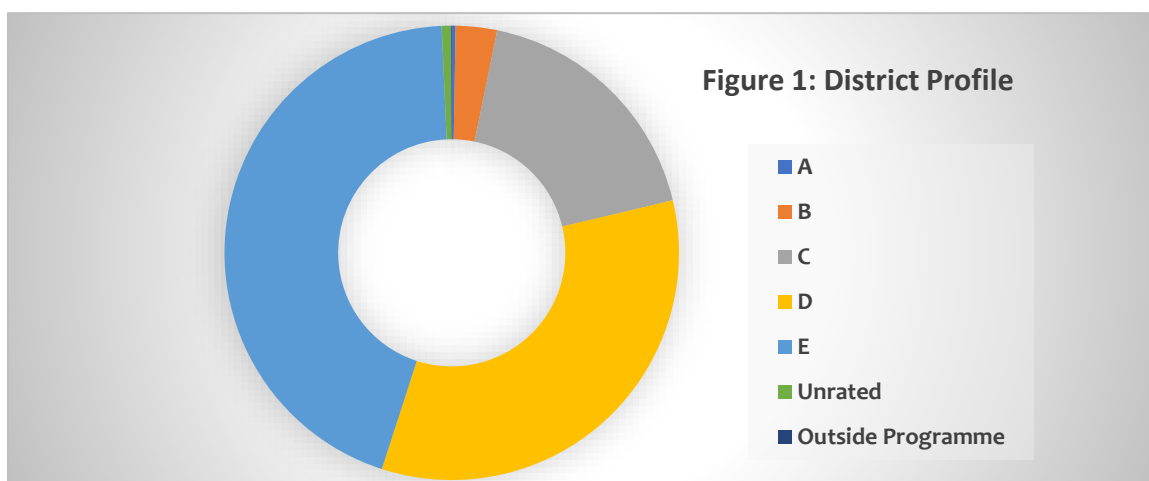
Environmental & Regulation: Food & Safety Team

What we are responsible for

- Protecting the public from potentially hazardous foods and poor food hygiene practices
- Preventing the death, injury and ill health of those at work and affected by work activities.
- Protecting the public from infection through the control of skin piercing activities.
- Protecting the welfare of animals through the licensing of animal establishments.
- Protecting the health and welfare of residents living in caravans in the District.

Food Businesses in the New Forest

- As at 31 March 2020 there were **1837** food businesses in the District; the majority of **1415** were restaurants and other caterers such as takeaways. These range from national companies to sole traders. There are also **333** retailers, **49** manufacturers / packers, **19** importers / exporters, **10** primary producers, and **11** distributors / transporters. Of the total, **13** are approved premises, and are subject to enhanced control.



- Figure 1, illustrates the premises ratings of food businesses in the District. This rating determines how often a business requires an inspection. A high-risk A rated premises will require more frequent inspections than a low risk E rated premises. This may be due to high-risk activities being undertaken at the business (e.g. caring for elderly or food manufacturers) or because the business is known to be poor and requires regular monitoring. E rated

premises are likely to be very low risk activities such as retail of ambient packed foods or a small-scale home-based cake maker.

- As in previous years, the overall number and profile of food businesses in the District has remained stable; however the rate of ‘churn’ or turnover of food businesses, i.e. the relative number of new businesses starting trading and those ceasing trading rose from around 10% to 13%, with **248** new businesses setting up.

Inspections Completed

- Inspections and other interventions are carried out according to the risk posed by the business. The business may have a higher risk due to the processes carried out, the type of food handled, the hygiene standards observed during inspection, as well as, whether they serve a vulnerable group.
- During inspections, officers observe and question, to judge three aspects of the business:
 - food hygiene and food handling practices
 - cleanliness, layout and maintenance
 - how well the business is managed
- These aspects are scored to determine how often to inspect the business – a poor business serving high risk foods will be inspected more frequently.

