

Meeting of:	Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, 26 March 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	Shared Regulatory Services Overview and Update Report
Purpose of Report:	This report provides an update on the work undertaken by the Shared Regulatory Service (SRS)
Report Owner:	Director of Environment and Housing
Responsible Officer:	Head of Shared Regulatory Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	No Elected Members have been consulted. The following officers have been consulted; Assistant Director Street Scene, Cardiff Council, Chief Officer Legal, Regulatory and Human Resources, Bridgend County Borough Council
Policy Framework:	This is a matter delegated to the Joint Committee
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report appraises the Joint Committee of the work of the service and progress toward completing the actions contained in the SRS Business Plans.

Recommendation

1. The Joint Committee is asked to consider, note, and agree the contents of this report.

Reason for Recommendation

1. The report appraises the Committee of the work of the service and the progress toward completing the actions contained in the SRS Business Plans.

1. Background

- 1.1** SRS Business Plans are developed in consultation with stakeholders; they inform and direct the work of the service and contribute toward the corporate priorities of each partner Council. The service has five key aims, namely:

- Improving Health and Wellbeing
- Safeguarding the Vulnerable
- Protecting the Environment
- Supporting the Local Economy
- Maximising the use of resources.

This report contains information outlining how the service is working to achieve better outcomes for residents and businesses within the region through a series of different actions and work programmes. The report provides an overview of activities undertaken in the period December 2024 to February 2025 as well as Q3 performance.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

Human Resources

- 2.1** The sickness absence level for the Service at the end of Quarter 3 2024-25 was 5.75 days per FTE person overall.

As shown in the table below, this is higher than at the same time in the previous financial year (i.e., Q3 of 2023-24), when the overall absence level was 3.99 days per FTE. However, closer examination reveals that while the long-term absence rate was elevated compared with the previous year, there was a marked 35% improvement in the short-term absence rate to 1.38 days per FTE.

Moreover, the short-term, long-term and overall sickness absence levels for Q3 are in line with the rates seen historically within the service.

	Short Term Days Lost per FTE	Long Term Days Lost per FTE	Total Days lost Per FTE
Q3 2024-25	1.38	4.36	5.75
Q3 2023-24	2.13	1.86	3.99
Q3 2022-23	2.17	6.29	8.47
Q3 2021-22	1.38	5.39	6.77
Q3 2020-21	1.34	4.02	5.35
Q3 2019-20	1.92	4.64	6.56

2.2 At its extraordinary meeting in February 2024, the Joint Committee agreed the SRS budget for 2025-26. Representing a standstill budget compared with 2024-25, the Service will effectively self-fund the anticipated 3% pay award, resulting in savings amounting to £245k.

2.3 Work has been underway since that meeting to map out exactly how the saving will be achieved. In addition to the vacant post mentioned at the February meeting, a resignation and a retirement are pending in the coming weeks, meaning that a total of three vacant posts can be deleted. The other main element of this year's saving will be found through exploitation of additional income generation. Finally, supplies and services budgets will be reviewed and trimmed where possible.

2.4 The agreed 2025-26 budget settlement also included a reduction in one aspect of Bridgend County Borough Council's authority specific funding, however, this will have no effect on the funding of posts.

2.5 In May, Shared Regulatory Services will mark the 10th anniversary of its launch. Throughout that time, it has continued to fulfil the three aims on which it was founded, namely

- Building resilience in Public Protection services
- Retaining specialisms, and
- Realising cost savings

2.6 As the Service reaches this milestone, it is good to reflect on how it has adapted to meet the significant challenges that have presented along the way, not least navigating EU Exit, the COVID 19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

Financial Position Quarter 3

2.7 Full financial monitoring for the period 1st April to 31st December 2024 is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Performance Monitoring

2.8 Joint Committee members are provided with data on activity levels to help reassure local members at each council that SRS activity continues to tackle issues across the region. Performance data for quarter 3 of 2024-25 is set out at **Appendix 2** and reported to each Council in line with their performance management regimes and existing service plans. Officers will provide more details on the Q3 performance at the Joint Committee meeting.

2.9 The Service updates below provide more detail and context for the Joint Committee on some of the key areas of work during the quarter.

Food Standards Agency Audit

2.10 The Food Standards Agency audit of the Service took place in the week commencing 3rd February. Its purpose was to assess service planning and delivery interventions following the end of the FSA COVID 19 Recovery Plan. Over the course of the two days, auditors looked in detail at the Food Hygiene, Food Standards and Port Health functions by reviewing premises files, officer authorisations, officer training records, prosecutions and other enforcement interventions, complaints and service requests.

2.11 Members will be advised of the audit outcomes once the final audit report is received.

Health and Safety Management in independent warehouses

2.12 Analysis of accident data produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has identified storage and distribution warehouse premises, and a number of the work activities undertaken by this sector, as a priority for investigation.

2.13 Earlier work carried out by SRS in 2023-24 identified that independent duty holders in micro and SME businesses performed poorly in respect of health and safety at work, when compared to national companies with multiple outlets. The recent survey work therefore focused on independent storage and distribution warehouses with a single premises in the SRS region.

2.14 In May 2024, a total of 30 warehousing businesses were selected, 10 from each local authority area. Each was sent a letter advising that the survey would be taking place, the reason for the intervention, and the paperwork that officers would require when visiting their premises. Over the course of the summer, all 30 premises were visited and 27 found to be in scope for the survey.

2.15 While the survey findings were broadly encouraging, 7 Improvement Notices under section 21 of the Health and Safety at Work Act had to be issued. The failure of one business to comply with 3 of these improvement notices was subject to further investigation.

2.16 Based on the recent findings, the survey report which is included as **Appendix 3** concludes by recommending future interventions target the following themes in independently run warehouse storage facilities:

- Mezzanine safety focusing on edge protection and safe working loads
- Racking safety – installation, inspection and provision of safety features

- Safe systems of work associated with pallet collapse
- Maintenance of electrical systems to prevent danger
- Duty to manage asbestos.

Special Procedures

2.17 Joint Committee members will be aware that from 29 November 2024, new licensing rules are in place for the following special procedures in Wales:

- acupuncture (including dry needling)
- body piercing (including ear piercing)
- electrolysis
- tattooing (including semi-permanent makeup and microblading)

2.18 A person who performs any of the 4 designated special procedures, must apply for a special procedure licence. This applies to all individuals who were previously registered to perform such procedures and all new applicants. The purpose of the licensing scheme is to

- improve hygiene and safety standards
- ensure such standards are consistent across Wales
- help protect the health of clients
- support them to choose licensed individuals operating from approved premises and vehicles

2.19 The licensing scheme allows for a period of transition when coming into force. This allows practitioners and businesses who were previously registered under the old registration scheme to continue to practise in the short term.

2.20 Individuals were required to submit their application form under the new scheme by 28 February 2025. As a result of this prescribed deadline, teams are incredibly busy processing applications and undertaking the necessary checks to ensure compliance and correct standards of infection prevention and control. Officers continue to engage in regular discussion on this matter through the Health and Safety Expert Panel to ensure consistency of regulation throughout Wales.

2.21 Across the SRS region, we have received **167 personal applications, of which 10 have been granted to date**. In respect of premises approvals, **we have had 88 applications with 8 having been granted to date**. Licensing teams have faced a high demand from the sector, with some applications having been deemed invalid due to errors in their submission. Officers continue to provide support and assistance to applicants as resources allow.

Building Safety

2.22 The latest position with the Building Safety (Wales) Bill is that it is likely to go to the Senedd before the summer recess. Implementation planning is underway, looking at how the Bill will affect those involved and a smaller group of stakeholders is being consulted by Welsh Government to review initial cost benefit models on the industry and regulatory impacts. It is difficult to predict an

implementation date at this stage, but it is not expected until a year from Royal Assent, which would be 2027 at the earliest. It is also possible that there may be a phased implementation which will account for category of high rise and the associated risk.

- 2.23** In relation to the Joint Inspection Team (JIT), they have begun their inspection programme with several reports having been produced. The first tranche of buildings inspected has been in Cardiff, Swansea and Wrexham and has cut across the public and private sector. Officers have recently met with the JIT to discuss their inspection programme for 2025, which within the SRS region, is likely to include a number of building types including local authority owned, private sector rented and student accommodation.
- 2.24** Plans are currently being finalised and officers are also scheduled to meet with Welsh Government to discuss the potential for additional resource to assist the JIT in those local authorities where their work is concentrated. In parallel with the inspection programme, an evaluation of the Joint Inspection Team (JIT) is also taking place. Members will be updated on the progress in respect of both matters as work continues.

Air Quality

- 2.25** During the last year, SRS ensured that Bridgend, Cardiff, and the Vale of Glamorgan Councils met their statutory duties under Part 4 of the Environment Act 1995 by producing the 2024 Annual Progress Reports (APRs) detailing the results for the previous year's (2022) data for each area and reporting these to the respective Cabinets. Failure to produce these reports can lead to the receipt of a Welsh Government direction under Section 85(3) of the Environment Act 1995.
- 2.26** In **Bridgend** the 2024 APR demonstrated that only two sites, both located within Park Street Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) still exceeded the air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide NO₂ as prescribed in the Air Quality (Wales) Regulations 2000 and the Air Quality (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2002. All other locations within Bridgend County Borough continued to meet all other relevant air quality objectives. The recorded NO₂ concentrations at these locations in 2023 were 43.3 µg/m³ and 42.9 µg/m³. This represented a reduction in NO₂ concentrations of 12% and 17% at these locations since 2019.
- 2.27** The 2024 APR also provided an update to Cabinet members on the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for the AQMA on Park Street. which was approved by Cabinet in April 2024. As detailed at the time of approval of the AQAP, Cabinet agreed to retain measures in the plan, to allow an assessment as to whether there is sufficient downward trend of NO₂ levels on Park Street as compliance has been modelled to be achieved by 2026. If exceedances show upward trends or other concerns identified, then an assessment on the necessity to consider implementation of the retained measures in AQAP will be undertaken in 2025-26.
- 2.28** In **Cardiff**, the 2024 APR demonstrated that out of the 135 non automatic monitoring locations across the entire City, no monitoring sites recorded exceedances of the annual average objective set for NO₂ of 40 µg/m³.

- 2.29** The APR provided an overview of the concentrations within each of the 4 AQMAs in Cardiff. Monitoring in the AQMAs demonstrated that compliance was being achieved in each of them. Concentrations of NO₂ at one location within the Llandaff AQMA have been found to be close to the annual mean NO₂ Air Quality Standard (40µg/m³) in recent years. However, NO₂ concentrations at this location in 2023 have improved when compared to 2022 and are currently within 10% of the annual mean NO₂. When examining average NO₂ concentrations at non-automatic diffusion tube sites across Cardiff, pollutant concentrations across Cardiff are now lower than those experienced during the pandemic.
- 2.30** The APR also gave a further update on the ongoing work on Castle Street in relation to the Welsh Government Air Quality Direction. The report confirmed that approval of the Final Plan and preferred option for Castle Street had been provided by the Deputy First Minister on 4th November 2024.
- 2.31** In the **Vale of Glamorgan**, the 2024 APR demonstrated that there were 53 specifically allocated non-automatic monitoring sites across the Vale of Glamorgan which monitored levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). From the 53 locations monitored throughout the Vale with the use of passive diffusion tubes, no sites breached the national NO₂ annual objective of 40 µg/m³ or the NO₂ 1-hour objective (200 µg/m³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times per year). Overall, the Vale of Glamorgan has seen a downward trend in NO₂ levels since before the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.32** The report also provided an update on a successful application to the Local Air Quality Management support fund from Welsh Government, for funding to upgrade and enhance the current real time air quality monitoring capabilities within the Vale. As a result of this, three new monitors were installed in Barry, Dinas Powys and Cowbridge in Q3, the locations being decided using a risk-based approach in line with relevant technical guidance.

Responsible Dog Ownership

- 2.33** SRS has been working with South Wales Police (SWP) on a pilot initiative to encourage education around responsible dog ownership to reduce the impact of anti-social dog issues and the number of dog-related incidents on local communities. The **Local Environment Awareness on Dogs (LEAD)** initiative for SWP has been piloted, in the Mid Glamorgan area which has included Bridgend. The LEAD initiative is deemed as 'best practice' from Defra in their guidelines on dealing with anti-social behaviour and low-level dog related incidents. The scheme provides a proactive, long-term approach and solution to address irresponsible behaviour from dog owners. The project focuses on early interventions to prevent anti-social behaviour with dogs, which can have significant impacts on communities.
- 2.34** SWP lead the initiative and our Animal Wardens have supported them by conducting joint visits with SWP officers. The initiative allows the use of informal, non-statutory methods to deal with dog-related complaints before resorting to anti-social behaviour powers. These measures include warning letters, meetings, and acceptable behaviour contracts with dog owners.

2.35 The initial pilot scheme has been deemed a success by SWP and they are now looking to roll this out more widely across the SWP area, including Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, hopefully sometime in March 2025. SRS will continue to support the LEAD initiative and work in partnership with SWP on the roll out across the SRS region.

Trading Standards Impacts and Outcomes

2.36 Members will be familiar with the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) *Impacts and Outcomes* framework which is published annually as a means of demonstrating the vital contribution of Trading Standards Services in England and Wales.

- Tackling Detriment and Preventing Harm
- Supporting the Local Economy, and
- Promoting Health and Wellbeing

The framework reports annually on the *combined* effect of Trading Standards Services across a range of key outputs, and the most recent report, on England and Wales activity in 2023-24 was brought to the December meeting of the Joint Committee.

2.37 Since the last meeting, a stand-alone Impacts and Outcomes report has been released, detailing the work of local authorities in Wales during the 2023-24 financial year. The latest report shows that over £38 million of detriment was prevented by Trading Standards actions during the year – the equivalent of £12.13 saved for every £1 spent. The Wales-only report for 2023-24 is included for information in **Appendix 4**, along with the summary infographic for Wales.

2.38 The Wales report also features a number case studies based on the work of SRS, and its influence is apparent in the statistics presented throughout the report. It is particularly pleasing to see the significant contribution of Shared Regulatory Services to Trading Standards outcomes in Wales. For example, across Wales in 2023-24, some **46 years** of prison sentences (or suspended prison sentences) were handed down as a result of concluded prosecutions in Trading Standards cases. In the same period, the equivalent figure arising from SRS Trading Standards cases was **14 years** of prison sentences, or **30%** of the total across Wales.

Enforcement Activity

2.39 Details of recent cases investigated by the SRS that have resulted in prosecution are set out in **Appendix 5** to this report.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

3.1 The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires the SRS to underpin decision making by contributing to the seven well-being goals of the Act, following the five ways of working, and consequently undertaking actions that will have a positive

impact on people living in the future as well as those living today. Consequently, SRS seeks to work in the following ways:

- Looking to the long term
- Taking an integrated approach;
- Involving a diversity of the population in the decisions affecting them;
- Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions
- Acting to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse.

3.2 The fundamental purpose of the SRS (here defined as trading standards, environmental health and licensing) is to protect residents, consumers, businesses and communities. The broad range of responsibilities can make it difficult to demonstrate succinctly their impact and value in terms of the wellbeing; the SRS Business Plans provide members with detail and articulate how those statutory responsibilities, and subsequent activities, contribute toward wellbeing across the region. This update report reflects some of the activities undertaken in recent months to promote the sustainable development principle.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** One of the key strategic themes for the Shared Regulatory Service is *Protecting the Local Environment*.
- 4.2** The SRS Business Plan articulates the work carried out under this theme to deliver on the corporate priorities for the participant Councils, including their ambitions to minimise climate change and impacts on the natural environment.
- 4.3** In this context, the Joint Committee is regularly updated on the contribution of the Shared Service to this agenda, for example through its work in the areas of animal health and welfare, air quality, contaminated land, energy efficiency in the private rented sector and investigating greenwashing claims or environmental fraud.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** The Participants' contribution towards the Shared Regulatory Service is recharged on a quarterly basis, based upon the approved budgets for 2024/25. Accounting for the full year is reported to the Committee at the Annual General Meeting.

Employment

- 5.2** There are no immediate employment implications associated with this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.3 There are no immediate legal implications associated with this report.

6. Background Papers

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Q3 2024-25 Financial monitoring
- Appendix 2 SRS Performance measures – Q3 2024-25
- Appendix 3 SRS survey report on health and safety in storage warehouses
- Appendix 4 Trading Standards Impacts and Outcomes report / infographic for Wales
- Appendix 5 Details of SRS prosecutions

Meeting of:	Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, 26 March 2025
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Homes and Safe Communities
Report Title:	Q3 2024/25 Shared Regulatory Services Revenue Monitoring Report
Purpose of Report:	To Provide the Partner Authorities with the Financial Performance of Shared Regulatory Services
Report Owner:	Matt Bowmer - Head of Service/s151 Officer
Responsible Officer:	Miles Punter – Director of Environment & Housing Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Head of Service for Shared Regulatory Services
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Shared Regulatory Services

Executive Summary:

- The £8.813m 2024/25 Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Budget was agreed by Committee on the 31st January 2024. The net budget increase of £168k included an assumed 4% pay award.
- As at Q3, the SRS is forecasting overall overspend of £166k. This position includes an historical Cardiff Authority specific budget shortfall of circa £200k relating to Taxi Licensing. The forecast outturn position is illustrated in the following tables.

Authority	Gross Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	1,917	1,875	42
Cardiff	5,152	5,361	(209)
Vale	1,744	1,743	1
Total Gross Expenditure	8,813	8,979	(166)

Authority/Category	(Over)/Under spend		
	Core	Authority Specific	Total
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	(12)	54	42
Cardiff	(26)	(183)	(209)
Vale	(6)	7	1
Total (Over)/Underspend	(44)	(122)	(166)

Recommendation

1. That the position with regard to the 2024/25 forecast outturn position is noted.

Reason for Recommendation

1. That the members are aware of the position with regard to the 2024/25 forecast outturn position pertinent to the Board and relevant Scrutiny Committee.

1. Background

- 1.1 The 2024/25 Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Gross Revenue Budget was approved on 31st January 2024.
- 1.2 Currently, the Service has one member of staff on secondment on a 0.5 FTE basis. The associated salary costs are being recovered from Public Health Wales.
- 1.3 The revenue position for 2024/25 continues to be challenging for the SRS both operationally and financially due to the ongoing implications of the cost of living crisis where prices are continuing to rise in excess of available funds. The SRS has continued to see additional pressure across the Service in the form of the annual pay award.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The Gross Revenue Budget and forecast outturn position for 2024/25 are shown in the tables below, with the position in respect of each of the partners detailed to include both Authority Specific (overspend £122k) and Core expenditure positions (overspend £44k). The service is forecasting a £166k overspend against a gross revenue budget of £8.813m, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 1.

