

Meeting of:	Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, 24 June 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Live Well Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Shared Regulatory Services Annual Report 2024-25
Purpose of Report:	To advise members on the performance and financial position of the Shared Regulatory Service for the 2024-25 financial year.
Report Owner:	Head of Shared Regulatory Services Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer, Vale of Glamorgan Council
Responsible Officer:	Director of Environment and Housing
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Advice has been sought from the partner Councils
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for the Shared Regulatory Services Joint Committee
Executive Summary: • The Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) is a collaboration between Bridgend County Borough Council, the County Council of the City and County of Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Council that commenced on 1st May 2015 and is charged with the provision of Regulatory Services across the three Authorities. • The Joint Working Agreement requires the Head of SRS and the Head of Finance to produce an Annual Report which, once approved by the Committee, is forwarded to the partner Councils. • The Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) continues to deliver a wide range of regulatory functions across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, supporting the health, safety and economic wellbeing of residents and businesses. • The report demonstrates that during 2025-26, the Service has made strong progress in delivering its Business Plan priorities despite continued pressures on staffing and resources. This includes: • Implementation of the Regulatory Services Apprenticeship, strengthening long-term workforce sustainability • Continued delivery of statutory functions across Shared Regulatory Services • Significant enforcement outcomes across the service	

- Ongoing development of income-generating services and business engagement
- The £8.838m 2025/26 Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) Budget was agreed by Committee on the 19th of February 2025. The net budget increase of £25k included an assumed 3% pay award plus an adjustment in respect of the previous year's pay shortfall, savings for this year were based on the assumed cost of the pay award being self-funded by the SRS.
- As of 31st March 2026, the SRS has achieved an unaudited outturn deficit of £274k against the 2025/26 £8.838m budget. The outturn position is illustrated on the following table;

	Gross Budget	Year-end Outturn	Outturn Variance
Authority	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	1,803	1,812	(9)
Cardiff	5,218	5,465	(247)
Vale	1,817	1,835	(18)
Total Gross Expenditure	8,838	9,112	(274)

- The adverse variances at year end shown against all 3 authorities can be associated with both the Authority Specific and Core elements of the SRS budget and is further detailed in this report
- This position is subject to the completion of the external audit of these accounts by Audit Wales.

Recommendation

1. That the Joint Committee approves the report, and authorises the Chief Executive, Vale of Glamorgan Council, to forward a copy of the report to the Heads of Paid Service for the other partner Councils.
2. That the 2025-26 unaudited outturn position is noted

Reason for Recommendations

1. To meet the requirements set out in Clause 5.1 of the Joint Working Agreement.
2. That Members are aware of the 2025-26 unaudited outturn position

Background

- 1.1 Under the Joint Working Agreement, the Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) is required to produce an annual report that covers the operational and financial performance of the service for the preceding year. Clause 5 of the Joint Working Agreement states:

'The Joint Committee shall receive in each year at its annual meeting which shall be held no later than 30th June the report of the Head of Regulatory Services and the Lead Financial Officer in respect of the functions delegated to the Joint Committee

relating to the twelve months ending 31st March of that year and a copy thereof shall be forwarded to the Chief Executive of each Participant.'

1.2 The report shall include:-

- (i) *A statement showing the performance of the Regulatory Service Functions and progress in achieving the Objectives and delivering the Business Plan.*
- (ii) *a summary revenue account and statement of capital spending including the distribution or use of any revenue surpluses and the financing of any capital expenditure"*

1.3 This is the eleventh report produced under this requirement and covers the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026. If the content of this report is agreed, a copy of the report must be sent to the Head of Paid Service of each of the three Councils along with the SRS Business Plan for 2026-27. This annual report outlines many of the actions undertaken at each partner Council to deliver the wide range of statutory functions assigned to the Service. The report provides a review of operations across the service, a summary of the financial position, and outlines performance against the 2025-26 service objectives.

Operating the Shared Regulatory Service

1.4 The Shared Regulatory Service (SRS) operates across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. Through a collaborative model, it delivers a range of statutory services, that are critical to maintaining the health, safety and economic wellbeing of local communities. The operating model delivers an integrated service for the Trading Standards, Environmental Health, and Licensing functions, which has three service delivery sectors.

- Environmental Protection and Licensing
- Health and Public Protection
- Enterprise and Specialist Services

1.5 As a regional organisation, providing regulatory services across three local authority areas, the SRS seeks to place the corporate priorities and stated outcomes of the three councils at the heart of all its activities. Using them as a focus, the strategic priorities for the Shared Regulatory Service of

- Improving Health and wellbeing
- Safeguarding the Vulnerable
- Protecting the Environment
- Supporting the local economy

- Maximising the use of resources

provide a robust base for achieving the outcomes identified in previous Business Plans and the partner Councils' corporate aspirations.

1.6 The Joint Working Agreement (JWA), originally executed in April 2015, underpins the entire service provision. The JWA contains a number of 'milestones and requirements'. In accordance with those requirements:

- Each year, the Wales Audit Office completes an independent financial audit of the service.
- The Business Plan for 2026-27 is presented for political approval in papers to the June 2026 Joint Committee meeting.
- The Joint Committee is due to receive an audited statement of accounts for 2025-26 at its December 2026 meeting.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

The 2025-26 Annual Report illustrates that the Shared Service continues to deliver a wide range of regulatory functions across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan Council, supporting the health, safety and economic wellbeing of residents and businesses. Key actions completed include -

- *Delivery of the SRS Business Plan 2025-26 and the associated corporate priorities assigned to the SRS by the partner Councils*
- *Supporting the partner Councils and other agencies as an integral part of the health protection system in Wales*
- *To Monitor the implementation of new legislation and any requirements imposed by such legislation upon the Service, for example, the newly launched special procedures regime; Single use Vapes ban requirements; legislative changes arising from the Tobacco and Vapes Bill and the Building Safety regime.*
- *To contribute to the climate change goals in each of the partner authorities through effective enforcement of environmental controls such as those regulating energy efficiency in the private rented housing sector.*
- *To further develop the 'growing our own' approach (including through regulatory apprenticeships when available), as part of the wider recruitment and retention strategy.*

- *Considering the continued pressures on public sector budgets, further explore, implement and maximise opportunities for income generation and cost recovery.*
- *Review the agile working arrangements for the service to ensure that technology is being exploited fully to improve service delivery.*

Human Resources

- 2.1** Overall sickness absence levels for 2025-26 were **11.03 days per FTE person** overall. This represents an increase on the same measure for 2024-25 when the overall sickness absence rate stood at **8.34 days per FTE person**. The increase across the year reflects a number of long-term absences, with the service continuing to support staff return to work arrangements.
- 2.2** **Figure 1** below provides some context for the levels of sickness absence seen in 2025-26.

Figure 1: 2025-26 sickness absence figures compared to those for previous years

Year	Short term days lost per FTE	Long term days lost per FTE	Total days lost per FTE
2025-26	2.64	8.39	11.03
2024-25	2.00	6.34	8.34
2023-24	3.22	3.70	6.93
2022-23	2.78	7.69	10.47
2021-22	1.95	8.16	10.11
2020-21	1.68	4.64	6.32
2019-20	3.04	7.19	10.23

- 2.3** Members will recall being updated on the summer recruitment and appointment of the Service's first two Regulatory Services Apprentices. Both began work on 1st October, one of them based in a Trading Standards setting, and the other in an Environmental Health setting. Since then, they have been busy shadowing Officers as well as managing their own growing workloads, and both are continuing their studies towards the Level 4 Diploma in Regulatory Compliance.

- 2.4** In another strand of the SRS 'Growing our Own' approach, SRS is committed to developing staff to ensure they are effective in their roles. Learning and development can take many forms and during the last year the service has continued to invest in a number of learning and development activities to support the business.
- 2.5** For the past few years, support has been offered to a small number of staff by way of match funding or seeking opportunities for development funding where possible. The qualifications attained since 2017 include –
- MSc in Environmental Health
 - MSc in Public Health
 - MSc in Health and Public Service Management
 - MSc in Leadership and Management
 - MSc in Public Health
- 2.6** The success of the initiative is evident, not only in demonstrating how SRS values its staff and supports their development, but in equipping the service with the necessary skills and behaviours to shape future leaders.
- 2.7** Alongside this a small cohort of managers or aspiring managers have also successfully completed an Institute of Line Management qualification. This is a proactive way to further develop staff and provide in-house opportunities for succession planning.
- 2.8** At its meeting in September, the Joint Committee requested that the SRS Management Board commence the recruitment process for the next Head of Shared Regulatory Services. Following a robust and multi-stage assessment process, the Joint Committee appointed a new Head of Shared Regulatory Services, with the successful candidate taking up the post on 1st April 2026.
- 2.9** Once again, colleagues across the Shared Service have gone above and beyond in supporting residents and reputable businesses. This is evidenced by the volume of positive feedback received throughout the year, recognising both individual contributions and the quality of services delivered. A selection of these examples is included later in this Annual Report, together with the awards and wider recognition achieved by the Service.

Operational Performance

- 2.10** Operational performance throughout 2025–26 has been reported to both the Joint Committee and each partner Council through established legacy systems. Overall, delivery against the 2025–26 Business Plan has been positive, with all

statutory documents published on time and the majority of targets and actions successfully achieved.

2.11 Where actions have not been completed, due either to resource constraints or factors beyond the Service's control, these have been carried forward into the 2026–27 Business Plan. The following paragraphs outline performance against the key criteria.

2.12 The Shared Regulatory Service continues to report to the partner Councils on a wide range of indicators of performance, these are detailed in **Appendix 1**, further information in relation to food and housing are detailed below.

- **Percentage of food establishments broadly compliant (formerly PAM 023)**

This indicator continues to provide a measure of how well a food business complies with food hygiene legislation. The food industry is responsible for producing and distributing safe food. The Shared Regulatory Service, as the enforcement agency, conducts inspections, ensuring that standards are met through a robust enforcement programme to deal with those who do not comply with standards. Premises are deemed to be broadly compliant if specified risk scores are achieved for cleanliness, structural issues, and confidence in the management of the business.

The proportion of premises that are broadly compliant with food hygiene requirements, i.e., scoring a 3* food hygiene rating or above, exceeds the UK average of 95%, and is consistent with that seen in previous years for each of the local authority areas, as shown in **Figure 2** below i.e.

Figure 2: Percentage of food establishments 'broadly compliant'

Year	Bridgend	Cardiff	Vale of Glamorgan
2025-26	98.24%	96.65%	97.34%
2024-25	98.02%	95.80%	97.55%
2023-24	98.03%	95.64%	96.63%
2022-23	98.00%	95.67%	97.01%
2021-22	97.38%	95.74%	97.25%
2020-21	97.24%	95.41%	97.53%
2019-20	97.49%	94.84%	97.37%

The significant turnover of food businesses has continued, and during 2025-26, some 1019 new food businesses were due for inspection across the region. All new food businesses are required to be inspected and the Food Law Code of Practice requires that where possible, they are inspected within 28 days of opening. This requirement places a significant impact on the resources of the Shared Service as these visits are in addition to the existing programme of inspections. The problem is further exacerbated when new businesses are found to have poor levels of compliance, requiring further intervention.

- **Empty Homes performance indicators (formerly PAM 013 and PAM 045)**

The Service continues to report on the *percentage of empty private properties brought back into use*, and the *number of new homes created as a result of bringing empty properties back into use*. These indicators have as their core purpose the aim of quantifying the reduction in the number of empty properties as a consequence of intervention by Councils. The current performance measure guidance sets out the categories of direct action that local authorities can take to bring a property back into use, including

- Grants, loans or other financial assistance
- Enforcement action including statutory notices, and
- Dialogue between the owner and the local authority where progress to restore the use of the property is evident.

Funding secured from the Vale of Glamorgan Council from the start of 2023-24, means that the Shared Regulatory Service now contributes a dedicated resource to bringing properties back into beneficial use through intervention and enforcement in all three partner Council areas.

In **Bridgend**, SRS continues to focus its efforts on long-term empty properties identified within the top 20 priority cases set out in the action plan. During the year, three of these properties have been brought back into occupation, with a further four now sold subject to contract and five currently undergoing renovation.

Work is progressing in respect of enforcement activity, including one ongoing enforced sale and the initiation of a further enforced sale following recent works in default. The remaining properties are being progressed through a combination of informal action and ongoing review to determine the most appropriate course of intervention.

A significant milestone has been achieved with a Compulsory Purchase Order for a property in Maesteg now confirmed by Welsh Government, with the case currently in the final stages of the legal process.

Beyond the top 20 cases, work continues to address additional empty properties through the established five-stage escalation process, alongside the use of formal enforcement powers where necessary.

The Service has also secured four Welsh Government funding applications during the year, supporting works in default and wider enforcement activity.

In parallel, SRS is working to implement the aims and objectives of the Empty Homes Strategy 2025–2030, including the development of a communications plan to support increased engagement through social media. A number of Empty Homes Support Sessions have also been delivered, which have been well received by property owners.

In **Cardiff**, SRS has continued to focus on tackling private sector empty homes across the city. This has involved both reactive and proactive work, including responding to complaints and enquiries, and engaging directly with property owners through site visits. Support has been provided through advice on property standards and rental requirements, as well as referrals and signposting to other Council services and potential sources of financial assistance.

This work has been strengthened through a corporate approach, supported by the Empty Homes Working Group, which has enabled a more coordinated and strategic focus on bringing properties back into use.

During the last year, a total of **162 properties** were returned to occupation, comfortably exceeding the target of 150 and continuing an upward trend in performance year on year. Of these, **151 properties had been empty for over 12 months**, demonstrating the Service’s continued focus on addressing long-term empty homes.

The Service continues to make strong and targeted progress in tackling empty properties in Cardiff—an increasingly important area of work in the context of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis and the shortage of affordable housing across the city.

In the **Vale of Glamorgan**, SRS is currently managing **44 empty property cases**, several of which involve a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach with Planning, Conservation and Building Control officers. This joint working ensures that complex cases are addressed effectively, particularly where properties present both regulatory and structural challenges.

Enforcement and intervention activity continues to be prioritised through a risk-based approach, with ongoing action focused on high-priority cases identified through review.

SRS is also leading the development of a new **Vale of Glamorgan Empty Property Strategy (2025–2030)**, which will take a broader and more strategic approach by incorporating both domestic and commercial empty properties. A draft strategy has now been prepared and is currently under consideration by relevant working groups prior to wider consultation and implementation.

- 2.13** The detail of performance against all the agreed performance indicators is set out in **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 2.14** The SRS may, through the relevant participant Council, prosecute breaches of legislation, particularly in respect of those who flout the law or who act irresponsibly, or where there is an immediate risk to health and safety. In the period, the service has been successful in challenging a range of unfair practices, many of which attracted media attention. The time and work required to investigate these matters, and the consequences this has on Officers' ability to carry out day to day work whilst these matters are ongoing, is significant. The details of all 34 prosecutions that concluded in the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 are set out in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.15** SRS has continued to tailor its efforts to support the particular challenges facing each of the partner Councils, including those arising from the cost-of-living crisis, the climate change agenda, dealing with anti-social behaviour, and in supporting air quality compliance.
- 2.16** In respect of Licensing, In March 2026, following consultation with the trade and other interested parties, Bridgend Licensing Committee introduced a significant policy change in respect of taxi and private hire vehicle testing. Proprietors are now permitted to obtain both an MOT and a Declaration of Fitness (the additional taxi/private hire compliance check) from any DVSA approved MOT garage within the Borough of Bridgend; previously, testing was required to be carried out at the Council's in-house testing centre. This change was implemented in response to pressure from the trade to increase flexibility, particularly as external garages are also able to undertake any necessary repairs.
- 2.17** The Statement of Licensing Policy was presented to Cardiff Licensing Committee in November 2025 seeking approval to consult on the revised Policy. Final approval for the updates policy is intended for consideration at full council in June 2026.

Significant Service achievements

- 2.18** Paragraph 1.5 above highlights the priority themes for Shared Regulatory Services, and a range of achievements over the course of 2025-26 demonstrate progress toward delivering the outcomes associated with these priorities. The 2026-27 SRS Business Plan reviews these achievements in some detail, while the sections below provide just some examples of the work carried out in the last financial year.

Improving Health and Wellbeing

2.19 Improving health and wellbeing is a key priority for Shared Regulatory Services. Work undertaken to ensure that food is safe, that infectious disease, noise, and air emissions are controlled, that risks in the workplace are managed properly, allows people to live in healthy environments. Add to this, our activities to ensure the quality of private rented property, the promotion of a safe trading environment and our regulation of licensed premises to ensure they operate responsibly, and it is evident that the work undertaken by SRS is hugely important to the health and wellbeing of the region.

Food Hygiene and Food Standards interventions

2.20 A set of unique challenges face SRS in delivering the full food hygiene and food standards programmes. These are well established and result from the sheer number of food businesses within our footprint (around 20% of all those in Wales), the diverse and vibrant nature of the food scene locally, and the very frequent churn of new business start-ups.

2.21 Reflecting the increase in enforcement action required at food premises, a total of nine food prosecution cases, involving fourteen defendants, concluded during the course 2025-26 financial year. The combined impact of these nine concluded cases was:

- **14 defendants** pleading or being found guilty
- Fines of **£665,728**
- Costs of **£18,640**

2.22 One very high-profile food safety case related to a major supermarket in Cardiff. During Food Safety inspections of a major supermarket in Cardiff, officers uncovered serious and repeated breaches involving the sale of prepacked foods beyond their use-by dates directly compromising public health. Significant quantities of out-of-date items were identified across multiple visits to one store and at a second outlet operated by the same company.

2.23 Over a four-month period, more than 100 food items were found to have exceeded their use-by dates, in some cases by up to 15 days. Critically, these included high-risk products such as meat and dairy, where consumption beyond the use-by date can lead to food poisoning and other serious health consequences. The presence of products marketed towards children further heightened the level of risk and concern.

- 2.24** The company pleaded guilty to four charges of selling unsafe food. The court heard that use-by dates are a vital legal safeguard designed to protect consumers from potentially hazardous food. Ignoring these dates undermines food safety controls and exposes the public to avoidable harm.
- 2.25** In sentencing, the Judge stressed that this was not an isolated incident but a systemic failure across multiple product lines and locations. The company's controls to prevent unsafe food reaching consumers were found to be wholly inadequate, posing a sustained risk to public health.
- 2.26** Although the company reported investing in improved systems, the seriousness of the offences was reflected in the penalty: a £640,000 fine, £15,115 in prosecution costs, and a £2,000 Victim Surcharge. The case drew widespread media attention, reinforcing the critical importance of robust food safety practices in protecting public health.
- 2.27** The second very high-profile food case followed a prolonged investigation into a Cardiff-based wholesale supplier of chicken to ethnic restaurants and takeaways, which exposed serious and systemic failures. Investigators identified appalling hygiene standards, evidence of poultry being defrosted and refrozen, chicken retained two years beyond its durability date, incomplete temperature records, and the distribution of meat across Wales in unclean, unrefrigerated vehicles unfit for purpose. Critically, the company also falsely marketed its products as halal without any evidence to support this claim.
- 2.28** The jury found the FBO guilty of all 11 charges. At sentencing in Merthyr Crown Court, the Judge condemned his refusal to accept responsibility, noting his attempts to shift blame onto employees. She described the situation as "a disaster waiting to happen" and emphasised the significant public health and societal risks posed. The court found that customers would have been "horrified" had they known the truth about the lack of traceability, misuse of dates, and false halal claims. The court imposed substantial penalties on both defendants, reflecting the seriousness of the offences and the risks posed to public health. The Food Business Operator, who pleaded not guilty, was sentenced to 4 years and 8 months in immediate custody, which includes a sentence relating to an associated insolvency offence. The company Director, who pleaded guilty, received a 24-month suspended sentence and has been ordered to complete 150 hours of unpaid work.
- 2.29** In addition, the court granted Hygiene Prohibition Orders against both individuals. As a result, they are now prohibited from being involved in the management or operation of any food business for a period of 10 years, providing a strong and lasting safeguard for consumers.