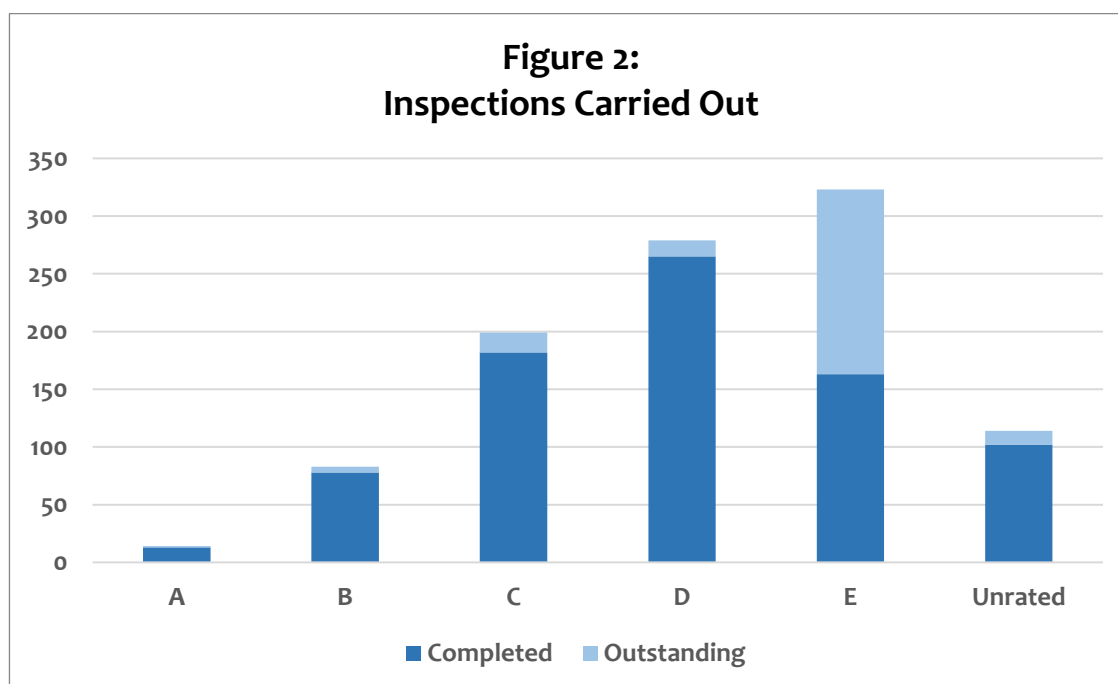


Figure 2 shows the number of food interventions completed in 2019-2020 according to each risk category.

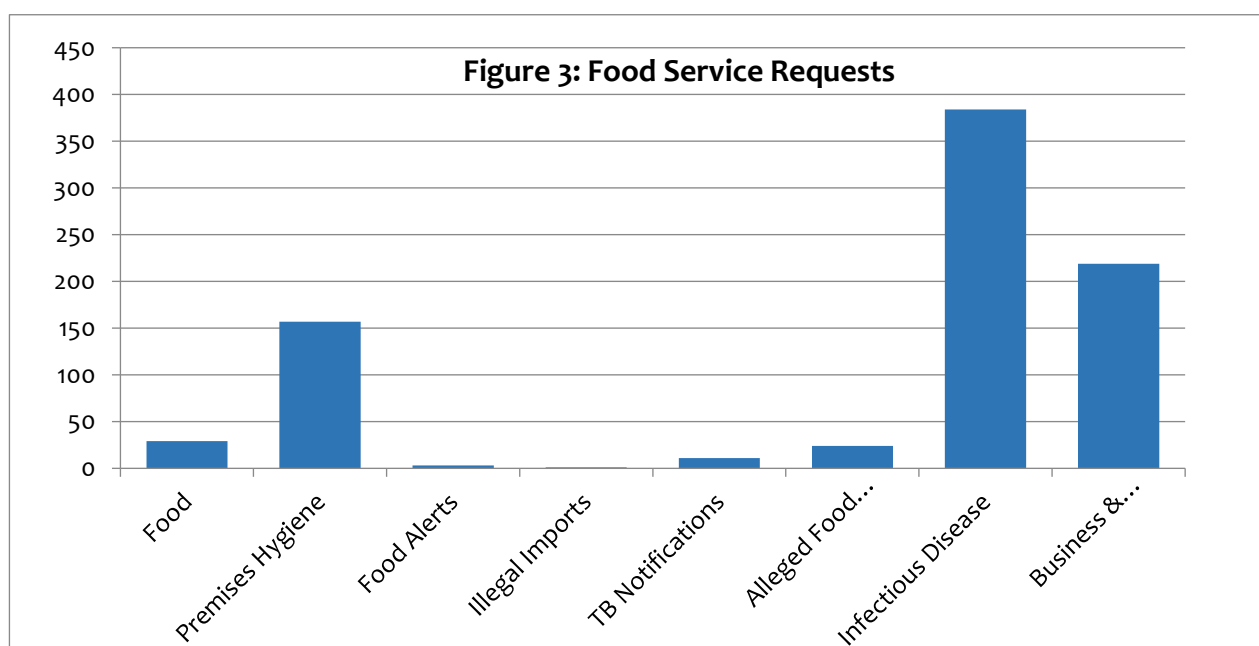
This chart also shows the number of new, previously unrated businesses which were inspected.

