Norfolk Trading Standards working in partnership with Norfolk Police, Norfolk Police Licensing, The Stop Smoking Service and BWY Canine delivered a week of activities targeting the sale of Illegal Tobacco in Norfolk.

Using funding secured from Public Health the roadshow visited King’s Lynn, Great Yarmouth, Thetford and Norwich looking to raise awareness of the dangers of cheap illegal tobacco including it’s contents and the potential that it’s cheap price makes the product more attractive to children and young people.

The roadshow gave the opportunity for Norfolk residents to talk to us about any concerns they have around the supply of illegal tobacco in their communities but also to meet the key weapons in our arsenal when looking for illegal tobacco. These were Scamp, George and YoYo the sniffer dogs supplied by BWY Canine. Their skills were not only called on during demonstrations at the roadshow events but also during a number of visits to premises around the locations targeted from intelligence received. During the week we seized:

- 7,200 cigarettes hidden in a number of sites around a shop in Great Yarmouth located by YoYo
- 6,150 cigarettes stored in a concealed space under a shop counter in King’s Lynn located by Scamp
- 8,400 cigarettes hidden in the rear area of a shop in Thetford located by Scamp
- 75,000 cigarettes and 20kg of hand rolling tobacco discovered in a hidden room at a second shop in Thetford. These were again located by Scamp and is the largest single tobacco seizure made by Norfolk Trading Standards in one location.

We will continue to work with key partners to combat the sale of illegal tobacco in Norfolk. If you have any information or concerns about the sale of illegal tobacco you can contact us on our duty phone number on 01603 638078 (please remember to identify yourself as a Champion)

Sniffer dog Scamp shows off the haul of illegal tobacco seized during the week
SHOPPING ONLINE THIS CHRISTMAS, CHECK OUT OUR TOP TIPS

With online shopping continuing to take a greater percentage of all retail transactions and Christmas often having people searching far and wide online for this year’s ’must have items’ we’ve put together our Top Ten Tips for safe shopping online:

1. If you’re buying online, using a credit card or debit card will give you extra protection from fraud than with other methods of payment.

2. Before entering any payment details online, ensure the link is secure:
   i) A padlock symbol should appear in your browser window frame as you log in or register. Make sure the padlock is not on the page itself. If it is it could be a fraudulent site
   ii) The web address should begin ‘https://...’ The ‘s’ stands for secure
   iii) In later versions of browsers, the address bar or name of the site will turn green

3. Looking to buy via an online auction site? Always use a secure payment site, such as PayPal – never pay money directly into the bank account of someone you don’t know

4. When buying from online auction sites, if something seems too much of a bargain, it probably is. The goods could be poor quality, fake or not even exist. Research the seller before you bid, check feedback if available (but remember it can be falsified), be cautious if the items are being supplied from outside the UK and if you’re in any doubt, back out of the purchase

5. If you’re buying electrical goods or toys online, make sure they’re safe, check:
   i) The voltage for the product is 230v 50Hz (the UK’s usual domestic voltage)
   ii) That it’s fitted with a three-pin UK plug or charger
   iii) The item is CE marked

6. This is a very busy time of year for many websites. Make sure you order in plenty of time and get them to confirm the delivery date in writing. If it’s just an estimated date it could change and you could end up waiting till after Christmas for the delivery
7. If you need to return anything, proof of purchase is very important. Keep receipts, electronic or otherwise.

8. Upon receipt of items brought online, check them before wrapping them. This way you’ll avoid disappointment on Christmas day and can sort problems quickly with the supplier.

9. If a website is claiming to have stock of this year ‘must have item’ that no one else has, check them out before you order:
   i) Does the site have full contact details? If it’s just an email address be very wary
   ii) Look online, what is the site’s reputation? What are other customers saying about them?

10. Looking to buy tickets as a gift? If a site is offering tickets for sold out events, they could well be fake or fictional.

LOTTERY SCAMS

Trading Standards still receive regular contacts about letters received by Norfolk residents relating to Lottery wins. Examples often name well known Lotteries, including Peoples Postcode Lottery & Euromillions and others that are totally fictitious including the FIFA World Cup & Olympic Lotteries. One example of the FIFA lottery is pictured below sent to us by one of our Community Champions.

Here are some simple steps you can take and pass on to others to avoid falling for lottery scams letters:

- If you haven’t entered a lottery then you can’t have won it. Never respond to unexpected communications.
- Official lotteries in other countries operate in much the same way as the UK’s National Lotto. No official lotteries that we know of contact people to tell them of their win.
- We don’t know of any official lottery operators who ask for fees to collect winnings. Any request for a fee payment is a good indication that someone is trying to scam you.
- NEVER disclose your bank details or pay fees in advance to claim a lottery win.
- If they’ve provided an email address to respond to, be very suspicious of addresses such as @hotmail.com or @yahoo.com or numbers beginning with 07 because these are free to get hold of and equally easy to get rid of.
- Genuine lotteries thrive on publicity. If they ask you to keep your win a secret it’s likely to be a scam.
- Many examples of lottery scam letters have bad spelling and grammar – see this as a warning that fraudsters are at work.
NEWS AND EVENTS

JOIN THE FIGHT CONFERENCE 2016

On Wednesday 16th November we hosted the second Join the Fight Conference in collaboration with our colleagues from Suffolk Trading Standards. The aims of the conference was to bring together key partners to look at the wider impact of scams that prey on vulnerable people within our counties and develop ways we can work together to make more people scam aware. The conference included a keynote presentation from Professor Keith Brown from Bournemouth University and further presentations from Paul Maskell Cybercrime Security Advisor for Norfolk & Suffolk Police and Walter Lloyd Smith Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board Manager. The day looked at how we can better identify and assist scam victims as well as exploring the much wider impact of scams on our communities. There were also two workshops which offered a valuable insight on how we can work together more effectively. The conference was attended by over 130 delegates representing over 50 different local, regional and national organisations and services. We were delighted to see a number of both our Consumer and Community Champions at the event and hope everyone found the day interesting, informative and took the opportunity to network with colleagues from other organisations and to explore how together we can tackle scams and rogue trading.

CONTACTING NORFOLK TRADING STANDARDS

If you need to contact us for any reason you can email us at consumer.champions@norfolk.gov.uk or call us Monday to Friday 08:45 to 17:30 (17:00 on Fridays) on 01603 638078. Remember when contacting us to say you are a champion so your enquiry is handled appropriately. You can also keep up to date with a range of News and Information from Trading Standards via our social media sites and our weekly emails:
Facebook: www.facebook.com/norfolktradingstandards
Twitter: twitter.com/norfolkccts (Norfolk Trading Standards news and information)
        twitter.com/ncc_farm_team (Norfolk Trading Standards Farm Team)
        twitter.com/norfolkttt (Norfolk Trusted Trader)
Email alerts from Norfolk Trading Standards
Consumer: www.norfolk.gov.uk/tsalerts
Business: www.norfolk.gov.uk/businessscams

WE’D LOVE TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF THE CHAMPION

Thanks for taking the time to read the current edition of The Champion, the newsletter for the Consumer and Community Champions schemes run by Norfolk Trading Standards. We hope you find it interesting and useful. If you have any comments about the newsletter, ideas on what you’d like to hear more about from Trading Standards in the future or any of the materials mentioned in the articles please contact us.