

# Trading Standards News

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



Leicestershire  
County Council

## Welcome to our Winter 2025 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.

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## Rogue Traders on your doorstep?

During these winter months and associated bad weather, don't be taken in by rogue traders alarming you into having urgent repairs to your property.

They may tell you they have seen loose tiles on your roof, which may not be true as they often use scare tactics to get you to agree to work there and then. Rogue Traders usually start at a low quote which soon becomes a higher quote when they suddenly tell you the whole roof needs replacing, when in fact this is not the case.

Cold calling is not illegal — but aggressive or misleading behaviour is. Here's how to stay safe:

- ✓ Don't feel pressured – you're under no obligation to listen or buy anything. It's OK to say no and close the door.
- ✓ Display a 'No Cold Callers' sign – many reputable businesses will respect this.
- ✓ Don't hand over money on the spot – always take time to think, check credentials, and get at least three quotes.
- ✓ Know your rights – if you buy something on the doorstep, you may have a 14-day cancellation period.

! If a trader won't leave when asked, or behaves aggressively, call 101 or 999 in an emergency.

📞 Report concerns to Citizens Advice on 0808 2231133, they will pass the details to Trading Standards. To request 'No Cold Calling' stickers email us on [tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk)



# Supporting Leicestershire residents

📣 In support of Carers Week 2025, our Trading Standards Scams Officer and an investigating officer attended an event hosted by [Leicestershire Support For Carers](#) at Leicester Racecourse to proudly represent our service.



👤 It was a pleasure to not only provide scams and doorstep crime prevention advice to carers and residents, but also to raise awareness of our role and how we can assist victims.

🔗 The officers also met with colleagues from partner organisations, and it was useful to gain additional knowledge of how other services operate and support residents of Leicestershire.

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## Eating out over Christmas & New Year?

Christmas and New Year are times of celebration for many with family, friends and food playing a big part of the festivities. However, eating out can be a worrying time for those with food allergies.

📣 Here are our top tips to ensure a safe celebration:

➡ If you have an allergy, it is important that you make the business aware so that they can ensure the food they serve you is safe.

➡ Do not rely only on the information on the menu but speak to the business as well to confirm the information.



➡ Ask to see ingredient packaging if you are not confident in the verbal information given.

➡ If unsure, ask – food businesses are legally required to provide information about what is in the food they sell so you can make an informed and safe choice.

➡ Be aware that cross contamination can happen in busy kitchens and some dishes may be at a greater risk of this due to preparation and cooking methods. Always speak to the business about your specific requirements.

➡ Suppliers, recipes, and ingredients can change. If you have purchased food before at, or from, a premises, do not assume it will always be the same.

🌐 If you believe that a business is putting their customers at risk, you can report it at [www.leicestershire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk)

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## Electric blanket safety this winter

Now we are in Winter, and temperatures have dropped, we know many Leicestershire residents are buying a new electric blanket or have taken an old one out of storage. Before you put it on your bed, please follow these safety tips:

✅ When looking to buy an electric blanket it is important to buy from a reputable retailer. The blanket must have either a CE or UKCA safety mark.

❌ Don't ever buy a second-hand electric blanket.

📖 Before using the blanket, read and follow the manufacturer's instructions. Do not use electric under blankets on top of the bed covers.

⚡ Check the blanket frequently for detached tie tapes, frayed edges, scorch marks, and loose electrical connections.

💧 Never use a hot water bottle in the same bed as an electric blanket, even if the blanket is switched off.

🔥 Unplug blankets before you get into bed unless they have a thermostat control for safe all-night use.

⚠️ When storing an electric blanket, don't fold it as this may damage the internal wiring. Store flat or rolled up.

💡 Get your blanket tested by a qualified electrician at least every three years.

❗ If your blanket is more than 10 years old, you should consider disposing of it and buying a new one. Blankets being disposed should be taken to a recycling facility which accepts electric and electronic appliances.



# Illegal tobacco seized in Oadby

🚨 Leicestershire Trading Standards Officers, supported by Officers from [Oadby and Wigston Police](#) seized illegal tobacco, which was hidden close to the till, from a business in Oadby .



🚨 Leicestershire Trading Standards are committed to tackling the supply of illegal tobacco within the county. It not only brings criminality to our high streets but also has a financial impact on businesses who are trading legitimately.

