

Introduction to Trading Standards

Mark Walker
Group Manager

10th July 2012



Our Purpose

To give **Nottinghamshire** a better
Trading Environment

‘What Matters’ to our Customers

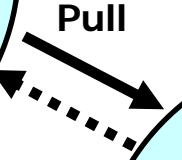
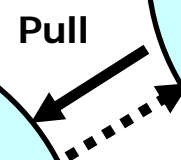
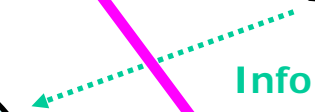
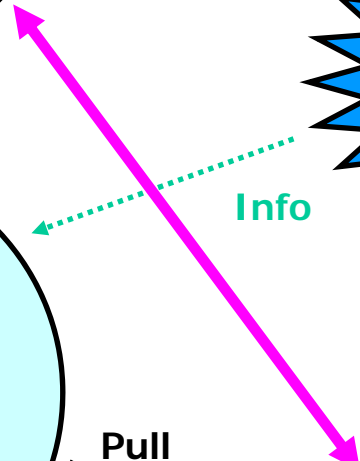
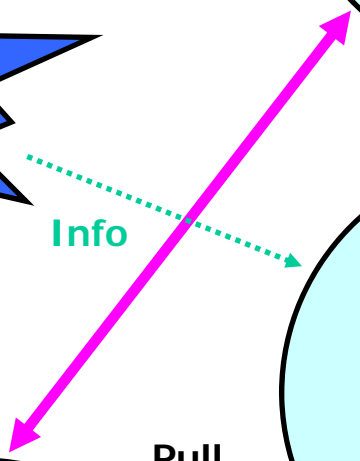
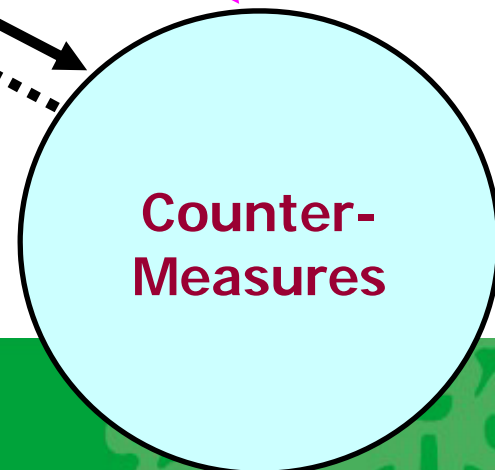
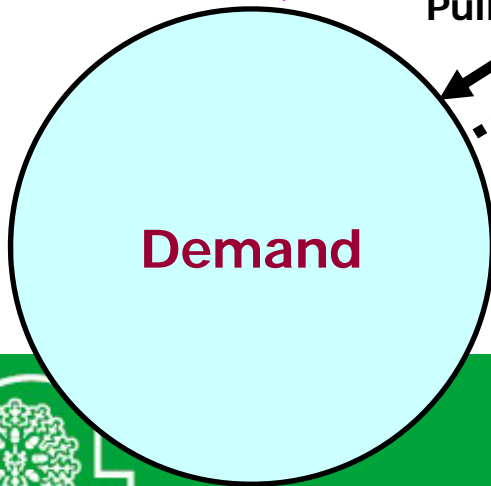
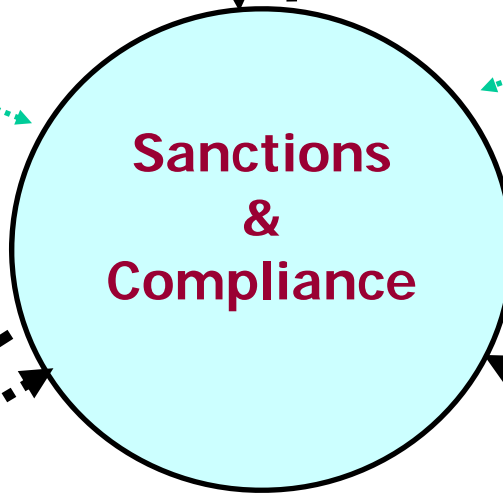
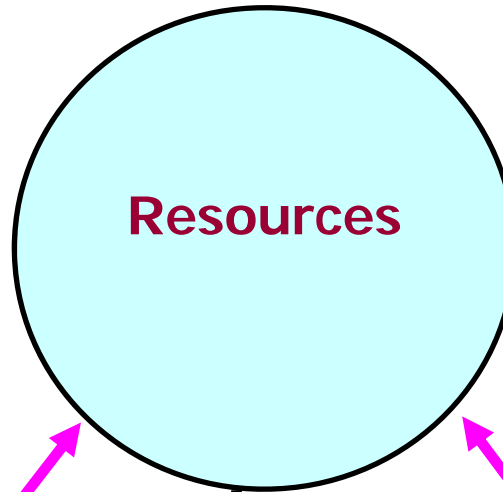
Help me to **solve** my problem **quickly**,
and to **stop** problems happening
to others.