Public Health Funerals

- 2.30** Under Section 46 of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984, local authorities have a statutory duty to arrange the burial or cremation of individuals where suitable arrangements have not been made. This provision protects public health and ensures individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Government has also issued non-statutory guidance to support the respectful delivery of public health funerals.
- 2.31** Public health funerals are typically required where a death occurs in the community and there is no identifiable next of kin, where relatives cannot be located, or where they are unwilling or unable to make arrangements. They may also arise where the deceased's estate or family cannot meet funeral costs.
- 2.32** In Cardiff, Bereavement Services undertake this function. In Bridgend and the Vale, these responsibilities sit with SRS, including registering the death, arranging the funeral, and completing associated documentation.
- 2.33** Referrals are usually received from the Coroner's Office or local hospice. While efforts are typically made to identify next of kin prior to referral, SRS will carry out further enquiries where necessary. If no responsible party is identified, the duty falls to the local authority.
- 2.34** The average cost of a public health cremation is approximately £1,500, initially met by the Council but recoverable from the deceased's estate under Section 46(5). Officers may undertake property searches to identify assets or relevant information. Funeral costs take precedence over other debts under Section 34(3) of the Administration of Estates Act 1925.
- 2.35** Demand for public health funerals is increasing, driven in part by social isolation and financial hardship. During 2025–26, SRS arranged 22 funerals (6 in Bridgend and 16 in the Vale). While overall numbers remain relatively low, the work involved is significant and typically falls to a small number of experienced officers.

Smoke-free legislation

- 2.36** The Smoke-free Premises etc. (Wales) Regulations 2007 were introduced to protect employees and the public from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. This legislation prevents smoking in 'enclosed' or 'substantially enclosed' public places, such as pubs, clubs, hotels, shops and workplaces, and 18 years on, smoking prevalence in Wales has dropped from 24% to under 13%. Committed to a smoke-free Wales by 2030 (less than 5% prevalence), Welsh Government extended the smoke-free requirements in March 2021 to apply in additional places, including hospital grounds.
- 2.37** SRS is responsible for enforcing this new area of smoke-free law and recognises that the requirement for all hospital sites to be smoke-free promotes healthier care environments and supports smokers using hospital services, or visiting or working in hospitals, to quit the habit. The Service has assisted its partner Health Boards of Cwm Taff Morgannwg and Cardiff and Vale in auditing the arrangements in place to prevent smoking in its grounds. Advice has been given and implemented ahead of the next phase of this work commencing.
- 2.38** Understanding that hospital patients and visitors can be experiencing some very difficult and emotionally challenging situations while on hospital sites, SRS is working with Cardiff and Vale Health Board to conduct awareness-raising patrol initiatives at first. Thought to be the first of its kind in Wales, the purpose of this SRS intervention is to work with the public to change behaviours, before progressing, in time, to a further phase of work which will involve law enforcement and the possibility of Fixed Penalty Notices being issued.

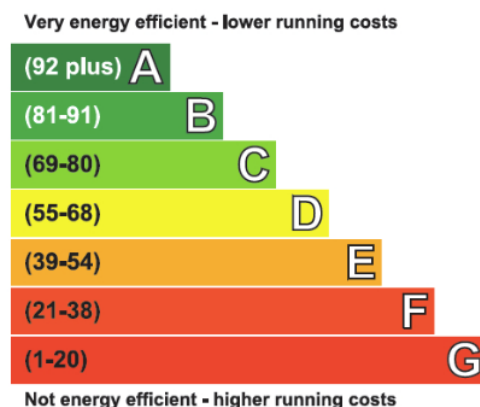
Protecting the Environment

- 2.39** Protecting the environment is a core strategic priority of SRS. Many of the activities such as water sampling, monitoring air quality, and remediating contaminated land contribute toward promoting a better environment. This in turn means better long term prospects for the health and wellbeing of our communities. SRS has a key role to play in ensuring society makes best use of existing resources and bringing back redundant/derelict properties into use is an important contributor to local communities as well as the wider environment.
- 2.40** In respect of the climate change and future generations agendas SRS is able to contribute through its enforcement role on energy efficiency controls in respect of properties and consumer products.
- 2.41** In the short term, SRS ensures that communities are protected from nuisance and are safer, by investigating noise complaints, and dealing with straying dogs and other animals.

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

- 2.42** In 2018, the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 introduced minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) for domestic private rented properties. The regulations were designed to increase the energy efficiency of the worst performing dwellings, reduce fuel poverty, and improve housing standards.
- 2.43** Energy Performance Certificates were first introduced in the UK in 2008. Certificates are valid for 10 years and through calculation of the energy efficiency score for a given property, they provide a rating from A (most efficient) to G (inefficient), as shown in Figure 4, below.

Figure 4: Energy Performance Score Rating of Properties



- 2.44** The Regulations require that domestic property let out under all new *and existing* tenancies must have an EPC rating of E or above. F or G rated properties cannot be let unless there is a bona fide, properly registered, exemption.
- 2.45** During 2025/26 SRS engagement took place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC resulting in a 129 compliant EPCs being validated across the region. A separate validation exercise highlighted a further 204 compliant properties. In terms of enforcement activity, 114 private rented sector properties were identified as non-compliant with EPC ratings of F and G, and compliance notices were issued accordingly.

Animal Welfare

- 2.46** Illegal dog breeding continues to be a lucrative business model for the unscrupulous, and it is often perceived as a lower risk activity in terms of the sanctions against offenders, when compared to other types of criminality. By their nature such cases can be painstaking for the Officers investigating, and they can be extremely costly where dogs and puppies have to be seized on animal welfare grounds. As we know from experience, this cost can be further exacerbated when defendants contest the evidence against them and challenge attempts by the Council to get legal ownership of the animals through the courts, in order to rehome them.
- 2.47** Once again, officers have during the year been involved in a number of animal welfare investigations, linked to unlicensed, illegal dog breeding and it is clear that this unlicensed activity continues to operate across some sophisticated criminal networks, being seen as profitable business model where the risk of punishment is perceived to be less than that associated with other illegal supply chains. Ongoing intelligence and complaints received suggest that this trend is set to continue for some time.
- 2.48** Faced with the appalling conditions in which breeding dogs and puppies are being found, officers have no choice but to act on Veterinary advice and seize animals to remove them from further harm. While cases are dealt with as quickly as possible, seizures unfortunately result in significant costs for the Service in boarding and caring for the dogs pending the courts granting ownership to the Council. It is only at this point in proceedings that the rehoming process can begin. The reality is that at the conclusion of a case, costs may not be awarded in full, if at all.
- 2.49** During 2025/26, 3 cases were successfully concluded in the courts. One case involved a married couple and an associate who operated a sophisticated and highly profitable illegal dog breeding business through a network of linked companies. Despite operating at a scale requiring licensing, they deliberately avoided regulation.
- 2.50** SRS investigations found they maximised profits by over-breeding dogs (primarily bulldogs and dachshunds) and undertaking veterinary-restricted procedures illegally. Over five years, the couple produced 259 puppies across 63 litters, over four times the legal limit, generating more than £400,000, with puppies sold for £1,000–£6,000. Their associate bred 24 litters in four years, earning £121,000.
- 2.51** Evidence presented in court included falsified records, unauthorised use of prescription-only medication, and the sale of puppies with undisclosed

congenital defects. All three defendants pleaded guilty to fraudulent trading and offences under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and associated regulations.

- 2.52** The first defendant received a 23-month sentence suspended for 2 years plus 10 rehabilitation days and 180 hours of unpaid work. The second defendant received a 15-month sentence suspended for 2 years and 140 hours of unpaid work. Their associate received a 12-month sentence suspended for 2 years and 120 hours of unpaid work. A Proceeds of Crime hearing will follow.
- 2.53** In another case, an investigation began after neighbours in Cardiff reported a severe odour from a residential property, raising concerns of a possible deceased person.
- 2.54** SRS Officers, supported by Police and veterinary surgeons, discovered 38 French Bulldogs and puppies living in overcrowded, appalling conditions. Puppies as young as 5 weeks were present, confirming the operation of an unlicensed breeding business. Basic welfare needs were unmet, with no adequate bedding, food or water, six adult dogs were confined in small cages and the bodies of 4 dead puppies were found in plastic bags in the freezer.
- 2.55** All dogs were examined and seized on welfare grounds. Two defendants were identified, and a court order under Section 20 of the Animal Welfare Act transferred ownership to the Vale of Glamorgan Council. Both defendants received lifetime disqualification orders, prohibiting them from owning, keeping, breeding, transporting, or otherwise being involved with dogs in any capacity.
- 2.56** Both defendants received suspended prison sentences, of 18 weeks and 9 weeks, 20 Rehabilitation Activity Requirements and 150 and 120 hours unpaid work respectively. Defendant 1 was ordered to pay £20,000 in costs within 12 months.
- 2.57** Each year, the RSPCA recognises exceptional contributions and unwavering commitment to protecting, promoting, and enhancing animal welfare through its PawPrints awards. The aim of the organisation in giving these annual awards is to shine a light on the organisations that have 'gone the extra mile' for animals, and entries are judged by an external panel of animal welfare experts. Once again, SRS has been recognised in three categories, namely Stray Dog Services, Animal Licensing Activity and Kennelling.
- 2.58** The hard work of our Animal Wardens and Animal Health and Welfare Officers throughout the year resulted in the following being awarded in 2024:

- **Stray Dog Provision: Platinum**
- **Animal-related Licensing: Platinum**
- **Kennelling: Platinum**

2.59 This builds on last year's success where two Gold awards and a Platinum award were received). This means that the Service has achieved the highest award for each of the above categories and is the only authority in Wales ever to do so. Platinum Awards recognise those organisations consistently achieving the Gold standard in a particular category for at least 5 years.

Air Quality

2.60 During 2025-26, 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 Annual Progress Reports (APRs) detailing the results for the previous year's 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.

2.61 In **Bridgend** the 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 2025 were 43.6 µg/m³ and 44.6 µg/m³. In 2025, a further monitoring site within the AQMA was compliant with the NO₂ annual objective for the first time since the commencement of monitoring at this location, with a result of 38.4 µg/m³

2.62 The APR also provided an update to Cabinet members on the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for the AQMA on Park Street. 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.

2.63 In **Cardiff**, the APR demonstrated that out of the 99 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. There remains a continued decreasing trend in NO₂ concentrations across Cardiff and average NO₂ concentrations at non-automatic diffusion tube sites across Cardiff, remain lower than those experienced during the pandemic and national lockdown periods. NO₂ levels have decreased by 36% since 2019 (pre-Covid).

- 2.64** 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. NO₂ concentrations at one monitoring site in the Llandaff AQMA continue to show improvement with significant reductions recorded. NO₂ concentrations are currently below the threshold of within 10% of the annual mean NO₂ and government guidance details that a revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of annual mean NO₂ concentrations being lower than 36 µg/m³.
- 2.65** The latest data shows continuous improvements in all AQMAs, with pollutant concentrations below legal limits. Given this, the Council will assess whether to revoke the City Centre, Stephenson Court and Ely Bridge AQMA. Before the decision is made to revoke any AQMA, detailed assessments for projected air quality concentrations within each Cardiff AQMA will be undertaken. This will allow for robust justification for the potential revocation of AQMAs within Cardiff, which would be subject to public consultation and Welsh Government approval.
- 2.66** Work commenced on the development of an updated Clean Air Strategy for Cardiff. This work is being supported by funding from the Welsh Government Local Air Quality Funding. SRS has secured the services of an external consultancy to lead on this work and initial steering group of internal and external stakeholders convened in Q3. This workshop was used to identify key areas of ongoing work within Cardiff Council aimed at improving air quality. The draft updated Clean Air Strategy will be brought to Cabinet early 26/27 to approve a public consultation commencing thereafter.
- 2.67** In the **Vale of Glamorgan**, the APR demonstrated that there were 41 specifically allocated non-automatic monitoring sites across the Vale of Glamorgan which monitored levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). From the 41 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.
- 2.68** Overall, in the Vale of Glamorgan we have seen a downward trend in NO₂ levels since before the Covid-19 pandemic. For existing monitoring sites, from the period of 2020 to 2024 annual average roadside NO₂ concentrations have decreased by 15% from 18µg/m³ to 15.3 µg/m³. A decrease of 6.5% from 17.2 µg/m³ to 15.3 µg/m³ in annual average roadside NO₂ concentrations is also evident between 2023 and 2024. This displays an overall improving trend in NO₂ concentrations.

Safeguarding the Vulnerable

- 2.69** SRS contributes toward the safeguarding agendas of the partner Councils by seeking to ensure that children are protected from harmful substances and products, that

older and vulnerable people are protected from unscrupulous individuals and traders, that illegal money lending activities across Wales are challenged robustly, and that the public feel safe when using taxis as public transport.

- 2.70** During 2025-26, SRS received 115 complaints or intelligence logs regarding **underage sales** of alcohol, tobacco, vapes, fireworks and knives. Although not currently restricted the service also received reports of premises selling nicotine pouches. With the assistance of young volunteers, Officers responded by staging a total of 83 attempts to purchase a range of age restricted products during the year. 10 of these attempts to purchase resulted in a sale of alcohol, vapes or fireworks. The circumstances of each case were fully investigated, and appropriate enforcement action taken. While the Service will always recommend a stepped approach to enforcement, over the course of 2025-26, three cases concluding in court saw the successful prosecution of three businesses for underage sales of alcohol, vapes or fireworks.
- 2.71** Once again, Officers have investigated a number of significant **rogue builder** or **doorstep crime** cases. Behind each of these cases is a story of residents, often vulnerable, being defrauded of large sums of money, sometimes their life savings. The cases show a pattern of little, or no, work being done, and where work has been carried out, it will have been to a very poor standard.
- 2.72** During the year, both Bridgend and Cardiff Council Legal Services teams prosecuted rogue builder / doorstep crime cases.
- 2.73** Details of all cases are given in the broader case narratives provided at **Appendix 2**, but to illustrate the impact of the offending on residents:

Rogue builder based in Bridgend County Borough

A husband and wife were sentenced following an investigation by SRS officer into a series of fraudulent building offences that caused significant financial and emotional harm to multiple victims.

The husband, a builder in his seventies, falsely presented himself as a reputable and experienced professional, securing large upfront payments from customers. Projects were left incomplete or substandard, costs increased despite fixed-price agreements, and funds intended for materials and contractors were misused. He also falsely charged VAT despite not being registered, using bogus registration details to mislead clients.

Victims were left with unfinished or unsafe properties, facing substantial additional costs to rectify poor workmanship. Many reported severe emotional distress, with some losing life savings and experiencing long-term financial hardship.

The husband was sentenced to a total of 3 years and 6 months' imprisonment for four counts of fraud and three consumer protection offences. The wife received an 18-week suspended sentence, along with a six-month electronic tag and a curfew from 7pm to 6am. Proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act concluded in February with £206k awarded in compensation to the victims.

Rogue builder operating across Cardiff and Bridgend

This case involved a prolific rogue trader operating across Cardiff, Bridgend and Swansea, affecting nine residents. Victims initially contracted him for legitimate property work but were subsequently persuaded to authorise unnecessary additional works based on fabricated issues.

Total consumer detriment reached approximately £547,000, with customers paying significant sums for little or no work. Where work was undertaken, it was often substandard and, in some cases, dangerous. In one example, works quoted at £8,500 escalated to £22,000, yet were later assessed as having no value, with total losses, including remediation amounting to over £46,000.

The impact on victims was severe, causing financial hardship, emotional distress and, in some cases, structural damage to homes. Several individuals were forced to take loans, use overdrafts or access pension funds to rectify defective work. Some victims were elderly and vulnerable.

The defendant continued offending while on bail for similar offences and used false identities to avoid detection. The court described him as a "persistent rogue builder" who acted dishonestly, delivered work to an "appalling standard," and left properties in potentially dangerous conditions, including unsafe gas work.

The defendant was sentenced to a further 6 years in prison and a criminal behaviour order against him remains in place, severely restricting his ability to work in the UK again.

- 2.74** Hosted by SRS, the **Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit (WIMLU)** has as its public-facing identity Stop Loan Sharks Wales. With the cost-of-living crisis continuing to be felt over the course of the year, it will come as no surprise that illegal money lenders or loan sharks have been poised to exploit the vulnerable in times of crisis, right across Wales. Reporting rates to the Unit are often low however, with victims unwilling to come forward let alone name a lender for fear of reprisal. Over the course of 2025-26, twenty-eight pieces of intelligence were received about illegal lending, and six lenders

were investigated as a result. Linked to these investigations, 64 victims have been supported, with 23 having had their debts written off.

- 2.75** Proceedings against 3 defendants were brought forward in 2025/2026 for offences of illegal money lending and money laundering. Two defendants initially entered either no plea or not guilty pleas, and subsequently entered guilty pleas in early 2026/27, and sentencing for these two cases is awaited. A further suspect also pleaded guilty to illegal money lending and money laundering and was sentenced to 14 months imprisonment suspended for **2 years with 250 hours community work**. Proceeds of crime act hearing successfully concluded awarding compensation to the three victims identified ensuring they were reimbursed for the unlawful interest charged by the loan shark.
- 2.76** The WIMLU works closely with other public agencies, including housing providers and third sector organisations whose position on the ‘front line’ means that they encounter the victims of loan sharks through their daily activities. These relationships provide the Unit with crucial intelligence of illegal lending. To exploit this and to encourage reporting, WIMLU proactively seeks opportunities to present to these organisations on the work of the team and receives frequent requests for information and training of frontline staff and community-based public facing support services. In 2025/2026 the unit concluded its all-Wales Roadshow events attending a number Councils including Newport, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Council, ensuring frontline staff from Housing, Antisocial Behaviour Teams, local police and trading Standards officers received updates on the work of the Unit. Training was provided to a further 12 organisations across Wales, including local health boards, utility companies, Citizens Advice staff, gambling addiction charities and housing associations. In total training was provided to 185 colleagues within these organisations.

Supporting the Local economy

- 2.77** The work of SRS has a significant impact upon the local economy in a number of different ways. The provision of timely advice and guidance on regulation can enable businesses to maximise the benefit they derive from the marketplace, and the taking of firm enforcement action against rogue traders and those undermining the *bona fide* trade maintains an environment in which legitimate businesses are able to flourish. At the same time, effective market surveillance ensures ‘visibility’ of trading practices that would otherwise be hidden, and this is particularly so in regard to the huge increase in online trading, including through social media, in recent years. The SRS role as regulator also extends to providing a fair trading environment for consumers, supporting them to become better informed and confident in their purchasing decisions.