🌐 If you have any information regarding the sale of illegal tobacco that you want to share with Leicestershire Trading Standards, please do so by calling 0808 223 1133 or report it online at [www.leicestershire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk)

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## Ensuring accuracy for all

🚨 Our Weights and Measures Officers were out in Autumn testing weighbridges to ensure they are accurate.

🚚 We visit sites with weighbridges that are for use in trade and used by members of the public.



# Jetting off for some Winter sun?

✈ Planning on getting some winter sun? Don't Let Scammers Tag Along!

Winter holidays are a great time to unwind, but they're also prime time for holiday scams. Fraudsters know people are rushing to book and use that urgency to trick you.



Here's how they do it:

- 🚫 Fake listings for holiday cottages that don't exist
- 🚫 Invalid tickets to popular events or attractions
- 🚫 "Discounted flights" that disappear once you've paid.

Here are some top tips to stay safe when booking your break:

- ✅ Use trusted travel companies and booking platforms — check they're ABTA or ATOL protected
- ✅ Pay with a credit card — it gives you extra protection if something goes wrong
- ✅ Read reviews on independent sites — don't rely only on testimonials shown on the booking page
- ✅ Be wary of deals that seem too good to be true — they often are.

📞 If you think you've been scammed, contact Citizens Advice on 0808 223 1133 for support and guidance.

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## New member of the family?

🐾 Leicestershire Trading Standards works with port authorities and the Animal and Plant Health Agency to investigate claims of illegally landed dogs. Ensuring that the animals are accompanied by the correct paperwork and have an approved health status.

🐾 If you are looking to add a new canine member to your family, ensure you do your research.



🌐 District Councils hold a register of reputable and licensed breeders and can be found on their websites

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## Have you witnessed underage sales?

🚫 Vapes containing nicotine are not allowed to be sold to people aged under 18. It is also illegal for adults to buy vapes to give to people under 18.

🌐 If you have seen the sale of these products to young people aged under 18, report it to Citizens Advice Consumer Service by calling 0808 223 1133 or report it online at [www.leicestershire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk)



**Are you aware of sales of vapes to young people aged under 18?**

**UNDER 18**

**Vapes and the law on underage sales**

- Vapes containing nicotine are not allowed to be sold to people aged under 18.
- It's also illegal for adults to buy vapes to give to people under 18.

**Spotting unregulated vapes for sale in the UK**

- Look out for the size of the device – the tank capacity should be no more than 2ml.
- Check the wording of the warnings. There's only one phrase that's allowed in the UK, which is 'This product contains nicotine which is a highly addictive substance'.
- Check the size of warnings. If they don't cover 30% of the front and back of the pack, it's not allowed to be on the UK market.

If you have seen the sale of these products to young people aged under 18, or you believe a business is selling unregulated products, please report it to the Citizens Advice consumer service: **0808 223 1133**

**Leicestershire County Council**

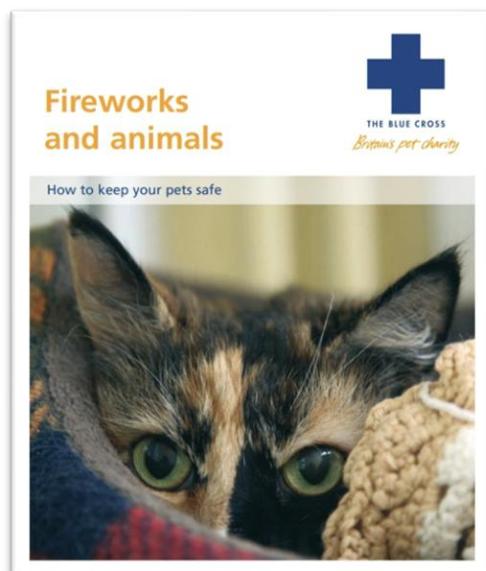
## New Year fireworks?

🔥 Whilst we find joy in welcoming the New Year in with colourful firework displays, local wildlife and livestock may not.

🐾 If you have livestock in your close surrounding area, consider letting their keeper know so they can be prepared.

⚠️ Where possible, direct fireworks away from livestock fields as debris can cause harm to livestock or become a choking hazard.

🌐 For more info, please visit the following line online: <http://www.tinyurl.com/fire-work>



**Fireworks and animals**

**THE BLUE CROSS**  
*Britain's pet charity*

How to keep your pets safe



# Staying safe with food

🔔 Part of the role as a Trading Standards Food Officer is to investigate complaints received from the public.

