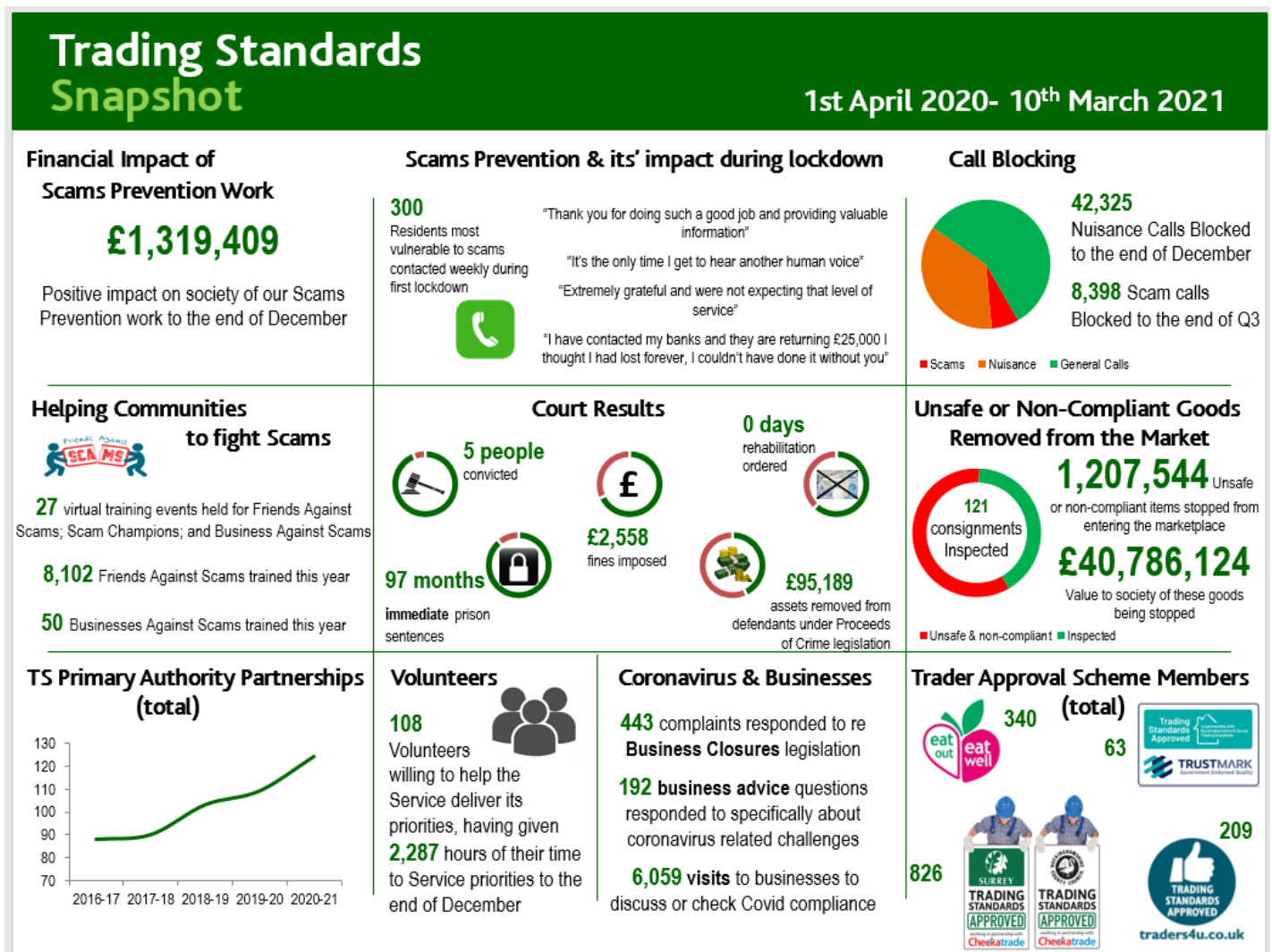





KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Summary - April to 10th March 2020/21



Service Priority Area 1 - Protecting the most vulnerable. Tackling fraudulent illegal and unfair trading practices, including serious and organised crime.

