

# CTSI VISION & STRATEGY TO 2031

HELPING TO BUILD A FAIRER WORLD  
FOR CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES



# CTSI VISION & STRATEGY

## FOREWORD



**Lord Jamie Lindsay**  
PRESIDENT, CTSI

It gives me great pleasure to be able to provide this foreword to the Chartered Trading Standards Institute's ambitious new vision and strategy that will ensure it is able to support the Trading Standards profession during a period that is likely to see considerable changes in the consumer protection landscape. To be effective, the Institute will have to support members and shape the sectors in which it operates through the full range of its activities, and the new vision recognises opportunities to modernise to achieve this.

Central to the new vision is CTSI's critical role sitting at the centre of networks that are all focused on protecting consumers. The Institute is well placed to harness the experience and expertise of its members and, as the country looks to the future, Trading Standards will be at the vanguard of many of the key conversations that will enable CTSI to fulfil its vision for the UK to prosper economically through fair and safe trade.

It is a privilege to be President of an Institute that takes its responsibility so seriously, something CTSI has done throughout its very long and proud history where it has continually demonstrated its value to society. This vision and strategy will enable the Institute to continue to demonstrate this value as it adapts to the new challenges consumers and businesses face, and help ensure that the UK remains at the forefront of protecting consumers. ■

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**Louise Baxter**  
CHAIR, CTSI



WE NEED TO  
INNOVATE AND  
MODERNISE AS  
AN INSTITUTE SO  
THAT WE ARE ABLE  
TO SUPPORT ALL  
THOSE WORKING IN  
THE PROFESSION

## INTRODUCTION

As the Institute representing the Trading Standards profession we have a proud history of protecting consumers stretching back 141 years, and our role was recognised with our Royal Charter in 2015. Over this period, we have dealt with many challenges and one of our core strengths has been our agility to adapt to changing circumstances.

In an increasingly dynamic consumer protection landscape, and after a period during which we have seen the profession face significant challenges, it is clear that our role has never been more important. We have an opportunity to respond to this challenge but to do this we need to innovate and modernise as an Institute so that we are able to support all those working in the profession within a landscape in which consumers need more protection than ever before.

This vision is a result of conversations we have had with our members, because first and foremost we are a membership organisation, but we also engaged with many stakeholders who share our social purpose and their views have provided critical input. We are grateful to all who have helped shape this vision towards the Institute's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2031.

The vision acknowledges our many strengths as an Institute as well as recognising our often unseen impact. Whilst being realistic about the challenges, the strategy builds on those strengths and will ensure our members and stakeholders know they will always have the support they have come to expect. ■

# OUR VISION AND MISSION

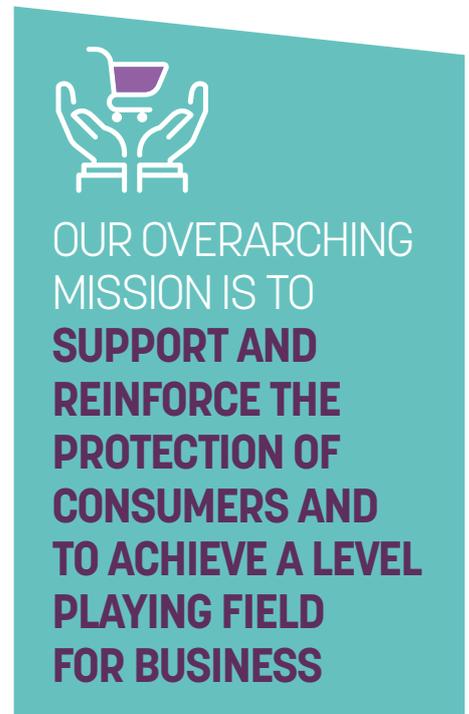
Consumer confidence sits at the heart of a healthy and prosperous economy. This is achieved through the work of a complex array of organisations across many sectors working together to protect consumers.

