GENERA LICENSING REPORT 2026

What a dog daycare licence costs in England, who checks it, and who is outside it

Published by Genera Software and Duncan's Dog Co, a dog daycare licensed in Surrey since 2011. Every figure below is read from a council fee table, a council licence register, a statutory guidance page, a Freedom of Information answer, a court report or a daycare's own website, and each source is linked at the foot of the page.

D **Duncan** | Published 22 September 2026 | Figures checked **28 October 2026**

Nine findings

£175 to £1,410

Like for like, a new one-year dog daycare licence for a small daycare on commercial premises costs £175 in Rugby and £1,410 in Westminster, both 2026/27 fees for a dedicated day care licence. Daycare run from a home can cost less, from £107 in Hull. Kirklees charges £1,951 for a three-year licence paid up front.

£30 vs £32.50

Businesses that sell dog day care on their own website but that we could not match to any council register charge a middle price of £30 a day. Licensed daycares charge £32.50.

£286.50 to £915

The same dog day care licence costs £286.50 in Mole Valley and up to £915 in Epsom and Ewell, two councils that

£1,359

Bromley charges £1,359 for a three-year licence for more than ten dogs once the council's own vet inspection and mid-

share a border and will be one authority in 2027.

5 into 1

From 1 April 2027 five Surrey councils with five different fee structures become East Surrey Council. None has said which fee or which inspection regime survives.

£393

A Welsh home boarder whose unlicensed premises saw two separate dog attacks was fined £393 in total, less than a licence costs in most of Surrey.

10 years vs 18 weeks

The maximum sentence in Illinois for one dog's death in heat. The two concluded English hot-vehicle cases against professional dog walkers ended in 18 weeks and in no custody.

term vet visit are added. Liverpool charges £325 for the same licence.

1 in 5 years

Wokingham Borough Council brought one prosecution for unlicensed animal activities between 2021 and 2025, and logged one complaint in 2025.

6 dogs

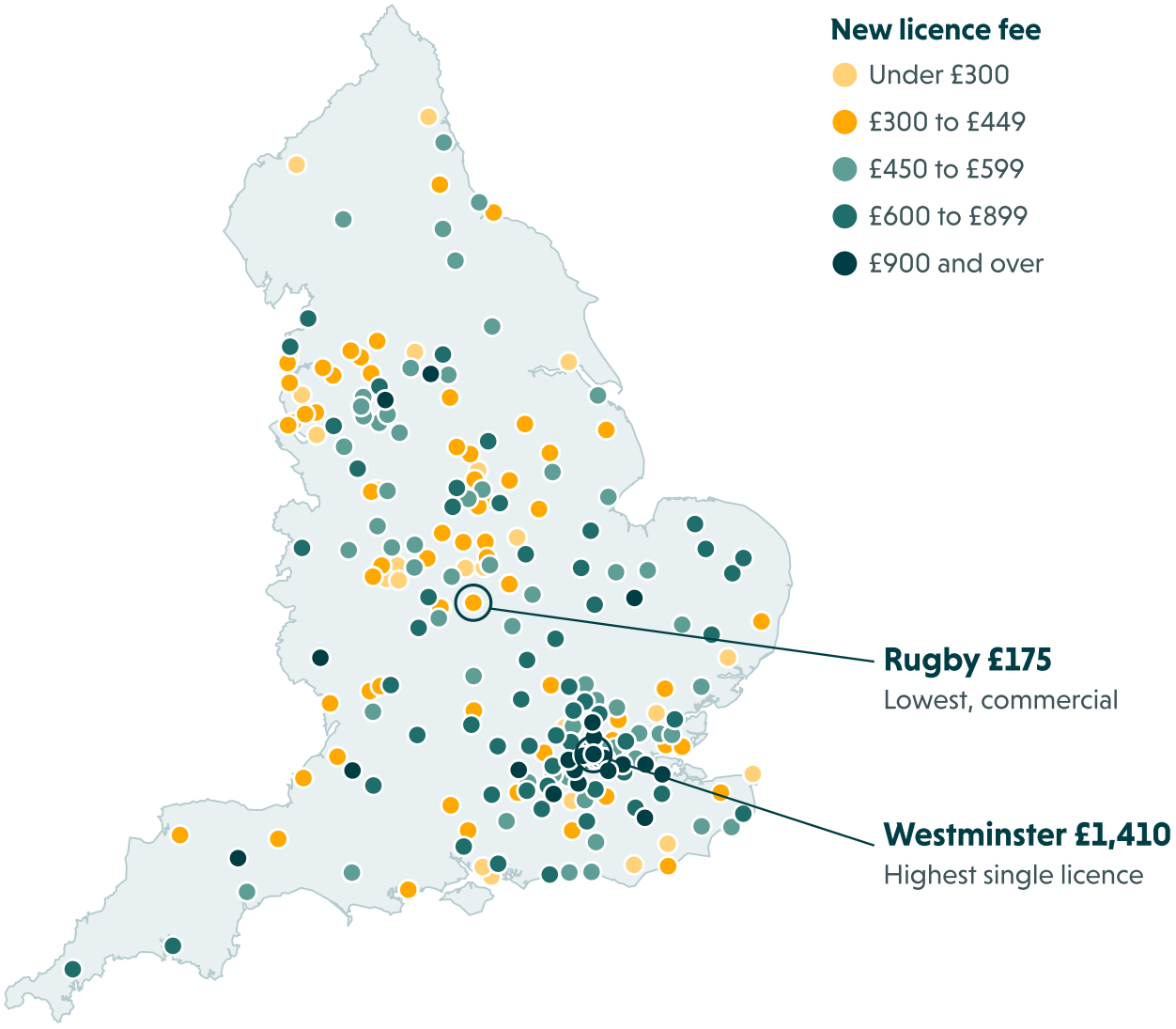
The six-dogs-per-walker limit in the statutory guidance applies only to licensed daycares and boarders. An independent walker, a sitter or a hired field is outside the national licence altogether.

