



Chartered Trading
Standards Institute

ANNUAL REVIEW

2024-25

www.tradingstandards.uk



INTRODUCTION FROM NIKKI PASEK, Chair of CTSI 2024–25



“

It is wonderful to see the fresh, new energy that apprentices bring to our profession, which has faced workforce challenges for many years.”

I have been very honoured to be your CTSI Chair this year, and it is a real pleasure to introduce the Chartered Trading Standards Institute Annual Report. Our profession continues to go from strength to strength, and this report highlights the vital work that is carried out across the UK. As a long-standing member of CTSI, I am particularly delighted to see that we have seen significant membership growth in the last 12 months.

Our members sit at the heart of our Institute, and I would like to thank you all for your support. In particular, I would like to highlight the key role our volunteers play in the continued success of our Institute. Many members play an important role in supporting our policy work, our Branches, Sections and Committees, and our Council and Board. I'd like to extend a special thank you for all your hard work in helping to ensure the future sustainability of our profession.

The highlight of my year as Chair was our Annual Conference in Blackpool. For me, Conference is more than just an annual training date in the calendar – it's a wonderful celebration of the collaboration and peer support across our profession. It is a reminder of the important work carried out by Trading Standards across the UK and the fact that our profession is stronger when we learn from each other.

Conference recognises and celebrates diversity and inclusion so this year, I was very proud to be able to use this platform to raise awareness of disability. Due to my own lived experience with severe hearing loss, I was able to give members the chance to learn more about the importance of removing barriers to create a more inclusive and equitable society.

My Chair's Challenge helped to raise awareness of the challenges faced by the Deaf community and the importance of British Sign Language. I am pleased that this work received such a positive response.

At Conference, as part of my next generation theme, I was also able to highlight the importance of apprentices to our profession. Apprenticeships are helping to secure the long term future of Trading Standards, and it is encouraging to see significant numbers of apprentices being recruited over the last year. It is wonderful to see the fresh, new energy that apprentices bring to our profession, which has faced workforce challenges for many years. Consumers and businesses rely on well resourced services, so it is positive that Trading Standards has started to turn a corner, and I hope we see a continued return to growth.

The CTSI Annual Review 2025 captures the significant progress we all continue to make in our profession. As you read through these pages, I invite you to reflect on our accomplishments, consider the work that still lies ahead, and join me in celebrating the spirit that defines our profession and the work of its members.

Nikki
CTSI Chair



INTRODUCTION FROM JOHN HERRIMAN, Chief Executive, CTSI



I am delighted to introduce our Annual Review for the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), which aims to capture some of the highlights of the last year while also offering a brief sneak preview into some of our forthcoming activities and achievements.

The work of the profession across all four nations has never been more critical. There is no better illustration of this than the CMA's reported increase in consumer detriment to £71 billion, alongside rising levels of consumer risk elsewhere. Encouragingly, government has responded, and we have never seen so much new legislation directly relevant to our work introduced in such a short time. The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act (DMCCA) and the Product Regulation and Legal Metrology (PRaM) Act have both come into force. We were also involved in shaping the Environmental Protection (Single-use Vapes) (England) Act, as well as continuing to contribute to the Tobacco & Vapes Bill.

While this new legislation naturally introduces additional burdens for already hard-pressed trading standards teams, I see it as a strong endorsement from government of the importance of place-based regulation in driving consumer confidence, ensuring a level playing field, and supporting economic growth. We have been clear that any new burdens must be matched with new funding, so it was very welcome to see the Department of Health and Social Care in England commit £10 million this year and beyond to support enforcement around tobacco and vapes. We will continue to lobby hard for further funding.

As an Institute, we are heavily involved in working with members across all sectors as we all seek to tackle the increasing detriment levels, with a common aim of seeing them reduce by the time the next survey is completed. It has therefore been particularly pleasing to see the growing profile of non-regulatory interventions such as the Approved Code Scheme and Alternative Dispute Resolution. *Business Companion* continues to add huge value too and there was highly effective training to businesses as the DMCCA came in. Given the premium the government is placing on supporting business growth and reducing regulatory burdens, areas such as this will become increasingly important. The profession is in a position to lead the way.

The profile and positive impact of Trading Standards has never been higher and we continue to generate and respond to a multitude of media requests – all incredibly important for highlighting the invaluable contribution we as a profession make to the UK. We continue to run high profile and highly effective campaigns, for example with cosmetic safety and animal welfare, all of which are playing a key role shaping conversations, influencing Government and making sure that consumers are better educated. Since our last Annual Review we have started to build good relationships with the newly elected Government. We have been advocating for a clearly defined consumer protection strategy, something that is becoming more and more pressing, and which has the opportunity to make a real difference.

There is a huge amount of activity happening – as you will see – but at the heart of CTSI sit our members. I was therefore particularly pleased to see a significant increase in our membership numbers. This was very much driven by the DMCCA Law in Practice training which received excellent feedback, and we will continue to grow our CPPD offer to ensure that members are well prepared for their roles in all sectors. Our Sections and Branches play a very important function here, and I always enjoy the opportunity to meet with the members at meetings during the year.

As an Institute we continue to grow stronger together, and to live our values of being Collaborative, Trusted, Supportive, Innovative and Inclusive. Finally, I want to say a huge thank you all our staff, Board, Council, Vice Presidents, our Lead Officers, and everyone who has been instrumental in helping us deliver our many achievements. Thank you for your hard work, dedication and commitment in helping us continue our mission to build a fairer world for consumers and business.

John
CTSI Chief Executive



ABOUT CTSI

■ OUR VISION

To ensure that the UK prospers economically through fair and safe trade.

■ OUR MISSION

To support and reinforce the protection of consumers and achieve a level playing field for business.