Size and Features

- 50 FTE – 90% of net cost
- TSEM Regional Operations Unit (Scambusters Team)
- Accredited Financial Investigator, Intelligence Manager
- 1 office – flexible working, hot-desking, print strategy
- Secure evidence facilities
- Surveillance Equipment.





Enforce 80 Acts and 300 Regulations

- Weights and Measures
- Food
- Fair Trading (doorstep, scams)
- Credit (loan sharking)
- Product Safety
- Explosives, petroleum, poisons
- Animal Health (disease & welfare)
- Animal Feeding Stuffs
- Underage sales – alcohol, tobacco, solvents, knives, fireworks etc
- Intellectual Property
- Proceeds of Crime (money laundering).



Method?

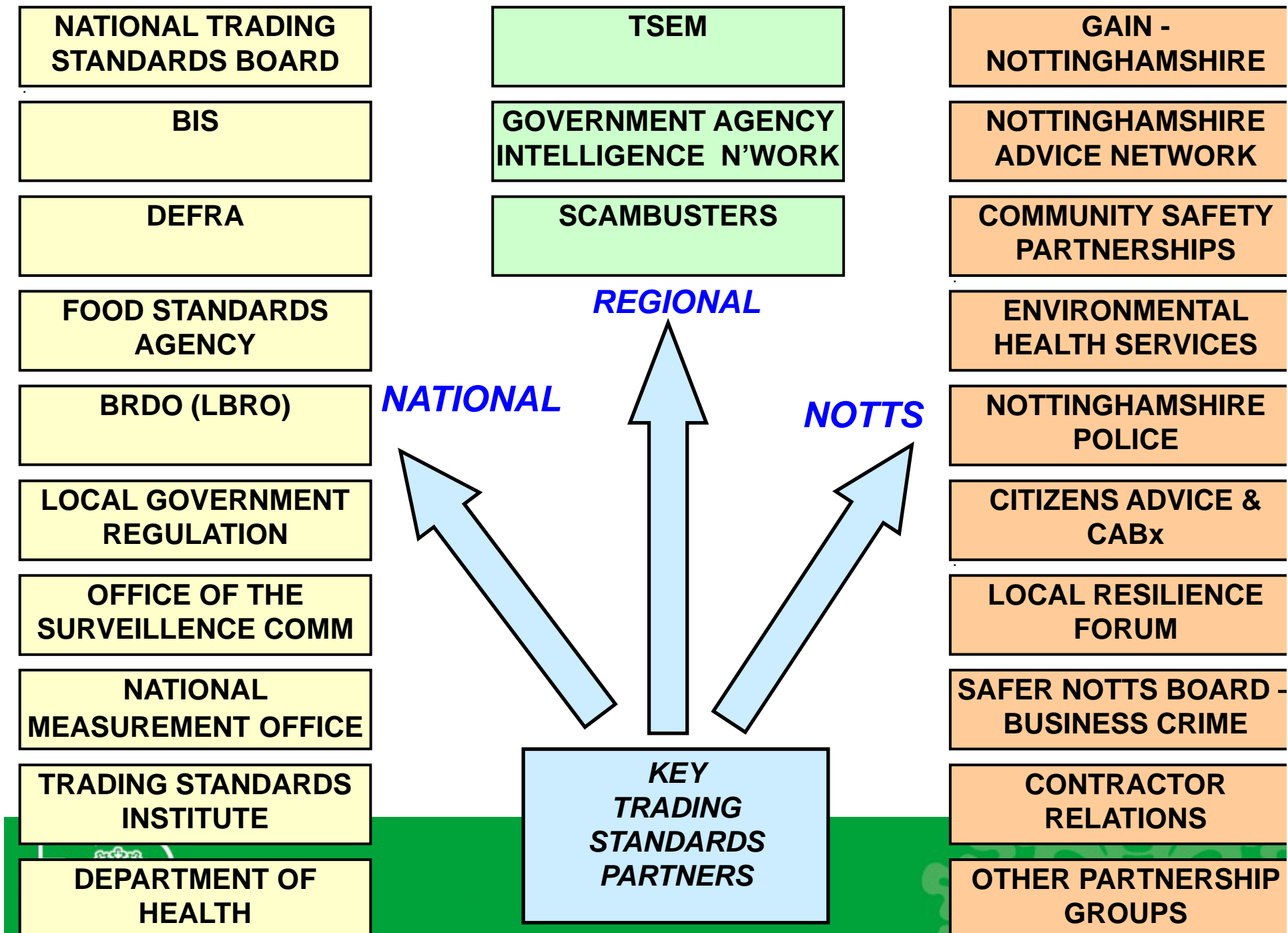
- Advice/mediation to consumers
- Advice to businesses – Primary Authority
- Inspections
- Investigations - Prosecutions/cautions/PND's
- Injunctive (civil court) action
- Licensing Regimes
- Financial Investigations – Proceeds of Crime
- 'Buy with Confidence'
- Media
- Lorry Watches/Cold Calling Control Zones/Real Deal



