



# Confident Times

Issue 3

Winter 2007

## Special points of interest:

- Welcome
- CRB Rule Changes
- Electric Blanket Testing Results

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## Welcome

Sixteen more Kent businesses from a variety of trade sectors have successfully made it onto the Kent Buy with Confidence scheme by proving they provide a good level of customer service (see back page for traders details).

The next Certificate Presentation Event takes place at the Holiday Inn Hothfield in December.

Businesses already 'Approved' are receiving good Customer Feedback, here are a few examples:-

*"I contracted F&S Mills to externally decorate my home and was impressed in every way. I will always come to this website for contacts for other trades."*

*"C & C Interiors were first rate in every way and detail."*

*"Estate Legacy Services - Jaci was a most helpful lady, she saw us out of hours which we really appreciated, being such busy people."*

*"Karen Brown Interior Decorator offered excellent service all round."*

*"Steve Dray Garden Service offered good, honest, trustworthy service."*

*Small Cars R Us - "A friendly & helpful service"*

*"Powerbase have provided consistently good service at a fair price"*

*"RCL Supplies - very helpful and reliable."*

## Rule change for subcontractors!

The rule on Criminal Record Bureau disclosures (CRB) and subcontractors has changed. Now, a CRB check will be needed only if your subcontractors are not supervised by a Buy with Confidence member or one of your CRB checked employees in or around peoples' homes.

The CRB checks now need to be renewed every three years from the 'Date of Issue', not every two years as previously.

## Clean Kent Campaign - Responsible Waste Disposal

The Buy with Confidence team took part in the Clean Kent Campaign in September.

The campaign was highlighting the new legislation, offering free advice on the safe and legal disposal of waste to householders and tradesmen.

Clean Kent, in partnership with the Environment Agency and Trading Standards held the events at selected B&Q and Build Centre branches.



The legislation does have implications for all householders and tradesmen across the UK. The law now states that if any waste is removed by a tradesman, such as a builder, plumber, garden contractor, waste removal service from a residential or commercial property and it ends up being fly-tipped, both householders and tradesmen could end up being fined if the rubbish is traced back to either party.

### The law in action

Although familiar to most tradesmen, there are still some who are not complying with, or are unsure of, their responsibilities. A waste carrier's licence is £144 for 3 years, which is good value considering that a fixed penalty notice for non-compliance could cost £300. The chance of being fined is high in Kent with routine stop-checks involving agencies such as the Environment Agency, Police, Customs and Revenue and VOSA happening regularly across the county.

### Handy hints for you

Clean Kent has put together some handy hints on Duty of Care.

For tradesmen:

1. If you transport waste you have not produced yourself, or builders waste, you must register as a waste carrier.
2. If you transport waste another person/company has produced, always get a description of the load and a transfer note.
3. Always deposit waste at a licensed site.

For more information on Duty of Care, visit [www.cleankent.com](http://www.cleankent.com) or contact the Environment Agency on 0870 850 6506 or [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)



**Changing minds. Changing views.  
Changing Kent.**

Report flytipping, graffiti & littering **0845 345 0210**

**cleankent**   
working together for a cleaner kent

## Buy with Confidence Approved Trader: RCL Supplies Case Study

### RCL Supplies is a specialist supplier of Computer Consumables

#### Quality Ink Cartridges & Laser Toners at affordable prices

Proprietor Ralph Lombart said "It's extremely important that our customers know that they are buying goods from a reputable business that provides a high level of customer service and that it has been thoroughly vetted by Kent County Council Trading Standards.

When the inspectors of Trading Standards visited our office to carry out an audit inspection, I was most impressed at the way they dealt with my application. They were very professional, polite and most helpful. They explained in detail the rigorous vetting process that could lead to our business being approved or not. After the visit, some months later we received a letter of congratulations from them confirming that our business had been approved. This was excellent news for our business.

We have always endeavoured to put our customers first, to provide them with quality products at affordable prices and above all to provide them with a high standard of customer service.

Earlier this year, I received from Trading Standards the results of Customer Feedback about my business, this gave our business 100% for: Level of Service, Value for Money and Quality of Goods supplied.

You can certainly **buy with confidence** from reputable and honest businesses approved by Kent County Council Trading Standards."

