



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

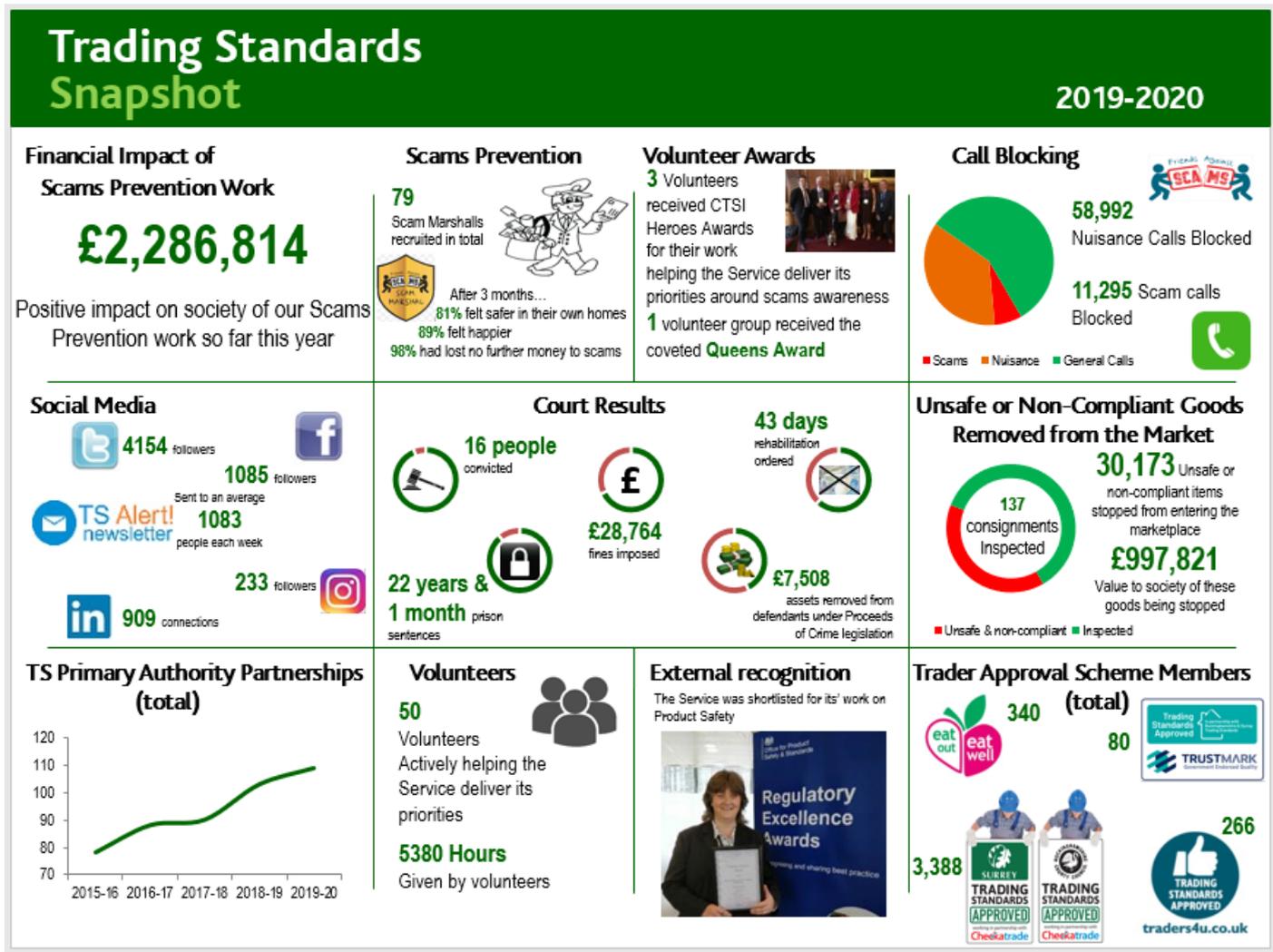
Full Year 2019/20



SUMMARY Full Year 2019/20

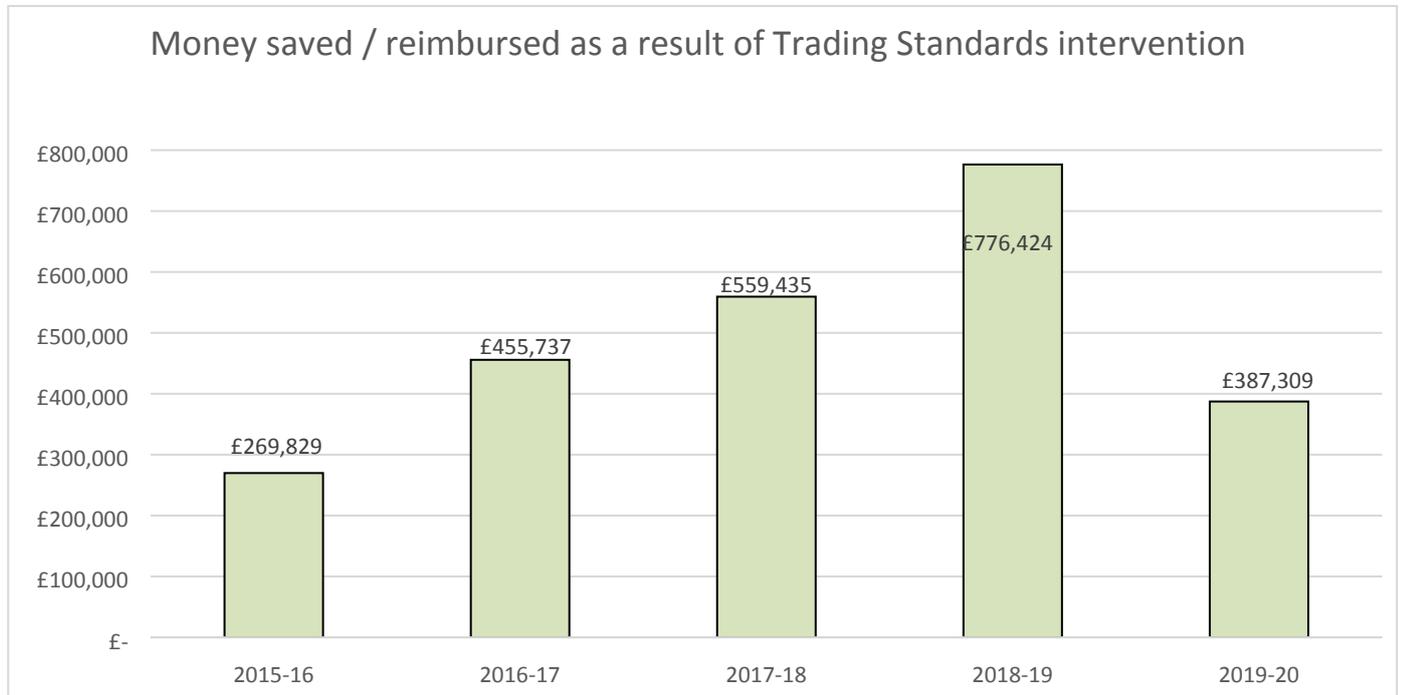
Key Performance Indicator	Comments	Status
1. Increase the financial savings for residents as a result of our interventions and investigations	Savings for residents fluctuate year by year often due to factors beyond our control. This year our savings are lower than the previous year. In part this is due to two unusually large savings amounts in the previous year and there being no large amounts of compensation awarded from proceeds of crime during this year.	Red 
2. Protect residents by stopping rogue traders operating in Buckinghamshire and Surrey	We have successfully stopped rogue traders and rogue trading in a range of ways, including but not limited to formal enforcement work. 16 people/entities were convicted following prosecution, leading to over 21 years of immediate prison sentences and £28,364 of fines. The data continues to be volatile from quarter to quarter.	Green 
3. Prevent residents becoming victims through expanding the use and reach of social media alerts, TS Alert! Volunteers, and other preventative initiatives to raise awareness of scams, rogue traders and unsafe products	Volunteer hours contributed are very strong, more than doubling the hours contributed during the previous year. Social Media presence and engagement remains very positive, with follower numbers continuing to grow. Messages on social media are diverse, covering the range of our work. Particular themes were: Rent Safe, EU Exit messages (especially for businesses), scams prevention and the Stan the Elf campaign. The number of scam marshals recruited by the service has increased by 18 compared to the previous year.	Green 
4. To increase the number of Primary Authority Partnerships	The service continues to successfully grow Primary Authority Partnerships both in terms of absolute numbers and in depth and quality with businesses now regularly approaching the Service seeking a partnership. The Service was recognised by BEIS / OPSS during the year, being shortlisted for the Regulatory Excellence Awards for our work with Businesses on Product Safety.	Green 
5. Increase membership of trader approval schemes	The service has succeeded in delivering this in partnership with Checkatrade, TrustMark and with Health partners.	Green 
6. Work with partners to tackle illegal sales of age restricted products; to explore new ways to reduce harm from the use and consumption of unsafe products; and to tackle poor food quality and nutrition	Work tackling illegal supplies of Tobacco is a significant part of this work stream and we continue to investigate offenders supplying illegal tobacco, making use of sniffer dogs to locate hidden tobacco. There have been five prosecutions of such offenders during the year, resulting in fines and community orders including rehabilitation days and 100 hours of unpaid work. Further investigations are ongoing. Demand continues to be high to tackle the import of unsafe products through transit sites for Heathrow, with the demand more than doubling in recent months. The service has inspected 137 consignments, an increase on last year. Over 30,000 unsafe and non-compliant products destined for people's homes have been prevented from entering the country through our work. The Service worked with the Police to carry out 17 test purchases by underage volunteers of knives in September and February. 2 shops sold and this is being followed up. Positively no sales were made from shops which had sold in the previous year.	Green 
7. Scams (including activities related to this area carried out by volunteers)	There are around 50 volunteers regularly working with the Service, particularly in the area of scams prevention. Truecall units are deployed to prevent scam and nuisance calls reaching the most vulnerable, with the positive impact to society of these calculated to be over £1.4million. Friends Against Scams and Scam Marshall initiatives all continue to grow with 18 new scam marshals and over 8500 new Friends Against Scams recruited.	Green 

