

# TRADING STANDARDS NEWS



Issue 34

Summer 2008

## Who are Trading Standards?

The Trading Standards Service is part of Wigan Council's Environmental Services Department. Our aim is to achieve a fair, safe and honest trading environment within the borough. Whether you are a consumer or a trader, you are equally important to us.

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## A Grand Idea - Fair Trading comes to Wigan

**Shoppers at Wigan's flagship mall are about to get a good deal more for their money thanks to a groundbreaking new scheme that puts fair play first.**

Management at the hugely popular Grand Arcade in Wigan town centre have joined forces with the council's Trading Standards team to create the borough's very first Fair Trading Scheme within the confines of the ultra-modern mall. The scheme offers individual retailers within the arcade the chance to sign up and make a commitment to trade fairly and within the spirit and letter of the law. Members also agree to deal with customer complaints quickly, fairly and in a courteous manner. In return, the Trading Standards team will offer support and advice to members as well as help in resolving any customer complaints.



The Mayor and Mayoress with Grand Arcade and Trading Standards members

Arcade by Mayor Cllr Rona Winkworth and Mayoress of Wigan Ms Gail Guy along with Grand Arcade Manager John Sanson on Wednesday July 9th 2008. Mr Sanson says: "It's great to see

Wigan Council's Chief Trading Standards Officer Julie Middlehurst says: "This is an exciting new partnership between the Trading Standards Service, the Grand Arcade and its retailers.

**"100% of the retailers signed up to this scheme,** and are committed to the highest standards of customer care and have pledged to continue to trade honestly and fairly. They will benefit from regular advice and information on consumer law, and standards will be monitored at times, so that consumers can have confidence when shopping in Wigan's Grand Arcade." The scheme was officially launched at the Grand

the scheme come to fruition as this was discussed with tenants and colleagues at the council prior to the Grand Arcade opening. All tenants have been really keen to join and co-operate, which can only benefit our shoppers and customers."

- Grand Arcade customers can find out more by picking up a leaflet at the Customer Services Desk.
- For more information and advice on a range of consumer issues call Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 (calls charged at local rate)



**Fair Play Charter - Are you looking for a reputable garage?**

**Need a reputable garage to buy a car from or have your car serviced? Visit [www.wigan.gov.uk](http://www.wigan.gov.uk) and search for Fair Play Charter or ring 01942 827476 for a list of Wigan members of the Charter, who are committed to fair and honest trading.**

## Good Traders Wanted by Public Demand

**“FREE” membership!**  
In response to public demand, Wigan Council Trading Standards are in the process of putting together a list of good traders.

These traders will be listed on a website that the public can use to search for a “good” trader in Wigan. We will also be able to use the list as a tool in the prevention of doorstep crime by giving the list out to potential victims of doorstep crime.

Trading Standards won't be the one's rating or approving the businesses – **the users of the scheme will**, by providing feedback about the traders they've used.

This feedback will then be available to view on the website. The website is live but is only being promoted to businesses initially, until a reasonable

number of members have built up, so any recommendations would be welcomed.

The traders joining the Scheme must have been trading in Wigan for at least 2 years, be based in Wigan and be willing to sign up to and abide by the Code Of Practice and the Terms and Conditions. Please feel free to pass on the web address or the following contact details to anyone you think may be interested.

**Contact details:**  
**Helene Mason/ Lynn Kendrick**  
**Telephone no 01942 486788**  
**Email [ts@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:ts@wigan.gov.uk)**  
**Web:**  
**[www.wigan.gov.uk/goodtrader](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/goodtrader)**

**Users of the scheme will be rating the traders by providing feedback about the traders they've used.**

## Alcohol and Tobacco Seizures

**Trading Standards and Customs officers have confiscated large amounts of tobacco and counterfeit vodka after swooping on pubs, off-licences, shops and homes in the borough.**



### Seized:

**Principal Trading Standards Officer Terry Gregson with some of the confiscated alcohol and tobacco.**

Wigan Council's Trading Standards team assisted HM Customs officers in the seizure of more than 17,000 illegal cigarettes, along with 15kg of loose tobacco and 66 bottles of Glens Vodka, most of which are believed to be fake.

The rest of the items that were seized were non-UK duty paid. Wigan Council's Chief Trading Standards Officer Julie Middlehurst says "the teams were reacting to complaints made by members of the public. One of the most alarming aspects about this operation was that someone at a private house in Leigh was selling tobacco openly via the front door," Julie says. "In fact the majority of tobacco we

confiscated came from that address."

The counterfeit items will now be analysed to determine exactly what they contain.

Trading Standards have made a number of seizures of fake Glen's Vodka in Wigan and Leigh over the past three months. Similar fake bottles have been found on sale across the country. Julie adds "We are concerned about the seemingly widespread availability of counterfeits in the area and our investigations are continuing."

Trading Standards urges anyone with information about illegal sales of tobacco and alcohol to call the Consumer Direct helpline in confidence on 08454 04 05 06 (calls charged at local rate).

## Operation Rogue Trader

### Wigan Trading Standards and Greater Manchester Police were out in force in May as they took part in Operation Rogue Trader.