For a personal, reliable and fast service, you can contact RCL Supplies on 01227 768812 or email [rclsupplies@btinternet.com](mailto:rclsupplies@btinternet.com) or buy on-line at [ww.rclsupplies.com](http://ww.rclsupplies.com).



Ralph Lombart, RCL Supplies (centre) is presented with his Approved Trader Certificate by Elizabeth Tweed, KCC Lead Member for Community Services and Clive Bainbridge, KCC Director of Community Safety and Regulatory Services.

## Tests discover potential safety risks

Nearly 40% of electric blankets belonging to Kent residents failed their safety tests, after a safety campaign carried out by Kent Trading Standards.

Four days of checks were carried out at Age Concern centres in Gravesend, Lyminge, Herne Bay and Ashford, in association with Kent Fire and Rescue and Age Concern.

Of the 123 blankets brought in by the public, 41 needed to be replaced and 8 were fitted with new plugs compliant with safety regulations. To help towards the costs of a new blanket, discount vouchers were given to those who attended the checks and the old blankets were stripped of their wiring and donated to a local animal sanctuary as bedding.

Around 300,000 electric blankets are sold in the UK every year and according to Age Concern, those that are defective have been the cause of some household fires. Many older styles do not have modern override safety features and are often not stored flat, causing the wires to bend which could then ultimately cause a fire.

KCC cabinet Member for Community Services Mike Hill said

*“These recent tests proved very popular but they show just how important it is for us to be aware of the condition of all our electrical items and replace those which may be faulty, old or worn. Having electric blankets checked really can help save lives”.*

Kent Trading Standards recommends blankets should be checked every three years. Anyone needing more information should call Kent Trading Standards via Consumer Direct on 08454 040506 or log onto [www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent)



From left to right: Ian Collins, Kent Fire Service; Liz Tidy, Advice Officer - Kent Trading Standards; Keith Richards, Global Electronic Manning Services - Accredited Testing Centre

# SCAMBUSTERS

29 October 2007

## SCAMBUSTERS and three police forces joint operation in Gloucester against rogue traders

Police Officers from three forces along with officers from the Trading Standards 'Scambusters' Team carried out a dawn raid on 25 October just outside Gloucester as part of a nationwide crackdown on rogue traders. Two men were arrested during the major operation which arose from information received about people cold calling for tarmac and paving jobs across a wide area from Kent to Devon.

Around 50 Police officers from Gloucestershire, West Mercia and Devon & Cornwall worked with colleagues from the Trading Standards 'Scambusters' Team during the operation. Support was provided from the Police Central Counties Air Operations Unit and officers from HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs) and the Environment Agency were also called in. Warrants were also executed at a number of other premises nearby that are connected with the investigation. At the end of the day, a large number of vehicles were seized including a large truck used to carry out tarmac spreading and a high value sports car. Other vehicles and items of equipment were also seized on suspicion of being stolen and Customs seized a horse truck suspected of running on red diesel.

Following news of the raid, Consumer Minister Gareth Thomas said *"The Government has funded three Scambusters teams to work with the Police and crack down on rogue traders and cold calling conmen. Fraudulent and malicious trading practices that exploit vulnerable people need to be stopped"*.

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***"We are determined to crack down on those who make profit from the misery of others ..."***

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'Scambusters' is a pilot project, funded by the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (formerly the DTI) to tackle cross border trading standards crime. A spokesperson from 'Scambusters' said *"This operation has involved a large amount of planning and is an excellent example of the cooperation that exists between Police forces and Trading Standards."* The spokesperson added *"We must reiterate our general warnings to members of the public that they should never deal with cold calling home maintenance traders."* Consumers who feel that they have been ripped off by cold calling traders or who wish to report suspicious activity can report the matter to Trading Standards via the national Consumer Direct helpline on 08454 04 05 06.

Detective Inspector Mark Chicken of Gloucester's Priority Policing Team said *"We are determined to crack down on those who make profit from the misery of others and this is the latest in a long line of operations which have demonstrated our ability to do just that."*



in partnership with



**Kent  
Police**

## Who's looking after your home or business when you are away?

**Kent Key Link** is a not-for-profit organisation working in partnership with Kent Police to provide a secure on-line database for key holder and property information. All profits will be made available for rural, business and residential communities to bid for towards crime prevention initiatives.

