

ECC Report November 2019

Chelmsford Car Dealer sentenced at Crown Court for misleading consumers

As the Christmas season approaches Essex Trading Standards are once again renewing their warnings to be very vigilant towards any potential scams.

1. Never give out any bank details, however genuine the requests may appear.
2. Never buy from doorstep salesmen.
3. Buy With Confidence, and check out credentials on <https://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk>
Any business listed is Trading Standards Approved –Essex-Thurrock-Southend-councils
4. If in doubt get in touch <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/get-more-help/report-to-trading-standards/>

A car dealership in Chelmsford was sentenced at Chelmsford Crown Court, on Friday 1st November 2019, following a conviction for misleading consumers as a result of an Essex Trading Standards investigation.

His Honour Judge Seely sentenced Saxton 4x4 Ltd to pay a fine of £27,375 and costs of £37,375. Three victims were also awarded compensation.

Judge Seely remarked that “there were elements of deliberate mis-selling and that there were a number of very poor business practices relating to the sale of the vehicle in question.”

The business was sentenced in relation to 6 counts of misleading consumers.

The prosecution arises as a result of complaints received and a subsequent investigation by Essex Trading Standards around the sale and description of a vehicle sold by Saxton 4x4 Ltd of Westway, Chelmsford on more than one occasion in 2017 and 2018.

During the trial the jury at Chelmsford Crown Court heard from counsel for the prosecution, Alison Lambert, that the vehicle had been sold to the first customer as a 2015 vehicle and it was discovered by that customer via the main dealer that it had in fact been first registered in Germany in 2011.

He informed the business and was refunded. The vehicle then went on to be sold by the business on two further occasions and a non-returnable deposit placed by another potential customer based on an inaccurate description.

Each time the business was informed of the problems with the age description of the vehicle and they failed to modify their advertisements or any of their sales communications to reflect the real age of the vehicle or to inform the subsequent purchasers of the true age of the vehicle.

Essex Trading Standards brought the prosecution under The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

When sentencing, His Honour Judge Seely added that he found the company’s submission that they had not received four recorded delivery letters [highlighting the true date of first registration] “wholly implausible” and that he “rejected it entirely”.

He also added he found some of the company witnesses “unimpressive to say the least”.

In response to the sentencing, Cllr Susan Barker, Cabinet Member for Customer, Corporate, Culture and Communities, said: “The purchase of car is often the second largest financial decision that a consumer makes, they need to feel confident that they can rely on the information provided by the dealer. Essex County Council Trading Standards has an ongoing commitment to protect consumers and ensure a level playing field for businesses.”

Essex businesses lead the way with green technology

“Climate change is everybody’s business and I’m pleased to see Essex businesses leading the way by using innovative, green technology.”

That’s the message from Cllr Tony Ball, Essex County Council’s Cabinet Member for Economic Development, following his recent visit to Taylor Construction Plant (TCP) in Maldon.

The company specialises in cutting-edge, environmentally friendly technology, and produce low-energy, hydrogen-fuelled LED lighting towers for the construction, rail and events sectors

The whole manufacturing process releases zero emissions, making them a completely eco-friendly lighting solution.

It is hoped that more businesses in Essex will invest in similar ways of working and commit to using manufacturing and production processes which reduce the impact on the environment.

Cllr Tony Ball said, “We are absolutely committed to looking at new ways that we can reduce environmental impact across the county and it’s been fantastic to learn more about the businesses in Essex that are already developing green solutions and leading the way globally. I’d like to thank the team at TCP for taking the time to share how they’re working towards a cleaner, greener climate.”

Andrew Barker, MD, TCP said, “It was a pleasure to meet Cllr Ball and I’m really pleased he was able to take the time to visit us.

“This is a very exciting time and we’re proud to be leading the way with a clean air, virtually silent alternative to things like diesel generators that use continual fuel consumption regardless of need. The greener the energy source, the better the environmental benefit for us all.”

Climate change and the environment is currently at the forefront of the county council’s agenda and Cllr Ball’s visit comes off the back of ECC’s recent announcement of a new Climate Change Commission.

