

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR JOHN REYNOLDS 11th NOVEMBER

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PLAGUED BY NUISANCE CALLS? TRADING STANDARDS OFFER ADVICE



Recent figures released by the Communications Regulator, OFCOM, show that around 10,000 unsolicited marketing calls and 3,000 silent calls are received by UK consumers every month. The majority of these calls are made between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday.

As well as interrupting whatever you are doing at the time, many such callers use pressure selling to persuade you to agree to something without giving you the chance to consider it properly.

What can you do to reduce the number of nuisance calls you receive?

Firstly, register with the Telephone Preference Service. The service is free and can reduce the number of unsolicited marketing calls you receive from UK companies. You can register by calling 08450 700707 or by visiting www.tpsonline.org.uk.

Secondly, speak to your telephone service provider to ask what call blocking technology they would recommend. Three Scottish Trading Standards authorities have recently tested some of the latest call blocking devices and found them to be very effective in reducing such nuisance calls. Some telephone providers also offer their own call blocking facilities. There may be a charge involved for such a device.

Thirdly, if you need to give your phone number to a business, make sure you opt out of receiving promotional information from them and third parties by ticking the relevant box on their website or clearly stating this if you are dealing with them on the telephone.

Fourthly, become ex-directory as some businesses use phone directories to compile marketing call lists.

Finally, many nuisance calls originate from overseas so ask your telephone provider to block international calls to your number (although be aware there may be a charge for this service).

Never divulge personal details such as your bank details to a cold caller, regardless of who they claim to be (Police, your bank etc) and never agree to any loans or credit over the phone.

Dealing with cold callers

When it comes to dealing with pressure selling on the telephone, remember that it is likely they are using this technique because their prices are uncompetitive – they don't want you to have time to compare their prices with other companies.

False claims that this is a 'one day only' offer or that the price is hugely discounted are common tactics.

Tell the caller you are not interested and ask them not to contact you again. If they ignore your request, report them to the Information Commissioner (ICO) online at www.ico.org.uk or by phone 0303 1231113. You can also report automated pre-recorded calls to ICO. If possible make a note of the business name, the number they called from, the date and time they called and what they were trying to 'sell' eg. PPI, accident claim, credit. You should also make the ICO aware of any distress, damage or loss you suffered as a result of these calls.

If you need advice on anything you have bought or agreed to as a result of such a cold call, contact our advice partner, the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline, on 0845 4040506.

THE GREAT WAR – BETWEEN THE LINES – CAMBRIDGESHIRE REMEMBERS

The Great War - Between the Lines project needs residents' help to commemorate the role Cambridgeshire people played in the Great War. Remembrance Day this year brings with it special poignancy as it marks the start of the period of commemoration leading up to the Centenary of the outbreak of the Great War in August 2014.

On Monday, November 11, 2013, Cambridgeshire County Council's 'Great War - Between the Lines' project will be announcing more details about its programme of activities for 2014. On the day the Council will also be running a 'bring your stories' event at Cambridgeshire Archives in Shire Hall as well as giving advice on how to research your own family.

The Council would like people to come and share their family's experiences of the war. There will also be original documents on display and advice on researching First World War Cambridgeshire and family history. The archives search room will be open following a short remembrance service at Shire Hall at 11am and will close at 2pm.

This project aims to bring to light the many 'hidden stories' about the role Cambridgeshire and its people played in the 'war to end all wars'. The Great War had an immediate effect on the county and its people, but also left a lasting legacy still affecting modern society.

During 2014 the Great War - Between the Lines project will :

- deliver a series of touring exhibitions in a number of locations covering the war from different angles
 - publish a number of tourist routes following Great War themes and locations - covering locations such as Cambridge itself, Huntingdon, Wisbech and the Guided Busway route
 - run workshops designed to involve younger people in understanding the impact of the Great War in Cambridgeshire
 - end with a commemorative event at Hinchingsbrooke Hall, Huntingdon on Sunday 3rd August 2014, which will include re-enactments, theatre, dance and exhibitions

To find out more and to view the growing collection of digital material being collected by the project - available for all to view for years to come, please visit www.great-war.ccan.co.uk '

People can contact the project through the website if they have materials they would like to add to the growing Great War digital collection or can upload it themselves via the 'We need your help tab'. Also people and organisations who have any Great War related events or activities taking place next year can also contact the team through the website.