**Kent Key Link** will ensure that Kent Police are aware of who to contact should anything untoward happen to your property, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They will also make sure your preferred suppliers are automatically contacted too.

**For only £20.00 per year (residential customers) or £25.00 per year (businesses) you can benefit from:**

- ◆ Quick, easy and secure immediate on-line registration for your home or business
- ◆ Registering your preferred service providers
- ◆ Receiving up to date crime alerts and reminders via your email
- ◆ 24/7 on-line update facility to advise when your property will be vacant (for example if you are away on holiday or out at work all day).
- ◆ All year round service, live on Kent Police Data Command System

**Interested?** Visit [www.kentkeylink.co.uk](http://www.kentkeylink.co.uk) for more information. Alternatively, call **01622 636326** (voicemail) for an information pack and registration form.

## New rules for emails and websites!

### The Companies (Registrar, Languages and Trading Disclosures) Regulations 2006

New legislation came into force on 1 January 2007 and details what Limited Companies and Limited Liability Partnerships must display on their emails and websites. This is in addition to existing legislation governing information on official business stationery and at place of business.

Companies must state the following information in legible lettering on all business stationery. This includes electronic or any other form, as well as websites:

- ◆ Its Name
- ◆ Its place of registration
- ◆ Registered number
- ◆ Its registered office address
- ◆ And if it is being wound up, that fact

For more information please visit:

[www.companieshouse.gov.uk/promotional/busStationery.shtml](http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/promotional/busStationery.shtml)

Non-limited companies need to comply with the Business Names Act 1985 - for a fact sheet email [tsadvice@kent.gov.uk](mailto:tsadvice@kent.gov.uk) or call 01233 652385.



Kent County Council  
Trading Standards  
Advice & Education  
PO Box 71  
Ashford  
Kent TN24 8WB

☎ 01233 652385

☎ 01233 652395

✉ [buywithconfidence@kent.gov.uk](mailto:buywithconfidence@kent.gov.uk)

**Buy with Confidence - Choose a trader you can trust**

## Members Section

**Newly approved members (to 26 November 2007):**

- ◆ Easycare Mobility Ltd, Erith
- ◆ Maidstone Kia, Aylesford
- ◆ Step Up Loft Ladders & Ride Up Stair Lift, Sittingbourne
- ◆ The Woodworker - Anthony Meintjes, Sittingbourne
- ◆ H & C Motors, Maidstone
- ◆ Polyspec Plastics, Maidstone
- ◆ Kent Locksmiths, Ashford
- ◆ Highclere Construction, Ashford
- ◆ Design Advantage, Canterbury
- ◆ Wilco Plumbing & Heating, Ottinge
- ◆ Independent Insurance Services, Folkestone
- ◆ 1st Call Aerials & Satellite, New Romney
- ◆ Freeflow-Drains, Greatstone
- ◆ Applejacks Landscape & Garden Service, Herne Bay
- ◆ G S Joiner & Sons Ltd, Herne Bay
- ◆ Dumpton Park Garage, Broadstairs

## Trading Standards Intel Unit

Kent Trading Standards has an 'intelligence led' approach to all our work, and we undertake brief campaigns to find out the extent of a problem or to target known problems. This benefits the whole community by concentrating activities on those traders who are causing the most concern, with the aim of stamping out their unfair trading practices.

If you have any intelligence, such as traders appearing to do poor work on drives, roofs etc, that you would like to share with the Trading Standards Intel Unit contact Consumer Direct on 08454 040506 or feedback on-line on [www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/kent). See our Scambusters article on page 4 to see how your information could be used.

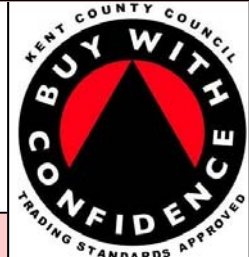
### Story to tell?

If you have a story to share about your business or your experience of the scheme, please submit your article to the team before 25 January 2008.

**Don't forget to contact us for your Buy with Confidence stationery.**

Stickers, leaflets, Customer Feedback Forms, A4 posters

**01233 652385**



[www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk)