

# High Standard

## Trading Standards News

### PDSA Order of Merit Awards. YoYo and Scamp



On stage, from left to right, is: John Miller, Chair of PDSA, Jan McLoughlin, PDSA's Director General, HRH Sophie, the Duchess of Edinburgh, Stuart Phillips, owner of B.W.Y Canine, Kay Burley, Sky News broadcaster, and stood in front of them are YoYo and Scamp, wearing their PDSA Order of Merit medals. At the ceremony held in London on the 2 October 2024.

In recognition of the key role that tobacco dogs play in the Trading Standards services work with Northumbria Police and HMRC under Operation CeCe and Operation Joseph; we are extremely proud to report that this important role has now been recognised by the PDSA.

In a ceremony held in London on 2 October, tobacco dogs YoYo and Scamp from BWY Canine, were both awarded Orders of Merit by the PDSA. HRH Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh presented the individual awards to the two dogs. Kay Burley of Sky News hosted the ceremony. Paul Leighton, a Newcastle Trading Standards Officer as the person who nominated the dogs for the prestigious award was lucky enough to attend the ceremony. Very well done to all concerned.

## Closure Order. Fenham Euro Market

Northumbria Police Officers have recently secured a closure order on a Tyneside shop after it was found to be selling illegal vapes and cigarettes to children. Acting on intelligence and concerns from those in the local community, Northumbria Police's Newcastle West Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) applied to close Euro Market, on Two Ball Lonnen in the Fenham area of the city.



Officers received reports that a number of children had been able to visit the shop and purchase illegal vapes as well as cigarettes, the team were then able to successfully carry out test purchases using police cadets. Newcastle Magistrates' Court has now granted a three-month closure order for the premises, which will run until 23 December 2024. It is now a criminal offence for anyone, apart from the landlord, to enter the premises and a criminal offence for the shop to be re-opened during this period and two people prosecuted for selling the products to children from the shop have been given out of court disposals.

Inspector Patrick Hannon, of Northumbria Police, said: *"This is some really good work from our officers, acting on community concerns and safeguarding local children from harm. When we received intelligence and reports from the community that youngsters were being allowed to buy these products, we immediately launched an investigation. We have now secured a closure order against the shop for the next three months and our hope is that this sends a strong message to businesses who continue to sell illicit products to those underage as to the action we will take."*

Anyone aware of any ongoing sale or supply of illicit and counterfeit tobacco products can report anonymously via the Keep-It-Out website at: <https://keep-it-out.co.uk/anonymous-reporting/>

## Illegal Tobacco Products



As part of the City Council's Trading Standards Service commitment to the regional illegal tobacco campaign and in conjunction with HMRC and National Trading Standards the delivery of Operation CeCe; in support of our work contributing to the "Smoke Free Newcastle" strategy from April 2023 to March 2024 we seized some 544,210

suspected illegal cigarettes and 171.5 Kg's of suspected illegal Hand Rolling Tobacco. These seizures follow the 584,220 suspected illegal cigarettes and 166.15 Kg's of suspected illegal Hand Rolling Tobacco seized in 2022-2023.

In the first six months of 2024-2025 the service has seized some 414,880 suspected illegal cigarettes and 67.4 Kg's of suspected illegal Hand Rolling Tobacco.

These operations involved inspections of businesses, the searches of residential premises, and vehicles. The latest operations were again prompted by several tip offs from members of the public and from the legitimate trade.

A survey published by the tobacco office Fresh found that 54 per cent of children aged 14 and 15, who smoke, say they buy illegal tobacco from sources like "tab houses" and shops, while 73 per cent say they have been offered illegal tobacco.

Ailsa Rutter, Director of Fresh said "Our research has found that illegal tobacco sellers will sell to kids of any age. It's about 54 per cent of the 15-year-old smokers who, when we surveyed them, said they were buying illegal tobacco, so we really don't want our kids getting hooked".

**If you have information regarding the sale and distribution of illegal tobacco, please phone 0300 9990000 or visit [www.keep-itout.co.uk](http://www.keep-itout.co.uk)**

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## Safety Alert: Water Beads



**On the 20 September 2024, the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) issued a Safety Alert to warn of the risks that water beads can pose to children and vulnerable adults. This follows action taken by OPSS to remove unsafe products from the market.**

The Safety Alert advises that water beads should be kept away from young children, under 5 years of age, and only used with older children or vulnerable adults under close supervision.