■ ABOUT US

As the professional membership body for Trading Standards professionals, we have four strategic objectives, which are:

• **Leading the profession**

Supporting our members working in Trading Standards, and seeking to grow and diversify our membership

• **Building our voice**

Speaking out on behalf of the profession and consumers, and campaigning to change policy, practices and attitudes

• **Becoming stronger together**

Creating partnerships and working with businesses to support consumer confidence and safeguard honest businesses

• **Delivering tangible change**

Modernising the work of our Institute to value and champion diversity, ensuring that we are digitally enabled and fostering a collaborative working culture



From left to right: Duncan Stephenson, Director of External Affairs; Kate Pike, Lead Officer for Tobacco & Vapes; Mary Creagh MP, DEFRA Minister; and John Herriman, CEO

■ OUR SERVICES

We run a variety of services for our profession, for businesses and for consumers.

For our profession:

- we develop qualifications, e-learning, training and continuing professional and personal development (CPPD) to support our members
- we create a wide range of resources and run events, including our Annual Conference
- we develop evidence-based campaigns and policy informed by our membership

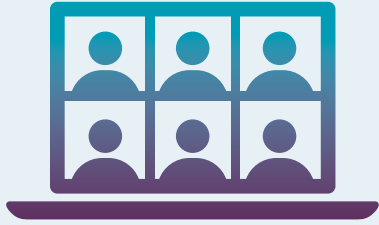
For consumers:

- we run the UK International Consumer Centre (UKICC), which provides advice and support for anyone who has bought goods or services from abroad
- our campaigns and policy work also supports consumers by speaking out and raising the profile of issues which impact the public

For businesses:

- we provide the Business Education Service, including *Business Companion*, which provides the latest information to businesses that want to know how to comply with the law
- we run the Approved Code Scheme, which provides reassurance to customers that approved businesses meet high standards in areas such as customer service
- we have a role in mediation between customers and businesses through alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and we approve over 50 ADR bodies across the UK

OUR IMPACT IN NUMBERS



8,500
professionals tuned into
CTSI webinars




An increase of **236%** since 2024



1,049 people attended our 2024
Annual Conference
 **(59% increase on 2023)**



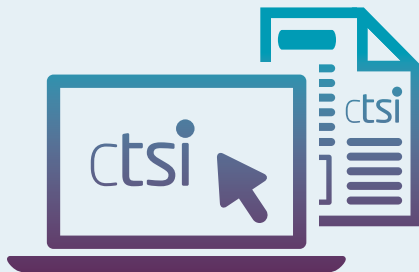
 **10%** increase in membership
between 2024 and 2025



CTSI delivered over **630,000** hours of CPPD
– **4x** increase on the previous year



Just under **550,000** visits to the CTSI website during 2024–2025 –and almost **4M** page views



CTSI appeared over **3,194** times in national and local media.

BUSINESS COMPANION WEBSITE

Just under **480,000** visits to the *Business Companion* website during 2024–2025 – and almost **3 million** page views

UK INTERNATIONAL CONSUMER CENTRE

7,641 consumers supported by the UK International Consumer Centre in 2023–2024

CONSUMER CODES

Over **40,000** businesses enrolled

Our Approved Code Scheme has helped recover over

£2 million for consumers

1 HELPING TO LEAD OUR PROFESSION

Revitalising CTSI's membership and our benefits

Training Together Package

This year saw the successful launch of the Training Together package, creating a new route for Local Authorities to fund individual memberships alongside training. The package has been extremely well received, leading to 126 additional memberships across 19 Local Authorities. If you'd like to explore how your authority could benefit from a Training Together package, please get in touch – membership@tsi.org.uk.

Membership Growth

Overall membership continues to grow, with Student Membership showing the most significant increase, up 35%. This reflects the legacy of the Student Membership project and the strong collaborative work with training providers and Local Authorities to ensure all new apprentices are supported to join. Membership is now embedded within the first year of Stage 1, Level 4 RCO, and Level 6 TSP qualifications.



Membership Strategy

To ensure sustainable growth and long-term member value, a new membership strategy was approved by Council in the spring. A dedicated membership working group has since been formed to provide continuous member feedback and shape direction. If you would like to contribute to this work, we would love to hear from you.

Branch Engagement & Support

A Branch Training Focus Group has been established to promote consistency and equality across regions, encouraging greater collaboration between Branches and CTSI. In addition, Branches continue to have access to wider CTSI support, including event management, treasury, and secretarial support when needed.

Data Centralisation

A major data centralisation project is underway to streamline administration and improve the member experience. The goal is to create a single, unified member profile that enables more personalised and efficient services in the future.

Elevating CTSP

Work is ongoing to further raise the profile of Chartered Trading Standards Practitioners (CTSP). A recent survey sought member views on a new digital badge, a physical badge, and a potential public register of CTSPs, ensuring members shape how we celebrate and promote the value of chartership. These developments align with the upcoming milestone of 10 years of Chartership.



Our Branches and Sections

Branches across the UK

We operate 13 Branches across the UK.

Branches help ensure our members have a supportive network of like-minded people to offer support, share ideas and help build our community. During 2022/23, CTSI undertook a number of visits to Branches to talk through the new vision, the changes to the Head Office and actively engage in areas including the development of our new policy framework, and the changes to our qualification.

Sections – our communities of interest

We also now have five Sections of CTSI, which cover specific sectors that our members operate in:

- **Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO)**
- **Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS)**
- **Consumer Empowerment Alliance (CEA)**
- **Business Members Group (BMG)**
- **Civil Service Forum (CSF)**



CTSI's governance and structure

CTSI is governed by its Council of members which is the body responsible for advising on, and monitoring strategic direction and policy, as both a membership organisation and as a business. Our Council is made up of representatives from CTSI's 13 Branches and five Sections, plus four nationally elected members and four officers. The Council delegates authority to a Board, made up of Executive and Non-Executive Directors, to help oversee and deliver CTSI's strategy. Both the Council and Board are supported in their work through a number of sub-committees. These include the Audit and Finance Committee, the Ethics and Standards Committee, the Qualifications Panel, the Race and Equality Committee and the People and Remuneration Committee.

CTSI is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. CTSI operates as a group which includes its subsidiaries: TSI, itsa Ltd and ACTSO Ltd. National Trading Standards (NTS) operates as a standalone organisation within ACTSO Ltd.