Authority	Gross Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	1,917	1,875	42
Cardiff	5,152	5,361	(209)
Vale	1,744	1,743	1
Total Gross Expenditure	8,813	8,979	(166)

- 2.2 Over the last few quarters, the ability of the Service to recruit into key roles has improved and retention levels have been more encouraging than in recent years. Given the difficult recruitment landscape for regulatory services across the country however, there is no room for complacency. The 'growing our own' approach is now firmly embedded with staff being developed both in their roles and in the

gaining of professional qualifications, enabling them to progress within the Service as future vacancies arise.

- 2.3 A full breakdown of the outturn position is shown in Annex 1.
- 2.4 In the context of the projected overspend the service will take a number of steps to help mitigate the overspend position during 2024/25. This includes roll out of a digital solution for inspection work (hand-held devices), and a ramping up of capacity for income generation. In addition, there is a concerted corporate focus within the host authority on debt recovery.

Authority Specific Services

- 2.5 The approved gross budget of £2.691m in respect of Authority Specific (AS) Services has a forecasted overspend of £122k as detailed in the following table:

Table 2

Authority	Gross Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	463	409	54
Cardiff	1,663	1,846	(183)
Vale	565	558	7
Total AS Services	2,691	2,813	(122)

Bridgend

- 2.6 The £54k forecast underspend at Bridgend, relates directly to a £39k underspend within The Bridgend Licensing Team, additionally a £14k underspend within Stray Dog Kennelling and Vets is currently being forecast which is very much consistent to activity levels experienced in previous years.

Cardiff

- 2.7 The £183k overspend at Cardiff predominantly relates to the £173k overspend within the Licensing Section which is consistent with performance in previous years. The previously reported £35k overspend within the port health service area was due to an accounting error in which the Vale’s share of the Cardiff port health costs were incorrectly recognised as an SRS expense, this is the reason for the substantial decrease in the forecasted overspend for Cardiff authority specific services. The Cathays and Plasnewydd HMO service areas are forecasting small overspends of £6k and £4k respectively. The remaining services areas are all forecasted on budget for the year.

Vale

- 2.8 Overall, the Vale has an aggregate £7k underspend.
- 2.9 Taxi Licensing, Burials and pest control are all close to reporting an on-budget position with a total overspend of £6k.
- 2.10 Stray dog Kennelling and Vets are forecasting a £13k underspend, which is consistent with performance in previous years.

Core Services

- 2.11 The approved Core Services Budget for 2024/25 is £6.122m, which as at quarter 3 is forecasting an overspend of £44k. The Core Service's budget is allocated in line with the information included in the Revenue support grant published by Welsh Government, across the participating authorities. As illustrated in the following table:

Table 3

Authority	Shares	Gross Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance
	%	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	23.75	1,454	1,466	(12)
Cardiff	57.00	3,489	3,515	(26)
Vale	19.25	1,179	1,185	(6)
Total Core		6,122	6,166	(44)

- 2.12 The £13k forecasted overspend within Animal Services is driven by an increase in vet and kennelling costs resulting from dog seizures.
- 2.13 Environmental Services is reporting an overspend of £32k, which is made up of smaller variances forecasted within this heading.
- 2.13 The Food Services current forecasted position is a £65k overspend. This forecast is based on agency costs over the year to achieve as much of the Food programme as possible (there being a Food officer shortfall of 6.5 FTE on the SRS establishment).
- 2.14 Housing Services forecasted position is an overspend of £66k. The overspend is attributable to additional salary expenditure which is the result of the impact of additional staffing needed to meet service area demands.
- 2.15 The Health & Safety and Communicable Disease budget heading comprises three cost centres spread across two SRS teams. A forecasted £35k overspend is reported at year end, this being driven by a temporary increase in staff costs and the provision of business support within certain elements of the service.
- 2.16 Pollution Services are currently forecasting a £98k underspend.
- 2.17 The 'Trading Standards' budget comprises a few cost centres spread across three different SRS teams and also includes an element of the Food service (separate to that outlined in 2.13 above). This service sector is currently forecasting an underspend of £69k.

Reserves

- 2.18 The Shared Regulatory Service have built up some reserves which can be utilised to fund planned investment in service expenditure but also emerging pressures within the service.
- 2.19 Usable reserves balance shown below is expected to change as a result of an amendment to the 2023/24 usable reserves following the completion of the audit

however this amount will need to be ringfenced for awareness campaign associated with the Offensive Weapons Act 2019.

2.20 Table 4.

Reserve	Opening Balance 01/04/24	Drawdown in the year	Transfer from Reserves	Transfer to Reserves	Forecast Balance 31/03/25
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
SRS General Fund Reserve	427	0	0	0	427
POCA Reserve	23	0	0	0	23
Total Usable Reserves	450	0	0	0	450

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1 The revenue budget has been set in order to support services in the delivery of the SRS Well-being objectives. It is therefore important for expenditure to be monitored to ensure that these objectives are being delivered.
- 3.2 The revenue budget has been set and is monitored to reflect the 5 ways of working.
- 3.3 **Looking to the long term** – The setting of the revenue budget requires planning for the future and takes a strategic approach to ensure services are sustainable and that future need and demand for services are understood.
- 3.4 **Taking an integrated approach** – The revenue budgets include services which work closely with other organisations to deliver services such as Cardiff & Vale e.g. Health Boards via Health Protection Support Officers (HPO's).
- 3.5 **Involving partners in decisions** – As part of the revenue budget setting process there is open engagement between the SRS partners.
- 3.6 **Working in a collaborative way** – The SRS was created as a collaborative service in 2015, with the split of funding split in line with the population data which is updated on an annual basis.
- 3.7 **Understanding the root cause of issues and preventing them** – Monitoring the revenue budget is a proactive way of understanding the financial position of services in order to tackle issues at source and as soon as they become apparent.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1 The SRS Annual Business Plan illustrates how the Service is working towards reducing the carbon footprint of the service with consideration also given to

nature implications, such as investigating noise and air emissions through environmental monitoring, including regulating emissions from industrial processes.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

5.1 As detailed in the body of the report.

Employment

5.2 There are no employment implications

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.3 There are no legal implications.

6. Background Papers

None

Forecasted expenditure breakdown to 31st March 2025

Annex 1

	Bridgend			Cardiff			Vale			Total		
	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance
Authority Specific												
Bridgend Licensing	389	350	39							389	350	39
Bridgend Empty Homes	42	41	1							42	41	1
Vets & Kennelling Fees (Bridgend)	32	18	14							32	18	14
Cardiff Licensing				832	1,005	(173)				832	1,005	(173)
HMO Cathays				222	228	(6)				222	228	(6)
HMO Plasnewydd				309	313	(4)				309	313	(4)
Student Liason				71	71	0				71	71	0
Night Time Noise				68	68	0				68	68	0
Cardiff Port Health				161	161	0				161	161	0
Vale Licensing							426	429	(3)	426	429	(3)
Burials							1	10	(9)	1	10	(9)
Pest Control							118	112	6	118	112	6
Vets & Kennelling Fees (Vale)							20	7	13	20	7	13
Sub total	463	409	54	1,663	1,846	(183)	565	558	7	2,691	2,813	(122)
Core Services												
Animal Services	103	106	(3)	247	255	(8)	84	86	(2)	434	447	(13)
Environmental	55	63	(8)	133	151	(18)	45	51	(6)	233	265	(32)
Food Services	385	401	(16)	925	961	(36)	312	325	(13)	1,622	1,687	(65)
Housing Services	135	150	(15)	323	361	(38)	109	122	(13)	567	633	(66)
HS & CD	138	146	(8)	331	351	(20)	112	119	(7)	581	616	(35)
Pollution Services	226	204	22	542	488	54	183	161	22	951	853	98
Trading Stds	412	396	16	988	948	40	334	321	13	1,734	1,665	69
Sub total	1,454	1,466	(12)	3,489	3,515	(26)	1,179	1,185	(6)	6,122	6,166	(44)
Gross Expenditure Budget	1,917	1,875	42	5,152	5,361	(209)	1,744	1,743	1	8,813	8,979	(166)

Shared Regulatory Services

Quarterly Performance Report 2024-25

Quarter 3



Gwasanaethau
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High Risk Food Hygiene Inspections

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	38	51	74.51%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	114	163	69.94%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	47	65	72.31%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	199	279	71.33%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%

High Risk Food Hygiene Inspections

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	228	318	71.70%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection. One inspection remained outstanding at the end of Qtr 3 due to officer being refused entry.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	572	737	77.61%	Amber	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 with the exception of 2 inspections were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection. One of these outstanding inspections was as a result of officers being unable to gain access and determine hours of operation but this was completed early January. The remaining inspection is scheduled for completion later in January.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	216	302	71.52%	Amber	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 with the exception of one inspection were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection. This remaining inspection is scheduled for completion later in January.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	1016	1357	74.87%	Amber	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 with the exception of 3 inspections were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection. The outstanding inspections were either completed in early January or scheduled for completion later in January.	90%

New Businesses—Food Hygiene

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 3	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	156	169	92.31%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 3 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 3	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	405	449	90.20%	Green	Target exceeded. Results for Qtr 3 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 3	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	157	185	84.86%	Amber	Results for Qtr 3 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 3	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	718	803	89.41%	Amber	While results are fractionally off target, results for Qtr 3 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection.	90%

Broadly Compliant Food Premises

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	PAM/23	Qtr 3	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	1307	1339	97.61%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2024-25	Cardiff	PAM/23	Qtr 3	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	3172	3315	95.69%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	PAM/23	Qtr 3	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	1239	1272	97.41%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%
2024-25	SRS	PAM/23	Qtr 3	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	5718	5926	96.49%	Green	Target exceeded.	94%

High Risk Trading Standards Inspections

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	4	8	50.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	11	17	64.71%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	3	4	75.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 3	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	18	29	62.07%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 3 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%

New business—Trading Standards

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 3	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	195	232	84.05%	Green	Results for Qtr 3 show excellent progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection compared to the same period last year.	80%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 3	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	533	728	73.21%	Amber	Results for Qtr 3 show good progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection compared to the same period last year.	80%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 3	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	213	344	61.92%	Red	Results for Qtr 3 show some good progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection compared to the same period last year.	80%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 3	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	941	1304	72.16%	Red	Results for Qtr 3 show some good progress in ensuring that new business registration inspections received during the year have been completed, together with the remaining backlog of overdue inspections at new businesses that were operating and available for inspection compared to the same period last year.	80%

Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to within tar- get	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 3	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	96	103	93.20%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 3	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	339	354	95.76%	Green	Target exceeded	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 3	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	51	52	98.08%	Green	Target exceeded	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 3	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	486	509	95.48%	Green	Target exceeded,	90%

Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to within tar- get	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 3	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	26	42	61.90%	Red	The shortfall against target represents 6 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day. This was largely due to other work commitments and lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 3	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	97	138	70.29%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 7 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day. This was largely due to lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 3	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	26	38	68.42%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 3 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day. This was largely due to lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 3	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	149	218	68.35%	Red	The shortfall against target represents 16 complaints that failed to meet the target response time of one working day. This was largely due to lack of resources available which impacted the ability to respond within this challenging target time.	75%

Noise and Air Pollution

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. re- sponded to within tar- get	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 3	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	4	4	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 3	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	18	18	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 3	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	2	2	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 3	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	24	24	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 3	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	37	37	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 3	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	153	153	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 3	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	36	36	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 3	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	226	226	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 3	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	11	11	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 3	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	48	48	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 3	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	14	14	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 3	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	73	73	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. re- ceived	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 3	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 3	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	1	1	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 3	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 3	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	1	1	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

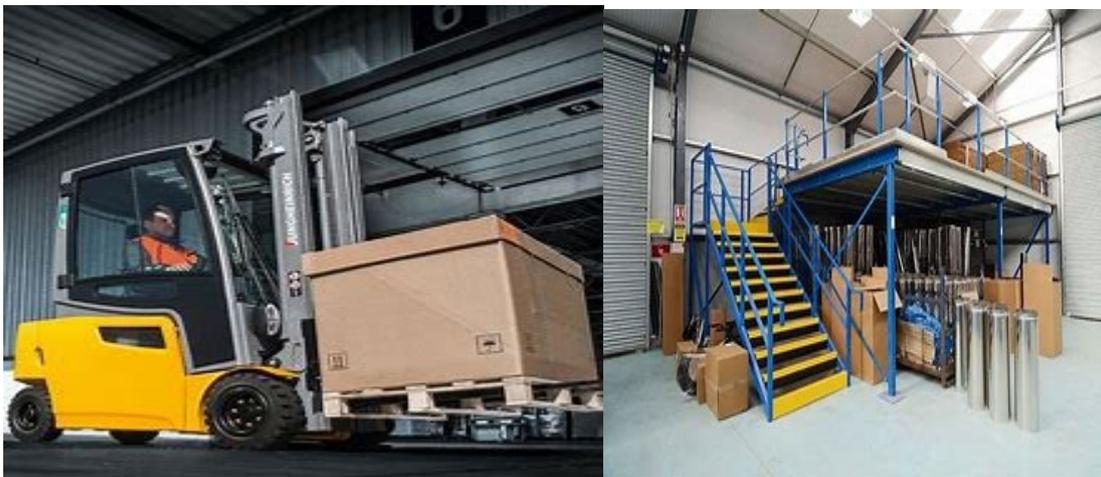
Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. that now have an EPC rated A-E	No of properties where engagement has taken place with landlord	Percentage achieved	Column2
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 3	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	24	50	48.00%	<p>Previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC in place has resulted in a further 17 EPCs being validated rated C to E.</p> <p>In addition 8 improved EPCs have been validated in respect of previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as having F and G ratings which are now rated B to E. This has resulted in an approximate total reduction in CO2 of 217.4 tonnes and 222568 kWh of energy across the 56 properties that responded to our engagement since 2023/24.</p> <p>Qtr 3 saw the commencement of enforcement activities in relation to non compliances with 15 Compliance notices being issued to landlords who had yet to comply. This has generated a number of improved EPCs.</p>
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 3	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	128	208	61.54%	<p>Engagement with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC in place during Qtr 3 has resulted in a further 76 EPCs being validated rated B to E.</p> <p>In addition a further 10 improved EPCs have been validated in respect of previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as having F and G ratings which are now rated B to E. This has resulted in an approximate total reduction in CO2 of 105.1 tonnes and 128071 kWh of energy across the 56 properties that responded to our engagement since 2023/24.</p> <p>Qtr 3 saw the commencement of enforcement activities in relation to non compliances with 16 Compliance notices being issued to landlords who had yet to comply. This has generated a number of improved EPCs.</p>
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 3	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	29	51	56.86%	<p>Previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC in place has resulted in a further 4 EPCs being validated rated B to E.</p> <p>In addition 8 improved EPCs have been validated in respect of previous engagement with landlords of properties identified as having F and G ratings which are now rated B to E. This has resulted in an approximate total reduction in CO2 of 134 tonnes and 132459 kWh of energy across the 52 properties that responded to our engagement since 2023/24.</p> <p>Qtr 3 saw the commencement of enforcement activities in relation to non compliances with 24 Compliance notices being issued to landlords who had yet to comply. This has generated a number of improved EPCs.</p>
2024-25	SRS	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 3	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	181	309	58.58%	<p>A further 208 landlords of properties that were identified as not having an EPC in place were engaged with during Qtr 3. This coupled with those previously engaged with has resulted in a further 97 EPCs being validated rated B to E since April.</p> <p>Furthermore 26 improved EPCs have been validated in respect of previous engagement at properties identified as having F and G ratings which are now rated B to E. This has resulted in an approximate total reduction in CO2 of 456.5 tonnes and 483098 kWh of energy across the 164 properties that responded to our engagement since 2023/24 across the SRS region.</p> <p>Qtr 3 saw the commencement of enforcement activities in relation to non compliances with 55 Compliance notices being issued to landlords who had yet to comply. This has generated a number of improved EPCs.</p>

Prosecutions

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. of prosecutions cases in court	No. concluded successfully	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Column1	Target
2024-25	Bridgend	SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 3	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	1	1	100.00%	Green	In this case a private hire operator knowingly recruited an unlicensed taxi driver to carry out airport pick up runs. The driver was stopped during a spot check by Police at Bristol Airport, and when the operator was questioned by SRS officers tried to blame others for the offences claiming that he had been told that it was acceptable. It became clear at interview that the operator was more concerned about how smart and presentable the driver was rather than whether they were licensed and subject to DBS checks. The operator was fined £241 for each of the 2 offences and ordered to pay £250, together with a victim surcharge of £191.	100%
2024-25	Cardiff	SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 3	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	8	8	100.00%	Green	Eight cases were concluded in Cardiff during Qtr 3. These comprised of 2 housing cases, one animal welfare case, 2 rogue trader cases, 2 underage sales cases and one in relation to the sale of illegal vapes. One significant case saw a rogue trader charged with 13 offences for his criminal behaviour in grossly overcharging for work, exaggerating the severity of work required to victim's properties, advising for work to be done which was not required and undertaking work of a very poor standard. Victims were pressured and persuaded by the defendant, and his seemingly friendly nature meant that they trusted him and his advice. The victims are now however left with trust issues towards any tradespeople. It was clear that the defendant targeted vulnerable individuals to commit his fraud leaving them emotionally, physically and financial burdened. In sentencing the defendant was sentenced to an immediate custodial sentence of 5 years and 2 months, and an application for a Criminal Behaviour Order was granted for a period of 10 years. An application under the Proceeds of Crime Act was also introduced to investigate the trader's finances in the hope that recovered monies can be paid to compensate the victims.	100%
2024-25	Vale of Glam	SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 3	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	1	1	100.00%	Green	This case arose as a result of food hygiene failings identified during a number of inspections of a mobile catering vehicle operating in the Vale of Glamorgan. An initial visit by an environmental health officer resulted in a Remedial Action Notice in respect of food being stored in a broken fridge. However, during a follow up visit a string of other failings were identified. Despite extensive advice and support from the investigating officer the food business operator and its sole director showed a disregard for the safety of customers. The seriousness of the failings were reflected in a zero food hygiene rating. Subsequent visits both announced and unannounced revealed multiple food hygiene non-compliances continuing. The defendant entered guilty pleas for a total of 17 food hygiene charges resulting in the director being fined £334 and the company £50. The director was ordered to pay prosecution costs totalling £2283.75. A request for a Food Hygiene Prohibition Notice was declined by the Judge.	100%
2024-25	SRS	SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 3	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	10	10	100.00%	Green	Ten cases were concluded across the SRS region during Qtr 3. These comprised one animal welfare, one food hygiene, one licensing, 2 housing, and 5 trading standards cases relating to rogue traders, illegal vapes and underage sales. Details of some of these cases are outlined above.	100%

Safe Estates Intervention 2024/25 (Phase 2)



Assessment of health and safety management systems and on site controls in independent storage and distribution warehouses within the Shared Regulatory Services region: April 2024 to September 2024



Background & Evidence Base for Intervention

The annual health and safety service plan for Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) is directed by Local Authority Circular (LAC) 67/2, “Setting Local Authority Priorities and Targeting Interventions”, guidance that assists Local Authorities (LAs) target their finite resources with a clear focus on delivering specific outcomes. To facilitate a more consistent and proportionate approach to regulatory interventions, LAC 67/2 sets out Government expectations of a risk-based approach to targeting and sets out principles to enable LAs to comply with the requirements of the National Local Authority Enforcement Code. The document also incorporates an annual list of national planning priorities within its Annex A, as well as a list of specific work activities considered to be suitable for proactive inspection (Annex B).