Water beads are beads that can expand up to 400 times their original size when exposed to liquid. They are marketed for various purposes, including for use as toys, in crafting, as home decor or in floristry. They are sold under a variety of names including, but not limited to, jelly balls, water balls, sensory beads or water crystals.

When swallowed, water beads expand and can block the gastrointestinal passage which can then require surgery. The beads can also cause choking and have harmed children in the UK, with reports linking them to deaths overseas. Water beads can be difficult to detect and do not show up in x-ray.

For further information go to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/opss-issues-safety-alert-to-warn-of-the-risks-of-water-beads>

## E-Bikes and E-Scooters Fire Safety Advice



E-bikes and e-scooters are becoming increasingly popular. Most are powered by lithium-ion batteries which can be charged in the home. The use of these batteries in a wide range of household products is becoming increasingly common.

It is important when charging e-bikes and e-scooters, you do so safely to avoid a risk of a fire starting and putting your families and homes at risk.

With an increased use of e-bikes and e-scooters, comes a corresponding fire safety concern associated with their charging and storage. The use of these products is expected to continue to rise. Some fire services and fire investigators have seen a rise in e-bike and e-scooter battery fires. Currently there is limited data relating to the number of fires, but London Fire Brigade reported 8 fires caused by e-bikes and e-scooters in 2019. This rose to twenty-four in 2020 and fifty-nine by December 2021.

For further information go to the websites of the National Fire <https://nfcc.org.uk/> and the Office of Product Safety and Standards

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-product-safety-and-standards>



## Disposable Vape Ban

The government has confirmed that the sale of disposable vapes will be banned in England starting in June next year.



This decision, initially announced in January by the previous administration but not implemented before the general election, aims to reduce environmental harm and safeguard children's health. Similar bans are expected in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Industry leaders in the vaping sector have raised concerns that the ban could lead to an increase in illegal sales of these products.

The Government highlighted that disposable vapes are challenging to recycle and often end up in landfills, where their batteries can release hazardous substances like battery acid, lithium, and mercury into the environment. Additionally, these batteries, when disposed of with household waste, contribute to hundreds of fires in garbage trucks and waste-processing facilities each year.

According to the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (Defra), nearly five million single-use vapes were either littered or discarded in general waste every week last year, representing a nearly four-fold increase from the previous year. In 2022 alone, discarded vapes contained more than 40 tonnes of lithium, enough to power 5,000 electric vehicles.

Defra's Circular Economy Minister, Mary Creagh, emphasized the wastefulness of disposable vapes, describing them as a "blight" on urban areas. She stated, "That is why we are banning single-use vapes as part of our efforts to end this throwaway culture."

Creagh also said the ban is just the beginning of the transition to a circular economy, where resources are used more efficiently, waste is reduced, and the country can move closer to its net-zero targets while creating jobs.

Although it is already illegal to sell vapes to anyone under 18, disposable vapes, often marketed in smaller, more colorful packaging than refillable versions, were identified by the previous government as a "key driver" behind the surge in youth vaping.

***“A Bill will be introduced to progressively increase the age at which people can buy cigarettes and impose limits on the sale and marketing of vapes [Tobacco and Vapes Bill]. My Ministers will also legislate to restrict advertising of junk food to children along with the sale of high caffeine energy drinks to children”.***

As announced in the Kings Speech of July 2024 the Government intends to restrict the sale of high caffeine energy drinks to children.

This announcement is very much welcomed and relates from a great deal of publicity, on the fact that national retailers have agreed to voluntarily ban the sale of energy drinks to customers under 16 years of age.

A previous Government in a Consultation proposed new laws to limit the sale of energy drinks amid continuing concern over the health implications of their consumption by children. The consultation sought views on what products should be included in any restrictions, what age limit a ban should apply to, whether sales of energy drinks from vending machines should be restricted, and whether there are any changes that would be more appropriate than a ban on sales to children or that could be applied as well as a ban.

The Consultation was put forward in response to strong calls from parents, health professionals, teachers and some industry bodies and retailers for an end to sales of high-caffeine energy drinks to children.

Energy drinks are soft drinks that contain high levels of caffeine than other soft drinks and may also contain a lot of sugar. Evidence suggests that excessive consumption of energy drinks by children is linked to negative health outcomes, such as headaches, sleeping problems, irritation and tiredness.