What every council charges

A dog daycare licence in England is one national licence, issued under the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 and inspected against the same Defra guidance everywhere. The fee is set by each council. The process guidance says fees must be "fair and reasonable" and may cover the

application, the inspection, compliance checks and enforcement against unlicensed businesses. In practice the price depends on the postcode.

The table below gives the fee for a new dog daycare licence at 230 English councils, read from each council's own fee page or fees and charges schedule. It runs from the cheapest to the dearest by the lowest figure each council gives. Where a council prices by size or licence length the whole range is shown.



New dog daycare licence fee, 230 English councils, checked September and October 2026. Each dot sits near the council's licensed daycares or its main town and is coloured by the highest new-licence figure the council gives. Where a council adds a vet's inspection separately, the fee is shown without it. Positions are approximate. England outline from the Office for National Statistics, Open Government Licence, contains OS data, Crown copyright and database right 2023.

Ipswich Town Hall. Ipswich Borough Council charges £131 for a dog daycare licence, one of the four lowest fees in England. Photo: Emperorzurg123, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Hammersmith Town Hall. Hammersmith and Fulham charges £1,363 for a new licence for more than ten dogs, one of the highest fees in England. Photo: Laurence Mackman, Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

How to read these figures

- Each figure is what the council says a **new** dog day care licence costs, with the application and grant parts added together. Renewals are often cheaper.
- Where a council prices by licence length, number of dogs or premises, the whole range is shown. Our headline comparison uses like for like: a dedicated day care fee for commercial premises at the shortest term.
- Some councils charge less for daycare run from a home, add a vet's inspection on top, or have no day care line and use their boarding fee. The notes on each row say which.
- Not every council prints a fee year, and fees usually change each April. Every row links to the council's own page: check it before you apply. Rows marked "by hand" were re-read on 12 October 2026.

What a new dog daycare licence costs at 230 English councils

COUNCIL	NEW LICENCE	WHAT IT COVERS	CHECKED	SOURCE
Hull Yorkshire and The Humber	**£107 to £297**	Commercial premises £208 (1 year) or £297 (2 years); daycare at home £107 or £138. Prices exclude VAT. 2026/27.	28 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗
Walsall West Midlands	**£125 or £160**	£125 is the line for 'home boarding and day care for dogs', which may mean daycare at home. A	12 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗

COUNCIL	NEW LICENCE	WHAT IT COVERS	CHECKED	SOURCE
		commercial day care may pay the £160 boarding line. The page gives no fee year.		
Bradford Yorkshire and The Humber	**£125.30**	Single 'Animal boarding' fee, which the council says covers day care for dogs. The page does not say whether this is the whole licence or the application fee. 2026/27.	12 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗
Ipswich East of England	**£131**	£83 application plus £48 on grant, new or renewal. The schedule the council's fees page links prints no fee year (it is dated 2024).	12 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗
Blackpool North West	**£140**	Single application fee for the animal boarding licence, which the page says covers day care for dogs. The council notes the fee is subject to change and the page gives no fee year; its 2022/23 fee schedule shows the same £140.	12 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗
North Warwickshire West Midlands	**£143.50 to £267**	£143.50 is the home boarders line; the council does not say day care at home falls under it. Commercial boarding, which covers day care, from £267.	12 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗
Rugby West Midlands	**£175 to £425**	Rugby's own dog day care line: £175 for a one-year licence, £300 for two years, £425 for three. Renewal £130. The same £175 is on the council's licence page and in its 2026/27 schedule. Vet fees are excluded.	28 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗
Portsmouth South East	**£181**	Single application or renewal fee of £181 for commercial dog day care, the same as home boarding or home daycare for dogs. 2026/27 fee table.	28 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗
Fylde North West	**£206 to £359**	£206 for a one-year licence, £282 for two years, £359 for three, new or renewal. Taken from the	28 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗

COUNCIL	NEW LICENCE	WHAT IT COVERS	CHECKED	SOURCE
		boarding licence, which the council says includes day care.		
Fareham South East	£211	£211 is the Animal Boarding Establishment fee, which the council says includes doggy day care. Home-based day care may pay the £161 home rate.	12 October 2026 (by hand)	Council page ↗

Like for like, the cheapest new licence for commercial premises is £175 in Rugby; some councils charge less for daycare run from a home, from £107 in Hull. The dearest one-year licence for a small daycare is £1,410 in Westminster; Kirklees charges £1,951 for a three-year licence paid up front, and Herefordshire up to £1,672.63 for three years for more than 71 dogs. Some councils add a vet's inspection on top of the figures shown, and Gravesham requires one for every new application, so the true cost there is higher than £1,120.

The same table, with a region filter and the councils we could not find a fee for, is kept up to date at **dog daycare licence fees by council**.

Mole Valley and Epsom and Ewell share a border. The same licence for the same business costs £286.50 on one side of it and £915 on the other for a three-year term. From April 2027 the same council will issue both.

Surrey: five fee schedules become one in 2027

On 1 April 2027 Surrey's eleven district and borough councils are replaced by two unitary authorities. East Surrey Council takes over Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead and Tandridge. West Surrey Council takes Guildford, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Waverley and Woking. Animal licensing moves with everything else.

Epsom High Street. A new three-year dog daycare licence here costs £915; across the border in Mole Valley it costs £286.50. Photo: DimiTalen, Wikimedia Commons, CC0 1.0.

The five councils becoming East Surrey Council

COUNCIL	NEW DAY CARE LICENCE	FEE STRUCTURE
Mole Valley	£286.50	Flat two-part fee, any size
Tandridge	£318	Flat two-part fee, any size
Elmbridge	£432 or £510	Two size bands, five dogs
Reigate and Banstead	£501 or £554	Two size bands, ten dogs
Epsom and Ewell	£665 to £915	Priced by licence length, one to three years

Five councils, four different ways of pricing the same licence, and a threefold difference in what a licensed daycare pays. Nobody has yet said which fee East Surrey Council will adopt, which inspectors it will use, or whether a business rated five stars by one council keeps that rating and its three-year licence when the council that issued it no longer exists. Those are the questions this report puts to the shadow authority.

Who inspects, and whether a vet is needed

> A vet must be appointed for the initial inspection for the licensed application for the breeding of dogs.

Animal activity licensing process: statutory guidance for local authorities, inspections. The same section lists the qualification for every other inspection: a Level 3 certificate from an Ofqual-regulated body, or a veterinary qualification.

A vet is not required to inspect a dog daycare. Some councils send one anyway and charge for it. Bromley charges £488 or £666 on a new application and £311 for a mid-term unannounced visit. Several councils in the fee table charge for a vet only where one is required. Both approaches are within the guidance. The difference is several hundred pounds a year, decided by which side of a borough boundary the building stands.

Every licence carries at least one unannounced visit. A five-star licence lasts three years, so a well-run daycare can go three years between unannounced inspections. A one-star licence lasts a year and is re-inspected, at full cost, every year. New applicants are automatically rated high risk and cannot receive a three-year licence at first application.

Who holds a licence

Councils publish a register of the animal activity licences they issue. We read the registers of 286 English councils on 23 September 2026. Between them they listed 1,097 licensed dog daycares, held with 215 of those councils. The other 71 registers listed no dog daycare at all.