Analysis of accident data produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) identified storage and distribution warehouse premises, and a number of the work activities undertaken by this sector, as suitable for proactive inspection.

This intervention was also informed by local intelligence gathered across the SRS region. This included data collected as part of a proactive, face-to-face intervention undertaken across this sector during the 2023–2024 work year (Phase 1), as well as data collated following the investigation of reactive complaints and accidents throughout Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Analysis of data determined that health and safety management systems, including the effectiveness of control measures being implemented, were noticeably poorer in micro and SME businesses that were independently operated in comparison to national companies with multiple outlets.

Based on this intelligence, the 2024–2025 (Phase 2) intervention focused on **‘independent operators with a single setting within the SRS locality’**.

The 2023–2024 report concluded that independent duty holders performed particularly poorly in the following areas:

- Health and safety management systems/employee training arrangements
- Compliance with the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- Safe storage of goods
- Safety of mezzanine storage areas
- Racking Safety – Installation, inspection and inclusion of safety features
- Electrical installation safety

Consequently, the key themes for the 2024-2025 (Phase 2) intervention were rationalised to focus on these priority areas.

As illustrated in the 2023-2024 report, this area of work was aligned with the strategic priorities of the Service, in particular improving the health and well-being of service users, and safeguarding more vulnerable citizens who would be exposed to risks associated with this category of workplace.



Key aims of the Intervention

- **To determine if independent duty holders operating storage and distribution warehouses across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan were operating in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and Regulations made thereunder.**
- **To determine if independent duty holders operating storage and distribution warehouses across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan were operating in compliance with Approved Codes of Practices and published sector guidance.**
- **To determine if independent duty holders operating storage and distribution warehouses across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan were operating in compliance with their own internal health and safety management systems.**
- **To educate duty holders operating storage and distribution warehouses across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan on legal matters pertaining to their undertakings.**
- **To identify other matters of evident concern.**

Relevant Legislation

Legislation relevant to the management of storage and distribution warehouses, and assessed as part of these intervention visits, included:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, *as amended*
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Working at Height Regulations 2005
- The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- The Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996

Preparation and Scope of Phase 2

All premises identified for inclusion in the intervention fell within scope of the Health and Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1998, Schedule 1, with the main activity being enforced by the Local Authority for health and safety matters.

The premises to be targeted were warehouse facilities which offered storage and distribution services and were operated by independent duty holders.

To maximise 'added value' for each visit, officers were also required to identify Matters of Evident Concerns (MECs). Whilst there was a particular focus on electrical safety, any wider concerns identified by Officers were required to be dealt with.

An initial scoping exercise of the Tascomi database, internet searches and collation of local intelligence identified a primary inspection list of 30 suitable premises, with 10 businesses per Local Authority area.

A project work plan and visit proforma were developed to promote consistency amongst all Officers engaged with site visits. These proformas were amended following Phase 1 to reflect the re-focused priorities for the 2024-2025 intervention. All officers allocated project visits attended briefing sessions with the Project Lead prior to visits starting to discuss the intervention plan.

Businesses identified through the scoping exercise were sent a letter in May 2024 to advise that unannounced visits would be taking place, the reason for the intervention, and what documentation would be required by the inspecting Officer during the visit. Duty holders were also signposted to relevant links on the HSE website to support them prepare for Officer visits.

Significant Findings of Phase 2 Visits

A total of **30 warehouses** were visited as part of Phase 2. A number of business closures on both the primary and reserve lists impacted the distribution of visits across the SRS region, as illustrated in **figure 1**.

Of the 30 visits undertaken, **27 fell within scope of the Phase 2 intervention**, namely independent operators with a single setting within the SRS region. For the purposes of data analysis **only data collated from the 27 premises within the scope of the project definition were included in the analysis of significant findings**.

Where Officers identified changes to an undertaking which meant it was no longer within scope of the Phase 2 intervention (*e.g. SME bought out by a national company, business expansion to more than 1 venue*), visits did continue and findings were reported to the duty holders. However, data from these 3 premises was excluded from the analysis to avoid skewing the overall results.

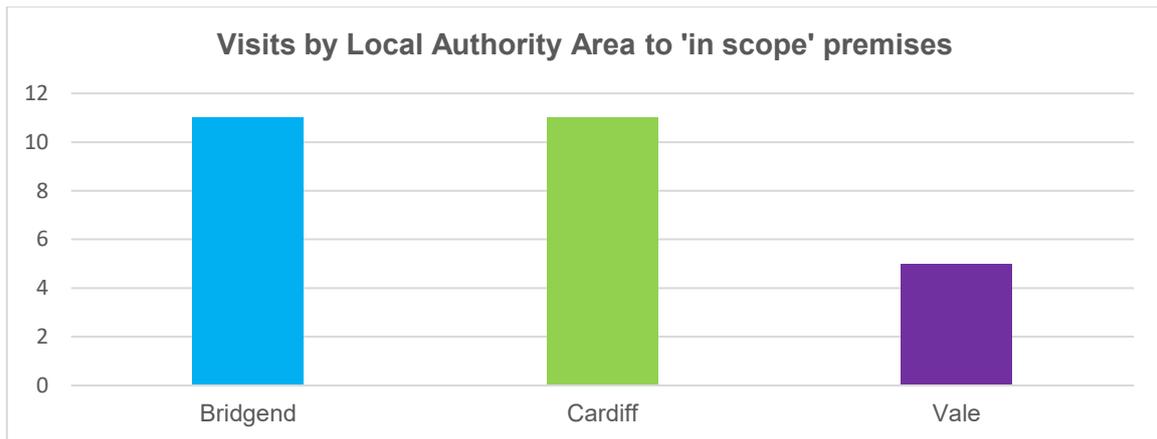


Figure 1

Management of Health and Safety

- **Health and Safety Policy**

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 requires an employer to have a policy in place which explains how they will manage health and safety in its business. Roles and responsibilities of key personnel should be clearly defined so that employees are aware who is tasked with specific health and safety functions within the organisation, whilst the health and safety arrangements should effectively communicate organisational operational procedures. Where an employer has five or more employees, the health and safety policy must be written down and effectively communicated to employees.

Of the 27 businesses visited, **3 (11%)** were not able to provide a documented health and safety policy at the time of the Officer's initial visit; all within the Cardiff area. **20 (74%)** premises were able to provide a documented health and safety policy that was considered to be adequate, **Bridgend (8), Cardiff (8) and Vale of Glamorgan (4)** - see **Figure 2** below.

Two (2) businesses, both within the Bridgend area, employed less than 5 employees so were not required to produce a written health and safety policy in law.

Two (2) businesses closed following the initial visit so Officers were unable to accurately verify what documented health and safety management systems were in place.

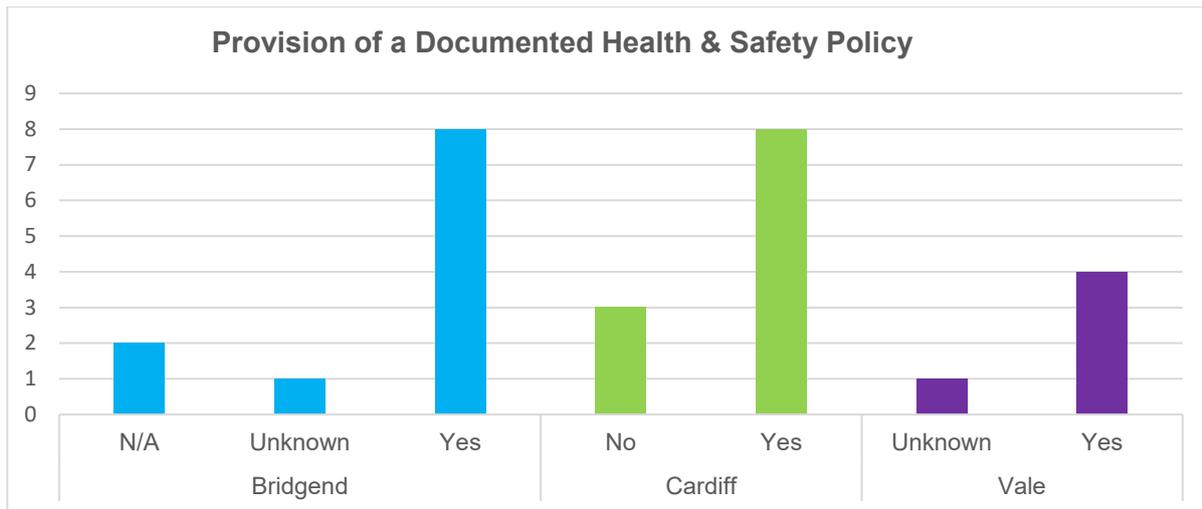


Figure 2

- **Risk Assessments**

Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at work Regulations 1999 requires every employer to undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of workplace activities to identify hazards and significant risks to employees and others. Where 5 or more people are employed, these assessments must be documented.



By following the hierarchy of controls principle (as illustrated in **Figure 3**), significant risks must either be removed, through elimination or substitution, or effectively mitigated through the implementation of suitable, and effective, control measures. All safe systems of work developed from risk assessment findings must be robustly implemented and routinely monitored to ensure they remain appropriate and effective.

Figure 3

Of the 27 businesses visited, **19 (70%)** premises - **Bridgend (8), Cardiff (8) and Vale of Glamorgan (3)** - were able to provide evidence of documented risk assessments during initial Officer visits that were considered to be suitable and sufficient. Of the remaining 8 premises, 2 were found to be closed during follow up visits, so Officers were unable to verify the existence and adequacy of risk assessments, whilst 4 businesses were not required to produce documented risk assessments since less than 5 persons were employed - **Bridgend (2), Cardiff (1) and Vale of Glamorgan (1)**.

The remaining **2 (7%)** premises in Cardiff had not produced documented risk assessments and were subject to formal action by Officers - see **Figure 4** below.

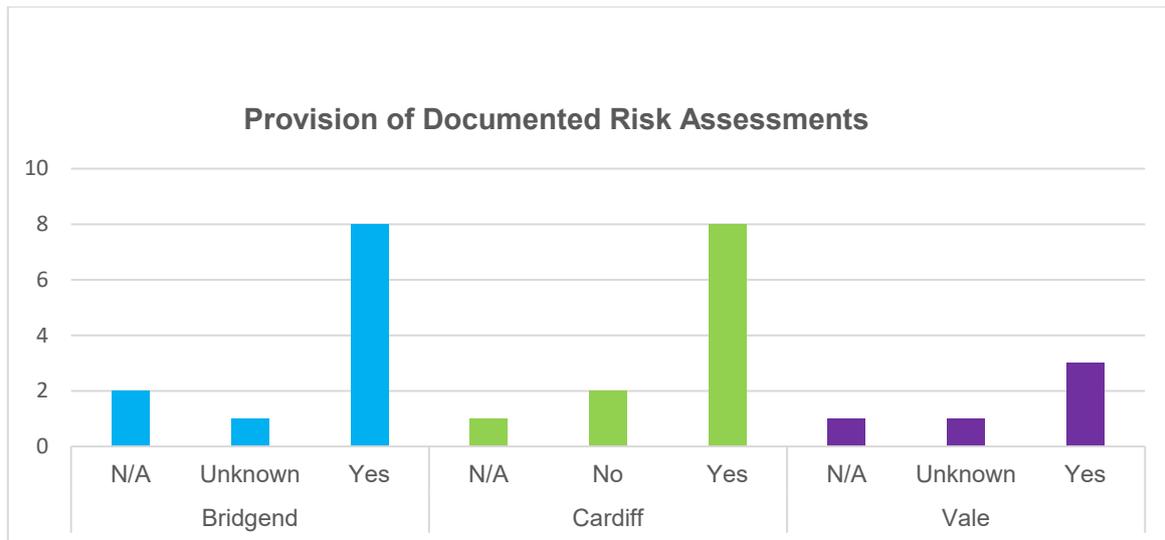


Figure 4

- **Staff Training**

Everyone at work needs to know how to work safely and without risk to their own health and safety, or that of others. When allocating work to employees, employers must ensure that demands of the job do not put employee health and safety at risk, or increase the risk of injury to others who may be impacted by that work activity. Employers should take account of employee capabilities based on their existing levels of training, knowledge, and experience; something of particular significance for new recruits or existing staff changing roles or assuming additional responsibilities. Equally, managers must be conversant with relevant legislation and be competent to undertake their delegated health and safety responsibilities effectively. All employee competencies should be subject to regular review, with additional and refresher training provided as necessary.

At the time of the initial visits to the 27 businesses, **22 (81%)** of duty holders - **Bridgend (8), Cardiff (10) and Vale of Glamorgan (4)** - had provided staff with adequate training on the main topic areas included in this intervention: manual and mechanical handling, working at height and workplace transport. See **Figure 5** below.

3 duty holders visited were self-employed, not all of which could evidence the completion of relevant health and safety training.

Of the remaining 2 businesses, 1 closed shortly after the initial visit so the Officer was unable to fully verify staff training arrangements, and actions remain on-going with the remaining business to determine the adequacy of staff training.

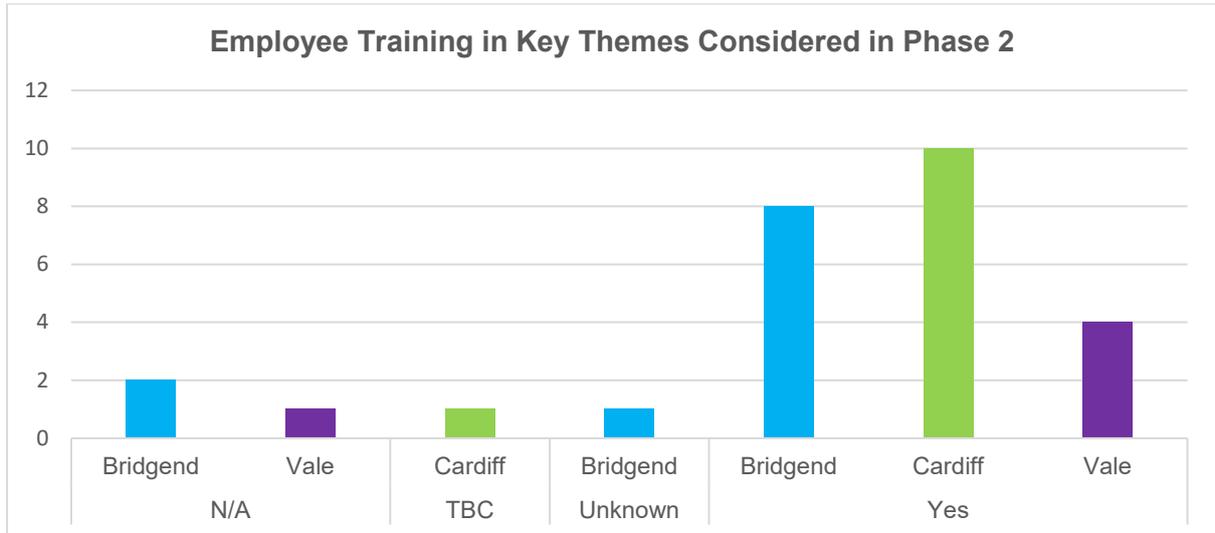


Figure 5

***N/A** – Self-employed no employees

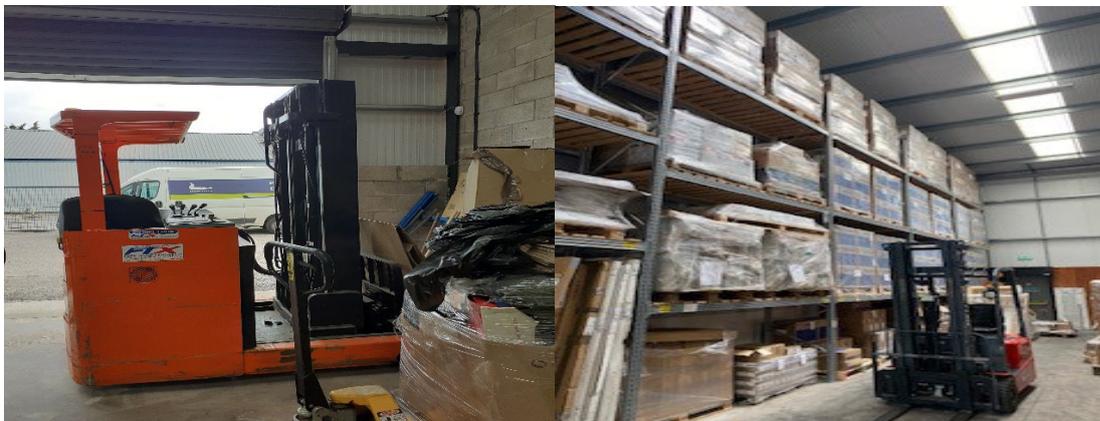
***Unknown** – Premises closed following initial intervention

***TBC** – Further action on-going to confirm employee training

Mechanical Handling Equipment (MHE)

Mechanical Handling Equipment (MHE) was found in **24 (89%)** of the 27 businesses visited in Phase 2. Whilst not an exhaustive list this equipment included sack trucks, pallet trucks, fork lift trucks (FLT) and pallet hoists; all used as aids for the movement of goods around the workplace, the loading and unloading of delivery vehicles and the loading and unloading of items onto racking and other storage areas such as mezzanines.

Examples of MHE's viewed during interventions are shown in **Pictures 1 & 2** below:



Picture 1: Reach FLT and pallet truck

Picture 2: Counterbalance FLT

HSE data shows FLT's are involved in about a quarter of all workplace transport accidents, (www.hse.gov.uk/statistics). These accidents not only lead to personal injury, but often physical damage to both the fabric of buildings and equipment, particularly racking systems.

Duty holders in **15 (63%)** of premises using MHE - **Bridgend (4), Cardiff (9) and Vale of Glamorgan (2)** - were able to demonstrate to Officers at the time of their initial visit that MHE was undergoing formal, proactive daily checks in the form of documented checklists - See **figure 6** below. The types of MHE being subject to daily checks included FLT's, pallet hoists and mechanised pallet trucks.