Local County Councillor said: “The Great War touched many families across Cambridgeshire and we want to hear these stories before they are lost forever. It is not just the stories of the soldiers but also their families and the homefront that we want to record and add to our digital collection for future generations. On Monday, November 11, people can come and see us or learn more about how to research their family.”

The Great War - Between the Lines project, in which Cambridgeshire County Council is a partner, is an EU funded project (under the Interreg '2 Seas' programme) involving partners from the UK, Northern France and Belgium.'

A CHRISTMAS STEER FOR A CHRISTMAS CHEER

With Christmas fast approaching, if you are a local retailer you will probably be enjoying your busiest time of the year, but when it comes to January and someone wants a refund on an unwanted gift, do you know where you stand?

Perhaps a customer has asked for a refund on something you have made especially for them or they are trying to return something you think they have used – what are you obliged to do? For advice on these and other consumer related issues visit the Trading Standards Institute's (TSI) [Sale of Goods Hub](#). It provides detailed guidance for retailers as well as 'at a glance' advice that you can share with your customers.

In addition, if you are a retailer that offers goods or services to customers via the internet, phone or mail order then you may find TSI's [Distance Selling Hub](#) useful. The website provides useful flow diagrams and training materials to help you understand your obligations.

TOUR DE FRANCE CONFIRMS STAGE 3 ROUTE THROUGH CAMBRIDGE

Next year, on Monday 7 July, Cambridge will experience a day like no other as the passion, colour and spectacle of Le Tour de France takes to the streets as the city hosts the start of the third stage of the Grand Depart 2014.

The route was revealed at a press conference in Paris earlier today, where all the stages of the 2014 Tour have been announced to the teams, dignitaries and media.

Beginning on Gonville Place by Parker's Piece, the peloton will ride through the historic city centre via Regent Street and Sidney Street before turning left at the Round Church. The riders will then travel past the world famous colleges of St Johns, Trinity and Kings as they cycle along Kings Parade and Trumpington Street before leaving the city via Trumpington Road.

The peloton will then race through the rest of Cambridgeshire via the A1301 taking in the beautiful villages in the south of the county including Trumpington, Great Shelford and Hinxton.

The Tour will then leave Cambridgeshire travelling on to Saffron Walden and through Essex towards London to finish on The Mall in front of Buckingham Palace.

Over the next few months, Cambridgeshire County and Cambridge City Councils will be working with a variety of organisations, cycling clubs and communities to ensure anyone coming to Cambridge to savour the Tour de France has the best experience possible.

Exact details of the route can be found at www.letour.2014stage3.com<<http://www.letour.2014stage3.com>>

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "It is awe inspiring to think of Cambridge being taken over by the greatest cycle race in the world with the spirit, glamour and sheer wonder it will bring. It is not every day the best cyclists on the planet come to your country, let alone county and we have a duty to make it a fantastic experience for everyone.

"There is much work to do and many challenges ahead of us but Le Tour's visit is a great opportunity to create a long lasting legacy for cycling not just in Cambridge but throughout the county. I don't think anyone can fail to be inspired by seeing the likes of Sir Bradley Wiggins, Chris Froome or Mark Cavendish ride and our challenge is to use this unique opportunity to encourage people onto their bikes. By working together, all those involved with Stage 3 of Le Tour promise to make the most of a day which I am sure will live long in all our memories."

Christian Prudhomme, director of Le Tour, said: "We are excited to take Le Tour back to Britain again. I know the Grand Départ in Yorkshire will be visually stunning and technically challenging and the third stage from the cycling city of Cambridge to the historic heart of London will provide a fitting finale. The British cycling fans are passionate people and I am sure they will line the routes of the three stages cheering the teams and riders all the way from Yorkshire to London, providing an unforgettable start to the 2014 Tour."

In the build up to the arrival of the Tour, detailed information will be given to residents, businesses and visitors regarding the impact of the race on Cambridge and the county. This will be made available online at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/letourstage3 www.cambridge.gov.uk/le-tour-cambridge as well as through leaflets, road shows and events.