📄 The action we take can range from working with businesses to help them to comply with food legislation to taking formal action for continued non-compliance or serious risks to health. We may carry out inspections, provide advice, or take samples as part of this process.



🗣️ The information we receive from the public is invaluable in helping us to identify businesses who may not be trading within the law.

🌐 We all want to help keep standards high across the county, and you can do your bit by letting us know about non-compliant businesses at

[www.leicestershire.gov.uk](http://www.leicestershire.gov.uk)

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# Child safety this Christmas



⚠️ When purchasing gifts for loved ones, please remember that button batteries, button cell batteries, or coin batteries are extremely dangerous to children if swallowed.

🤖 They can be found in toys, remote controls, car keys, musical greetings cards, and small electronic devices such as calculators and weighing scales.

👤 A child needs urgent medical attention if they have swallowed a button battery.

🌐 Find out more at [www.rospa.com](http://www.rospa.com)

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# Artificial Intelligence scams

 Criminals involved in scams have begun to use artificial intelligence (AI), which can create texts, videos, audio, and images.

 This is particularly useful when it comes to romance scams, as the scammers can create a 'personalised' video using AI to convince you they are real. If you are dating online, please follow the advice of [Action Fraud](#)

 Find out more about romance scams and how to protect yourself, at [www.which.co.uk](http://www.which.co.uk)



**DON'T LET YOUR HEART RULE YOUR HEAD.**  
#LoveNotLies

Online dating? If you haven't met them in person do not:

- Send them any money.
- Purchase and send the codes on gift cards.
- Transfer money on their behalf.
- Take a loan out for them.
- Provide copies of your personal documents such as passports or driving licenses.
- Allow them access to your bank account.
- Invest your own money on their behalf or on their advice.

ActionFraud  
www.actionfraud.police.uk

TO STOP FRAUD

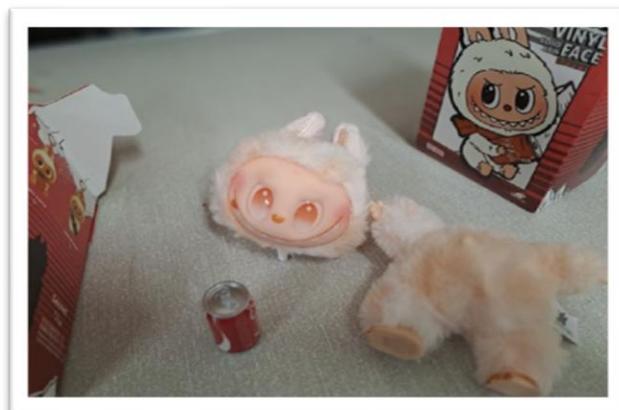
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## Is your gift genuine this Christmas?

 Some fake Labubu dolls (aka Lafufu) were recently seized by our officers at a convenience store in the county.

 Fakes like this often would not pass toy safety standards and a quick screen test shows the toy's head came off without difficulty!

 The BBC offers advice on how to check your Labubu aren't fakes via [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize)



# Watch out for this car park QR code scam

🚗 Did you know scammers can place fake QR codes in car parks?

This can lead drivers to share their personal and financial information on scam websites



It's important you look out for frauds and be [#ScamAware](#)

- ✓ Check if the QR code is in an unusual place & professionally printed, often it can be a sticker above another QR code
- ✓ Ensure you're using a legitimate website - look at the URL and see if it matches the name of the parking facility
- ✓ See if the car park has an official app or website so you can pay in alternative ways.

You can read more on parking scams online at [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk)

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## What would you put on your skin?

😬 Would you buy and use lotion in a tube, and use it on your skin, if there were no labelling and no information about what it contained, or even a product name?

✈️ This tube was part of a consignment of cosmetics imported for sale by a business in the UK. It may contain tattoo numbing cream but then again it may not!

⚠️ All labels on cosmetic products sold in the UK should include ingredients, warnings, and a UK address.