These documented systems enabled duty holders to evidence that safety devices such as warning lights, audible alarms and personal restraints were operating correctly; fluid levels were correct; and signs of wear and tear or damage to tyres, forks and chains were being identified in a timely manner.

A total of **3 duty holders (13%)** using MHE which should be subject to daily checks, failed to have any formal system of proactive maintenance in place - **Cardiff (2) and Bridgend (1)** - See **figure 6** below. These duty holders were subject to formal action by Officers.

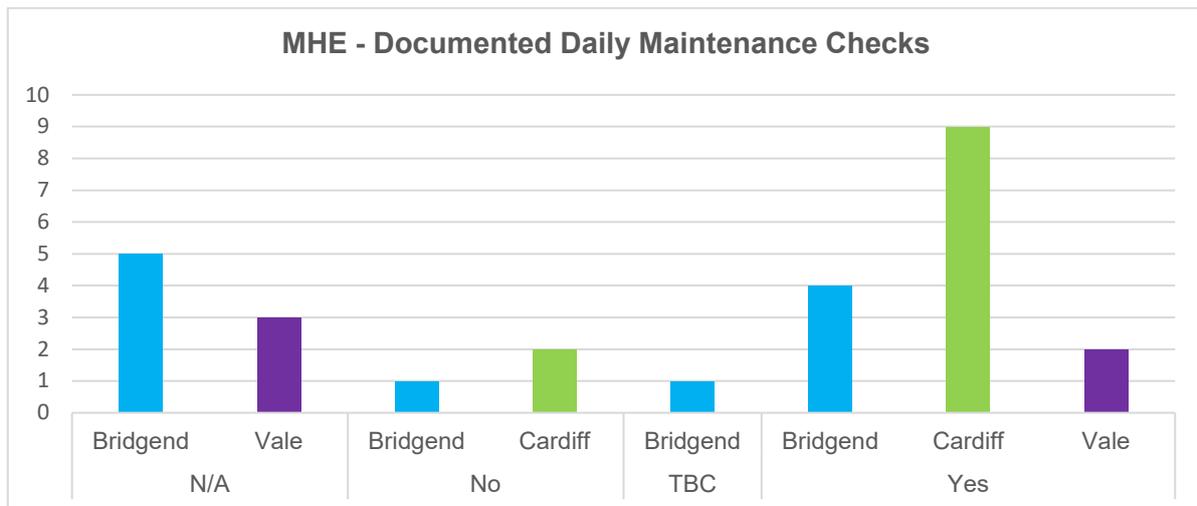


Figure 6

***N/A** – No MHE in use or equipment did not require daily checks

***TBC** – Further intervention ongoing to confirm daily checks in place

- **Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998**

Under these regulations duty holders are required to ensure any lifting equipment is subject to a thorough examination, and evidence is available on site to confirm the date when it was last completed, and the frequency it must be carried out (*as determined by law or by a suitably competent person*).

Of the 24 premises visited which used MHE, **17 (71%)** businesses used lifting equipment, such as fork lift trucks, that would require thorough examinations under LOLER.

Only **14 of the 17 (82%) duty holders** using fork lift trucks were able to demonstrate to Officers during initial visits that MHE was subject to thorough examination on an annual or 6-monthly basis. - **Bridgend (4), Cardiff (9) and Vale of Glamorgan (1)** - see **figure 7** below.

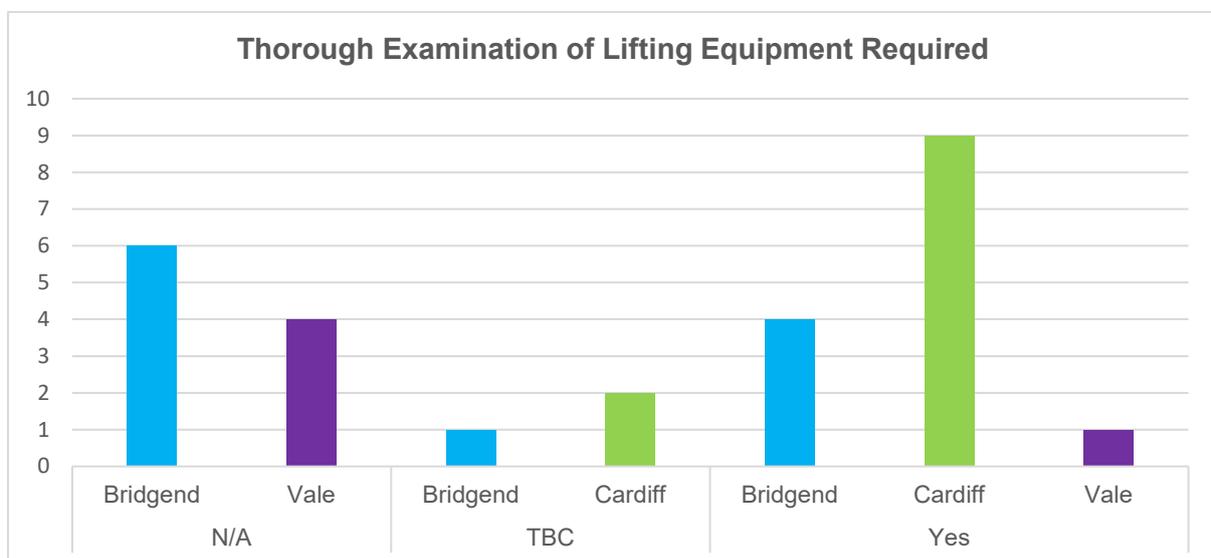


Figure 7

***N/A** – No MHE in use or equipment in use not captured by LOLER

***TBC** – Further intervention on-going to confirm thorough examinations are undertaken

- **Training of Fork Lift Truck Operators**

‘Every employer shall ensure that all persons who use work equipment have received adequate training for purposes of health and safety, including training in the methods which may be adopted when using the work equipment, any risks which such use may entail and precautions to be taken’.

Regulation 9, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

All employers must ensure that lift-truck operators are trained to the standards outlined in the L117 ACOP, whether using in-house trainers or external training providers. Training should always include 3 stages:

- Basic training: the basic skills and knowledge required to operate a lift truck safely and efficiently.
- Specific job training: knowledge and understanding of the operating principles and controls of the lift truck to be used and how it will be used in their workplace.
- Familiarisation training: applying what has been learnt, under normal working conditions, on the job.

14 (82%) of duty holders - **Bridgend (4), Cardiff (9) and Vale of Glamorgan (1)** – where MHE requiring specialist training was in use, were able to demonstrate to Officers during initial visits that Fork Lift Truck (FLT) operatives had received an appropriate level of training. See **figure 8** below. Further formal actions have been taken with those either failing to provide an appropriate level of specialist training, or where this has yet to be confirmed.

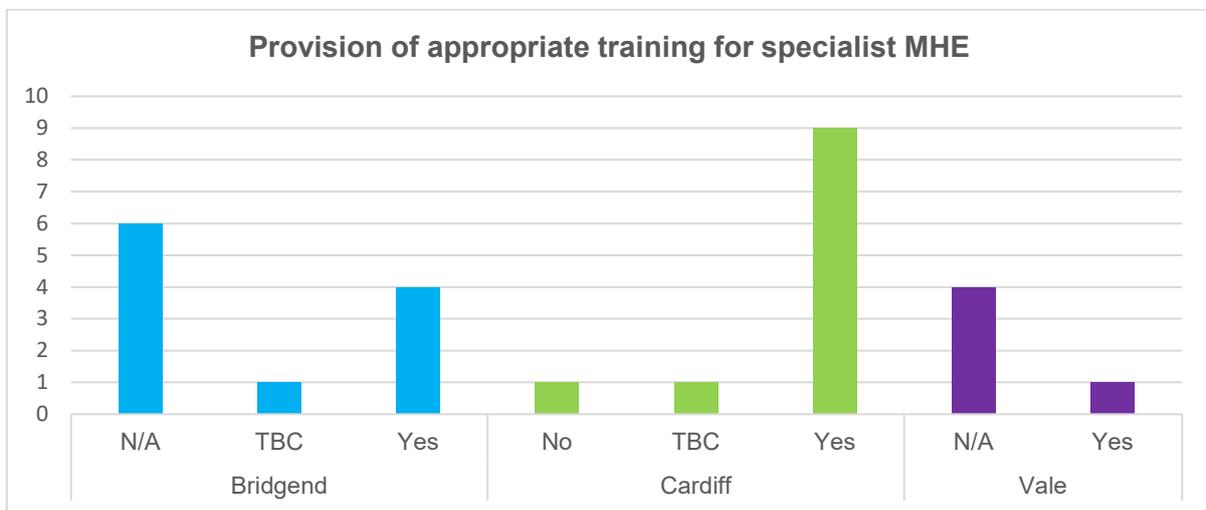


Figure 8

***N/A** – No MHE in use or MHE equipment in use did not require specialist training for employees

***TBC** – Further investigation on-going to confirm appropriate specialist training in place

Arrangements to prevent the use of FLT's by unauthorised staff was considered as part of the Phase 2 site visits. As illustrated in **Pictures 3 and 4** (below), some duty holders failed to ensure that keys were removed from FLT's when not in use, thereby failing to adequately mitigate the risk of untrained people using MHE.



Picture 3



Picture 4

Working at Height

- **Use of Mezzanine Floors**

Mezzanine floors are often installed to increase storage capacity and available workspace in buildings. To prevent the risk of people and goods falling from a height, it is critical that mezzanine floors are fitted with appropriate edge protection, a safe means of access and egress is provided, and workers are aware of (and adhere to) safe working loads.

Of the 27 businesses visited, **14 (52%)** of premises - **Bridgend (5), Cardiff (6), Vale of Glamorgan (3)** - had mezzanine floors on site.

Of these 14 businesses, all **14 (100%)** - **Bridgend (5), Cardiff (6), Vale of Glamorgan (3)** - had safe means of access to the mezzanine area.

In 4 of the 14 premises (**29%**) - **Cardiff (3), Vale of Glamorgan (1)** – mezzanine floors were not marked with Safe Working Loads and Duty Holders were unaware of their load capacity - See **figure 9** below.

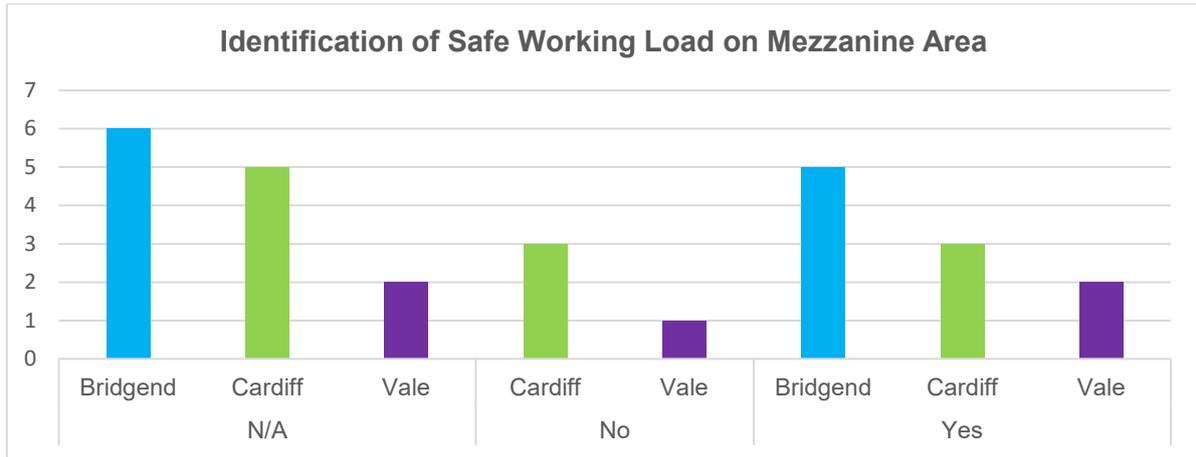


Figure 9

*N/A – No Mezzanine on site

In 3 of the 14 premises with mezzanine floors (21%) - Cardiff (2), Vale of Glamorgan (1) – mezzanine floors were not provided with suitable edge protection, for example guard rails and toe boards, increasing the risk of both persons and goods falling from a height - See figure 10 below.

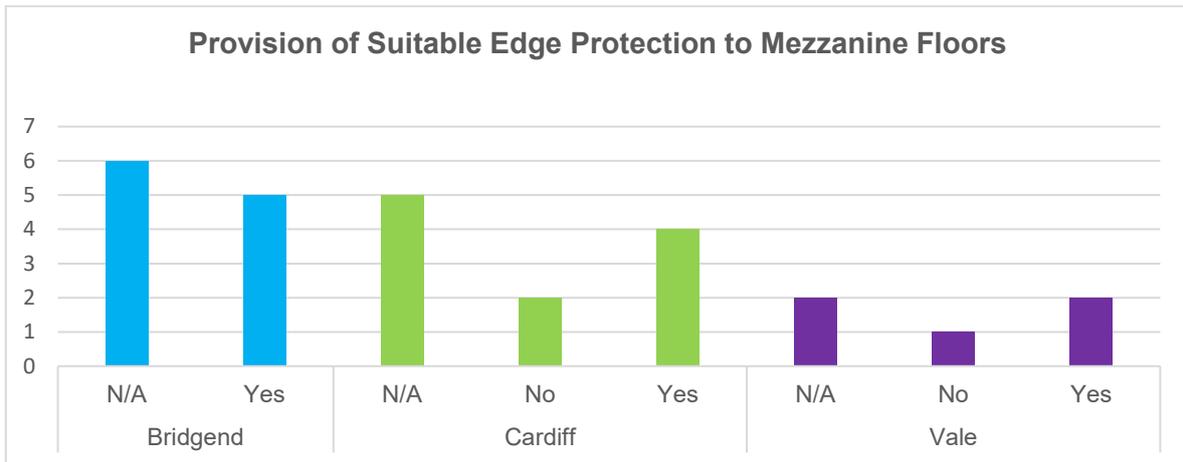


Figure 10

*N/A – No mezzanine storage area on site



Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7

Picture 5 highlights a number of the requisite safety features required on a mezzanine storage area, including suitable edge protection and a safe means of access.

Picture 6 shows a mezzanine area fitted with a mezzanine pallet safety gate.

Picture 7 illustrates an alternative type of mezzanine gate commonly found in use.

- **Pallet Collapse Procedures**

In the event of a pallet collapse within a high level storage area, it is crucial for businesses to have a safe system of work, or emergency plan, which details how workers will safely access the load. This plan should include controls such as: restricting access to the area, use of safety “buffer” zones when using mechanical lifting equipment, use of specialised machinery that may need to be brought in to facilitate the safe retrieval of collapsed stock.

Of the 27 businesses visited, **10 (37%) - Bridgend (7), Vale of Glamorgan (3)** – either did not have palletised stock or did not store palletised stock at a high level - See **figure 11** below.

Of the remaining 17 businesses that did hold palletised stock, **10 (59%) - Bridgend (2), Cardiff (7), Vale of Glamorgan (1)** - had suitable systems in place for managing pallet collapse at high level - See **figure 11** below.

Of the remaining 17 businesses that did hold palletised stock, **5 (29%) - Cardiff (4), Vale of Glamorgan (1)** - were found to have no suitable systems in place which required Officers to take action during visits - See **figure 11** below.

The remaining 2 businesses closed shortly after the initial intervention visits and Officers were unable to substantiate safe working practices.

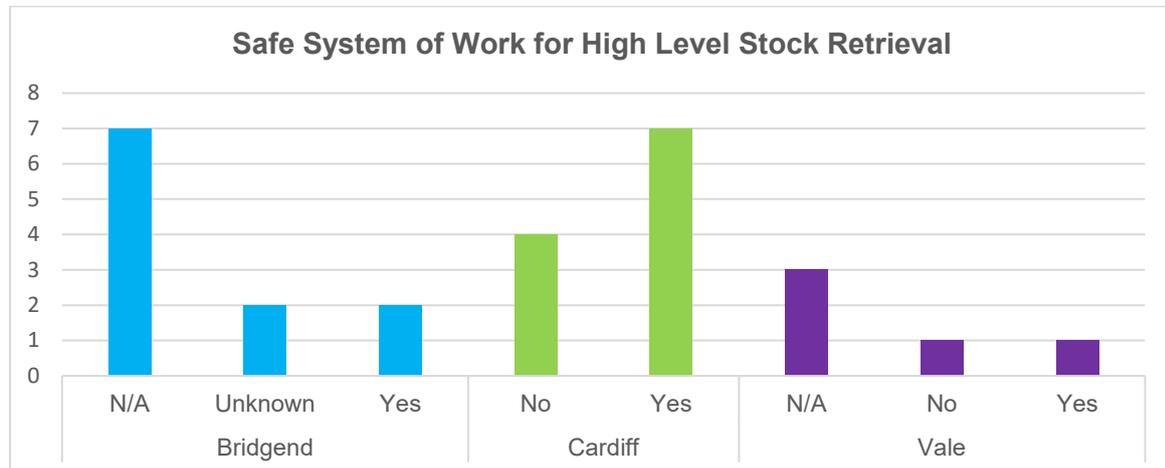


Figure 11

***N/A** – No pallets or no high level palletised storage

***Unknown** - Premises closed following initial intervention or unable to confirm work procedure to-date

Racking and Storage Systems

The industry best practice standards for racking systems in the United Kingdom are designed by the Storage Equipment Manufacturers' Association (SEMA) who promote a number of criteria to ensure a racking system is safe and remains so throughout its lifetime. Racking systems should be to a safe design, be safely installed and be regularly inspected and maintained whilst in use. SEMA advocate a Green, Amber, Red traffic light system as part of their racking inspections, with defects identified as Red requiring immediate attention and stock removal. Amber defects require corrective action within one month.

- **Racking Installations**

Of the **17 businesses visited** which had racking installations present, duty holders in **6 (35%)** premises were able to demonstrate to Officers that racking systems had been installed by a competent SEMA affiliated company - **Bridgend (2), Cardiff (3) and Vale of Glamorgan (1)** - See **figure 12** below.

The remaining **11 (65%)** of premises were unaware who had installed their racking systems - **Bridgend (2), Cardiff (8) and Vale of Glamorgan (1)** - See **figure 12** below.