This annual multi-agency operation is designed to identify rogue traders and deter and disrupt their activities within Wigan and across Greater Manchester. Working with a number of other agencies including Customs, the Department of Transport, and the Environment Agency, Trading Standards interviewed various traders who were travelling around the borough to establish exactly what work they were doing. Some of the traders stopped were legitimate local businesses



**Terry Gregson from Wigan Council's Trading Standards team inspecting a vehicle with PC Mike Parker of Greater Manchester Police**

who were pleased that Trading Standards were actively looking for the rogue traders who prey on the vulnerable and elderly. They said that these rogue traders gave

their industry a bad name. Rogue traders will cold call residents and offer to carry out various types of work from tarmac driveways to tree pruning, but often they do a very poor job and charge an exorbitant amount. These traders often give false addresses and untraceable mobile numbers so residents will be unable to get the traders back to sort out any problems.

Trading Standards checked a total of 68 vehicles including gardeners, builders, driveways/block pavers and scrap metal dealers and identified a number of possible rogue traders some of whom admitted to cold calling customers in Wigan borough.

## SHIP Day - 70's style

### A team of Trading Standards staff got ship shape in May, when they put on an information stand at the annual Sheltered Housing & Information Partnership (SHIP) awareness day.

This is a major event promoting housing and other services to support independent living. The theme for the event was the 1970s, and members of the Trading Standards team dressed up in the spirit of the event to hand

out information packs to help the over 50s to avoid being conned by rogue traders and bogus callers who turn up on their doorstep.

To reinforce the doorstep crime message, the Halliwell Theatre Company from Bolton, performed a number short plays involving various 'rogues' calling at an unsuspecting resident's front door, and gave advice on the best way to deal with cold callers.



**Trading Standards Officers dressed in 70's styles for the SHIP day**

## Trading Standards Team Grows

### In April this year the Trading Standards team were joined by two Licensing Enforcement officers, to help with the fight against sales of alcohol to under 18s and it's associated anti social behaviour.

John Brabbin and Brian Goulding are bringing their considerable experience of the Licensing

regime to the Section, to assist and advise local off-licences on how to avoid selling alcohol to youngsters and thereby safeguard their alcohol licence. John and Brian are also working on a schools education initiative with partners from the Children's and Young Persons Services, the Young Persons Drug and Alcohol

Team and the Police.

This exciting project will help all year 9 pupils in the borough to better understand the dangers surrounding under-age drinking, by getting involved in the production of a drama on the subject of alcohol, which they will write and perform in.

## PRODUCT RECALLS

**01/08/08 - Recall - Tesco Free From Bramley Apple Pies Pack size: 4 Pies Ref: 39/2008  
Date Code: Up until and including product date-coded: BB 15/AUG/08**

Tesco has withdrawn from sale its 'own-brand' Free From Bramley Apple Pies due to the potential presence of pieces of hard, blue plastic in the apple filling.

Tesco is withdrawing this product from the shelves and putting up point-of-sale notices in its stores. These notices will advise customers of the withdrawal and that further details are available at Customer Services. No other Tesco products are known to be affected.

**29/07/08 - Recall - Poundland Ltd - Archery and Blow Pipe Play Set - Item No: 40585**

**Barcode: 5025066405854**

### **What's Happened?**

As part of on going quality checks, it has been discovered that there is a potential safety issue with regards to the darts and arrows in this play set. Poundland are currently undertaking investigations into this issue and recalling the products.

### **What you should do:**

Discontinue use immediately and return the item to your nearest Poundland store as soon as possible. If you've bought this product for someone else or know someone who has one, please let them know about this recall as soon as possible.

Should you have any queries or concerns regarding this recall please call the free customer services number **0800 731 5622**. Lines are open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Visit [www.Poundland.com](http://www.Poundland.com) to find your nearest store.

**17/07/08 - Recall - Non Branded Gaming Console Chargers - AC/DC Gaming Machine Chargers**

Consumers should be aware of the potential electric shock and overheating problems that have been found in certain non-branded gaming machine chargers imported from China and typically sold through on-line sites.

The chargers were supplied as accessories for charging Nintendo DS and DS Lite machines, although they could also be used to charge Gameboy machines.

One of the chargers causing concern can be identified by the product code: DE 62347066 which is marked on the black label attached. However, the other charger carries no identifying product code on the silver label and is simply called 'Travel Charger'. On the body of the 'Travel Charger' the abbreviation 'USB' is also visible.

If you believe that you, or a member of your family has bought one of these chargers you are urged to contact your local Trading Standards who can advise you further on the matter.



## HOW TO CONTACT US

If you are a member of a group or association and would like to receive a regular supply of this free newsletter  
Ring 01942 827476

Or if you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail - send a message to [ts@wigan.gov.uk](mailto:ts@wigan.gov.uk) to register your name and e-mail address

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We're on the Web

[www.wigan.gov.uk/services/businessregeneration/tradingstandards](http://www.wigan.gov.uk/services/businessregeneration/tradingstandards)