

# Trading Standards News

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



Leicestershire  
County Council

## Welcome to our Spring 2026 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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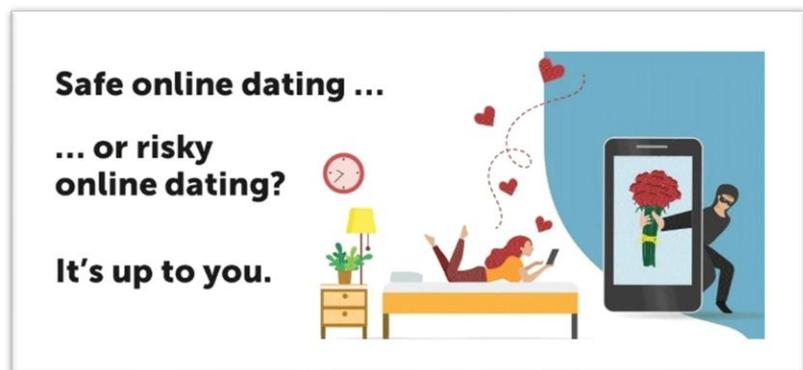
## Do you know who you're chatting with?

❤️ Online dating is a brilliant way to find a new relationship, whether it's an online companion or the love of your life.

Most people you'll meet on dating sites and other online platforms are genuine, but if they're not, you could potentially fall victim to:

➡️ Romance fraud – when your date is a fraudster or identity thief and will gain your trust before asking for money, gifts or personal details.

➡️ Catfishing – when you're lured into a relationship by a person using a false or stolen profile.



Get advice on how to avoid romance fraudsters from Get Safe Online 🙌 [safe dating online](#)

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# Going for a walk in the countryside?

 Make sure you're a considerate dog walker.



 The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025 gives additional protection to sheep, cows and other farm animals (including llamas and alpacas) from being attacked or chased by dogs.

 It also extends police powers to investigate offences and increases the maximum penalty to an unlimited fine for those in charge of dogs that worry livestock.

 For more information on dog attacks on farm animals, follow the link  [fines for dog attacks](#)

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## Scam alert - Vehicle tax renewal

Beware of emails asking you to confirm personal details. Fraudsters will often send emails or text messages to unsuspecting victims asking them to confirm personal details, such as bank or payment information.

Remember, DVLA will never ask you for your bank account details or ask you to confirm payment details. They will only ask you to confirm your personal details by email or text if you have a live enquiry with them.

 Tips on how you can stay safe online:

 The only place to access official information on DVLA and its services is via the [GOV.UK](#) website.

 Never share your driving licence or vehicle information online.

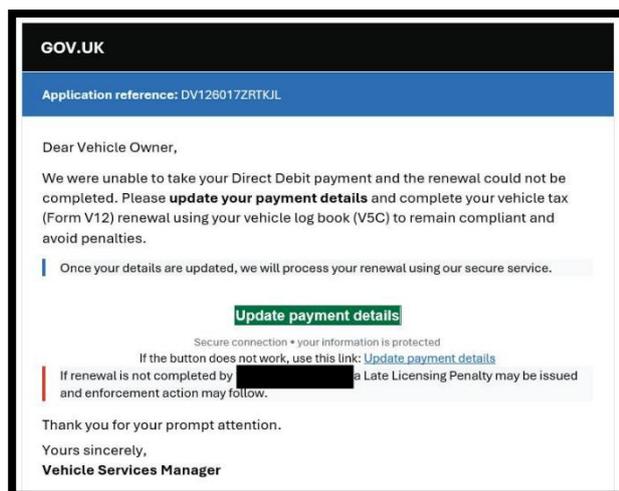
 Beware of websites impersonating DVLA: scammers create websites that attempt to impersonate DVLA and may appear legitimate.