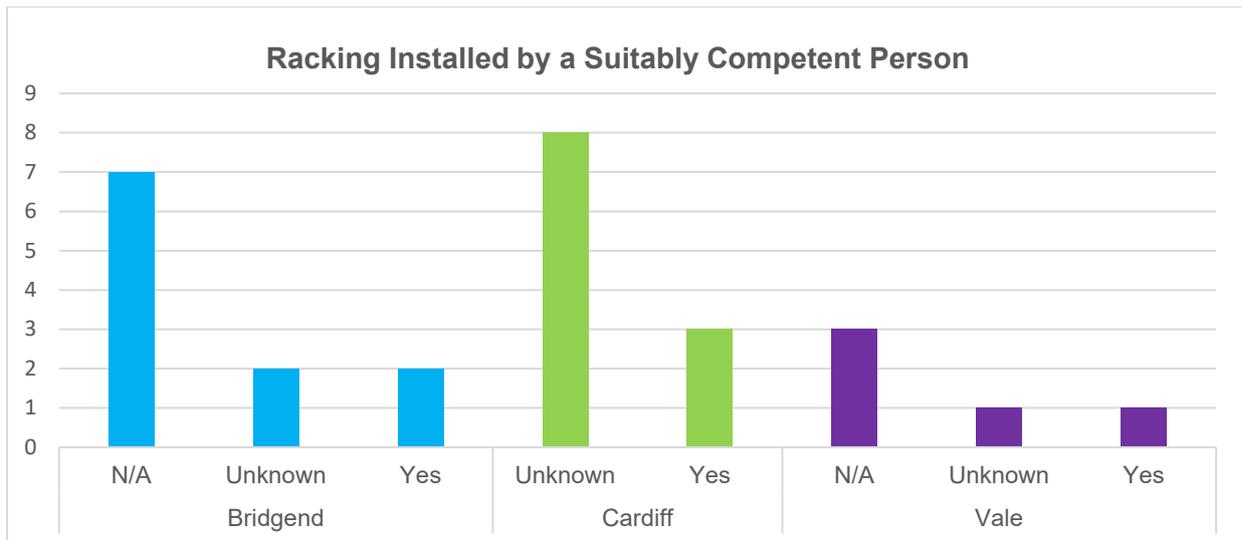


Figure 12

*N/A – No High level racking on site

*Unknown – Duty Holder unable to confirm installation details

- Racking Inspection**

Initial inspection visits identified that **6 (35%)** premises with racking - **Bridgend (1), Cardiff (4) and Vale of Glamorgan (1)** - were undertaking formal inspections of their storage systems via a competent third party or competent in-house inspector. See **figure 13** below.

9 (53%) premises - **Bridgend (3), Cardiff (5) and Vale of Glamorgan (1)** - were not undertaking formal inspections of their racking. See **figure 13** below.

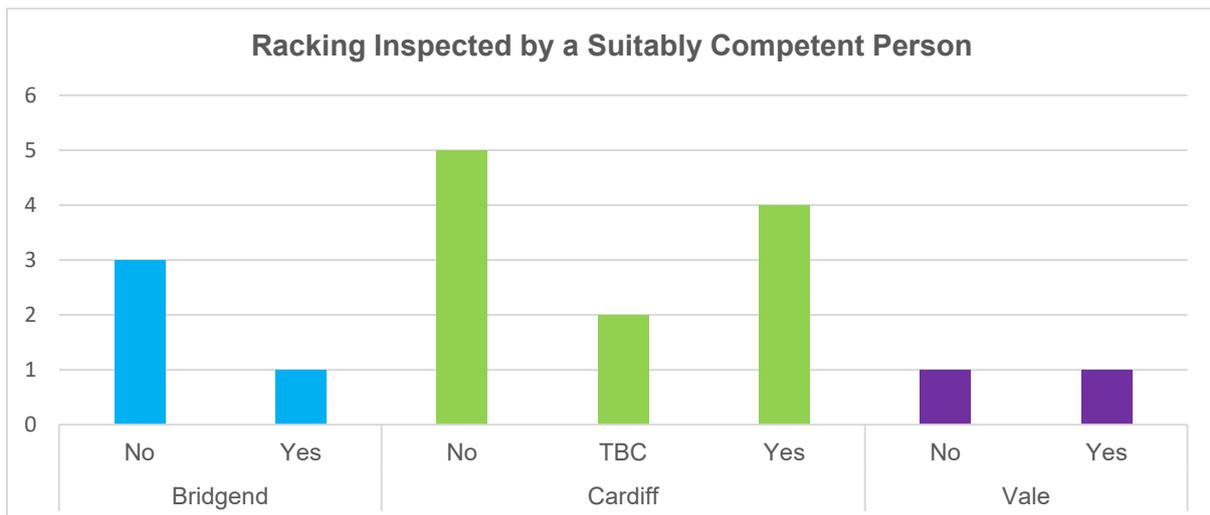


Figure 13

*TBC – Further action on-going to confirm appropriate inspections being undertaken



Picture 8 (adjacent) illustrates an example of damaged and unsecured racking found in use by Officers during site visits.

Picture 8

- **Provision of Safety Features**

During visits Officers visually inspected all racking systems for the presence of relevant safety features such as: display of Safe Working Load (SWL) information, suitable means of anchorage, presence of locking pins, and installation of column guards to protect against mechanical impact.

15 (88%) of the 17 premises with racking installations were found to have a suitable means of anchorage - **Bridgend (4), Cardiff (9) and Vale of Glamorgan (2)**. See **figure 14** below.

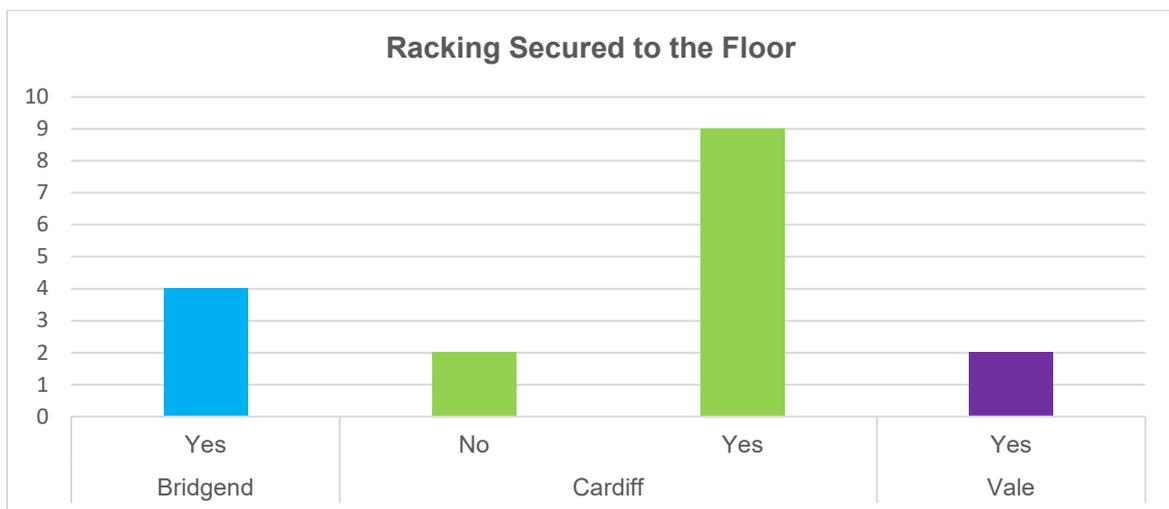


Figure 14



9 (53%) of installations were found to have column guards in place to offer suitable mechanical protection to the racking installation in areas where MHE was in use - **Bridgend (2), Cardiff (7)**. See **figure 15** below.

8 (47%) of installations did not have column guards in place, resulting in mechanical damage to critical parts of the racking installation – as illustrated in **Picture 9** (adjacent).

Picture 9

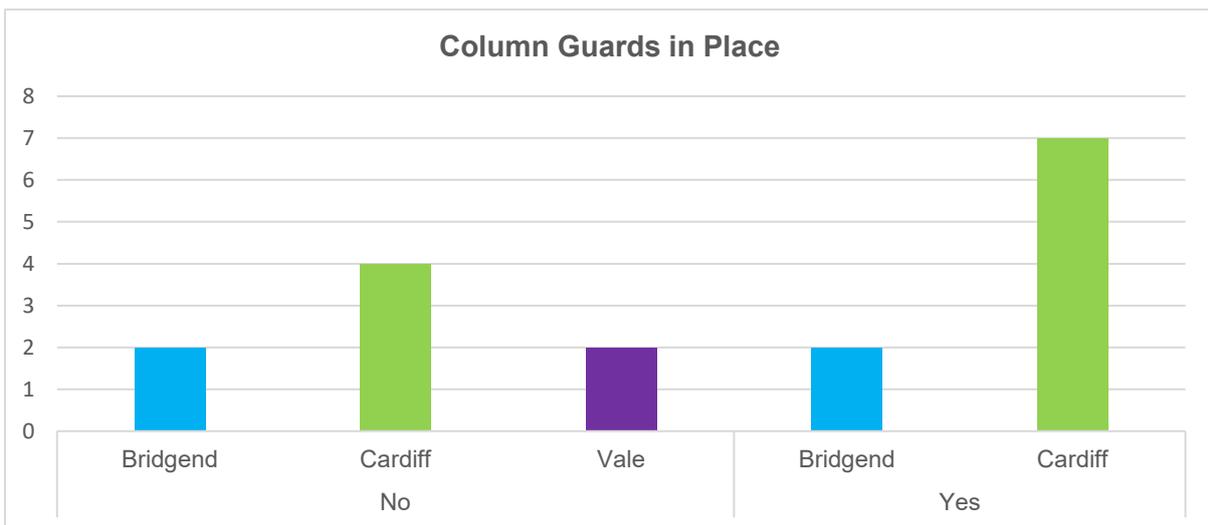


Figure 15



Picture 10

14 (82%) of racking installations were found to have their locking pins in place - **Bridgend (4), Cardiff (8) and Vale of Glamorgan (2)**. See **figure 16** below.

3 (18%) premises had racking installations without locking pins in place, as illustrated in **Picture 10** (adjacent)

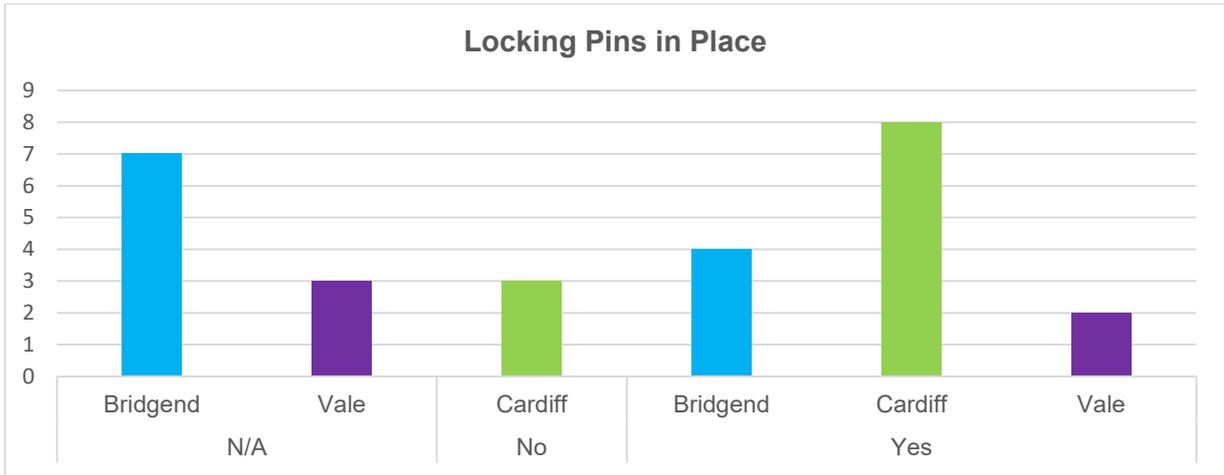


Figure 16

*N/A – No high level racking

Of the 17 premises with racking installations, only **10 (59%)** businesses had racking marked with its safe working load (SWL) - **Bridgend (2), Cardiff (7) and Vale of Glamorgan (1)**. See **figure 17, pictures 11 and 12** below.

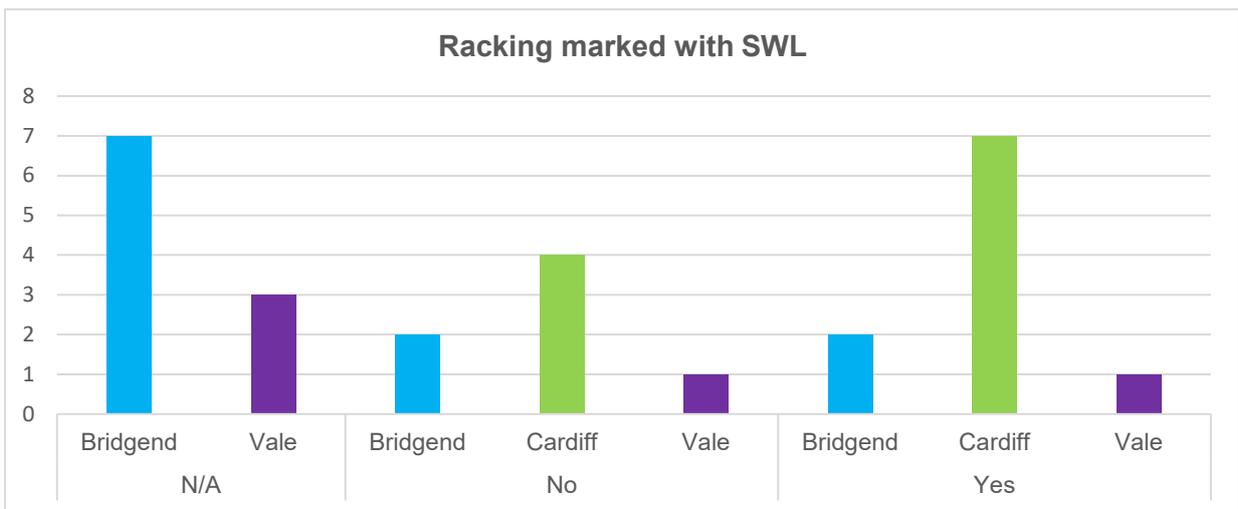


Figure 17

*N/A – No high level racking



Picture 11



Picture 12

- **Safe Storage of Loads**

Of the 17 businesses visited who were storing loads on racking, **15 (88%)** premises were found to have stock securely stored on racking systems - **Bridgend (4), Cardiff (9) and Vale of Glamorgan (2)**. See **figure 18** below.

Concerns about the security of loads were identified in 2 premises in the Cardiff area and duty holders were instructed by Officers to implement immediate corrective actions.

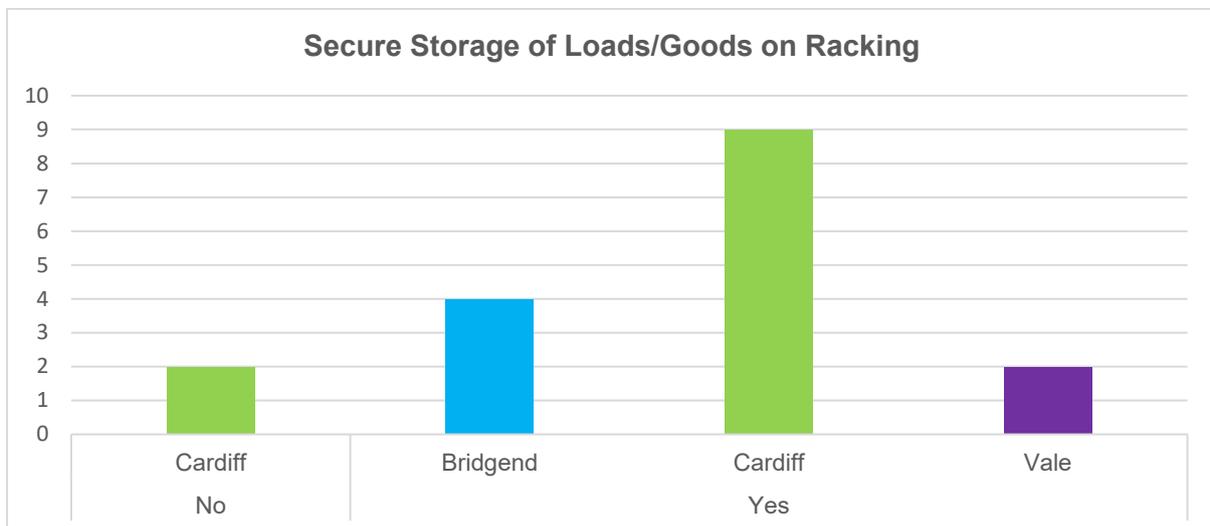
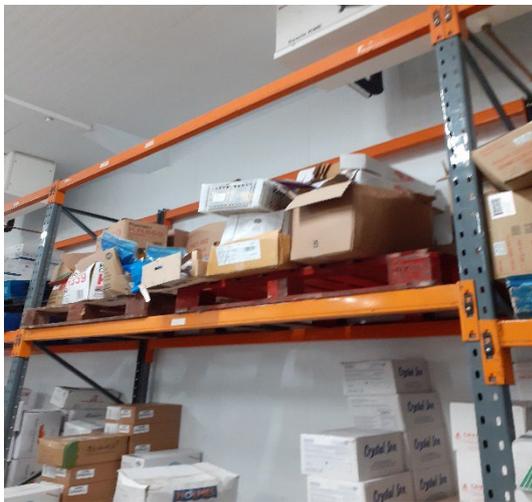


Figure 18



Pictures 13, 14 and 15 (adjacent & above) illustrate examples of poor load security on racking observed during site visits.

Matter of Evident Concern

- **Electrical Safety**

Of the 27 businesses included in the phase 2 intervention, up-to-date Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs) were only available for inspection at **19 (70%)** premises during initial visits - **Bridgend (9), Cardiff (7) and Vale of Glamorgan (3)**. See **figure 19** below.