- 2.78** The **Primary Authority scheme** enables a business to enter into a statutory partnership with a local authority through which it can receive assured advice. Provided this advice is followed, the Primary Authority (PA) is able to challenge intended enforcement action by other local authorities. As of 31st March, the SRS Primary Authority portfolio had a total of 32 partnerships with a range of local and national businesses. The Service can charge for work done under these arrangements on the basis of full cost recovery.
- 2.79** **Illegal tobacco** (i.e., counterfeit, or non-duty paid) continues to present a very real problem in our communities. Research has shown that at least 14% of all tobacco and cigarettes supplied in Wales are illegal, and smokers are quite comfortable in purchasing it, presumably under the misapprehension that the only impact of its widespread use is the loss of revenue to HM Treasury. This thinking ignores the most serious harms caused by illegal tobacco. At around half the cost of legitimate product, illegal tobacco removes the price incentive for smokers to quit the otherwise expensive habit.
- 2.80** Nicotine inhaling products such as vapes are a regulated product that should comply with the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016. Which applies restrictions on the capacity of the refillable tank of the device which must not be more than 2 ml; that there is a nicotine limit of 20 mg per ml in nicotine containing liquids or containers; that products should contain prominent health warnings; and that all vapes and e-liquids are required to be notified to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency before they can be sold.
- 2.81** In response to continued high levels of intelligence and complaints received, SRS officers undertook several exercises to identify the availability of such products during 2025/26. One notable exercise was **Operation Machanize**, a UK wide multi agency operation led by the National Crime Agency. The exercise targeted criminal exploitation of cash rich businesses including small shops tackling economic crime, money laundering and modern slavery. SRS carried out several multi agency operations seizing large quantities of illegal tobacco and vapes. 51 inspections were carried out and 34 of those resulted in enforcement action being taken. 4260 illegal vapes valued at £24,200, 3811 packs of illegal cigarettes valued at £36,480, and 267 packs of hand rolled tobacco valued at £8,400 were seized. In addition, 2 closure orders were obtained for the most prolific offenders. Investigations are still ongoing.
- 2.82** Over the year officers conducted 86 test purchases, securing 36 illegal sales, and carried out 95 inspections which resulted in 61 seizures. Illegal products included large quantities of cigarettes, hand rolling tobacco, vapes and SUVs, with an estimated combined value exceeding £445,000. 56 written warnings were issues to businesses as a result of this work.

Events and Economic Activities

- 2.83** An important, but often unseen element work involves officers of the Shared Service enabling a wide range of events to take place safely across the region. This takes the form of advice and guidance in the planning stages through the respective fora (the Events Liaison Panel in Cardiff and the Event Safety Advisory Groups in Bridgend and the Vale). Where necessary, officers will also play a role at the point when events are being staged through checks and enforcement where necessary.
- 2.84** Since April 2025, SRS officers have supported well over **70 events**, through the provision of advice and support on such things as
- Food Hygiene and ensuring that participating businesses are broadly compliant
 - Health and Safety
 - Noise and other nuisance
 - Brand Protection
 - Infection Prevention and Control
- 2.85** These events range from local (for example Maesteg Town Food Pop Up, Rhiwbina Summer Festival, and Cowbridge Food Festival), to larger events (such as Glastonbarry and the British Women's Open Golf in Porthcawl), and right through to major events of national and international importance such as the concerts that took place in Cardiff over the summer months at Blackweir Fields and Cardiff Castle.
- 2.86** Blackweir Fields, located at the northern end of Bute Park, had not previously been used as an outdoor events venue. The Council opened up the site to support a number of strategic priorities, including building consistent audiences ahead of the new Indoor Arena, strengthening Cardiff's position as a leading UK destination for music tourism, supporting the visitor economy, and ensuring the city remains part of major touring circuits.
- 2.87** Given the site's proximity to residential areas and other sensitive receptors, minimising noise impact was a key consideration for SRS. Officers worked closely with the event promoter and appointed acoustician to develop a comprehensive noise management plan. Agreed conditions were subsequently attached to the Premises Licence, including a limit of six events per year. In practice, four events were held over the summer, attracting over 100,000 attendees in total.
- 2.88** Noise Pollution officers attended each event and maintained close liaison with the acoustician, responding to complaints in real time and identifying where adjustments to sound levels were required. A total of 101 complaints were

received across the four events (including multiple submissions from some individuals), broken down as follows:

- 40 – Noah Kahan
- 10 – Alanis Morissette
- 36 – Slayer
- 40 – Stevie Wonder

2.89 Variations in wind direction influenced the geographic spread of complaints, with most originating from the inner-city wards of Cathays, Splott, Adamsdown and Plasnewydd. Key concerns included weekday events and consecutive event scheduling. For the first event, over half of the complaints related to sound checks; this feedback was shared with the promoter and acoustician, resulting in measures to minimise this source of disturbance for subsequent concerts.

Maximising the use of resources

2.90 Maximising the use of resources was the original catalyst for creating SRS, and work in this area continues. By reducing repetition of effort, introducing better processes, making systems work without constant intervention and improving access into the service, our business improves and customer satisfaction increases. Income generating activities like marketing our metrology laboratory, offering paid for advice services, building Primary Authority partnerships and extending our training provision to business are examples of our income generation and cost recovery culture.

2.91 Further improvements to the **SRS website** have taken place over the last year in order to ensure the best possible customer journey. During 2025-26, the SRS website had 116,456 page views. Once again, our noise and air pollution web pages continue to receive the most page views of all areas.

2.92 The service has evolved its approach to **social media**, moving away from X (formerly Twitter) to a stronger presence on Instagram. This platform is used to showcase the work of the service and provide advice to the public on relevant issues. Additional channels, such as LinkedIn, are also utilised where appropriate to reach wider audiences.

2.93 The Service encourages use of the **noise app** in cases where residents wish to make a complaint about noise. It can be downloaded simply from the App Store enabling to short bursts of the disturbance to be recorded and submitted to the case Officer to determine if a nuisance has occurred. This approach has enabled complaints to be triaged effectively, thereby ensuring that officers' site visits are prioritised where and when they are most needed.

- 2.94 Ask the Regulator Podcast** – SRS produces its own podcast in partnership with Bro Radio. The podcast provides an accessible and engaging way for the public to stay informed about environmental health, trading standards, and licensing matters.

Trading Standards Impacts and Outcomes framework

- 2.95** In 2018, the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) launched its *Impacts and Outcomes* framework as a means of demonstrating the vital contribution of Trading Standards Services across England and Wales in.

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

- 2.96** As reported in March the Impacts and Outcomes report has been released, detailing the work of local authorities in Wales during the 2024-25 financial year. The latest report shows that over £43 million of detriment was prevented by Trading Standards actions in Wales during the year. The Wales-only report for 2024-25 is included in **Appendix 4**, along with the summary infographic for Wales.

- 2.97** The Wales report also features a case study 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 2024-25, some **142 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 **48 years and 4 months** of prison sentences, or **34%** of the total across Wales.

- 2.98** Looking ahead to 2026-27, there will be an expectation on the Shared Service to deliver on several new areas of regulatory law without the benefit of Welsh Government funding to provide any additional resource. Chief amongst these will be the Building Safety agenda, and the Food (Promotion and Presentation) (Wales) Regulations 2025 that came into effect in March 2026 to restrict the marketing of foods high in fat, sugar and salt. Likewise, the service is required to move forward with the new Food Standards Delivery Model which in turn will see a huge increase in the number of food premises requiring inspection under this regime.

- 2.99** A key priority for SRS, is the further development of our commercial approach by increasing our 'paid for' services and marketing them to business. These commercial activities are aimed at complementing existing services whilst also providing income generation. We do this by developing Primary Authority partnerships with businesses

of which we currently have 32 in place. The Service also provides 12 accredited training courses in areas such as food safety, health and safety and allergens. SRS was the first training centre in Wales to deliver the RSPH Level Two Award in Infection Prevention and Control for Special Procedures Practitioners. Income is also generated via our UKAS accredited Metrology Lab services, and we are expanding our environmental services with an increase in Air Quality Monitoring Services/Local Site Operator Licences. As a result, during 2025/26 the income generated by SRS was £132,274.

2.100 The service places significant emphasis on obtaining customer feedback, as this helps identify areas of good performance as well as opportunities for improvement.

2.101 In addition to monitoring customer satisfaction through surveys, direct feedback is also received directly from individuals and groups we have supported, often expressing appreciation for our interventions. During the past year, a number of such compliments were received, and a selection is set out below:

"I just wanted to drop you a line to say thank you very much for the efforts of your officer. I have found her to be completely professional. Without her intervention, my son and his co-tenants would still be living in squalor. Since she became involved, the landlord and letting agents have been busy improving the property to make it habitable... Sometimes people only remember when things do not go right and it is important that employers can see good, professional work". Housing Enforcement Team service user.

"Anyway, I'll finish off now with a compliment. Your emails have been prompt, clear and warm, which is a lovely combination, and I'd really like it if you showed our communications to your boss because an important public service such as yours needs to be accessible and professional. And it's this mix that I think you've achieved". Food poisoning case service user.

"I'm writing to let you know what a fantastic job your officer did in supporting us in getting money back after we fell prey to a scam by a rogue trader. He will be able to give you the details, but in short, over a year ago, a roofer scammed us out of £2,400. The bank refused to accept it fell under their definition of 'scam' and the ombudsmen ruled in favour of the bank. With your officer's help, we've been able to recover the full amount, plus compensation from Checkatrade. He has been supportive, professional and thorough in persevering different avenues. I appreciate our case is concerning an amount far less than many of the cases your department deals with, so his diligence is all the more appreciated" Thank you to your team for sticking up for people like us in the face of large corporations and rogue traders alike. Trading Standards service user.

Financial Performance

The Gross Revenue Budget and outturn position for 2025/26 are shown in the tables below, with the position in respect of each of the partners detailed to include both Authority Specific (overspend £210k) and Core expenditure positions. The service achieved an unaudited £274k overspend against a gross revenue budget of £8.838m, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 1

	Gross Budget	Year-end Outturn	Outturn Variance
Authority	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	1,803	1,812	(9)
Cardiff	5,218	5,465	(247)
Vale	1,817	1,835	(18)
Total Gross Expenditure	8,838	9,112	(274)

2.102 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 landscapes 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.

2.103 For context the service continues to attempt to derive savings from core service activities to achieve a balanced position within this area of the service. The delivery of these savings will continue to be monitored in 2026/27.

2.104 For context, the overspend seen at year end arose in the landscape of the greater than budgeted pay award for 2025/26, and an increase in demand for regulatory services, in particular those delivered on an authority specific basis.

A full breakdown of the outturn position is shown in Annex 3

The approved gross budget of £2.704m in respect of Authority Specific (AS) Services has an unaudited overspend of £210k, as detailed in the following table:

Table 2

Gross	Forecast	Outturn
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	Budget	Outturn	Variance
Authority	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	445	444	1
Cardiff	1,684	1,891	(207)
Vale	575	579	(4)
Total AS Services	2,704	2,914	(210)

Bridgend

- 2.105** The unaudited outturn position in Bridgend is a total underspend of £1k. The licensing function was close to reporting on budget with a overspend of £2k. Additionally Empty Homes is reporting an overspend of £11k and Kennelling and Vets has an underspend of £14k this is consistent with activity levels noted in previous years when accounting for the saving taken from this service area in the 2025/26 budget setting.

Cardiff

- 2.106** The £207k overspend at Cardiff predominantly relates to the £239k overspend within the Licensing Section which is consistent with performance in previous years.
- 2.107** The combined £8k overspend within HMO Cathays and HMO Plasnewydd teams relates to smaller variances within these teams.
- 2.108** The £15k underspend within Night-Time Noise relates to a decrease in demand due to a decrease in service usage.
- 2.109** The student liaison underspend of £28k is as a result of the additional SPF funding contributions separate from the standard budget contributions. These have not been fully utilised in the year due to staffing vacancies arising in this service area during the year.

Vale

- 2.110** Overall, the Vale has an aggregate £4k overspend.
- 2.111** The increased use of services for Licensing and burials has resulted in a £13k and £10k reported overspend in each of these areas respectively.
- 2.112** Pest control is reporting as on-budget position for this financial year.
- 2.113** Kennelling and Vets are forecasting a £19k underspend, this is higher than usual but consistent with the typical performance of being underspend in previous years.

Core Services

- 2.114** The approved Core Services Budget for 2025/26 is £6.134m, which as of 31st of March 2026 has an outturn overspend of £63k. 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

		Gross	Forecast	Outturn
		Budget	Outturn	Variance
Authority	%	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Bridgend	22.07%	1,358	1,368	(10)
Cardiff	57.67%	3,534	3,574	(40)
Vale	20.26%	1,242	1,256	(14)
Total Core		6,134	6,198	(64)

- 2.115** The £32k underspend within Animal Services is due to a staffing vacancy that arose in the year. This was one of the vacant posts subsequently deleted to achieve budget savings ahead of the 2026/27 financial year. As in the previous year some expenditure relating to supporting animal welfare seizures has been incurred, however levels are far lower than those incurred in the previous financial year
- 2.116** Environmental Services is reporting an overspend of £45k, which is made up of smaller variances forecasted within this heading.
- 2.117** The Food Services outturn position is an £57k underspend. This is vacancy related (including maternity leave) in the year, as well as some reduction in the use of contractors. Spending will increase moving forward, however in order to meet as much of the food inspection programme as possible. It is important to note that the Food Officer shortfall continues to be at 6.5FTE
- 2.118** Housing Services outturn position is an overspend of £38k. The overspend is attributable to additional salary expenditure which is the result of the impact of additional staffing needed to meet service area demands.
- 2.119** The Health & Safety and Communicable Disease budget heading comprises three cost centres spread across two SRS teams. A £9k underspend is reported at year end, made up of a series of smaller variances.
- 2.120** Pollution Services are currently reporting a £5k underspend for the year, this overspend relates to a number of smaller variances across this service area.
- 2.121** The 'Trading Standards' budget comprises a number of cost centres spread across three different SRS teams and also includes an element of the Food service (separate to that outlined in 2.16 above). This area is £84k overspent for 2025-26. Within Q3 a new staff member started within the Trading standard scheme as part

of the SRS initiative for apprentices as part of our 'Grow Our Own' strategy, the provisional use of home office reserved grant funding has been used to cover this role for the remainder of 2025/26.

Reserves

	Opening Balance 01/04/25	24/25 Recovery	Transfer to Reserves	Transfer from Reserves	Forecast Balance 31/03/26
Reserve	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
SRS General Fund Reserve	356	243	0	(334)	265
Ringfenced Grant Reserve	88	0	31	(14)	105
Special Procedures Reserve	0	0	41	0	41
Health board Reserve	0	0	268	0	268
Capital Receipts	17	0	0	0	17
POCA Reserves	30	0	68	(49)	49
Total Usable Reserves	491	243	408	(397)	745

2.122 The Shared Regulatory Service has built up some reserves which can be utilised to fund planned investment in service expenditure but also emerging pressures within the service.

2.123 The SRS has taken steps in this year to continue to build up our reserves to have additional funding available for utilisation in further years. We continue to set aside the annual home office funding received in respect of the offensive weapons act and in this year as noted in point 2.121 we have begun to utilise this via the funding of apprenticeship position.

2.124 In this year a change of approach has been taken, and the SRS is also reserving additional income generation from both the new Special procedures licensing and

an upturn in our efforts to support local health boards with their needs on a variety of different schemes.

2.125 Since its inception, SRS has consolidated service delivery in accord with the agreed standards. The over-riding challenges during 2026-27 will be around recruitment and retention, the need to address emerging global, national, regional, and local events, and all the while working within a reduced resource. Consequently, the Key Milestones for 2026-27 include:

- *Delivery of the SRS Business Plan 2026-27 and the associated corporate priorities assigned to the SRS by the partner Councils*
- *To support the partner Councils and other agencies as an integral part of the health protection system in Wales*
- *To monitor the implementation of new legislation and any requirements imposed by such legislation upon the Service. Examples include Tobacco and Vapes Bill; The Food (Promotion and Presentation) (Wales) Regulations 2025, and of course, the Welsh Government Building Safety agenda.*
- *To contribute to the climate change goals in each of the partner authorities through effective enforcement of environmental controls such as those regulating energy efficiency in the private rented housing sector.*
- *To further develop the 'growing our own' approach, embracing the new Regulatory Apprenticeship for Wales, and exploration of other new employee developmental frameworks as part of the wider recruitment and retention strategy.*
- *In light of the continued pressures on public sector budgets, further explore, implement and maximise opportunities for income generation and cost recovery.*
- *Review the agile working arrangements for the service to ensure that technology is being exploited fully to improve service delivery.*

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

3.1 The Annual report demonstrates the partner Councils' commitment to improving social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being and promoting sustainable development in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Equalities, Sustainability and safeguarding issues have all been taken into account when drafting this plan. Our work with stakeholders seeking to ensure that our early

intervention and prevention activities maintain wellbeing in the SRS region is a crucial element of our approach to protect local people and the environment.

- 3.2** The Wellbeing 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. The SRS Business Plan contains a number of initiatives that contribute to the wellbeing objectives. Section 6 of the Business Plan illustrates how the SRS priorities interface with the wellbeing goals on matters such as safeguarding the vulnerable and protecting the environment and forms the basis for the Annual report.
- 3.3** Aligning the Wellbeing Goals of the Act enables us to evidence our contribution to the National Wellbeing Goals. Promoting the five ways of working is reflected in our approach to integrated business planning. Setting consistently challenging yet realistic steps and performance improvement targets, the SRS is able to clearly demonstrate progress towards achieving the national goals by the production of the Annual report.

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 implications are set out in the body of the report.

Employment

- 5.2** The implications are set out in the body of the report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.3** The report outlines achievements in 2025-26 for the matters assigned to the Shared Regulatory Service. The Joint Working Agreement executed on 10 April 2015 and amended July 2017 sets out the obligations placed upon the partner Councils in delivery of the Shared Regulatory Service.

6. Background Papers

None

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – SRS Performance Measures 2025- 2026
- Appendix 2 – SRS Prosecution Statistics 2025-2026
- Appendix 3 – 2025-2026 SRS Provisional Outturn Position
- Appendix 4 - Impacts and Outcomes framework

Shared Regulatory Services

Quarterly Performance Report 2025/26

Quarter 4



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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
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	42	42	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	170	170	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	44	44	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/FH/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat A & B) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	256	256	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated A and B due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 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
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	346	346	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	802	802	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	306	306	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	90%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/FH/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses (Cat C) that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected for food hygiene.	1454	1454	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses rated C due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	90%

New Businesses—Food Hygiene

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	172	219	78.54%	Red	While results show some good progress in ensuring that new business registrations received during the year have received an inspection, there has been a shortfall against target. This is largely due to staff vacancies within the teams and the shortage of available contractors to assist with service delivery.	90%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	403	565	71.33%	Red	While results show some good progress in ensuring that new business registrations received during the year have received an inspection, there has been a shortfall against target. This is largely due to staff vacancies within the teams and the shortage of available contractors to assist with service delivery.	90%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	183	235	77.87%	Red	While results show some good progress in ensuring that new business registrations received during the year have received an inspection, there has been a shortfall against target. This is largely due to staff vacancies within the teams and the shortage of available contractors to assist with service delivery.	90%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/FH/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment during the year for food hygiene.	758	1019	74.39%	Red	While results show some good progress in ensuring that new business registrations received during the year have received an inspection, there has been a shortfall against target. This is largely due to staff vacancies within the teams and the shortage of available contractors to assist with service delivery.	90%

Broadly Compliant Food Premises

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2025-26	Bridgend	PAM/23	Qtr 4	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	1283	1306	98.24%	Green	Target exceeded.	95%
2025-26	Cardiff	PAM/23	Qtr 4	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	3171	3281	96.65%	Green	Target exceeded.	95%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	PAM/23	Qtr 4	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	1246	1269	98.19%	Green	Target exceeded.	95%
2025-26	SRS	PAM/23	Qtr 4	Percentage of food establishments which are 'broadly compliant' with food hygiene standards.	5700	5856	97.34%	Green	Target exceeded.	95%

High Risk Trading Standards Inspections

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	4	4	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	21	21	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	5	5	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 were completed at premises that were operating and available for inspection.	100%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/TS/001	Qtr 4	The percentage of high risk businesses that were liable to a programmed inspection that were inspected, for trading standards.	30	30	100.00%	Green	All high risk businesses due an inspection by the end of Qtr 4 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
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	180	238	75.63%	Amber	While results show some good progress in ensuring that new business registrations received during the year have received an inspection, there has been a shortfall against target. This is largely due to staff vacancies within the teams and the shortage of available contractors to assist with service delivery.	80%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	417	625	66.72%	Red	While results show some good progress in ensuring that new business registrations received during the year have received an inspection, there has been a shortfall against target. This is largely due to staff vacancies within the teams and the shortage of available contractors to assist with service delivery.	80%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	190	264	71.97%	Amber	While results show some good progress in ensuring that new business registrations received during the year have received an inspection, there has been a shortfall against target. This is largely due to staff vacancies within the teams and the shortage of available contractors to assist with service delivery.	80%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/TS/003	Qtr 4	The percentage of new businesses identified which were subject to a risk assessment visit during the year, for food standards and animal feed.	787	1127	69.83%	Red	While results show some good progress in ensuring that new business registrations received during the year have received an inspection, there has been a shortfall against target. This is largely due to staff vacancies within the teams and the shortage of available contractors to assist with service delivery.	80%

