

Notable achievements during 2022/23



The number of food businesses that are broadly compliant with food standards (have a food hygiene rating of more than 3) continued to remain at a high level.

Improving
health and
wellbeing

32 seizures of illegal tobacco were made from vehicles, residential and retail premises. These resulted in 13,834 packets of cigarettes and 957 packets of hand rolling tobacco being seized with a total retail value estimated to be £184,501.

32
Seizures of
illegal
tobacco products

Officers undertook 37 test purchases and 56 inspections to check that e-cigarettes complied with legislation, resulting in seizures of 5444 illegal e-cigarettes with an estimated retail value of £50,889.



With the assistance of young volunteers, officers made 60 attempts to purchase age restricted products such as alcohol, e-cigarettes, tobacco and knives. In addition 4 businesses were successfully prosecuted.

Safeguarding
the
vulnerable

Protecting
the
environment

Officers once again took part in Safeguarding Week raising awareness through a number of presentations, carrying out rogue trader operations and producing a podcast on safeguarding for Bro Radio.

The Wales Illegal Money Lending Unit rebranded their public face to the 'Stop Loan Shark Wales' with a 4 week media campaign and creation of a social media digital toolkit for stakeholders.



SRS played a central role in the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. Officers conducted over 500 checks to ensure that host accommodation met the required standards of safety and suitability.

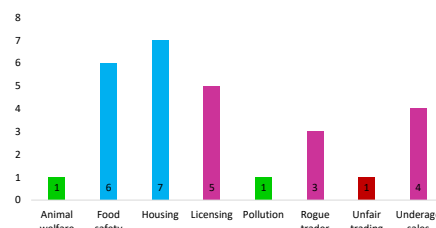
Following statutory consultation, the Cathays Additional Licensing Scheme in Cardiff was re-declared.

SRS undertook a public consultation in Cardiff on the introduction of mandatory card payment facilities in taxis and the relaxation of the moratorium on new taxi licences.

The SRS Staff Survey received a good response with 56% of results falling into the very good to excellent range.

Maximising
the use of
resources

A total of 28 prosecutions were successfully concluded during 2022/23 across a number of SRS functions, some of which resulted in significant fines and costs being awarded. These included a food business ordered to pay fines and costs of £28,500, and a landlord/owner ordered to pay over £25,000 for a catalogue of failings in a rental property.



SRS became the only service in Wales to be awarded the gold standard in animal licensing at the RSPCA Pawprints Award.

Our work dealing with illegal dog breeding was featured in 2 BBC programmes which highlighted SRS prosecutions that resulted in significant fines and costs, and in one case required payment of over £300,000 in Proceeds of Crime.

SRS now has 34 primary authority partnerships in place enabling us to charge for assured advice on the basis of full cost recovery.

34
Primary Authority
partnerships

Our 'Ask the regulator' podcasts were nominated at the National Community Radio awards for best podcast.

SRS has become one of 5 accredited training centres to deliver the qualification in Infection Control and Prevention under the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017.

The service trained 206 delegates in food safety, health and safety, underage sales and infection prevention and control in special procedures with 100% of delegates indicating that they felt the training they received will benefit their business.

100%
Of delegates felt
training would
benefit their
business

£88,000+
Income
generated

£88,000 + income was generated through commercial activities such as training, primary authority, environmental services and our UKAS accredited Metrology Lab.

Our actions for 2023/24

Improving health and wellbeing

- Develop and adopt the Food and Feed Law Enforcement Plan 2023/24 ...
- Engage with the Food Standards Agency's Achieving Business Compliance Programme to modernise the way food businesses are regulated.
- Develop and adopt the Port Health Plan 2023/24.
- Develop and adopt the Section 18 Health and Safety Service Plan 2023/24 ...
- Engage with smokers using, visiting or working at hospital sites to promote smoke free compliance .
- Develop a Noise policy including service standards.
- Review and explore options for future proofing the Duty Officer Rota.
- Extend the enforcement tools available to the night time noise service in Cardiff through the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices for certain noise offences occurring after 11pm.
- Strengthen relationships with Housing and Anti Social Behaviour Unit and develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in Cardiff and Vale.
- Undertake seasonal product safety projects encompassing products such as contact lenses and fancy dress costumes.
- Conduct firework inspections of licensed premises to ensure those holding a licence sell fireworks that meet the relevant safety standards, have adequate policies in relation to age restricted sales and stored safety in retail premises.
- Undertake a weights and measures project in pubs and bars to ensure customers are receiving accurate measures.
- Undertake a pre-summer season exercise in Bridgend advising pubs on how to minimise noise disturbance.
- Drive up standards in the private rented housing sector by undertaking robust enforcement action to deal with rogue agents and landlords letting and managing properties.
- Improve fire safety in our council homes and the private sector by continuing to work with Welsh Government and stakeholder organisations in the development of their Building Safety Programme for medium and high rise buildings in the private sector.
- Review and harmonise the annex to the SRS Compliance and Enforcement Policy in relation to Housing Enforcement.
- Develop Works in Default (WID) process in Cardiff.
- Secure approval and deliver the Communicable Disease Service Plan 2023/24 ...
- Prepare businesses and internal procedures in readiness for the implementation of the new special procedures licensing regime and through the delivery of RSPH Level 2 Infection Control Training course.