The Service also produces more accessible snapshots of performance with some high-level information:

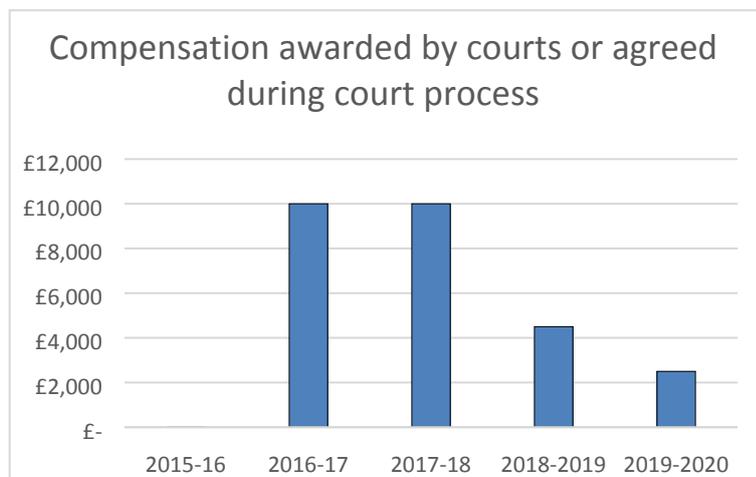


KPI -1 Increase the financial savings for residents as a result of our interventions and investigations

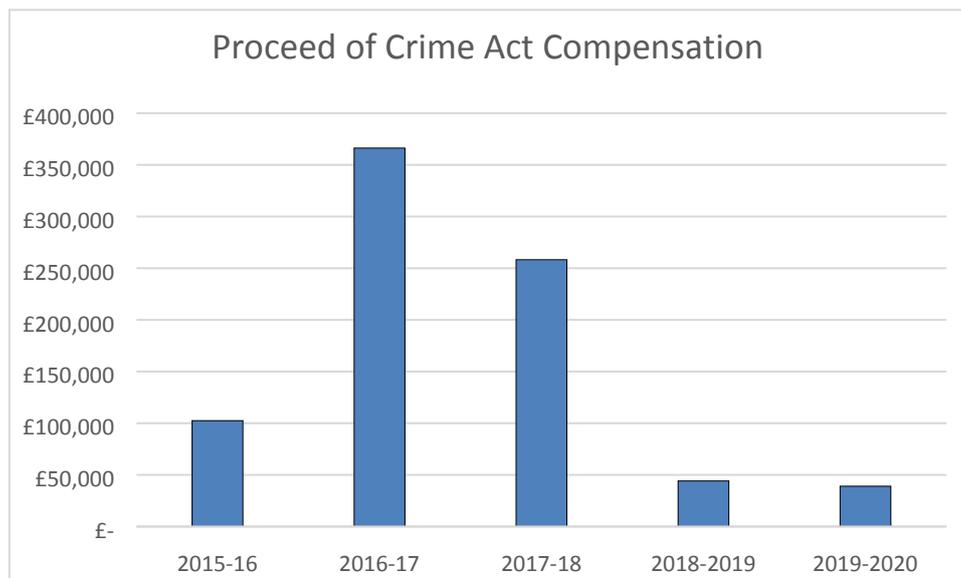
Financial savings for residents consists of: compensation awarded by the Courts to victims of crimes where the Service has prosecuted; compensation awarded as part of Proceeds of Crime Act confiscation proceedings; reimbursement which the Service has obtained for customers when intervening in trading disputes including money which the Service has stopped reaching a potential criminal through its intervention.



This graph includes all money saved, stopped (e.g. cheques), not spent or recovered for consumers as a result of Trading Standards intervention in their issue. It includes where people were identified as scam victims. Another example includes where residents have been cold called by doorstep criminals and are being charged extortionate amounts for little or no work. 2018-19 includes two cases in relation to scam victims involving unusually large amounts of money. In one case we were able to return a cheque for £150,000 with the assistance of the National Trading Standards Scams Team. In the other case we assisted a vulnerable person who had been repeatedly financially abused. Our intervention prevented the loss of £350,000.