For more information see  [DVLA's top tips for avoiding scams](#)

 Scam emails can be reported by forwarding them to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)

If you lose any money to a scam, call your bank immediately using the number on the back of your bank card and report it at the [report fraud website](#)

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# Protecting your hard-earned savings

🚨 Fraudulent roofers sentenced to 13.5 years for £208,000 scam.

⚠️ The National Trading Standards Regional Investigations Team East Midlands have successfully prosecuted eight individuals for their part in an organised crime group that saw residents of Leicestershire, amongst neighbouring authorities, lose thousands of pounds for work that was substandard, incomplete and often not even required.

ℹ️ This case followed a referral to the national team by Leicestershire Trading Standards.

🌐 To see the full article please visit the [National Trading Standards](#) website.



🗣️ If you or someone you know has been affected by rogue traders or cold callers, please contact Citizens Advice for free help and guidance on your rights or call Citizens Advice on 0808 223 1133 to report a matter.

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## Farmed animal welfare

🐾 If you keep farmed animals inside, it's a legal requirement that they have access to well maintained, drained and dry bedding.

❄️ Cold and wet weather brings an increased demand for good quality, suitable bedding materials as an alternative to straw or dried grass.

🚫 Unsuitable bedding materials can have a negative environmental impact and affect the health of both animals and keepers.

🪵 Any bedding derived from waste wood must not have been treated by any means. Only authorised organisations may process untreated wood for use as bedding.

🌐 For further information visit the [AHDB website](#)



# Support genuine charities

😊 Make it tougher for fraudsters to take advantage of your goodwill and help ensure your donations make it to the genuine causes in need of your support this Spring.

⚠️ Although most charity fundraising is genuine, fraudsters and criminals sometimes take advantage of people's generosity, using methods such as fake appeal websites, email appeals that falsely use the name of genuine charities, or appeals from fake charities.

➡️ Make sure the charity is genuine before giving any financial information.



➡️ Check the charity's name and registration number at [the charity register](#) – most charities with an annual income of £5,000 or more must be registered.

➡️ Be careful when responding to emails or selecting links within them.

➡️ Contact or find out more online about the charity that you're seeking to donate to, to understand how they are spending their funds.

ℹ️ If you have become a victim of Fraud, report it to Report Fraud, the UK's national fraud reporting centre by calling 0300 123 2040 or by visiting Report Fraud at the [report fraud website](#)

☎️ Report it to your bank or payment card provider immediately.

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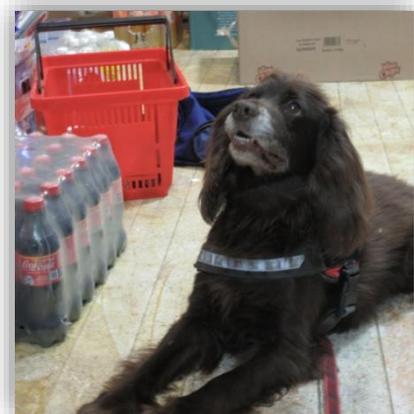
# Working together to help keep you safe

📣 Leicestershire Trading Standards have again been working alongside [Charnwood Police](#)

4 Earlier this year, officers targeted the sale of illegal tobacco and vapes during an enforcement operation in Loughborough town centre. Subsequently, two men were arrested and an investigation is ongoing.

🐾 We were also joined by the fabulous Frankie 🐕 the tobacco detection dog who put his nose to excellent use!

👛 We continue to work closely with partner agencies to tackle illegal trading and related activity in the county.



ℹ️ Products seized are often illegal, counterfeit, or unsafe for public consumption, and our joint operations aim to prevent these items reaching the community.

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# Buy safely online

Even well-known online marketplaces sometimes host sellers listing unsafe products – from chargers and smart tech to kitchen appliances and beauty tools.

