



## **TRADING STANDARDS BUSINESS CHARTER**

**This charter explains the Trading Standards Services which are available to Flintshire businesses.**

The Trading Standards Service promotes fair, safe and honest trading practices in Flintshire. We have a statutory duty to enforce a wide range of trading laws and to provide help and advice to businesses and consumers.

We enforce legislation covering unsafe goods, product descriptions, short weight etc and have powers to ensure compliance with the law. We are able to advise you and your business on all aspects of legislation enforced by Trading Standards e.g. Unfair Commercial Practices, the Consumer Credit Act, the Business Names Act and the Food Safety Act.

### **WHO CAN GET HELP?**

- Traders with a base in Flintshire
- Any person who has purchased goods or services in Flintshire
- Residents of Flintshire

### **HOW CAN YOU CONTACT US?**

- If you require advice concerning any aspect of your business that Trading Standards may be able to help you with or advice concerning a complaint from a customer of your business please contact us, either by:
- Telephone - 01352 703181
- Fax – 01352 703192
- Or via our contact page on the Flintshire Website – [www.flintshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.flintshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards)
- Our office is open 8.30am to 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday. An answer phone operates whenever we are closed or dealing with other clients. Simply leave a message and we will ring you back within two working days.

**Please remember this line is very busy and you may not get through straight away.**

- You can of course make a personal visit to our offices between 9.00 a.m. - 4.30 p.m. If possible telephone this office on 01352 703181 before making the journey to ensure that an appropriate officer is available.
- Write to us at Trading Standards Service, County Hall, Mold. CH7 6NF. We will acknowledge your letter within two working days and aim to give you advice within five working days.

## **OUR SERVICE**

### **Enforcement and Investigation**

- We check shops, garages, wholesalers, factories, pubs and markets to ensure compliance with the law. These checks also create a fair trading environment which helps protect honest traders from unfair competition.
- We are constantly on the look out for dangerous products and also work to expose fraud and deception against consumers.
- We investigate complaints about unfair and illegal trading practice.
- We enforce laws banning the sale of cigarettes and other products to underage persons.

### **Advice and Education**

- We offer free initial advice and guidance to help business comply with the law.
- We provide a “Home Authority” service for Flintshire based businesses that operate outside of Flintshire, regionally, nationally or even internationally.
- We provide free advice to help consumers solve problems with faulty goods or poor quality service.
- We attempt to resolve disputes by mediation between consumers and businesses.
- We promote consumer education in schools and community groups

### **Other duties**

- We carry out checks at animal markets and farms to ensure compliance with animal health and welfare legislation.
- We weigh goods vehicles to ensure they are not overloaded.
- We licence the safe storage of dangerous products such as petroleum spirit, explosives and poisons.

## **YOU CAN**

- Ask for an explanation of our actions or our advice.
- If you remain dissatisfied with our service, you can complain to a more senior officer and/or use our corporate complaint service

## **OUR STANDARDS**

### **Courtesy and Helpfulness**

We will be courteous and helpful at all times. We will identify ourselves by name in all correspondence, on the telephone and when we meet you.

## **Prompt Response**

Our target times for responding to consumer complaints and requests for services are:-

- Matters affecting the health or safety of the public – 1 working day
- Requests for advice and information (from businesses and members of the public) – 2 working days.
- Other requests for service and complaints about trading practices – 5 working days.

## **Privacy**

Information you provide to us will be treated in confidence. It will only be given out with your agreement or when legally necessary.

## **Appointments**

Appointments will be kept at the time agreed. If we are forced to cancel we will make a new appointment to suit you.

## **Inspections**

We usually visit trade premises unannounced. When we carry out these inspections we will show identification and explain fully what we intend to do.

## **YOUR VIEWS**

Flintshire Trading Standards is committed to providing the highest quality services and we are constantly striving to improve our performance.

We encourage your comments, good or bad about the service you have received and welcome any suggestions you may have for improvements. If you wish you may use the space below to make your suggestions.

## **YOUR COMPLAINTS**

If you are not satisfied with the service you have received from us and wish to complain, here are the steps you can take:

- Step 1 -** Contact the Trading Standards service or the Customer Services Team. Your complaint will be recorded on a central database and if it is not possible to resolve the matter immediately it will be acknowledged with 5 working days.
- Step 2 -** If you are not satisfied with the response you receive from the service, contact the Customer Services Team who will ensure that your complaint is considered by a senior officer within the service or the Corporate Complaints Officer.

**Ombudsman**

If you feel that the Council has failed to address or resolve your complaint to your satisfaction you can contact the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

**OTHER HELP**

If you prefer, you can complain to your local councillor, MP, or the Local Government Ombudsman. We will be pleased to provide you with contact details if you need them.

This information is also available at your local library.

**Officer Welfare**

*Any threatening or abusive behaviour towards an officer is always treated seriously and will result in the advice/ visit being ended. The incident may also be reported to the Police.*

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**COMMENTS**

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