A more unusual, and much smaller, source of savings for residents is through compensation awarded by or agreed during court processes. The amounts shown represent either one or two such awards in each year. They often happen where proceeds of crime proceedings are not occurring and/or where the defendant has made an offer of compensation as part of persuading the court of their acceptance and remorse.



Under The Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA), after a person is convicted of crimes, we are able to seek orders from a court to confiscate money (and assets bought with money) which they have made from their crimes. Where victims are identifiable and their evidence has been able to be used, we ask for confiscated money to be ordered to be paid as full or, more often, part compensation for the victims losses. (This graph does not include any money confiscated but not paid as compensation). The amount awarded as compensation varies significantly from year to year, as it relates only to a small number of cases despite the large sums which can be involved (in these figures the highest number of cases in any year was four). For example in 2016-17 £241,000 compensation was awarded to an elderly couple in Amersham who had lost significantly more than that in doorstep fraud; and in October 2017 £258,180 was awarded to the vulnerable victims of doorstep offenders who had operated in Surrey. The amount awarded as compensation varies heavily depending on the money and assets the defendant still has available. For example a victim may have lost £200,000 to the crimes but the defendant may have spent £190,000 on things that cannot be retrieved. Under the proceeds of crime act it may be appropriate for the service to apply to court for a restraint order if there is evidence that money which is, or is suspected to be, proceeds of crime is being inappropriately spent. If the judge grants this it stops suspects/ defendants from spending money which may be required to pay any future POCA Order. However in some cases money has been spent prior to our involvement.

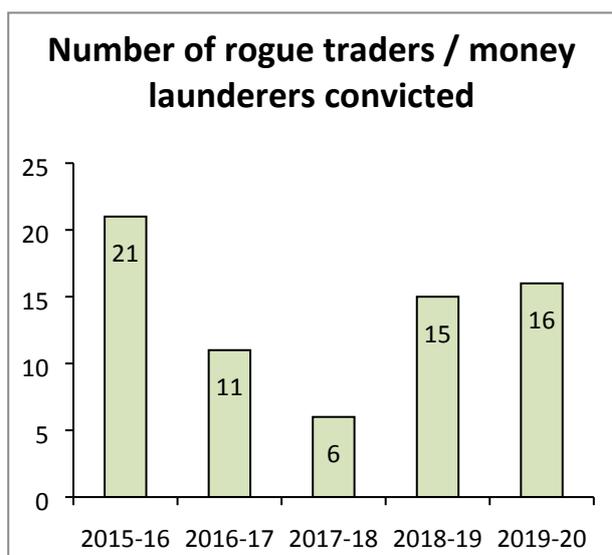
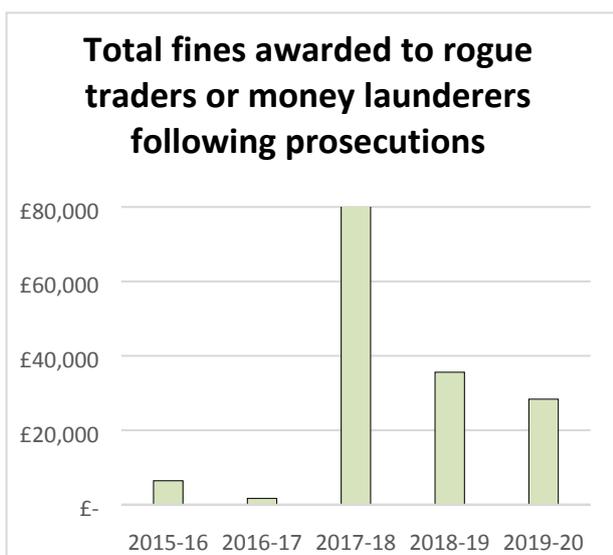
At the end of March 2020 the Service had six proceeds of crime act proceedings following convictions gradually progressing through the court process. In five of these we are anticipating compensation for the victims. In three of these cases assets are under a restraint order. In larger cases it is more often the case that a defendant has less money and assets than they are deemed to have benefited from by their crimes. It is not unusual for these cases to take several months after conviction, although two of these cases were more than a year since conviction and another was almost a year (for reasons outside of our control) which is more unusual and impacts the figures above.

In relation to activity undertaken with scam victims, during 2019-20 we began to calculate the full financial impact of our work using a nationally developed tool. This is further explained, alongside the outcomes in KPI 7 later in this report.

KPI -2 Protect residents by stopping rogue traders operating in Buckinghamshire and Surrey

The Service undertakes a variety of interventions to stop rogue traders operating – including investigations, projects, civil and criminal proceedings. The target means we need to identify how we have done that, and one set of indicators of that is convictions and the data below. However that alone doesn't determine whether the Service has been successful in this area.

It should also be noted that the data below are indicators only. There are no targets set in relation to these as it is for the courts to decide convictions and the appropriate penalties. We expect the figures to fluctuate, and there may be considerable variations, but they provide useful context as to the extent of offending that the Service is dealing with.



During 2019-20, convictions have related to offences relating to: the supply of illicit tobacco (not labelled with the required warnings in English, not labelled in plain packaging or counterfeit); fraud and money laundering, linked to home improvement work; rules relating to the disposal of animal by-products (to ensure they do not risk getting back into the food chain) and contempt of court for breaching a restraint order in relation to the Proceeds of Crime.

Below are some examples of press coverage of the cases taken by the Service:

Cowboy builders leave elderly couple with half a living room wall knocked down

An elderly cancer patient and his wife, from Worcester Park, south west London, fell victim to building firm P&T Property Services, who also said their roof could kill them

By Laura Hartley 13:07, 25 FEB 2020



An investigation found out there was 'no reason' for the wall to be knocked down

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Rogue builders left a pensioner going through cancer treatment 'in shock' after demolishing his living room wall - and asking to be paid £300,000 for unnecessary work.

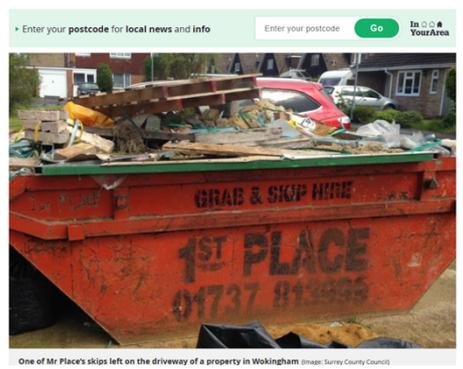
The elderly gentleman and his wife - aged 89 and 84 at the time - fell victim to the firm P&T Property Services Limited after the so-called builders called at their front door, [Surrey Live](#) reports.

Claiming to be from the company which had rendered the couple's Worcester Park home in south west London a few years before, a worker calling himself Paul dropped by and offered to clean the front of their house in September 2017.

1st Place Grab and Skip Hire director fined £31k for using 'aggressive' practices

Brian Place, from Hampshire, has been ordered to pay fines and court costs amounting to a total of £31,335.90

By Eleanor Fleming Senior Reporter 14:53, 19 MAR 2019 | UPDATED: 14:58, 19 MAR 2019



One of Mr Place's skips left on the driveway of a property in Wokingham (Image: Surrey County Council)

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Bucks Free Press

10th February

High Wycombe shopkeeper blamed stash of fake cigarettes 'on a customer named Fang'

By Kiera Gillies | @Kiera_BFP Apprentice reporter

mix96 96.2fm

ON AIR ANDY GREEN

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Farmer fined after carcasses, pigs heads & sheep skulls found

A farmer from Buckinghamshire has been fined, after animals remains were found on his farm.

