

OUR IMPACT IN 2022/2023

NATIONAL
TRADING
STANDARDS

Protecting Consumers
Safeguarding Businesses

HOW WE WORK

This document provides a snapshot of the work of National Trading Standards in 2022/2023. We allocate Government funding to tackle high priority national and regional Trading Standards issues in England and Wales. This is separate to the bulk of day-to-day Trading Standards activity delivered by local authorities across the country. Our vision is to protect consumers and safeguard businesses through cross-boundary, intelligence-led enforcement. We do this by:

- Supporting specialist teams that cover a range of issues
- Funding local authorities to deliver specific work in priority areas

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR WORK IN 2022/2023

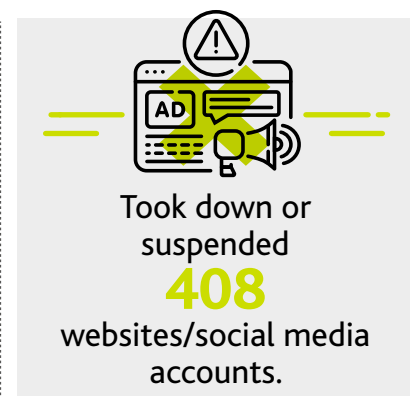


2022/2023 AT A GLANCE

eCRIME



Assisted with **33**
local authority
investigations and
have **12** live
investigations.



SCAMS



Identified **3,791** victims and made **£49 million** in savings for consumers and funds stopped from reaching criminals through investigations and disruption work.

Stopped **2,332** clairvoyant-style mailings. The average recipient's age was 81.



Friends Against Scams reached its **1 million 'friends' milestone.**



The number of Scam Marshals grew to **2,254**. There is now at least one Scam Marshal in **97%** of local authorities and 117 have at least five.



NTS IN ACTION – PREVENTING FRAUD

Multi-Agency Against Fraud (MAAF) partnerships are now established in most areas. NTS secured £800,000 from the National Crime Agency to invest in call blockers and MAAFs are applying for call blockers for local consumers.



ESTATE & LETTING AGENCY



550 officers completed Tenant Fees Act 2019 training.



100 officers completed new e-learning provided on property crime and intelligence.

17 webinars were delivered on various housing topics with at least **1,430** local authority officers attending.



26 warning notices, penalty notices or monetary penalties were issued in relation to Estate and Letting Agents and 1500 reported incidents were dealt with.

INTELLIGENCE

The NTS Intelligence Team introduced a central NTS PND service for all Trading Standards Services, Regional Groups and NTS Teams (in England and Wales).



The team produced the NTS Strategic Assessment and five scoping and research documents on the underage sale of vapes, approved trader schemes, driving test scams, Google Trends' solar grant and the supply of illicit alcohol.

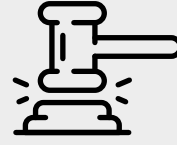
REGIONAL CASES



At the end of 2022/2023, the Regional Investigation Teams had **113 open cases**



The consumer and business detriment avoided through their intervention was **£121.6 million.**



22 defendants were convicted.



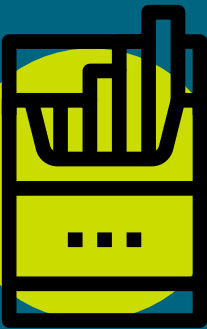
Four people were **banned** from being company directors for a total of **21 years.**

Prison sentences totalling **41 years and 11 months** were handed down.

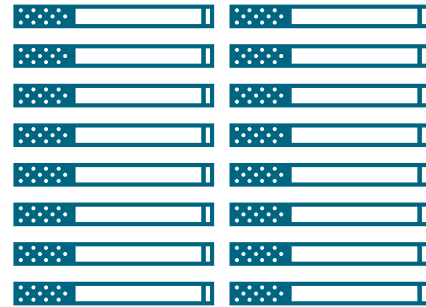


ILLICIT TOBACCO

£7.6 million



As part of Operation CeCe, a project funded by HMRC, local authorities seized illicit tobacco with a revenue value of over **£7.6 million.**

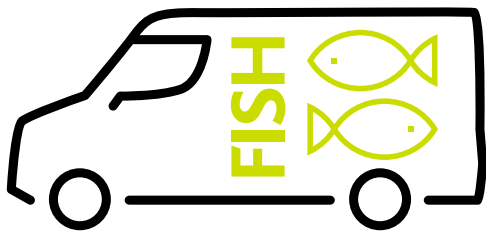


14.3 MILLION

TOBACCO

Seized **14.3 million** illicit tobacco sticks and nearly **3.2 tonnes** of illegal hand rolling tobacco.

