

Trading Standards Working Group

**citizens
advice**

April 2024

Agenda

Welcome and introductions

Actions from the previous meeting - no outstanding actions

- DBT update
- ACTSO update
- Education Update
- Campaigns update
- Operations performance update
- Systems update
- AOB (including CTSI conference - Leeds June 2024)

DBT Update



Carol Rice

ACTSO update



Gina Green

Consumer Education Update



Mel McGinn

Lab and Innovation partnership

Presentation to RNID

- Selected a resource on Saving money on broadband and mobile to create a prototype for Deaf/deaf hard of hearing people, using a range of activities
- Delivered a presentation to RNID staff at their L&D meeting.
 - Demonstrated how we work in partnership
 - Demonstrated the CE resources available
 - Demonstrated the student consumer awareness Tiktok videos
 - Discussed areas for further development

Citizens Advice conference

What we did

- Promoted the CE and fincap resources
- Delivered presentations on how to navigate the web pages, how to use resources
- Demonstrated how simple things like toys and sweets can start engagement on consumer topics.
- Built our contact network by speaking to offices from across the network
- Collected top tips for consumer and fincap skills



BSL Tiktok

Renting - 3 things you should know about landlords

<https://www.tiktok.com/@citizensadvice/video/7332934230302788896>

Sign language awareness week

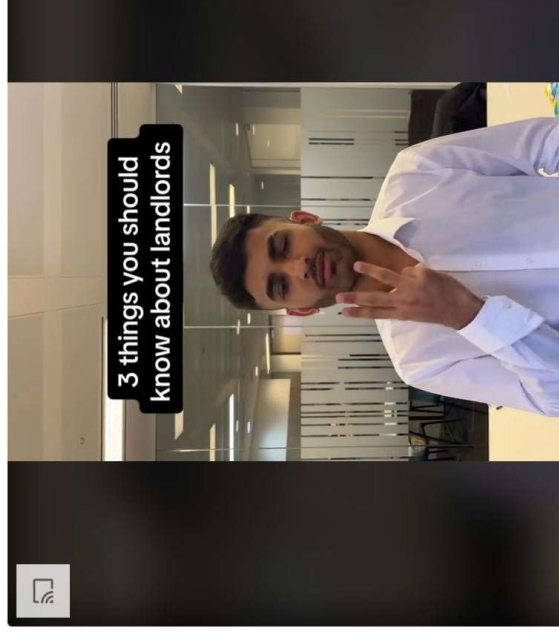
<https://www.tiktok.com/@citizensadvice/video/7348521365013531936>

Consumer Awareness

Work will be done on the 2nd hand car campaign



Search



- For You
- Following
- Friends
- Explore New
- LIVE
- Profile

Log in to follow creators, like videos, and view comments.

Log in



Consumer Empowerment Alliance

Coffee and catch up sessions

May 1st, 9am Jess Rigby Consumer Awareness campaign will be discussing the 2nd hand car campaign coming up in June.

June 5th session - will be with **John Herriman of CTSI** who will tell us about the work that CTSI do to influence politicians, and give us some tips in how we might have some of those conversations over the coming months

July session - tbc

Aug 7th session - Experian's James Jones leads the firm's public education outreach and will cover key aspects of credit reports and scores along with examples of Experian initiatives and campaigns designed to promote consumer financial health.

Miscellaneous

- **ADR** - identifying what we have and where we can increase content on this. Also planning to design a road map for consumers/ clients to understand how to navigate the process.
- **LCA network Financial Capability training** - currently in the process of designing CE training in the same format
- **Mapping consumer education and financial capability projects across England and Wales**
- **Creating content in EasyRead format**
- **Plain numbers training** - method for communicating information that involves numbers in a clear and easy-to-understand way. Colleagues are currently working on this and will cascade to the team.

**Consumer Awareness
Campaign
20 May - 2 June 2024**

2024 / 2025 Campaign Dates

Consumer Awareness

→ 20 May - 2 June
2024

Dates have swapped due to external factors - The Business Companion website will be launching a new updated guide for businesses around used cars this May.

Our campaign will complement this launch with consumer outreach.