Information will also be made available via Facebook: www.facebook.com/LeTourCambridge or Twitter: www.twitter.com/LeTourCambridge

The 101st edition of Le Tour will start on Saturday 5 July 2014 in Leeds before travelling 120 miles to Harrogate, where the first Yellow Jersey of the Tour de France 2014 will be awarded. The next day, the riders will leave York for Sheffield on a tricky 125 mile stage whose final section will include a climb of Holme Moss.

HELPING HAND TO GET OFF AT THE RIGHT BUS STOP

The County Council, with funding from housing developers S106 corridor money, enabled the "next stop" sound displays to be fitted to Guided Buses. This is an ongoing project which has started with implementation on the Guided Busway.

All service A and B buses have been fitted with the new display signs. All service C and D buses will have these new features completed by the end of November.

Originally it was designed for Busway only vehicles, however it is now to be extended to other services as an ongoing project.

BUYING A SECONDHAND CAR? ADVICE FROM TRADING STANDARDS

At Trading Standards, the most frequent type of consumer complaint we receive relates to the purchase of secondhand cars. They are one of the most expensive purchases we make and many of us are dependent on them for going about our daily lives. As a result it can be a daunting process to buy a secondhand car. Below we provide some advice to help you.

Check before you buy

- Check the validity of the MOT on [VOSA's website](#) and check the car's details are correct on the MOT certificate. If it states there were advisory points, make sure you see the details so that you know what work is likely to be needed before the next MOT.
- Check the VOSA website to check the vehicle has not been recalled.
- Check it's service history. How often has it been serviced, and has it been serviced in line with the manufacturer's recommendations?
- Carry out an [HPI](#) check to make sure there is no outstanding finance on the car that could lead to it being repossessed by the finance company. An HPI check will also tell you if the car has been written off or if it is stolen.
- In terms of physically checking the car, carry out a walk around check and test drive the car. If you are not mechanically minded we would also strongly recommend you have the car checked by an engineer.

More advice can be found on the [Citizens Advice website](#).

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YOUR RIGHTS AGAINST THE SELLER

If you buy from a private seller, your rights are limited if you find a fault with the car after buying it. The seller must have the right to sell the car and the car must be 'as described', but other than that you have no recourse if things go wrong with it.

By comparison, if you purchase the car from a trader, again they must have title to the car and it must be 'as described' but in addition it must be of satisfactory quality, taking into account its age, mileage, condition etc. For instance, it would be reasonable to expect a brand new car to be free from wear and tear issues when you buy it. However if you were to buy a ten year old car with a mileage of over 100,000 then naturally there will be wear and tear on the vehicle. If faults arise due to wear and tear, it is unlikely you will have any recourse against the trader. Where a fault occurs which is not due to wear and tear, you may be able to seek a repair by the trader in the first instance.

The rights explained above are in addition to any rights you may have under a warranty.

You can find more information about your rights when you buy a secondhand car on the [Citizens Advice website](#) or you can view a video about buying a used car on [You Tube](#). If you need advice on any of the above, or any other consumer issue, please contact Trading Standard's advice partner, the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline, on 0845 4040506.

COUNTY COUNCIL BUDGET 2014/15

Many thanks to all of those who have take part in a survey that will help set the authority's budget and priorities. 'You Choose' is a county-wide interactive survey which has been running since September, asking residents to put themselves in the seat of councillors in making decisions where to invest and save money.

Cambridgeshire County Council is expected to make further savings over the next year of around £39 million. This is following savings of £42 million last year, and a further £32 million this current financial year. These savings have to be made whilst supporting and

...looking in services such as social care, protecting children, securing the economy, and looking after roads and transport.

People have had the opportunity to show the Council how they would balance the budget, by cutting funding in areas or raising council tax to balance the books. But the survey closes on November 1 and there is just a week to make sure you have your say.

So far we have had an excellent response from door-to-door surveying. Hundreds of have also told us what they think via the online survey itself.

Local Councillor John Reynolds said: "Councils across the land have some hard decisions to make and we want Cambridgeshire residents to have a big say in ours. You Choose puts residents at the heart of the decision making, having to face the challenges we do to balance the budget. No decisions have been made at this point, but like last year, the suggestions and priorities indicated by residents will help shape the budget.