- Higher risk businesses with an A, B or C risk category receive a full inspection on a more frequent basis than those with a lower risk – A’s are visited every 6 months, B’s every year, and C’s every 18 months.
- Lower risk businesses with a D or E risk category may not always be inspected and may receive a different intervention such as a partial or targeted inspection.

- A few inspections were not completed due to the lockdown beginning in March as a result of the Government’s public health response to the coronavirus pandemic. Many of the restaurants and cafes closed entirely on lock down, although over time several are now re-opening and offering takeaway and food delivery services.
- The number of inspections outstanding based on lockdown approach taken by Government are 1 A rated inspection, 5 B rated and 17 C rated inspections. These will be prioritised once the businesses are trading again.
- **93%** of all high-risk inspections were completed, which were made up of **13** out of 14 category A, **78** out of 83 category B and **182** out of 197 category C interventions.
- **265** out of **279** category D category premises interventions were undertaken, which is just over 98%. The shortfall was due largely to difficulties in gaining access to the premises.
- For category E businesses, which are the lowest risk businesses and include newsagents and retailers, **163** out of **323** interventions were undertaken which equates to 53%.
- Resources are always focussed on a risk-based approach and despite new initiatives to assist in completing the lower risk inspections and backlog, it has not been possible to achieve this with the current officer resource level.

Investigations and Advice

In the past year we responded to **828** service requests relating to food, hygiene or cases of infectious disease. This is broadly similar to the number received in the previous year. A total of **186** were complaints made by members of the public about food that was purchased or consumed, or standards of hygiene observed at a premise – this is lower than the **234** similar complaints received in the previous year. **29** complaints were made by individuals who claimed that food they had eaten had made them ill. Such complaints are hard to investigate as there is rarely sufficient evidence; however, there were **384** confirmed cases of infectious disease (many related to food where it is alleged to have caused illness.) Action will only be taken if there is strong evidence to support this or there are a number of cases (an outbreak) linked to a single premise.



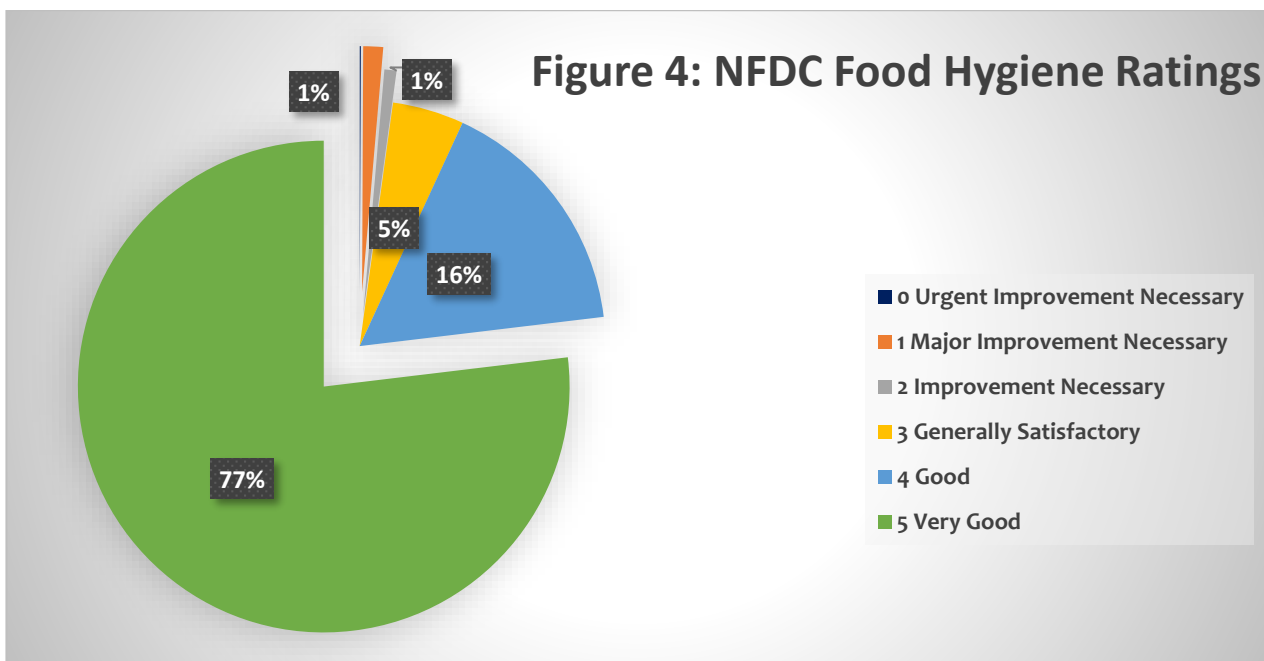
National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme

Business Ratings in the New Forest

The food hygiene rating of a business is a visual indication to the consumer that a business has been inspected by the local authority, and also used to promote high performing food businesses and to enable customers to make informed choices about the standard of hygiene in the business where they eat out or shop for food. Good businesses can expect to get a rating of 4 or 5 and businesses with a 3 rating are considered to be generally satisfactory. Ratings of 0, 1 or 2 are issued to businesses which improvement is necessary.



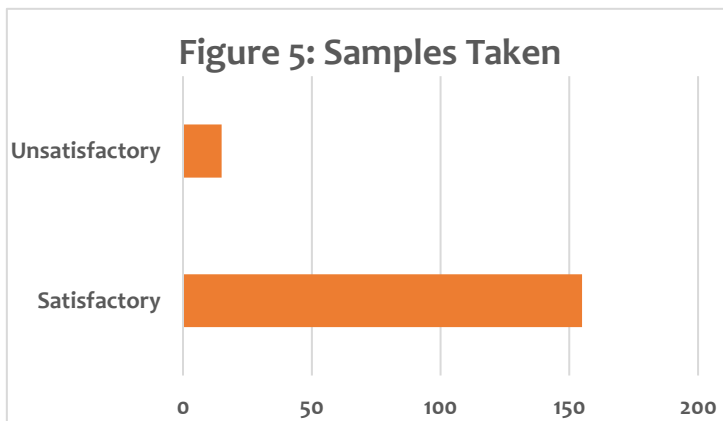
The majority of businesses in the New Forest have a rating of 3 or better. Almost **98%** of businesses fall into these categories. This is an increase of 0.5% on last year and 1.2% over the past two years. This shows that consumers can have further confidence in the standards of food businesses in the District. One business has a rating of zero and 29 businesses have a 1 or 2 rating – only **2.5%** of the total.



A rating remains in place until the next inspection is undertaken, unless the business applies for a re-inspection where they have carried out works identified during the inspection. Re-inspection visits are a discretionary service, and therefore a fee of £162 is charged for the visit. As more consumers rely on the food hygiene rating of a business when deciding where to eat, the food business operators are recognising the importance of a good rating. In 2019-10, **22** applied for a re-inspection, which was a slight increase on 18 which applied the previous year. On re-inspection, the business' rating will be assessed by the original inspecting officer and could go up or down.

In addition to the above, there are safeguards built into the food hygiene rating scheme which allow a business to appeal to the Food and Safety Team Manager should they consider their rating to be incorrect.

Food Sampling



The Food Standards Agency places considerable emphasis on the importance of sampling as part of the delivery of a local authority's food service. Sampling can be used as both a means to support business, to verify that they are producing safe food and also to emphasise when their food safety controls are inadequate. Local high-risk businesses are sampled, such as manufacturers, especially those carrying out specific processing, including sous-

vide foods, butter manufacture, fermentation, or aseptic packaging.

The food team also participates in national and local Hampshire wide sampling projects which are identified by emerging issues and epidemiological data. The team has sampled frozen fruit and vegetables and pastry products in support of these regional projects in the past year.

Over **170** food samples were taken, of which **15** were found to **not** meet food safety requirements. In these cases we support the businesses in investigating what went wrong and will usually re-sample to demonstrate that any additional measures put in place by the business have been successful. Our role is to ensure that measures are taken to prevent unsafe food from being placed on the market.

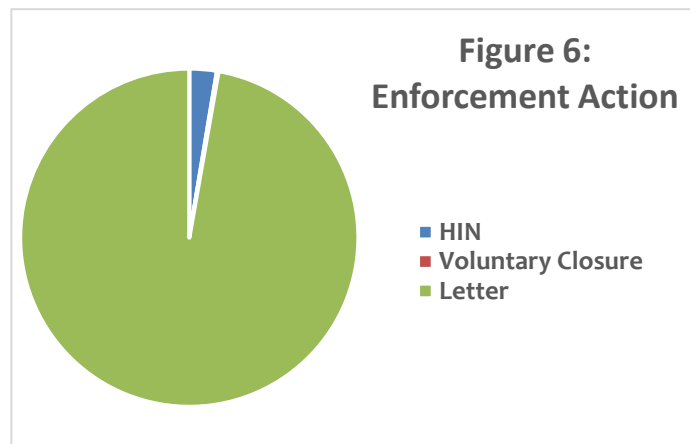
Enforcement Actions

Figure 6 illustrates the enforcement action taken by the food and safety team which ranges from no action to informal discussion, advice, written warning, serving of notice – hygiene improvement Notice (HIN) or hygiene emergency prohibition notice or prosecution.

Action taken is in accordance with our enforcement policy – ensuring that food businesses are compliant with the law and can achieve sustained compliance. The team will always ensure that food business operators deal with serious food safety risks immediately and once resolved, will consider whether further legal action is in the public interest.

Most businesses in the district seek to comply with the requirements and **630** received inspection letters explaining any areas where improvement was required to comply with the law. In the past year, 19 hygiene improvement notices were served on **17** businesses and **1** business voluntarily closed due to serious risks to health.

This data consolidates a positive trend which was also noticed in the 2018-2019 where the number of formal notices, prosecutions and simple cautions has reduced.



Export Certificates

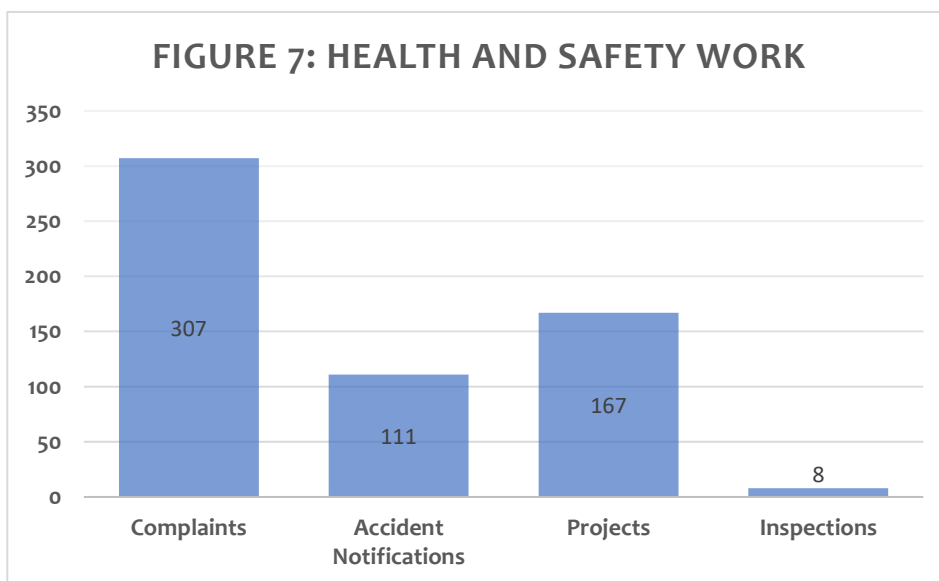
Export Health Certificates are issued to businesses wishing to export foodstuff outside the UK. They provide assurances that food and drink produced in the district meet the export requirements on UK food safety and that of the destination country. The provision of these certificates is not mandatory, so there is a charge of £88 for providing this service. In 2019-2020 **15** export health certificates were issued.

This area of work is likely to increase in the future as export health certificates may be required to export goods to the EU.

Health and Safety Work 2019 - 2020

We are responsible for enforcing health and safety law in a wide range of workplaces in the district through;

- Targeted projects looking at specific health and safety matters
- Investigating workplace accidents
- Inspecting high risk or poor performing businesses
- Advising businesses
- Investigating complaints



To reduce unnecessary burdens on business, we only inspect when intelligence is received which indicate poor standards (e.g. following an accident notification).

As a result, **8** inspections were undertaken last year.

111 formal accident notifications were received and assessed and 37 required further investigation.

Officers work with the business to improve health and safety and identify measures which could have prevented an accident for occurring.

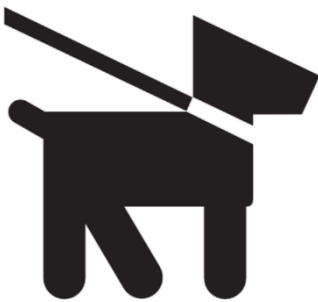
In the past year, the team received **307** health and safety complaints and requests for information – an increase of 15% over the previous year.

Targeted projects are carried out based on local or national intelligence of emerging trends, provided by the Health and Safety Executive. These have included;

Health and Safety Projects 2019 -2020

- Inspection of beauty establishments including nail bars
- Inspection of licensed riding establishments
- Raising awareness of health and safety in relation to inflatables at organised events
- Highlighting health and safety concerns from the public accessing large commercial waste bins.

