

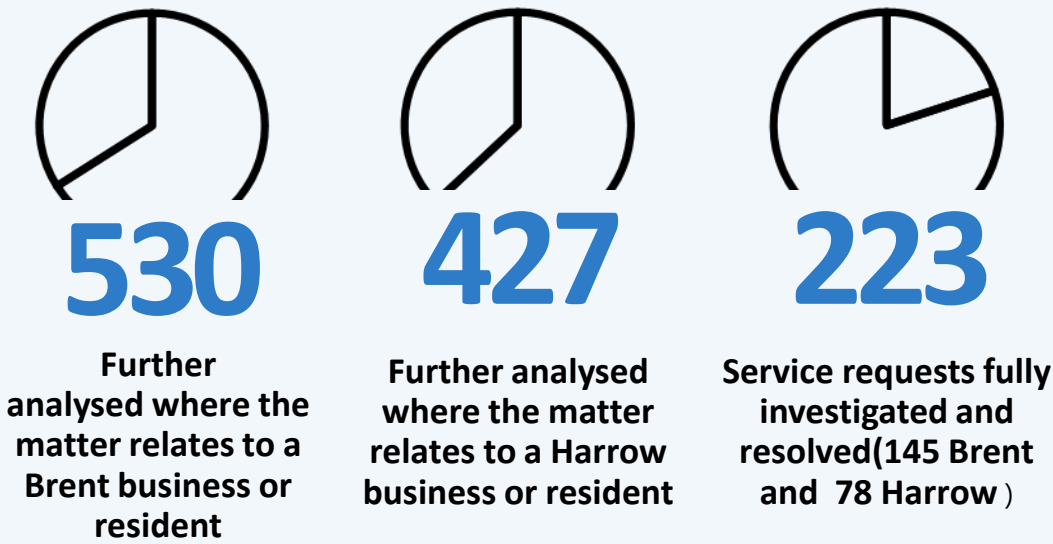
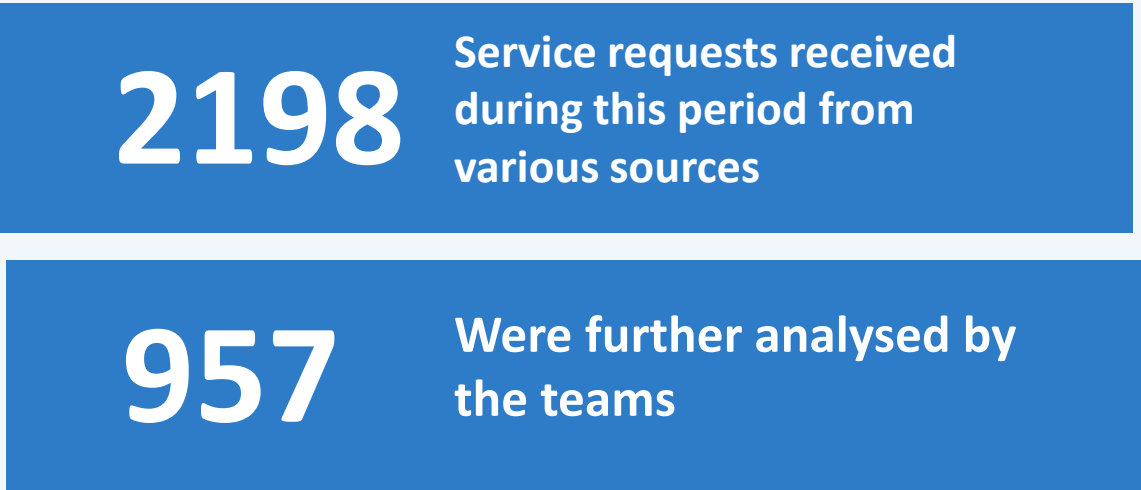
BRENT & HAROW TRADING STANDARDS MID –YEAR REVIEW REPORT 2026/27

The purpose of this report is to provide a mid-year update on the Service’s performance and key achievements, offering a snapshot of activity without waiting for the annual report which follows at year end.