This report reflects the activities of CTSI, TSI and its subsidiary itsa Ltd. CTSI's other subsidiary, ACTSO Ltd, produces an impact and outcomes report which was published in 2023.

CTSI also has a relationship with the Consumer Codes Approval Board (CCAB) which runs the Approved Code scheme. A separate report detailing its activities is available here:

https://consumercode.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Consumer-Code_Annual-Report-2023-24_vfn_web.pdf



Making progress with our qualifications

In 2024, an impressive 183 candidates demonstrated their dedication and commitment to growth by completing a total of 797 CTSI Qualification Framework assessments. CTSI also proudly welcomed 20 new Level 6 Trading Standards Practitioner (L6 TSP) and 2 Regulatory Compliance Apprentices to the qualification framework, marking a significant step in nurturing fresh talent and building a strong foundation for the future.

CTSI has successfully developed and implemented transition options for L6 TSP apprentices in the Food, Feed, and Weights and Measures pathways, ensuring clear and supported routes into the qualification framework. These tailored transition options have provided greater flexibility for apprentices, enabling them to smoothly transition into the qualification framework to achieve CTSI Food, Feed, and Weights and Measures qualifications should they wish.

We successfully delivered seven separate competencies to a total of 55 delegates, reflecting our continued commitment to high-quality, targeted training. Each competency is designed to build practical skills and deepen subject knowledge, ensuring delegates were well-equipped to apply their learning in real-world contexts. The competencies are chiefly designed to keep Local Authority professionals up to date with legislative changes, equip them with the knowledge and skills to work effectively with business, and build their consumer confidence.



College of Fellows

The College has adopted a set of rules based on the CTSI Membership Regulations. These rules will provide the College with a clear framework while it decides which roles it will take on in the future.

The CTSI Company Structure Review highlighted possible confusion caused by two separate bodies using the same name: 'The College of Fellows of the Chartered Trading Standards Institute'. To resolve this, the Charity changed its name to 'Trading Standards Fellows' Charity', which is now registered with the Charity Commission.

In 2024–2025 the Charity has provided £12,200 in member support grants, including: annual grants in respect of four children from two families; an initial and a further grant to a member who sadly lost their newborn son; support to a disabled member for the cost of adapting their car controls; Further Education grants to four students continuing their degree courses; and assistance to a member with the open access dissemination fee for their published research paper. The Charity also gave £500 prizes to the winners of the Best Overall Student for Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the qualification.



CTSI Manifesto progress update: Our recommendation for the profession and wider Trading Standards workforce

Funding, resourcing, promoting and future proofing the profession was a key and continual area that CTSI campaigned and lobbied on during the last financial year.

- As part of the UK government's regulatory ambitions in the Tobacco and Vapes Bill, CTSI and partners secured £10 million of investment from the UK Government for Trading Standards services across England. This provided 80 apprenticeship places.
- CTSI successfully lobbied and engaged with government to ensure provisions in the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Bill, the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill (both now enacted) and the Tobacco and Vapes Bill were amended and changed to reflect the input and experience of CTSI's Policy Team and Lead Officers. These measures were important to put product safety and metrology on the government's agenda.
- We celebrated the amazing Trading Standards profession and key, supportive partners with our events and campaigns such as the CTSI Annual Conference, annual Hero Awards and a National Apprenticeship Week. We started conversations around local government regulation, devolution and the potential challenges and opportunities for the Trading Standards profession in that process.

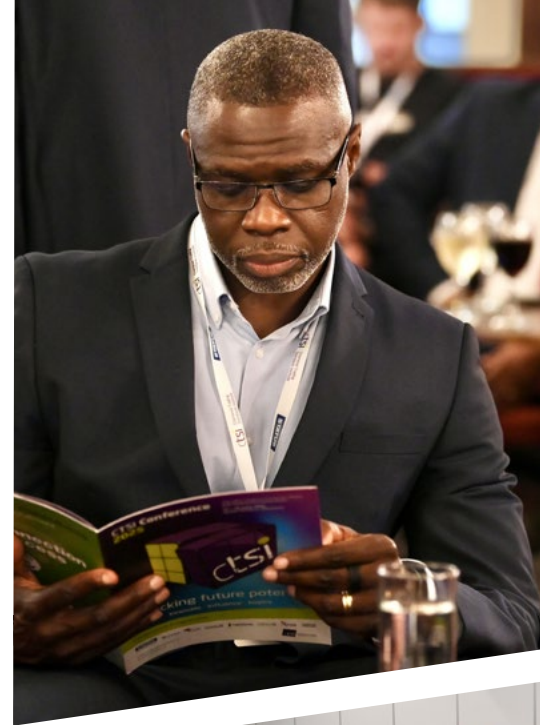


CTSI Annual Conference 2024

CTSI's Annual Conference in 2024 was a little bit different, as for the first time in the Institute's history we partnered, for part of the conference, with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH). Our conference secured a significant increase of nearly 60% in attendees over the 3 days at the Armouries in Leeds.

There were several joint sessions at the CTSI Annual Conference covering key issues, including workforce, forthcoming legislation on artificial intelligence and digital technology, the journey to net zero, tobacco and vapes, product safety and legal metrology. We also ran joint sessions with CIEH on housing, food standards and regulatory leadership.

The Awards dinner also provided poignant tributes to former CTSI employee Andy Allen and the 60th Anniversary of D-Day. And we presented brand new Awards including the National Apprentice of the Year Award which was won by Ali Walker from Leicestershire County Council.



While our report captures the last financial year, we have since April also held the Annual Conference in 2025 at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool. We had a record number of CTSI members attending this Conference and special sessions on topics including workforce, organised crime groups, artificial intelligence, and dynamic pricing; and special sessions on legislative change including the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Act, Tobacco & Vapes Bill and Product Regulation and Legal Metrology Bill (now an Act of Parliament).