CTSI sits at the centre and we are uniquely placed to bring different groups together in ways no one else can. Our members who work with key stakeholders will help deliver our overarching **vision that the UK prospers economically through fair and safe trade.**

CTSI seeks to represent everyone working in, or aligned to, the Trading Standards profession. We want to build an organisation and lead a profession which is inclusive and representative of the communities we serve. Recognised for our professionalism and commitment CTSI continues to have a high level of trust with the public and will ensure we can fulfil our **mission to support and reinforce the protection of consumers and to achieve a level playing field for business.**



//  
CONSUMER  
CONFIDENCE SITS  
AT THE HEART OF  
A HEALTHY AND  
PROSPEROUS  
ECONOMY



This vision will be delivered through the strategic goals discussed later in this document that identify a long-term plan for success. CTSI acknowledges that real change on the scale we are planning takes time and will require continuous effort over many years, but there is an urgency, and if we are to respond to the challenges and develop the opportunities, the work must start immediately.



# INFLUENCING THE CONSUMER PROTECTION LANDSCAPE

## **Dependence on Trading Standards**

Trading Standards professionals sit at the heart of a network that supports business compliance with advice and enforcement, and protects the public 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. CTSI is critical in the delivery of education to business alongside its support to members.

Our value to society is clear but it often goes unnoticed because it is a mark of its own success. When consumer protection is working at its best, many of the problems which we encounter are less likely to materialise. The profession, across various sectors, protects consumers through every stage of their lives, without most even being aware of it.

## **Economic value**

Trading Standards supports business enterprise by creating a level playing field for competition and is essential to the success of the UK economy. CTSI members work within businesses, driving compliance. Compliant businesses support consumer confidence – what is good for consumers is ultimately good for business. Our members are uniquely placed to understand the challenges businesses face – by providing advice, guidance and taking actions where necessary against non-compliant businesses – they are powerful allies to legitimate businesses.



**TRADING STANDARDS ENFORCES MORE THAN 250 PIECES OF LEGISLATION**



WHEN CONSUMER PROTECTION IS WORKING AT ITS BEST, MANY OF THE PROBLEMS ARE LESS LIKELY TO MATERIALISE

### Times of crisis

The profession also has an important role to play as a contingency service within local government. Trading Standards has been called on in times of crisis – for example, foot and mouth, Avian Flu and the COVID-19 pandemic. Our versatility as a profession has proved to be a huge asset to the country.

### A comprehensive consumer protection network

The work of Trading Standards is delivered across the whole of the UK, through legislation from both central and devolved Governments and by working closely with national regulators, businesses and not-for-profit organisations.

IN 2019/20, TRADING STANDARDS PREVENTED  
**£400m**  
 IN CONSUMER AND BUSINESS DETRIMENT

Source: ACTSO  
 Figure is for England and Wales

FOOD SAFETY	
FAKE GOODS	
TRAVEL RIGHTS	
CONSUMER RIGHTS	
UNDERAGE SALES	
FIREWORK SAFETY	
ONLINE SHOPPING	
VEHICLE SALES	
ANIMAL WELFARE	
HOME ENERGY	
MISLEADING PRICING	
TENANTS' RIGHTS	
COVID COMPLIANCE	
KNIFE SALES	
WEIGHTS & MEASURES	
TOY SAFETY	
ILLEGAL TOBACCO	

# CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING CONSUMERS

The consumer protection landscape has never been more complex and yet, at the same time, consumers have needed ever-greater levels of protection. Working in partnership with others is a critical role for Trading Standards.

## The digital economy

The digital economy poses new threats to consumers, with risk growing along with the complexity of the marketplace. Most fundamentally, the development of the online marketplace and the growth of digital technology more widely is unpredictable and requires an ongoing agile response.

## Consumer vulnerability

Everyone is vulnerable at some point. The COVID-19 pandemic left many people in more challenging situations and the recent cost of living crisis, including soaring energy prices, is likely to exacerbate this.

## Net Zero

The pursuit of Net Zero is already driving another seismic shift in the landscape and this will shape the market for the foreseeable future. We know that where there are new markets, with significant financial gains to be made, there will be a greater number of consumers who find themselves at risk.