Key Performance Indicator	Comments	Status
Increase the financial savings for residents as a result of our interventions and investigations	Savings for residents fluctuate year by year (and quarter by quarter) often due to factors beyond our control. Savings for residents to date are £458,870 compared to a total of £387,000 in the full 19-20 year.	Green 
Actions to stop rogue traders operating in Buckinghamshire and Surrey	5 defendants were convicted during the year, with 97 months immediate custody awarded, compared to 16 convictions last year. This was due to the impact of coronavirus on the Criminal Justice System as most courts had to severely reduce their operating capacity and all jury trials were postponed for a time at the start of the year. The Service has a number of cases in progress but all have been delayed as a consequence, adding additional volatility to the data it is possible to report on. Investigations into criminal offences have continued, although some actions were postponed for a short time due to Covid restrictions. Activity to make people aware of potential Covid scams by rogue traders, and to encourage people not to become victims, has been a high priority for the Service with advice and information being regularly released by the Service and picked up across local, regional and national media.	Red 
Impact of our interventions with scam victims, as measured by the NTS Scams Calculator	Over £1.3m has been saved for residents and in avoided health and social care costs as a direct result of our scams interventions until the end of December. This compares to a full year figure last year of £2.1m. The impact of our interventions with scam victims referred to us by the National Trading Standards (NTS) Scams Team varies year on year. This variation occurs because of the work streams carried out by the National Team which result in the subsequent referrals of victims to us. In some cases, there will be a higher level of financial savings than others. We continue to deal with all the referrals made to us by the NTS Scams Team.	Red 

The Joint Committee are receiving a separate report with more detail on prevention initiatives within the Service. This includes: the use of call blockers; safeguarding phone calls; Friends Against Scams; Business Against Scams; Media and Social Media; Scam Champions and Scam Marshals.

Two of the convictions came in relation to a doorstep crime investigation involving 5 victims based in Buckinghamshire, Surrey and London. The victims lost a total of £178,000, which was paid out for roofing works on their properties. The traders cold called at the victim's properties, initially offering to do a small job such as roof or guttering clearing. After this work had started the traders then suggested a number of other urgent roofing works were required, which would end up costing the victims thousands of pounds more than the price of the initial works. The majority of the works carried out by the traders were found to be unnecessary and excessively overpriced by an expert building surveyor. The two traders pleaded guilty to offences under the Fraud Act and the Companies Act and were sentenced to 36 months immediate imprisonment and 31 months immediate imprisonment. Both defendants were disqualified from being a Director for 10 years. All of the £178,000 has been paid back to the victims from the defendants.

A further two convictions related to the sale of illicit tobacco and more detail about the circumstances of these is given in the separate tobacco report.

The fifth conviction related to emergency home repairs and involved a trader who had been prosecuted by the service in 2019 for various fraud offences in relation to his business at the time as a locksmith. This previous offending resulted in him being sentenced to 18 months immediate custody in July.

Shortly before the trader was sentenced in relation to the first prosecution, it came to our attention that he had more recently been operating an emergency plumbing business and undertaking like for like behaviour as a plumber as he had when he was operating as a locksmith. Namely he was attending people's residential properties on an emergency call out basis, providing initial quotations, carrying out the works and then subsequently inflating the costs. In total, consumers over both the cases had paid out in excess of over £22,000.

The trader entered guilty pleas covering offending against all of the consumers concerned and compensation of £22,446 was received from a relative of the trader for the victims, as well as a contribution towards the prosecution costs. The trader was sentenced in November to an additional 12 months in custody in addition to the 18 months he is already serving.

Service Priority Area 2 - Enabling businesses to get the help and support they need to thrive and grow. Delivering public protection through supporting businesses to comply with their legal responsibilities and ensuring a level playing field.

Key Performance Indicator	Comments	Status
To increase the number of Primary Authority Partnerships	The number of Primary Authority Partnership we have has increased from 109 at the start of the year to 124 currently. The Service has prioritised providing high quality, practical advice to businesses who have faced significant challenges, particularly around their supply chains; in understanding how new business closures legislation affects them; in understanding what rights and responsibilities they have when something has been adversely affected by the pandemic; and in responding to the new trading conditions. Some businesses with whom we have Primary Authority Partnerships were required to close during the various lockdowns, and some have been very busy responding to new demands for their goods/services. One example of our activity in this area early in the year was to work closely with the Association of Convenience Stores (who have over 30,000 members nationally) and our partners in Environmental Health to develop complete guidance for convenience stores who wanted to set up new safe home delivery services to support people who were isolating at home (see below)	Green ↑
Support to trader approval schemes	The service launched Traders4U early in the year. There has been a gradual uptake. The Service continues to run "Eat Out, Eat Well" with the support of Health partners and is expanding this to Eat Well, Start Well to focus particularly on early years settings. However due to the challenges in conducting face to face visits at times during the year this work has slowed considerably. We continue to work in partnership with TrustMark. We had expected an up kick in this work with the announcement during the year of the new Green Homes Grant, as any work carried out under the scheme must be completed by a TrustMark registered business, however this has not translated into as much additional work as predicted.	Red ↓

ACS best practice

HOME DELIVERY GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL SHOPS

This guidance is designed to provide reassurance to convenience store retailers who want to carry out local grocery deliveries to support people self isolating. There are regulations that can easily be followed through normal business practices, including on how you:

- Take orders and payments
- Manage data
- Keep food safe
- Physically deliver products

This guidance explains what these regulations are, and provides simple advice on conducting deliveries in a way that best promotes good hygiene and limits the risk of passing on Covid-19 and other viruses when doing so.

