

Protecting the Public and Supporting Business During the Pandemic

The Impacts and Outcomes of Local Trading Standards Services in Wales 2020/21

This report is the first year that Trading Standards Services in Wales have benefitted from Trading Standards Wales's (TSW) comprehensive assessment into the value that local Trading Standards Services deliver based on the report published by the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) that represents Heads of Trading Standards across both England and Wales.

This year's report, 2020/21, coincides with the most severe periods of the Covid 19 pandemic and can therefore assess the impact of the Covid 19 specific work carried out by Trading Standards services in addition to the usual three themes of Tackling Detriment and Preventing Harm, Supporting the Local Economy, and Promoting Health and Wellbeing. However, due to the severe impact of Covid 19 on services, the findings of this year's report will be incomparable to any other.

This document provides a snapshot of the key findings from this year's assessment and demonstrates Trading Standards' continued value in focusing support on protecting and supporting the most vulnerable and local businesses through very difficult times.

In 2020/21, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, local Trading Standards Services have:

- Prevented over £1 million of detriment
- Provided support to 1,000 scam victims and secured £54,000 in redress through advice and intervention
- Responded to 3,384 requests for advice from businesses
- Received almost 280,000 referrals and notifications to services
- Carried out almost 48,000 Covid related visits and inspections to businesses across Wales

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 criminal behaviour that leads to it and support victims.

Key statistics for 2020/21 included:



86 defendants taken through the prosecution process



Over **£167,000 prevented** from being handed over to criminals



Prison sentences of 344 months handed down. This included both immediate and suspended sentences



Local authority Trading Standards provided support to over **1,000 scam victims**



Defendants were ordered to pay over **£435,000 in Proceeds of Crime**



Work to disrupt mass marketing fraud mailings, stop outgoing payments, mail etc **saved consumers over £222,000**





SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Businesses need advice and support from Trading Standards to help them navigate the range of laws that ensure they trade fairly and safely. This was particularly crucial this year when businesses needed to respond to Covid legislation and change their businesses to survive during the pandemic.

Key statistics for 2020/21 included:



3,384 responses to requests for advice from businesses



Over **2,500 visits** were carried out to businesses to **ensure they comply with the law and provide advice** to help them fix any non-compliance



Over **27,000 counterfeit products** were seized with a **market value of over £312,000**, which breach the intellectual property of legitimate businesses



Over **750 businesses** were subject to an **intervention**, such as advice, investigation or referral

PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Trading Standards undertake a wide range of activities to protect and promote the health and well-being of local communities. This includes ensuring that products people buy are safe, that food is correctly and clearly labelled to help them to make healthy choices and avoid allergens.

Key statistics for 2020/21 included:



Over **34,000 unsafe or non-compliant products and PPE** were seized or removed from the market place following Trading Standards' interventions



Nearly **1,100 premises** were visited to check that the **Minimum Unit Pricing for alcohol sales** was being observed



The **savings to society**, in terms of product value and injuries and fires prevented, is almost **£1 million**



Seizure of illegal tobacco from **48 premises**



Over **215 businesses** were identified as **supplying food that was misdescribed, did not correctly declare allergens, contained toxic or illegal components or were involved in food fraud**



Over **536,000 illicit cigarettes** were seized, worth an estimated **£120,000**



Over **500 businesses** were found to be in **breach of animal health and welfare legislation**

TRADING STANDARDS SUPPORT FOR THE COVID RESPONSE

Trading Standards were a key part of the local authority Covid response, along with other colleagues in regulatory services.

Key statistics for 2020/21 included:

In Wales:



157 incidents of COVID related issues concerning refunds and the return of deposits reported



Supported local authorities with **over 42,000 Covid related enquiries**



663 Business Improvement Notices were issued as well as **142 Business Closure Notices** in order to keep people safe



Carrying out over **48,000 visits to business**



237 COVID related scams reported