



Buy With Confidence Trading Standards Approved



About the Buy With Confidence Scheme

In response to concerns about 'rogue traders' which are often highlighted in the media, a partnership of Local Authority Trading Standards Services have taken a ground-breaking step by putting together the Buy With Confidence Scheme. The scheme provides consumers with a list of local businesses which have given their commitment to trading fairly. Every business listed has undergone a series of detailed checks before being approved as a member of the scheme.

History

The Buy With Confidence scheme was first launched by Hampshire Trading Standards in 1999. At around the same time, Devon Trading Standards initiated a similar scheme called 'CustomerFirst'. The two schemes became successful, and were also adopted by neighbouring Trading Standards Services. As the schemes grew larger and began sharing information, it became clear that there were benefits to working together under the same rules and branding.

The two schemes merged formally in 2008 as 'Buy With Confidence', by which time over 20 local authorities were participating. Buy With Confidence is the largest scheme of its kind nationally and continues to expand its geographical coverage.

Independence

Buy With Confidence is run through the cooperation of a number of Trading Standards Services. We consider that Trading Standards has the right expertise and motivation to offer a scheme which offers genuine benefits consumers and businesses. Accordingly, the Buy With Confidence scheme is administered by local authority Trading Standards Services directly, and is not outsourced.

Entry Vetting

In order to become a Buy With Confidence member, a business must first apply or be recommended to join the scheme and must then pass a set of tailored background checks. Membership of the scheme is not given lightly – amongst other checks, each applicant will have their complaints history reviewed and will receive a visit from Trading Standards. Good references are required from previous customers and applicants must agree to abide by the scheme's code of conduct, which requires them to follow the letter and spirit of the law. Criminal records disclosure may also be required in some circumstances.

Only if all the scheme requirements are met, will a business be granted membership, and their conduct will continue to be monitored thereafter. We cannot promise that Buy With Confidence members' work will be perfect every time, but you can expect any problems to be dealt with fairly by the business, and you can turn to Trading Standards for advice in the event of an unresolved issue.

Using the Buy With Confidence Scheme

Searching for a business

The Buy With Confidence scheme is open to many different types of business – visit the buy with confidence website (www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk) to look for the goods or services you need.

You can also search by Trade Type or Business Name, and can additionally enter your post code (or the trader's) to find businesses in a specific area.

Things to remember

The businesses listed on the Buy With Confidence scheme will vary in size, expertise, and cost. To make sure the business you have chosen will best match your expectations, it is important to seek several quotes and to ask questions before going ahead. You may also wish to refer to the **Buying Advice** section for more information.

Customer Feedback

We don't currently list customer feedback on our website because all prospective members are thoroughly vetted by Trading Standards staff before being invited to join the scheme. The performance of members of the scheme is continuously monitored via Consumer Direct and through customer feedback submitted directly to us. In the unlikely event that concerns are raised about a member we take appropriate action and if necessary will remove them from the scheme.

A Word of Warning

The Buy With Confidence scheme is designed to ensure that member businesses comply with relevant legislation, resolve any consumer complaints in a fair and timely manner and understand their obligations to consumers.

However, there are some limitations to what Buy With Confidence can achieve.