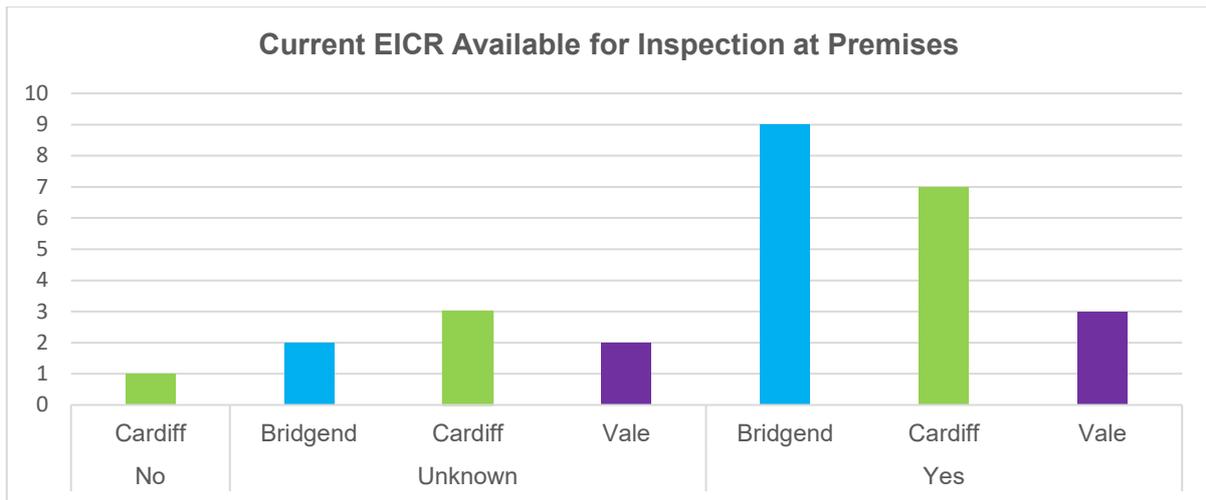


Figure 19

***Unknown** – Further intervention on-going to confirm EICR in place or premise closed following initial visit

Officers noted that whilst a significant proportion of landlords and managing agents were responsible for providing copies of EICR certificates to tenants, many duty holders had not received relevant documentation for the units they occupied.



Commonplace defects identified by Officers during visits included missing protective covers on IP66 rated socket boxes, as illustrated in **picture 16** (adjacent).

Enforcement Action Taken

Where necessary, duty holders were sent a formal written warning post-visit to confirm what legislation had been breached and what actions were necessary to secure the required level of compliance. In accordance with the Compliance and Enforcement Policy of Shared Regulatory Services, legal contraventions and Officer recommendations were clearly differentiated in written communications. Duty holders were either required to provide a detailed action plan to confirm how issues would be resolved by a prescribed deadline, or were subject to an Officer revisit after a specified period.

Where duty holders failed to provide Officers with the requisite information, physical revisits have, and continue to be, undertaken to ensure improvements are implemented.

To-date, **x7** Section 21 Improvement Notices, **Cardiff (4) and Vale of Glamorgan (3)** have been served on duty holders in both Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan following **Phase 2** visits to secure the following improvements:

- Inspection of existing racking systems by a suitably competent person to evidence correct installation.
- Remediation of defects to existing racking systems by a suitably competent person.
- Maintenance of electrical systems to prevent the risk of danger.
- To assess the presence of asbestos containing materials and complete an asbestos management plan where necessary.
- Thorough examination of lifting equipment (FLT).
- Provision of training for FLT operators.

At the time of writing this report, the Vale of Glamorgan duty holder has failed to comply with **x3** Improvement Notices and has now been invited to provide representations under caution about a number of alleged health and safety offences.

By way of an update from **Phase 1** of this intervention, **x4** Section 21 Improvement Notices were subsequently served on an independent operator of a warehouse in Cardiff after the company failed to make adequate progress with:

- The preparation of suitable and sufficient risk assessments of work activities undertaken on site.
- Maintaining electrical systems to prevent the risk of danger.
- Engaging a suitably competent person to assess the condition of asbestos containing materials and complete an asbestos management plan.
- Effect suitable repairs and improvements to storage racking systems in use.

At the time of writing this report, the Cardiff duty holder has failed to comply with **x2** of these Improvement Notices and has now been invited to provide representations under caution about a number of alleged health and safety offences.

Conclusion

The documentation used by Officers during the Phase 2 intervention was found to be fit for purpose and the method used to engage with duty holders was found to be appropriate.

The selection of premises to be included in Phase 2 would've benefited from an additional website check prior to the commencement of visits. A failure to do so resulted in 3 businesses being visited that were outside of the agreed scope of the intervention.

The current cost of living crisis did have an impact on businesses subject to this intervention, with several duty holders electing to cease trading after initial Officer visits.

Initial intervention visits identified that the majority of duty holders were discharging their health and safety management duties effectively, with only **11%** of duty holders failing to produce a suitable health and safety policy and **7%** failing to produce suitable and sufficient risk assessments. Notwithstanding these statistics, where managers were not on site at the time of the visit, or a temporary manager was in post, staff were not readily able to produce key documents at the request of the inspecting Officer. This suggests that internal communication and wider knowledge about health and safety management arrangements may still be lacking, even where policies and risk assessments have been produced.

82% of duty holders were found to be providing suitable training to employees on the main themes covered by this intervention, including appropriate training in the use of specialist mechanical handling equipment such as fork lift trucks (FLT). Officers did, however, continue to find a number of unattended fork lift trucks with keys left in the ignition, thus increasing the opportunity for unauthorised use by both untrained employees and non-employees able to access these parts of the workplace.

Mechanical handling equipment (MHE) was identified in **89%** of premises visited, and of these, **63%** of duty holders were able to evidence the use of daily equipment checklists and equipment safety devices. For larger pieces of lifting equipment, such as FLTs, a significant proportion of businesses had elected to lease the MHE as opposed to purchasing it. Despite the leasing company being responsible for maintaining the lifting equipment and providing evidence of LOLER compliance, only **82%** of duty holders were able to demonstrate that lifting equipment in use within their undertaking had been subject to a thorough examination.

Mezzanine storage facilities were identified in **52%** of premises visited. Whilst all could be safely accessed by workers, almost a third of duty holders were unaware of the safe working loads for these areas, and a fifth of businesses failed to have suitable edge protection fitted to mitigate the risk of either persons or stock falling from a height.

Of those premises storing palletised stock on racking, only **59%** had safe systems of work in place for dealing with pallet collapse at a high level.

Only **35%** of duty holders could evidence that a suitably competent person had installed racking systems in use at their premises. Many small businesses had inherited the racking with the building, but without any documented evidence of its installation and subsequent inspection.

The engagement of a competent person to undertake on-going racking inspection and repair could only be evidenced by **35%** of duty holders.

Whilst **88%** of racking systems were fitted with a suitable means of anchorage, only **53%** were protected by column guards designed to maintain structural integrity in the event of mechanical impact. Locking pins were found in use on **82%** of racking systems but only **59%** of installations had their safe working loads identified.

The majority of premises visited were able to demonstrate safe storage methods and safe levels of stock held on site. Only a minority of duty holders were found to have unsatisfactory housekeeping arrangements where goods were obstructing MHE traffic routes or locations where workers would need to use ladders to access storage systems.

Current Electrical Installation Condition Reports were not available in **30%** of premises visited, with several duty holders either unaware of whether they or their landlord was responsible for undertaking these maintenance checks.

Recommendations and Future Work

Completion of the Phase 2 intervention during the 2024-25 work year has provided further evidence that health and safety standards in premises controlled by independent operators remain poor in some key areas.

A continuation of focused work across the micro and SME warehouse sector would be justified, albeit in a targeted way to effectively prioritise finite Local Authority resources.

It is recommended that future interventions target the following themes in independently operated warehouse storage facilities:

- Mezzanine safety with particular focus on edge protection and safe working loads.
- Racking safety – installation, inspection and provision of safety features.
- Safe systems of work associated with pallet collapse.
- Maintenance of electrical systems to prevent danger.
- Duty to manage asbestos.

Protecting the Public and Supporting Businesses – Trading Standards making an impact on your local community

The Impacts and Outcomes of Local Trading Standards Services 2023/24 in Wales



FOREWORD

The Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) represents heads of Trading Standards across England & Wales and currently 95% of local authorities are members. ACTSO created the Impacts and Outcomes Framework in 2018/19 to provide national data for England and Wales on work done by local authority Trading Standards Services. This is its fourth report.

During 2023/24, cost of living issues remained high on everyone's minds. Cheap dangerous, illicit, and counterfeit goods appearing to be a "good deal" posed risks to consumers. Misleading price claims could cause consumers to miss out on fair deals, and businesses remained at risk from being undercut by unfair competition and businesses selling illegal goods and services.

As well as the usual three themes of Tackling Detriment and Preventing Harm, Supporting the Local Economy, and Promoting Health and Wellbeing, we have devoted specific sections to environmental regulation and work to support consumers and businesses with the cost of living crisis.

While Welsh local Trading Standards Services remain stretched in terms of funding and staffing, they continue to have a big impact in protecting consumers and helping businesses. The headlines from this year's report are:

- **Over £38 million detriment was prevented** by Trading Standards' actions. This equates to **£12.13 saved for every £1 spent**.
- **Revenue budgets were over £12 million**, a 1% increase from last year.
- **Overall staff numbers are 258**, almost identical to last year.
- **Notifications and Referrals from Citizens Advice reduced from 24,838 in 2022/23 to 18,343 in 2023/24**. This would appear to be part of a post pandemic trend.
- This year **107 people or businesses were convicted of offences**, compared to 70 in 2022/23 a significant **65% increase** on 2022/23.
- The amount of **money saved for scam victims was £893,000**, a significant reduction from the 2023/23 figure of £2.8 million. This could be attributed to the success in stopping scam mail reaching victims by working with partners to tackle the issue at source

- **Trading Standards provided over 1,900 hours of advice to businesses through Primary Authority partnerships**. The total number of Primary Authority partnerships also increased slightly from 75 to 79.
- **Almost 13,000 compliance checks** were carried out to ensure that businesses met their legal responsibilities and to provide them with advice on site. This is an increase from 11,000 last year and represents a 19% increase.
- **Almost 6,700 unsafe or non-compliant products** were seized or removed from the marketplace representing a saving to society of almost £114 million.
- **Around 474 premises were subjected to a test purchase check** to ensure they were not selling age-restricted goods, such as alcohol, vapes, knives, fireworks and corrosive substances to children. 14% were found to have sold to an under age person
- **Over 1.3 million illicit cigarettes, over 0.220 tonnes of illicit hand-rolling tobacco and over 376,000 illicit vapes** were seized.

In summary, Trading Standards continues to demonstrate its huge value in protecting consumers, legitimate businesses, public health, and the environment. The impact of this work, alongside that which is delivered via National Trading Standards, highlights the results that Trading Standards achieves. Trading Standards is unique in having an infrastructure that can operate at local, regional, and national levels in this way and this is key to its success.

We want this report to inform Government's policy development, including funding for services, and to raise the profile of Trading Standards' work within local authorities.

Special thanks go to the 17 services covering 20 local authority trading standards services that submitted their data return. This covers 85% of all local authorities in Wales.



Jacqui Thomas,
Chair, Trading
Standards Wales



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BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Local authorities in Wales were asked to submit data for the financial year 2023/24.

A total of 17 services contributed, covering 17 of 20 local authority trading standards services in Wales.

The responses cover an area with a population of over 2.7 million, or 86.7% of the population of Wales.

To illustrate the estimated national impact of Trading Standards, figures have been adjusted to account for both population and the response rate for each question. These figures estimate impact and activity levels for the whole of Wales.

DEMAND AND RESOURCING

The approximate revenue budget allocated to Trading Standards was close to £12 million, a 1% increase from last year.

In the region of £357,000 was received in income from a variety of sources including metrology, National Trading Standards' grants and Primary Authority income.

Of the **258 full time employees** employed on Trading Standards' work, 89.5% are "operational" staff.

Trading Standards services received just over 18,000

referrals and notifications to their services from the Citizens Advice Consumer Service. This shows how many members of the public are seeking advice and support from Trading Standards on consumer related problems and issues. However, it is lower than the 24,838 in 2022/23 which might suggest that the cost of living is not hitting consumers quite as much now as it was then. Whilst the demands on Citizens Advice remain relatively high, the resources remain the same to address new and emerging challenges. In addition, trading standards services received nearly 9,000 referrals from other partners.

SECTION ONE: TACKLING DETRIMENT AND PREVENTING HARM

One of the key functions of Trading Standards is to prevent consumer and business detriment. Trading Standards' work can include providing advice and support to the public on how to avoid being ripped off, as well as disrupting and taking enforcement action against criminal behaviour, to prevent harm and financial detriment. The former may be limited due to the financial constraints faced by local services and the need to focus on statutory activity.

The Consumer Protection Study 2022 estimated that there was £54 billion in unaddressed detriment across Great Britain.

1.1 Stopping Fraudulent, Illegal and Unfair Trading

Trading Standards Services will usually take formal enforcement action where people deliberately break the law, have caused serious harm, or have repeatedly ignored advice from officers. Trading Standards legislation carries a variety of penalties including imprisonment; fines; forfeiture of assets; fixed penalties; and undertakings to stop future non-compliance. Serious investigations are complex, lengthy and can take several years to bring to trial. This is being exacerbated by ongoing delays in the Crown Court system. Government is continuing to increase options for the use of monetary penalties by Trading Standards.

In 2023/24:

- Approximately 107 defendants were prosecuted and convicted.
- Prison sentences totalling over 46 years were handed down.
- Defendants were ordered to pay over £51,121 in fines.
- Defendants were ordered to pay almost £1 million in Proceeds of Crime confiscation orders, a significant increase on last year as a result of one particularly large order.

1.2 Detriment and Redress

Trading Standards can ask for the Court to issue a compensation order for victims as part of a prosecution process or get redress for victims through a variety of other means. In 2023/24, it is estimated that the actions of Trading Standards Services resulted in:

- £375,800 compensation being awarded to victims by the courts.
- Over £1,207,000 prevented from being handed over to criminals.
- £462,418 gained for victims through advice and intervention.

Overall Trading Standards actions in Wales prevented over £38 million of detriment to consumers and businesses.

This shows that Trading Standards continues to offer a cost effective and important service to local communities and individuals and demonstrates the seriousness of the offending being tackled by local services.

1.3 Supporting Scam Victims

Fraud is the most common crime in the country, accounting for 40% of crime in England and Wales, and affecting millions of people, at risk of substantial financial losses. Trading Standards Services play a key role in tackling fraud and protecting people from scams.

Trading Standards support victims to get the help they need to stop them from being scammed again. This includes the installation of call blocking devices and doorstep cameras alongside working with safeguarding agencies. Trading Standards can also make referrals to the National Trading Standards Scams and eCrime Teams to undertake disruption work such as getting telephone or payment systems removed and taking down websites. Most scams

emanate from overseas where formal legal action by Trading Standards is not possible.

In 2023/24, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Local authority Trading Standards Services provided support to almost 1,600 scam victims.
- Work to disrupt mass marketing fraud mailings, stop outgoing payments and mail, saved consumers almost £900,000.

In Wales, the number of scam victims supported has increased from 1301 in 2022/23 to 1579 this year.

Blaenau Gwent CBC: Supporting scam victims

In addition to undertaking 100% of visits to all scam victims identified as vulnerable when referred from the National Scams Hub, Blaenau Gwent Trading Standards supports local communities by providing advice on scams to vulnerable groups where possible. In 2023, a presentation was undertaken to enable the local Salvation Army to provide advice on scam awareness, doorstep crime, and advice about rogue traders.

The service also identifies chronic scam victims who have suffered repeated scams, so that additional follow up visits can be made to check on their welfare, ensure that no further scam activity has taken place and provide target hardening when funding is available.

Isle of Anglesey: Safeguarding & Scam Prevention Initiative

A project with Call Blockers has experienced good uptake, with users reporting a large reduction in calls. Due to the success of the project, work will continue throughout the next financial year, working with partners such as the Citizens Advice Consumer Service, Friends Against Scams and local Social Services to identify potential vulnerable victims.

Caerphilly CBC: Prosecution of Unscrupulous tradesmen

Since Covid, the traditional perpetrators of doorstep crime itinerant traders have been joined by builders and similar traders who had previously run compliant local businesses but were tempted by the opportunity to earn big money and take on large scale projects that they were incapable of undertaking, lacking the expertise required. Often, these large scale jobs involved consumers paying out huge amounts of money only to be left with work that was incomplete, misdescribed, dangerous and of very little value and faced with not only financial hardship but also with the shame and mental anguish that goes hand in hand with such scams. The victims were not the typical vulnerable victims associated with this type of crime, but often much younger and savvier, who had not entered into contracts without conducting research. Many of the victims had young families and the damage to properties also had adverse effects on the children. Three incidents that led to prosecution resulted in consumers spending just over £200,000 for little in return. Compensation was awarded in two cases and POCA confiscation is proceeding in a third, but the stress and suffering on the victims is unquantifiable.



Pembrokeshire County Council: Supporting Vulnerable Scam Victims

A vulnerable couple with learning difficulties requiring minor roof repairs were charged £800 to refit a single slipped tile. The trader then made false claims regarding the safety of their chimney stack and subsequently spent 30 minutes on the roof and

charged the couple £4,500. This work was unnecessary, substandard, and the couple had been grossly overcharged. Pembrokeshire Trading Standards Service prosecuted the trader who pleaded guilty to four offences under the Fraud Act. He received a 15-month suspended prison sentence and a compensation order for £900 was awarded to the victims.



Neath Port Talbot CBC: Working in collaboration to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

NPT's Trading Standards service has been working with the local Police, Social Services and its Licensing service on an initiative to educate local hotels and accommodation providers on the tell-tale signs of child sexual exploitation (CSE). This initiative was known as Operation Oakham. Whilst Trading Standards does not have a specific duty as such in relation to CSE, the service does have information on the relevant businesses that might witness CSE. The project delivered training and advice to a number of establishments in the NPT area, along with carrying out "test purchasing" exercises to see if the businesses checked would query adults booking themselves rooms with children for short periods of time. Furthermore, the service is a member of the local Police led Serious Organised Crime Group, a forum for identifying targets of mutual interest with partners and for sharing intelligence.

Carmarthenshire County Council: Seraphimbeta© trueCall Integrated Victim Risk Analysis

272 Scams victims are subject to ongoing interventions under the CCC Seraphim trueCall Nuisance and Scam Call Intervention Programme.

Using the Seraphimbeta© inference engine, (an innovative software solution created by CCC) to automate the monitoring of trueCall call log metadata and notify programme officers where trueCall users are, suspected of engaging with telemarketing fraud approaches, behaving in such ways that puts them at increased risk of telemarketing fraud victimisation and identify non-operational/ malfunctioning trueCall devices, 2752 automated monitoring actions were undertaken for the period 2023/24.

Monitoring actions for the period resulted in the generation of 76 intervention alerts, resulting in direct officer welfare interventions. Outcomes from these intervention activities have been the identification of unreported telemarketing fraud victimisation, redress for victims, enhanced ongoing victim support and the reinstatement of non-operational/ faulty trueCall devices to protect the most vulnerable residents.

For the period 2023/24, CCC trueCall devices blocked 20,921 nuisance calls, of which 3,922 were identified as being scam phone calls and prevented approximately 34 scams. Estimated savings of this activity saved vulnerable households £157,373 and led to a reduction of £93,201 in public service costs (NHS, Social Care & Police).

SECTION TWO: SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Local economies and economic growth can only flourish where businesses have a level playing field and are not subject to unfair competition by those who break the law, and by being able to access good advice on how to meet regulatory requirements.