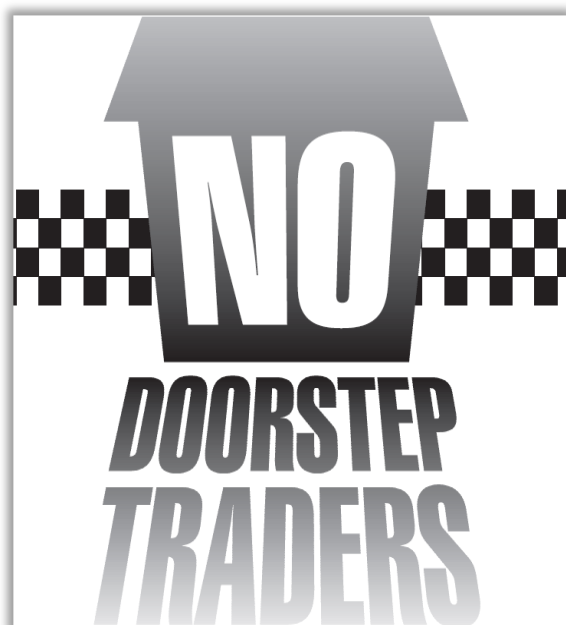
The City Council has therefore now requested retailers in Newcastle, that may be stocking and selling high-caffeine energy drinks; that they show their support for a voluntary ban in Newcastle, and they can do this by the display of a poster, copies of which have been sent out to retailers. Under the voluntary ban in Newcastle, retailers agree not to sell to under 16's any of their products that can be classed as high-caffeine energy drinks.

If retailers are advised that if they are not sure of the customer's age and they appear to be under 16, they should ask for proof of age. If the customer is under 16, they then should refuse the sale.

Please contact us directly if you have not received your copy of the poster. A copy can be downloaded at: <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/business-and-commerce/business-commerce/trading-standards/campaigns/sale-energy-drinks>

## No Cold Calling Zones

**No Cold Calling Zones aim to decrease doorstep crime incidents by specifying a Zone in which doorstep callers are not welcome. Zones are usually defined by window stickers placed in the doors or windows of homes within the Zone area.**



Zones range in size in Newcastle to those containing flats within a residential care home through to thousands of homes in a residential estate. They are set up either in response to incidents, local intelligence, or on request - but all follow a comprehensive consultation process.

Zones should meet the three criteria before they can be set up:

- a history of doorstep crime or distraction burglary
- a vulnerable population
- a defined geographical area

The No Cold Calling Zone is an area in which residents have stated they do not wish to receive unsolicited visits to their homes (cold calls) from businesses. The zones are set up by the City Council's Trading Standards Service working in partnership with Northumbria Police and Safe Newcastle.

The main aim of the zones is to reduce the number of unwanted and uninvited callers to households soliciting services or goods, which in turn reduces the number of criminal or civil law offences committed against Newcastle residents.

There are currently some 33 zones implemented across Newcastle, protecting some 84,799 households. Fifteen of our wards: Parklands, Walkergate, Benwell & Scotswood, Kenton, North Jesmond, South Jesmond, Chapel, Dene and South Gosforth, Blakelaw, West Fenham, Byker, Castle, Fawdon & West Gosforth, Gosforth and Kingston Park South and Newbiggin Hall have all been declared as No Cold Calling Zones.

The Trading Standards Service continues to look towards the implementation of some further No Cold Calling Zones (NCCZ).

**For full details relating to the zones, including maps outlining the extent of the zones, please visit our website at [newcastle.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://newcastle.gov.uk/tradingstandards) or email [tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk).**



## Notifiable Animal Diseases



**Avian influenza (bird flu) is a notifiable animal disease. If you suspect any type of avian influenza in poultry or captive birds, you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200301. Failure to do so is an offence.**

If you find dead wild waterfowl (swans, geese, or ducks) or other dead wild birds, such as gulls or birds of prey, you should report them to the Defra helpline 03459 335577, please select option 7.

All bird keepers (whether you have pet birds, commercial flocks or just a few birds in a backyard flock) must keep a close watch on them for signs of disease and maintain good biosecurity at all times. If you have any concerns about the health of your birds, seek prompt advice from your vet.

You should register your poultry, even if only kept as pets, so we can contact you during an outbreak. Poultry includes chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, pigeon (bred for meat), partridge, quail, guinea fowl and pheasants.