How do you take an order?

You can receive an order on the phone, through your own website or another online platform, for example WhatsApp, email, text, a Twitter direct message or a Facebook message.

Whichever approach you use, there are some important principles to consider:

- If you're providing a shopping list or order form, make sure it's clear what you're selling, the quantity (ACS Far Trading Guide [help](#)) and food allergen information (ACS Managing Food Safety and Hygiene Guide [help](#)).
- If you're taking generic orders, try to confirm specific details on brand, quantity; it is acceptable to make a reasonable substitution.

You can promote that you are offering a temporary delivery service for customers using this template poster for your store and on your social media platforms.

(Download the poster [here](#))

How do you take payment?

You can take payment by any method, including:

- Customer not present card payments - this means manually entering the customer's long card number and security code on your terminal.
- Use a virtual terminal provider like PayPal or Worldpay and other online systems.
- Cash is perfectly acceptable and for best hygiene practice you should separate handling of cash and food preparation (ACS Managing Food Safety and Hygiene [help](#)).
- You can offer credit at your discretion but you cannot add on a fee or a charge interest. Typically issuing this will mean allowing customers to take delivery of goods and pay you the agreed amount at a later date.

ACS best practice

HOME DELIVERY GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL SHOPS

How to deliver to customers?

- Check your vehicle insurance. Standard car insurance policies may not cover the use of the vehicle for business purposes and you may need to update your policy. Contact your insurance provider/broker to check if they can extend your business and vehicle insurance to cover home delivery.
- Chilled food can be kept at ambient temperature for a maximum of four hours in one continuous period, so you do not have to have chilled compartment or box for a short journey. However, if a chilled product is kept at a temperature of more than 8°C for more than four hours, it should be destroyed.
- Courtesy to other residents and drivers should be considered when making deliveries, and this sign can be printed and placed on your dashboard. Download the sign from ACS' website [here](#).
- Parking restrictions apply as normal. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government advise that good practice in parking enforcement allows for a 10 minute grace period.

How to operate a collection service

All of the guidance on making deliveries will also apply to offering a collection service for customers, their neighbours or family, and local volunteers.

26% of off-peak and collect services

12% of convenience stores already offer home grocery delivery

Reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19

You should minimise the risk of spreading infection from Covid-19 or any virus. Good practice that should be followed at all times includes:

- Adopt sensible measures to minimise risk especially when delivering to people who have stated they are self isolating, notably by wearing deliveries at the front door. Do not enter their home or directly hand the delivery to them (see the Government's Stay at Home guidance [help](#)).
- Washing hands for a minimum of 20 seconds every time you return to the store, and at least every two hours.
- Avoiding shaking hands or direct contact with customers and others when delivering products.
- Cleaning on a regular basis surfaces you regularly touch, including phones, car steering wheels, bicycle handles and car handles.
- If you have less than 250 full time employees you do not have to apply the single use carrier bag charge.

ACS best practice

HOME DELIVERY GUIDANCE FOR LOCAL SHOPS

How do you manage data security?

We recommend all retailers follow good practice in handling customer data. Retailers should ensure their systems are secure, and only retain customer details as long as it is justifiable to do so. The Secretary of State for Health has stated that "no one should continue work on responding to coronavirus due to data protection law. Article 4(1)(d) states: "Processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller". For more information, visit the ICO website [here](#).

GDPR

Age restrictions

All product age restrictions apply for more details on which products are age restricted and for specific policies on checking age for deliveries, see ACS' [Preventing Underage Sales Guide](#) [help](#).

PASS

About this guidance

This guidance has been developed in consultation with Surrey and Sussex Trading Standards, and Woking Borough Council. ACS' Assured Advice guides referenced here are part of ACS' Assured Advice scheme with Surrey & Sussex Trading Standards, Woking Borough Council and Brighthelm County Borough Council which means that ACS members are protected in law if they follow this advice.

All retailers can freely access this advice and follow it as good practice backed by national and local government departments.

Where to go for help?