The Service plays a key role in protecting residents and legitimate businesses from harm, financial loss, unsafe products, scams and unfair trading practices, while supporting a safe and confident local economy. Trading Standards also contributes to wider Council priorities, including community safety, safeguarding vulnerable residents, public health and economic resilience. Key areas of work include product safety, illicit and counterfeit goods, age-restricted sales, rogue traders, scams, business compliance and intelligence-led enforcement.

The period began with the loss of an experienced Enforcement Officer to another borough’s Trading Standards and an Assistant Regulatory Services Officer, who secured promotion within Regulatory Services. These departures have unfortunately reduced our staffing capacity, placing additional pressure on remaining officers to maintain service delivery and complete statutory duties. Our current staff numbers consist of 2.37 full time equivalents for both Brent and Harrow. On a positive note, our officers are now supported by two Level 6 Trading Standards apprentices who joined the team in September and, as part of their training, will take on tasks, helping to ease workloads and build future enforcement capacity. Recruitment to the vacant post is also being pursued, although there is a national shortage of experienced Trading Standards Officers and the recruitment market remains very challenging.

The Service receives requests from consumers, businesses, local authorities, ports and enforcement agencies. It prioritises complaints and intelligence involving scams, unfair trading, unsafe products, vulnerable residents and serious offending.



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Trading Standards has a range of enforcement options for businesses that deliberately break the law, ignore advice or cause serious harm. These include written warnings, cautions, monetary penalties, undertakings, fines and imprisonment.

16 Infringement reports completed for various breaches

£6,376 Total cost awarded by the courts from defendants



16

Letters of Warnings issued or recommended following investigation



2

Cases recommended for legal proceedings following investigation

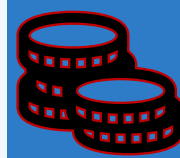


2

Simple Cautions issued & signed by defendants following investigations



3 Cases concluded at the Magistrates' Court, involving 5 defendants



£10,133

Total fines imposed by the Magistrates' Court in concluded cases

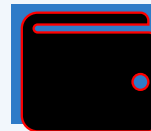
The Service does have two financial investigators who conducts financial investigations for other local authorities



£819,472

Confiscation order made by the courts in Proceeds of Crime Case

The team provides rapid response support to protect residents from doorstep crime. We are pleased to report no urgent callouts have been required, but complaints about building and renovation services have been investigated and residents supported.



SAVED £16,000

Overview of the work of Trading Standards

Trading Standards is a frontline public protection service delivering significant benefits to residents, businesses and the wider Council. The Service addresses consumer protection issues, supports vulnerable residents, removes unsafe products from the market and works proactively with businesses and enforcement partners.

Its work contributes to safer communities, a stronger local economy and public confidence across the borough.

Product safety investigations, business advice and compliance work protect consumers while supporting legitimate businesses. Some preventative work is difficult to quantify but can prevent harm before products reach the market. For example, officers have worked with the Ports and importers on non-compliant goods, including imported toys that failed safety testing and presented a potential choking hazard, affecting approximately 596 products. Officers also examined documentation for a container of porcelain matt tiles held at the Port, where adequate evidence of compliance with the Construction Products Regulation 2011 was not provided. As the importer could not demonstrate compliance, the container was subsequently destroyed.

The 2026/27 work targets are set out in the Service Plan and reviewed regularly, with action plans introduced where needed to maintain progress. Targets assume full staffing of 3.5 Enforcement Officers in Brent and 2.5 in Harrow. As demand varies, targets may change, with final performance reported in the annual report.

The Service has also seen a steady increase in Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, with 13 responded to for each borough during the reporting period. Although not included in the Service Plan targets, these requests require officer time to review and respond to, adding to existing workloads. Common subjects are vaping and tobacco data, but other requests have included gas safety statistics, home improvements, underage sales, petrol pump complaints, counterfeit goods and even a request about weighbridges.

Priorities for October 2026–March 2027

- **Target high-risk activity:** Continue intelligence-led operations against illicit tobacco, illegal vape sales and underage supply specifically with changes being brought in by the Tobacco and Vapes Act 2026
- **Strengthen prevention and partnerships:** Work with council services, police, public health and other partners to improve compliance and reduce harm
- **Focus resources on measurable impact:** Prioritise serious cases, develop staff capability and monitor outcomes against service objectives