**For further information go to [www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu).**

### **Blue Tongue**

**Bluetongue does not pose a threat to human health or food safety.**

Bluetongue virus is primarily transmitted by biting midges and affects cattle, sheep, and other ruminants such as goats and deer, and camelids such as llamas. The virus does not affect people or food safety.

What is Bluetongue?

- Bluetongue is a notifiable disease and suspicion must be reported to APHA.
- It is a viral disease, which affects ruminants (such as sheep, cattle, goats and deer) and camelids (llamas and alpacas). It does not affect horses or pigs.
- Symptoms vary across ruminants, but include fever, lesions, redness of the mouth, eyes, nose, reddening of the skin above the hoof, excessive salivation and nasal discharge. Some animals may show few or no clinical signs.
- BTV is mainly spread by adult-infected midges biting an animal susceptible to the disease. This is classed as 'vector-borne' transmission.
- Infected midges can spread locally and more widely in certain temperatures and wind conditions.
- It does not affect people or food safety, but outbreaks can result in prolonged animal movement and trade restrictions.

**If you suspect bluetongue, you must report it immediately by calling:**

**03000 200 301**

## Pet Animals and Travel

If you're travelling from outside the UK with your pets, call +44 3000 200 301 (option 2) or email [pettravel@apha.gov.uk](mailto:pettravel@apha.gov.uk) to find out what to do. These rules apply to Great Britain (England, Wales, and Scotland). You can enter or return to Great Britain with your pet cat, dog, or ferret if it:

- has been [microchipped](#)
- has a [pet passport or health certificate](#)
- has been [vaccinated against rabies](#) - it will also need a blood test if you're travelling from an [country that is not 'listed'](#)
- Dogs must also usually have a tapeworm treatment.
- Your pet may be put into quarantine for up to 4 months if you do not follow these rules - or refused entry if you travelled by sea. You're responsible for any fees or charges.
- There's different guidance if you're taking your pet dog, cat, or ferret abroad.
- You must follow extra rules if the animals will be sold or rehomed in Great Britain.
- If you bring a banned breed of dog into Great Britain it can be taken away from you by the police or local authorities and could be destroyed.

### Bringing your pet to Great Britain

- Your pet must arrive in Great Britain no more than 5 days before or after you, or you'll have to follow different rules.
- You must use an approved route unless you're travelling within the UK or from Ireland.
- You need to fill in a declaration confirming that you are not going to sell or transfer the ownership of your pet.

**Before you travel.** Check if the company you're travelling with:

- will accept your pet for travel - and how many they'll accept if you have more than one
- needs any proof that your pet is fit and healthy to travel, for example a letter from a vet or certain information in your pet passport.

**Authorising someone else to travel with your pet.** Your pet can travel with someone else if you've authorised it in writing.

**Bringing other animals.** The rules are different if you're bringing other animals into Great Britain. For further information go to: <https://www.gov.uk/bring-pet-to-great-britain>

## Loan sharks



**The City Council's Trading Standards service is continuing to work with the England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) to steer residents away from borrowing from loan sharks.**

**A loan shark is someone who lends money illegally without the correct authorisation from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). Loan sharks normally appear friendly at first, but this behaviour soon changes once monies are owed.**

It's easy to fall into the grip of a loan shark; they seem like friendly people at first, someone who you might refer to as a close neighbour or colleague. You might find yourself short for money during the festive season but borrowing from a loan shark could result in you paying back significantly more with extortionate interest rates and threats included. When taking out a loan from an illegal money lender, you will be left in the dark, not knowing much how much money you owe or the amount of interest you're being charged on the loan as often no paperwork is given.

We understand it can sometimes be scary to ask for help, but if you call the England Illegal Money Lending Team's hotline on 0300 555 2222, you can speak to a member of the team anonymously or in confidence. They are there to help, not judge, and will let you know what your options are so you can decide what to do.

In some cases, loan sharks have been known to resort to the most extreme methods to enforce repayment from borrowers. This has involved victims being subject to intimidation, threats, and violence, leaving many frightened to leave their own home.

## Loan sharks continued

The England Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) can help people who have been a victim of a loan shark. The national team are a law enforcement agency who work with local Trading Standards authorities across the country to investigate and prosecute illegal money lending and related offences. The team have previously prosecuted loan sharks for other forms of criminality, including drug offences, kidnap and even rape.



The 50-strong team are made up of Investigators who work endlessly to bring loan sharks to justice and LIAISE officers who protect and support victims, and work with several partner agencies to raise general awareness of the issue.