The new cross-party group will look to reduce CO2, reduce waste, promote sustainable transport and work to combat climate change, supported by initial funding of £250,000.

The council also recently announced the announced the Essex Forest Initiative – a million pound tree project which will include planting 375,000 trees across the county over the next 5 years, equivalent to the size of 210 football pitches, which will capture 60,000 tonnes of carbon.

Further information:

- More information about ECC's Climate Change Commission can be found here <https://www.essex.gov.uk/news/new-climate-change-commission-for-the-county>
- TCP is head-quartered in Maldon, Essex (with depots in Coventry, Essex, Leeds, Exeter and Scotland) and offers nation-wide rental and sales from sites across the UK.
- The TCP LED lighting tower is powered by the BOC Hymera fuel cell. Instead of polluting exhaust fumes, they produce clean power and water vapour. On top of their zero emissions status, they produce zero noise, complying with section 61 (Control of Pollution Act 1974)
- The lighting tower is increasingly popular with the construction, rail and events sectors. With zero site emissions, zero noise and zero spill risk, the environmentally friendly off-grid power resource requires minimal maintenance and can be easily transported due to their compact lightweight design. This cutting-edge technology is a way of reducing air pollution when powering tools, lighting, welfare units and other equipment.
- For more information about TCP, contact Nadine Daines ndaines@tcp.eu.com tel: 01621 850777

Demolition of Army and Navy flyover to take big step forward

Plans to demolish the Army and Navy flyover are set to take a significant step forward with firms invited to formally bid for the work.

Several specialist contractors have already expressed an interest in removing the flyover in Chelmsford and they will be encouraged to firm up that interest when the tender documents go out next month.

Essex County Council announced in September that the flyover would be permanently closed after a detailed engineering report revealed new defects within its concrete foundations.

The council is now seeking to have the structure removed as soon as possible and is also continuing to work on a long-term solution to ease congestion and delays at the junction.

Initial options for the junction will be shared with the public for the first time this autumn. A full public consultation on a revised shortlist of options will follow later once detailed testing and modelling has been completed.

Cllr Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader of Essex County Council and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, said: "The Army and Navy is a crucial gateway to Chelmsford and, together with the support of the Army and Navy Taskforce, we are working incredibly hard on options for a long-term solution.

"In the meantime, we are looking to remove the flyover and have already had a strong response from companies interested in the demolition. I am pleased they will soon be able to formally bid for the work.

"I would like to assure people that we are doing everything we can to progress as quickly as possible with both the removal of the flyover and the development of potential long-term improvements at the junction.

“However, we must also ensure we get it right and provide a sustainable solution that is an asset to the city which does not put additional pressure on other roads in the city centre.”

Progress with the scheme continues to be discussed with both the Army and Navy Taskforce and Great Baddow East Neighbourhood Association.

To help manage congestion at the Army and Navy junction, the council is continuing to encourage the community to play its part by avoiding peak periods or, where possible, switching to other modes of transport such as bikes, buses or walking.

More information about travel options in Essex, including car sharing, Park and Ride services, walking and cycle routes, and bus services, is available at: www.essex.gov.uk/travelplanning

For the latest news on the junction and to sign up for the scheme email newsletter, please visit www.essex.gov.uk/armyandnavy

Senior Cabinet Minister welcomed to Harwich and Essex

A senior cabinet minister visited Harwich to see Brexit preparation at one of the UK’s busiest ports first hand, meet local politicians and police who have been leading Brexit work in the county and talk to local businesses about their own preparedness.

The Right Honourable Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, was welcomed on 10th October by representatives from Essex County Council, Essex Police, Tendring District Council and other authorities from across the county.

The Secretary of State toured Harwich port before a roundtable discussion with leading local businesses including Surya Foods, Dura Composites, Pickering Interfaces and the COLBEA business enterprise agency. Directors from these companies outlined their preparations for Brexit directly to the Minister.