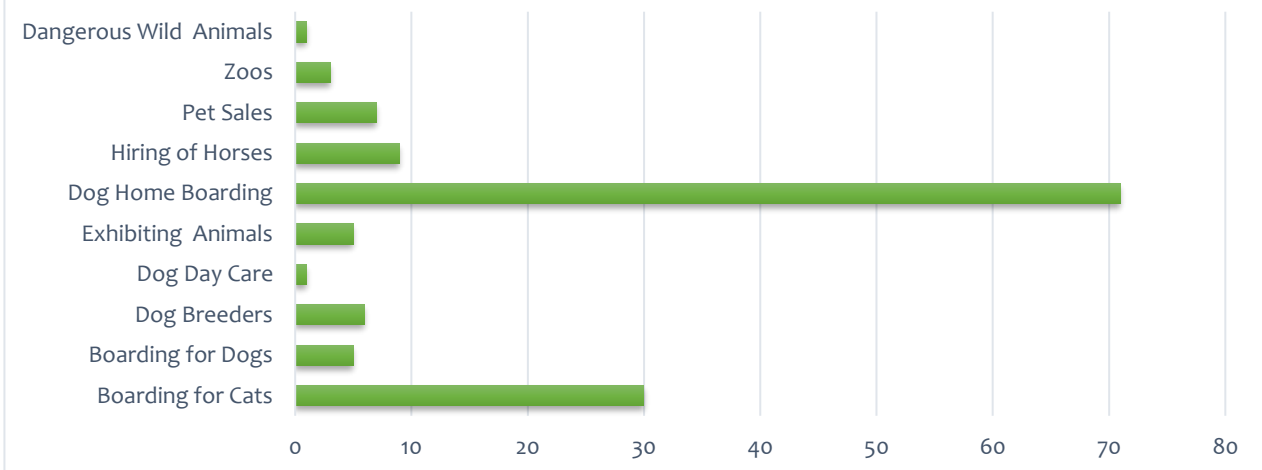
Animal Welfare – Animal Establishment Licences



Animal related activities including dog breeding, animal boarding and pet shops are licensed under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018. This legislation introduced a risk-based process for granting animal establishment licences – recognising high performing businesses and ensuring resources are focussed where most needed. Licences may be issued for 1, 2 or 3 years depending on the standards observed during inspection.

The profile of licensed premises in the New Forest is illustrated in Figure 8:

Figure 8: Animal Establishments in the New Forest



The majority of businesses are dog home boarders and there are also a number of larger businesses, including 9 horse riding establishments and 16 boarding establishments (kennels and catteries.)

Work completed in 2019 – 2020

- Issued 105 licences (new premises and renewals)
- Carried out 84 inspections and responded to 66 requests for information.
- Two officers trained in Inspecting Licensable Activities Involving Animals
- More formal approach taken in relation to unlicensed dog breeders and home boarders
- Worked with non-compliant businesses to improve star-rating and long-term compliance

Primary Authority



The Primary Authority (PA) scheme allows businesses to form a statutory partnership with a single local authority (or group of authorities) to access assured, robust and reliable advice at a reasonable cost. The advice can be on food hygiene and safety, health and safety or licensing and gives companies greater consistency particularly where they have outlets operating across several areas.

We currently have two Primary Authority Partnerships, one with a care home provider and the another with a fish products manufacturer.

Skin Piercing



All businesses carrying out skin piercing must be registered with the Council which cover those carrying out:

- Cosmetic body piercing (including ear piercing)
- Acupuncture
- Tattooing
- Electrolysis
- Semi-permanent skin colouring

There are **141** registered premises who have to follow byelaws and health and safety legislation to ensure they operate in a safe and hygienic manner.

The team has seen an increase in businesses setting up in recent years particularly carrying out semi-permanent skin colouring and have registered **14** new premises and **21** people carrying out eyebrow treatments, microblading and blotch removal.

Caravan Site Licensing

The team is responsible for ensuring that standards at licensed residential caravan sites in the district are maintained for the safety and welfare of the residents.

Licence conditions are used to control issues such as drainage, roadways, safety of electrical supply, fire provisions and the layout of the site including distance between caravans.

Due to the popularity of the New Forest area, there are currently **34** residential caravan sites in the district with over **1400** individual properties. This is a high number compared to many other areas of the UK.

All caravan sites are subject to a yearly inspection.

The team work closely with colleagues in Development Control to ensure that new sites will meet the required standard.



Summary

- The level of business compliance is good, and is gradually improving
- The majority of planned work was completed with the exception of a few food inspections
- The Coronavirus pandemic has impacted on the work of the team and required the rapid adaptation of working practices
- The priority of the team is the protection public health and provision of a high level service to businesses, residents and visitors to the New Forest.