KEEPING CONSUMERS SAFE, HEALTHY AND FREE FROM HARM



Cost of Beauty campaign

CTSI were successful in receiving funding from the Office of Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) to further develop the Cost of Beauty campaign addressing additional cosmetic products that posed a significant risk to consumers. Following stakeholder engagements and member surveys, CTSI focussed on:

- **Nasal tanning sprays**
- **Nail glue**
- **Lash lift and tints kits designed for professional use**

CTSI partnered with a number of different stakeholders holding expertise in those areas, including the Cosmetics, Toiletries and Perfumery Association, Melanoma Focus, The Sunbed Association and the National Hair & Beauty Federation. CTSI developed resources and factsheets for consumers to understand the risk and concerns posed by the products.

CTSI also developed national stories using case studies to achieve maximum impact. The campaign was covered in over 200 national and local media outlets, with an estimated reach of 16 million. Broadcast coverage was achieved from the top consumer programmes and channels, including *BBC Breakfast*, *Good Morning Britain*,

The One Show, *Lorraine*, *Morning Live*, *BBC News*, *Sky News* and *ITV News*.

Because of the significant media interest in this area, coverage for this went slightly beyond the 2024–2025 financial year, reinforcing how important this issue is to both the public and the Trading Standards profession. CTSI will continue to shine a light on the importance of effective regulation in the beauty and aesthetics sector over the next few years, helping to educate and inform consumers, support legitimate businesses to trade in a fair and level landscape and equip the Trading Standards professional with the knowledge and resources needed.



CTSI action in Parliament

CTSI has been busily working on a number of key pieces of legislation that are fundamental to the work of our members.

CTSI has worked closely with parliamentarians on the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers (DMCC) Bill (now enacted) to ensure strong consumer protections and effective enforcement powers. The Bill is a vital step in modernising consumer law for the digital age. We will continue to support its implementation and provide members with training through the new Law in Practice programme.

Following on from extensive campaigning and public awareness raising, CTSI has been actively engaged in shaping the government's approach to the Single Use Vape Ban (now enacted) and the Tobacco and Vapes Bill that is still making its way through Parliament. CTSI has provided evidence from Trading Standards teams on the frontline, highlighting the harms to young people and the environment, and we continue to press for the powers and resources needed to enforce these new laws effectively.

CTSI has worked closely with government and a coalition of partners on the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill (now enacted), calling for stronger protections against unsafe and counterfeit goods sold on online marketplaces by third-party sellers. The enabling Bill marks a significant step forward and CTSI will continue working with the government to ensure that secondary legislation gives Trading Standards the powers needed to hold online marketplaces to account and safeguard consumers as well as ensuring weights and measures legislation is fit for the modern markets the UK operates in.



Relaunching the All Party Parliamentary Group on Consumer Protection (APPG)

Following on from our successful AGM in February 2025, CTSI re-established the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Consumer Protection and has retained the position as the Group's secretariat. The Group is chaired by Gill Furniss MP, with Vice Chairs Baron Elliott of Mickle Fell, The Earl of Lindsay, and Mark Sewards MP, reflecting strong cross-party commitment to consumer protection issues.

Through our role as secretariat, CTSI is helping to drive important conversations, facilitate political engagement, and encourage cross-party debate on key consumer issues, while raising the profile of the Trading Standards profession in Parliament. During this period, we planned an APPG parliamentary drop-in session for April, in partnership with London Fire Brigade, Electrical Safety First, Which?, and the British Toy and Hobby Association, to highlight our amendments to the upcoming Product Regulation and Metrology Bill (now enacted). The event secured attendance from a large number of MPs from across the political spectrum, including the Minister for Employment Rights, Competition and Markets, Justin Madders MP, alongside officials from the Department for Business and Trade.

Hero Awards 2024

The 19th CTSI Hero Awards took place at the House of Commons in December 2024, hosted by broadcaster Jenny Falconer with the support of the office of Gill Furniss MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Consumer Protection. The annual event honoured remarkable individuals, teams and organisations who went the extra mile to protect consumers, support fair trading, and champion equality, diversity and inclusion. 2024's winners included Trading Standards Officers, scam victims, charity workers, business owners and even a sniffer dog – with most nominees put forward by colleagues and partners from across the consumer protection landscape.

Notable mentions recognised collaborative projects with charities, community groups and enforcement partners, underlining the importance of cross-sector action in protecting the public. The evening celebrated the professionalism, dedication, and impact of the Trading Standards community and the wider consumer protection network, highlighting the real difference they make to people's lives across the UK.



Getting to grips with organised crime

Ghost number plates

CTSI supported Sarah Coombes MP in introducing the Vehicle Registration Offences (Review) Bill to Parliament. The Bill seeks to clamp down on certain offences relating to vehicle registration marks, particularly “ghost number plates”.

Ghost number plates are designed to evade enforcement systems, such as speed cameras, ULEZ cameras, and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras. The use of ghost number plates is linked to organised crime groups, who use the number plates to obscure their criminal activity.



Operation Machinize

Trading Standards were involved in an operation, coordinated by the National Crime Agency (NCA), that targeted cash-intensive businesses to crackdown on high street crime in England. In total, the Op saw 380 premises visited which resulted in:

- freezing orders on bank accounts totalling more than £1 million
- 35 arrests
- 55 individuals questioned about their immigration status
- 97 individuals safeguarded in relation to potential modern slavery
- Seizure of:
 - c.£40,000 in cash
 - c.200,000 cigarettes
 - c.7,000 packs of tobacco
 - c.8,000 illegal vapes
 - two vehicles
- Two cannabis farms were also found, containing a total of 150 plants

CTSI championed the work of local Trading Standards teams in this huge operation that disrupted organised crime groups up and down the country, with national media coverage, including appearances by CTSI staff on *BBC Breakfast* and Radio 4's *PM* programme. This coverage showed the importance of Trading Standards in understanding and protecting local communities, and the amplified impact that can be achieved when work is co-ordinated with national regulatory partners.