Significant breaches

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. carried out	No. due	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/TS/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for: Trading Standards	31	33	93.94%	N/A	This measure relates to premises/businesses that are subject to ongoing investigations. The conclusion of such investigations may not always be possible within the financial year, however all cases are in within time for legal processing.	N/A
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/TS/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for: Trading Standards	211	237	89.03%	N/A	This measure relates to premises/businesses that are subject to ongoing investigations. The conclusion of such investigations may not always be possible within the financial year, however all cases are in within time for legal processing.	N/A
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/TS/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for: Trading Standards	35	37	94.59%	N/A	This measure relates to premises/businesses that are subject to ongoing investigations. The conclusion of such investigations may not always be possible within the financial year, however all cases are in within time for legal processing.	N/A
2025-26	SRS	SRS/TS/002	Qtr 4	The percentage of significant breaches that were rectified by intervention during the year for: Trading Standards	277	307	90.23%	N/A	This measure relates to premises/businesses that are subject to ongoing investigations. The conclusion of such investigations may not always be possible within the financial year, however all cases are in within time for legal processing.	N/A

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
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 4	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	84	94	89.36%	Amber	The fractional shortfall against target represents one complaint that was not responded to within the deadline of 3 working days. It was however responded to soon after.	90%
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/008	Annual Result	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	412	457	90.15%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 4	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	320	338	94.67%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/008	Annual Result	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	1516	1589	95.41%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 4	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	60	62	96.77%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/008	Annual Result	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	302	317	95.27%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/008	Qtr 4	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	464	494	93.93%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/008	Annual Result	Percentage of domestic noise and air complaints responded to within 3 working days.	2230	2363	94.37%	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
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 4	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	27	42	64.29%	Red	The shortfall against target represents 5 complaints that were not responded to within the challenging deadline of one working day. These were however responded to soon after.	75%
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/009	Annual Result	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	161	218	73.85%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 3 complaints that were not responded to within the challenging deadline of one working day. These were however responded to soon after.	75%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 4	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	79	117	67.52%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 9 complaints that were not responded to within the challenging deadline of one working day. These were however responded to soon after.	75%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/009	Annual Result	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	484	693	69.84%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 36 complaints that were not responded to within the challenging deadline of one working day. These were however responded to soon after.	75%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 4	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	22	30	73.33%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents one complaint that was not responded to within the challenging deadline of one working day. It was however responded to soon after.	75%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/009	Annual Result	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	131	162	80.86%	Green	Target exceeded.	75%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/009	Qtr 4	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	128	189	67.72%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 14 complaints that were not responded to within the challenging deadline of one working day. These were however responded to soon after.	75%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/009	Annual Result	Percentage of commercial and industrial noise and air complaints responded to within one working day.	776	1073	72.32%	Amber	The shortfall against target represents 29 complaints that were not responded to within the challenging deadline of one working day. These were however responded to soon after.	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
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 4	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	2	2	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/010	Annual Result	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	5	5	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 4	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	9	9	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/010	Annual Result	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	86	89	96.63%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 4	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	0	0	0.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/010	Annual Result	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	11	12	91.67%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/010	Qtr 4	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	11	11	100.00%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/010	Annual Result	Percentage of alarm complaints responded to within one day.	102	106	96.23%	Green	Target exceeded.	90%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	29	29	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/004	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	140	140	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	108	109	99.08%	Amber	One application was deferred at the applicant's request which resulted in the application not being determined within the target of 2 months.	100%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/004	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	507	508	99.80%	Amber	One application was deferred at the applicant's request which resulted in the application not being determined within the target of 2 months.	100%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	29	29	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/004	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	158	158	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/004	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	166	167	99.40%	Amber	One application was deferred at the applicant's request in Cardiff which resulted in the application not being determined within the target of 2 months.	100%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/004	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	805	806	99.88%	Amber	One application was deferred at the applicant's request in Cardiff which resulted in the application not being determined within the target of 2 months.	100%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	9	9	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/005	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	71	71	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	54	54	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/005	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	209	209	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	9	9	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/005	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	60	60	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/005	Qtr 4	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	72	72	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/005	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of licensed personal applications received and determined within 2 months.	340	340	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

Licensing

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No deter- mined	No. received	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Comment	Target
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 4	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/LC/006	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 4	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/LC/006	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	3	3	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 4	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/LC/006	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/006	Qtr 4	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	0	0	0.00%	Green	No applications received.	100%
2025-26	SRS	SRS/LC/006	Annual Re- sult	Percentage of Gambling Premises applications received and determined within 2 months.	3	3	100.00%	Green	Target achieved.	100%

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

Year	Authority	Ref	Quarter	Title	No. improved to an E or above EPC	Column1	Column2	Target
2025-26	Bridgend	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	36	Red	During Qtr 4, further engagement took place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC resulting in 30 further compliant EPCs being validated against properties. Furthermore a separate validation exercise on the list of unrated rental properties highlighted a further 100 compliant properties. In terms of enforcement activity further private rented sector premises were identified as being non compliant with EPC ratings identified as F or G. Compliance notices were issued accordingly with 9 being issued in Bridgend.	50
2025-26	Cardiff	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	58	Red	During Qtr 4, further engagement took place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC resulting in 49 further compliant EPCs being validated against properties. Furthermore a separate validation exercise on the list of unrated rental properties highlighted a further 66 compliant properties. In terms of enforcement activity further private rented sector premises were identified as being non compliant with EPC ratings identified as F or G. Further notices will be issued to Cardiff premises following checks in early May 2026.	100
2025-26	Vale of Glam	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	35	Red	During Qtr 4, further engagement took place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC resulting in a further 26 compliant EPCs being validated against properties. Furthermore a separate validation exercise on the list of unrated rental properties highlighted a further 38 compliant properties. In terms of enforcement activity further private rented sector premises were identified as being non compliant with EPC ratings identified as F or G. Compliance notices were issued accordingly with 10 being issued in the Vale of Glamorgan.	50
2025-26	SRS	SRS/MEES/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of private rented sector properties where energy efficiency has been improved through direct action from SRS.	129	Red	During Qtr 4, further engagement took place with landlords of properties identified as not having an EPC resulting in a further 105 compliant EPCs being validated against properties. Furthermore a separate validation exercise on the list of unrated rental properties highlighted a further 204 compliant properties. In terms of enforcement activity, a further 114 private rented sector premises were identified as being non compliant with EPC ratings identified as F or G. Compliance notices were issued accordingly. 10 in the Vale of Glamorgan, 9 in Bridgend. Further notices will be issued to Cardiff premises following checks in early May 2026.	200

Prosecutions

Ref	Quarter	Title	No. of prosecutions cases in court	No. concluded successfully	Percentage achieved	RAG Status	Column1	Target
SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	3	3	100.00%	Green	One Bridgend case was successfully concluded in Qtr 4, resulting in a total of 3 cases during 2025/26. In the most recent case a Bridgend based catering business failed to register his business under the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006. Investigations found that the defendant was fully aware of the need to register before beginning to trade in 2024 but provided catering at a wedding venue on at least 5 occasions. It became clear that this wasn't the first time that the defendant had failed to register a food business. Given that registration is free, it appeared that the defendant was driven to run his food business 'under the radar' without being subject to the Food hygiene inspection regime. A guilty plea was entered in court and the defendant was fined £2000, ordered to pay £200 in costs together with an £800 surcharge.	100%
SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	29	30	96.67%	Amber	8 prosecution cases were successfully concluded in Cardiff during Qtr 4, resulting in a total of 30 cases being concluded during the year. During Qtr 4, 1 case related to animal welfare, 2 food safety, 1 housing safety and 3 trading standards involving rogue traders. One of these rogue trader cases resulted in the defendant being sentenced to 6 years imprisonment. In this case, a prolific rogue trader affected 9 residents living in Cardiff, Bridgend and Swansea. They had contracted with the defendant to undertake work on their properties. However the defendant persuaded them to have further work done, often on the basis that problems had been found. Residents paid very large sums of money for work and materials, only to have little or no work completed, or completed to a poor or dangerous standard. The consumer detriment in this case was astounding, standing at £547,000. One consumer ended up paying £22,000 against an original quote of £8,500. Added to this is the cost of remediation works and consequential losses which for that one resident amounted to £46,440. Residents statements in this case spoke of their worlds being turned upside down by the physical, mental and financial misery caused to them and their families, with them being forced to take out loans and overdrafts and in some instances withdraw money from their pension pots to rectify the poor quality work he had carried out. Some of the victims were elderly and vulnerable. A significant aggravating factor was that at the time of the offences the defendant was on bail for similar offences prosecuted by the City and County of Swansea Council. Alongside the 6 year prison sentence, a criminal behaviour order remains in place severely restricting his ability to work in the UK again.	100%
SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	1	1	100.00%	Green	One prosecution case was successfully concluded during Qtr 4 in the Vale. In this case, an inspection of a takeaway food trailer on Barry Island identified very poor hygiene practices, including an inadequate water supply for hand washing and cleaning of equipment.. As a result of the public health risks posed, a Remedial Action Notice was served to prevent the sale of ready to eat food as well as 2 Food Hygiene Improvement Notices. The business was given a Food Hygiene Rating score of 0. While restoration of the water supply a few days later meant that the RAN could be lifted, the Improvement Notices remained in place during the summer of 2024. While the investigating officer attempted to work with the defendant to resolve the remaining concerns a further inspection in August 2024 identified further poor practices, amongst which was fish defrosting out of temperature control in a bucket on the floor. The defendant pleaded guilty to 11 food hygiene offences and was fined a total of £640, and ordered to pay costs of £250, together with a Victim surcharge of £256.	100%
SRS/PRO/001	Qtr 4	Percentage of SRS investigations resulting in prosecution that were successfully concluded.	33	34	97.06%	Amber	10 prosecution cases were concluded across Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan during Qtr 4, resulting in 33 cases out of 34 being successfully concluded during 2025/26. Of the cases that concluded during the year 3 related to animal welfare, 9 food safety and standards, 3 health and safety, 5 housing, 2 licensing, 1 pollution, 10 trading standards and 1 the Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit.	100%

Summary of cases concluded during 2025 - 2026

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

Case	Court date	Offence(s)	Outcome
1	1.4.25	This case arose as a result of a resident feeding pigeons and other birds over a long period of time at their terraced property in Cardiff. The impact of this longstanding behaviour on neighbours was significant, ranging from at one end of the spectrum the day-to-day nuisance of birds in large numbers, through the problems caused by bird droppings on properties, cars and washing on the line. At the other end of the spectrum were the exacerbation of health conditions such as asthma, and real concerns about the marketability of homes. SRS Officers went to great lengths to persuade the resident to change her behaviours, both directly and in conjunction with other Council departments. Nevertheless, the bird feeding, and associated nuisance continued, despite a Community Protection Notice (CPN) having been issued to prohibit the practice. I am very mindful of Ms Mosey's state of health and the treatment we are advised she is undergoing currently, however there is a pressing need for matters to be escalated in a bid to resolve. The court had found the defendant guilty of breaching the Consumer Protection Notice at an earlier hearing. On this occasion, sentencing was considered, as well as the Prosecution's application for a Criminal Behaviour Order.	The defendant was sentenced as follows for breaching the Community Protection Notice: • Conditionally discharged for 12 months • Costs of £250 • Victim surcharge of £26 The court decided however not to grant the Criminal Behaviour Order on this occasion.

2	2.4.25	In this case, a father and son engaged in misleading, fraudulent and sometimes aggressive trading practices in their dealings with customers of their driveway business. The pair demonstrated classic rogue trading behaviours of charging more than agreed, going back on their word (e.g. no deposit / payment on completion), not completing work, and the little work that was done, was of very poor quality. While appearing charming and plausible at first, the father showed his true colours in another trait of doorstep criminals, that of becoming aggressive when residents tried to resist his demands for more money. For one of the victims however, there was a particularly nasty twist when the third defendant (the daughter and sister of the first two defendants) pretended to befriend him. In so doing, she gained his trust to such an extent that she was found to be administering medication and getting physically very close with him and even sat in on a meeting with the victim's financial advisor. This third defendant then went on to defraud the victim (a vulnerable gentleman) by claiming to be him in a call to his pension provider, before arranging for £50,000 to be paid from the victim's pension fund and into his current account. It was only through the fast thinking of the Financial Advisor that the money was paid back into the pension. None of the three defendants showed any remorse for their offending and the harm caused to the residents concerned. This only added to the distress for the victims and their families who have not been able to gain closure, and this is particularly so for the family of the gentleman befriended by the female, as he passed away some time later.	The three family members were sentenced as follows:- The father - was sentenced to a 12-month immediate custodial sentence. The son - sentenced to 21 weeks imprisonment suspended for 21 months and given 200 hours community service. The daughter - was sentenced to an 18-month prison sentence, suspended for 24 months. She was also required to do 10 hours unpaid work, a 20-day rehabilitation programme. In addition, an electric tag to be worn for 4 months alongside an 8pm - 6am curfew.
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		In sentencing, the Judge considered the offending of the family members and concluded that the victims had been 'bullied, harassed and intimidated'.	
3	17.4.25	Late on a Friday night in April 2024, the defendant, a Hackney carriage driver failed to take two customers from Greyfriars Road in Cardiff to their requested City Centre destination. The prospective passengers were test purchase volunteers working with Licensing Enforcement Officers, and while the defendant initially seemed to accept the fare while parked in the taxi rank it is clear from the accounts of the volunteers that he would take the fare on the basis that he was paid £10 upfront (i.e. not using the taximeter to calculate the fare as required). The volunteers describe how they got into the licensed Hackney Carriage only to drop a pound coin in the back of the car, and their failure to find it meant that they no longer had the £10 the driver wanted upfront for the journey. They describe how he became verbally aggressive and told them to get out of the vehicle. Had the driver activated the taximeter as he was required to do, the 0.5 mile journey would have cost £5.67, well within the £9 the volunteers had available to them at the time. When interviewed under caution, the driver offered no plausible explanation for his actions in refusing to transport the two female volunteers, other than to claim that they wished to pay by card, which wasn't the case. In mitigation, the defendant told the Court that he previously had problems with students 'messing' him around and running off	The defendant was fined £100 and ordered to pay £150 prosecution costs and £40 Victim Surcharge.

		without paying.	
4	24.4.25	This was the second prosecution of the defendant for failure to comply with a statutory notice under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949, and obstruction. Despite his earlier conviction (in August 2023), the defendant failed to address the neglected state of his overgrown garden and its accumulations of waste, including plastic food containers and water bottles, and even an abandoned fridge. As well as being an eyesore, the gardens provided the perfect harbourage for rodents, adding to the misery for neighbours who have lived with the ongoing problem over a number of years. It is also clear that Officers attempted to work with the resident to encourage him to tidy up the garden, putting him in touch with help for his hoarding tendency as well as with Pest Control, and bringing contractors on site to carry out the much-needed work. Unfortunately, at every turn, the defendant refused to comply with the statutory notice under the PDPA, and the situation was further complicated by his frequent and prolonged stays with relatives in England. All the while, his neighbours had to live with the dreadful mess at the property and the presence of rodents was causing significant distress. The obstruction element of the case, as previously, related to Officers and contractors (brought in to clear the garden through works in default) being sent away by the defendant. While the Service will always seek to work with residents in similar circumstances in the most sensitive way possible, a significant	The Judge sentenced the defendant to a fine of £100, together with a £40 Victim Surcharge and a £200 contribution towards prosecution costs. The CBO was granted for a period of 2 years, allowing immediate access to the property by the Local Authority to complete the necessary works in default, and this CBO will be in force for 2 years from today.

		amount of Officer time and cost had been spent in trying to resolve the ongoing problem. This was unsustainable for the Service and unfair on the neighbours impacted by the defendant's behaviour. In the circumstances, a Criminal Behaviour Order was sought from the Court as part of this second case against the defendant. The defendant had been found guilty in his absence at an earlier hearing however he wished to contest the seeking of the CBO as he believed he was morally correct in his way of life. The Court heard evidence from the Investigating Officer and also a neighbour of the defendant. The neighbour confirmed that she had noticed the issues with the defendant's property as far back as the spring of 2019. The garden was in horrendous condition with rubbish attracting the presence of rodents. The neighbour explained how they are afraid to go into her garden anymore, that the rats frighten their grandchildren, cause nightmares, and the stress of it makes them ill.	
5.	28.4.25	The defendants, a husband and wife, had previously pleaded guilty to the offences at an earlier hearing. The court heard how the victims in this case were taken in by the charm of the husband, a builder in his seventies who presented himself as a successful and experienced businessman. Each of the victims paid upfront and in good faith, and only gradually realised that things were not what they seemed. Timelines were slipping, costs were escalating (despite fixed cost quotations), work was substandard to the point that Building Control were unable to sign off on it, and it became clear that the various tradespeople and suppliers were not being paid by the defendant despite his having taken money specifically for this. Such was the extent of the deceit and over-riding desire to make money, that the defendant charged VAT on exempt work (new	The Judge sentenced the husband for the 4 counts of fraud, and 3 Consumer Protection offences to a custodial sentence totalling 3 years and 6 months. The wife was sentenced to suspended sentence of 18 weeks. An electronic tag was also imposed for a period of 6 months, with a curfew of 7pm to 6 am.

		build) but worse still, he did this when not even registered for VAT. Using VAT registration numbers in his paperwork, gave the impression that the defendant was VAT registered (and therefore having an annual trading profit in excess of £85,000). In truth the VAT numbers he referenced in paperwork were bogus. Customer payments were transferred into personal bank accounts, including that of the builder's wife. In addition, significant cash payments were requested, all presumably to conceal the true extent of income. The statements given by the residents in this case illustrate in detail the sheer misery that Anderson has brought on his customers over many months, through jobs started and not finished, goods not ordered despite specific payments having been made to him, poor workmanship, and failure to obtain necessary Building Control consents. The financial detriment he has caused customers extends beyond the various examples of overcharging, to such things as having to pay competent traders to complete the work In court, the devastating consequences of the defendants' actions were powerfully told in Court through the victims' impact statements. A number of common themes ran through each of the victim's statements, they all felt that the defendant presented himself as one of their friends who frequently reassured them that they could trust him. Each of the victims was physically, emotionally and financially impacted, losing all of their savings and being left with damaged properties or paying significant amounts of money to have the poor work rectified. Some of the victims were left with suicidal thoughts, having to sell their dream house, their retirement plans now being replaced with plans of how to manage the financial hardship caused to them. In mitigation, the Court heard that the defendant had experienced mental health struggles was in his late seventies and had no previous convictions. The defence sought to minimise the role played by the wife, suggesting that she had been controlled by her	
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		husband, but the Judge did not accept this. A Proceeds of Crime timetable has been set, and it is hoped that as a result, there will be opportunity for the victims to receive compensation in due course.	
6.	29.4.25	SRS Officers have found illegal vapes and illegal tobacco in possession for sale at this Cardiff store, a number of times previously. During an inspection in July 2023, a large quantity of non-compliant disposable vapes (tank size exceeding 2ml, and not registered with the MHRA) were found, along with illegal hand rolling tobacco. The seizure of the offending goods amounted to 692 illegal vapes. The company and its sole Director chose to flout the law by trading in illegal vapes and illegal tobacco, this despite being issued with detailed guidance by SRS Officers on a number of occasions. Likewise, the Director did nothing to assist Officers in this investigation; he failed to respond to correspondence and failed to attend interview under caution. It was also clear that there has been no effective due diligence defence in place to avoid the commission of the offences. In Court, the Director claimed that at the time of the commission of the offences, he had stepped away from his role with the company and was acting as an employee at that time. This wasn't reflected in the details held by Companies House at the time, and the Judge reminded him that when getting involved in a business as a Director, it was his responsibility to ensure he complied with the laws and regulations.	The company was fined a total of £5,000 with costs of £1048. The Director was also fined £1400 together with a further £1048 in prosecution costs and a Victim Surcharge of £560. Forfeiture of seized goods was also granted.