A testing team attended Richard Piercy's farm in Water End, Stokenchurch, to conduct TB tests on his cattle, but their attention was drawn to animal carcasses, pigs' heads and sheep skulls being stored on the premises. This was apparently in breach of animal by-products regulations.

When trading standards officers later attempted to carry out an inspection to investigate the situation, Mr Piercy refused them access to the farm, so they had to apply for a warrant and police escort to gain entry.

Cowboy builders are jailed for a total of seven years after charging an elderly couple, aged 84 and 89, £270,000 for work that left them with half a living room wall

- The couple, aged 89 and 84, were approached by P&T Property Services Limited
- A man from the firm visited in 2017 and offered to complete some building work
- Firm sent costs spiralling and caused unnecessary damage to couple's property
- Trading Standards visited and stopped all work at the south-west London home
- Thomas William Penfold, the manager, was later convicted of fraudulent trading

By JAMES WOOD FOR MAILONLINE
PUBLISHED: 17:13, 25 February 2020 | UPDATED: 01:54, 26 February 2020

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Two cowboy builders have been jailed after causing major damage to the home of an elderly couple and quoting them almost £300,000 for unnecessary repairs.

Thomas William Penfold, Managing Director of P&T Property Services Limited, and his employee Glenn Steel, were sentenced at Guildford Crown Court yesterday after badly damaging the couple's home in Worcester Park, south-west London in 2017.

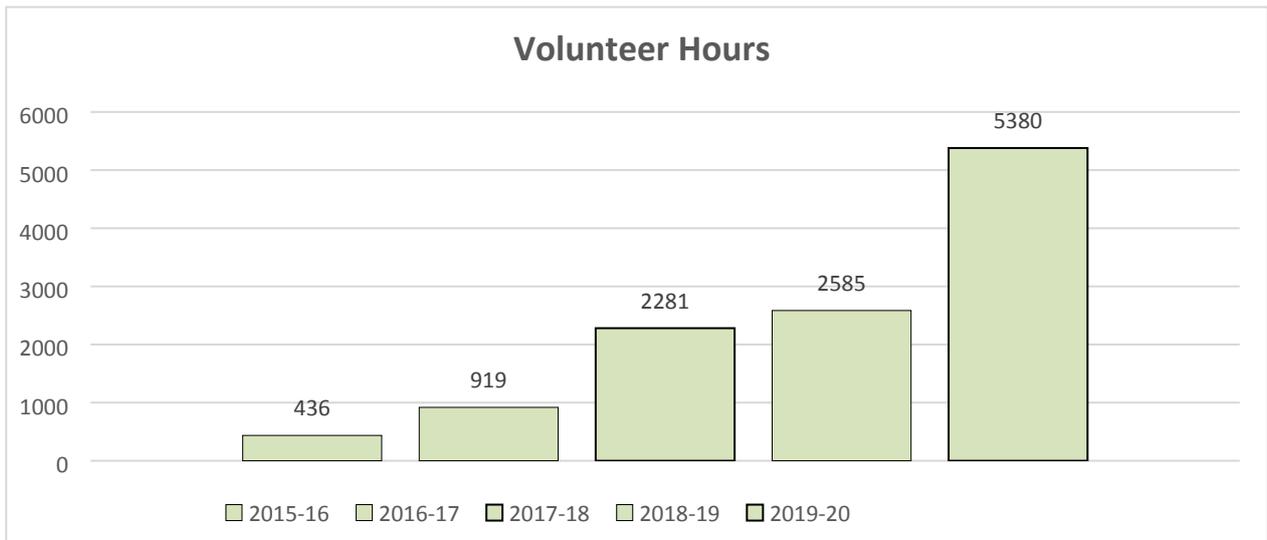
Among their 'disgusting' treatment of the couple, the firm smashed through the pair's living room wall without permission, quoted them needless repairs and charged them massively inflated prices.

The shocking saga began in September 2017 when the couple, who were aged 89 and 84 at the time, were visited by a member of staff calling himself Paul.

KPI -3 Prevent residents becoming victims through expanding the use and reach of social media alerts, TS Alert! Volunteers, and other preventative initiatives to raise awareness of scams, rogue traders and unsafe products

Volunteers

The Service has volunteers from a wide range of ages and backgrounds who supported the priorities of the Service with 5,380 hours of their time during 2019-20. The volunteers undertook a variety of different work for the service, including taking informal samples, checking whether traders have acted on advice given by officers and supporting our preventative work.



Social Media & TS Alert! Newsletter - Regular messages are put out through social media including scam awareness messages, product safety messages (including recalls) and making people aware of our activity. In 2019 the Service put out numerous messages signposting readers to the Government information on EU Exit, including how businesses will need to do things differently post exit. Where it would be helpful to spread a message, we run campaigns, a couple of examples of which are given below. Very recently we have been telling people about our work with Surrey Police to check whether under 18's could buy knives.



#RentSafe Campaign - Following the death of a 14 week old baby at a mobile home site in Buckinghamshire, and the subsequent serious case review, Trading Standards were approached by Thames Valley Police to participate in a multi-agency strategic group designed to:-

- Safeguard children and vulnerable adults living at the site more effectively
- Improve the environmental and living conditions on the site
- Ensure professionals can visit and work at the site without fear
- Where applicable bring offenders to justice using all partnership legislation that is available, criminal or civil.
- Support the serious case review and identify and assess threat and risk.

The site has been subdivided many times and contains about fifty caravans/mobile homes. The 'homes' are sub-let to individuals who are unable to afford other forms of accommodation. Allegations had been raised, including potential trading standards offences relating to the manner in which the accommodation was advertised and rent collected, tenants subject to exploitative practices and growing indications of hidden vulnerability.

Either through fear, embarrassment or ignorance, Trading standards had received no complaints from residents. To inform and empower residents, Trading Standards developed and coordinated a social media campaign advising people of their rights when renting. The campaign, #RentSafe, was actively promoted by partners from Buckinghamshire County Council, Surrey County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and Thames Valley Police.

Materials were also distributed to health and social workers visiting the site to distribute during their visits. The campaign ran for three weeks and with the support of partners proved highly effective.

<https://mybucks.buckscc.gov.uk/november-2019/latest-news/rentsafe-check-this-advice-if-you-rent-your-home>



“Most problems can be resolved quickly and easily by talking to your landlord or letting agent. There are often legal protections in place too for the most common problems that you may experience during the tenancy.

If you have a complaint about a letting agent’s service and they don’t resolve your complaint, you can complain to an independent redress scheme. “

#RentSafe

https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/private_renting/letting_agent_redress_schemes



“If the property is in an unsafe condition or has no heating and the landlord won’t repair it you can contact your local authority – they have powers to make them deal with serious health and safety hazards”

<https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

#RentSafe

#StanTheElf Campaign - The unofficial mascot of BSTS is Stan Dards. Our 2019 Christmas social media campaign centred on Stan the elf highlighting the diverse and sometimes surprising work TS undertakes. Every day during December a photo and associated information were posted on various media platforms using the hashtag #stanthelf. The posts were designed to inform as well as entertain.