The Minister then shared his Brexit advice with the representatives present, stating:

- Businesses should prepare for leaving the EU on 31st October.
- Companies with any specific issues surrounding Brexit should get in touch with the Government immediately.
- Any companies with EU citizens working for them should encourage these employees to register for the EU settlement scheme by December 2020.

Chairman of the Essex Resilience Forum Chief Constable BJ Harrington of Essex Police outlined the work of the forum in planning for Brexit across Essex and in co-ordinating the response of public service providers to help residents continue to live their daily lives after Brexit.

The Minister was also taken through the county’s approach to traffic control, with Essex County Council, Thurrock Council, Southend Council and Essex Police all working together to keep the county moving immediately following Brexit.

The Secretary of State praised the partnership approach to Brexit taken in Essex, with all authorities and agencies collaboratively working together.

Cllr Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader of Essex County Council, attended the visit in his role as head of Local Government Association's Brexit task force.

Cllr Bentley said: "I'm very pleased that the secretary of state visited Harwich, to view the hard work that has been done all authorities and agencies within Essex.

"I feel it was important the minister saw for himself how important a port Harwich is going forward, whether there is a deal or a no deal.

"It's the only port linked directly to a major airport by a single road, the A120, and I have conveyed upon the Secretary of State the importance of that road.

"I feel the minister left Harwich and Essex with an understanding that we are preparing for Brexit in any scenario and this is a point I would underline to all county residents – we are preparing for Brexit."

Cllr Neil Stock OBE, Leader of Tendring District Council, said: "In terms of Brexit it was useful to discuss the extensive planning and preparations made by the port, partners and ourselves with the Secretary of State to see what he can do to help us maximise the opportunities afforded to us by leaving the EU – such as the potential for establishing a free port at Harwich."

A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System consultation

4th November was the launch of Essex County Council's public consultation on options for the A120/A133 Link Road and Rapid Transit System (RTS).

This follows the successful £99million bid for Housing Infrastructure Funding which will enable the creation of the new Link Road and for the first stages of an RTS to be implemented linking up key parts of Colchester.

Within the consultation brochure, we set out the differing route alignment options for both schemes and are looking for public views to enable preferred options to be selected and more detailed design to take place.

The dual-carriageway Link Road will be completed by 2024, supporting proposed future growth east of Colchester, helping manage traffic flows and making it easier for those travelling from Tendring to access the strategic network (A12/A120) while reducing the impact on more local roads.

A high-quality RTS can move people en masse quickly and efficiently across an area. Through creating a priority public transport corridor linking in key locations such as Colchester Town Centre, university, railway stations and park and ride we can better connect Colchester, giving people a

genuine alternative to their car and providing a significant boost to the local economy. Connected to this will be a new 'Park and Choose' site. This is a concept which is explained within the consultation brochure. It is about recognising that the best-connected places are 'multi-modal' in that they bring together cycling, walking and public transport.

The consultation brochure can be downloaded at: www.essex.gov.uk/link-road-and-rapid-transit with comments required by the 16th December.

To support the consultation a series of public drop-in events will be held over the coming weeks at which technical specialists will be on hand to answer questions:

Wivenhoe House	Tuesday 12 November	1pm - 8pm
Greenstead Community Centre	Friday 15 November	1pm - 6pm
St John's Church and Community Centre	Thursday 21 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	Saturday 23rd November	10am – 5pm
Wivenhoe House	Monday 25 November	1pm - 8pm
Colchester Community Stadium	Monday 9 December	1pm - 8pm

If you have any queries on the consultation please email Linkroadandrapidtransit@essexhighways.org and our team will be happy to come back to you

Essex schools urged to embrace free programme to help vulnerable young people

Secondary and Primary schools across Essex are being urged to sign up to the Risk-Avert programme, which helps children and young people understand and manage risk, improve decision-making and leads to improvements in emotional health and resilience.

Risk-Avert, which has been developed jointly by Essex County Council Public Health and The Training Effect (TTE), has been running in Essex for the past six years and is free for schools to run.