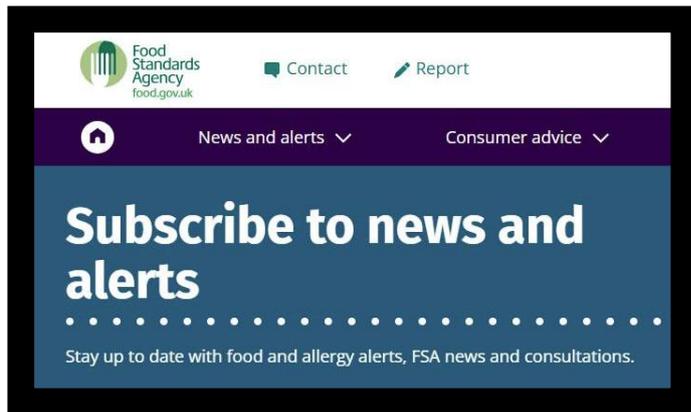
For a full list of what is required, go to [www.gov.uk/guidance/consumer-products-cosmetics](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/consumer-products-cosmetics)

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# Keep up to date with the latest food safety recalls

🍷 Would you know if a food product you bought was recalled? Could it be something you have in your cupboard or fridge?

⚠️ A recall is when unsafe food is removed from the supply chain and consumers are advised to take appropriate action, for example to return or dispose of the unsafe food.



🦠 There are many reasons why a food product might be recalled, including a risk of food poisoning, problems identified with the manufacturing process, or labelling errors such as incorrect or missing allergen information.

🌐 The Food Standards Agency offers a free service to receive a notification when a food recall or allergy alert is issued. Sign up now at [www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/subscribe](http://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/subscribe)

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## Won the lottery recently?

💰 Have you won a lottery that you didn't sign up for? It is probably a scam.

⚠️ If it seems too good to be true, then it probably is.

✉️ Send your scam mail to the 'Friends Against Scams' team!

🌐 Find out more here [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/scamnesty](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/scamnesty)



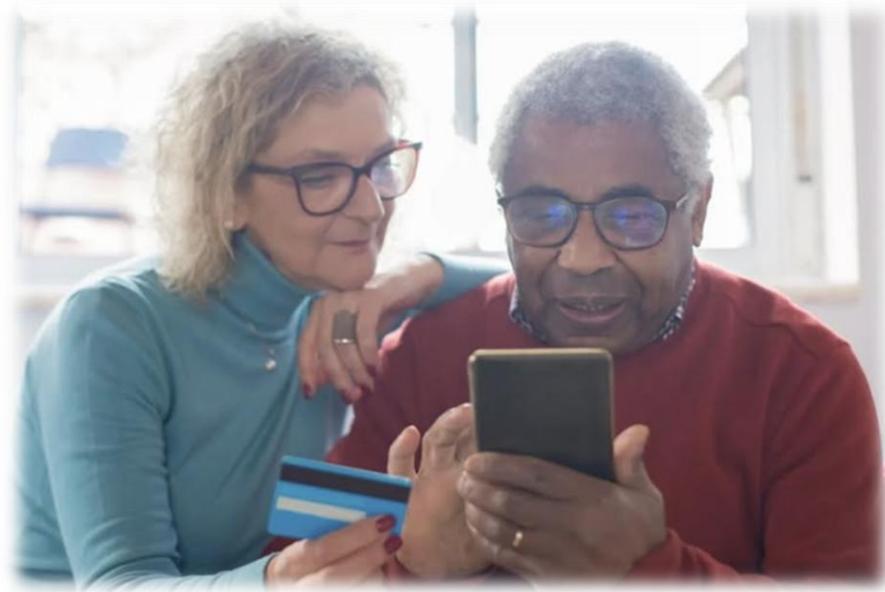
# Buying in the winter sales?

## Know your rights!

👤 Planning on shopping in the winter sales? A lower price doesn't mean fewer rights.

If you buy a product in the sales and it's faulty:

- ✅ You have 30 days to return it for a full refund
- ✅ After 30 days, you may still be entitled to a repair or replacement
- ✅ Discounts don't affect your rights – sale or not, the law is the same.



Shopping Winter sales deals online? Here's how to protect yourself:

- 🔍 Check the website – look for real contact details and reviews
- 🔒 Pay securely – credit cards often give you extra protection.

Watch for red flags:

- ▶ Prices that look too good to be true
- ▶ Spelling errors and poor website design
- ▶ Sellers asking for bank transfers only.

Didn't get a refund for a faulty item? Visit Citizens Advice for free help and guidance on your rights at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) or call Citizens Advice on 0808 223 1133

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# Follow us...

Have you visited our [Facebook](#) page recently? We regularly post on all manner of consumer issues from new scam alerts and product safety notices to the work of our Animal Health Officers and East Midlands Airport team. Join over 2500 followers to stay up to date.