Dog daycares on 286 English council registers, 23 September 2026

MEASURE	FIGURE
Licensed dog daycares listed	1,097
Councils with at least one	215 of 286
Rated five stars	692
Rated four stars	194
Rated three stars	130
Rated one or two stars	61
No rating shown	20
Register shows how many dogs the licence allows	457
Middle figure where it does (median)	16 dogs
Licensed for 20 dogs or fewer	284 of 457
Licensed for 50 dogs or more	55 of 457
Expiry date already passed on the day we read it	110 of 949 with a date shown

Most licensed daycares are small. Where the register gives a number, half are licensed for 16 dogs or fewer and 284 of 457 for 20 or fewer. Most are also well rated: 692 of the 1,097 hold five stars, and 61 hold one or two.

A register entry is only as current as the council keeps it. On 110 entries the expiry date had already passed when we read them. Some of those businesses will have renewed, and the register had not caught up.

Method: the published registers of 286 English councils, read through Animal Licensing UK on 23 September 2026. A business is counted once however many licences it holds. The number of dogs is counted only where the register shows it as one figure for the daycare; for a few combined licences that figure includes boarding.

Enforcement in numbers

Running a boarding or day care business without a licence is a criminal offence under section 13 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Since January 2024 a council can also issue a fixed penalty of up to £5,000 for it under the Animals (Penalty Notices) Act 2022. Whether anyone is prosecuted or fined is left to each council. There is no national figure, so we asked one.

What the public record shows

MEASURE	FIGURE	WHERE IT COMES FROM
Prosecutions for unlicensed animal activities, one council, 2021 to 2025	1	Wokingham Borough Council, FOI 20902, answered 5 January 2026
Complaints about unlicensed boarding logged by that council in 2025	1	Same response
Total fines for an unlicensed home boarder after two separate dog attacks a year apart	£393	Rhondda Cynon Taf Council press release, 19 March 2026 (Wales, 1963 Act)
Councils confirming in writing that a public Facebook advert is enough to open an	2	East Riding of Yorkshire and East Suffolk, via Yappily Pulse

MEASURE	FIGURE	WHERE IT COMES FROM
investigation, without a complaint		Study 002
Cheapest new licence for commercial premises in our fee table	£175	Rugby

The £393 fine is less than a new licence costs at nine of Surrey's eleven councils; only Mole Valley and Tandridge charge less. In most of Surrey a business that pays for a licence pays more than one that is caught without one.

The House of Commons Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee said in April 2024 that councils' ability to enforce animal licensing is constrained by a lack of specialist knowledge and training and by inadequate funding. Two councils have since confirmed that the tools exist: an advert on social media is enough to begin an investigation and officers may contact the advertiser directly. The gap is not the law or the tools. It is whether anyone is asked to use them.

Who is outside the licence

> Businesses that look after dogs in their owner's homes, "such as, dog sitters and dog walkers", do not need a licence. The guidance under condition 7.2 for a licensed daycare: "A dog walker may walk no more than 6 dogs at the same time."

Dog day care licensing: statutory guidance for local authorities, scope and guidance under condition 7.2

The 2018 Regulations list the activities that need a licence. Boarding dogs, including day care at a fixed premises, is one. Walking them is not. Sitting them in the owner's home is not. Hiring out a field for dogs is not. A licensed daycare that takes its dogs off the premises is held to six dogs per walker by the guidance

under condition 7.2; an independent walker with twelve dogs in a hired field is subject to no national condition at all, because no national licence reaches them.

What binds a licensed daycare and what binds the alternative

REQUIREMENT	LICENSED DAYCARE	WALKER, SITTER OR HIRED FIELD
Staff to dogs on the premises	One person to ten dogs (one to eight for the higher standard)	None
Dogs per person on a walk	Six	None nationally; a few council park orders set four
Space per dog	Six square metres	None
Fencing	Two secure barriers between a dog and the road	None
Inspection	At least one unannounced visit per licence	None
A number the public can check	Licence number and star rating, displayed	None

Some field-based and walking businesses are licensed by choice, and some councils have moved on their own: Tower Hamlets caps walkers at four dogs in its restricted area unless they hold the council's £240 professional dog walker licence, which allows six. Local rules like this cover one borough and stop at its boundary.