Looking ahead: Our future work on organised crime

In the 2025 CTSI Member Survey, the presence of organised crime groups on the high street was identified as the #1 threat to Trading Standards. This is also reflected in increased political, media, and public awareness of the issue. In response to growing concerns about organised crime groups and their impact on areas covered by Trading Standards, CTSI will work with stakeholders to identify key issues and address them over the year ahead.

Protecting consumers – raising awareness of a multitude of scams and fraud

CTSI was mentioned 437 times in the media to raise awareness on various scams and fraud. The coverage has a potential reach of 964 million and covered topics such as:

- QR code parking scams
- CTSI impersonation scams
- Counterfeit good scams
- Rogue trader scams
- Pet microchip scams
- Financial scams
- Funeral scams
- Lantern festival scams

Featured headlines:

- Car park QR scam signed me up to gaming service
- Lantern festival scam fears spark investigation
- Chinese network behind one of world's 'largest online scams'

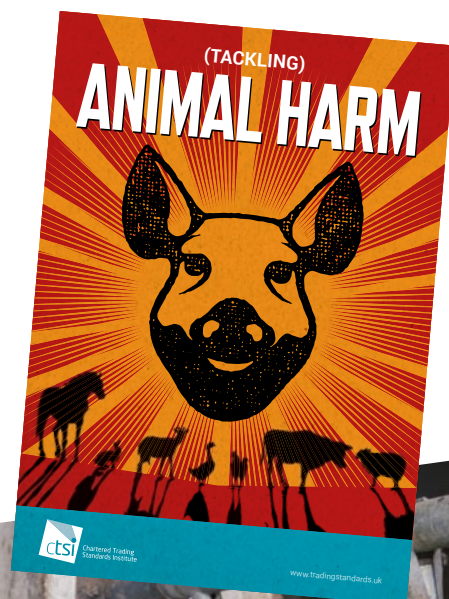


(Tackling) Animal Harm

CTSI published our long awaited policy paper (Tackling) Animal Harm, which examined the enforcement challenges facing animal health and welfare. The report set out how lengthy court delays, gaps in legislation, and spiralling costs are leaving animals at risk and forcing many local authorities to walk away from cases that can cost more than £100,000 to pursue. It calls for urgent reform of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, including:

- **Pre-conviction disqualification powers to prevent offenders from acquiring more animals while cases are ongoing**
- **A statutory duty for courts to hear possession order applications within 21 days**
- **Dedicated funding from devolved governments for complex cases, alongside a review of farmer support schemes to ensure welfare is not compromised**

CTSI's ongoing campaign to ensure local authorities have the tools, funding, and powers needed to act swiftly and effectively included engagement across the UK with advocacy and support from the UK Parliament, the Senedd, and the Scottish Parliament – underlining CTSI's commitment to working across the whole of the UK.



CTSI Manifesto progress update: Our recommendation for consumers



Year in numbers

3,194 pieces of coverage
(in print, online and broadcast)

Estimates reach of
1.8 billion

38 press releases issued

Consumer detriment was, and will continue to be, a focus for CTSI, with published figures showing known consumer detriment to be estimated at £71.2 billion. With this data from the CMA only capturing known detriment, the true cost of detriment is expected to be significantly higher. This fed into numerous, impactful consumer education and protection campaigns, such as:

- We launched successful cosmetics and aesthetics campaigns on items like nail glue, lash lift kits, injectable cosmetic procedures such as Brazilian Butt Lifts, and skin whitening IV drips, highlighting the danger and harm these unregulated products and procedures caused
- Promoted the importance of “getting what you pay for” with our fantastic short measures and short weight campaigns. The campaigns showed that the average loss was around £100 per person, per year, due solely to short measures, and 40% short weight found in solid fuel packs, with an estimated detriment of up to £4.1 million per year
- CTSI highlighted pricing practice issues with ticket sale, loyalty pricing and grocery pricing to ensure consumers got a fair deal at the checkout

SUPPORTING THRIVING LOCAL BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES

Partnering to support Continued Professional and Personal Development (CPPD)

During the last year, CTSI's qualifications team has vastly increased our CPPD offering to the profession and membership. A wide range of CPPD training has been offered: in 2023, there were 1,513 CPPD bookings, and in 2024, we have recorded 2,356 bookings to date.

Launch of CTSI's Law In Practice:

Helping our profession navigate new legislation

CTSI launched our new programme: Law in Practice, starting with the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Act. With the support of our Lead Officers, we delivered 10 online training sessions, resulting in 1,238 bookings: 1,049 from CTSI members, 105 from non-members, and 84 new members who joined CTSI to access the training for free.



Vape training: Part of Operation Joseph

The aim of this project was to provide guidance, training and support for the Trading Standards profession and businesses in England.