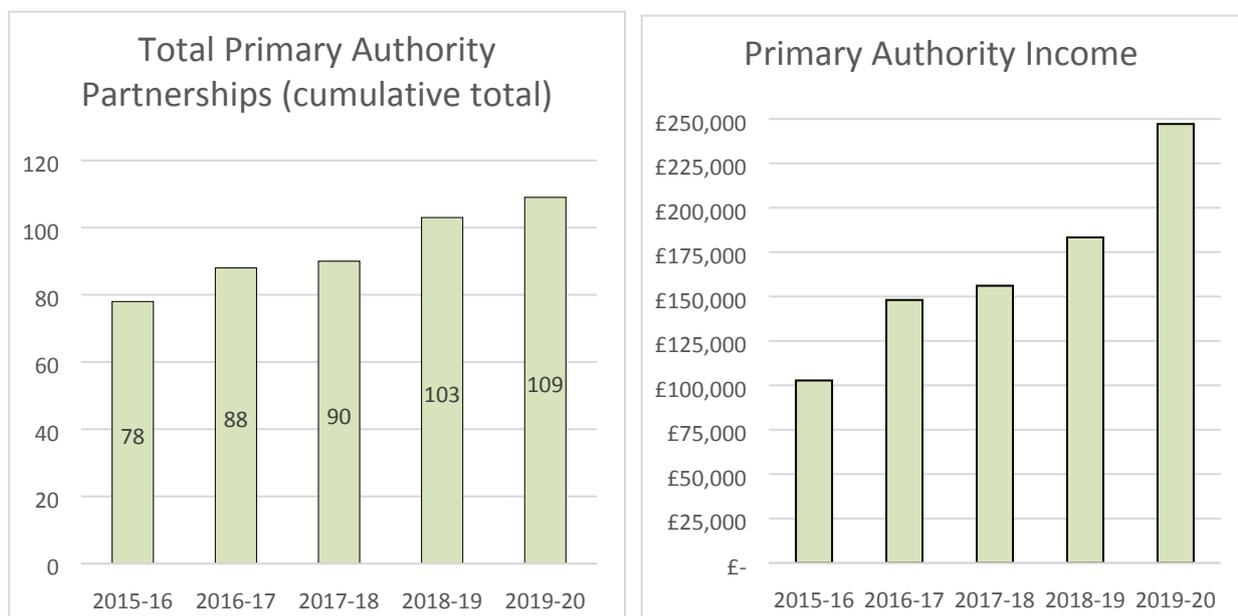


All teams contributed to this campaign, taking a photo of Stan the Elf highlighting a particular activity eg Stan on a petrol pump, Stan with a barrister, Stan at a business conference etc. Stan also went to Berlin and Afghanistan, accompanying gift parcels donated to troops on active service abroad. A letter of thanks was received from Major Thwaite, Officer Commanding, 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment thanking us for our support.

This campaign has been the most successful media campaign we have run to date, capturing the imagination of officers, partners and the public alike and reaching 252,587 individuals.

KPI - 4 To increase the number of Primary Authority Partnerships

Primary Authority Partnerships are partnerships between the Service and Businesses where we give the business assured and tailored advice on meeting trading standards regulations. This ensures start-ups get it right at the outset and enables all businesses to invest with confidence in products, practices and procedures, knowing that the resources they devote to compliance are well spent. This increases a business’s confidence that they are protecting themselves and their customers. We also act a single point of contact for a number of businesses to enable them to also get advice on environmental health and fire safety regulation. As regulators these partnerships enable us to support local economic growth through stronger business relationships, improve the consistency of local regulation and target our resources on high-risk areas.



The Service continues to provide excellent and varied support to businesses through our 109 Primary Authority Partnerships. The nature of our individual partnerships continue to adjust and change with some growing, some leaving, some closing and some businesses merging. As in other years we have welcomed new partner businesses to the scheme. This year, anecdotal evidence from the national Primary authority Users group suggested a notable slowdown in business Primary Authority activity due to Brexit and economic uncertainty. This effect has most clearly been seen in one of our partnerships who had projected a significant increase in activity which has been delayed for much of the year. Covid had little impact during the 19-20 year, although it is anticipated that it will significantly impact 20-21 and potentially beyond.

In the summer the Service was shortlisted for a national Regulatory Excellence award for its work with businesses on product safety.



Buckinghamshire & Surrey Primary Authority Partnerships January 2020

OPSS celebrates ten years of Primary Authority

In 2020 the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) marked the tenth anniversary of Primary Authority. As part of the tenth anniversary celebrations, OPSS held a two-day conference on 26 and 27 February in Telford, attended by local authorities, fire and rescue services, businesses, and trade associations who are in an active primary authority partnership.

Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards were invited to support the celebration:

- On day one, as a previous winner, Michele Manson outlined the 2018 excellence in leadership in Primary Authority Award and what it meant to us.
- On day two Michele jointly presented a workshop on how to maximise the benefits of Primary Authority.



Kerry, a major food and ingredient manufacturer, has been working with Buckinghamshire & Surrey since the start of the scheme and was one of the first companies to sign up to help sponsor the event.



Denise Din, Group H&S Compliance Manager, Bannatyne Fitness Ltd says: “Primary Authority is important to our business as it allows us to be in control of driving standards of compliance forward without the need for local authority intervention.”

KPI -5 Increase membership of trader approval schemes



This year the Service has been involved in providing several different trader approval schemes: Checktrade Trading Standards Approved; Trust Mark; traders4u and Eat Out Eat Well. The first two are trader approval schemes provided in partnership with commercial providers. The latter is a scheme developed by Surrey County Council, between Trading Standards and Public Health.

TrustMark is the Government Endorsed Quality Scheme covering work a consumer chooses to have carried out in or around their home.

When a consumer uses a TrustMark Registered Business, they know they are engaging an organisation that has been thoroughly vetted to meet required standards, and has made a considerable commitment to good customer service, technical competence and trading practices.



By ensuring all Registered Business adhere to and maintain these standards through the TrustMark expert network of Scheme Providers, TrustMark gives consumers increased confidence and choice. Additionally, in the event that a problem does arise, TrustMark offers a range of remedies to give further protection to consumers.



One of the strands of our partnership work with Surrey Public Health continues in relation to **Eat Out Eat Well**. We continue to work with Public Health England and other Local Authorities via a Healthy Eating Steering Group to promote the scheme and ensure caterers are assisted in ensuring they provide healthier options for their customers.

Eat Out Start Well is a new initiative lead by Surrey Public Health, in partnership with Trading Standards aimed at early years settings. It is important to support and encourage under 5's to have a healthy and balanced diet and this scheme builds on the success of Eat Out Eat Well expanding to this age range, who have their own nutritional requirements. Pilot assessments are currently being carried out at Early Years settings targeting areas of deprivation and an evaluation report will be produced in the autumn. The scheme is planned to launch later in 2020 and will be promoted to other Local Authorities. We have already received interest from a number of other Local Authorities who are keen to adopt this early years scheme.