 Before you make that purchase, make sure that you:



- Check the seller: research their name, location, and how long they've been selling.
- Read their reviews: focus on detailed reviews mentioning safety, not just star ratings.
- Verify product descriptions: check for usage instructions, warnings and safety marking (UKCA or CE), and information on materials.
- Check if the product has been recalled. Search 'product recalls' on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

 Stop. Check. Don't get burnt. For full guidance, visit [My safety: online shopping](#)

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## Stay aware - Gift card fraud

 Gift cards are a popular present choice at any time of the year. Leicestershire Trading Standards are advising consumers that this can be a way for scammers to steal your money. Gift cards purchased over the counter can be the safest method of purchase, however, below are some tips when purchasing:



- ➡ Before buying a gift card, check if there are any signs of tampering e.g. the protective foil on the back hasn't been removed and the PIN is not visible.
  - ➡ Check the value of the card online if you receive one as a gift. If it has been emptied, try to return it to the store and explain the situation. The store will likely need the original receipt to verify the card was a genuine purchase.
  - ➡ If buying online eGift cards, buy directly from the retailers' site or an authorised seller.
  - ➡ If you have become a victim of a gift card scam, report it to Report Fraud, the UK's national fraud reporting centre by calling 0300 123 2040 or by visiting Report Fraud.
  - ➡ Report it to your bank or payment card provider immediately.
-  For more information check out the Report Fraud [website](#)
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# Planning a health and weight loss plan?

📌 Supplements and health foods are strictly controlled by legislation in the UK to ensure that they are safe to consume and don't contain any unsafe ingredients.

📌 Supplements which are not manufactured for the UK market may not meet these requirements or contain ingredients which are not deemed safe. It is important to ensure that you only buy from reputable sources and seek professional medical guidance if necessary.

⚠️ If you have concerns that a product claim is false or you think a product is unsafe you can report it at 📌

[Leicestershire Trading Standards](#)



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## Don't get burned!

Our officers in the East Midlands Airport team recently recently examined consignments of e-bikes and e-scooters.

E-bikes are a fantastic way to get around but not all electric bikes and scooters are safe, including their batteries and/or chargers.

Government safety guidance highlights that poorly made, counterfeit or non-compliant products can pose serious fire risks, especially when charging lithium-ion batteries.

Top tips to keep in mind 📌



- ◆ Buy from reputable retailers — look for CE or UKCA marks to show products meet UK safety standards.
- ◆ Use the correct charger and battery supplied or authorised by the manufacturer — mismatched or cheap chargers can be dangerous.
- ◆ Charge safely — don't leave batteries charging unattended, while asleep or when out, and avoid blocking escape routes.

◆ Follow all manufacturer instructions for charging, storage and maintenance — they're there for your safety.

◆ Be cautious with second-hand or converted e-bikes — it's hard to verify safety or compliance with these.

For guidance from the UK Government on e-bike & scooter safety, see 📌 [Buy Safe, Be Safe](#)

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## New food businesses

🔔 In the last 12 months our food team received over 1000 registrations for new food businesses in Leicestershire.

🗨️ We contact all new food businesses to ensure they are meeting legislative requirements and offer advice to assist them with compliance.

👤 Our aim is to assist businesses right from the start to help ensure safe food for the people of Leicestershire.

🌐 Find out more information here 👉 [food business info](#)



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## Business buzzing?

🐝 Are you a honey producer?



⚠️ It is a legal requirement for all food businesses, including honey producers, to register with their local district council.

🍯 Honey producers must label their jars with their name and address, the name of the food, country of origin, and provide storage instructions, as well as the best before date and weight.

📘 To register your food business please visit: [Register a Food Business](#)

🌐 More information can be found here 👉 [Business Companion](#)

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# Delivery scam alert!

⚠️ Fraudsters are sending fake texts and emails pretending to be from delivery companies like Royal Mail. These scams often claim you need to pay a small fee or provide personal details to release a parcel. Clicking the link could lead to identity theft or financial loss.