## Diversity and inclusion

Society is becoming more aware of the structural and cultural inequalities that exist and what can be done to address these. CTSI is well placed to lead on conversations as we work to improve the representation of the communities we serve, so that we can better reflect those needs in the services Trading Standards delivers.



**36m**

UK ADULTS WERE TARGETED BY A SCAMMER FROM JAN-JUNE 2021



**54%**

OF SCAMS RELATED TO BOGUS DELIVERY NOTIFICATIONS



**33%**

SURGE IN SCAMS BETWEEN APRIL 2020 AND APRIL 2021\*



**60%**

INCREASE IN SCAMS VIA TELEPHONE CALLS\*



**41%**

OF SCAMS INVOLVED FAKE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS



**667%**

RISE IN SCAMS VIA UNSOLICITED EMAILS\*\*

Source: Citizens Advice; \* Which? \*\*January-May 2021 vs. 2020



# KEEPING CONSUMERS SAFE IN A COMPLEX MARKETPLACE

Trading Standards is fundamentally about consumer protection, and ultimately increasing consumer confidence. Consumers from all backgrounds sit right at the centre of our vision. The profession ensures that consumers are protected throughout a whole range of interactions with businesses, organisations and individuals in an increasingly dynamic and unpredictable marketplace. In a climate of increasing detriment, consumers need Trading Standards to be there for them and to know we are protecting them.

To help protect consumers, CTSI and Trading Standards need to work

closely with business to safeguard honest businesses and ensure those who are non-compliant are held to account. As well as enforcement, prevention, inspection, testing and market surveillance, Trading Standards has a role to play in business advice and education to help ensure consumer safety.

As a profession that understands consumer behaviour we are well placed to support consumer education as part of the broader prevention agenda. However, we must not be complacent in a fast-paced, changing consumer landscape.



TRADING STANDARDS  
HAS A ROLE TO PLAY  
IN BUSINESS ADVICE  
AND EDUCATION  
TO HELP ENSURE  
CONSUMER SAFETY

# AN INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP BODY

CTSI's core purpose is to be a professional membership body supporting members from qualification through to ongoing Continuous Personal and Professional Development (CPPD), and from external affairs through to maintaining our 13 Branches and 4 Sections, the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers

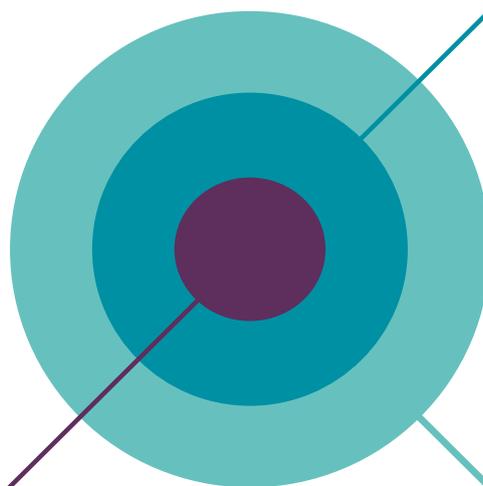
(ACTSO), the Society of Chief Trading Standards Officers in Scotland (SCOTSS), the Business Members Group (BMG) and the Consumer Empowerment Alliance (CEA). Our secondary purpose is our traded services which our members benefit from and which also generate revenue for us to reinvest in the membership.

CTSI has a broad membership across different sectors. This includes those Trading Standards professionals who work outside of local authorities, and also have a vitally important role in protecting consumers and helping to achieve a level playing field for business. There is a significant opportunity to make our membership more

## DEFINING THE BOUNDARY FOR CTSI MEMBERSHIP

Having a broader membership base will help CTSI build a stronger voice but we will never risk diluting the professional boundary so we protect the expertise and reputation of CTSI and its members. We will define membership in three broad groups that will need to be aligned with the membership categories, decision on voting rights to be agreed at an AGM. Membership fees will be reviewed to reflect the different levels:

