

Trading Standards News



A summary of work and Facebook posts by the Trading Standards Service

Welcome to our Spring 2023 Newsletter

The latest news of our work and advice on scams and consumer issues.

Remember to stay up to date with our latest news by [following us on Facebook](#).

Contact Citizen's Advice Consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133 or [Citizen's Advice online](#) for advice on all Trading Standards matters.

Trading Standards in the news

Crackdown on supply of illegal tobacco and vapes

At the beginning of May we worked with police teams across the county on a joint operation targeting premises selling illegal tobacco and vapes.



Disposable nicotine vapour products must contain no more than 2ml of liquid. 2ml of liquid equates to around 600 puffs in a vape product. Disposable vapes which exceed these amounts cannot be legally sold in the UK. A large quantity of illegal vapes were seized and have been signed over for destruction.

We also seized a quantity of counterfeit tobacco.

You can report concerns about the supply of illegal tobacco and vapes in Leicestershire to Trading Standards, via our [Report It](#) page.

Counterfeit skin care products seized at East Midlands Airport



Our team regularly carries out examinations of imported products at East Midlands Airport. We recently discovered a consignment of cosmetics that contained fake Estee Lauder skin care serum. Genuine Estee Lauder cosmetics are higher-end products, with a matching price range.

These counterfeit products would be sold at the price of a genuine product but could contain harmful chemicals.

As always, our advice is to buy only from reputable suppliers.

Get advice on how to avoid purchasing fake goods online from [Get Safe Online](#).

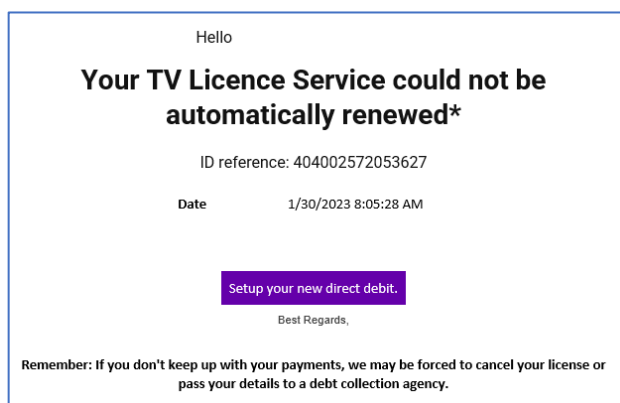
Scams in the news

Tv Licensing scams on the rise

TV Licensing scams are on the rise, with [Which?](#) issuing a warning about emails taking users to websites where they're asked to hand over personal and financial details.

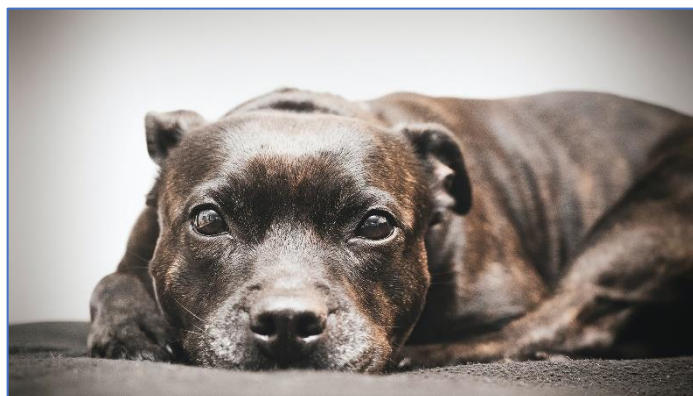
It is common for scammers to use names of well-known organisations to obtain money and/or personal details from their consumers.

Get advice on [how to avoid these scams](#)



Dog's Trust rehoming scam on social media

The [Dog's Trust](#) and [Chartered Institute of Trading Standards](#) have urged the public to be on the lookout for scammers charging money upfront for puppies, requesting payment for vet's bills, and



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giving out the charity's address. This scam started with a post on social media as: "Kelly Staffy puppies for sale". Not only are the scammers asking for money, but they also ask for personal information. One victim went to the Dog's Trust Leeds Rehoming Centre to collect a puppy, only to be left heartbroken when they realised, they had been tricked.

The Dog's Trust advise: "When buying a puppy, do your research first, and if something doesn't feel right, don't do it. If an advert seems too good to be true, it probably is. Never pay for a puppy upfront, and always go to see the mother with the puppies, visiting multiple times before you commit. Ask to see vaccination records; any legitimate breeder would be happy for you to come and see the dog with its mother and give that kind of information. And no legitimate breeder would ever ask you to pay for an animal's vets bills before you buy it".