Common scam tactics include:

- ✉️ Text messages saying your parcel needs rescheduling or a fee paid (e.g. £2.99).
- ✉️ Emails claiming customs duty or delivery charges are outstanding.
- 🔗 Links to fake websites that look official but steal your details.



How to stay safe:

- ✅ Don't click links or share personal details in unexpected messages.
- ✅ Check the official website by typing the address manually (e.g. [royalmail.com](https://www.royalmail.com))
- ✅ For more guidance, visit: 🙌 National Cyber Security Centre: [the NCSC website](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk)

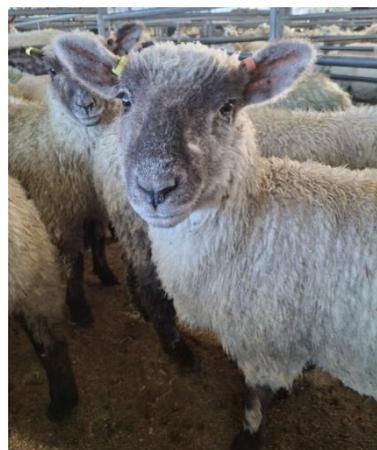
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## Keeping livestock?

🐏 All sheep and goats aged over 6 months (or 9 months if reared outdoors) must have official ear tags from suppliers approved by the Rural Payment Agency.

No sheep or goat may leave a farm unless it has been correctly tagged.

🌐 Please follow the link for more information and a list of approved suppliers - [approved sheep & goat tag suppliers](#)



# Cold calling report!

Recently we were made aware of a man cold calling in Leicestershire, offering to buy gold, jewellery, antiques, art and other items for cash on the doorstep. He may have been targeting vulnerable residents.

Please stay alert and share these safety tips:

- ✔ Don't feel pressured – you're under no obligation to listen, buy or sell 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, valuables or personal details on the spot – always take time to think, check credentials and get advice or other quotes.
- ✔ Check in with elderly neighbours and relatives to make sure they're safe.
- ✔ Report suspicious behaviour.



💡 Thinking of selling your gold, jewellery or other valuables?

We suggest that you consider going to a jewellers or other reputable business to get an idea of the value of your items before selling.

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

☎ Report concerns to Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133 – they'll pass details to Trading Standards.

🌐 You can find further information and request "No Cold Calling" stickers directly from [our website](#)

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# Renting a property?

⚠ Millions of pounds were lost last year due to criminals creating fake or copycat websites and adverts to market properties for rent.

ℹ Before you hand over any money, make sure that you:

- ➡ Always go to legitimate and well-known agents.
- ➡ Read and obtain contracts.
- ➡ Always view the property in person.
- ➡ Pay any money via secure payment methods.
- ➡ Verify ownership of the property.



🌐 For more information on rights, responsibilities and deposit schemes, visit [👉 Renting a property](#)

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## Another success for Trading Standards

👉 A Hinckley shop worker has been given an eighteen-month Community Order, which means he needs to do 135 hours of unpaid work, after he admitted selling counterfeit cigarettes and illegal vapes from Hinckley International Store on Regent Street.

It's all part of Operation Hind – our joint effort with Leicestershire Police to crack down on illegal tobacco and vape sales across the county.



👉 Another great result for the team working hard to protect residents and keep illegal and potentially unsafe products off our streets!

Read more details on the case [on our website](#)

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# Spotted a Trading Standards issue?

## Report it online

### Have you seen:

-  Underage sales.
-  Fake alcohol.
-  Illegal cigarettes and vapes.
-  An animal health and welfare issue.
-  A short measure.
-  Counterfeit goods.
-  Doorstep crime and cold calling.



Use this handy link to report any issues you witness to Leicestershire Trading Standards

 [report it here](#)

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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.



**Leicestershire Trading Standards Service**

Tel: 0116 305 8000

Email: [tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk)  [/LeicsTradingStandards](https://www.facebook.com/LeicsTradingStandards)