Residents are urged to never borrow money from someone if they:

- Have been provided with no or very little paperwork on loans.
- Have had debts randomly increase or have had additional amounts added to a loan unexpectedly.
- Have personal items taken as security on a loan (passport, driving license, bank cards)
- Have been subject to intimidation and threats by the money lender.

Residents can check if someone is authorised to lend money by visiting the Financial Conduct Authority's website and searching for a company, person, or postcode through their register.

To get help with debt and budgeting, visit your local Citizens Advice Bureau. If you need a cash loan or would like to open a savings account in preparation for Christmas, visit <https://www.findyourcreditunion.co.uk/> to find your nearest credit union.

**The message is clear- what may seem like a small loan to tide people over, could end up costing them well into the New Year and beyond. The effect is not just financial; the impact on the lives of victims and their families can be horrific.**

## Sales of House Coal & Wet Wood

**New laws were introduced in May 2021 with a view to phase out the sale of the most polluting fuels that we burn on our stoves and open fires.**

The change affects the sales of wood fuel, coal, and other solid fuels for use in household fires and will help to address issues that affect climate change, air pollution, and will improve air quality.

The Air Quality (Domestic Solid Fuels Standards) (England) Regulations 2020 now provides that:

- **Sales of bagged traditional house coal and wet wood in units under 2m<sup>3</sup> unlawful.**
- **Wet wood in larger volumes must be sold with advice on how to dry it before burning.**
- **All manufactured solid fuels must now have a low sulphur content and only emit a small amount of smoke.**
- **In addition, a new certification scheme will see products certified and labelled by suppliers to ensure that they can be easily identified, and retail outlets will only be able to sell fuel that is accompanied by the correct label.**

For further related guidance go to <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-solid-fuels-rules-for-local-authorities-in-england>

## Tenant Fees Act 2019

**The Tenant Fees Act 2019 sets out the approach to banning letting fees paid by tenants in the private rented sector and capping tenancy deposits in England.**

The aim of the Act is to reduce the costs that tenants can face at the outset, and throughout, a tenancy, and is part of a wider package of measures aimed at rebalancing the relationship between tenants and landlords. Tenants will be able to see at glance, what a given property will cost them in the advertised rent with no hidden costs. The party that contracts the service- the landlord - will be responsible for paying for the service, which will help to ensure that the fees charged reflect the costs of the services provided.

For more details, and guidance for both tenants and landlords, please go to <https://www.newcastle.gov.uk/services/business-and-commerce/business-commerce/trading-standards/fair-trading/guidance-private> or email [tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk) to report any concerns you may have.

## Doorstep Crime

Doorstep crime refers to rogue traders, bogus callers, and distraction burglary. This type of crime will often start with a trader at your door offering to provide a service or in some cases goods such as household products or fish.

Whilst we can have genuine callers at our doors, there are also those that aim to exploit people in their homes. This type of crime includes people that knock on your door and then go on to offer fraudulent services, being overcharged for services, as well as false use of logos or ID that appear to be genuine.

The general advice is NEVER to deal with traders calling at your home. If you are looking to get some work carried out to your home always talk to friends and family or trusted people for recommendations.

If you do happen to agree to have work undertaken from someone calling at your home, you should receive information of how to cancel the contract. For contracts undertaken in your home, you have 14 days to cancel. You may be asked to sign a waiver so that work can be undertaken within the 14 days. Do not agree to the work being undertaken before the 14 days as this law was specifically introduced to protect people feeling under pressure in their own home.



### Friends Against Scams

Friends Against Scams is a National Trading Standards Scams Team initiative, which aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams by empowering people to take a stand against scams.

Becoming a Friend will equip you with more understanding about the different types of scams and how to report them. If you would like to become a Friend Against Scams, the session can be taken in a number of ways: an eight-minute video, a British Sign Language interpreted video, an interactive online session, or request an in-person session for groups.

To find out more please visit [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk).

## Allergens and Natasha's Law

**The UK Food Information Amendment, also known as Natasha's Law, came into effect on the 1st of October 2021 and requires food businesses to provide full ingredient lists and allergen labelling on foods pre-packaged for direct sale on the premises. The legislation was introduced to protect allergy sufferers and give them confidence in the food they buy.**

This amendment was brought about thanks to the actions of a lobbying group lead by the parents of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse, the teenager who died after suffering an allergic reaction to an undeclared ingredient in a prepacked meal. Due to their efforts, the government confirmed that stronger laws would be implemented to protect those with food allergies and give them greater confidence in the food they buy.

