



Town Centres
People | Community | Belonging



Pop-Up Shop Guide

TOWN CENTRES

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol





Contents

1. The New High Street
2. Pop-Up Shops Explained
3. Steps to Starting a Pop-Up Shop
4. Logistics



The New High Street

Britain's high streets are changing and evolving. Town centres were once dominated by the same familiar multiple retailers, however the so called 'clone high street' is disappearing and being replaced by a more diverse visitor experience.

With these changes has come a renewed appreciation of independent businesses, which offer a point of difference and are sought out by people seeking a shopping experience. Alongside the traditional retail offer, new restaurants and bars have opened to meet an increased consumer demand for social connection.

Following the pandemic, many people developed a greater affinity for their local community and now feel a deeper sense of belonging to the place they call home. Despite all the economic turmoil of recent times, the high street remains a place where people can shop, access a wide range of essential services and socialise.

Emerging out of this period of uncertainty are some exciting and innovative ideas that are changing the way people live and work within a town centre location.

Town centre living is growing in popularity. With increased investment in active travel plans, residential living in a town centre context is seen as an attractive option for a wide demographic of people.

The concept of office space is also being transformed by the creation of new collaborative workspaces. These innovative buildings bring together technology and creative businesses under one roof to provide an exciting platform to help them grow. Alongside these are a variety of food providers and the development across the UK of 'street food' as a destination experience.

In line with the diversification of the high street, the property market has also shifted. Leases are becoming shorter as landlords are being asked to adopt a more flexible lettings approach.

The idea of Pop-Up shops, which were once the preserve of quirky towns and city suburbs, has now become far more mainstream. They are recognised as a way to harness entrepreneurial spirit and help people set up a successful business.

This short guide provides some answers to frequently asked questions in relation to setting up a Pop-Up Shop and also sets out the steps to begin the process of starting one up.



Pop-Up Shops Explained

What is a Pop-Up Shop?

A Pop-Up shop is where a tenant and landlord enter into a short-term lease which is usually for a period less than six months. The arrangement creates a temporary shop space that offers benefits to both parties.

Why should a tenant consider a Pop-Up Shop?

- assess the suitability of a location without entering into a long-term commitment
- test a new business idea
- gauge the demand for their product/service
- create a versatile space to host a variety of activities including community projects, art galleries and workshops
- market a new business idea to a much wider audience

Why should a landlord consider a Pop-Up Shop?

- generate a small income
- transfer the responsibility for the payment of Business Rates from the landlord to the tenant
- make an empty unit more secure and deter vandalism
- potentially lower the insurance premium on a vacant unit
- a way to attract new tenants into a vacant unit
- improve the appearance and diversity of the high street
- offer a potential tenant the chance to try their idea making them more likely to consider taking a long-term lease



Who pays Business Rates on a Pop-Up Shop?

When a Pop-Up shop takes occupancy of a vacant unit, the responsibility to pay business rates passes from the landlord to the tenant.

Notes in relation to business rates:

- occupied properties with a rateable value of £6,000 or less qualify for 100% Small Business Rate Relief and properties between £6,001 and £12,000 rateable value qualify for a reduced amount of relief on a tapering scale. (e.g. 50% relief for a £9,000 rateable value). However a ratepayer can only receive relief for a maximum of two properties on one rating list
- Pop-Up shops which are occupied by a registered charity are eligible for 80% mandatory charitable rate relief upon application.
- Pop-Up Shops in the Retail, Leisure or Hospitality Sector can benefit from relief at the rate of a 40% reduction in their rate bill for the financial year 2025-26 up to a maximum of £110,000 for all properties occupied by the same business throughout Wales upon application.

If you have a specific query relating to Business Rates on a Pop-Up shop you can contact the Council's Taxation team for advice.

Please email: taxation@bridgend.gov.uk

Is planning consent required for a Pop-Up Shop?

If a Pop-Up retail shop is proposed for an existing retail unit at ground floor level, it is unlikely that there will be a requirement for a change of use planning application.

However, a standalone Pop-Up unit may require planning permission depending on the location of the unit and the length of the lease.

Before embarking on a Pop-Up shop project, you may like to contact the Council's Planning Department for some advice and guidance on how planning consent relates to Pop-Up shops.

Please email: planning@bridgend.gov.uk



Steps to starting a Pop-Up Shop

Find a vacant unit

Bridgend County Borough Council has an online Town Centre Vacant Property Search. Every retail unit available for lease or sale in Bridgend, Porthcawl and Maesteg town centres is listed. The Property Search contains a photo and description of each property, a map showing its location, the agent's contact details and where available, the agent's marketing brochure.

The council also collects footfall data in Bridgend town centre at Adare Street and Caroline Street, in Porthcawl town centre at John Street and in Maesteg town centre at Talbot Street. This footfall data shows how many people have visited that location each week and is a useful tool in evaluating pedestrian numbers in a particular town centre. For more details on footfall data please contact the council's Regeneration team at regeneration@bridgend.gov.uk

Make a plan

In a simple and concise way, set out your business case. One side of A4 is sufficient. This should clearly explain what your business idea is and how a Pop-Up shop will benefit the landlord.

Pitch your idea

Contact the property agents who are marketing the unit and ask them to present the idea to the landlord on your behalf. Having a well-presented business case demonstrates to a landlord that you are serious about starting a business and have thought through the concept of taking on a Pop-Up shop.

Agree a short-term lease

If the landlord agrees, you will be asked to enter into a short-term lease. At this stage you may want to consider obtaining some independent legal advice before agreeing to enter into a lease.

A short-term lease will cover the length of tenancy, details of the agreement between the tenant and the landlord.

It will also set out some of the key responsibilities in relation to the property.

- who pays the utility payments (gas, water & electricity)
- who has responsibility for the security of the property
- who pays for any damage caused
- who looks after the maintenance of the property i.e. fixtures and fittings

And finally...

Having agreed a lease for a Pop-Up shop there are just a few things to consider before you open your doors to the public.

Layout

Pop-Up shops by their nature need to be flexible spaces. It is worth giving some careful thought as to how to best utilise the shop to sell goods or deliver a service.

In recent years, there has been a move towards shopping as a leisure experience, which places a far greater emphasis on the shopping environment and customer service. Remember, any furniture and fittings that are purchased will have to be easy to move around and portable. This is so that at the end of the lease the unit can be returned to its original condition.

Branding

Because Pop-Up shops are temporary, they will attract interest from curious shoppers when they first appear on the high street. Therefore, it is important to think about how your Pop-Up shop is presented on the outside. It is also worth considering whether it is clear what the shop sells or the service it offers.

Marketing

Social media is an excellent way to begin to promote your Pop-Up shop within the local community and create a buzz around the idea.

Business Wales runs free courses on how to use social media within a business context.

Visit the Business Wales website for more information or call the Business Wales Helpline on 03000 603000 - lines are open 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday.





Logistics

Running a shop requires commitment and consistency. It is worth considering the hours you can commit to opening a Pop-Up shop each day. It is better to open for shorter hours but to be consistent, than have sporadic opening hours which can confuse and disappoint customers. Simple things such as who opens and closes the shop everyday will need some thought as they may need to work around existing commitments.

For more information on starting a Pop-Up shop in Bridgend, Porthcawl or Maesteg town centres; please contact the Council's Regeneration Team Regeneration@bridgend.gov.uk

Please note you are advised to obtain independent advice before entering into any legal agreement.