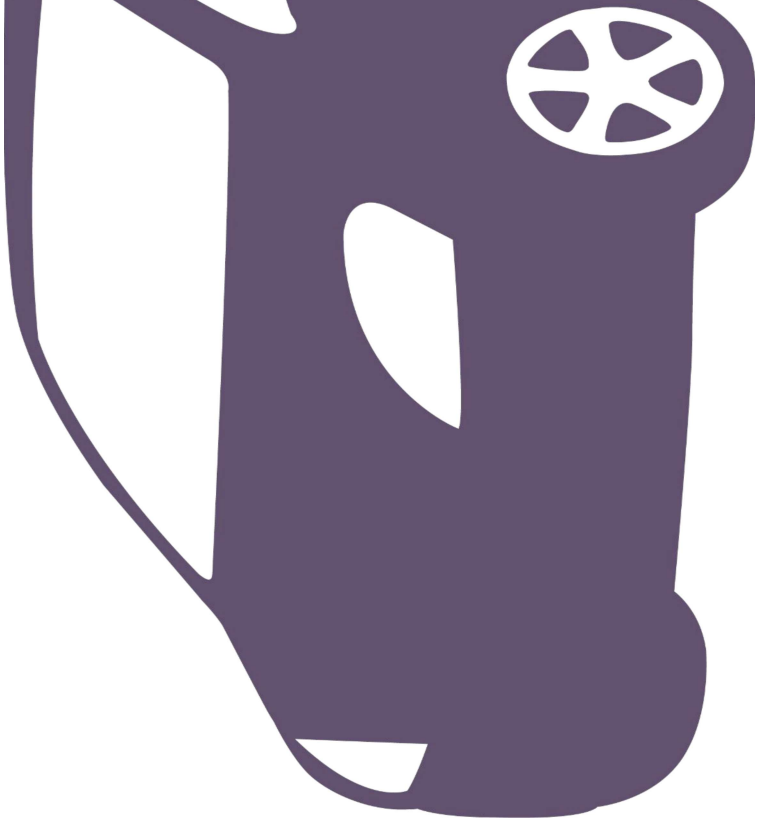
The Business Companion is Government-backed and run by CTSI, key members of the CPP, who oversee our Consumer Awareness campaigns.

Scams Awareness

→ October 2024

Consumer Awareness is an annual campaign aiming to:

- **Raise awareness and understanding with consumers** on how to shop wisely, what to look out for, and what to do if things go wrong
- **Educate consumers** on their rights
- **Empower consumers** to seek a remedy if things go wrong
- **Raise awareness** of where consumers can go if they need more advice and help with an issue



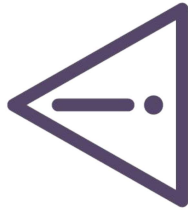
Brake. Check. Buy.

Our 2024 Consumer Awareness campaign will consist of two weeks of activity focusing on supporting consumers as they purchase second hand cars - or run into issues after purchase.

In 2023 our Consumer Service helpline saw almost 30,000 used car complaints from consumers, showcasing the need for consumer support and advice around this topic.

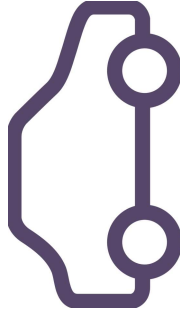
The advice shared throughout this campaign will ensure consumers feel supported and emboldened when shopping within the used car market, as we arm consumers with the knowledge to purchase a car safely, from trustworthy sellers and traders.

Our top 3 messages to consumers



Brake.

Make sure the seller is trustworthy, whether buying from a trader or an individual seller.



Check.

Check the car's history. There are free tools online which can help you do this.



Buy.

Choose the best payment method for your circumstances, and never buy a car without the log book.

Campaign Resources

- Template posts and social media assets
 - ◆ Available in English and Welsh
- Printable resources, including posters, leaflets and a postcard
 - ◆ Available in English and Welsh/English
 - ◆ Available in large print
 - ◆ Currently finalising Easy Read content
- Press release - both national and local

Campaign Advertising

- Meta advertising
 - ◆ Adverts across Facebook and Instagram
- Spotify advertising
- Influencer advertising

Thank you

Jessica Rigby

jessica.rigby@citizensadvice.org.uk



Performance & Operations update

**citizens
advice**

April 2024

Quarter four performance

Contact channel	Q4 23/24	Q3 23/24	Q2 23/24	Q1 23/24
General consumer calls	138,972	125,561	122,811	118,525
General consumer emails	17,526	12,260	15,275	13,767
General consumer webchats	14,145	11,109	9772	10,281
General consumer contacts	170,643	148,930	147,858	142,573

- In quarter four we answered an additional 21,713 contacts when compared to previous quarters
- The volume of webforms received increased by 15% when compared to our busiest quarter of the year (Q2)
- Quality and CSAT performance remained strong at local and national levels
- Overall annual performance will be reviewed with DBT at our end of year review in May
- Citizens Advice consumer impact report will be published in June

Quarter four trends comparison

Q4 2023/24	
(EE04) Used car	11099
(EH05) Car MOT, service and repairs	1897
(AB25) Roofing, roof sealing and chimney repairs	1810
(CA02) Women's clothing	1460
(AB24) Major renovations (including lofts, conversions and extensions)	1249
(AD05) Upholstered furniture (e.g. sofas)	1224
(AB28) Window frames and doors (excluding electric garage doors)	1120
(EM01) Air	1115
(IA03) Mobile phone (service agreements)	989

Q4 2022/23	
(EE04) Used car	10541
(EM01) Air	1858
(EH05) Car MOT, service and repairs	1806
(AD05) Upholstered furniture (e.g. sofas)	1713
(AB25) Roofing, roof sealing and chimney repairs	1642
(CA02) Women's clothing	1623
(AB28) Window frames and doors (excluding electric garage doors)	1509
(CZ99) Other	1373
(AB24) Major renovations (including lofts, conversions and extensions)	1362
(IA02) Internet service (e.g. broadband, WiFi, MiFi, dial-up)	1262