THOSE WHO ARE QUALIFIED TO CARRY OUT THE DUTIES OF TRADING STANDARDS/ OR THOSE WHO ATTAIN CHARTERED TRADING STANDARDS PRACTITIONER STATUS



THOSE WHO ARE QUALIFIED TO WORK IN FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF TRADING STANDARDS/CONSUMER PROTECTION

THOSE WHO ARE INVOLVED IN THE WORK OR SUPPORTIVE OF TRADING STANDARDS / CONSUMER PROTECTION

Additionally, CTSI aims to expand its corporate membership offer for both local authorities and business.

inclusive and accessible to those working in sectors other than local government. In this way, we can create a diverse community of professionals focused on consumer protection. This will allow CTSI to grow and strengthen its voice and representation so we can influence through the sectors in which our members work. As part

of this approach, we will review our membership packages as well as ensuring we respect and protect boundaries between members who play different roles and have responsibilities in different sectors.

Trading Standards offers an exciting and rewarding career with flexible entry routes, but CTSI needs to raise the profile

of opportunities so that they are more visible. We must also reflect greater diversity in our marketing and advertising, as well as adapting the language we use to remove possible barriers to entry.

## WHAT WE DO



THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE OUR MEMBERSHIP MORE INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE TO THOSE WORKING IN SECTORS OTHER THAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT



**1.**  
WE PROVIDE  
LEADERSHIP TO  
THE PROFESSION



**2.**  
WE ARE THE VOICE OF  
THE PROFESSION TO  
INFLUENCE AND SHAPE  
THE FUTURE OF TRADING  
STANDARDS



**3.**  
WE ARE A  
MEMBERSHIP  
ORGANISATION



**4.**  
WE ARE A PROVIDER OF  
SERVICES SUPPORTING  
THE WORK OF TRADING  
STANDARDS AND  
CONSUMER PROTECTION

# STRATEGIC GOALS TO DELIVER THE VISION

THERE ARE FOUR STRATEGIC GOALS TO WHICH WE WILL COMMIT THAT WILL ENABLE US TO DELIVER THE NEW VISION.

## 1 | LEADING THE PROFESSION

Expanded membership, including greater numbers working across all sectors, to influence the work of Trading Standards in supporting consumer protection.

A robust qualification that is suited to the needs of the profession and all the sectors in which it operates.

Clear and flexible entry routes into the profession such as degrees and apprenticeships, that are inclusive and attractive to new entrants.

Targeted membership campaigns.

Greater promotion of the value of Chartership.

Fully embracing and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.

High-quality CPPD, training, leadership development activities and events for members.

Annual membership survey indicating high levels of member satisfaction.

Strong Branch and Section networks connected physically and digitally to share knowledge and best practice and create an opportunity for students to shape the way that CTSI operates.



**CTSI WILL BE LEADING A PROFESSION RECOGNISED FOR THE VALUE IT ADDS AND WHICH IS REPRESENTATIVE OF THE COMMUNITIES IT SERVES** WE WILL LEAD AN EXCITING AND DYNAMIC PROFESSION HELPING THE UK TO SUCCEED ECONOMICALLY



## 2 | BUILDING OUR VOICE

The trusted voice prepared to speak up for the profession and consumers, and a 'go to' organisation for Government and the media.

A measured, reasoned and respected voice into Government.

Strong, evidence-based, informed policy making and influence across the four nations.

Clear policy positions for lobbying and public affairs with measurable outcomes.

Strong strategic partnerships locally, nationally and, where appropriate, internationally.

Supporting Lead Officers as CTSI policy experts and harnessing their expertise to shape policy.

Robust horizon scanning to ensure CTSI can engage reactively and proactively.

Positive media profile on Trading Standards and consumer protection issues.

Innovative approaches to consumer and business education.

Extensive and effective use of our networks, such as CTSI's Vice Presidents and College of Fellows.

A national Conference which is a flagship event for Trading Standards, consumer protection professionals and those working in related fields.