2.1 Businesses Get the Help and Support they need to Thrive and Grow

Having a thriving local economy is crucial for local authorities and for Government. Trading Standards' role in providing advice and support to businesses has never been more important.

There are currently 79 **Primary Authority partnerships** across Wales. These partnerships enable assured advice is given to a business with multiple shops or sites via a single local authority. There was an increase in activity of 8% from 2022/23.

In 2023/24, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Over 1,900 hours were provided by Trading Standards advising Primary Authority businesses.
- Trading Standards responded to almost 1,700 requests for advice from businesses that were not part of the Primary Authority scheme.

2.2 Creating and Maintaining a Level Playing Field for Safe and Fair Competition

Fair competition underpins economic growth. Unfair competition from those who fail to meet legal standards damages the economy and can cause legitimate businesses to fail, as well as putting consumers at risk.

Trading Standards Services follow a risk based and intelligence-led model. They will take action proportionate to the risk. Actions may include providing advice, seizing unsafe, counterfeit, and illicit products, and taking formal enforcement action where required.

Compliance visits have increased by **19%** from 2022/23. This could be the result of the Food Standards Agency's requests for more food inspections.

In 2023/24, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Over 13,000 visits were carried out to businesses to ensure that they comply with the law and to provide advice to help them fix any non-compliance.
- Over 3,700 businesses were subject to an intervention, such as advice, investigation, or referral.

- 59% of Welsh Trading Standards Services operate an assured trader scheme to help increase consumer confidence. These tend to be targeted at specific trade sectors. This has remained steady but the number of participating businesses has significantly decreased year-on-year. Some 168 businesses participate in these schemes.
- Over 10,350 counterfeit products with a market value of over £1.1 million, which breach the intellectual property of legitimate businesses, were seized.

This is much less than what it has been in previous years. The reason is unknown. This may be partly due to a shift of focus to vapes and tobacco work. It may be that counterfeit goods are being sold through social media groups rather than from physical premises, making large scale seizures less likely and intervention more difficult. We will monitor this in future years.

The illegal trade in counterfeit goods funds organised crime and damages legitimate businesses who manufacture, distribute, and buy licences to sell legitimate products.



Shared Regulatory Services (Bridgend, City and County of Cardiff & the Vale of Glamorgan): Supporting SME's

Home Improvement sector webinars for new businesses - SRS provide numerous services to support businesses within its area including the Buy with Confidence trusted trader scheme, Primary Authority services, business advice and numerous training courses. One business in its area entered into a Primary Authority scheme with SRS in 2019 and due to the positive benefits and growth that they have seen from this partnership, they also became members of the Buy with Confidence scheme a couple of years ago. The business has also been exploring how its partnership working with Trading Standards Services can benefit its students, who are training to be home improvement professionals, e.g., plumbers, electricians, gas engineers, kitchen fitters, etc. Many of these students are likely to set up their own businesses once they qualify and these types of traders can often be difficult for Trading Standards services to identify and engage with until something goes wrong. SRS has been providing live webinar sessions in conjunction with the company, covering key areas of trading standards legislation including paperwork and cancellation rights, consumer rights and redress, how to deal with complaints, contract law and how to avoid business scams. These have been delivered to hundreds of students across the UK, as well as made available to partners in training centres. The webinars have also highlighted the services offered by Trading Standards services for businesses, as well as other sources of advice and support, to help educate the new businesses on the range of advice and support that Trading Standards can offer. The intention is to give new businesses more confidence in understanding their legal obligations, thereby reducing the amount to unnecessary breaches of legislation due to a lack of knowledge, which can have significant economic impacts on both businesses and consumers.

Newport City Council: Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) Food Training:

Newport's Trading Standards service maintains successful business support programmes and continues to provide support at the hundreds of visits and interactions it has with businesses. A compliant business is a successful business, therefore, the support provided helps the delivery of a strong city economy. Key projects include the SPF supported Food Safety work, Primary Authority work, licensing activity, and assured trader schemes.

Neath Port Talbot: Food Standards Workshop for Takeaway Businesses

In conjunction with the local Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) coordinator, Neath Port Talbot's Trading Standards Service ran a free food standards workshop for takeaway businesses. The BAME coordinator used their contacts to invite relevant businesses. The morning workshop session provided advice on all aspects of food standards, with a particular focus on allergens. It is hoped to continue this as a programme for forthcoming years.

Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC: Providing early support to new businesses

When notified of new business, or new businesses are observed, the Trading Standards service will visit to provide initial advice on all relevant legislation. If the local authority is notified prior to set-up, then initial set-up advice is provided, which can result in potential new businesses changing their business model once they understand the costs associated with legal compliance, especially in the safety and food sector. The local authority is seeing an unprecedented number of new businesses; its monthly notification figures align with pre-pandemic annual figures. This year, new businesses have included: car traders, a feed / dog treat manufacturer, honey producers and a business producing and supplying microgreens.



Gwynedd Trading Standards create a unique premises file for each new trader that operates in Gwynedd and comes to its attention. Gwynedd's procedure is to make contact with each new trader, either remotely or through an inspection in person. The decision whether to inspect or make contact remotely will depend on the activity/business risk. This encourages businesses to comply with regulations and follow good business guidance. Officers evaluate intelligence received and

undertake targeted inspections to sector specific businesses to offer advice, guidance and to ensure they comply with relevant regulations. During 2023/24, officers inspected 48 on-licence premises to ensure they were trading fairly and conducted 64 inspections to retail premises known to sell e-cigarettes, combining such inspections to cover the sale of age restricted products, the legalities of e-cigarettes as well as other fair trading matters such as pricing and product safety.

SECTION THREE: PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The health and well-being of local communities is important to all local authorities and Trading Standards have an important part to play by ensuring consumer products meet safety standards, food is correctly labelled and animal health and welfare standards are maintained.

Trading Standards, in particular, enforce a very wide range of age restricted sales legislation to help to keep young people safe. Stopping the supply of age restricted products, such as vapes, cigarettes, alcohol, and knives, are a key priority in many local authorities.

3.1 Ensuring the Safety of Consumer Products

Product safety laws are in place to ensure that products do not cause deaths or personal injuries. Unsafe consumer goods such as cosmetics, toys and electrical goods can cause serious injuries, fires and even risk lives. As well as checking goods at retail and wholesale level, Trading Standards identify, check, and seize unsafe products at ports.

In 2023/24, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Over 6,700 unsafe or non-compliant products were seized or removed from the marketplace following Trading Standards' interventions.
- The savings to society, in terms of product value is over £265,000.

3.2 Protecting the food chain

There has been an increased focus on food safety to protect consumers. The Food Standards Agency has increased its focus on the local authority role in ensuring food standards are maintained. This is likely to be reflected in the increase in interventions as mentioned earlier in this report.

Food prices are higher than ever. This can increase the temptation for unscrupulous businesses to adulterate or falsely label food to enhance profits or gain a competitive advantage. Consumers need to be able to trust food labels and get good value for money. They also need to have clear, reliable information about food allergens which can cause serious injury or even death.

In 2023/24, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Over 1,750 businesses were identified as supplying food that was misdescribed, did not correctly declare allergens, contained toxic or illegal components, or was involved in food fraud.

Ensuring proper animal health and welfare standards, and protecting animals from suffering, helps the rural economy and protects the food chain.

In 2023/24, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Over 1,250 businesses were found to be in breach of animal health and welfare legislation.

Animal disease outbreaks create risks to the UK economy and the farming industry. It should be remembered that the Foot and Mouth Outbreak of 2001 cost the UK economy £8 billion, and caused problems affecting tourism, farming, rural wages, and food production for many years afterwards.

In 2023/24, there were far fewer avian influenza cases than in the last few years.

3.3 Reducing the risk of children accessing age restricted products

Trading Standards Services conduct test purchases to ensure businesses do not sell age-restricted goods to children, as well as providing businesses with advice on how to comply. Legislation outlaws the sale of age-restricted products, such as vapes, alcohol, cigarettes, knives, and fireworks to children, to protect them and their local communities from harm. This year there has been a continued national focus on the problems caused by the sale of vapes to children.

- 72 premises were tested for alcohol sales.
- The average failure rate for alcohol test purchases was 15%.
- Over 422 premises were tested for illegal vape sales.
- The average failure rate for vapes was 14.5%.
- Over 103 premises were tested for other products.
- The average failure rate for other products was 16%.

Resources have been shifted towards vapes testing, resulting in less under age testing on other products including illegal tobacco.

3.4 Reducing the availability of illicit products

Illicit tobacco, vapes and alcohol can contain undeclared contaminants. Illicit vapes can also contain higher than permitted levels of nicotine.

Smoking remains a significant driver in health inequalities. Price has been shown to be a critical factor in determining whether people quit smoking. The presence of cheap illicit tobacco undermines attempts to get people to cut down and quit smoking. Packs of illicit cigarettes are often between a third and a half the price of legitimate products.

The amount of tobacco and vape products seized has increased enormously since 2022/23. This reflects the prevalence of vaping problems and the priority this work is being given within local authorities. The work is supported with funding from National Trading Standards and the Welsh Government.

In 2023/24, across Wales:

- Over 1.3 million illicit cigarettes were seized, together with 0.220 tonnes of illicit hand-rolling tobacco, worth a combined street value of over £735,000.
- 376,500 illicit vapes were seized by local authorities.
- 99 test purchases were made to check on the authenticity of tobacco and tobacco products

The Licensing Act 2003 allows for a review, and potential removal of a licence, by a local authority Licensing Committee, where failures to comply with any of the four licensing objectives occur. These objectives are preventing crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm. Activities by Trading Standards have resulted in 4 Licence Reviews being carried out





Isle of Anglesey: Working in partnership with North Wales Police and UK Border Force (UKBF) to tackle illegal vapes

The Isle of Anglesey Trading Standards service's partnership working with North Wales Police resulted in a 3 month Closure Order on a vape shop on the island which resulted in a reduction in antisocial behaviour and underage sales to children which was shown to be affecting their health/school work. Working with UKBF at the port in Holyhead resulted in 118,011 vapes being prevented from entering the market whilst 2,824 were removed from sale in retail shops. The street value of these vapes was determined to be £1,463,569.92. So far, 232,307 vapes have been destroyed.

Newport City Council: Disrupting Illegal Tobacco

Operation Osprey relates to illegal tobacco. The team enhanced the disruption tactics of seizure, prosecution, and closure. The problem was scored under the Serious Organised Crime MORILE system and submitted to the Regional Organised Crime Unit (ROCU). Directed surveillance was carried out using the Council's CCTV system and links were established between several shops on the city's main street. Surveillance showed the same people delivering tobacco to the shops and always leaving and entering the area from the same road. CCTV was not available to identify the route further. The ROCU were able to take on an aspect of the investigation and provided expertise in 'foot-follow'

surveillance, and very quickly intelligence was provided relating to the residential address where the individuals were based. There was a coordinated action involving the execution of a warrant, arrest, seizures, closures, and suspect charging, all on one day. The result of the day of action was the seizure of 23,000 cigarettes, 2,000 vapes, 4.9 kg of tobacco as well as cash and cannabis. The suspects were subsequently convicted of fraud.

Neath Port Talbot Council: working with the Youth Service to tackle illicit vapes

NPT's Trading Standards Team regularly deliver seminars on topical trading standards issues to elected members to keep them apprised of its work. For the e-cigarette / vape seminar, Trading Standards worked with a member of the Education Department's Youth Service. This then led to the Youth Service and Trading Standards working together to establish a panel to share information and promote joint working on vapes. This panel has been running since September 2023, it includes members from the Health Board, Social Services, ASH Wales, Swansea City Council services (TS, Social Services) and the local Police. The group has sourced training on vapes for partners and members, is a forum for sharing information between partners and has developed a project plan to promote information on the use of vapes and the dangers of using illegal vapes.

SECTION FOUR: NET ZERO, ENERGY COSTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The Net Zero and Climate Change agenda continues to be important to local authorities. Many have this issue as a key corporate priority. The cost of living crisis has also meant that claims associated with energy efficiency and costs are attractive to consumers as they look to save money. While there is no specific data collected on this issue, figures will be included within the totals for compliance checks, business advice and prosecution figures in previous chapters. For example, some Trading Standards carry out work in relation to:

- Misleading claims on green energy products such as heat pumps and solar panels.
- Ensuring compliance with Energy Performance Certificates and Minimum Energy Efficient Standards.
- Misleading “greenwashing” claims.
- Enforcement of single use plastics bans.

Denbighshire & Flintshire County Councils' collaborate in relation to greenwashing and green claims

Denbighshire CC worked with Flintshire CC and its own grants services in relation to 'green businesses' registered on the Authority's scheme. All were written to after claims in relation to Central Government Department approval, selling techniques and approaches to consumers. The organisers of the scheme in Flintshire were approached and following discussions, all businesses were written to and advised of sales practices/ claims and marketing.

Blaenau Gwent CBC: Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012. Display of Energy Certificate. Compliance begins at the office!

In addition to the private sector, the Regulations require Council buildings which are open to the public (and caught by the provisions of regulation 10 and 14) to display an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) in a prominent position.

Following an Annual Strategic Assessment of all relevant data, Blaenau Gwent Trading Standards worked closely with the Council's "Corporate Landlord" over a period of time to advise on the legislation and prepare a plan to check compliance of Council buildings. This was followed up by a series of inspections to check compliance in February/March 2024 on 25% of the Authority's public buildings. The results highlighted that EPC's were displayed in a prominent position in all of the buildings inspected (100% compliance).

Blaenau Gwent has also established a reciprocal agreement with Torfaen County Borough Council to enforce provisions under Regulation 34A regarding Council owned buildings.



Newport: Energy Efficiency

Work by Newport Trading Standards Services resulted in eight illegally marketed domestic properties brought into compliance from their failing F and G ratings. This will result in an annual reduction of 30.2 tonnes of CO₂ and savings to residents of £2,428 per year. Three entirely unrated domestic properties were identified and brought up to standard, resulting in a further reduction of 23 tonnes of CO₂ and savings to residents of £3,787 per year. 11 homes were made more energy efficient resulting in a saving of £6,215 per year, potentially leading to a warmer, healthier environment in which to bring up a family. The team also saw 22 illegally marketed commercial properties brought into compliance from their failing F and G ratings, resulting in an annual reduction of 576 tonnes of CO₂. The amount of carbon removed from the atmosphere was the equivalent of planting 56,000 trees.

Shared Regulatory Services (Bridgend, City and Council of Cardiff, and Vale of Glamorgan): Energy Efficiency

Trading Standards contacted owners, agents, and landlords of private rented homes across the three local authority areas to remind them of their duties under the Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations (MEES). The team also signposted them to funding that may be available to assist in improving the energy rating of homes.

The focus was properties appearing to fall into the forbidden F and G energy efficiency ratings, together with those for which there was no published rating. By the end of the year, a total of 138 properties were sufficiently improved to take them out of the F and G energy efficiency rating to become E rated or better. Also, some 127 previously unrated private rented homes now hold Energy Performance Certificates ranging from B to E. This resulted in a reduction of 406 tonnes in the amount of CO₂ produced at the improved properties and a reduction of almost 425,000 kWh needed to heat the improved homes.

SECTION FIVE: COST OF LIVING CRISIS

As referenced throughout this report, the cost of living crisis has continued to influence the work done by Trading Standards this year. Similarly to net zero, there is no specific data collected on this issue as figures will be included within the totals for compliance checks, business advice and enforcement activity.

Carmarthenshire County Council: Farmer Welfare Initiative

Carmarthenshire Trading Standards' Animal Health Team has responded to an increasing number of animal welfare complaints on farms only to find that farmers are struggling financially and/or mentally. They brought together the Citizens' Advice Bureau (to offer debt/financial advice), and charities, Tir Dewi (offering practical support to farmers) and the DPJ Foundation (mental health charity for the farming community) so there are now mechanisms in place for four-way referrals between each of the organisations, ensuring farmers receive the support they need.

As an example, officers responded to one complaint and during a joint visit with the Animal and Plant Health Agency, found evidence of carcasses scattered throughout the property, a large quantity of slurry and very little grass, hay or straw. The farmer told officers that he was struggling, had no money or support and was a carer to his elderly mother who had recently attempted suicide. Initially, he was too proud to accept help, but after numerous visits by an officer, he agreed to meet with Tir Dewi and CAB who were able to provide practical and financial assistance, which allowed the farmer to resolve non-compliance and become more financially and emotionally stable.

Isle of Anglesey: Imposition of additional charges for paying by card results in donation to local food bank

An Anglesey business was prosecuted for charging customers an additional amount if they paid by card resulting in a '£6000 donation' to the local Food Bank; further information and context can be found by clicking on the press release;

www.journaloftradingstandards.co.uk/consumer/anglesey-ts-secures-food-bank-donation/



Trading Standards Wales Week: “The Cost of Living”

The cost of living was the overarching theme for Trading Standards Wales Week.

Press releases, media messaging, LinkedIn messaging, podcasts on community radio and short videos highlighted the work of Trading Standards Wales in areas that seek to support some of the challenges associated with the cost of living crisis. Information was also shared locally by individual local authorities. An advert promoting TSW Week was played across a range of community radio stations: Each station has about 20,000 listeners, based on their own research.

Specific days were dedicated to food, fuel, loan sharks, misdescriptions and unsafe products.

TSW highlighted the good work of partners and partnership working, including some joint podcasts with national regulators.

Trading Standards Wales X (previously Twitter) data showed that during TSW Week impressions rose to 6,500, representing a 1,700% increase over previous months. The top impressions were on the themes of Loan Sharks and Fuel.

Powys County Council: Bulk Fuel Deliveries

Powys Trading Standards Service carried out bulk fuel tests finding one tanker was delivering 14 litres short measure in every 1,000 litres of central heating fuel. The cost to the individual consumer is estimated at a loss of approximately £10 per delivery of 1,000L. The trader is estimated to have gained approximately £8,250 over the year from short measure deliveries.

Continuing to Protect the Public and Support Businesses in the Cost of Living Crisis

The Impacts and Outcomes of Local Trading Standards Services in Wales in 2023/24

The Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) created the Impacts and Outcomes Framework in 2018/19 to provide national data for England and Wales on work done by local authority Trading Standards Services. This is the third report for Wales and this document contains a summary of the highlights of work done in 2023/24.

This year, across all areas of work, the risks associated with the cost of living crisis on consumers and businesses is apparent. The need for effective business advice and a level playing field for legitimate businesses is going to be crucial to keep them afloat in difficult times. Risks to consumers around the safety of cheap or illicit goods and false claims relating to prices, costs and energy efficiency are growing and the impact of losing money to scammers is bigger than ever.