"The County Council services are very wide-ranging and touch everyone's lives. From looking after young people and adults during vulnerable periods in their lives to maintaining the County's roads and recycling rubbish. But with less money from Government and increasing demographic and inflation pressures we have to find millions of pounds in savings while delivering front line services.

"The County Council has worked hard to be efficient and we saved £42 million last year, and a further £32 million this current financial year. But next year we have to find further savings of £39 million. .

FINAL TEST FOR WINTER FINDS MEN AND MACHINES IN TOP GEAR

The County Council has carried out a final test of the gritting fleet to ensure the equipment and drivers are in top gear and ready to go when winter comes. The dry run was designed to check that the 38 gritting trucks are ready for the task ahead with no faults which could have developed during their summer break and the team of 80 drivers are familiar with the treatment routes. The run, which did not involve spreading any of the stockpiled grit, went well and the machinery and man-power are now on standby for when the temperatures start to drop and winter weather arrives.

The council has more than 10,000 tonnes of salt stockpiled across the county with a further 6,000 tonnes in reserve. Arrangements to top up supplies as necessary are also in place. In addition specialist brine spraying equipment mounted on two four-wheel drive quad bikes will be used to treat harder to reach foot and cycle paths in Cambridge and backpack sprayers available to 'spot' treat other areas as necessary, including 11 foot and cycle bridges in Cambridge. The specialist multihog machine will again be used to treat the maintenance track alongside the Busway.

Last year the gritting team was called into action 103 times with the runs triggered automatically by weather monitoring equipment and the routes treated are designed to keep commuter and passenger transport flowing with secondary routes covered when resources allow. Salt bins, which are kept stocked by the County Council, are also available to local parishes and the county council works in partnership with the district councils to try to ensure maximum treatment of winter-weather affected areas.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "This dry run was the final test of men and machines to ensure we have done everything we can to prepare for the bad weather and I'm delighted to say that both passed the test with flying colours."

"We have done everything we can within the resources available to us to ensure we are as prepared as possible for the winter weather - whenever it arrives. "But I would remind all road users and pedestrians that they have a responsibility to take care and to keep

traffic moving by taking account of the weather and by avoiding any unnecessary accidents caused by inappropriate driving or speed in winter conditions."

The county council has also recruited and trained more than 60 volunteers who will treat agreed footways in their community with equipment and salt provided by the local authority highways team.

LOCAL PEOPLE TO HAVE THEIR SAY ON HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Cambridgeshire County Council is again giving local communities a chance to have a real voice in deciding on highways improvements in their area.

The Council is inviting communities to apply for funding which has been made available for the next financial year, and parish councils, community and residents groups and charities are all eligible to apply.

Successful projects will be those providing highway improvements that benefit the local community. For example, better signing and road markings, pedestrian improvements, parking controls or dropped kerbs.

Applicants can seek up to £10,000 as a County Council contribution to their scheme with an expectation that they will provide 10% or more of the overall cost. The County Council is also offering loan facilities for those who wish to spread their contribution over 2 or 3 years.

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "We know that local people know local needs, so we are giving communities a real say about what goes on in their area. This funding presents a real opportunity for them to put forward ideas for improvements to the highway network that will benefit everyone in their area and to work in partnership with the county council - it's localism in action."

Applicants have until December 9 to submit details of their scheme and an application form is available online at:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/localism/highway-improvements.htm>

STOPTOBER - IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO BE PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL!

Smokers are being reminded that it's not too late to stub out for good and turn this Stoptober into something really special.

Stoptober is a mass quitting attempt where people across the country get support to become smoke free for good.

The campaign is well under way in Cambridgeshire, but health chiefs at the County Council want local people to know that they can still join in and ditch the habit.

CAMQUIT, the local stop smoking service, would love to hear from smokers and offer a detailed step by step programme on how to quit. For more information and to join the biggest stop smoking challenge of its kind, visit smokefree.nhs.uk/Stoptober or contact CAMQUIT on 0800 018 4304.

Research shows if people stop smoking for 28 days they are four times more likely to stay smokefree. Longer-term, those who stop smoking reduce their risk of heart disease and lung cancer as well as protecting others from their second hand smoke.

Claire Mead, CAMQUIT co-ordinator, said: "It's really not too late to quit this Stoptober and Camquit is here to support you every step of the way towards your goal of being smoke free. You will save money, experience physical improvements including a better sense of smell and taste and more energy.