Since the project's inception 75 per cent of the county's Secondary schools have participated and since the official launch of the Primary programme in the last academic year, 10 per cent of all Primary schools have taken part.

Councillor Ray Gooding, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Education, said: "At Essex County Council we work hard to enable all children to fulfil their potential and we want to improve the health of all residents of Essex.

"Results in the schools which have followed the Risk-Avert programme have been very encouraging and I hope more schools in Essex will take up the initiative.

“Next year, new statutory requirements for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education will come into force. This initiative will fulfil those PSHE curriculum requirements and improve the mental health and resilience of young people. I feel it’s a win-win situation.”

Risk-Avert is an evidence-based, secondary school programme which identifies young people vulnerable to multiple risk-taking behaviours and provides universal and targeted interventions through a life skills-based programme.

Pupils at risk of engaging in early-onset risk-taking are identified through a screening tool administered to all pupils in year 8. The survey also identifies those young people experiencing early and emerging emotional health difficulties and offers a distinct, targeted programme for these pupils.

The award-winning Risk-Avert also offers a primary school programme which aims to support the transition from primary to secondary education. It is focused on the teaching of positive social norms and protective behaviours. Participating schools are asked to complete an anonymous survey with year 6 pupils and deliver four sessions over the summer term.

Mark Bowles, Director, TTE, said: “Young people are exposed to many risks such as drugs, alcohol, knife crime and bullying. The Risk-Avert programme provides teachers and students an opportunity to develop strong, positive relationships in a supportive environment. It also allows students to learn about risk-taking, improve decision-making and develop the skills that will help them safely navigate adolescence.”

The targeted element of Risk-Avert is delivered over six sessions. In addition, schools are also provided with additional resources, including a full PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Education) curriculum mapped to the new statutory requirements for schools from September 2020 and resources to support parents.

Mark Bowles continued: “With the new statutory requirements for PSHE coming into force next year, Risk-Avert is now providing a full PSHE curriculum, to enable schools to fulfill the requirements in one simple, free programme.

“Since its inception around 30,000 pupils have engaged with Risk-Avert and independent evaluation conducted by the University of Bath has shown that over 75 per cent of pupils experience an improvement in mental health and 74 per cent see improvements in their resilience alongside improvements in their ability to make independent decisions and feel better prepared to overcome adverse situations.

The feedback and evidence we receive shows the extent of the impact the programme can have and we really want to encourage all Essex schools to get involved this year to benefit not only from the Risk-Avert programme but also the new PSHE curriculum.”

More information on Risk-Avert is available at: www.risk-avert.org

Mark Bowles is available for interview to expand on Risk-Avert and the results the programme is achieving.

For further information contact: Sananur Meric or Charlie Vavasour, Quantum Public Relations, email: sananur@quantumpr.co.uk or call 01233 500200

About TTE

The Training Effect (TTE) is a leading provider of health-based intervention around children and young people. Founded in 2011, it has quickly become an established provider to the public sector, private and third sector.

The Training Effect designs, develops and delivers training, health intervention programmes and services which save money, improve outcomes and support frontline service delivery.

All TTE staff are subject-specific experts in their particular professional field. This means we bring real world expertise and practical solutions to all of our projects. We are experts in substance misuse, families with complex needs, risk-taking behaviour, emotional and mental health.

About Risk-Avert

Through the Risk-Avert website, participating schools are provided with all the required programme resources to effectively deliver all aspects of the programme.

Secondary Schools are required to send at least one member of staff on a one-day training course (delivered by The Training Effect) after completion of which they receive access to all Risk Avert resources. The targeted element of the programme is delivered over 6 sessions. In addition, schools are provided with additional resources including a full PSHE curriculum mapped to the new statutory requirements for schools from September 2020 and resources to support parents.

Primary Schools do not attend training but video guides to deliver each session are provided alongside all required programme resources hosted on the Risk-Avert Primary website.

Primary schools are asked to register their interest directly with The Training Effect after which they will receive access to programme resources and unlimited support from the team at The Training Effect.