The government has been asked to look at it. The Responsible Dog Ownership taskforce report Defra published on 24 September 2026 recommends that it "consider potential legal requirements for professional dog walkers", and calls further regulation a longer-term aim. The government has not yet responded to that recommendation.

What the sentence is when a dog dies

The Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Act 2021 raised the maximum sentence for the worst cruelty offences in England and Wales from six months to five years. Two professional dog walkers have since been sentenced after dogs in their care died in hot vehicles. Both pleaded guilty. Neither was licensed, because no national licence exists for what they did.

Three concluded cases, a dog left in heat

COURT	WHAT HAPPENED	SENTENCE
Southampton Magistrates' Court, March 2022	Two clients' spaniels left in a car boot on 21 July 2021 at 29C by a professional dog walker. Both died.	18 weeks' imprisonment, eight-year ban on owning animals
York Magistrates' Court, March 2023	A client's cocker spaniel left in a professional dog walker's van for about five hours on 11 August 2022. Died of heatstroke.	Twelve-month community order, three-year ban on dealing with and transporting dogs, £400 costs and a £114 surcharge. No custody
St Clair County, Illinois, September 2026	A Rottweiler left outside in high temperatures and dragged by a chain. Died the next day. Convicted by a jury of animal torture and aggravated cruelty.	Ten years, the state maximum, at least five to be served

We are not arguing for American sentences. The point is narrower. In England a professional dog walker meets the system only after a dog is dead, because nothing can be inspected, conditioned or taken away before that. A disqualification order is the only record that follows them, and there is no public register of disqualified people that a dog owner can check before handing over a lead.

What five stars costs the business

The licence fee is the small part. The conditions set the wage bill. The guidance councils license against sets one member of staff to ten dogs. One to eight is an optional higher standard, one of several a daycare can choose on the way to four or five stars. A daycare that takes it on pairs every person on the floor with two fewer paying dogs.

Two dogs a person, over a year

Dogs given up per staff member at the higher standard	2
Day rate	£30
Days a week, weeks a year	5 × 48
Turnover given up per staff member per year	**£14,400**

At £30 a day, five days a week, 48 weeks a year, for a daycare that chooses the one to eight standard. Four or five stars bring a two or three year licence instead of one.

Holiday cover under the ratio

Statutory holiday per full-time member of staff	5.6 weeks, 224 hours
National Living Wage from April 2026	£12.71 an hour
Paid to the person on holiday	£2,847
Paid again to the person standing in	£2,847
Holiday pay plus a stand-in, for one full-timer	**£5,694**

A shop can run one person short for a week. A daycare at one to ten cannot, so every day of holiday is paid twice. With employer's National Insurance and pension added to both, roughly £6,700.

Space sets the ceiling: six square metres per dog, inside and outside counted together, divided into the total. A 120 square metre premises can never take more than twenty dogs whatever the demand. A Level 3 qualification, one of the optional higher standards for four and five stars, is about £340 plus VAT. None of this applies to a business the licence does not reach.

The two petitions

Two petitions to Parliament are asking for change. Petition 770225, Review regulation of animal boarding and licensing conditions, known as Molly's Law, opened on 19 June 2026. It asks for a review of standards for paid pet care, easier licence checks and consistent enforcement. Petition 776716, Introduce stronger welfare regulations for pet care services, opened on 24 August 2026. It asks for dog walkers, sitters, groomers and trainers to be licensed. On 28 October 2026 they had 1,185 and 1,790 signatures, 2,975 between them. Neither has yet reached the 10,000 needed for a government response, or the 100,000 to be considered for a debate.

Duncan's Dog Co is a licensed business and supports both. A licence that costs its holders thousands a year in staffing and is enforced against almost nobody is worth less each year to the people who hold it and nothing at all to the dogs outside it.

Three changes we are asking for

CHANGE	WHY
A national enforcement standard, with the numbers published	Each council decides for itself whether to prosecute and none has to say how often it does. One council, one prosecution in five years, is the only figure on the public record because we asked for it.

CHANGE	WHY
Licence dog walkers and dog sitters	The six-dog limit, the ratio and the unannounced visit stop at the daycare gate. The businesses most often in the news for a dog's death are the ones no licence reaches.
One place to check any licence	Councils are told to keep a list online. Most do, in different formats, on different pages. A dog owner should be able to type a business name and see a number, a star rating and an expiry date.