**CTSI WILL BE A TRUSTED VOICE, RECOGNISED FOR EFFECTIVE EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS ACTIVITY WE WILL INFLUENCE AT THE LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL AND ENSURE CONSUMER PROTECTION SITS AT THE HEART OF THE AGENDA**



# 3 | BECOMING STRONGER TOGETHER

Influencing the local, regional and national structures that exist to support consumer protection.

Promoting the role and function of Trading Standards as a profession and advising businesses, in order to protect consumers and safeguard honest businesses.

Delivering a broad range of income generating services, delivered through successful business development to help support the financial sustainability of CTSI.

Increasing the role and influence of the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme (CCAS) and Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

Increasing the profile of the UK International Consumer Centre.

Developing a corporate membership offer that appeals to all sectors.

Creating strong partnerships between CTSI and key influential bodies including strategic partnerships, where appropriate.

Supporting secondments and other opportunities to build relationships across sectors and different organisations.



**THE SECTORS IN WHICH TRADING STANDARDS OPERATES WILL FEEL THE VALUE CTSI ADDS AND LOOK TO US FOR LEADERSHIP** TRADING STANDARDS WILL BE ADDING VALUE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT, THE CIVIL SERVICE, BUSINESS AND NOT FOR PROFIT SECTORS

# STRATEGIC GOALS TO DELIVER THE VISION

## 4 | DELIVERING TANGIBLE CHANGE

A professional Head Office, valued by the membership, supporting blended working to encourage creativity, and to attract and retain staff.

A digitally enabled organisation to support agile creation and delivery of all our services and activities making them accessible to all.

An inclusive organisation that champions equality, diversity and inclusion that shapes all our decisions.

Agile and cohesive governance structures that support good decision making.

Professional servicing of our governance structures by CTSI Head Office.

Embracing sustainability as an Institute.

Adopt a culture of continuous improvement.

A collaborative working environment built on trust and transparency, that encourages diversity of perspective to support good decision making.

An annual staff survey capturing what is going well and where there are opportunities to improve.



**CTSI WILL HAVE EMPOWERED STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WHO FEEL VALUED AND OPERATE WITHIN AGILE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES**  
EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE WILL ENSURE WE MAKE GOOD DECISIONS THAT ARE ABLE TO BRING TOGETHER THE DIVERSE VIEWS OF THE STAFF AND MEMBERSHIP



# GETTING FOCUSED ON DELIVERY

We need to make some immediate changes to drive modernisation and innovation as well as more incremental changes between now and 2024 in three key phases.

Beyond 2024, the focus is on maximising the opportunities to build the profession and to shape the landscape in which CTSI operates. Key deliverables are:

## 2022-23

### **Policy, Marketing and Communications**

- Campaign activity – priority areas are workforce and making the link with consumers
- Greater promotion of the profession – Young Consumers of the Year (YCOY), careers, apprenticeship week
- Developing our strategic partnerships
- Reflecting the vision in website improvements
- Membership campaign targeting

### **Local Authority Trading Standards Services**

- Promoting the value and recognition of Chartership
- Thought leadership papers and round tables
- Reviewing the *Journal of Trading Standards*
- Extending CTSI influence through the Hero Awards
- Building our Vice President network
- Campaigning activity to connect with consumers

### **Membership and Governance**

- Qualifications review outcomes
- Membership categories and pricing
- Clarity of entry routes to profession
- Membership improvements
- Branch Race and Equality Working Groups
- EDI toolkits for branches
- Update our code of conduct
- Update our EDI Policy
- Race and Equality Working Group Committee proposal
- Recognising volunteers consistently