According to the new rules, PPDS (Prepacked for Direct Sale) food must clearly display the following information on the packaging; name of the food and full ingredients list, with allergenic ingredients emphasised (for example in bold, italics or a different colour).

Prepacked for direct sale or PPDS is food that is packaged at the same place it is offered or sold to consumers and is in this packaging before it is ordered or selected. It can include food that consumers select themselves (e.g., from a display unit), as well as products kept behind a counter and some food sold at mobile or temporary outlets.

The change to labelling requirements does not apply to PPDS food sold by means of distance selling, such as food that can be purchased over the phone or on the internet. Businesses selling PPDS food this way will need to ensure that mandatory allergen information is available to the consumer before they purchase the product and also at the moment of delivery.

You must provide allergen information; before the purchase of the food is completed - this can be in writing (on a website, catalogue, or menu) or orally (by phone) or when the food is delivered - this can be in writing (allergen stickers on food or an enclosed copy of a menu) or orally (by phone). Allergen information should be available to a customer in written form at a point between a customer placing the order and taking delivery of it.

Takeaway meals should be labelled clearly so customers know which dishes are suitable for those with an allergy.

Please report any concerns in respect of allergens to the Food Safety Team on 0191 2787878 or email [psr@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:psr@newcastle.gov.uk).

## Food Safety Ratings



**Businesses have a general duty not to undertake unfair trading practices under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008 (CPRs).**

The CPRs aid in determining whether certain advertising and marketing practices are misleading, aggressive or lack due diligence.

In addition to this general duty, there are 31 business practices that are banned outright, such as displaying a quality mark without authorisation.

The aim of the CPRs is to provide a framework for determining whether certain practices are misleading, aggressive or lack due diligence on the basis that they would alter the behaviour of the average customer. In other words, if it can be determined that the customer made a purchase that they otherwise would not have done if they knew the full facts of the matter, then the business has engaged in unfair practices.

This covers engaging in misleading practices such as making false or deceptive statements in marketing material, or omitting important information that would have a bearing on the customer's purchasing decision. **For complete clarity this includes the display of a false and outdated food safety rating.**

## Animal Licensing

**On the 1 October 2018 the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 came into force.**

The Regulations provide for the licensing of anyone involved in selling animals as pets, proving, or arranging for the boarding of cats, hiring out horses, breeding dogs and keeping or training animals for exhibition.

The City Council is the licensing authority for the new legislation, which has replaced the previous registration under the Performing Animals (Regulation) Act 1925, or a licence under the Pet Animals Act 1951, the Animal Boarding Establishments Act



## Keeping Primates as Pets Banned

**It will no longer be possible to keep primates as household pets in environments that fail to provide for their needs.**

Measures have been signed into law on the 5 March 2024 to ban the keeping of primates as pets.

The legislation brings in a licensing scheme setting strict rules to ensure that only private keepers who meet new welfare and licensing standards will be able to keep primates, delivering on a pledge to provide greater legal protection for pet primates.

The measures come into force from **6 April 2026** when all primates in England will need to be kept to these zoo-level standards - in effect banning the practice of keeping primates as pets.

It is estimated that up to 5,000 primates are currently kept in domestic settings as pets in the UK. These wild animals have complex welfare and social needs and, according to most experts, cannot be properly cared for in these environments. The new measures will improve the welfare of potentially thousands of these intelligent animals.

Under the law all private primate keepers will be required to hold a licence, issued by their local authority, with failure to comply with licence conditions resulting in an unlimited fine or removal of the primate. Defra will work closely with local authorities to make sure that they have the appropriate tools and guidance to ensure that enforcement will be carried out effectively.

RSPCA Head of Public Affairs David Bowles said:

*“Meeting the needs of monkeys and other primates is practically impossible to do in a household, domestic environment.*

*“That’s why this legislation will be a really important moment for animal welfare – ensuring primates can only be kept in an appropriate environment, as we all strive to create a better world for every animal.*

*“Too often, our dedicated officers are called to properties where monkeys live in the wrong surroundings, eat totally inappropriate diets and are at risk of suffering behind closed doors. This new law has the potential to change that.*

**If any business requires further advice on this important legislative change, please contact the Trading Standards at [tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk)**

## Safety of Halloween Costumes

The City Council continues to raise public awareness of the dangers surrounding Halloween costumes.



