

Buckinghamshire & Surrey

trading standards

Service Criteria

Every year Buckinghamshire and Surrey County Council's trading standards service receives thousands of complaints and requests for help. Unfortunately, we cannot investigate every complaint, nor respond to all requests, so we prioritise the most serious cases and use the others to help us to plan our prevention work.

We look at a number of issues to help us to decide which complaints we will investigate and which requests for help we will respond to:

- Amount of money involved and number of customers or businesses affected.
- Vulnerability of the victim.
- Risk to safety.
- Complaints involving food and a risk to public health and wellbeing.
- Significant breaches of animal health and welfare legislation with a risk of disease outbreak or affecting farm animals.
- Failure to comply with a statutory notice, written advice or other formal commitment to comply with the law.
- Complaints that relate to organised criminal activity such as doorstep crime.
- Helping good local businesses to thrive.

In addition we consider the overall harm that a trading practice or product might cause. We also need to be sure that we can get enough evidence to use in court and that the investigation would be in the public interest.

What happens if we investigate or respond to a request for help?

Not all investigations lead to a prosecution or court case. Sometimes other steps, such as issuing advice or a statutory notice, are more appropriate.

When responding to requests for help we will consider the most appropriate action to support and help the most vulnerable in our community.

What happens if we don't investigate or respond to a request for help?

Unfortunately we cannot investigate every complaint, nor respond to every request for help, but all information received is reviewed regularly and this helps us to decide the priorities for our prevention work.

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