7.	29.4.25	In November 2023, SRS officers found exposed, live electrical wires in different locations in the rear room of the retail premises on Clifton Street, Cardiff. Officers gave advice on having a competent electrician rectify the problems urgently, with access to the rear room being restricted in the meantime. After attempting to work with the business to make the premises safe, officers were concerned on returning the next day to find that although work appeared to have been completed to remove / enclose the live wires, no proof could be provided that the work had been carried out by a competent electrician. Despite service of Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act Improvement Notices on the company, no such information was provided, and despite being given additional time to comply, by the end of January 2024, the required Electrical Installation Condition Report, and proof of ongoing electrical safety maintenance had not been forthcoming. Attempts to interview the company under caution had been similarly unsuccessful.	The company was fined £4,000 and ordered to pay £570 in costs.
8.	17.6.25	The defendants in this case, a limited company and its sole Director, rented out eleven flats in Cardiff to tenants, despite there being an emergency prohibition order in force in respect of each flat. The emergency prohibition orders were served in 2018 as a result of Category 1 Hazards being identified which posed an imminent risk of serious harm to the occupiers of the flats. Every attempt was made by the Investigating Officer to interview the company and its Director under caution, but they chose not to engage. Likewise, the defendants made no attempt to provide the information required by the Investigating Officer using his powers during that time. It is particularly disappointing given the seriousness of the matter, that the defendants failed again to provide information required by the	Sentencing was as follows Defendant company <i>Total fine of £32,400</i> <i>Surcharge £2,000</i> <i>Costs of £3,000</i> Director <i>A total fine of £21,600.</i> <i>£2,000 surcharge</i>

		Service in a s.235 notice under the Housing Act 2004, this being to identify the occupiers of the property and confirm the functioning of the emergency lighting and smoke control systems. In sentencing, the Judge said: <i>I have to sentence both the defendants. It is clear the company is a vehicle created by the defendant for the purposes of presenting an enterprise of legitimacy. It is also clear that the financial accounts provided are questionable, similarly as is the financial circumstances of the defendant. I disregard the assertions made by defence as regards financial circumstances in their entirety, particularly given what I have heard in respect of his directorship of other companies not cited.</i> <i>The offences are clearly serious offences. I conclude in 2022 when the offences were committed, they were very deliberate failures to comply with EPOs, provided as far back as 2018, and that they continued to be breached flagrantly so by ongoing occupation of the flats. It is evident this was to gain profit from people desperate for housing, accommodated for rents in the region of £600 per month. Tenants are entitled to protection relating to health, safety and welfare. Non-compliance with regulation means that money has been saved by the defendants by not completing the requisite work. Planning permission was granted only for 6 flats, there are 11. Basic safety requirements have not been adhered to.</i> <i>I determine that the company is in receipt of significant income, in region of £80,000. High profit, I've not been told of a mortgage on the property. I do not accept the accounts as provided. They are inconsistent and do not make sense. Additional directorships not put before Court, and only done so by prosecution. Significant penalties are required to mark offences.</i>	Costs of £3000
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9.	17.6.25	The defendants run a retail outlet in Cardiff with a history of selling illegal tobacco and vapes, as well as underage sales and selling alcohol without having the necessary licence in place. Only one of the defendants attended the hearing as the other was in Police custody in relation to an assault. The Judge considered all the circumstances in sentencing the defendant who was present. The absent defendant will be sentenced on a separate occasion.	The following were imposed on the one defendant present: • A 12-month community order - 10 Rehabilitation Activity Requirement days and 140 hours unpaid work . • A surcharge of £114, and • Costs of £1,200 A deprivation order was imposed for all items.
10.	1.7.25	Officers found very poor standards of food hygiene at a Cardiff convenience store. The Food Business Operator was a limited company having one Director. In March 2024, SRS Officers visited the shop and identified structural problems as well as issues with food safety management, cleanliness, the lack of hand washing facilities and the inability to separate raw and ready-to-eat foods. As a result of the seriousness of the situation at the premises, two Remedial Action Notices were served, and a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme score of 0 was awarded. Conditions at the store were particularly disappointing given the advice given to the business previously and there had been a history of offending. Previously, the business had been run by a different limited company, whose sole Director was married to the sole Director of the new company. When interviewed under caution, the sole Director of the current company sought to deflect responsibility for the problems identified, seeking to blame the advice given to the business by Environmental Health Officers, or otherwise as a result of issues not having been brought up during previous visits. The defendant company and its sole Director each pleaded guilty to	The sentencing outcome was as follows: <i>The limited company</i> A fine of £10,000 Victim surcharge of £2,000 A contribution of £275 to prosecution costs <i>The company Director</i> A fine of £2,000 Victim surcharge of £800 A contribution of £275 to prosecution costs

		10 charges.	
11.	15.7.25	During a Food Safety inspection of a major supermarket in Cardiff, Officers identified a significant number of prepacked foods on sale after their use-by dates. Further out of date items were found on sale in a subsequent visit to the same store, while visits to another of the company's Cardiff outlets identified even more food stuffs on sale after their use-by date. These visits took place over a period of 4 months and resulted in over 100 items of food past their use-by dates, and in some instances, the date had expired as much as 7, 12 and 15 days before. The offences included the sale of high-risk items such as meat and dairy products, which pose a significant health risk when consumed beyond their use-by dates. Several of these products were clearly marketed towards children, raising concerns about food safety and consumer protection. The company had pleaded guilty to four charges of selling unsafe food at an earlier hearing in May. The court heard how use-by dates are legally required on highly perishable food products to ensure that customers are purchasing and consuming food that is safe. Selling food that is past this date is a breach of food safety regulations and can lead to serious health consequences. In sentencing, the Judge recognised the seriousness of the company's failings and the fact that this wasn't an isolated, localised incident, or the result of some mistake. Rather, this was a systemic problem across multiple product lines and across two stores over a four month period. Simply stated, the systems the company had in place to prevent food being on sale after its use-by date were wholly inadequate. Acknowledging this, the company advised that it has invested heavily in new systems in which it has confidence, and pleaded guilty to four charges across the two stores.	The company was fined £640,000 (i.e. £160,000 for each of the four offences). In addition, it was ordered to pay £15,115 in prosecution costs and a Victim Surcharge of £2,000.

12.	17.7.25	This case related to a repeated breaches of two abatement notices under section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act which had been served on a Cardiff restaurant in October 2023. The notices had been served following complaints from neighbouring residents about odour and smoke nuisance emanating from the restaurant and into their Cardiff bay flats. Officers tried over time to work with the company in a bid to address the odour and smoke nuisance caused by the style of cooking used at the restaurant. While the business explored ways to resolve the nuisance caused by the charcoal cooking process (including moving the location of the charcoal cooking and trying an alternative smokeless charcoal), these attempts came to nothing, with the company having switched back to regular charcoal after a short period, as a result of the perceived detrimental effect of the smokeless product on the taste of the food. The three complainants in the case explained the impact of the nuisance on their lives and how this was occurring from early to late, day in and day out. They explained how they are unable to use their balconies, or even open a window when the restaurant is open; and how this dictates the time they go to bed (i.e., when they are finally able to open a window for ventilation). The complainants also explained how the cooking aromas seep into their furnishings and can't be removed. Officers visiting the flats noted how their hair and clothing smelled of food and charcoal for some time after they had left the building. The company and its two Directors pleaded not guilty in the Magistrates Court to the offences of repeatedly breaching the improvement notices. Having heard the evidence, the Magistrates decided that the company and its Directors had done all that was reasonably practicable to address the problem, and found them not guilty.	Costs from central funds awarded to the defence.
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13.	24.7.25	This case was brought after a lengthy investigation into a Cardiff wholesale company which supplied chicken to ethnic restaurants and takeaways. A catalogue of failings was uncovered, including very poor food hygiene practices, evidence that some poultry had been defrosted and refrozen, chicken found two years after durability marking, discovering temperature records were not kept up to date, and the transport of meat as far as West Wales in unclean vehicles that were not refrigerated or fit for purpose. In addition, the company was passing off the chicken supplied to its customers as halal when there was no evidence that the company had been supplied with chicken that was halal. The company Director had previously pleaded guilty to a number of food hygiene and food fraud offences. His co-defendant however, his co-defendant chose to plead not guilty to all charges. The co-defendant was an integral part of the running of the business, being the Food Business Operator (FBO) and company shareholder. He was precluded however from being a company Director himself as a result of previously being disqualified. As a result of the FBO's 'not guilty' pleas, a two week trial followed during which the jury heard that he had created a smokescreen of companies to mislead investigators, while he was actually running the entire operation himself. The jury was also told the takeaways and restaurants believed they were dealing with a number of different companies and all believed they were buying halal chicken. There were long periods of time when the warehouse did not receive halal meat from wholesalers, but continued to supply chicken to restaurants and takeaways who believed it was halal. After deliberating, the jury found the FBO guilty of all the 11 charges against him, and arrangements were made for both defendants to be sentenced at a later date. When sentencing took place at Merthyr Crown Court, the Judge said that it was evident the FBO was not willing to take any responsibility for the failings,	The two defendants were sentenced as follows: <i>The Food Business Operator (who pleaded not guilty)</i> 4 years and 8 months in immediate custody (this includes sentencing for an insolvency issue) <i>The company Director (who had pleaded guilty)</i> 24 months suspended sentence 150 hours unpaid work to be completed Hygiene Prohibition Order applications against both defendants were successful, meaning that both the above individuals were prohibited from being involved in the running of a food business for a period of 10 years.
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		preferring to blame employees. She observed that there had been 'a disaster waiting to happen' and it was a relief that no one is reported to have become ill as a result of the criminality. When unsafe meat is sold, the harm goes beyond that of financial harm, there is also a huge societal impact. The Judge went on to conclude that had the FBO's customers known of the lack of traceability of the chicken, incorrect use by dates and non-halal meat being sold, they would have been 'horrified'. The Director of the company, having pleaded guilty to the offences on the first possible occasion, was entitled to 25% credit, the Judge also felt that he was entitled to credit for having the weight of the impending sentence on his shoulders for over 3 years. Finally, it was acknowledged that he was very remorseful and moved away from the food business as a result of the charges against him however. Nevertheless, the Judge believed that the two defendants were as culpable as one another.	
14.	14.8.25	This case involved very poor conditions of hygiene at a Cardiff food establishment, first identified by officers in April 2024. At a subsequent visit in June of 2024, the concerns remained and it became clear that there was also an active rodent infestation at the premises. On this occasion, both officers saw a mouse running across the kitchen, while in a second sighting, a mouse was seen running along pipework under the kitchen sink. The presence of mouse droppings was widespread, and it was clear that the infestation was quite well established. Despite the premises being awarded a Food Hygiene Rating score of 1, there was a lack of urgency on the part of the company and its Directors, to tackle the root causes of the low score. The subsequent finding of the mouse infestation during the June 2024 visit, served to compound these concerns and led to a Voluntary Closure Agreement being put in place as there was an imminent risk to health.	Sentencing took place as follows: <i>The company</i> A fine of £6,000 Victim surcharge of £2,000 A contribution of £283 to prosecution costs <i>Company Director 1</i> A fine of £1,324 Victim surcharge of £530 A contribution of £283 to prosecution costs

		Of real concern in this case was the attitude of the company and its Directors to the severity of the problems found at the premises. They seem to have been in denial about this, indeed the responses provided under caution contain a number of flippant remarks about the mouse infestation, for example blaming the street outside and suggesting that the mice had been engaging <i>'in covert operations to infiltrate avoiding our security systems'</i> Once in the Magistrates Court, guilty pleas were entered to all 9 charges by the Directors, and on behalf of the company. In sentencing, the Judge submitted that the culpability was medium, the company fell short of the appropriate standard and although some systems were in place, they were not sufficiently adhered to or implemented. The directors committed the offences through act or omission, offences that a reasonable person would not have committed.	<i>Company Director 2</i> A fine of £1,324 Victim surcharge of £530 A contribution of £283 to prosecution costs
15.	28.8.25	On two occasions in October 2024, SRS officers witnessed smoking taking place in a substantially enclosed coffee shop in Cardiff. Discarded cigarette ends had previously been seen at the premises during a Food Hygiene inspection in May 2024, and this was followed by a visit from the Investigating Officer at the start of June 2024, during which smoking activity was observed. Following the June visit, the company running the business and its sole Director received a warning / advisory letter from the Investigating Officer in which detailed advice was given on their responsibilities under the law. Disappointingly, this advice was not acted upon, with further offending being witnessed on 3rd October and again on 22nd October 2024. It is a cause for concern that the Investigating Officer together with HSE and PCSO colleagues felt so intimidated by a group of men	The company was fined a total of £986 and ordered to pay costs of £365 together with a victim surcharge of £394.

		present at the premises during one of the daytime visits to the premises, that they made the decision to leave for their own safety. Neither the company nor the Director assisted with the investigation and chose not to answer questions put to them under caution about smoking on the premises. The company pleaded guilty to charges of failing to take reasonable steps to cause persons smoking at the premises to stop smoking contrary to Section 6(1) and 6 of the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017 on the 3rd and 22nd of October 2024. In mitigation the defendant was adamant that 50% of the area was open/uncovered and that the area was not for use by the public.	
16.	18.9.25	In this case, a Cardiff landlord allowed tenants to live in very poor and unsafe conditions at a terraced, two storey Cardiff property, which had been converted into two self-contained flats. He had chosen to ignore the advice of SRS Officers over a sustained period of time, and had none of the works carried out to the flats as required by the Improvement notice served on him under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 in April 2023. Subsequently, it was also established that the Landlord had continued to allow tenants of the ground floor flat to use as a bedroom an internal room with no windows and no means of escape. Use of this middle bedroom in this way was prohibited by a Prohibition Order served way back in April 2015, and yet it was still being used in January 2024, leaving tenants at risk of being trapped in the event of a fire. The list of failings at the property was extensive including for example the lack of complete fire-resistant doors, lack of containment for utility meters, the storage of flammable materials in communal passageways as well as	The defendants were sentenced as follows: The Landlord received a fine of £993 and was ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £373. The Letting Agent also received a fine of £993 and was ordered to pay costs of £250 and a victim surcharge of £373.

		electrical and physical safety concerns. After charges were brought against the landlord and his letting agent, guilty pleas were entered by both defendants.	
17.	18.9.25	As part of a test purchase operation in Cardiff city centre, the defendant sold hot food to a volunteer after midnight, thereby committing offences under both the Licensing Act 2003 and the street trading provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. The test purchase was witnessed by Licensing Enforcement Officers who cautioned the defendant. He initially explained that he thought he was able to sell hot food until 1am, but given his lengthy history of failing to comply with Licensing law, he later states that he wasn't going to stop in future and Officers would have to book him again next time. In court, the defendant changed his story again, telling the Magistrates that at the time the offence took place he was not trading, just visiting friends. This type of offending has a direct impact on the legitimate trade who comply with street trading Licensing law, and also on food business operators in fixed premises who have to pay business rates and other overheads.	The defendant was fined a total of £160 for the two offences, and was ordered to pay £150 towards prosecution costs together with a £32 victim surcharge.
18.	18.9.25	During a smoke-free enforcement visit to a Cardiff shisha bar, electrical safety concerns were identified on the premises. SRS Officers tried to work with the business to achieve compliance, but two follow up visits in May and July 2023 revealed that none of the issues identified had been addressed. During this time, failings	Sentencing was as follows: The company received a fine of £1760 and was ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £704. The Director received a fine of £3692 and

		were also identified in the safeguards in place for protecting staff involved in the preparation of charcoal. Two improvement notices subsequently served under the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act, but these were also ignored, as were letters seeking responses under caution from the company running the business and its sole Director. This lack of engagement and corrective action was disappointing but perhaps not not unsurprising as the same stance was taken by the company and its Director in an earlier SRS investigation into the company's smoke-free breaches The company and its Director failed to ensure the safety of staff working at the premises over a significant period of time, and charges were laid against both. The matter took a long time in the court process as a result of non-attendance. Matters began to come to a conclusion after the Director was arrested and taken off a plane at Heathrow Airport. He was brought before Uxbridge Magistrates Court, and spent a total of 36 hour in custody.	was ordered to pay costs of £700 and a victim surcharge of £1477
19.	18.9.25	When SRS Officers carried out a programmed inspection of a Cardiff takeaway restaurant in April 2024, they found mouse droppings in the storage room, in the kitchen and in the gas meter cupboard at the front of the premises. While the Investigating Officer was satisfied that the necessary cleaning and pest proofing had been completed in the weeks that followed, when he returned in July 2024, he witnessed evidence of a live and active mouse infestation in the rear storage room and rear preparation room. This included the sighting of a live mouse.	The magistrates fined the Director £320 and ordered him to pay a contribution to costs of £800 and a Victim Surcharge of £128.

		When interviewed, the sole Director of the company running the business claimed that daily pest checks were taking place at the premises, he sought to blame employees and claimed that there was no history of pest problems, which was untrue. He also claimed to have been new to the business, whereas records show that he has managed, or been part of the management of the business since as far back as 2017. The Director pleaded guilty to 6 food hygiene offences, but the same charges against the company were withdrawn as it had since ceased trading.	
20.	16.10.2025	This case arose as a result of an investigation by the Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit (WIMLU), into a loan shark lending to victims in North Wales. The illegal lender worked as a waiter in a well known chain of restaurants. By lending to work colleagues, he was able to win the trust of his victims. However, they became repeat borrowers with the threat of action from the illegal lender to 'sort it out' if repayments weren't made on time. It is clear that the victims endured very stressful circumstances and their evidence in this case described the often desperate situations they found themselves in. While the illegal lender may have been seen initially as a solution to the victims' immediate needs, as with all illegal money lending, he soon became part of the problem, effectively locking the individuals into cycles of spiralling debt. It is thought that over a period of 8 years, there were 27 victims, but through fear only three of them felt able to provide witness statements. One of them described how he borrowed money from the defendant as he was falling behind on essential payments on	The defendant was sentenced to: • 14 months imprisonment, suspended for 2 years • Community requirement of 250 hours (he was not given the max solely because he works)

		household bills however, he was left feeling fearful for his family's safety. He also described how he 'regularly skipped meals when money was tight to ensure that his children could eat. It was evident that the defendant preyed on the victim's desperate situations The illegal lender was sentenced at Mold Crown Court where the Judge described him as a loan shark, not in that he was 'behaving like a thug and threatening people, no one was subjected to physical harm, but no one likes to be in debt to a money lender'. The Judge thanked the officers of the Illegal Money Lending Team and praised the hard work that went into this case, and a Proceeds of Crime hearing will follow.	
21.	23.10.25	This case involved the seizure of a quantity of fireworks in the run up to Bonfire Night 2024, following concerns that they were being sold via Facebook. It appeared from the videos posted online that fireworks were being stored / displayed in a breeze block constructed building. When officers attended the home address of the defendant in Cardiff, they found a significant quantity of fireworks being stored in unsafe conditions in an outbuilding to the rear of the property. Despite the SRS Officers being accompanied by officers of South Wales Police, on being told that the fireworks would be seized on the grounds of unlicensed and unsafe storage, the defendant and a number of his associates subjected the SRS Officers to vile and threatening verbal abuse, making them flee for their own safety. In the minutes that followed, the men proceeded to remove the vast majority of the fireworks from the outbuilding, leaving behind fireworks with a total net explosive content of just over 2kg.	The defendant was fined £200 and ordered to make a contribution to costs of £150 together with a victim surcharge of £80. The forfeiture order was granted allowing the seized fireworks to be destroyed.