The partnership with Checkatrade finished at the end of March 2020. All Trading Standards Approved Checkatrade members were advised of this in December, and all were invited to join our new scheme "Traders 4 U" during March.



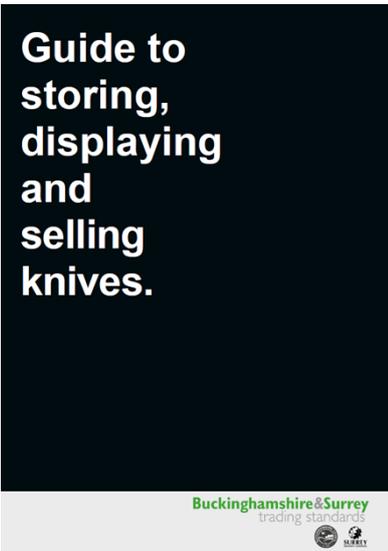
traders4u is a new trader approval scheme, established with United Knowledge Ltd who are a subsidiary of a community interest company and with whom we have a Primary Authority Partnership. The new scheme will allow traders to have the distinct accreditation from their local Trading Standards Service at a competitive cost, with the accreditation sitting separately or alongside other accreditations such as Checkatrade. The scheme itself is also a Coordinated Primary Authority Partnership, giving members access to support and assured advice from trading standards.

KPI -6 Work with partners to tackle illegal sales of age restricted products; to explore new ways to reduce harm from the use and consumption of unsafe products; and to tackle poor food quality and nutrition

A high priority for the Service is to protect people from the harms caused by unsafe goods or products which certain groups e.g. children shouldn't be able to buy. We respond to complaints, where harm has occurred but also carry out market surveillance, test purchasing and activity at the border (for us, Heathrow) to prevent goods being sold which are unsafe as well as advising retailers how to sell appropriately. Goods can become unsafe through incorrect labelling and therefore this is an important consideration when assessing a product or foods safety. Examples include cigarettes which do not warn of the dangers of smoking; large stone fireplaces with inadequate fixing instructions; food that doesn't declare allergens; and the alcohol content of drinks which drivers might rely on them to keep them under the limit for safe driving.

Age restricted sale of Knives

Knives, and the role they have in serious violent crime, are a key concern for the community. Trading Standards are engaging with other partners who can also contribute activities to prevent serious violence through the developing Serious Violent Crime initiatives of both Bucks Council and Surrey County Council. We continue to work with the relevant Police forces to conduct test purchases of knives by under 18's. However, in addition to this, we have recently adopted a "Knives Toolkit" which was developed by the Metropolitan Police and London Trading Standards.



This has a Good practice guide for retailers, which is supported by posters and access to training modules which can be accessed for free through our website. As well as talking to individual retailers about this issue, we are also looking to make use of our Primary Authority Partnerships to spread the toolkit and available training as widely as possible.



Module 1 : Safe Storage and Display of Knives



This module explains how to store and display knives in order to reduce the risk of them being stolen or used in crime.
Load module >>>

Module 2: How to ASSESS Age



This module explains why it is important to always assess the age of the customer to ensure knives are sold responsibly, prevent underage sales and confirm delivery to someone over the age of 18.
Load module >>>

Module 3: How to CHALLENGE someone for ID



This module explains how to challenge a customer for proof of age whether the knife is being sold in a shop, or delivered to a customer.
Load module >>>

Module 4: How to CHECK ID Properly



This module explains how to check ID properly to prevent underage sales and confirm delivery to someone over the age of 18.
Load module >>>

Module 5: When to call the police



This module explains when you should call the police about a knife related incident and how your actions will help police prosecute offenders and reduce knife crime.
Load module >>>

Market Surveillance Projects

Below are some examples of the market surveillance activity carried out April 2019 – March 2020:

	What being looked for and why	Number of samples tested or approach	% of samples that were incorrect in some way
Knives (working with the Police)	Are knives being sold to under 18's? Do retailers know the age restrictions on knife sales?	17 test purchases	2 sales Advice was given to all 17 retailers after the test purchases.
Ports	Unsafe, or otherwise non-compliant, items being brought into the Country through Heathrow	137 targeted consignments checked (comprising over 220,000 items)	62 (45%) consignments contained unsafe and/or non-compliant goods. Stopping these goods had a value to the economy of £997,821
Illicit tobacco	Compliance with rules on selling products which have warnings, are correctly labelled in plain packaging and which aren't counterfeit.	Intelligence gathered (see below) at 43 premises. Sniffer dog visits to 8 premises. Planned visits in March were postponed due to Covid 19 issues	Intelligence found 16% (7) premises selling illicit tobacco 25% (2) premises were found with illicit tobacco when visited with the sniffer dog
Allergens – targeting new businesses and those already identified as having problems in this area	Correct allergen labelling is important to prevent those with allergies unnecessarily suffering anaphylactic shock any other allergic consequences. The focus on new businesses is to ensure they start out with the correct procedures in place to ensure safe food.	98 advisory visits 14 samples taken We have received 25 complaints about allergens during the year.	35% (5 samples) incorrect. We are advising the food businesses to avoid repetition of the issue
Apple juice	Patulin levels - It is a naturally occurring food contaminant which is mutagenic, genotoxic, immunotoxic and neurotoxic. Patulin can be responsible for acute effects including nausea, vomiting and other gastrointestinal issues.	22	90% Problems included incorrect labelling. No excess Patulin was found
Minced Meat	Collagen and meat ratio (to ensure compliance with maximum fat levels and the collagen/meat protein ratio (which relates to what cuts of meat have been used and their relative quality) and speciation.	25	56% (14) Problems included: contamination of other species (through cross contamination); excess collagen; and excess fat

Gin and Craft Beer	Labelling, alcohol content (which can be particularly important where drivers are relying on the indication of units alcohol)	36	75% (27) Problems included: incorrect labelling and excess alcohol
Gluten free claims	The aim of this campaign was to check the compliance of foods which claim to be gluten free or low in gluten. This campaign focused on non-pre-packed meals from catering establishments such as takeaways.	13	15% (2) One sample was marginally in excess of the limit, the other was 95 times in excess of the limit. We have advised the food business about the issue and they have amended the information supplied with the product
Aflatoxin levels in almond products	Aflatoxins, including aflatoxin B1, are highly toxic and there is evidence that they can cause liver cancer in humans.	28	None were found to have levels that were a concern
American soft drinks	Preservatives: Benzoic Acid, Sorbic Acid which are unsafe above certain levels	25	68% (17) Problems included: excessive levels of benzoic acid, incorrect labelling and lack of required warnings
Soy Sauce	Presence of 3-MCPD (3-monochloropropanediol) which is a carcinogen	22	80% (18) Problems were all labelling related, including not labelling allergens correctly. No excess 3-MCPD was found.
FSA funded imported food sampling project	To inform the FSA about imported food issues they provided funding to carry out market surveillance sampling.) We worked with our Public Analyst to bid for funding and foods sampled included spices, almond based products, American sweets and fish and fish products to check out presence of allergens and levels of contaminants and colours.	100 samples were taken	32% (32 samples) were unsatisfactory mainly for labelling issues and these are being taken up with the food businesses or Primary Authorities as appropriate
“Healthy” Yogurts	Consumer research shows that the UK population spends £1.7 billion a year on yogurt and fromage frais. But with an ever-increasing range of yogurt varieties on offer, it can be difficult to work out why one variety may be healthier than another. The project assesses any nutrition claims made relating	25	100% - All 25 samples had varying minor labelling issues which we are taking up with the food businesses or Primary Authority as appropriate to discuss

