



Ticket reseller pays penalty

Following a pioneering investigation undertaken in conjunction with Trading Standards Scotland, East Ayrshire Council's Trading Standards Service has issued a four figure financial penalty to a prolific ticket reseller located in the West of Scotland.

This was the first such fine to be issued in Scotland and, on being paid without appeal, has also become the first successful case of its kind in the UK.

The financial penalty related to tickets being resold for Still Game's run of shows at the SSE Hydro in Glasgow. Information regarding the seating location was not disclosed, contrary to Section 90 of the Consumer Rights Act 2015.

Tickets for Still Game were being offered at inflated prices through ticket resale sites, despite face value tickets still being available on the primary market for some shows.

When it comes to secondary ticketing, consumers have rights they may not be aware of. Buyers must be told where they are sitting or standing, any restrictions, and the face value of the ticket.

East Ayrshire Trading Standards Service are committed to ensuring consumers are given the information they need, and which is required by law, in order for them to make informed choices. It is envisaged that work in this area will continue.

Remember your statutory rights

As Christmas approaches, consumers should be aware of their rights when buying online and in shops. Your statutory rights come from the Consumer Rights Act 2015 and if goods are not of satisfactory quality, you are entitled to a repair, replacement or refund depending on the circumstances. Online, you have a 14 day cooling off period to return goods if you have changed your mind but this does not let you try the goods and return them. If you use them, you have accepted them.

At this time of year, some retailers will have different policies and may have extended return times to allow for unwanted presents. Be aware of this and make sure gift receipts are given with the gift or keep them safe, just in case.

Call blockers are a big success

Scams come in many forms and are usually uninvited contact making false promises to con victims out of money. Some of the most common scams are fake lotteries, deceptive prize draws or sweep stakes, clairvoyants, computer scams, and romance scams but there are many more.



The most common contact method is by telephone, so in the last year East Ayrshire Trading Standards Service have been able to offer free call blockers to vulnerable people who have been, or are likely to be, the victim of a scam. It is calculated that for every £1 spent on the device nearly 50 times that amount is saved by the householder and associated organisations.

The devices, which have been funded by the Scottish Government, screen out thousands of known scam numbers at source and block over 91% of nuisance calls. Householders can be confident that when their phone rings it will be someone they want to speak to.

Here are some of our call blocker stats.

34 is the average number of nuisance calls received each month.

2600 nuisance calls have been blocked by the TrueCall devices since April 2019.

49% of all calls received were nuisance calls.

91% of nuisance calls were blocked.

We still have a few of these devices for allocation. If you are affected by nuisance calls or have been the victim of a scam please get in touch.





Tips for choosing a trader

If you need work carried out on your home, here are a few things to consider when choosing a trader:

- Ask friends and family to recommend traders.
- Get at least 3 different quotes before having work carried out.
- Check that all the quotes are provided in writing.
- Check whether you are given a quote or an estimate. A quote is a fixed price for the job and should not change, whereas an estimate can vary by a reasonable amount.
- Check the quote includes an inclusive price and details all work that you have requested.
- Check that the quote includes a timescale for the work to be started and completed.
- Check that you have adequate contact details for the trader including an address and phone number.
- Check that you are not required to pay for the work in advance. You should always aim to keep back at least some money until the work is completed.



Questions to ask of traders:

- How long have they been in business? Established traders are less likely to disappear in the middle of a job.
- Are they a member of a trade association? Some trade associations operate codes of practice that offer extra protection to consumers and some offer mediation or conciliation services to help resolve disputes. You should contact the trade association to see what extra protection they offer and to check that the trader is a member.
- Do they have references? Ask to see references for similar work the trader has done in the past.
- Do they have insurance to cover damage to property? Check that this will cover your neighbour's property as well as your own, where appropriate.

- Is the work guaranteed? Check whether any guarantee provided is insurance backed, since this will mean you will be protected even if the trader goes out of business.

Points to remember when using a trader:

- Check that you are happy with the standard of work before paying the bill. If you are not, refuse to pay until the problems are rectified.
- Pay by credit card where possible, as you will often get extra protection. Otherwise, try to pay by cheque rather than cash.
- Never agree to go with the trader to the bank or building society in order to withdraw money.

Of course, you could contact an East Ayrshire Trusted Trader who have been vetted by us and who have made a commitment to treat their customers fairly based on customer experience and customer feedback. Visit www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/trustedtrader for more information.

Pop up shop

Once again East Ayrshire Trading Standards will be teaming up with Police Scotland and other partners to raise awareness of safety and security issues during the festive period. We will be focusing on how to avoid doorstep crime. Come along and talk to us between 11am and 1pm in the Burns Mall on the following dates:

Wednesday 11th December
Friday 13th December
Wednesday 18th December
Friday 20th December

Electric blankets safety project

The Service has recently completed its annual electric blanket safety testing project in conjunction with the Council's Customer Service Centres.

Of the 25 blankets submitted by East Ayrshire residents this year, a total of 5 or 20% failed the electrical safety test. This project illustrates the importance of testing electric blankets on a regular basis. These products experience a considerable amount of wear and tear, simply through normal usage and as such may become electrically unsafe.