		It was clear from the Facebook evidence and from footage taken by officers during their visit that the defendant had been using the garage / outbuilding to the rear of his home to store fireworks over a period of at least a week. It was also abundantly clear that the storage was inherently dangerous (presence of strip lighting, electrical appliances, and flammable material) while at the same time there was a complete absence of the fireworks' transport containers, which would at least have slowed the passage of fire in the event of an emergency. Likewise, there was no safety signage nor any other fire safety precautions. The defendant declined to be interviewed about the matter and was charged with offences relating to the unsafe storage and supply of fireworks, as well as an obstruction offence. An application was made for forfeiture of the fireworks seized, so they could be destroyed. In court, the defendant pleaded guilty to the fireworks safety offences, but not guilty to the obstruction charge. On that basis, the prosecuting solicitor decided to drop the officer obstruction charge.	
22.	31.10.25	This case arose after a rogue trader and his accomplice targeted often vulnerable residents across Cardiff, the Vale and Bridgend, as well as RCT and Newport. Masquerading under various trading names suggesting links with bona fide construction products, the man adopted classic rogue trader tactics to confuse, unsettle and alarm his victims. In a fraud totalling more than £60,000, residents parted with their money in good faith for driveway and patio work. They soon found out however that materials weren't purchased, and that apparently unforeseen problems meant more work was required with an associated increase in cost. Finally, what little	The rogue trader was ordered to • Serve a prison sentence of 3 yrs 9 months • Pay compensation of £42,960 to victims • Pay costs of £28,917 His accomplice was sentenced to 9 months in prison, however as he had

		work was done, was to a very poor standard. When one of the residents told the rogue trader that they were going to make a complaint about him, they were told 'Don't you <i>expletive</i> dare, or I'll come around and smash your house in' When the rogue trader realised that he was under investigation, he sent his accomplice to the homes of victims, offering them cash payments to retract statements. Needless to say, coming on top of earlier threats, the worry caused to the residents was significant. Against this backdrop the rogue trader and his accomplice were charged and remanded, pending the evidence being heard in court. When they finally appeared, the rogue trader pleaded guilty to multiple offences including perverting the course of justice, while his accomplice pleaded guilty to a single charge of perverting the course of justice. A Proceeds of Crime hearing will follow	already spent 5.5 months on remand, this was deemed to have been served.
23.	2.12.25	The defendant in this case cold called a resident enquiring whether she had any antiques or jewellery for sale. He was invited into the porch area, but followed the resident into a bedroom where she kept her jewellery. The court heard how he proceeded to rifle through the jewellery and other goods, before the resident, a lady in her eighties agreed to sell a number of items to him. It wasn't until later that the resident realised that other items were missing and contacted South Wales Police. An SRS investigation followed and it was established that offences had been committed under the Consumer Protection From Unfair Trading Regulations. In court, the defendant accepted the prosecution case in full, pleading guilty to the offences at the	The defendant received an 8 month prison sentence, suspended for 18 months. He was ordered to do 200 hours of community service and pay a victim surcharge of £120. Finally, the defendant was ordered to pay £5,000 costs to the Local Authority and the resident was awarded £4,500 for the harm and distress that she had suffered.

		earliest opportunity. The Judge remarked that the defendant had acted aggressively and unfairly, and did not give the victim enough time to make proper decisions. He also felt that the resident had been targeted. The scrap of paper she had been given did not reflect the items purchased from her, and the Judge was satisfied that the defendant's behaviour was to confuse, bully and harass the resident into selling items to him that she did not want to sell. This was a despicable set of offences which demands an immediate custodial sentence. In mitigation however, the Judge took into account the defendant's work for charity, a character reference and the early plea, before sentencing him to an 8 month prison sentence suspended for 18 months.	
24.	15.12.25	Environmental Health Officers found very poor hygiene conditions during inspections of two Cardiff premises under the control of the same limited company. The first of these premises was a Sri Lankan takeaway while the other just a few doors away, was being used as storage space. It had previously been a takeaway too. Serious concerns, including an active rodent infestation were first identified at the in September 2024, and a voluntary closure was necessary. Officers worked with the company and its director to get the issues addressed, but progress was slow. By early December 2024, it became to Officers that there were food hygiene and pest control problems at both premises, and enforcement action was necessary. Officers described occasions where they observed mouse activity problems in real time, weeks after the issue was first identified, and it was clear that the business showed a real lack of urgency in addressing the deep cleaning required, in the eradication of the mouse infestation, and in pest proofing the premises to prevent	Sentencing in this case was as follows: The limited company Was fined a total of £16,080, and ordered to pay costs of £1084 The company director Was fined £3072 and ordered to pay costs of £1084 together with a Victim surcharge of £1229.

		recurrence in the future. When the director was interviewed under caution, he accepted ultimate responsibility for the failings of his company as the Food Business Operator. His responses however, suggested a lack of ownership of the rodent infestation problems, and he had chosen to cite for example that staff randomly opening external kitchen doors as being the cause of the problem. In another example he suggested the cause as being staff living in the flat above the storage premises using the downstairs kitchen and not cleaning up after themselves. While a Rentokil Pest Control contract was in place to cover both premises, the FBO did not have a robust system of checks and cleaning to keep pests at bay. Rather, there was an over-reliance on calling the pest control contractor out on a reactive basis. Likewise, there was a dependence on an app to notify rodent trap activity. While use of technology in this way is to be encouraged, it has to be part of a broader <i>preventative</i> strategy.	
25.	19.12.25	The defendants in this case were a married couple and their associate who had built a sophisticated and profitable dog breeding business with integrated fertility services, though a series of interlinked companies of which they held directorships. The scale of the breeding clearly required a dog breeding licence, however the individuals chose to evade the licensing process. Upon investigation by SRS Officers, it was established that to maximise their profits, the defendants over-bred their dogs (mainly bulldogs and dachshunds), and procedures were carried out that legally can only be performed by a veterinary surgeon. The court heard how in a five-year period, the couple bred 259	The first defendant was • Sentenced to 23 months in prison suspended for two years, and • Ordered to attend 10 rehabilitation requirement days and complete 180 hours of unpaid work The second defendant (wife of the first) was • Sentenced to 15 months in prison suspended for two years, and • Ordered to complete 140 hours of

		puppies in 63 litters - more than four times the number permitted by law (a breeding dog should have no more than three litters a year). Selling the puppies for between £1000 and £6000 each meant that the couple made over £400,000 in that time. Meanwhile their associate had 24 litters over a four-year period and made £121,000. The court also heard evidence of records being altered to avoid detection, prescription-only medication being given without authorisation, and congenital defects being passed on through the puppies, something purchasers would have been unaware of would not have been aware of. All three pleaded guilty to fraudulent trading, and a subsequent count of violating the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Animal Welfare (Breeding of Dogs) Wales Regulations 2014.	unpaid work Their associate was • Sentenced to 12 months in prison suspended for two years • Ordered to attend 120 hours of unpaid work A Proceeds of Crime hearing will follow.
26.	5.1.26	A March 2024 inspection of a takeaway food trailer on Barry Island identified very poor hygiene practices, including an inadequate water supply for hand washing and for the cleaning of equipment. As a result of the public health risks posed, a Remedial Action Notice (RAN) was served to prevent the sale of ready to eat food, as well as two Food Hygiene Improvement Notices. The business was given a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme score of 0 (Urgent Improvement Necessary). While restoration of the water supply a few days later meant that the RAN could be lifted, the Food Hygiene Improvement Notices remained in place and over the course of summer of 2024, the Investigating Officer attempted to work with the defendant to resolve fully the remaining concerns.	The defendant entered guilty pleas to eleven food hygiene offences, but in mitigation blamed the landowner for intermittently turning off the water supply. It was demonstrated to the court that he was no longer working in the food industry, and that he had a low income based on benefits and working as a cleaner while supporting four dependants. He was fined a total of £640, and ordered to pay costs of £250, together with a Victim Surcharge of £256.

		Disappointingly, a further inspection in August of 2024 identified further poor practices, including • <i>Fish defrosting out of temperature control in a bucket on the floor</i> • <i>No water supply to the sink - water supplied in old ketchup bottles</i> • <i>Obstruction of the double sink</i> • <i>Inadequate temperature monitoring records</i> • <i>Inadequate information on allergens to provide to customers</i> • <i>Failure to wash hands (no water supply and no soap)</i> • <i>Dirty equipment</i> • <i>Potential for physical and chemical contamination of food</i>	
27.	14.1.26	When Environmental Health Officers carried out a Food Hygiene inspection at a Cardiff trampoline park, their findings were such that the business was given a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme score of Zero - <i>Urgent improvement necessary</i>. The failings identified by the Officers are many and illustrate how even the most basic principles of food hygiene were not being met (for example the lack of separation of equipment and cleaning cloths used for raw and ready to eat foods; lack of handwashing / hand drying facilities, and a lack of appropriate cleaning regimes). The nature of the premises meant that food prepared in the kitchen would be purchased and eaten by families, including young children.	The court heard how the defendant had previously been subject to a suspended prison sentence for offences relating to the same business. Mitigation was given in respect of the defendant's attempts to remedy the issues and in addition, mitigating personal circumstances were put forward. Sentencing resulted in a fine of £800, and an order to pay costs of £500.

		By his own admission, the company director was in sole charge of food preparation at the time of the Officers' visit, and such was the concern over his understanding and competence in food hygiene, that he was served with a Hygiene Improvement Notice requiring him to undertake Level 3 or level 4 Food Hygiene training. While a number of the food hygiene failings at the premises were rectified by the time of the Officers' second and third visits, this took an inordinate amount of time and officer input, with some of the most serious failings taking the longest to be remedied. By the time the prosecution case came to court, the company had been liquidated, meaning that only proceedings against the director of the former company could continue. The same individual had been prosecuted following an earlier SRS investigation into health and safety failings. That earlier case had resulted in the then company director being given a suspended prison sentence in 2023	
28.	21.1.26	This investigation into illegal dog breeding began when neighbours of a residential property in Cardiff alerted South Wales Police to concerns over the dreadful smell emanating from the property. The smell was so bad that the neighbours feared it was being caused by the presence of a dead body. SRS Officers attended the property accompanied by veterinary surgeons and Police Officers, and found a total of 38 French Bulldogs and puppies living in absolutely appalling, overcrowded conditions. Some of the puppies were as young as 5 weeks, and it soon became clear that the house was being used to run an	Both defendants received suspended prison sentences as follows: Defendant 1 • An 18-week sentence, suspended for 12 months • 20 days Rehabilitation Activity Requirement

		unlicensed and therefore illegal dog breeding business. Even the very basic welfare needs of the dogs were not being met - there was no adequate bedding and no food or water present. 6 adult dogs were being kept in four small cages, and the bodies of four dead puppies were found in plastic bags in the freezer. Each dog was examined by a Vet, and all 38 were seized from the property on welfare grounds. Two defendants were identified and an order was subsequently obtained through the court under section 20 of the Animal Welfare Act, meaning that ownership of the dogs passed to the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The court imposed a disqualification under section 34 of the Animal Welfare Act in respect of each defendant. This is a lifetime order in respect of all canines, meaning that each is permanently prohibited from: a) Owning dogs b) Keeping dogs c) Participating in their keeping d) Being party to an arrangement under which he is entitled to control or influence the way in which dogs are kept; e) Dealing in dogs f) Transporting dogs g) Arranging for their transport	• 150 hours unpaid work Defendant 2 • A 9-week sentence, suspended for 12 months • 20 days Rehabilitation Activity Requirement • 120 hours unpaid work As outlined above both defendants are disqualified for life from the keeping etc of dogs. In addition, Defendant 1 is to pay £20,000 in costs within 12 months.
29.	22.1.26	The defendant in this case was found to be linked to the previous case outlined at (6) above, during the course of its investigation. In	The defendant received an immediate

		addition, the defendant was already known to SRS and Cardiff Council as he had previously been prosecuted for breeding dogs without the required licence. Officers had continued to remind him of the need to become licensed in the years in between. Far from learning his lesson after the 2020 prosecution, however, it became clear that he had continued to breed Bully type dogs, even giving an interview to an American magazine in which he presented himself as the CEO and founder of a business breeding bully type dogs, based in Cardiff, UK. An entry warrant was executed at the defendant's home address in where seven breeding dogs were found in appalling conditions. It was clear that he disregarded the dogs' welfare, both physical and mental, with the sole intention of breeding as many dogs as possible in as little a space as possible, thereby maximising his profit margin when selling puppies. In addition to the breathing difficulties and eye conditions so often associated with breeds of this type, dogs were found with their ears cropped, despite such mutilation being against UK law. Dogs were found barely able to walk through lack of exercise and being kept in the kennels to the rear of the domestic property they were devoid of any social interaction. It was clear from the build-up of waste that the accommodation wasn't kept clean. Even the construction of the kennels was completely inappropriate meaning that the dogs were prone to extremes of heat and cold during the year. In mitigation in court, the defendant claimed that the dogs' ears had been dogs' ears were cropped by a professional vet, however the Judge rejected this assertion as ear cropping is an illegal procedure	custodial sentence of 34 weeks. He was also disqualified from owning or keeping any dogs for a period of 15 years.
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		that no legitimate vet would carry out. As the case against him had developed, he relied on a inflammatory bowel condition to spare him jail time (as it had in the earlier 2020 prosecution). Unfortunately for him, evidence had emerged evidencing his taking part on a boxing match in November 2025, this being after the medical submission had been made to the court to present the debilitating nature of his condition. Taking all of the circumstances into account, the Judge concluded that despite the 2020 prosecution for illegal dog breeding and fraud for which he received a suspended prison sentence, he continued to offend with his 'eyes wide open' and 'put his financial greed and interest before the welfare of those dogs'.	
30.	5.2.26	Despite the additional HMO Licensing Scheme for the Plasnewydd ward in Cardiff being introduced in 2014, the landlord in this case consistently failed to obtain the required licences for his three HMO properties (converted into flats) situated next to each other on a road close to the city centre. This was despite the Investigating Officer having provided Mr Troy and his agent with the necessary advice and information to secure compliance. During the course of the investigation, the landlord was asked to produce certain documentation in respect of the safety of the flats, including fire safety. He has failed however to provide all the documentation required of him by the Investigating Officer. There were also clear a number of concerns at each of the properties, including defective fire doors, defective fire alarm systems and the presence of inner rooms where occupants could become trapped in the event of a fire.	The defendant was fined £1970 for one offence of failure to licence and one offence of failure to submit fire alarm certificates. No separate penalty was imposed for the remaining 4 offences. Mr. Troy was ordered to pay £782 in costs as well as a victim surcharge of £788.

		Throughout the years, the landlord had benefitted financially by not paying for the required licences under the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme. He also benefitted financially by not remedying the failings at the properties, which in their current condition do not comply with Building Regulations. All the while, his tenants were put at risk by not having the necessary protections in place.	
31.	11.2.26	This case arose from the underhand practices of a prolific rogue trader, and affected residents living in Cardiff, Bridgend and Swansea areas. In the case of each of the nine residents, they contracted with him for work to be completed to their property, only for the defendant to persuade them to have further work done, often on the basis that problems had been found, and that the additional works were necessary. The extent of the consumer detriment in this case was absolutely astounding, standing at £547,000. The residents paid very large sums of money for work and materials, only to have little or no work done, and that which was been carried out was done to a poor, and in some cases, dangerous standard. In the case of one of the residents, the expert witness surveyor report illustrates well the harm caused by the defendant. While the original quote was for £8,500, the consumer ended up paying a total of £22,000, while the Surveyor subsequently estimated the value of the work as being nil. Add to this the cost of remediation works and consequential losses, and the detriment to that one resident alone amounted to some £46,440. The residents' statements in this case made for difficult reading, with each of them having their worlds turned upside down by the physical, mental and financial misery caused to them and their families. They have had to live with the worry and cost of putting	The defendant was sentenced to a further 6 years in prison. Unfortunately, there were insufficient means for the defendant to pay compensation to the residents affected. The Criminal Behaviour Order against the defendant remains in place, severely restricting his ability to work in the UK again.

		right Slocome's involvement, including in one case the possibility of having to demolish a two-storey extension. There is no doubt that his actions caused significant financial hardship to the victims, who were forced to take out loans and overdrafts and, in some instances, withdraw money from their pension pots to rectify the poor-quality work he had carried out. Some of the victims were elderly and vulnerable. A significant aggravating factor in this case was the fact that at the time of the commission of the offences the defendant <i>was on bail</i> for similar offences prosecuted by the City and County of Swansea Council. To ensure the victims in this current case didn't pick up on his previous history, the defendant made the conscious decision to go by false personal and business names. At Cardiff Crown Court, the Judge described the defendant as 'a persistent rogue builder who operated dishonestly'. He remarked on how costs had been falsely escalated, and that any work he did carry out was to an "appalling standard", with some homes being "virtually destroyed". The Judge went on to reference how the defendant had brought in an unqualified gas engineer to carry out work at properties, leaving them in a "potentially lethal state". In one instance, carbon monoxide leaked into a property where a 10-month-old child was living.	
32.	25.2.26	A Cardiff take-away outlet was awarded a Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) score of 3 on its initial food hygiene inspection in January 2025. However, it was established in early March 2025, that the FHRS sticker supplied to the business was not being	The defendant Food Business Operator pleaded guilty to the failure to display, and were dealt with as follows:

	displayed as required by the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act, and the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Regulations. A Fixed Penalty Notice was issued to the Food Business Operator, a limited company, on 7th March 2025, and while this was subsequently paid some weeks later, the failure to display the FHRS score continued for at least another month, as identified during the Investigating Officer's follow up visits to the premises. When questioned under caution about the continued failure to display, the sole Director of the company explained that there had been a misunderstanding on his part in that he believed that payment of the fixed penalty charge had absolved the business from having to display the score and he was in any case going to be submitting an application to SRS for a re-rating visit. The Director sought to blame 'Head Office' for delaying a visit to review any works that were needed to improve the FHRS score. While it is true that his business is a franchisee of a particular noodle takeaway brand, responsibility for food hygiene compliance rests with the Food Business Operator at the Cardiff address. The Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Act, and the Food Hygiene Rating (Wales) Regulations require the FBO to display a valid FHRS sticker at or near each entrance available for customer use, in a conspicuous place where it is capable of being easily read by customers before they enter the establishment. The FBO had fallen short of this requirement on the repeated occasions witnessed by the Investigating Officer since 15th April. Informations were laid against both the local company (the FBO) and its sole Director.	The company received a fine of £660 and was ordered to pay costs of £188 together with a victim surcharge of £132. Likewise, the company director received a fine of £660 and was ordered to pay costs of £188 together with a victim surcharge of £132.
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33.	25.2.26	The defendant in this case failed to register his Bridgend based catering business, as required by the Food Hygiene (Wales) Regulations 2006. During the investigation, it became abundantly clear that the defendant was fully aware of the requirement to register his food business before beginning to trade early in 2024. Nevertheless, the Investigating Officer was able to establish that the unregistered business provided the catering at a wedding venue on at least 5 separate dates. It became clear that this wasn't the first time that the defendant had failed to register a food business. As there is no charge associated with the registration process, it is likely that the failure to register was driven by a desire to run his food business 'under the radar' without being subject to the Food Hygiene inspection regime or other Environmental Health intervention. When interviewed under caution, the defendant and his wife were evasive about their business arrangements but it was clear that the offending in this case was premeditated, over a period of time, and not the result of some one-off oversight or accident.	A guilty plea was entered in court, and the defendant was fined £2,000. He was also ordered to pay £200 in costs together with an £800 surcharge.
34.	27.2.26	This rogue builder investigation established how the defendant engaged in misleading and fraudulent trading practices in his dealings with a total of 18 victims. In classic rogue trader fashion, the defendant presented himself as friendly, knowledgeable and engaging when quoting for a range of building and home improvement contracts. The trust of each of the residents was betrayed however, and they were left to pick up the pieces as a result of <i>none</i> of the jobs being completed, and the work that was done was to a poor standard.	Taking into consideration all aggravating and mitigating features, also giving 15% credit for a guilty plea a few days prior to trial, the Judge sentenced the defendant to 43 months in prison. Unfortunately, the rogue builder had no money or assets to his name and so no compensation could be awarded to the