How we gathered this

Fees were read from each council's own fee page or fees and charges schedule, and each row of the fee table carries the date it was checked. Where a council has not published a 2026/27 figure, the table says which year it is. Councils that charge a vet's inspection separately are shown without it unless the council gives a total. The licence holder figures come from the councils' public registers, read on 23 September 2026. The enforcement figures are one council's FOI answer and one council's press release, both linked. The court outcomes are from contemporaneous local press reports of the sentencing hearings; we have not named the defendants here. Petition counts are read from petition.parliament.uk on the date shown and will move.

This report covers England unless it says otherwise. It is not legal advice. If a figure is wrong or has moved, email **info@generasoftware.com** and the page is corrected in place with the checked date updated. Nothing is appended.

Journalists are welcome to quote any figure with a link to this page. Duncan is available for interview and the daycare in Cobham is open to visit.

Sources

1. **Mole Valley District Council, animal activities licensing, fees as listed on 28 October 2026**
   Lower tier (home boarding and day care for dogs): Part A application £166.50, Part B licence £120, total £286.50. Vet inspection, where required, charged in addition.

2. **Tandridge District Council, animal licences, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
   Lower tier: Part A £198, Part B £120, total £318 for a new dog daycare licence, 2026/27. Vet inspection invoiced after the visit where required.

3. **Elmbridge Borough Council, animal welfare licence fees from 1 April 2026**
   Day care for dogs, five or fewer: £432 new, £380 renewal. Large day care centre, more than five dogs: £510 new, £449 renewal. Veterinary inspections where required charged separately.

4. **Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, animal licence fees 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027**
   Dog day care: £381 Part A plus £120 Part B, £501 new and £421 renewal for up to ten dogs, and one further £53 for more than ten. Part B is described as the recoverable enforcement cost. Vet inspection invoiced separately.

5. **Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, fees and charges 2026/27, Appendix 2 (licensing)**
   Animal welfare (boarding, day care, breeding, kennels and catteries): initial fee £220 plus a licence fee by length, £445 for one year, £530 for two, £695 for three. A new three-year licence is therefore £915.

6. **Spelthorne Borough Council, fees and charges 2026/27**
   Dog day care £600 (application £468, grant £132), up from £568 in 2025/26.

7. **Liverpool City Council, animal activity licence fees, fees as listed on 11 October 2026**
   Dog day care £325. The page adds that fees for vet inspections may be required.

8. **London Borough of Bromley, animal welfare licensing fees 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027**
   Part A on application: admin £159 plus a vet inspection of £488 (fewer than ten dogs) or £666 (more than ten). Part B before the licence is issued: £75, £150 or £223 by licence length plus a £311 mid-term unannounced vet visit. A three-year licence for more than ten dogs comes to £1,359.

9. **The fee pages of 186 further English councils, read 12 October 2026, each linked from its row in the fee table**
   Every figure was read on the council's own fee page or fees and charges schedule. Figures seen only in search summaries are left out.

10. **Ipswich Borough Council, fees as listed on 11 October 2026**
    Home boarding for dogs or dog day care: £83 application fee plus £48 on grant, total £131, new or renewal.

11. **Fylde Council, fees as listed on 28 October 2026**
    £206 for a one year licence, £282 for two years or £359 for three, new or renewed.

12. **Fareham Borough Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**

£211 for a daycare licence, new or renewed. 2026/27.

13. **North West Leicestershire District Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £238 to £315 for up to 6 animals and £284 to £361 for 7 or more, depending on how long the licence lasts. 2026/27.

14. **Blaby District Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £240 for a dog daycare licence, plus vet fees where needed. 2026/27.

15. **Chelmsford City Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £272 for a new dog daycare licence, or £242 to renew. 2026/27.

16. **Gloucester City Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £371 for a licence for 10 or more animals, new or renewed, or £278 for fewer. 2026/27.

17. **Darlington Borough Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £281 to £451 for a new licence, depending on the number of dogs and the licence length. 2026/27.

18. **Northumberland County Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £288.75 for a new dog daycare licence, or £260.40 to renew. The latest year we could read was 2025/26.

19. **Harborough District Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £290 to £368 for a new licence, depending on numbers, or £265 to £343 to renew. 2026/27.

20. **Hart District Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £318 to £444 for a daycare licence: £318 for under 20 animals (fees-small page), £444 for over 20 (fees-large page). 2026/27.

21. **Test Valley Borough Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £331 for a daycare licence, new or renewed. 2026/27.

22. **North Yorkshire Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £355 to £455 for a daycare licence, depending on how many years it lasts. 2026/27.

23. **Nottingham City Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £374 for a daycare licence.