**Scary but Safe**  
Don't give yourself too much of a fright this Halloween night.

See that the costume fits properly to avoid trips and falls  
Always check costumes for a CE mark, instructions and safety information  
Flames should be kept away from the child and costume, or use LED lights  
Ensure any masks or hoods don't stop the child from seeing, or breathing

**NATIONAL TRADING STANDARDS**  
Protecting Consumers  
Safeguarding Businesses

**Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy**

**CFOA**  
Chief Fire Officers Association

**BRITISH TOY & HOBBY ASSOCIATION**

**ROSPA**  
accidents don't have to happen

The campaign will inform consumers of the need to buy fancy dress and Halloween costumes from legitimate sources, and check costumes carry appropriate safety labels. Consumers must be aware of the potential dangers that come with fancy dress clothing, especially involving children and open flames.

The key messages of the campaign are as follows; keep children in fancy dress away from naked flames and always buy from legitimate sellers and check labelling for safety markings such as the CE mark.

## Illegal Firework Sales



**A joint visit conducted Trading Standards with Tyne and Wear Fire Service and Northumbria Police found a domestic address in Byker where the occupants were allegedly storing and selling a vast quantity of fireworks, including those intended for display only and prohibited bangers to members of the public, well in excess of the limits set out in law for safe storage. A significant quantity of cannabis, along with illegal tobacco and vapes were also seized from the address.**

**The main rules concerning the sale of fireworks are as follows.**

- It is illegal to supply category F2 and category F3 fireworks (including sparklers) to any person under the age of 18, except category F1.
- It is illegal for anyone under the age of 18 to possess category F2 and F3 fireworks in a public place.
- The same penalty applies for breaking down boxes of fireworks to sell fireworks individually.
- If selling category F2 or F3 fireworks, the statutory notice must be displayed
- Businesses selling fireworks must display safety leaflets featuring the Firework Code,
- Businesses could face a fine and/or up to three months in prison if they break the law.
- Businesses must know what is classed as a firework and who you can sell to

Sparklers are also classed as fireworks and cannot be sold to anyone under 18. Sparklers must be marked 'Warning: not to be given to children under five years of age'.

### **Know your stock**

Fireworks are measured by Net Explosive Mass (NEM), not by price or weight. Businesses must keep a record of the amount of stock they have (by NEM). Businesses must now also provide the Fire Service with a plan of their building showing the exact place of storage, only that store will be licenced, the fireworks cannot be stored anywhere else without the approval of the Fire Service.

### **Know your limits**

A fireworks licence (without separation) will allow you to store up to 250kg NEM. A licence (with separation) will allow you to store up to 2,000kg NEM under certain circumstances. Do not exceed these limits. To gain a licence to store fireworks please visit [www.twfire.gov.uk/community-safety/Business](http://www.twfire.gov.uk/community-safety/Business). Businesses could face a fine and/or up to 2 years in prison if you break the law.

### **Know the dates**

Your licence is to STORE fireworks only and you can only SELL fireworks between specific dates:

- Bonfire Night 15 October – 10 November
- New Year 26 – 31 December
- Diwali - The first day and three days before
- Chinese New Year - The first day and three days before

### **Know what you are selling**

Your licence allows the storage of Hazard Type 4 (HT4) domestic explosives. You only must have one Hazard Type 3 (HT3) to mean all your stock is classed as HT3, which have much greater restrictions. Know how to protect your neighbours; you are limited to 75kg NEM of HT4 fireworks if you are next to or in the same building as domestic/sleeping accommodation.

### **Fly-tipping**

Rubbish which is fly tipped can be ignited. Fly-tipping is illegal, and the penalties are:

- Fixed penalty notice of between £150 - £400
- Summary conviction – maximum fine of £50,000 and/or a 12- month prison sentence.
- On conviction or indictment – an unlimited fine and/or a 5- year prison sentence.

### **How to report fly-tipping**

If you have information about fly-tipping, contact Newcastle City Council on 0191 2787878 or if anyone witnesses a person using a vehicle to fly-tip waste and the offence is on-going, contact the Police on 101. If the waste appears to be hazardous or is in/near a watercourse, contact the Environment Agency emergency hotline on 0800 807060. The person taking your call will need to know as much information as possible such as the date, time, and location of the fly-tipping, and never put yourself in danger either by handling the rubbish or confronting the fly-tippers.

### 1. Buying online

In most cases when you shop online or via mail order catalogue you have the right to cancel your order and receive a full refund, even if you don't like the goods or have simply changed your mind. This is in addition to your normal statutory rights. Under the Consumer Contracts Regulations 2014 you now have 14 days in which to return goods after you have received them.

### 2. Product safety

Be safe this Christmas whether you are looking to buy Christmas lights, electrical goods as presents, or even a heater to help keep you warm. Always make sure that your intended purchases have a CE mark, manufacturers identity or mark, and ensure it has a standard 3 pin plug. More complex items should always come with instructions on how to use them, or warnings about risks. The same advice applies to toys, both larger gifts and stocking fillers. You must ensure a toy's intended age group is applicable to the child you are buying it for.

### 3. Fakes

In the current financial climate, you may be tempted by a product. Watch out though, as counterfeit goods such as DVDs, games, clothing, perfume, electrical goods and jewellery may appear to be a bargain, but in practice they rarely are. The quality and safety of these products is very poor, and you may be supporting organised crime gangs with such a purchase.

### 4. Charity collectors

Whilst most charity collectors are genuine, sadly some people will try and take advantage of another's generosity. If you are in any doubt about the legitimacy of a charity collector or a collection bag delivered through your door, check the charity name and number at [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk).

### 5. Buying goods on your credit card

If any of your purchases at Christmas cost more than £100, it is often worth paying for them, or even a deposit, with a credit card. Section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act 1974 makes the card company equally liable for any breaches of contract, or if the goods fail to match their description, so when things go wrong, you can ask the card company for compensation.

### 6. Unwanted gifts

Shops are not legally obliged to accept returns unless they were faulty when bought, not as described, or not fit for purpose. If an unwanted present does not fit, or you do not like it, unfortunately you do not have an automatic right to return it. However, many shops have goodwill returns policies, especially when it comes to unwanted gifts, so you may actually find that a retailer is prepared to refund or exchange without question, although they often require proof of purchase for this.

**If you buy something from a shop or agree for a person or business to do some work for you, the law gives you certain consumer rights. These are there to protect you from being treated unfairly by a trader or when things go wrong with your purchase.**

For example, you may have had a poor standard of work from a builder, if you have having problem switching energy suppliers, or if a shop is refusing to take back a faulty product. In these instances, the **Citizens Advice Consumer Service** provide the resident of Newcastle upon Tyne with advice and assistance on the behalf of Trading Standards. You can contact them by telephone on 0808 2231133 or by visiting their website at [www.adviceguide.org](http://www.adviceguide.org), which contains guidance on the likes of purchasing a vehicle, problems with furniture, or buying goods over the internet. If for example a trader is found to be persistently misleading consumers, or fraudulently trading, the information is then referred back to Trading Standards who will undertake a full criminal investigation.

Newcastle upon Tyne Citizens Advice also provides an advice service on consumer issues, debt, housing, employment, and benefits, amongst others. They can be found at 4th Floor, City Library, Charles Avison Building, 33 New Bridge Street West, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8AX, or can be contacted on 0344 245 1288. Newcastle upon Tyne Citizens Advice have a website [www.citizensadvice-newcastle.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice-newcastle.org.uk) and a contact email of [citycab@newcastlecab.org.uk](mailto:citycab@newcastlecab.org.uk)

The **Northumbria University Student Law Office** offers free legal service to members of the public facing a range of legal issues. The service is provided by students who are supervised by qualified professional lawyers from the School of Law staff. The law office deals with over 800 cases annually and have successfully concluded a number of high-profile cases. They can be contacted by telephone on 0191 227 3909 or by email at [la.studentlawoffice@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:la.studentlawoffice@northumbria.ac.uk) Please note this service is available during term time only.

Consumer champion **Which?** have a website [which.co.uk](http://which.co.uk) that provides free resources on consumer issues and a number of buying guides and reviews to help consumers how to get the best value for money or provide assistance when problems have occurred. Some of this information may be available by way of their subscription service.

**For more information on how to contact Trading Standards**

[tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk)

Animal Health and Citizens Advice Consumer Service 0808 2231133 Report crime online anonymously at [www.newcastle.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/tradingstandards)

**If you need this information in another format, please email Trading Standards at [tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@newcastle.gov.uk).**