		Unlike the average rogue builder however, the defendant in this case improved his chances of residents choosing him for their projects through his use of a Trade Association membership (which he later resigned). He further enhanced the professional image he presented by preparing for each of the victims a very detailed and plausible looking quotation, and he also provided the required information on customers' cancellation rights. Another theme running through the witness accounts of the residents, is the fact that he did little of the work himself, relying instead on quite casual arrangements with individuals who he then failed to pay. Message timelines showed how dishonest and manipulative the defendant was in his treatment of customers, fobbing them off with a whole host of excuses for not turning up to work, ranging from his hospitalisation for mental health crises and having COVID multiple times, to car crashes and other accidents, and bereavement. The web of deceit that he spun became so complex that it was difficult to see how he could remember what lies he had told to which customers. The witness statements of the residents affected make for very difficult reading as the pattern of offending is repeated over and over. All in all, the impact of his behaviour has been devastating with residents suffering huge inconvenience and a collective detriment amounting to in excess of £100,000. In court, the Judge recounted the circumstances of each of the victims, citing some of the common themes emerging from their statements, not least sleepless nights, strains on relationships, anxiety, feeling stupid and an inability to trust going forward. This all being alongside the financial devastation that they had suffered. The Judge commented that the victims 'should not feel stupid for	victims in this case.
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		being victims of a deeply dishonest and deceitful conman’.	
35.	4.3.26	This case saw residents of both Cardiff and the Vale ripped off by the defendant’s cynical rogue trading practices. At the first of the two properties, the elderly homeowner sought help in addressing leaks around a chimney breast at her Cardiff property. When the defendant quoted for the work, he sent a worker onto the roof to take a look. Following a classic rogue trader tactic, the defendant claimed that the worker had put his foot through the roof as it was in such a poor condition, and there would be a cost of £9,500 to repair the roof. In the weeks that followed, he claimed that the amount of work and therefore the cost of the job had increased significantly, with the result that in the space of barely a fortnight, the victim had parted with a total of £29,500 for a new roof. This is a tried and tested rogue trader tactic where money is taken gradually from the victim in line with a developing story of the extent or complexity of the work required. At the same time, the perception of the resident is one where the point of no return has been reached and they continue to make payments to get the job done once and for all. Compounding the problem in this was the lack of any paperwork or cancellation rights being given to the resident. Unfortunately for the Cardiff resident, despite the new roof, leaks still came into the property. In the second case, a Vale of Glamorgan resident was overcharged for a poor job when a patio was laid. Again, this resident received no paperwork or notification of their cancellation rights. In their investigation of the trader, Officers evidenced multiple breaches of the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008,	The defendant was sentenced to an immediate custodial sentence of 27 months. No costs were awarded and the Prosecution’s application for a Criminal Behaviour Order was refused.

		including aggressive practices. With the inclusion of rectification costs, the total losses amounted to £43,000 and in sentencing, the Judge referred to the defendant's practices as 'disgraceful'.	
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Gross Expenditure Breakdown as of 31st March 2026

Annex 1

	Bridgend			Cardiff			Vale			Total		
	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance	Budget	Outturn	Variance
Authority Specific												
Bridgend Licensing	384	386	(2)							384	386	(2)
Bridgend Empty Homes	42	53	(11)							42	53	(11)
Vets & Kennelling Fees (Bridgend)	19	5	14							19	5	14
Cardiff Licensing				824	1,063	(239)				824	1,063	(239)
HMO Cathays				284	289	(5)				284	289	(5)
HMO Plasnewydd				283	286	(3)				283	286	(3)
Student Liason				61	33	28				61	33	28
Night Time Noise				66	51	15				66	51	15
Cardiff Port Health				166	168	(2)				166	168	(2)
Vale Licensing							435	448	(13)	435	448	(13)
Burials							1	11	(10)	1	11	(10)
Pest Control							118	118	(0)	118	118	(0)
Vets & Kennelling Fees (Vale)							21	2	19	21	2	19
Sub total	445	444	1	1,684	1,891	(207)	575	579	(4)	2,704	2,914	(210)
Core Services												
Animal Services	89	82	7	232	214	18	82	75	7	403	371	32
Environmental	54	63	(9)	139	166	(27)	49	58	(9)	242	287	(45)
Food Services	369	355	14	960	928	32	337	326	11	1,666	1,609	57
Housing Services	161	169	(8)	419	441	(22)	147	155	(8)	727	765	(38)
HS & CD	150	147	3	390	385	5	137	135	2	677	668	9
Pollution Services	210	208	2	547	544	3	192	191	1	949	944	5
Trading Stds	325	343	(18)	847	896	(49)	298	315	(17)	1,470	1,554	(84)
Sub total	1,358	1,368	(10)	3,534	3,574	(40)	1,242	1,256	(14)	6,134	6,197	(63)
Gross Expenditure Budget	1,803	1,812	(9)	5,218	5,465	(247)	1,817	1,835	(18)	8,838	9,112	(274)

Protecting the Public and Supporting Businesses – Trading Standards improving compliance and tackling crime

The Impacts and Outcomes of
Local Trading Standards Services
2024/25 in Wales



FOREWORD

The Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers (ACTSO) represents heads of Trading Standards across England & Wales and currently 97% 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 the fourth report for Wales.

During 2024/25, Trading Standards services in Wales have prevented over £43 million of detriment to consumers and legitimate businesses.

The year **2024/25** was yet another busy one for Trading Standards Services in Wales with further increases in activity around illicit tobacco and vapes. Cheap, unsafe and counterfeit goods appearing to be a “good deal” continued to pose risks to consumers. The focus was on preventative measures to address consumer detriment which revealed consistent failures in relation to age restricted products together with an increase in non-compliances around food labelling. This shows the continued importance of providing good quality advice to support legitimate businesses and promote fair competition.

The report focuses on the three themes of Tackling Detriment and Preventing Harm, Supporting the Local Economy, and Promoting Health and Wellbeing. While Local Trading Standards Services remain stretched in terms of demand and pressures, they continue to have a big impact in protecting consumers and helping businesses. The headlines from this year’s report are:

- **Over £43 million detriment was prevented by Trading Standards’ actions.**
- **Revenue budgets were approximately £15.5 million.**
- **Overall staff numbers were 294.**
- **Referrals from Citizens Advice rose by nearly 38% to 25,263 compared to 2023/24.**
- **This year 164 people or businesses were convicted of offences.**
- **The amount of money saved for scam victims was over £2.5 million.**
- **Trading Standards provided over 1,700 hours of advice to businesses through primary authority partnerships.**

- **Over 18,800 compliance checks were carried out to ensure that businesses meet their legal responsibilities and to provide them with advice on site.**
- **Over 21,900 unsafe or non-compliant products were seized or removed from the marketplace.**
- **Almost 1,990 food premises were found to be in breach of food standards legislation and almost 2,900 businesses were found to be non-compliant with animal health and welfare requirements.**
- **Over 280 premises were checked to ensure they were not selling age-restricted goods, such as alcohol, tobacco and vapes to children.**
- **Over 747,000 illicit cigarettes, over 0.859 tonnes of illicit hand-rolling tobacco and over 28,000 illicit vapes were seized.**

Ongoing investment into the Trading Standards Profession in both the short and the long term, helps to support the Government’s aims of innovation and economic growth.

Trading Standards services in Wales provide a vital consumer protection role, tackling unscrupulous businesses who undermine consumer and market confidence. Officers work collaboratively and in partnership with other agencies and regulators to play their part in responding to serious organised crime and other priorities, related to safeguarding, the cost-of-living crisis, unsafe products and food safety. By sharing information and intelligence, they work dynamically to meet new and emerging issues.

In summary, Trading Standards provides a crucial link, on consumer and fair trading issues, between local communities across England and Wales. It has a unique regulatory infrastructure that can operate at local, regional, and national levels, which is key to its success. This means that regional investigations are effectively coordinated and delivered via and alongside the work of National Trading Standards. This includes a joined-up approach to scams, eCrime, estate agents and letting agents.

The impact of the work that Trading Standards has in Wales and the results and outcomes that are achieved are highlighted throughout this report. It demonstrates the huge value in protecting consumers, legitimate businesses and supporting public health.

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 across Wales.

Special thanks go to the 16 services covering 20 local authority trading standards services in Wales that submitted their data return. This covers almost 80% of all local authorities in Wales.

Valerie Simpson

Chair of the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers

Jacqui Thomas

Chair of Trading Standards Wales

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Local authorities in Wales were asked to submit data for the financial year 2024/25. The indicators measure demand and resourcing alongside key outputs and outcomes from Trading Standards' activity.

A total of 16 trading standards services contributed, covering 18 of 22 local authorities in Wales.

The responses cover an area with a population of over 2.5 million, or 79.6% 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 over £15.5 million, a 28% increase from last year.

Trading Standards Services received over £845,000 in income from a variety of sources including National Trading Standards' grants, and Primary Authority income and metrology work, a 1.2% increase from last year.

Approximately 294 full-time employees were employed on Trading Standards work in Wales, of which over 90% (267) were operational staff.

The Citizens Advice Consumer Service referrals and notifications to Trading Standards rose by almost 38% to 25,263. This shows how many members of the public are seeking advice and support from Trading Standards on consumer related problems and issues. In addition, Trading Standards also received over 8,200 referrals from other partners. Whilst the demands on Citizens Advice has increased in the region, the level of frontline trading standards capacity has not increased to meet the extra demand on the service.

SECTION ONE: TACKLING DETRIMENT AND PREVENTING HARM

Trading Standards' work can include providing information 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 to both consumers and legitimate businesses.

The Competition and Markets Authority's 2024 Consumer Detriment Survey, commissioned from the National Centre for Social Research estimated overall detriment to consumers across Great Britain at £71.2 billion.

1.1 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 2024/25, it is estimated that the actions of Trading Standards Services resulted in:

- **Almost £300,000** compensation being awarded to victims by the courts.
- **Over £1 million** prevented from being handed over to criminals.
- **Over £650,000** gained for victims through other processes, e.g. advice and intervention.

Despite reductions in direct compensation for victims and money prevented from being returned to criminals, when compared to last year, Trading Standards services in Wales continue to make a significant and growing impact. Compensation secured for victims through alternative routes has grown by 42.5%, demonstrating adaptability and a strong commitment to securing justice and redress. **Overall, Trading Standards actions in Wales prevented over £43 million of detriment to consumers and businesses.**

1.2 Stopping Fraudulent, Illegal and Unfair Trading

Trading Standards Services enforce almost 300 pieces of legislation. Trading Standards legislation carries a variety of penalties including imprisonment, fines, forfeiture of assets and undertakings to stop future non-compliance. Formal enforcement action is usually taken where people deliberately break the law, have caused serious harm, or have repeatedly ignored advice from officers. Serious investigations are complex, lengthy and can take several years to bring to trial.

In 2024/25:

- **Approximately 164 defendants** were prosecuted. This is a 53% increase in the number of people or businesses convicted of offences, compared to 2023/24.
- **Prison sentences totalling almost 142 years** were handed down.
- **Defendants were ordered to pay over £60,000 in fines**, a slight increase of nearly 18% compared to 2023/24.

- **Defendants were ordered to pay almost £1.4 million in Proceeds of Crime confiscation orders**, an increase of over 52% compared to last year.

Prosecutions have risen by 53%, reflecting increased enforcement activity, while proceeds of crime orders have increased by 52%, ensuring offenders face greater financial consequences for illegal trading. This rise is likely driven by more complex, higher-value cases, improved financial investigation capability, and greater multi-agency use of asset recovery powers, alongside a stronger emphasis on preventing criminals from profiting, and the prosecution of more asset-rich offenders. Together, these results highlight strong investigative performance, increased disruption of criminal activity, and a determined focus on protecting consumers and communities across Wales.



1.3 Protecting and supporting people experiencing fraud-related harm

Fraud is the most common crime in the country, accounting for 31% 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 shares intelligence with the National Trading Standards Scams and eCrime Teams who undertake disruption work such as removing telephone or payment systems and taking down websites. Most scams emanate from overseas where formal legal action by Trading Standards is not possible.

In 2024/25, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Local authority Trading Standards Services in Wales provided support to over **7,000** scam victims.
- Work to disrupt mass marketing fraud mailings and stop outgoing payments and mail saved consumers over **£2.5 million**.

The large percentage increase in scam victims supported compared with last year is mainly due to Anglesey Trading Standards' extensive preventative work with their local No Cold Calling Control Zones and widespread home visits providing advice and deterrent stickers - meaning far more residents are now identified, engaged, and protected from potential scams.

Public Protection Partnership Working

Neath Port Talbot Trading Standards continues to play a key role in preventing harm and reducing detriment within the community through targeted engagement, intelligence-led enforcement and strong partnership working. Officers regularly deliver talks on fraud, scams and rogue trading to raise awareness and build consumer resilience, while close collaboration with the Community Safety Partnership, Serious and Organised Crime Board and other multi-agency groups helps ensure early identification of emerging risks. Following intelligence that drugs were being supplied from vape premises, Trading Standards has worked alongside the police on joint operations targeting illicit vape and tobacco sales - directly disrupting criminal activity and safeguarding local residents.

Protecting vulnerable people is central to this work. After concerns were raised about safeguarding failures within hotel and B&B accommodation, officers carried out follow-up visits to all 29 known premises alongside colleagues from policing, licensing, social services and The Children's Society. Businesses received guidance on recognising risk indicators for child sexual exploitation, now reinforced through a new online training resource developed with Trading Standards input.

Metrology/Cost of Living

Around a quarter of Welsh households live in fuel poverty, with rates rising to over 40% in rural West Wales, where many homes rely on expensive, off-grid fuels such as heating oil or LPG - unprotected by Ofgem's price cap.

To protect these vulnerable households, **Pembrokeshire Trading Standards** tested 29 bulk fuel tankers over the past year to ensure accurate delivery and fair trading, preventing overcharging and supporting honest local suppliers.

As part of a wider all-Wales Trading Standards "fuel poverty" project, **Gwynedd Trading Standards** officers also checked prepacked coal sold in retail outlets and found some sacks to be over 5% short in weight.

Accurate weights and measures are vital to consumer fairness, especially for households struggling with rising energy costs. By tackling short-weight and unfair fuel sales, Trading Standards services safeguard rural consumers, protect limited household budgets, and promote trust and integrity in the Welsh energy market, contributing to the Welsh Government's Health & Wellbeing priorities.



During 2024-2025, **Gwynedd Trading Standards** also undertook a campaign specifically targeting grocery stores within the Authority to check for compliance in relation to the Price Marking Order 2004. A total of 116 inspections were undertaken, and 19 businesses were deemed not to comply with the Price Marking Order 2004 - either not displaying a price or displaying an incorrect price when checked at point of sale (16% failure rate).

Consumer Protection and Protecting Communities

During 2024-25, **Anglesey Trading Standards** strengthened its prevention-led approach to tackling doorstep crime by expanding and reinforcing No Cold Calling Zones across the island. Through home visits, distribution of “No Uninvited Callers” stickers and community engagement under the DoorSmart/DoorSafe initiative, officers helped residents feel more confident in refusing cold callers and identifying rogue traders. Working closely with North Wales Police, the service also supported joint enforcement activity where concerns were raised, ensuring that vulnerable people are protected and criminals cannot operate unchecked. This proactive programme is helping to reduce risk, empower communities, and stop harm before it occurs.

In addition, five criminal investigations led to five successful prosecutions in 2024/2025, demonstrating effective enforcement and positive outcomes for consumer protection in Anglesey.

Carmarthenshire Trading Standards is delivering significant protection for vulnerable residents through its trueCall© telemarketing fraud prevention programme. By combining call-blocking technology with monthly monitoring via Seraphimbeta© - an innovative system developed in-house - officers are able to identify early signs of contact with fraudulent callers and intervene before harm occurs. During 2024/25 alone, the programme blocked 31,374 nuisance calls, including 6,756 linked to known telemarketing criminals, resulting in 2,421 monitoring reviews and 74 direct welfare interventions where the team stepped in to protect individuals at risk. This proactive approach is estimated to have prevented around 40 fraud attempts and generated £184,554 in direct savings to vulnerable households, as well as a further £109,297 reduction in public service costs (NHS, Social Care & Policing). These outcomes demonstrate the powerful impact of Carmarthenshire’s prevention-led strategy - safeguarding residents, reducing financial loss, and easing pressure on frontline services.



Rhondda Cynon Taf Trading Standards has delivered strong results in tackling criminal traders and protecting residents from substantial financial harm. In January 2025, two brothers running a building company were sentenced to 32 months in prison and banned from acting as directors for 10 years after leaving multiple homes unsafe and consumers out of pocket by almost £125,000. One victim alone lost over £61,000 and was left living in an uninhabitable property without heating, a kitchen or basic security for over a year. This successful prosecution not only secured justice for those affected but sent a clear message that traders who exploit consumers, breach trust, and profit from poor or incomplete work will be held to account.

The service has also identified a concerning shift in offending patterns - with complaints now frequently involving traders with no previous adverse history and victims who would not traditionally be viewed as vulnerable. This evolving landscape makes the work of Trading Standards even more vital, and this case demonstrates the critical impact of early investigation, robust enforcement and the protection the service provides to households across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Torfaen Trading Standards secured a three-year prison sentence after almost 300 accident-damaged vehicles were found to have been sold to unsuspecting buyers across the UK. The offender used fake social media profiles and false identities to register vehicles, hiding the fact they had been previously written off - a fraud valued at around £165,000. The case began when a 17-year-old buyer reported to Torfaen Trading Standards that a recently purchased car had broken down within minutes of leaving the seller. Faced with repair costs of over £1,300 and no refund offered, officers investigated and discovered the vehicle's accident history and launched a wider investigation.

Trading Standards officers later traced nearly 300 vehicles linked to the operation and identified that many buyers had no idea they were purchasing previously written-off cars. In one instance, a customer returned a faulty vehicle for repair only for it to reappear for sale a week later. Persistent investigation work, evidence gathering and consumer intelligence ultimately secured a conviction at Cardiff Crown Court under the Fraud Act 2006. The case illustrated the dangers associated with undisclosed accident-damaged vehicles and demonstrated the essential role Trading Standards played in protecting motorists and preventing unsafe cars from circulating on the market.



SRS Trading Standards successfully brought a rogue builder to justice after homeowners were left with losses exceeding £200,000 and months of stress, unfinished building work and unresolved disputes. Despite presenting himself as a reputable tradesperson, the builder engaged in fraudulent and misleading business practices, taking large upfront payments, failing to complete contracted work, and using money from new customers to placate existing ones - a classic 'rob Peter to pay Paul' pattern of deception.

Through a detailed investigation led by SRS Trading Standards, evidence was gathered showing the use of multiple trading names, new companies created to escape liability, and the use of stock photographs taken from online sources to falsely portray previous work. Witness statements demonstrated the scale of harm caused - unfinished projects, goods paid for but never supplied, substandard workmanship and failure to obtain planning or building control approval where required. As a result of the case built by SRS Trading Standards, the defendant pleaded guilty to 11 counts of fraud, one count of fraudulent trading and one unfair commercial practice offence. He received a custodial sentence of 43 months (3 years and 7 months). This case highlights the significant

role Trading Standards plays in protecting residents, tackling fraud, and preventing further financial harm in the community.