In 2023/24 local Trading Standards Services in Wales have:

- Prevented over £38 million of detriment to consumers.
- Saved scam victims £893,000.
- Provided nearly 1,900 hours of advice to businesses through Primary Authority partnerships, up from last year.
- Seized over 376,000 disposable vaping products.
- Over 13,000 compliance checks to ensure businesses meet their legal responsibilities and to provide them with advice on site.

TACKLING DETRIMENT AND PREVENTING HARM

One of the key functions of Trading Standards is to prevent consumer and business detriment (financial and non-financial), tackle the criminal behaviour that leads to it and support victims. The Government's 2022 Consumer Protection Study estimated that there was £54 billion in unaddressed detriment across Great Britain.

Key statistics for 2023/24 included:



107 defendants were prosecuted and convicted.



Prison sentences of over **46 years** were handed down. This includes both immediate and suspended sentences.



Defendants were ordered to pay **£918,000 in Proceeds of Crime**.



Local authority Trading Standards provided support to almost **1,600 scam victims**.



Work to disrupt mass marketing fraud mailings, stop outgoing payments, mail etc. **saved consumers in the region of £900,000**.



Over **£375,000 compensation** being awarded to victims by the courts.



SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Businesses have always needed advice and support from Trading Standards to help them navigate the range of laws that ensure they trade fairly and their products are safe. This year, as businesses continue to recover from the impacts of Covid, and face supply chain and energy cost issues, the ability to access the correct advice and have confidence has never been more important.

Key statistics for 2023/24 included:



Responded to almost **1,700 requests** for advice from businesses that were not part of the Primary Authority scheme, similar to pre-pandemic levels.



Over **3,700 businesses** were subject to an intervention, such as advice, investigation or referral.



Over 13,000 visits were carried out to businesses to ensure they comply with the law and provide advice to help them fix any non-compliance.



Over **10,350 counterfeit products** with a market value of over **£1.1 million**, which breach the intellectual property of legitimate businesses, were seized.

PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Trading Standards undertake a wide range of activities to protect and promote the health and well-being of local communities including ensuring that products people buy are safe, that food is correctly labelled, and that the health and welfare of livestock is assured.

Age restricted products, including vaping products, tobacco, alcohol, and knives, are also a significant area of focus for many authorities. Trading Standards enforce and advise on a very wide range of age restricted sales legislation to help to keep young people safe.

Key statistics for 2023/24 included:



Over **6,700 unsafe or non-compliant products** were seized or removed from the market place following Trading Standards' interventions.



140 premises were tested for the under age sale of alcohol; the average failure rate was **23%**.



The savings to society, in terms of product value is over **£265,000**.



Trading Standards services across Wales received over **18,000 notifications and referrals** from the Citizens Advice Consumer Service as well as nearly **9,000** from other service partners



Over **1,750 businesses** were identified as supplying food that was misdescribed, did not correctly declare allergens, contained toxic or illegal components or was involved in food fraud.



422 premises were tested for illegal vapes; the failure rate was **14.5%**.



Over **1,250 businesses** were found to be in breach of animal health and welfare legislation.



Some **1.3 million illicit cigarettes** were seized, together with **0.220 tonnes of illicit hand-rolling tobacco** worth a combined street value of **£735,000**

SUPPORT FOR ENVIRONMENT, NET ZERO AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The Net Zero and Climate Change agenda are becoming more important each year, with the majority of local authorities seeing this issue as a key corporate priority.

Claims associated with energy usage and energy efficiency are going to be a real marketing point as energy costs rise so quickly and households will be looking to save money. More broadly "greenwashing" and green claims have become a concern and the Competition and Markets Authority issued a report on this.

There is no separate data collected on Trading Standards work to support this agenda, they will be included within the compliance checks, business advice and prosecution figures in the above figures.

COST OF LIVING

The continuing cost of living crisis has been a major influence on all of the work done by Trading Standards. In some localities specific projects have been undertaken to address issues such as pricing on groceries, accuracy of fuel deliveries and extra support to consumers who have been defrauded.

Appendix 5 - Summary of cases concluding between December 2024 and the end of February 2025

The following prosecution cases arising from investigations conducted across the Shared Service, have been concluded recently.

Case	Court date	Offence(s)	Outcome
1	10.12.24	<p>In April 2024, a sixteen-year-old volunteer was served with a SKE Fizzy Cherry nicotine inhaling product (vape) at this Cardiff store. The illegal sale took place as part of a Trading Standards test purchase exercise which was prompted by complaints, or other intelligence, alleging that people under the age of 18 were able to purchase vapes at the store.</p> <p>This was not the first time the store failed a test purchase attempt for vapes – underage sales made previously resulted in an informal warning letter in respect of a December 2022 illegal sale, and in prosecution in respect of the July 2023 underage sale that followed. Throughout this time, SRS officers provided the business with detailed advice on compliance with underage sales law.</p> <p>The case was brought against the limited company running the store, its sole Director, and also her husband who was acting in the capacity of the store manager.</p>	<p>The Judge ordered each defendant to pay a fine of £320, together with cost of £284 and £128 victim surcharge.</p> <p>It was made clear to the defendants that they must take more care as this was not a mistake but a crime. If they continue to offend, the Judge will have no hesitation in continuing to double each fine they receive.</p>
2	10.12.24	<p>This case arose as a result of the food hygiene failings identified during a number of inspections of a mobile catering vehicle operating in the Vale of Glamorgan. During the initial visit to the food truck in a popular seaside location, the inspecting Environmental Health Officer issued a Remedial Action Notice (RAN) in respect of food being stored in a broken-down fridge. The items of food, which included meat and fish, were meant to be kept chilled (at a temperature of less than 8°C) but were being stored in</p>	<p>The Judge fined the company Director £334, and the company £50 (seemingly on the grounds that it had not been trading for some time). The Director was ordered to pay prosecution costs totalling £2283.75, but no victim surcharge.</p> <p>The prosecution's request for a Food</p>

	<p>the fridge at temperatures between 17.5°C and 19.6°C.</p> <p>A string of other failings was identified during a follow up visit in May 2023, and these cut across multiple aspects of food safety (including cleanliness, unsafe food storage, and lack of training for staff) indicating a disregard for the significant responsibilities associated with running a food business. As a result of the Officer's concerns, a second RAN was issued, this time to prohibit the handling and storage of raw foods.</p> <p>Despite extensive advice and support from the Investigating Officer, the Food Business Operator (a limited company) and its sole Director showed a disregard for the safety of customers, and the seriousness of the failings in this case is reflected in the ZERO Food Hygiene Rating Scheme score awarded to the business as a result.</p> <p>Further visits (both announced and unannounced) took place between June and September 2023, during which multiple food hygiene non-compliances continued to be observed. In addition, failure to display the ZERO food hygiene rating sticker resulted in a fixed penalty notice being issued.</p> <p>The defendant had entered guilty pleas for a total of 17 food hygiene charges. In sentencing, the Judge took into consideration the 'glowing references' for the company Director, the lack of previous convictions and certain personal circumstances that weren't disclosed to the court.</p> <p>The Judge made it clear however that had the defendant's personal circumstances been different, he would have been facing a substantial fine, and this should act as a deterrent for any future</p>	<p>Hygiene Prohibition Notice was declined by the Judge.</p>
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		offending.	
3	11.12.24	<p>This case catalogued a series of occasions between March and the end of November 2022, when illegal vapes (electronic cigarettes) were either supplied, or in possession for supply, to customers at a vape outlet in Cardiff. During the various Officer visits, it became clear that the company running the business, and its sole Director, chose to flout the law by trading in illegal vapes, non-compliant with the requirements of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations. This was despite the business being issued with detailed guidance on the first occasion. The behaviour of the company and its Director accords with the intelligence received by the Shared Service which indicated that illegal stock was being stored on, and supplied from, the premises.</p> <p>The Judge identified the aggravating factor of the case as being the multiple occasions in which non-compliant e-cigarettes were found on the premises. The defence presented the mitigating factors to be that the Director accepts his wrongdoing (evidenced by his early guilty plea), and the fact that he is experiencing poor mental health.</p>	<p>The Judge imposed fines totalling £2,000 (which took into account the early guilty pleas). In addition, costs amounted to £1336, and there was a victim surcharge of £500.</p>
4	17.12.24	<p>The defendant faced 13 charges for his offences under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 and the Fraud Act 2006. The court heard how his criminal behaviour involved grossly overcharging for work, exaggerating the severity of the work needing to be done to the victims' properties, advising for work to be done on properties which was not needed in the first place, and any work which was done was of a very poor standard.</p> <p>The defendant's actions also resulted in the victims having to pay high costs for extensive repairs for any work he did do.</p>	<p>The recorder imposed an immediate custodial sentence of 5 years and one month on the defendant for the offences arising from the residents' properties.</p> <p>In addition, his guilty plea under the Bail Act 1976 for Failure to Surrender also warranted a 1-month concurrent sentence, bringing his overall sentence to 5 years and 2 months, half of which he will serve in</p>

		<p>The victims were 'pressured' and 'persuaded' by the defendant, and his seemingly friendly nature meant that they trust him and his advice. However, the victims are now left distressed and with 'trust issues' towards any tradespeople. One of the victims, a 93-year-old lady, who had placed her trust in the trader, sadly passed away in 2023. Her son's Victim Impact Statement told of how she had urged her son not to cancel her agreement with the defendant, or to involve the police as he seemed to be a 'very nice man' who would 'do a good job and give her a fair price'. It is clear that the defendant targeted vulnerable individuals to commit his Fraud, leaving them emotionally, physically and financially burdened.</p> <p>An application for a Criminal Behaviour Order was sought to restrict the defendant's ability to offer and provide building and home improvement services in the future, and this was granted for a period of 10 years.</p> <p>An application for the Proceeds of Crime Act Inquiry was also introduced to investigate the defendant's finances, in the hope that recovered monies can be paid to compensate the victims. A timetable for this was set and the mention hearing will be on 29th April 2025.</p>	<p>prison and half on licence. The</p>
5	17.12.24	<p>The investigation in this case arose as a result of a number of complaints received by the Service from neighbours concerned that dog breeding was taking place in 'inhumane conditions' at a residential property in Cardiff.</p> <p>On arrival at the property, the Investigating Officer was confronted with the dreadful conditions in which dogs were being kept by the unlicensed breeder. A Vet reviewed the wellbeing of the dogs and offences under both section 9 and section 4 of the Animal Welfare</p>	<p>The defendant, who was already serving a prison sentence following another matter, was given a one-month concurrent prison sentence for the Animal Welfare offence and ordered to pay a £154 surcharge.</p>

		<p>Act were established.</p> <p>Sentencing in this case took place at Cardiff Crown Court. The court heard that the defendant had pleaded guilty to causing an animal to suffer contrary to Section 4 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006. All dogs had either been voluntarily handed over to the local authority or were subject to successful section 20 proceedings to give ownership of the animals to the Council.</p> <p>An application for a Disqualification Order under the Animal Welfare Act was successful, and this means that the defendant is unable to keep, or be involved in the keeping, of dogs for a period of 6 years.</p>	
6.	18.12.24	<p>This case arose following the sale at a Cardiff convenience store of a bottle of Smirnoff Ice to a 16-year-old volunteer. The sale was made during a Trading Standards test purchase operation. SRS had received complaints about the premises, including the suggestion that a young person was apparent hospitalised after they had purchased alcohol from the store.</p> <p>It is disappointing that the volunteer was sold alcohol despite Officers previously giving written and verbal advice to the business on age restricted products and on how to avoid underage sales.</p> <p>The defendant entered a guilty plea by post, and the court was told that he will make a number of improvements at his retail premises, this to include hiring only experienced staff in future.</p>	In sentencing, the Court imposed a fine of £461, together with costs of £400 and a surcharge of £184.
7.	3.1.25	The landlord of two Victorian properties, converted into 5 self-contained flats, faced a total of 28 charges for which he entered	The defendant was fined a total of £840, and ordered to pay costs of £784, plus a

		<p>guilty pleas.</p> <p>Following a complaint made by one of the tenants in November 2023, SRS officers visits were made to the property where it was established multiple failures to comply with the relevant standards for this type of private rented accommodation, namely</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was no functional fire alarm system of the appropriate type. • Flat entrance doors were defective and/or damaged fire doors. • Gas and electricity meters in the common areas had not been fire protected. • Electrical installations were unsafe. • Kitchen and bathroom facilities were inadequate and/or defective. • The property was no secure against intruders. • There were accumulations likely to harbour rodents in the rear garden and garage. • A drain was missing a cover. • One of the flats included an unacceptable inner room. • Flats did not have adequate heating systems. • There was penetrating damp. <p>Improvement Notices were served on the defendant in January 2024 under Part 1, Housing Act 2004 were served on Mr. Stewart in January 2024 and required him to carry out the necessary works by 5th April 2024. When Officers returned in may and June to inspect the property it was clear that the Improvement Notices hadn't been complied with.</p> <p>In mitigation, it was claimed that the actions of the tenants had</p>	<p>£330 victim surcharge.</p>
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		contributed to the awful conditions they were living in.	
8.	24.1.25	<p>In this case, a Cardiff Taxi Driver failed to use a hackney carriage taximeter to calculate the fare on a journey. The offence was committed during a 'mystery passenger' exercise organised by SRS Officers with the assistance of Police student volunteers. The statements of the three volunteers describe how the driver agreed to take them to the destination before they entered the vehicle. Once inside the vehicle they observed that the taxi meter wasn't in operation for the fare to be properly calculated, and they describe how during the journey, when asked how much the fare would be, the driver replied 'just a tenner'.</p> <p>The maximum fare that should have been charged (calculated from the Hackney Carriage fare tariff for Cardiff), was £6.34. Comparison of the permitted fare of £6.34 with the £10 fare actually charged by the driver for the 0.91 mile journey equates to a 37% overcharge.</p> <p>In court, the driver pleaded guilty to two charges, taking full responsibility for his actions and explaining in mitigation that it was a momentary lapse in judgement.</p>	The driver was fined £300 in respect of both charges, £150 prosecution costs and £120 Victim Surcharge.
9.	28.1.25	<p>Officers found such poor standards of food safety when they inspected a Cardiff restaurant in October 11th 2023, that a Food Hygiene Rating of Zero was awarded, i.e. <i>urgent improvement necessary</i>. In addition to cleanliness issues, dangerously long date markings were being given to prepared food, and a total of three active pest infestations were identified (mice and cockroaches in various locations, and book lice living in the spices). As a result of these findings, the premises were voluntarily closed for cleaning</p>	For the overarching charge relating to the business not being run safely, the District Judge imposed a fine of £11,000 on the limited company. For the remaining five offences, the company was fined a total of £5500. In addition, it was ordered to pay costs of £462 and a victim surcharge of £2000.

		<p>and for both pest elimination and proofing.</p> <p>The defendant company had been the Food Business Operator at the premises since 2019, and since 2021, there was a marked decline in levels of food safety compliance. Despite this deterioration at the premises and despite detailed advice being given on compliance, the food business failed to address the problems. It also became apparent that staff at the premises were aware of at least one live mouse being seen on the premises in the week before the initial Officers' visit, yet this wasn't addressed.</p> <p>Charges were laid against the company as well as its sole Director and the natural Food Business Operator. The defendants told the District Judge that they took full accountability for the offences and had learnt a valuable lesson going forward, they stated they are now compliant with the law when running their business.</p>	<p>The two individuals received equal fines as their income was identical. Each was fined a total of £4180, and ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £1672 together with costs of £462.</p> <p>Fines summary</p> <p>Company: £11,000</p> <p>Defendant 1: £ 4,180</p> <p>Defendant 1: £ 4,180</p> <p>TOTAL: £19,360</p>
10.	17.2.2025	<p>This investigation identified persistent failings of a Cardiff company in supplying, and having in possession for supply illegal vapes, as well as soft drinks and snacks containing additives not permitted in the UK. Despite the Investigating Officer on a number of occasions providing the company's Director with detailed advice on compliance in both of these areas of regulatory law, he did nothing to stop the offending.</p> <p>While the company's wholesale outlet is based in Cardiff, the impact of its offending was felt much further afield, and the many referrals from other local authorities and the Food Standards Agency demonstrate the breadth of supply of non-compliant goods to third party outlets, as well as the Director's own retail shop (run by a second company). When interviewed under caution about the non-compliant stock, the company Director was unable to give any</p>	<p>The District Judge imposed the following fines:</p> <p>The first company was fined £1,340, with a victim surcharge of £536 and costs of £732.</p> <p>The second company was fined £500, with a victim surcharge of £200 and costs of £732.</p> <p>And finally, the Director was fined £641, with a victim surcharge of £256 and costs of £733.</p>

		plausible explanation for allowing the offending to continue, other than to blame staff.	
11.	18.2.25	<p>SRS received fourteen complaints about the keeping of ducks, chickens, geese and cockerels in the garden of a terraced property in Cardiff. Neighbours complained about the nuisance caused by faeces, odour and noise associated with the keeping of large numbers of birds in a small space.</p> <p>In October 2023 notices under the Environmental Protection Act were served on the occupiers of the property requiring the cleaning and disinfection of the birds' living area on a weekly, or more frequent basis, the clearing away of excess food and bedding on a daily basis, and for waste to be stored appropriately.</p> <p>When further resident complaints followed, it was established that the notices had been breached. When visiting a neighbour's property to carry out their assessment, officers found that the odour from was so overwhelming in that it could be smelt in every room of the neighbour's home. It was clear that the area was not being adequately cleaned and disinfected. Waste was not being stored in sealed containers and further visits revealed no improvement.</p> <p>Proceedings were brought against a father and daughter, the latter confirming to the Court ahead of sentencing that the birds had finally been removed from the property.</p>	<p>The father was fined £150 and ordered to pay costs of £350, together with a victim surcharge of £60.</p> <p>The daughter was fined £250 and ordered to pay costs of £350, together with a victim surcharge of £100.</p>
12.	20.2.25	A Cardiff Taxi Driver failed to use a hackney carriage taximeter to calculate the fare on a journey. The offence was committed during a 'mystery passenger' exercise organised by SRS Officers. When the passengers gave the driver the destination they wished to be taken to, he told them that the fare would be £10. The taximeter	The Magistrates imposed a fine of £40 for each charge, a £32 Victim Surcharge and £150 prosecution costs.

		<p>was not activated, despite this being legally required.</p> <p>The maximum fare that should have been charged (calculated from the Hackney Carriage fare tariff for Cardiff), was £6.95 Comparison of the permitted fare of £6.95 with the £10 fare actually charged by the driver equates to a 31% overcharge.</p> <p>In mitigation, the driver submitted that he had a momentary lapse of judgement that resulted in the offences occurring, that he has learnt from this experience and will not repeat his actions.</p>	
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