Phase	Phase 1 April 2021-March 2022	Phase 2 April 2022-March 2024	Phase 3 April 2024-2031
<b>Focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting control</li> <li>• Developing the new vision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing the new vision</li> <li>• Growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation and growth</li> </ul>
<b>Key elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTSI Delivery Plan</li> <li>• Building the team/ structure</li> <li>• Membership focus</li> <li>• Diversity and inclusion</li> <li>• Policy framework</li> <li>• Qualification review</li> <li>• Financial resilience – BEIS grants</li> <li>• Good governance</li> <li>• Branch and membership engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership growth</li> <li>• Business development</li> <li>• Digital enabling strategy</li> <li>• Strong policy voice</li> <li>• Implementing new qualification</li> <li>• Membership value proposition – extending this</li> <li>• Corporate value proposition</li> <li>• Website and social media</li> <li>• EDI Action Plan</li> <li>• Growing the UK International Consumer Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consolidation and growth</li> <li>• Delivering the future vision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Valued as a profession</li> <li>◦ Leading the sector</li> <li>◦ Trusted voice</li> <li>◦ Agile and responsive</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# 2023-24

- Establishing the Aspiring Leaders programme
- Governance review

## Service Delivery

- Quality Management System accreditation for key CTSI services
- Developing the CCAS strategy

## Corporate Services

- Digital enabling strategy
- Review of Head Office capacity needs
- Investing in hybrid working

## Policy, Marketing and Communications

- Political engagement
- Annual impact report
- Extending the influence of our Conference

## Membership and Governance

- Expansion of our corporate membership offer
- Local Authority packages

## Service Delivery

- Grow business development revenue
- Training offer for business

## Corporate Services

- Net Zero plan for CTSI and Head Office

# WHERE WILL WE BE IN 2031?

The last two years, during which the Trading Standards profession has responded to critical issues such as the pandemic, responding to EU exit and most recently the cost-of-living crisis have taught us that the future is always unpredictable. Whilst we cannot control external events, we can control how we operate and our ability to be agile in a dynamic landscape will be key in ensuring our relevance. We have already begun to take action to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) across our organisation.

Our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2031 seems far away, but it will be here sooner than we think. The vision and strategy aims to deliver modernisation and change over the next two years, so that by March 2024 we will have made significant changes. **This will give us the confidence that by 2031 we will have been a key player in:**

- helping to influence the UK's consumer protection landscape, including shaping the structures, at local through to national level, with the right capacity at the right level;
- responding to the critical changes in market and business behaviour such as e-commerce and global trade, with a strong commitment to protecting consumers;
- shaping key consumer protection debates relating to sustainability and Net Zero;



2031 SEEMS FAR AWAY, BUT IT WILL BE HERE SOONER THAN WE THINK.



- helping to ensure society fulfils its responsibility to protect those who are most vulnerable;
- shaping a flexible career profile of a Trading Standards professional able to move between sectors to drive the mission and vision of the Institute;
- supporting business in its role in complying with legislation

**We will achieve this by being an Institute that:**

- is representative of a broader community of professionals, who both protect consumers and support business;
- has a clear national identity with an ambition to grow representation and influence across all nations;
- has built a profession that is inclusive and representative of the

communities it serves;

- is the trusted voice for the profession, a measured and respected voice on consumer protection issues, and a 'go to' organisation for Government and the media;
- embraces digital technology and is at the forefront of adopting sustainable practices;
- has agile and responsive governance structures that enable us to respond to changes in the external environment;
- has secure long-term financial sustainability and mission driven revenue generating services;
- is shaping a flexible career profile of a Trading Standards professional able to move between sectors to drive the mission and vision of the Institute.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

**Thanks to our Members, Branches, Sections, Council, Board, Lead Officers, Vice Presidents and the College of Fellows for sharing their thoughts and views with us in preparation of this vision. We also extend our thanks to all of our stakeholder organisations for their valuable input.**

*Regional coordinators, Trading Standards representatives from Four Nations, Local Government Association, Welsh Local Government Association, Competition and Markets Authority, Office for Product Safety and Standards, UKAS, Intellectual Property Office, British Standards Institute, Financial Conduct Authority, Food Standards Agency, Small Business Commissioner, British Retail Consortium, British Toy and Hobby Association, Consumer Codes Approval Scheme, Federation of Small Businesses, British Chambers of Commerce, Institute of Leadership and Management, Trade Association Forum, Which? Institute of Consumer Affairs, Advertising Standards Authority, Consumer Council, Citizens Advice, Institute of Licensing, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and Local Registration Services Association.*

