

Protecting the Public and Supporting Businesses

Trading Standards improving compliance and tackling crime

The Impacts and Outcomes of Local Trading Standards Services in England and Wales in 2024/25

The Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) created the Impacts and Outcomes Framework in 2018/19 to provide national data for England and Wales on work done by local authority Trading Standards Services. This is the fifth report for England & Wales, and this document contains a summary of the of highlights of work done in 2024/25.

This year, across all areas of work, the risks associated with the cost-of-living crisis on consumers and businesses is apparent. The need for effective business advice and a level playing field for legitimate businesses is going to be crucial to keep them afloat in difficult times. Risks to consumers around the safety of cheap or illicit goods and false claims relating to prices, costs and energy efficiency are growing and the impact of losing money to scammers is bigger than ever.

In 2024/25 local Trading Standards Services have:

- Prevented over **£651 million** of detriment to consumers.
- Saved scam victims almost **£49 million**.
- Provided over **16,300 hours** of advice to businesses through primary authority partnerships, similar to last year.
- Removed over **7 million** unsafe or non-compliant goods and over **2.5 million** illegal vaping products from the market.
- Seized over **23.5 million** illegal cigarettes
- Almost **72,000** compliance checks to ensure businesses meet their legal responsibilities and to provide them with advice on site.

TACKLING DETRIMENT AND PREVENTING HARM

One of the key functions of Trading Standards is to prevent consumer and business detriment (financial and non-financial), tackle the criminal behaviour that leads to it and support victims. The Government's 2022 Consumer Protection Study estimated that there was **£54 billion** in unaddressed detriment across Great Britain.

Key statistics for 2024/25 included:



1,006 defendants were prosecuted.



Prison sentences of almost **570 years** were handed down. This includes both immediate and suspended sentences.



Defendants were ordered to pay almost **£11.9 million in Proceeds of Crime**.



Local authority Trading Standards provided support to almost **16,500 scam victims**.



Work to disrupt mass marketing fraud mailings, stop outgoing payments, mail etc **saved consumers about £49 million**.



Over **£3.4 million compensation** being awarded to victims by the courts.



SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Businesses have always needed advice and support from Trading Standards to help them navigate the range of laws that ensure they trade fairly and their products are safe. This year, as businesses continue to recover from the impacts of Covid, and face supply chain and energy cost issues, the ability to access the correct advice and have confidence has never been more important.

Key statistics for 2024/25 included:



Provided over 16,300 of advice to business who are part of the Primary Authority scheme and responded to almost **12,100 requests** for other advice from businesses.



Almost **25,200 businesses were subject to an intervention**, such as advice, investigation or referral.



Over **71,600 visits were carried out to businesses to ensure they comply with the law and provide advice** to help them fix any non-compliance.



Over **530,500 counterfeit products with a market value of £17.5 million**, which breach the intellectual property of legitimate businesses, were seized.

PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Trading Standards undertake a wide range of activities to protect and promote the health and well-being of local communities including ensuring that products people buy are safe, that food is correctly labelled, and that the health and welfare of livestock is assured.

Age restricted products, including vaping products, tobacco, alcohol, and knives, are also a significant area of focus for many authorities. Trading Standards enforce and advise on a very wide range of age restricted sales legislation to help to keep young people safe.

Key statistics for 2024/25 included:



Nearly **7 million unsafe or non-compliant products were seized or removed from the marketplace** following Trading Standards' interventions.



1,500 premises were tested for the underage sale of **alcohol**; the average failure rate was **20%**.



The **savings to society**, in terms of product value and injuries and fires prevented, is over **£252 million**.



920 premises were tested for the underage sale of **tobacco**; the average failure rate was **21%**.



Over **10,250 businesses** were identified as **supplying food that was misdescribed, did not correctly declare allergens, contained toxic or illegal components or was involved in food fraud**. This was an **8% increase** on last year.



Over **3,100 premises** were tested for the underage sale of vaping products; the average failure rate was **23%**.



Over **8,200 businesses** were found to be in **breach of animal health and welfare legislation**.



Over **23.5 million illicit cigarettes** were seized, together with **7.2 tonnes of illicit hand-rolling tobacco** worth a combined street value of **£16.4 million**.