Key Facts – Fair Trading Law

- **£6.6bn** – estimated annual consumer detriment from unfair trading
- **£4.8bn** – cross border detriment
- **£6:£1** – ratio of benefit to cost of TS Fair Trading Work
- **£30:£1** – average ratio of cost to benefit of larger prosecutions





Rambling Club takes to the hills

18th walking date leads for Rambling Club on Sunday. A 6.6 mile walk in the White Horse area.

Coach will leave the Staff of 100 on Hick Lane in Sutton. Here and the Barnard Lane of Stockwell Gate, Mansfield. 10am.

There is no need to pre-book on the coach, and the fare is £5.

For further information and John on Mansfield 01930 407004, or the club website www.ramblingclub.com.

Breathe Easy meet

Mansfield and Ashfield the Resc Group will be holding its next meeting at the Kings Club, on Mansfield, 11.30am on Tuesday, from 11.30am.

Andrew Motymen, a mutual chest specialist, will be talking about treatments for asthma and breathing problems, taking questions from the audience.

Everyone is welcome to attend and meet on the day.

Real rescue stories

Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire Air Ambulance Charity (LNAAC) is appealing for stories of how the life service has helped them. LNAAC wants to hear from the people who have been assisted by the ambulance medical team at the scene of an accident or from the emergency services. The official launch of a new magazine on 18 November.

For details contact Alan on 0115 942255 or email aldy@lambu.co.uk.

DON'T ever think that police officers aren't victims of crime from time to time.

can still remember the mixed feelings of anger and vulnerability when I found, some years ago, that my car had been broken into, leaving not only a smashed window to repair but a gap where a number of favourite CDs had

Fuse lit on new fireworks drive

Report by
Nick Brimacombe
email: nick@brimacombe.co.uk

AS Bonfire Night draws nearer, police and Trading Standards officers have been busy visiting licensed premises across Ashfield to check fireworks are being stored and sold correctly.

Operation Blue Flash is a joint initiative run by Ashfield Police and Nottinghamshire County Council's Trading Standards team in a bid to tackle the illegal sale and possession of fireworks and help improve community safety.

Pc Adam Brooks, based at Kirkby Police Station, has been running the first stage of the operation across Sutton and Kirkby this week.

He says that with Bonfire Night, so too does the risk of fireworks being misused and falling into the wrong hands.

"The storage of fireworks is something that impacts on the emergency services as when stored incorrectly or carelessly, the risk of damage and danger to life increases," he said.

"This operation was put together for a number of reasons including injury prevention, to guarantee public confidence in police and trading standards and to ensure that the community as a whole has a peaceful Halloween and Bonfire night."

More than 20 licensed premises around Kirkby and Sutton have been visited this week to remind shopkeepers of their duties towards community safety.