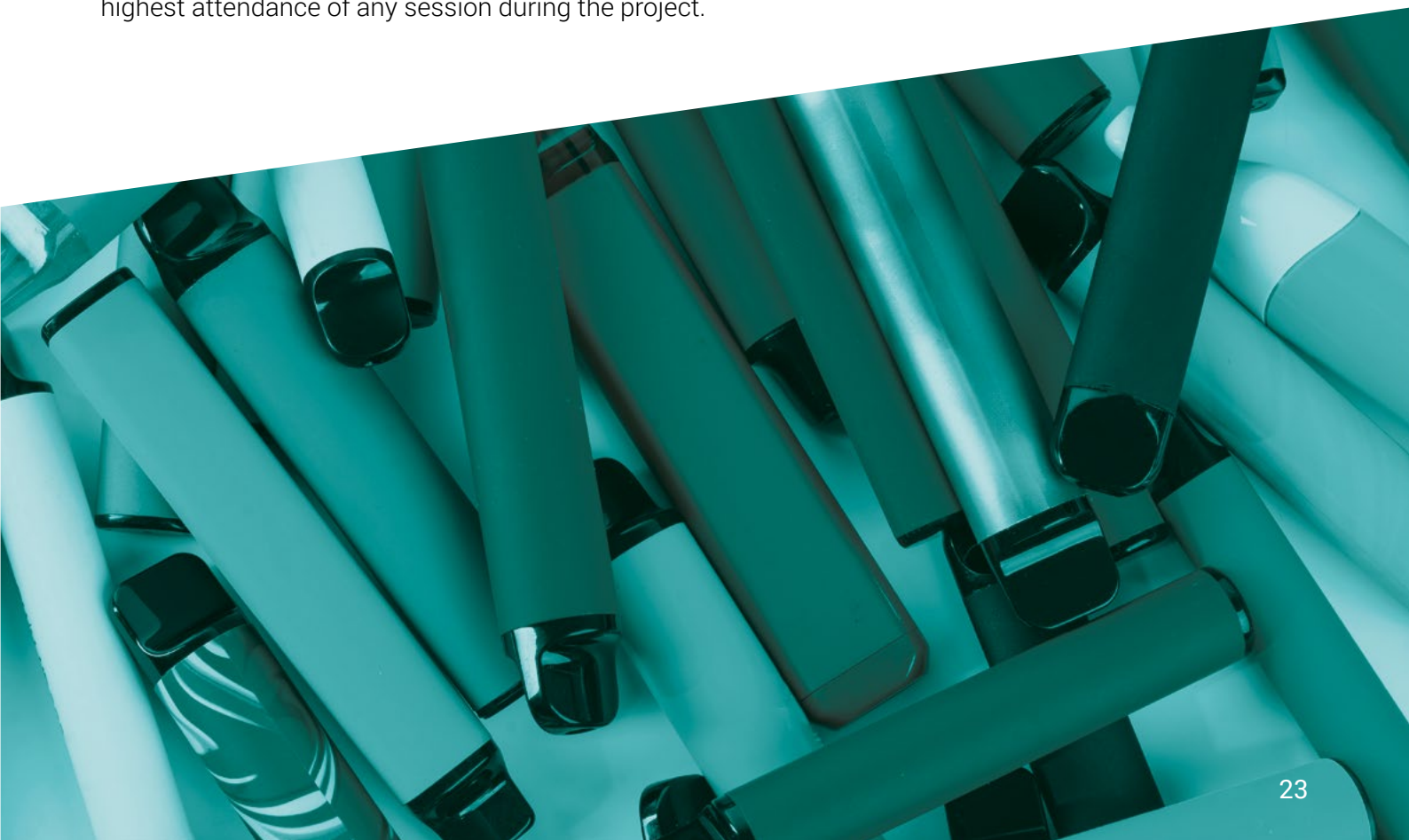
CTSI designed and developed a new section on the *Regulators Companion* website to support the profession. The aim of this section was to host all the guidance and toolkits developed for Trading Standards professionals. It now contains 17 dedicated guidance and support resources, including a training video. This has proven to be a valuable tool for VEP, CTSI Lead Officers, and CTSI in engaging with the profession.

CTSI has gathered significant feedback and intelligence to identify priority training topics. CTSI has continued to be agile in its approach to training, for example recognising the desire from the profession for 'meet the experts' training; we originally planned to host one session but extended this offering to 4 sessions due to demand.

CTSI delivered the first 'meet the experts' session face to face at our Annual Conference, this session was exceptionally popular, with demand so high we had standing room only and we had to turn people away. Recognising the need for further 'meet the experts' sessions we provided 4 webinar sessions and this proved to be very successful.

CTSI collaborated with the VEP members and CTSI Lead Officers to develop and deliver a variety of webinar training sessions throughout the duration of the project. In total, CTSI received 732 bookings for the webinar training sessions offered this year, with 563 attendees, resulting in an overall average attendance of 76.2%. Following feedback from our community, CTSI developed and delivered a Trading Standards underage sales webinar, which has seen the highest attendance of any session during the project.

In total CTSI received 732 bookings for the webinar training sessions offered this year, with 563 attending.



Product Safety training for businesses – PRISM and PAS7050

Our guidance and training provided via the *Business Companion* website provides business with clear, concise easy to understand support, increasing their knowledge and understanding in specific areas of PRISM AND PAS 7050.

CTSI developed the new Business in Focus section on the *Business Companion* website. The supporting documentation and recorded webinar are live on the website to continue the support to businesses.

CTSI organised and delivered a total of 8 webinars, each 4 hours in length. The table below summarises the webinar attendance and participation data. In total, there were 353 bookings, with 251 attendees joining the sessions. While it is common for free webinars that not all bookings result in attendance, the overall participation rate exceeded expectations.

The PRISM & PAS 7050 training has successfully engaged new businesses, which is a great achievement. We are also aware that regular users of the *Business Companion* website continue to use the guidance and support toolkit provided. The training sessions had an average attendance rate of 72%.

The engagement and reach with UK businesses has been very high, we are pleased to confirm 135 unique businesses attended the training, providing participants with clear practical insights into compliance processes and product safety management.



Intellectual Property

CTSI delivered a total of 10 webinars and two face-to-face training sessions. We saw a total of 490 bookings representing 129 local authorities. The training is aimed specifically at Trading Standards Officers working in all nations.

businesscompanion
trading standards law explained

From April 2024 to March 2025, the Learning and Development (L&D) Department experienced a period of steady growth and impactful delivery.

Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) Grant Programme

Following the award of a three-year grant from the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), the L&D team successfully developed and delivered training in collaboration with our partners, including FAAB Training. These courses supported Trading Standards Officers (TSOs) and Environmental Health (EH) Officers across the UK.

- **Over 190 hours teaching time**
- **50 training courses**
- **2,257 delegates**
- **1,355 responders to the course evaluation survey (60% of attending delegates)**

Course formats included:

- **Face-to-face practical sessions:** including Legal Metrology topics such as Bulk Fuel Measuring, Liquid Fuel Measuring, and Weighbridge Testing.
- **Classroom-based sessions:** such as PRISM and Construction Products and Automated Weighing Instruments.
- **Online programmes:** such as PAS7050, PSD, GPSR, Cosmetics, Fireworks, and Electrical Product Safety, and Recreational Craft.

These offerings were well received across the industry, with 1,355 participants completing the course evaluation and sharing positive feedback.