Protecting the environment

- Undertake local air quality assessments and review the data to ensure that national air quality objectives continue to be achieved.
- Use feedback from the public consultation to report back to Bridgend Cabinet to agree a finalised Air Quality Action Plan for Park Street and start work on the measure to improve air quality.
- Contribute to good air quality in Cardiff by reviewing real-time air quality data to assess and identify trends in pollution to assess further interventions that will further reduce air pollution.
- Review planning consultation process in respect of Noise and Air complaint practices and procedures.
- Work with landlords to return empty properties back into use helping to increase the availability of affordable housing for sale or rent.
- Working closely with other partners identify empty properties suitable for leasing and buy back scheme, continuing to target enforcement at the worst longer term problem empty homes, using existing funding for works in default , or by drawing down funding available for Welsh Government.
- Engage with landlords and lettings agents to improve the energy performance ratings of private rented properties under the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations.
- Support the 3 partner Councils in fulfilling their climate change responsibilities through the delivery of regulatory activities that contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions.
- Review information on SRS website in relation to animal licensing.
- Co-ordinate dog and equine clinics in the region to include microchipping and castration.
- Modify animal welfare vans to facilitate seizure of rabies dogs.
- Engage with Welsh Government regarding the welfare of stud and imported dogs and wider animal welfare issues related to dog breeding and sales.
- Engage with students and residents during Freshers Week in Cardiff providing community advice on housing, environmental and social issues.

Safeguarding the vulnerable

- Support the 3 partner Councils in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Consider how SRS could engage more with Elected Members regarding areas of concern and safeguarding for the public, such as rogue traders, scams, illegal money lending and doorstep crime.
- Work in partnership to safeguard the vulnerable to ensure that children are protected from harmful substances and products, older people are protected from rogue traders and scams and vulnerable people are not subject to exploitation.
- Conduct intelligence led underage sales exercises in relation to the sale of tobacco, alcohol, nicotine inhaling products, knives and other age restricted products.
- Raise awareness of illegal money lending and support individuals to access responsible lenders and debt advice, rebuild their finances and make a sustainable transition to legal credit
- Sponsor school savings awards to promote saving by the young in illegal money lending hotspot areas.
- Learn from illegal money lending research findings and target promotions accordingly.
- Engage and respond to Welsh Government white paper on modernising taxi and private hire services in Wales.
- Undertake enforcement exercises with the taxi trade including mystery shopper exercises to ensure compliance
- Review taxi vehicle testing regime in Bridgend.

Supporting the local economy

- Conduct intelligence led operations to investigate and disrupt businesses selling illegal tobacco products.
- Strengthen illegal tobacco enforcement by exploring the feasibility of introducing Closure Orders as a more effective means of enforcing illegal tobacco premises.
- Incorporate regular surveillance and review of online sales platforms into trading standards work due to the volume of goods being sold on line.
- Continue to promote the 'Buy with Confidence' (responsible trader) scheme across the region including working to ensure inhouse trades people are registered with the scheme.
- Extend training provision through the delivery of RSPH Level 2 Infection Control Training Course for Special Procedures and explore options for underage sales training provision to support people who commit offences for underage sales
- Re-commence the issue of the SRS Food and Safety newsletter.
- Review the primary authority framework to ensure advice and support requirements for partners is appropriate.
- Extend the scope of the 'Ask the regulator' podcasts to encompass other regulatory activities undertaken by SRS.

Maximising the use of resources

- Work with officers and ICT to explore options for exploiting newer technologies that ensure officers can continue to operate as efficiently as possible, for example, consolidating the ICT interface between the partner authorities, agile working, mobile devices for inspections and improved communication mechanisms .
- Explore options to implement online payment facilities for fixed penalty notices.
- Extend the scope of the Intelligence Operating Model across further SRS services, for example private sector housing complaints.
- Further develop a recruitment strategy together with a range of initiatives that address recruitment and retention pressures within the service such as apprenticeships and other HR related approaches.
- Consider the feasibility of obtaining accreditation for forensics capability.
- Engage with partner authorities on accommodation requirements as a result of hybrid working arrangements.
- Identify a clear process through which any significant reprioritisation of SRS services would be decided by partner Councils including how such an exercise would be communicated and consulted upon, as part of the process through which a final decision is made.
- Improve engagement and consultation with stakeholders including service users and residents and review the effectiveness of current mechanisms used to access Shared Regulatory Services.
- Complete the PDR process with all SRS employees.
- Review Workforce Development Plan.
- Develop a Staff Survey Action plan.
- Promote and encourage involvement in staff engagement and wellbeing initiatives and proactively support staff development.
- Review all available options for cost recovery and income generation to ensure this approach underpins sustainable service delivery.
- Consider increasing weight range capability of Metrology Lab to provide higher accuracy levels.