- Speak to your wholesaler or supplier group to see if there are systems they use that you can link with.
- Speak to your card payments provider.
- There are a number of shopping apps and delivery partners you can work with.

CONTACT

For more details on this guidance, contact a member of the ACS team on 0252 355000. For more details on ACS: Visit: www.acs.org.uk Call: 0252 355000 Follow us on Twitter: @ACS_Localshops

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ACS | the voice of local shops

During the year the business team have continued to offer a range of options, some are free and some are chargeable on a cost recovery basis. The offer ranges from web information and simple signposting to large Primary Authority Partnerships. Accessed through a helpline and direct email address, each service is tailored to the individual businesses needs.

The team's activities directly contribute to levels of compliance and individual consumer experiences with those businesses.

During this year the coronavirus pandemic has impacted on the way we do business:

- Requests for help and information which related directly to Covid-19 were delivered free of charge impacting on the income normally derived from pay as you go advice
- We have successfully replaced face to face business training with webinars
- Whilst the vast majority of our Primary Authority partners have stayed with us renewals have been delayed and activities have not proceeded as planned. This has impacted on the income normally derived from pay as you go income
- During this challenging year our partners have appreciated Bucks and Surrey commitment to remaining available and responding quickly to their enquiries.
- Our reputation has continued to bring potential Primary Authority partners to us – see *new partnerships since June 2020* below
- Although we have seen businesses merge or focus on savings we have also continued to receive approaches from new businesses seeking to join us.

“If anything proved the value of a PA relationship it is this. My sincere thanks go to the team at Buckinghamshire and Surrey for all their support and help this year – it is very obvious the benefit of the partnership to our members”.

Andrew Chalk, British Blinds and Shutters Association, Director of Operations








The high percentage of food related businesses provided us with a core of stability from those who remained trading throughout the pandemic.

This stability enables us to be creative, developing partnerships with innovative businesses and those who may be highly technical from a regulatory perspective. As a result we are working with them to develop centres of excellence for the regulation of accreditation, Gin and CBD novel foods.

20 off the existing 124 Primary Authority Partnerships are “Coordinated¹” giving us a broader impact by reaching 21,568 businesses nationwide. We are the only authority in the country supporting this number of organisations.

Our local business advice line has handled 1735 enquiries to date. Of these just over 10% were directly related to the Covid regulations. Amongst the wide variety of subjects received, there seemed to be topical trends which came in waves relating for example to new business ideas, balloons, manufacturing dog biscuits, wax melts and honey.

¹ Coordinated – with a trade body or association

124  Primary Authority Partnerships	64% of partnerships support businesses for food standards and/or food safety advice 	57 Single point of contact (SPOC) relationships between businesses and other regulators managed 
20 Coordinated partnerships  supporting	Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards services for businesses April 2020 - March 2021	179 Business calls to helpline about Covid regulations answered free of charge <i>(excludes advice as part of enforcement activities)</i> 
21,568 Small businesses nationwide 	12 Partnerships support innovative / developing sectors e.g. e-scooters, cannabinoid products, digital identification, contactless collections, protecting a brand or sector 	563 Business delegates and other local authority officers supported through the provision of training. 



New Partnerships since June 2020



Businesses have been supported with diversification to produce or import hand sanitiser, face coverings and PPE, food labelling, alternative ingredients, allergens, food delivery, takeaway, meals for vulnerable residents, and using caterers supplies for retail. Throughout this period there have been significant numbers of questions relating to businesses who could open, how to open and whether businesses should be open.

For our Primary Authority Partners we amended the suite of guidance for the Association of Convenience Stores relating to Covid safe trading, deliveries (above) and terms and conditions. The range of advice to other partners included cancellation of contracts and frustrated contracts where installations are necessarily delayed, safe reopening of premises and how this applies in the context of devolution, converting ambient food to frozen food and using available but not current labelling to supplement national food supplies, multipacks and car showrooms.

Two examples of our work with Primary Authority Partners (the British Blind & Shutter Association and the Association of Convenience Stores) were recognised and shared by The Office of Product Safety and Standards (part of BEIS) with other Regulators as good practice to counter uncertainty during the pandemic crisis (see article to the right).



Primary Authority News – May 2020

How you are using Primary Authority to counter uncertainty

Providing key advice on contracts

The British Blind & Shutters Association and Trustmark sought advice from their primary authority partner Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards on how contracts for goods and services should be adapted due to coronavirus.




Topics included delays, cancellation rights, consumers no longer affording goods and dealing with home visits when consumers are self-isolating.

The Primary Authority Advice focused on the importance of maintaining effective communication between parties with their members.