Business Certificate of Competency in Product Safety (BCCPS)

In May 2024, we launched the first cohort for the **Business Certificate of Competency in Product Safety (BCCPS)**—a new six-month programme aimed at professionals working in product compliance and safety.

The competency-based course includes 22 hours of teaching and covers topics such as Toy Safety, Cosmetics, Clothing, Gas appliances, and Electrical Goods. Delegates are assessed throughout and are required to present a live scenario as part of their evaluation.

The BCCPS proved highly popular in its inaugural year, resulting in two full cohorts with a total of 36 delegates (Cohort 1 – 19 and Cohort 2 – 17). Participants joined from both the UK and overseas, representing several well-known household brands.

Participant feedback highlighted the value of the programme, citing the networking and the opportunity to gain insight into product safety challenges.

DEFRA – Animal Health and Welfare penalty notification training

The aim of the project was to provide Trading Standards professionals with dedicated training which would highlight their responsibilities under the new legislation and how to apply the penalty notifications.

Online business training support

CTSI devised a learning journey for users, starting with Introduction to Product Safety (Part 1), moving on to Understanding Compliance (Part 2), and concluding with PAS 7050 (Part 3).



Business Education Service (BES)

CTSI published the following business in focus guidance this year:

- Food labelling – A selection of infographics on labelling requirements for prepacked food targeted at new and emerging food businesses.
- Unfair commercial practices – Guidance on the DMCCA's court-based civil enforcement regime
- Criminal enforcement – Guidance on the DMCCA's court-based criminal enforcement regime
- Vaping products
- Chemical safety of vapes

CTSI also updated the following business in focus guidance this year

- Car Trader and consumer law
- Net Zero Journey
- Guidance for online businesses



Helping businesses understand the DMCC Act

CTSI collaborated with multiple subject matter experts and specialists to review, update, and develop comprehensive guidance on the DMCC ACT. This involved coordinating input from various disciplines to ensure the guidance was accurate, relevant, and aligned with current legislative requirements and operational best practices. In order to demystify the DMCC Act for businesses, CTSI engaged 3 Lead Officers to assist with the development of training. CTSI created a number of short videos to help businesses understand the implications of the new Act.

- Introduction to the DMCC Act
- Unfair commercial practices
- Banned practices
- Fake reviews
- Invitation to purchase
- Drip pricing
- Subscription contracts
- Civil enforcement
- Online interface orders

Comprehensive 2-hour training sessions were developed for businesses; in order to reach as many businesses as possible we delivered the training virtually via Microsoft Teams. We delivered 8 training sessions from early March. We have actively expanded our webinar training programme to further enhance the business guidance available on *Business Companion*. Over the year, we delivered 21 training sessions, accumulating 713 bookings from businesses. The dedicated DMCC Act 10 training webinar alone attracted 622 bookings.

Regulators Companion

The *Regulators' Companion* is a trusted and highly respected source of guidance and support for the Trading Standards profession. *Regulators' Companion* provides a wide range of guidance materials including video training resources, designed to support Trading Standards professionals in staying informed, confident, and effective in their roles. These resources offer practical, expert-led insights to help Trading Standards professionals navigate complex challenges with clarity and confidence. CTSI was proud to expand its scope even further by introducing a dedicated section on Vapes — offering a comprehensive collection of resources to support efforts in addressing illicit vaping products and underage sales.

Statistics:

The platform has experienced substantial growth during the review period:

- **41,200 Active Users** — a **321% increase compared to the previous year**
- **42,500 New Users** — a **338% increase compared to the previous year**

The *Regulator's Companion* now hosts:

- **62 webinars covering key regulatory topics including:**
 - - Toy Safety
 - - Electrical Product Safety
 - - Fireworks/Pyrotechnics
 - - Legal Metrology
- **220 hours of learning content, supporting continuous professional development**

Refreshing and growing our Approved Code Scheme

CTSI relaunched the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme, as the Approved Code Scheme in the summer of 2024, but much of the preparation for this, including the development of a brand new website took place during the reporting period.

There are now 23 Approved Code Sponsors running 27 approved codes of practice.

- **£55 billion covered by a Code of Practice**
- **40,000+ business members**
- **£2 million recovered for consumers through the scheme**
- **Average of 45% of disputes resolved in favour of consumers**
- **£281 billion of consumer spending covered by the ACS scheme**
- **8,100 visits to the newly invigorated ACS homepage**

We are targeting high-risk sectors with significant consumer detriment to broaden and strengthen ACS. By working closely with government and other partners, we aim to positively influence the landscape, achieving better outcomes for consumers while supporting business growth.



Supporting Alternative Dispute Resolution

We support 40 ADR bodies running 62 schemes and are continuing to grow. We work closely with the Department of Business and Trade on the expansion of the DMCC Act in this sector, and are looking forward to supporting businesses as this legislation evolves. During this reporting period:

- Over 180,000 complaints received by ADR bodies
- 21 biennial audits undertaken
- The average time taken for approved ADR body to handle complaints from receipt of the complete case file is 29 days
- ACS & ADR attended 6 public and business facing events with BES to promote the services

UKICC

Protecting consumers when buying from abroad – the UK International Consumer Centre. With an increasing proportion of goods bought by UK consumers coming from abroad, CTSI plays a pivotal role in supporting consumers who may encounter issues with their purchases. CTSI runs the UK International Consumer Centre which deals with cases where consumers may have experienced issues when buying goods or services from outside of the UK.

The most complained about sector is a consumer's holiday experience – from their flights to hotels and car hire. Second to this are complaints about online traders who provide goods and services directly to consumers.

During 2024, the UKICC successfully closed 7,641 cases. Over a third (3,120) involved purchases made from Non-EU countries, including USA, China and Australia. Consumers were saved over £2million.

For 2024 overall, we estimate UK consumers were saved £593 each, resulting in a total saving of **£2,075,500**.

(From April 2025 to July 2025, we have saved consumers on average £1,700 each, resulting in a total saving of **£61,507**).