24. **Durham County Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £396 for a new daycare licence, and £309 to renew.

25. **South Kesteven District Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £407.50 for a daycare licence. 2026/27.

26. **Calderdale Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**

£409 to £450.40 for a daycare licence, new or renewed: £409 for up to 25 dogs, £450.40 above that. Latest published fees, set in 2018.

27. **Braintree District Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £439 on Braintree's animal boarding line, which is where it takes dog daycare applications.

28. **Stockport Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £440 to £490 for a new daycare licence, depending on the number of animals, and £410 to £470 to renew. Latest published fees, from April 2024.

29. **Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, fees as listed on 28 October 2026**
    £470 for a new licence for up to 8 dogs, or £618 plus a vet fee for 8 or more. 2026/27.

30. **Trafford Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £493 to £546 for a new daycare licence, depending on how many years it lasts. Latest published fees, 2025/26.

31. **Rochdale Borough Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £504.30 to £708.10 for a dog daycare licence of one to three years, depending on the length the council grants.

32. **Telford & Wrekin Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £520 for a new daycare licence, and £500 to renew. Latest published fees, from April 2024.

33. **West Northamptonshire Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £554.80 for a dog daycare licence in a commercial building, new or renewed. 2026/27.

34. **Colchester City Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £565 for a dog daycare licence of one to three years. 2026/27.

35. **Breckland Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £576 to £724 for a dog daycare licence of one to three years, depending on the star rating.

36. **Stroud District Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £579 for a new dog daycare licence, or £400 to renew on time. 2026/27.

37. **Mid Sussex District Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £587 for a dog daycare licence. 2026/27.

38. **Warrington Borough Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £622.51 for a daycare licence. 2026/27.

39. **Cheshire East Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £662 for a new daycare licence for more than 2 dogs, and £625 to renew. 2026/27.

40. **London Borough of Havering, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**

£674 for a new dog daycare licence, or £562 to renew. 2026/27.

41. **Herefordshire Council, fees as listed on 28 October 2026**
    £334.74 application plus a grant fee of £357.13 (one year, up to 10 dogs) to £1,337.89 (three years, over 71 dogs), so £691.87 to £1,672.63 for a new licence. 2026/27.

42. **Buckinghamshire Council, fees as listed on 2 October 2026**
    £719 for a dog daycare licence, new or renewed. 2026/27.

43. **Arun District Council, fees as listed on 9 October 2026**
    £833 for a new daycare licence, and £762 to renew. 2026/27.

44. **London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, fees as listed on 11 October 2026**
    Animal establishment licence fees 2026-27. Home boarders and dog daycare: new licence £872 application plus £207 ongoing costs, £1,079; renewal £990. More than 10 dogs: new licence £1,156 plus £207, £1,363; renewal £1,185.

45. **Gravesham Borough Council, fees as listed on 11 October 2026**
    Dog day care: Part A £727 on application, Part B £393 before the licence is issued. A vet inspection is required for all new applications and some renewals, and its fee is recharged to the applicant.

46. **Surrey County Council, government confirms new East and West councils for Surrey**
    East Surrey Council takes over Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead and Tandridge from 1 April 2027; West Surrey Council takes Guildford, Runnymede, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Waverley and Woking.

47. **Animal activity licensing process: statutory guidance for local authorities (Defra, updated 1 June 2026)**
    What councils may charge for and the fair and reasonable fees line; inspector qualifications; when a vet is required; star ratings and licence lengths; at least one unannounced visit per licence.

48. **Dog day care licensing: statutory guidance for local authorities (Defra, updated 1 June 2026)**
    Scope and the exclusion of dog walkers and sitters; condition 4.1 (one member of staff to ten dogs, six square metres per dog) and the higher standard of one to eight; condition 5.1 (two secure barriers); condition 7.2 (six dogs per walker).

49. **The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018, Schedule 1**
    The licensable activities. Dog walking, dog sitting and hiring out a field are not among them.

50. **Animal Welfare Act 2006, section 13**
    Carrying on a licensable activity without a licence is an offence.

51. **Animals (Penalty Notices) Act 2022, section 3**

A fixed penalty may not exceed the lesser of £5,000 and the maximum fine for the offence. Council penalty notices for offences including section 13 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 apply in England from 1 January 2024.

52. **Wokingham Borough Council, FOI response 20902, investigations into unlicensed dog boarding and kennels 2021 to 2025 (answered 5 January 2026)**
    One prosecution in 2023 in connection with unlicensed animal activities, the only one in the period; one complaint in 2025.