"Looking over previous years, antisocial behaviour incidents reported to police during October and November include the misuse of fireworks, the most common incidents include fireworks being thrown in public or being set off in



Annie Wheatley, store manager at McColls in Kirkby, who is supporting the Operation Blue Flash campaign.

Operation Blue Flash is launched to tackle illegal firework sales in Ashfield

an inconsiderate manner," added Pc Brooks.

Nottinghamshire County Council Trading Standards officer Paul Wilson has spent several days in the district checking up on local shopkeepers.

"We're here to ensure that fireworks are stored and sold safely and we are conducting full inspections of licensed premises in Ashfield," he said.

"We do not a range of situations, usually chain stores have well prepared systems but at the other end of the scale there may be some retailers who have not sold fireworks before

and they are keen to do the marketing but have not prepared properly."

"We are looking for a number of things on a visit, such as checking that fireworks are kept in cabinets and they are not stored in shop windows."

"We have a check list which we go through on every visit, including the amount of storage space available and checking that the premises are registered under the law and that the extinguishers have been checked in the last 12 months."

Stage Two of Operation Blue Flash begins this week.

Windows are secure but you should not store car keys in obvious locations or in a place where they can be seen from outside.

It is important to remember, however, not to put yourself at any personal risk.

If you see or hear anything suspicious, whether related to vehicle crime or not, you can report it to us in three ways:

If a suspected crime is in progress call 999

Boss puts cowboy builders on the run

A new scheme protecting vulnerable people from rogue traders has had its first success — thanks to a young building society manager.

Consumer Affairs Correspondent
KEVIN PEACHEY reports



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ACHAT with his building society manager saved a Notts pensioner from the clutches of cowboy builders.

The manager, Ashley Pearson, foiled traders who had driven the potential victim to the bank.

The 23-year-old prevented the elderly customer paying six times over the odds for building work — by finding out what the work should have cost and then calling in police.

Trading standards officers praised his actions which followed new guidelines being handed out to banking staff in a bid to beat doorstep bullies.

The customer, an 85-year-old from Aspley who has not been named, was driven to the Nottingham branch of the Leeds and Holbeck Building Society in Friar Lane.

He told cashier Ann Floyd that he wanted to withdraw £1,500 in cash.

Such a transaction usually requires 24 hours' notice and Mrs Floyd, who has worked at the building society for 33 years, became even more suspicious when the pensioner told her workmen were waiting outside for the money.

Unusual

Mrs Floyd said: "I noticed the customer was making an unusual withdrawal for a large amount on his account and brought this to the attention of the branch manager. I am pleased to have been able to help."

She alerted Mr Pearson — one of the youngest branch managers in the company — and he rang various reputable Notts builders.

They told him that the work to fix guttering and roof tiles — for which the pensioner had been charged £1,500 — should only cost about £250.

He alerted police and officers arrived to negotiate a payment of £250 with the builders on behalf of the elderly customer.

Officers are still investigating and may take further action.

Mr Pearson, who lives in Derby and has only been Nottingham branch manager since March, said: "We were delighted to be able to help one of our customers."

"We have been alerted to this type of incident through the Building Societies Association, local trading standards and internal communications, and so the branch remains vigilant at all times."

"I would encourage anyone to question large withdrawals, particularly if the transaction is



EAGLE-EYED: Ann Floyd and Ashley Pearson

unusual and from a vulnerable member of the community."

Caroline Ryan, of Nottingham Trading Standards, said: "This highlights the importance of the information that is being circulated and shows how we need to be working with bank and building society staff to raise awareness of rogue traders."

Trading standards officers had visited the branch just a week before to advise staff about the new guidelines designed to protect consumers from rogue traders who charge over the odds for home-improvement work.

It is alleged the workmen in this case knocked on the door uninvited and failed to offer the statutory seven-day cooling-off period before starting work.

Investigations into the case are ongoing by police and trading standards officers.

The pensioner said: "They intervened on my behalf. I am absolutely grateful."

"They are watchful for this type of business now. I am 85 and I suppose the builder thought I had stacks of money built up somewhere."



He said the rogues had initially charged a few hundred pounds for the work but within 24 hours had increased their price to £1,500.

The pensioner then drove him to the building society in a white van, leaving another worker back in the house.

