

# BUY WITH CONFIDENCE NEWS

Nottinghamshire  
& Nottingham City



May 2011

Issue 3

Hello and welcome to issue 3 of Buy With Confidence news, the newsletter for members of the scheme in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

In this issue there are comments from customers taken from the feedback cards YOU hand out!

## BWC attends Mansfield 20:20 Business networking event

BWC recently attended a business networking event to promote the scheme to potential new members and to celebrate the opening of a new showroom belonging to BWC member Mansfield Garage Doors.

Graham Kirk, Managing Director of Mansfield Garage Doors said: "The Buy with Confidence scheme instills customer confidence in



our business and we have had a number of enquiries as a result of being on the scheme. We feel that the BWC logo is quite recognisable now and our customers can see it on the website and on official documents which gives added confidence. A great benefit of being on the scheme is that any customer who uses a BWC trader has the back up of Trading Standards should something go wrong.

"We feel that promotion of the BWC scheme is a key part of its success and so we give out BWC leaflets to our customers to explain about the scheme in more detail.

"We have been trading for over 40 years and it's great to be part of a scheme which is independent and backed by Trading Standards, we feel it's added real value to our business."

## Quick Tip

Have you ever been asked to give two quotes for the same job, one higher than the real one? It's come to our attention that some customers will ask for this so they can claim more money on insurance. We've also heard that some businesses offer it without being asked. So, what's the problem? Just something called the Fraud Act 2006. Both the customer and the business could be prosecuted, with a maximum penalty of £5000 fine and/or 10 years imprisonment. You might think that it wouldn't apply to you, as you aren't benefiting financially. However, the law focuses on the dishonest behaviour, and on the intent to make a gain or cause a loss. If your actions could potentially cause a loss to the insurance company, then you could be found guilty of fraud.

*"I found this plumber a very nice GENTLEMAN and very helpful."*

# Members Survey

In November 2010 we sent out survey forms to all our members – 342 at the time. We received 59 replies, a response rate of 17%. See below for the highlights:

Most of the comments from members were very positive, but some were critical of the scheme, particularly about a perceived lack of advertising. We do continually work to publicise Buy With Confidence but we have taken your comments on board. Some of them were very helpful in suggesting places that we can advertise. One of our considerations is the cost of advertising. We'd love to do TV and radio adverts, but the prices are way out of our league. We're therefore always looking for options that give value for money – if you have any ideas please let us know. And of course, you can contribute to the advertising yourself, by telling customers about the scheme, giving out

feedback cards and using the logo. To answer some of your other queries:

### **Can there be a members' area of the website?**

The website is run by Hampshire Trading Standards. We will make this suggestion to them.

### **I'd like to see comments and star rating on the website.**

Customer feedback isn't currently listed because all prospective members are thoroughly vetted by Trading Standards before being invited to join. The performance of members of the scheme is continuously monitored. In the unlikely event that concerns are raised about a member we take appropriate action and if necessary will remove them from the scheme.

We understand that consumers like to see other customers' feedback and Hampshire Trading Standards are looking at how this can best be provided in the future.

Also, remember that we send you quarterly reports on the feedback cards we have received for you. You are free to publish these results in any way you wish.

### **I'd like to download a high resolution logo.**

Just email [buywithconfidence@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:buywithconfidence@nottsc.gov.uk) and we will send you one.

### **What is the situation with Which Local?**

Please see the separate article on this subject.

### Is Buy With Confidence living up to your expectations?

| Yes      | No      |
|----------|---------|
| 50 (86%) | 8 (14%) |

### If your business has benefited from being a member of Buy With Confidence, please indicate below all that apply.

| Increased work | Increased consumer confidence | Less advertising needed | Advice & support from Trading Standards |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 28 (57%)       | 42 (86%)                      | 9 (18%)                 | 12 (24%)                                |

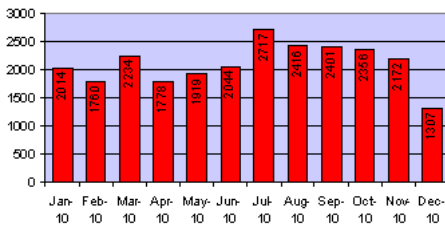
### Have you noticed an increase in business since joining Buy With Confidence?

| I have not noticed an increase | I have noticed a small increase in business | Business has increased by over 25% | Business has increased by over 50% | Business has increased by more than 100% |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 20 (34%)                       | 26 (45%)                                    | 8 (14%)                            | 3 (5%)                             | 1 (2%)                                   |

***“Fantastic, fantastic. Cheapest in Mansfield, the price was better than fair. The service and help I received from the lady in the shop was absolutely fantastic. Her people skills are the best I have ever come across. Situation like that I would speak very highly of her and definitely recommend them to friends and family. 10 out of 10.”***

## How many people are looking for you?

In 2010, over 25,000 searches were carried out on the BWC website by people with a Nottingham or Notts post code. That's over 70 customers for each one of you! The graph shows the breakdown by month.