"Willpower alone isn't always enough so ring CAMQUIT your local NHS stop smoking for information and support on 0800 018 4304 or visit

www.camquit.nhs.uk<file:///C:/WINNT/IE/TempInt/gb100/OLK1415/www.camquit.nhs.uk> to find out how."

Local County Councillor John Reynolds, said: "I absolutely support Stoptober, which will help cut the number of people who smoke and reduce the possible health problems it can cause. Smoking is one of the biggest causes of premature death in Cambridgeshire each year. I'd urge smokers across the county to take part in Stoptober and achieve something special."

For more information and to join the biggest stop smoking challenge of its kind, visit smokefree.nhs.uk/Stoptober or contact CAMQUIT on 0800 018 4304. Smokers wanting to quit can also access Camquit's stop smoking services all year round.

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Shaping *our* Future: Housing Related Support for Older People

Briefing

Background

Historically, housing related support for older people has only been available to people living in sheltered housing schemes, but they only account for 5% of the older people living in Cambridgeshire. Whilst sheltered housing tenants benefit from living in a communal environment with access to support to help maintain their capacity to live independently, the 95% of older people living in the wider community are often isolated with more limited access to services.

A public consultation in 2012 sought the views of older people in Cambridgeshire to find out what sort

of service they require to live independent, healthy lives, ideally in their own homes. The consultation targeted current service users living in sheltered accommodation and the wider community of people aged over 50. The results showed a strong demand for free advice outside the home to live healthy and independent lives, and highlighted a significant split between older people's expectations if they live in private or sheltered housing. Seven hundred consultation papers were returned. Almost all respondents wanted to remain in their own homes.

The Housing Related Support for Older People Project is part of the Quality for Adults Programme. Its aim is to remodel current housing related support for older people and make this available to more older people across Cambridgeshire. A new model has been agreed to form the basis of new contracts to provide housing related support targeted at all older people assessed as needing support to live independently regardless of where they live, and to target care to those who need it most.

Why are the changes being made?

The number of older people is forecast to rise steadily and we need to ensure support for older people can be provided to meet this challenge within a budget that will not increase at the same rate as the client group.

The County Council funded pilot projects in Cambridge City and Fenland both of which demonstrated that many older people who contacted the service needed one-off or short-term interventions to enable them to continue to live independently.

By remodeling services, an increasing number of older people can be supported to live independently and the service can be expanded to provide support to older people who live in the wider community – ensuring that resources are available to support those older people who need them.

A remodeled service provides an opportunity to deliver preventative services to the wider community,

provide support to family and informal carers and to work with others to deliver preventative services that maintain and support community networks. The new service will provide more equitable access to services across the county, so that older people can access a service regardless of whether they are an owner occupier or a tenant.

For every person living in sheltered housing there are currently 19 other older people living in the wider community who do not have access to housing related support services.

What is changing?

There will be five lots for the housing related support service, but only three are being tendered. The three lots to be tendered are:

- East Cambridgeshire
- Fenland
- Huntingdonshire.

It is intended that each of the services will be based on the respective district council boundaries. This should ensure that information about the service will be easily accessible from a range of sources and other services that older people may already be accessing.

The two services not being tendered, within Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire districts, are not being tendered because it is proposed to negotiate directly with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council respectively to provide these services in these districts. This approach is permitted by procurement law where the councils concerned are to co-operate in ensuring that a public task, here the provision of housing related support for older people, is carried out and certain criteria are met. It is considered that such criteria are capable of being met in respect of both of these services.

The service will be 'needs-based', focusing on people in need in sheltered housing schemes and in the local community. By linking with existing services, people will be supported to access services in their local area – through networks such as Community Navigators, Age UK Cambridgeshire Information Service, Alzheimer's Society and other community services.

A needs assessment of all existing tenants is a crucial part of the tender specification to ensure that, where needed, continuing support is provided. Tenants who have a support need will be assured that support will still be available but it may be met in a different way, provided by someone new, or available in their local community.

Timescale

It is proposed to issue the tender specification in late October 2013 enabling the new service to start on 1st April 2014. Some existing providers who don't win (or apply for) new contracts will still be a housing provider and working with them is part of the specification.

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