"I did not know how I was going to get out of this trouble," the pensioner said.

The man had left by the time the pensioner returned home.

"People should be made aware of this. There are some good workers out there but this was one that was wrong," he said.



10 out of 13 shops sell weapons to boy

Knives and axes sold to boy, 16

THIS is the collection of knives and bladed weapons sold to a 16-year-old boy in Bassetlaw.

The knives and axes were sold to the youngster as part of an operation to catch retailers selling such items to under 18s.

Out of 13 shops - including national retailers and small independent stores - that were tested, ten sold them to the boy.

This week the outcome was branded 'disappointing' and police pledged to monitor the retailers carefully.

There were eight knife incidents involving under 18s in 2008, out of a total of 95.

Despite this overall figure falling to 73 last year, the number of incidents involving under 18s rose to 12.

The owners and staff at those shops will be contacted and receive a warning from Nottinghamshire Police.

They will also be given advice by the County Council's trading standards officers on how to



Supt Gail Hart and Trading Standards officer John Maher with the seized items

prevent sales in the future.

Any retailer who does not heed their warning faces formal enforcement action.

Trading standards officers have also been carrying out investigations into websites offering knives and various bladed weapons for sale.

Councillor Mick Murphy, Cabinet Member for Community Safety at Notts County Council, said: "This was a very disappointing result and we now need to do more to make sure these shops no longer sell knives to underage children."

"By getting out there and educating retailers on underage sales and targeting those who sell knives to young people over the internet, we hope to reduce the chances of weapons making it out onto the streets."

Chief Inspector for Bassetlaw Richard Stapleford said the force remained determined to stamp out knife crime.

He said: "Everyone has a role to play in tackling knife crime and retailers must take their responsibility for preventing underage knife sales very seriously."

"Retail staff must challenge customers whose age is in doubt. It is clear through local test purchasing that certain retailers are not taking their responsibilities seriously."

Out of 46 sites looked at, 32 raised concerns about the measures in place to ensure the purchaser was over 18.

In some cases people were just asked to tick a box to say they were over 18, while other just listed the age restrictions in their terms and conditions.

'Dangerous' toys seized

Report by
James Hoy

e-mail james.hoy@ncc.gov.uk

TOY guns have been seized from a market stall in the area over fears they could damage children's eyes.

Trading Standards officers found 12 of the imitation weapons at Thoresby Market, but fear more of them could be on sale elsewhere.

Coun Mick Murphy, cabinet member for community safety at Nottinghamshire County Council, said: "We are concerned that a number of the toy guns have already been sold to



Toy guns marked TD-2007 Super Action Toy Gun, which were seized from Thoresby Market. Officers fear the lasers they contain could damage children's eyes.

Nottinghamshire consumers. "We are issuing this warn-

ing to retailers, parents and carers to avoid any potential injury to local children."

Officials fear the guns are similar to toys found in Suffolk, which were found to have lasers 17 times more powerful than the legal limit.

The guns cost around £10 and come in yellow packaging marked TD-2007 Super Action Toy Gun.

They emit a red laser and the packaging is marked with a CE safety stamp.

Anyone who sees the guns for sale in the area should contact 08454 64606.

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Elderly and disabled on sales alert

ELDERLY and disabled people in Notts are being urged to be on their guard after complaints about firms selling mobility equipment.

In one case, an 88-year-old was contacted by a Notts-based company claiming she had completed a questionnaire about health issues. She suffers with bad arthritis and walks with the help of a stick.

A salesperson called at her home and tried to sell her a scooter, which was declined.

She was, however, persuaded to buy a walk-in bath, even though she already had a walk-in shower and the bath wasn't suitable for her medical condition. She was assured the £3,300 bath would be beneficial and paid a £240 cash deposit.

When the woman's family decided to cancel the order, the company refused to refund the deposit.

It's despicable that firms prey on the elderly



The niece, who didn't want to be identified, said: "Elderly, disabled and vulnerable people are being misled into buying products which are not suitable and don't meet their needs. It annoys me that people are getting ripped off."

The county council's trading standards team has since contacted the company to advise them of their responsibilities and the deposit has been refunded.

Councillor Mick Murphy said: "It's despicable that firms prey on the elderly and disabled."

People can report concerns about rogue traders or cold callers to Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.





Any Questions?

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