	to either fat, protein or calcium and to assess the accuracy of the sugar information stated on the label.		
FSA Operation Opson	Looking at counterfeit and adulterated alcoholic drinks	We are looking for products when doing visits and complaint work	We have provided intelligence about an alleged alcohol poisoning incident to the National Food Crime Unit
Fireworks (working with the Fire Services)	Fireworks need to be stored safely to prevent fires and limit the damage caused when there is a fire	117 applications were received 82 premises were inspected	10% (8) Problems included: live fireworks in the sales area not stored within a locked storage cabinet; no statutory notices advising customers on the legal restrictions on the sale of fireworks; fireworks found stored in crisp boxes and not transit boxes as recommended; fireworks found stored under combustible material.
Animal Health – Tuberculosis (TB)	Ongoing work with farmers particularly in Buckinghamshire which is classified as an “edge” area (ie in proximity of areas where TB is more prevalent)	We have carried out 8 visits to higher risk farms.	All were given advice and guidance and the work is ongoing

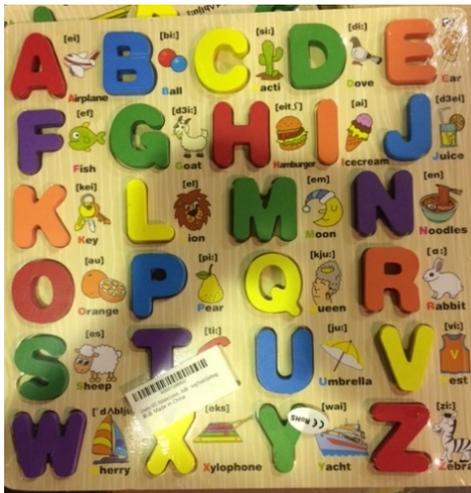
Preventing the supply of unsafe consumer products at ports of entry

Detaining unsafe goods at the point of entry (the transit sheds for Heathrow) saves considerable additional work once unsafe or non-compliant goods are spread across multiple wholesalers or retailers nationwide, and is an efficient and effective way to protect consumers from potentially harmful products. Because of the national impact of the work, funding is allocated from BEIS by National Trading Standards.

Some examples of unsafe and non-compliant products found and stopped from entering the Country are:

1159 **skin whitening creams** suspected to contain hydroquinone which has been banned from ‘over the counter’ products because it can cause liver, nerve and foetal damage, and were also labelled wrongly. The importer claimed to be importing them for personal use but has not produced the necessary paperwork for Border Force to accept this submission.





This **wooden toy puzzle** posed a choking hazard (the letter I) for children, bore no importers details and the CE mark was not in the correct format. The importer agreed to destroy the goods.



Because of the high risks involved, importers of electrical goods must have documentation to show that they have been tested, are safe and conform to our standards. These **smart bracelets** were part of a mixed consignment of electrical products. The importer was unable to provide any documentation relating to this and other products, so the goods were refused entry and destroyed.

The importer described this unsafe item as an adult **plush toy**. However its' form and plush nature would be particularly appealing to children under 3 years and it was CE marked as though intended as a soft toy. The toy included a small button on its chest which was easily detached and would pose a choking risk to a child. The importer was asked for documentation to prove that its' safety had been considered and tested but was unable to supply this and so agreed to the destruction of the items.



KPI -7 Scams (including activities related to this area carried out by volunteers)

Scams are an increasingly common and serious form of financial abuse, often having the greatest impact on vulnerable and elderly people. The Service works with a range of partners to identify people who have been the victims of this form of financial abuse. Once they are identified, we make contact and visit where scams are ongoing or there is likely to be a positive benefit of our intervention. We will talk to them about their situation, what assistance can be offered and assess which interventions would help them, and others, stop being impacted by the scams. Where social isolation has played a significant part in why they have engaged with the scammers, we will involve volunteers to help the resident make contacts into their local community and with community groups to reduce their isolation.

Call Blockers

A Call Blocker is a device which screens telephone calls; permitting calls from friends and family straight through while blocking unwelcome nuisance and scam callers. Unrecognised callers are required to identify themselves before being put through to the resident. Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards have 258 active devices blocking in excess of 167,000 nuisance and scam calls, equating to 99.9%.

Feedback about Call Blockers:



“My husband has been diagnosed with frontal lobe dementia. He becomes very flustered, confused and agitated when answering the telephone to nuisance calls. We get nuisance calls daily and normally at the same time so I feel this device will help immensely and give us peace of mind”

“It has been very reassuring having a Truecall device installed in my home and has enabled me to block out unwanted calls which had been a concern and worry to me”

“Since having the device fitted my mother now feels safe when answering her phone. Many thanks, a great service”

Friends Against Scams

Friends Against Scams is a National Trading Standards Scams Team initiative, which aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams by empowering people to take a stand against scams. Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards deliver 45-minute awareness sessions to individuals, businesses and communities, who in turn shares that knowledge with neighbours, colleagues, friends and family encouraging them to take a stand against scams.