DOORSTEP CRIME



Three aggressive fraudsters who mis-sold fish worth **£350,000** to elderly and vulnerable customers were sentenced to a combined total of **eight years and seven months.**

Four defendants were sentenced to a total of **14 years in prison** for frauds relating to the mis-selling of conservatories, building work and driveways exceeding a combined total of **£600,000.**



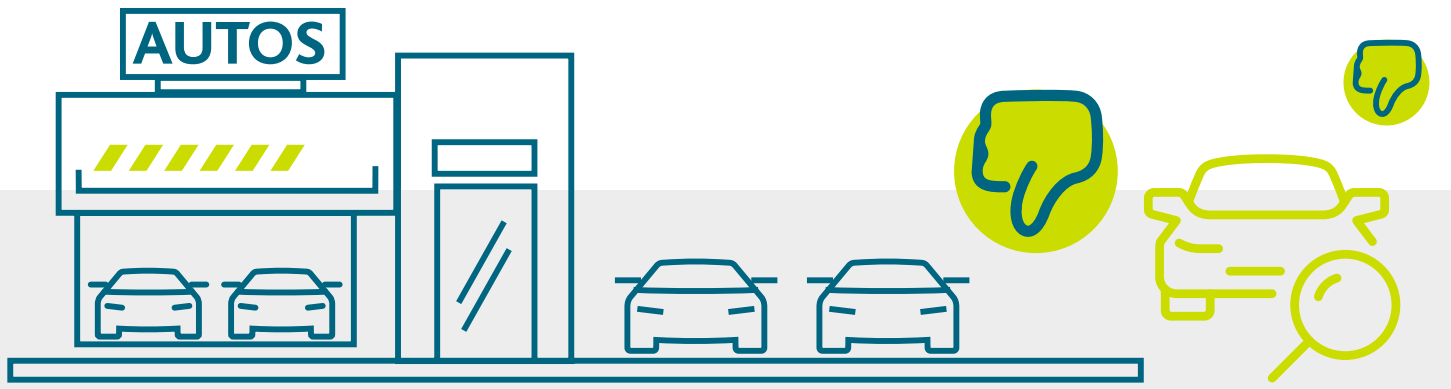
NTS IN ACTION



Operation Beorma

The supply of large-scale counterfeit and illicit goods to markets is a key priority. Operation Beorma, led by the Central England Trading Standards Authorities (CEntSA) Regional Investigation Team and focused in the Midlands, continues to tackle organised criminals responsible for huge imports of counterfeit goods into the UK and sales at online and physical markets. It has led to over 80 direct enforcement actions, the identification of previously unknown Organised Crime Groups, and the recovery of several million pounds worth of counterfeit goods.

USED CARS - DISRUPTION PROJECTS



Operation Jumpstart tackled the top 10 most complained about used car traders in the East of England. 63% of vehicles inspected had at least one fault. The projected consumer detriment saved in dangerous vehicles alone was **£130,000**; a return of **£7.47 for every £1 invested**.

Operation Nutmeg tackled the top 10 most complained about used car traders in the East Midlands. Advice and audits resulted in a decrease of complaints from 275 to 215 with overall detriment **reduced by 47%**.

NTS IN ACTION



Cracking down on criminals who target the self-storage industry

Three targeted visits led to the seizure of counterfeit and illicit goods. One operation identified 11 containers, and intelligence led to further action and the identification of an Organised Crime Group sending out 300 to 500 parcels per day from an illegal business worth £65m a year.

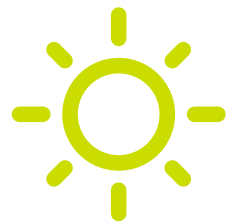


ENERGY RELATED FRAUD



EIGHT
energy-related cases supported.

Two defendants received **custodial sentences totalling almost four years** and were banned from being company directors for five years for mis-selling solar panels.



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For more information about the work of National Trading Standards, please visit: www.nationaltradingstandards.uk