We also count how many people phone Consumer Direct – the total for the year for our area was 694, with the peak being in July, as with the web searches. (The figures for Consumer Direct are included in the graph, as the CD advisors do a BWC web search using the customer's post code.)

***"A very polite and helpful decorator. Trustworthy and work is of a very high standard."***

***"Very courteous, very thoughtful. Took shoes off, laid a sheet on carpet etc. Very quick response from initial phone call (2hrs!) Great!!"***

## Handy Person Scheme and Adaptation Service (HPAS)

Great news! The HPAS scheme went live across the whole of the Nottinghamshire County area excluding the City from the 1st April 2011. The project started initially as a pilot back in October 2009 in Mansfield and Ashfield District areas and as a result of its success, has been rolled out to the remainder of the Districts across Nottinghamshire.

We are currently looking to recruit additional BWC traders who live in the following districts: Gedling, Broxtowe, Rushcliffe and Newark & Sherwood.

### What is HPAS about?

HPAS has been created in partnership by Nottinghamshire County Council, all the District and Borough Councils in Nottinghamshire and the two health authorities. The scheme aims to provide 'that little bit of help' to older and vulnerable people living in Nottinghamshire in order to help prevent accidents and help older people to remain living independently in their homes.

The type of jobs you would be

asked to do would range from fitting minor adaptations such as hand rails and half steps, to changing light bulbs and putting up shelves.

Anyone who is disabled or over 60 years of age can use the scheme and many of the jobs will be completely free to the public, although some will require a £10 fee.

### What can you expect from us?

You will be paid a fixed hourly rate of £20 per hour along with a materials allowance of 50p per job to cover small parts such as rawl plugs, screws, silicone etc. All jobs will be limited to 4 hours work. You will only receive local jobs in the district that you live.

A training session would be provided before being accepted onto the scheme and you would need to have £5 million public liability insurance.

If you would like to register your interest in becoming part of the HPAS scheme, you can contact the Buy with Confidence team on 01623 452005 or email: [buywithconfidence@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:buywithconfidence@nottscc.gov.uk)

### Cancellation rights

I know we keep going on about these, but this piece of law is really important. You must make sure you give your customers a Notice of the Right to Cancel, giving a 7 day cooling off period, whenever you make a contract in the

customer's home. If you don't, it's a criminal offence and you can't enforce the contract if the customer decides not to pay. Last year, staff of Trading Standards made a short video that explains it in, hopefully, an interesting and fun way. We certainly had fun making it!

You can watch the video, and download a form you can personalise to be your own cancellation notice, by visiting <https://secure.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/business-economy/trading-standards/podcast/>

# Feedback 2010

We received over 3800 feedback cards during 2010. This means that nearly 4000 of your customers had something to say about you! And for the most part, it was something good.

## How would you rate the quality of work carried out?

| Very good  | Good     | Poor   | Very poor |
|------------|----------|--------|-----------|
| 3547 (93%) | 234 (6%) | 6 (0%) | 5 (0%)    |

## How would you rate the level of customer service you received?

| Very good  | Good     | Poor   | Very poor |
|------------|----------|--------|-----------|
| 3542 (93%) | 245 (6%) | 7 (0%) | 8 (0%)    |

## Did you feel you were charged a fair price?

| Very fair  | Fair      | Unfair  | Very unfair |
|------------|-----------|---------|-------------|
| 3055 (80%) | 602 (16%) | 15 (0%) | 7 (0%)      |

Some of the positive comments you received are scattered about this newsletter. We love receiving these cards, and we're sure that you like getting your quarterly feedback too.

## Would you recommend the business to a friend?

| Yes        | No      |
|------------|---------|
| 3738 (98%) | 21 (1%) |

We keep an eye on the members for whom we never receive any cards, as this implies they don't hand any out. Please make sure you keep handing out the cards to your customers – it's important for us, for you and for the scheme as a whole.



Which? Local, is a recommendation website that subscribers to Which? can use to both recommend and find traders.

All Buy With Confidence members are listed on the site with a recommendation from us and flagged as members of the scheme. We think this is a fantastic opportunity to promote your business and even better, it's free! Your details have been added to the site unless you told us otherwise.

To access your account, go to <http://local.which.co.uk>. Click on the Activate Your Account button. In the membership number box, enter your main phone number with a capital T at the front, and no spaces – like this T01623452005. You can then set your own login and password. Contact us if you have any problems.

Please note that you are **not** allowed to advertise that you have been recommended on the Which? Local website.

***“We had to move out for work to be done and the workman even fed the cat! Great service!”***

***“A really first class service from the first phone call to the completion of the job.”***

## BWC out and about

In April, Karen Merriman from Nottingham and Emma Coalwood from Nottinghamshire Trading Standards visited the NAPIT (National Association of Professional Inspectors and Testers) conference at the b2net football stadium in Chesterfield to promote Buy With Confidence. Emma staffed a stand all day, and talked to a lot of businesses interested in finding out more about the scheme. Karen gave a talk on the benefits of joining

Buy With Confidence, which includes support for members on compliance with the law. Another opportunity to talk about cancellation notices!



## Buy With Confidence

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