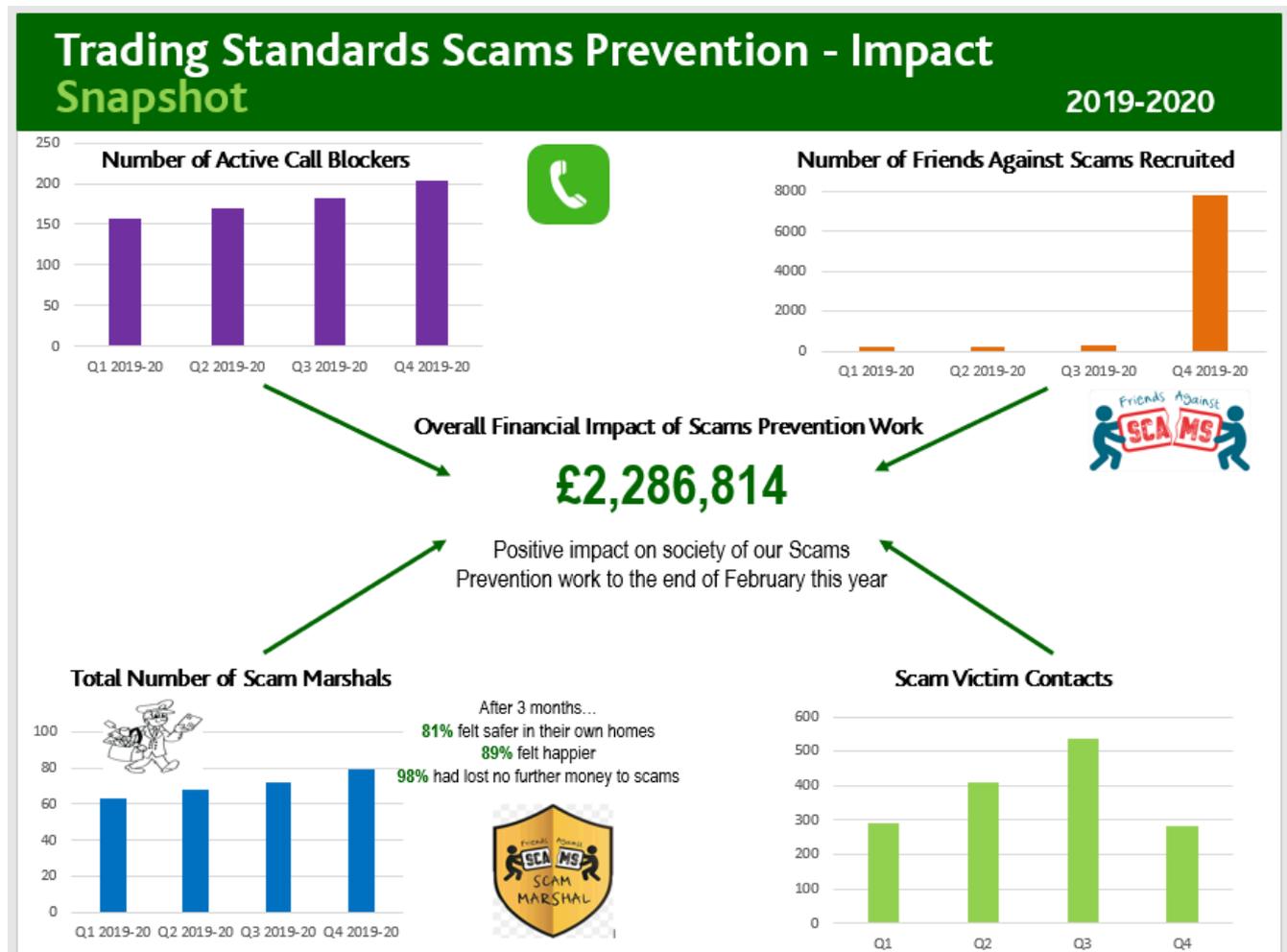
At the end of March there were 8,646 Friends Against Scams registered within Buckinghamshire and Surrey.

Scam Marshals

A Scam Marshal is a resident who has been targeted by a scam and now wants to fight back and take a stand against scams. Scam Marshals do this by sharing their own experiences, helping others to report and recognise scams and sending any scam mail that they receive to the NTS Scams Team so that it can be utilised as evidence in future investigative and enforcement work.



During 2019-20 we began to use a nationally developed impact calculator to understand the impact of our work to prevent scams. This is a tool which enables us to calculate the economic and societal value of the main interventions on scams carried out by Trading Standards including installing call blockers, recruiting Friends Against Scams and Scam Marshals and other interventions to support victims.



The calculator was developed by independent economists with input from Trading Standards professionals including the National Trading Standards Scams Team. It draws on a variety of robust and respected sources of data including the Home Office Cost of Crime study, with most of the calculations consist of two parts: financial losses prevented, and non-financial losses prevented, including physical and emotional harm, healthcare and other service costs.

The calculation of non-financial losses is proportionate to financial losses prevented in each case by a ratio of approximately one to two. This ratio has been calculated using data from the Home Office Cost of Crime study, which is robust and well respected. This is likely to be an

underestimate because it calculates the harm to an average victim of fraud rather than victims made vulnerable by circumstance.

The calculations for interventions such as Friends Against Scams, Scam Marshals and Call Blocking are based on existing evaluations and surveys which demonstrate their impact. For example, the call blocking calculation is based on survey results which show that high risk victims (according to a definition used to input the figures) are likely to lose around £9,000 per year to telephone scams. On average, call blocking units are used for two years and block 91% of scam calls. The average saving for each call blocker installed is therefore $£9,000 \times 2 \times 91\% = £16,380$ plus a small amount for the 'nuisance cost' – i.e. the number of minutes saved by not having to answer the phone for every scam call.

Additional Savings: In relation to healthcare and health related quality of life savings, it has been argued that there is a relationship between fraud of vulnerable elderly individuals and their need for social care. It is believed that defrauding vulnerable elderly accelerates their need for residential social care, at significant cost to themselves and Local Authorities. This is often anecdotally described as individuals *losing the confidence to live independently* with the cumulative impact of the financial abuse on their finances and health make it impossible for them to continue to live at home, and they enter care.

The work of trading standards, in, for example, providing call-blockers, visiting homes and advising victims and families in order to prevent or stop victims from responding to scams, can be seen as an alternative to care in these cases, enabling the individual to continue to stay in their home, at least until the underlying condition (which increased their vulnerability to the financial abuse) necessitates residential care, or, sadly, death. This conveys financial savings to the victim, family and Local Authority. So far we have excluded these savings from the savings shown above however we hope to develop our use of this aspect of the data during next year.

During lockdown, the NTS Scams Teams ceased referring scam victims to Trading Standards, similarly referrals from other agencies also reduced significantly, this accounts for the perceived drop in numbers for Q4. Of the 284 cases we did receive, 100% of victims were subject to an intervention and support.

Conference - SCAMS: THE TRUE COST. Working Together to Tackle Financial Abuse

On the 4th February Trading Standards Services from Buckinghamshire & Surrey, Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex hosted a free event focusing on the impact that financial abuse has on individuals, the true cost to Local Authorities and the importance of joint working with all stakeholders to help minimise future detriment.



The event included a range of speakers from Trading Standards stakeholders, partner agencies and the National Trading Standards Scams Team and included an interactive workshop exploring opportunities for collaborative working.

As a direct result of this conference over 7000 new Friends Against Scams have been recruited.



The event brought together police, fire services, safeguarding professionals, academics, local authorities and the third sector. Victims of financial fraud also shared emotional accounts of their experiences and received positive feedback from attendees.

A similar event covering Buckinghamshire and the Thames Valley authorities was planned for July in Kidlington but has been postponed due to the Covid outbreak. We hope to offer a virtual version of the event during the year.

Investment Fraud case study – Mrs S

The Service received a referral from colleagues in Hertfordshire Trading Standards regarding an investigation they were undertaking into a case of investment fraud. One of the victims they had identified was a Surrey resident who had fallen victim to a wine investment scam, losing over £100,000. She was then being targeted by debt recovery fraudsters and criminals pretending to be Hertfordshire Trading Standards.

Buckinghamshire and Surrey TS Prevention Team immediately visited the victim to assess what support we could provide. It soon became apparent that the victim was a widow in her late 70s,

Annex A

a resident of Woking, who suffers from numerous mental health issues including depression and anxiety. The lady was also an extreme hoarder, making her residential situation far from ideal.

Mrs S had been 'investing' since 2016 and it was her belief that she had been purchasing cases of luxury wines.

It was also discovered that she had handed over in excess of £150,000, rather than the earlier estimate of £100,000. During our ongoing support, we identified that some wine did exist. Working on behalf of Mrs S we managed to secure the bottles and provide her with options for auctioning the stock. We managed to return £42,000 to the lady.

Trading Standards, having identified several safeguarding issues and facilitated additional support from Adult Social Care and Surrey Fire and Rescue. To prevent further targeting we installed call blocking technology to cut off the scammers from constantly pressuring the victim via telephone.