Google Analytics

	January	February	March
Reporting to Trading Standards -	62,499	60,761	59785
Grants and benefits to help you pay your energy bills -	51,499	54,070	50131
Claim compensation if your flight's delayed or cancelled -	46,924	35,673	40688
Contact the consumer helpline -	45,831	31,977	37008
Complaining to an ombudsman -	21,902	19,277	30081
How to read your gas or electricity meter -	20,834	18,368	20339
How to read your smart electricity meter -	20,034	17,949	19866
WaterSure scheme - help with paying water bills -	19,872	17,868	18868
Return faulty goods	17,338	17,578	18328
Solve an ongoing consumer problem with a business seller	16,673	17,081	17870

Doorstep refresher training

The logo for Citizens Advice, featuring the words "citizens" and "advice" stacked vertically inside a white speech bubble shape.

**citizens
advice**

Background

- Doorstep training is included in advisor training, to ensure that all clients receive both correct legal and practical guidance to help them progress their dispute
- Advisors have access to a toolkit that is a centres resource of information and briefings. The toolkit is continuously updated. We have a briefing and information that covers Doorstep and rogue traders on the toolkit
- Previously, we arranged Doorstep training for our delivery centres which this had a massive impact on the advisors at that time - so we wanted to repeat this. The aim is to reduce the fear of this type of crime with clients, and ultimately ensure that the service correctly advises, and refers clients to sources of further advice and information

Doorstep training for advisers

We arranged 4 training sessions with Tim Day from Herts TSS - Lead officer. Each session lasted for one hour, and included time for a short Q and A opportunity at the end.

Following the sessions, we circulated a feedback questionnaire to gauge how attendees had found the refresher training, examples of the feedback can be seen below:

"I found it really interesting to learn about doorstep crime from TSS perspective."

"Gave me a real insight about what TS what do regarding doorstep crimes"

"Brilliant session and so informative"

"I am pleased that we are able to play a part in stopping these rogue traders and it is good to hear how seriously TSS are taking this matter which obviously causes so much distress to so many clients, particularly those who are vulnerable"

"I think this session was brilliant. After 9 years in the job, the information Tim provided still surprised me. The advisors I have spoken to who have been on the session also found it extremely helpful and will assist them massively in spotting doorstep crime referrals."

"It was helpful to know how important the info provided by advisers is to TSS in helping them try to prevent doorstep crime."

"Hearing the lengths rogue traders go to to seem legitimate was all very interesting and I can see how that matches with what we hear on the calls."

Code of the month & referral checks



Code of the month

- As part of our continuous commitment to quality, we have been undertaking “Code of the month” on General consumer. This is similar to the process we complete on Energy
- This is essentially a new process action for centres in that we ask centres to complete extra dip checks across one month on a specific advice area
- Each month, we will provide a specific Flare code or search that covers an area of advice, and we will ask all centres to undertake dip checks into all applicable cases to ensure that there are minimal issues and the applicable codes are being used correctly
- Our focus has been on Doorstep for two months, and this month's focus is Safety

Referral checks

Adviser tenure on the consumer service is significantly shorter than we have seen over recent years and therefore we recognise the importance of enhanced checks on the quality of referrals being sent to partners.

The operations team are currently working alongside delivery centres to review and revisit the following:

- **Adherence to protocols** - particularly reviewing whether referrals are being sent in line with enforcement protocols and the correct judgement has been applied by the adviser in areas of subjectivity. Where a referral has been made in previous contacts, or, in some instances where advisers may be a bit unsure, they will always send the intelligence over as a referral

The feedback mechanisms that we have in place allow us to support delivery centres in getting timely feedback to advisers and therefore particularly for the newer advisers this helps to also reaffirm their training in referrals, the importance of accuracy and reviewing protocols

Systems update

**citizens
advice**

Consumer service systems

- We have extended the date for completion of the first phase of systems work and launch - we are now aiming to have new systems ready for implementation from September 2024
- To ensure ongoing service continuity for all users in the interim, we have agreed a one year extension with Civica for Flare and other associated systems, running until March 2025
- The Operations team continue to work closely with Product colleagues to inform their user-centred approach to design
- We will continue to engage with centres, partners and other user groups to ensure expertise, experience and requirements are shared
- We are working with our centres also on training resource creation, training delivery planning and user-acceptance testing
- We will shortly circulate a very brief check for partners in relation to their current systems set-up for referrals, to help our understanding of the wider landscape

AOB



AOB

- Date of next meeting **Tuesday 18th June - 3pm** face to face at CTSI conference in Leeds - this will be a more practical workshop session, including some opportunities to think about the development of the service and the key aspects to what we currently deliver
- We will also be giving the opportunity for delegates who visit our stand to explore more information about our systems project (including a demonstration product), and engagement on the future of the service concepts also
- Energy referrals to Trading Standards - very high level discussion about the manner in which this intelligence is used by partners

Thank you

The logo for Citizens Advice, featuring the text "citizens advice" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, positioned inside a white speech bubble shape with a small tail pointing towards the bottom right.

**citizens
advice**