53. **Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, unlicensed Aberdare dog boarder prosecuted (19 March 2026)**
    Complaints in October 2024 and July 2025, each after a dog was attacked; guilty plea at Merthyr Magistrates' Court on 11 February 2026; fines totalling £393 under the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963.

54. **Yappily Pulse, Study 002: councils' use of social media in unlicensed home boarding investigations (September 2026)**
    Shared by Yappily Pulse in the Facebook group Licensed Canine Businesses Discussion & Support UK in September 2026; not yet published on its website. Written answers from East Riding of Yorkshire Council and East Suffolk Council: a public advert can start an investigation and be evidence, and officers may contact the advertiser directly.

55. **House of Commons EFRA Committee, Pet welfare and abuse (April 2024)**
    Councils' ability to enforce is constrained by a lack of specialist knowledge and training, and inadequate funding and resources.

56. **London Borough of Tower Hamlets, Public Spaces Protection Order (dog control), Part 5**
    Made 30 April 2025 for three years. No more than four dogs per person in the restricted area unless the walker holds the council's professional dog walker licence.

57. **London Borough of Tower Hamlets, professional dog walkers licence FAQs**
    The licence allows a walker up to six dogs. £240 from 1 April 2026.

58. **KMOV First Alert 4, man given maximum sentence for animal cruelty incident in Washington Park (17 September 2026)**
    St Clair County, Illinois. Ten years, the statutory maximum. The dog was left in the heat and dragged by a chain; it died the next day.

59. **Belleville News-Democrat, Washington Park man sentenced to 10 years for animal cruelty (September 2026)**
    Jury conviction on 4 August 2026 for animal torture, aggravated animal cruelty and animal cruelty. The dog was left outside in high temperatures. At least five years must be served.

60. **The News (Portsmouth), Hampshire professional dog walker jailed after two clients' dogs died in her car (March 2022)**

Southampton Magistrates' Court, 28 March 2022. Two spaniels left in a car boot on 21 July 2021 at 29C. Guilty plea to causing unnecessary suffering. Eighteen weeks' imprisonment and an eight-year ban on owning animals.

61. **Gazette & Herald, professional York dog walker caused spaniel's death in heatwave (March 2023)**
York Magistrates' Court, 3 March 2023. A cocker spaniel left in a van for about five hours on 11 August 2022. Guilty plea. Twelve-month community order, three-year ban on dealing with and transporting dogs, £400 prosecution costs and a £114 statutory surcharge. No custody.

62. **Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Act 2021**
In force 29 June 2021. Raised the maximum sentence for the worst animal cruelty offences in England and Wales from six months to five years.

63. **Defra, Responsible Dog Ownership taskforce report (24 September 2026)**
Recommendation 8: "Consider potential legal requirements for professional dog walkers, and take forward best options." Most members agreed more regulation could help but saw it as a longer-term aim. No government response to this recommendation as of 28 October 2026.

64. **Genera, what dog daycare costs in England in 2026 (daycare price survey, October 2026)**
Full-day prices read from each daycare's own website and matched to council licence registers. Source of the £32.50 licensed median and the £30 median for businesses not found on any register.

65. **National Living Wage from 1 April 2026**
£12.71 an hour for workers aged 21 and over.

66. **Working Time Regulations 1998, regulations 13 and 13A**
5.6 weeks' statutory holiday, capped at 28 days.

67. **Petition 770225, Review regulation of animal boarding and licensing conditions (Molly's Law)**
Opened 19 June 2026. Asks for a review of paid pet care standards, easier licence checks and consistent enforcement. 1,185 signatures on 28 October 2026.

68. **Petition 776716, Introduce stronger welfare regulations for pet care services**
Opened 24 August 2026. Asks for dog walkers, sitters, groomers and trainers to be licensed. 1,790 signatures on 28 October 2026.

69. **Animal Licensing UK, council animal activity licence registers, read 23 September 2026**
The published registers of 286 English councils, gathered in one place. Source of the licence holder, star rating, licensed number of dogs and expiry figures in this report.

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England outline: Office for National Statistics, Countries (December 2023) Boundaries UK BUC

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Duncan

Founder of Genera and owner of Duncan's Dog Co

Duncan has run Duncan's Dog Co, a licensed dog daycare in Surrey, since 2011. Genera is the software he built to run it, shaped by what actually works day to day, not theory.