CTSI Manifesto progress update: Our recommendation for businesses

CTSI recognises and values the importance of the reputable retailer in our society, communities and economy. Our aim is to recognise and support legitimate and reputable businesses to prosper in a market which is a level playing field.

- Our APPG inquiry paper “Mind the Gap” showed the inequity between the reputable retailers (both online and on the high street) and third-party sellers on online marketplaces in terms of accountability and safety of products supplied, especially imported products. This paper was influential in bringing about the content and provisions in the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill
- We showcased the vital importance of Approved Codes in the home-building sector, explaining the high standards Approved Codes Members operate to, and the option for Alternative Dispute Resolution if problems arise
- We also campaigned for licensing schemes in certain sectors to prevent and reduce the opportunities for rogue traders to undermine consumer confidence and allow legitimate businesses to thrive
- Listening to our members, the profession and private industry, we recognised the impact of organised crime in both the world of Trading Standards and how it undermines our reputable businesses. We started to scope out this area with more on this to come in 2025–2026!



This paper was influential in bringing about the content and provisions in the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill.



Supporting equality, diversity and inclusion

We continue to drive the positive changes that support equality, diversity and inclusion across CTSI and it is integral to our vision for the future. Here are just a few of the recent changes and initiatives we have taken forward:

- our Race and Equalities Working Group (REWG) has now become the CTSI Race and Equality Committee (REC). Reporting to Council, it is there to support transparency by shaping our EDI strategy and helping to scrutinise our delivery
- we continue to support a diverse workforce in our Head Office which has an ethnic diversity of 12% and a gender diversity of 59% female
- our “We are CTSI” values include an explicit commitment to ‘Inclusivity’
- we employ fair and open recruitment processes for all our roles
- our Annual Conference continues to promote a respectful and safe environment for all our members from all backgrounds
- we are proud to have attained Foundation Level with Inclusive Employers, and remain signed up to the Business in Community Race at Work Charter (RAWC) where we have committed to the following principles:
 - Appoint an Executive Sponsor for race – the Finance and Corporate Services Director fulfils this role and is supported by the Executive team
 - Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress – this is captured for staff and has been reported to the REWG in the past and will now be reported to the REC
- Commit at Board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying – this is explicit from the Board and Council, and is supported by training for all staff, as well as being communicated more widely to members at events
- Make clear that supporting equality in the workplace is the responsibility of all leaders and managers – this is built into our HR processes and supported by training
- Take action that supports ethnic minority career progression – we actively encourage and support talented staff from all backgrounds and will feature in our succession planning in the future to ensure we retain our best staff
- Support race inclusion allies in the workplace – our People and Culture Manager has been our inclusion champion in the workplace
- Include Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse-led enterprise owners in supply chains – all our grant applications are assessed for the ‘social value’ that CTSI provides to wider society. We have not yet completed a full review of our supply chain, but will do so as contracts reach their expiry dates
- we actively support staff and members by highlighting key dates from our Diversity Calendar through our wider communications.

Looking ahead, we will focus on establishing the REC, building EDI networks to support members, helping our Branches increase capacity and awareness, and aligning work between CTSI and ACTSO.

Audit and Finance Committee

The Audit and Finance Committee (AFC) is a committee of the CTSI Board that has a remit to scrutinise the financial management of the Institute. The non-executive members of the committee include those with a Trading Standards background and, very helpfully, one with a corporate accounting background. The period has been somewhat of a transition where the organisation completed arrangements relating to two big decisions. The first was the decision to move financial reporting from the calendar year, to the financial year (thus delivering a 15 month budget) and the second was the decision to exit the Local Government Pension Scheme which had been a risk to the Institute for many years as a result of its deficit position which was as high as £3.037 million in 2018.

As a result of favourable market conditions the pension deficit reduced significantly to £199k and the Board took the decision to exit the scheme promptly to take advantage of the positive position. Overall performance for CTSI (consisting of the three companies CTSI, ITSA and TSI) was a surplus of £247,751 before tax and exceptional costs. Exceptional costs amounted to £241,704 which consisted mainly of the pension settlement figures as well as some other legal expenses. Therefore, the overall pre-surplus was £6,047 after exceptional costs were applied, but without the pension settlement and other exceptional costs CTSI would have exceeded its 2024/25 budget forecast.

With these decisions now implemented and the organisation on a secure financial footing, the committee will focus over the next year on long-term strategic financial planning and on maximising the use of its financial assets to deliver the most for its members. Plans are also in place to continue work on the organisation's risk assessment, risk appetite, and risk management. Additionally, the committee will be seeking a new non-executive member this year to support its work.

People and Remuneration Committee

The focus has been on creating a Head Office that sits at the heart of the Institute. A Head Office that is seen to support our members, branches and sections, and which helps to ensure good governance through the relationship between Council, the Board, and the Executive. In support of this, the Board led a Council-directed review of all our governance processes and there were a number of recommendations that have been implemented that involved the People and Remuneration Committee (PRC), including a Board skills and experience audit.

There has been a lot of work to ensure that CTSI Head Office is a great place to work, ranging from the development of our 'We are CTSI' values through to an emphasis on flexible working arrangements with our 'Work Your Way' policy. Our goal is to be an organisation that attracts and retains great people. This commitment was reflected in our latest annual staff survey, which had an 89% response rate. Results showed that 85.4% of staff feel highly motivated to give their best, and the same proportion are proud to work for CTSI.

There were a number of actions that stemmed from this survey that are in the process of being progressed with the intention of continuing to develop a collaborative and supportive office culture, and one that staff actively contribute to. It is encouraging to note positive progress in reducing staff absence. The PRC continues to closely monitor key indicators, including diversity, sickness, and staff turnover. In addition, further work has been undertaken to ensure pay equity across all staff. There has been a deliberate focus on strengthening our Finance and our Resolution Services teams, and we are seeing the benefits of this investment in our people and we will continue with this approach.

All of this helps to ensure that CTSI can be seen as a good employer and one that truly values its staff. We are also proud to have successfully renewed our Investors in People accreditation at the end of 2024, further reinforcing this commitment.



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