Rhondda Cynon Taff Trading Standards brought a successful prosecution after an unsafe second-hand car was sold to a consumer and later broke down within just 20 miles of delivery, causing a dangerous incident in peak-time traffic. The buyer reported severe mechanical faults, braking failure and smoke from the engine, later confirmed by an expert to be caused by a fractured suspension spring that left the vehicle un-roadworthy and at significant risk of causing a serious accident. Officers also found discrepancies between the vehicle's advertised description and its true specification, alongside failures to provide mandatory cancellation rights - all breaches of consumer protection law.

Following investigation and court action, the seller pleaded guilty to three offences, including misleading descriptions and supplying an unsafe vehicle. The case demonstrated clear public protection outcomes: unsafe trading practices were exposed, a dangerous car was removed from the road, and a conviction was secured.



A long-running investigation by **SRS Trading Standards** led to the conviction of a builder who faced 13 charges under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 and the Fraud Act 2006. Evidence showed a pattern of dishonesty, including grossly overcharging customers, exaggerating the urgency of work, recommending unnecessary repairs, and delivering construction of an unacceptably poor standard. The impact on victims was significant - with total losses of **£175,000** - and one of the individuals targeted was a 93-year-old woman. The court heard how vulnerable residents were exploited for financial gain, leaving them distressed, out of pocket and in some cases with homes left in a dangerous or deteriorated condition.

The offender was sentenced to **5 years and 2 months in prison**, reflecting the severity of the fraud, and a **10-year Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO)** was imposed to protect the public. The order prevents him from obtaining or carrying out any building, maintenance, gardening or home-improvement work

- directly or through others - anywhere in the UK. This case demonstrates the continuing value of Trading Standards enforcement in exposing rogue traders, safeguarding homeowners and preventing repeat harm long after sentencing.

Ceredigion Trading Standards successfully prosecuted a local individual for producing and selling counterfeit DVDs over a number of years through multiple websites and payment accounts. The operation involved the unauthorised use of major brand names including Netflix, Amazon, Disney, Sony and Universal, with the estimated market value of equivalent genuine goods totalling around £150,000. The defendant pleaded guilty to offences under the Trade Marks Act 1994 and received a 20-month prison sentence, suspended for 18 months, along with a four-month curfew order and 15 Rehabilitation Activity Requirement days. Proceeds of Crime proceedings also took place to recover the financial benefit gained from the offending.

SECTION TWO: SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Economic growth is a key priority of the Government and local authorities. To maximise economic growth, businesses need access to good advice about regulatory requirements, fair competition and to be confident that others will not be able to undercut them by breaking the law.

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

The importance of achieving economic growth means that Trading Standards' role in providing advice and support to businesses remains important.

As of 31st March 2025, **81** organisations were benefiting from a direct primary authority partnership in Wales.

In **2024/25**, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Almost **1,700** hours were spent by Trading Standards advising Primary Authority businesses.
- Trading Standards responded to almost **1,200** requests for advice from businesses that were not part of the Primary Authority scheme. This is a reduction of over 30% from 2023/24. This may be because there is more information available online through sites such as Business Companion.

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

Unfair competition from those who fail to meet legal standards puts consumers at risk, can cause legitimate businesses to close and damages the prospects for growth.

Trading Standards Services follow a risk based and intelligence-led model. They will take action proportionate to the risk. This may include providing advice, seizing unsafe or illegal products, issuing fines and taking formal enforcement action.

In **2024/25**, it is estimated that across Wales:

- Over **18,800** 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. This is a 40% increase compared to 2023/24.

- Almost **4,900** businesses were subject to an intervention, such as advice, investigation, or referral. This is a 32% increase from 2023/24.
- Over **38,500** counterfeit products with a market value of over **£6 million**, which breach the intellectual property of legitimate businesses, were seized.

There was a 273% increase in the removal of counterfeit goods from 2023/24. However, we know this figure fluctuates due to local demand and has been higher in previous years.

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





Business Advice

Following on from previous years, **Gwynedd Trading Standards** continue to make contact with all new businesses that come to their attention. It is their procedure to make contact with each trader - either from a distance or through an inspection in person - encouraging businesses to comply with regulations and follow good business practice. Gwynedd Trading Standards responded to a request from OPSS to take part in the E-bike/E-scooter project due to product safety concerns. 13 inspections to relevant businesses were undertaken, providing advice and guidance on Legislation with issues identified with one business in particular. Officers took part in the 'tick box' campaign in partnership with the Intellectual Property Office (IPO). As part of the project, 5 storage facilities were inspected, undertaking a full audit at 3 of those facilities. The purpose of the work being to improve industry standards, awareness and engagement with law enforcement agencies to deter counterfeit and illicit goods being stored at such facilities.

Working Together for a Stronger Local Economy

Neath Port Talbot Trading Standards has an established relationship with NPT Economic Development (a business support service) and is consulted on businesses seeking grants for support and attends a business support event almost every month. Due to the presence of other organisations at these events, it leads to a wider network of contacts and raises the profile of the service.

Blaenau Gwent Trading Standards play an active role attending Blaenau Gwent Enterprise Partnership Group meetings which bring together business support groups such as Business Wales, Careers Wales, Development Back Wales and many more. Organised and facilitated by the Council's Regeneration and Innovation Officers, the forum aims to provide support to new businesses within Blaenau Gwent.

Caerphilly County Borough Council's annual Business Satisfaction Survey showed strong, consistent praise for Trading Standards engagement over the past year. Local businesses reported that support was professional, approachable and delivered with respect – but, crucially, also practical and useful. Many highlighted that the advice received helped them improve compliance, solve problems and operate more confidently, with several implementing recommendations that led to real, positive changes.

The results reflect the important role Trading Standards plays not only in ensuring fair, safe trading practices, but also in helping businesses grow, adapt and thrive within regulatory requirements. By maintaining strong relationships and offering clear, actionable guidance, the service is directly contributing to the stability of local enterprises and the strength of the wider Caerphilly economy.

SECTION THREE: PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Trading Standards have a vital part to play by ensuring consumer products are safe, food is correctly labelled and animal health and welfare standards are maintained. This supports the health and well-being of communities which is a key priority in most local authorities.

Trading Standards also enforce a wide range of age restricted sales legislation to help to keep young people safe from vapes, cigarettes, alcohol, and knives.

3.1 Ensuring the Safety of Consumer Products

Product safety laws ensure that products do not cause fires, injuries or deaths. This is particularly important for goods such as electrical items, toys and cosmetics. Trading Standards will advise businesses and check goods at manufacture, import, wholesale and retail level.

In 2024/25, it is estimated that across Wales:

- **Almost 21,900 unsafe or non-compliant products were seized or removed from the marketplace.** This was a 227% increase on last year.
- **The savings to society, in terms of product value and injuries and fires prevented, is over £780,000.**

3.2 Protecting the food chain

Food prices remain high which 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 2024/25, it is estimated that across Wales:

- **Almost 1,990 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.** This was an 13% increase on last year and nearly 42% higher than in 2021/22. This is likely to relate to new allergen requirements for smaller businesses with an increased focus by local authorities on these issues.

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

In 2024/25, it is estimated that across Wales:

- **Almost 2,900 businesses were found to be in breach of animal health and welfare legislation.**

This represents a 129% increase from last year. Increased enforcement activity in Wales reflects a combination of factors, including the national drive to tackle illegal dog breeding, economic pressures affecting animal care standards, rising public reporting, and stronger multi-agency intelligence and intervention. While illegal breeding remains a major area of focus, wider welfare concerns linked to hardship and farm-level neglect are also contributing to the volume and seriousness of cases being brought forward.





3.3 Reducing the risk of children accessing age restricted products

Trading Standards Services play an important role in ensuring that children cannot buy products that have age restrictions, such as knives, alcohol, vapes, tobacco and fireworks. They also provide businesses with advice on how to comply.

In 2024/25, it is estimated that across Wales:

- **95 premises** were tested for alcohol sales.
- The average failure rate for alcohol test purchases was **12%**.
- **65 premises** were tested for tobacco sales.
- The average failure rate for tobacco test purchases was **2%**.
- **124 premises** were tested for vape sales.
- The average failure rate for tobacco test purchases was **5%**.

Overall, Trading Standards activity across Wales shifted in focus compared with the previous year. Alcohol compliance checks increased, with 95 premises tested compared to 72 in 2023/24, and the failure rate fell from 15% to 12%, indicating an improvement in responsible retailing. Tobacco testing was also undertaken, with a low failure rate of just 2%. In contrast, vape enforcement activity was much more extensive in 2023/24, when more than 422 premises were tested and 14.5% failed. In 2024/25, vape checks were far fewer at 124 premises, but compliance was significantly higher, with only 5% failing. The reduced scale of test purchasing work in some areas may also reflect operational challenges, particularly the ongoing difficulty in recruiting underage volunteers for controlled test purchase exercises - a common limitation reported by Trading Standards teams across Wales.

3.4 Reducing the availability of illicit products

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 which maintains pressures on local health systems. Packs of illicit cigarettes are often between a third and a half the price of legitimate products.

Illicit tobacco, vapes and alcohol can contain undeclared contaminants. Illicit vapes can also contain higher than permitted levels of nicotine including those that claim to be nicotine free. Tests on vapes identified other illegal substances, such as the drug, Spice.

The amount of tobacco and vape products seized has continued to increase significantly in recent years. This reflects the prevalence of vaping problems and the priority this work is being given within English local authorities reflected in the new Department of Health and Social Care funding to local authorities from 2025/26. To achieve comparable impact and to address the scale of illicit vape activity in Wales, Trading

Standards services require similar funding support from Welsh Government.

In 2024/25, across Wales:

- Over **747,000** illicit cigarettes were seized, together with **0.859 tonnes** of illicit hand-rolling tobacco worth a combined street value of over **£856,000**.
- Over **28,000** illegal vapes were seized by local authorities.

The Licensing Act 2003 has four objectives (preventing crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm). The Act allows for a review, and potential removal of a licence, by a local authority where there are failures to comply with the objectives. Activities by Trading Standards have resulted in **6 Licence Reviews** being carried out, an increase of 50% from last year which recognises the benefits of the regime as an effective enforcement tool.



Illegal Tobacco and Vapes

Anglesey Trading Standards secured a forfeiture order in January 2025 for the destruction of **54,560 illegal vaping devices**, valued at more than **£750,000**, after they were discovered concealed behind sliced beef in a refrigerated wagon at the Port of Holyhead. The vapes were undeclared, undocumented and significantly non-compliant with UK regulations, including excessive tank capacity and missing mandatory warnings. Following seizure and investigation, the company responsible failed to provide evidence to support claims that the products were loaded in error and later withdrew cooperation when informed of the forfeiture application. The Court granted the order, enabling the devices to be destroyed and preventing them from reaching the UK market. The business was also ordered to pay £4,725.82 in costs. This case demonstrates the continued commitment of Anglesey Trading Standards to tackling illegal vape imports and highlights the value of collaborative work with UK Border Force in intercepting high-risk products that would otherwise reach consumers.

As part of a multi-agency operation involving **Pembrokeshire County Council Trading Standards**, Regional Investigators and local police the seizure of illegal tobacco, non-compliant vapes and vehicles from two retail premises took place in March 2025. Illegal products were found both on-site and concealed in vehicles used to replenish shop stock, and a substantial amount of cash believed to be linked to criminal activity was also recovered. Police additionally impounded one vehicle for having no tax or insurance. The operation formed part of an ongoing crackdown on the illegal tobacco trade, which is known to target children and low-income communities with cheap, unregulated products. Counterfeit vapes and cigarettes pose significant health risks due to excessive nicotine levels and toxic contaminants, including arsenic, lead and formaldehyde. Since Operation CeCe began four years ago, more than six million cigarettes have been

seized in Wales, with further enforcement planned. This action demonstrates the continued commitment to preventing youth access to tobacco products, safeguarding public health and disrupting organised criminal supply chains.

Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) continued to tackle illegal tobacco supply across Cardiff, Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan through joint operations supported by tobacco detection dogs. In 2024–25, officers seized **86,540 illegal cigarettes and 30kg of illicit hand-rolling tobacco** with an estimated street value of **£110,500**. While seizures disrupt availability at retail level, SRS recognises that organised supply chains can restock quickly, and therefore a more strategic approach is required to prevent ongoing harm.

This approach has already delivered major results. A long-running investigation - Operation USK - into the organised distribution of illegal tobacco and nitrous oxide culminated in the seizure of **£600,000 worth of tobacco and £12,500 of canisters**, and the successful prosecution of 11 defendants. Due to the scale and complexity of the case, it was heard through two Crown Court trials, with sentencing concluded in July 2024. In total, **six offenders received custodial sentences amounting to 27 years and 4 months**, while **five others received suspended sentences totalling over nine years, alongside 500 hours of unpaid work requirements**. The case demonstrates the scale of criminality linked to illicit tobacco and the critical role SRS plays in dismantling supply networks rather than just removing products from sale.

Since October 2023, **Newport Trading Standards** has led Operation Firecrest to tackle the supply of illegal tobacco and vape products across the city. Around 25 premises were actively trading in illicit goods. One enforcement tool used was the 3 month closure of premises under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. However, availability in the Magistrates' Court impacted the timely granting of orders.



To address this, Operation Frost was launched in late 2024 to increase the speed and volume of closure applications, aiming to disrupt the illegal retail supply chain. Working with the Council's Legal Team and Court administrators, dedicated weekly court slots were secured, enabling strategic planning and efficient preparation of evidence. From December 2024, closures were planned at a rate of two per week.

Following a closure, it was usual for a new shop to open nearby. A rapid response meant officers were able to close these too within a week, sometimes based solely on test purchases. This caused significant disruption, with offenders struggling to find suitable alternative premises. In some cases, illegal sales moved to the streets, with products stored in stash vehicles. These were robustly dealt with by Gwent Police, resulting in arrests and vehicle seizures.

By March 2025, 23 closure orders had been granted, two extended, and the estimated financial detriment to offenders reached £250,000. Eleven premises became vacant or changed use following enforcement or landlord intervention. The number of illegal shops was cut by up to 50%, with some areas seeing no illicit shops operating.

Operation Frost's success has been driven by strong collaboration with Gwent Police and the South Wales ROCU team. The operation continues alongside investigations, prosecutions, and landlord engagement. Public support has been strong, with improved intelligence including video footage and early alerts on new activity.

Food Safety and Standards

This period saw an increase in investigations and convictions for exposing for sale of food past its use by date for **Rhondda Cynon Taff Trading Standards**. In one case, a local store was convicted for fourteen items, up to eight days past their durability date, despite an attempt to claim daily checks, and items being purchased by the store on a sale or return basis. Another prosecution related to the owner of a

village convenience store for placing unsafe food on the market, contrary to the General Food Regulations 2004. The case followed a complaint and subsequent inspection, during which officers found multiple products on display significantly past their use by dates - including items 132 and 153 days out of date. Additional stock was also found beyond best before dates, raising concerns about date-checking practices and stock rotation within the business. The business owner pleaded guilty and received a total financial penalty of over **£1,800**, comprising a fine, costs and victim surcharge.

Blaenau Gwent faces some of the highest deprivation levels in Wales, with low incomes, high child poverty, and rising costs for essentials like food, energy, and housing. As residents struggle to make ends meet, the work of Trading Standards has become increasingly vital.

Blaenau Gwent Trading Standards Officers are playing an important role in supporting residents through the cost of living crisis, while prioritising the protection of public health. Officers have visited local food banks to provide free advice, guidance and education on food safety compliance, ensuring donated food is safely labelled with allergens, "use by" and "best before" information. This proactive work helps prevent foodborne illness, safeguards vulnerable residents, and ensures that food banks can continue to support the community with confidence and safety at the forefront.

Powys Trading Standards inspected a number of premises to check that allergen systems are sufficiently rigorous to prevent a health risk. The findings were concerning, with 16% of food labels found to be incorrect and 13% of allergen systems checked were found to be inadequate. In addition, 6.4% of allergen notice requirements and 16% of menu descriptions were found to be absent or incorrect. Officers helped the businesses become compliant which reduced the risk to Powys's residents and also the many visitors to the area.



Children's Safety

Gwynedd Trading Standards were actively involved in undertaking test purchase exercises across the county throughout 2024-2025, these products having an age restriction for reasons including harm to children's health - mostly vapes and tobacco products. Out of 54 test purchase attempts, 96% of the businesses were compliant in that they refused to sell the product without valid proof of identification. Gwynedd Trading Standards continuously reviewed intelligence reports submitted through various sources including North Wales Police, Crimestoppers and other local agencies as they play their part in combating the sale of dangerous products including illegal tobacco and vapes.

Swansea Trading Standards led a major multi-agency operation, Operation Grinch, targeting four toy warehouse sites on an industrial estate in Southall, London. The operation followed the seizure of thousands of counterfeit toys in Swansea over Christmas 2024, which prompted further investigation and intelligence-gathering to identify the wider distribution network supplying unsafe products across the UK. Officers from multiple councils and police forces supported the London raid, alongside brand representatives from major licensed toy manufacturers.

Several of the toys seized in Swansea had been packaged to resemble well-known brands, including Pokémon, Peppa Pig, Star Wars and Marvel, and were later found to contain banned phthalate chemicals linked to hormone disruption and increased cancer

risk. By tracking the supply chain beyond local retail outlets, Swansea Trading Standards played a pivotal role in disrupting large-scale distribution of dangerous counterfeit toys, protecting children and consumers nationwide and safeguarding legitimate businesses from brand infringement.

Rhondda Cynon Taff Trading Standards noticed an increase in (normally compliant) local traders purchasing items from online marketplaces, to meet demands in trends. Officers seized more than 100 counterfeit and unsafe toys from one local business after an inspection revealed a lack of required labelling, manufacturer information and safety assurance. Although the products carried CE markings, officers determined these were likely false and that the toys had not undergone appropriate safety testing. The items were sourced online via TEMU and were voluntarily surrendered, with the business owner expressing concern that the goods could have posed a risk to children.

Trading Standards officers provided full guidance on toy safety requirements, emphasising that businesses using overseas suppliers are classed as importers and must ensure products comply with UK law before sale. In recognition of the owner's cooperation, no enforcement action was taken, and the items were safely destroyed. The case highlights the risks associated with low-cost online imports, the importance of verifying product safety beyond CE/UKCA markings, and the value of early engagement between Trading Standards and local businesses to prevent harm.



Safety at Ports

Work at Holyhead Port by **Anglesey Trading Standards** is ongoing to identify areas of work needing attention e.g. import/exports, live animals (including dogs) etc. Continuing to analyse manifest data and referrals from UKBA has been key to shape the delivery model and engagement with various businesses implicated and affected is ongoing.

Animal Welfare

A woman from Cefn Fforest was sentenced at Merthyr Crown Court in October 2024 following an investigation by **Caerphilly Trading Standards** into unlicensed dog breeding, animal welfare, and misleading advertising offences. She received a 16-week prison sentence suspended for 52 weeks for causing unnecessary suffering to one of 29 dogs in her possession, alongside further convictions under animal welfare and breeding laws. She was also disqualified from dealing with animals for seven

years, and subject to Proceeds of Crime proceedings to recover the financial gain that she made from her criminal activities. The investigation revealed she had continued selling puppies online after her breeding licence expired in 2020. The dogs were rehomed through Hope Rescue, a South Wales-based animal welfare charity that provides care, rehabilitation and new homes for dogs in need.

Ceredigion Public Protection secured a strong enforcement outcome in November 2024 after over 500 sheep were found neglected across two holdings, deprived of water, left untreated for lameness and kept in sheds so deep with manure that their heads touched the roof. Despite 40 visits and repeated advice from officers, the owners failed to act, resulting in serious unnecessary suffering. Both defendants received custodial sentences, a four-year ban on keeping livestock, and financial penalties - a decisive response reflecting the severity of the neglect.