To read more on this scam visit [CTSI](#).

Avoid Loan Fee Fraud



Leicestershire Trading Standards have been educating county residents about the dangers of Loan Fee fraud.

Loan fee fraud is when someone who is looking for a loan is asked to pay an upfront fee before receiving it. They pay the fee, but they never get the loan.

Pause and do the 3-step check before you make any decision and avoid the scammers:

- Cold called?
- Asked to pay an upfront fee?
- Pressured to pay quickly or unusually?

Tick any of these? STOP!

Protect yourself from loan fee fraud. Visit Financial Conduct Authority [Scam Smart](#) to find out more.

Thinking of selling your home?

If you are struggling financially, it can be tempting to think about solving money worries by releasing capital tied up in your home.

You might be tempted to use a “quick sale” company. They offer to buy your house very quickly at a discounted price. But deals like these might be misleading and mean you’ll lose out financially.

Moneyhelper.org.uk offers great advice to help you think twice [before selling your home](#).



Buying second hand childcare items

Childcare items such as car seats, prams and cots can be expensive if you are on a budget.



Saving money shouldn’t mean compromising on safety. What should you be aware of if buying second hand?

The Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents ([RoSPA](#)) advises not to purchase a second-hand car seat. It may have been involved in an accident and the damage may not be visible. If you do choose second hand read their [advice first](#).

What about highchairs, safety gates, cots, and other items? [The National Childbirth Trust](#) has great advice on what to check and

what to avoid. Find out more at nct.org.uk

Don't turn to a "Loan Shark"!

Loan sharks take advantage of people who are in financial difficulty by offering quick loans. But they probably don't say how much you'll have to pay back, and you could end up paying up to three times as much as you would for a legal loan.

A loan shark could be a "friend" from the school run, neighbour, or other acquaintance. You may also be offered a loan on social media or by unsolicited email or text. If you have turned to a loan shark you have done nothing wrong, and help is available to you.

Find out more at: [Stop Loan Sharks](#).

An advertisement with a dark green background. On the right, there is a circular inset image showing a hand holding a smartphone. The text is in white and light green. The main headline reads 'Be wary of unexpected emails or social media adverts offering quick loans'. Below that, it says 'Before borrowing money, check that the lender is authorised by the FCA at register.fca.org.uk'. At the bottom, it says 'Say No to Loan Sharks' and provides contact information: 'Call us in confidence 24/7 on 0800 074 0878' and 'Or visit www.stopillegallending.co.uk'. There is a small logo for 'STOP LOAN SHARKS' in the bottom right corner.

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Want to make some extra money by selling your unwanted clutter?

Scammers also want to make money from your stuff!

Online auction sites and selling apps can be a great way to make space and money but make sure you follow these top tips from [Get Safe Online](#):



- Always make sure you have received payment before despatching goods.
- Provide only the minimum necessary personal information to sellers and buyers, such as your address for collection or despatch purposes.

- Do not fall for requests to close auctions early.

- Some payment methods are not guaranteed to be safe, meaning that you could lose your money. For example, using PayPal friends and family may avoid fees but does not offer protection if things go wrong.

- If you think that your auction or online payment account has been compromised, take action immediately. Check the site's online help page.

Get more advice at getsafeonline.org

Looking forward to summer music gigs?

Over £6.7 million was lost to Ticket Fraud in 2022. Don't become a victim in 2023.

- Make sure you purchase tickets on a credit card for extra protection and don't purchase them from someone you don't know via bank transfer.
- Only buy tickets from the venue's box office, official promoter or agent, or a well-known ticketing website.
- Avoid purchasing tickets advertised on social media platforms.



Get more advice from [Action Fraud](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk).

Can't wait to get away? Avoid holiday fraud pitfalls!



When booking a holiday, use a credit card where possible. When making purchases over £100-£30,000 you will receive Section 75 protection under the Consumer Credit Act, this offers extra protection if anything goes wrong.

Use secure payment methods recommended by reputable retailers.

Always avoid paying by bank transfer, especially if you're booking with someone you don't know.

Read reviews from reputable sources. More top tips are found at [ActionFraud](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk).

Leicestershire Trading Standards Service

Tel: 0116 305 8000

Email: tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk

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