Supporting thousands of retailers

To support local communities many Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) members diversified into home deliveries. ACS worked with their primary authority partners Woking Borough Council and Buckinghamshire and Surrey Trading Standards to get advice on adapting practices for click and collect, delivery charges, social distancing, cleaning, waste storage, alternative payment methods, managing data, transporting chilled foods and price increases. They have also worked with their primary authority partners to resolve enforcement issues.

Service Priority Area 3 - Improving wellbeing and public health; tackling the supply of unsafe, dangerous or age restricted products and working to maintain the integrity of the food chain, including food quality, nutrition, and animal health.

Key Performance Indicator	Comments	Status
Number and estimated value of unsafe/non-compliant goods removed from or prevented from entering the supply chain.	After reviewing over 5 million items, over 1.2million unsafe or non-compliant products were stopped from entering the supply chain by the Service with an estimated impact to society of over £40m. These products were mainly face masks and other protective equipment related to the outbreak of Covid. This is a very large increase in work in this area compared to last year (when around 25,000 unsafe/non-compliant items were prevented from entering the supply chain) as the supply of safe PPE became a national priority. Significant imports were (unusually) seen via Heathrow in the early part of the year due to the speed of air freight versus the more usual sea freight for this type of product.	Green 
Number of premises tested for selling illicit or age restricted products inappropriately, and approximate value of seized goods.	26 premises were tested for selling illicit or age restricted products inappropriately during the year, compared with 64 in the previous year.	Red 
Market surveillance projects carried out, including in relation to food	9 food market surveillance projects have been carried out during the year, mainly in the summer/early autumn in between lockdowns and once the Food Standards Agency guidance setting the expectation Trading Standards Services should not undertake proactive project work that required visiting shops/food businesses was removed.	Red 

Response to Covid related issues - This year has been exceptional due to the disruptive impact of the pandemic. Performance in several areas has been undermined because business have been operating differently or have been closed for much of the period and the interventions we would normally make have not been possible because of Covid restrictions. In addition, major new unanticipated demands and new responsibilities were given to the service to help the national response to the crisis. The service has quickly adapted to meet those new demands efficiently and effectively and in a way which both protects resident's safety but also which helps businesses comply. This has included responding to over 400 complaints to date, engaging with many businesses by phone to help them comply with the legislation, and making over 6,050 visits to check compliance or advise businesses. More detail of the service response to Covid is provided in a separate paper on this agenda.

Assessing the Compliance of PPE - During the year, significant work has been carried out to assess the safety and compliance of PPE, particularly that being imported via Heathrow. This work was paused in the latter part of 2020 and early 2021 whilst further external funding was sought, but this has been resolved and work has now resumed. During the course of the checks carried out by officers' numerous irregularities with the documentation have been discovered, including:

- missing information
- counterfeit documentation (see example to the right)
- misleading documentation purporting to show required compliance
- documentation showing compliance with standards that are for countries outside of the UK/EU (which do not meet our requirements)



Where face masks or other PPE being imported through Heathrow could not be shown to be safe as PPE and could not satisfactorily be repurposed as non-protective ‘barrier masks’ for general public use they were denied entry into the UK.

Food Standards - After a delay related to Covid, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) food standards pilot scheme started in January 2021 and we are working on the new approach this needs relating to the interventions we will carry out to achieve compliance in food businesses. The main challenge has been to develop remote interventions rather than physical visits in the context of the Covid situation. We are currently also discussing some targeted sampling with the FSA.

We have been able to take food samples either online or in limited cases in person, supporting nine Public Analyst sampling projects. This has resulted in a number of minor non-compliances that have been addressed with the relevant food businesses. One more serious issue regarding excessive levels of ochratoxin in a black pepper was found and resulted in the food business reviewing its control systems as the contaminant can cause kidney damage in humans.

Nitrous oxide issues - We have carried out work with the police around the alleged supply of nitrous oxide by several shops. Usually supplied in small metal canisters for food use, if nitrous oxide is sold for purposes other than that an offence may be committed. The visits produced illegal sales of nitrous oxide canisters and also found counterfeit alcohol and illicit tobacco being sold by the same business. The potential offences are currently being investigated.

Animal Health work - The Service continues to engage with farmers to ensure livestock are looked after appropriately. During the year two newsletters aimed at the farming community have been produced covering issues such as avian flu and support networks available to them particularly during this difficult period. Work on updating contingency plans for disease outbreaks has taken place in partnership with colleagues in the Resilience teams.

Illicit Tobacco - This work is covered in more detail in a separate paper. Plans are in place for more work in this area shortly after restrictions are eased after the current lockdown.

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