

Clampdown to begin on illegal tobacco sales

ILLICIT tobacco dealers that encourage people to smoke are the target of a new crackdown being rolled out across the county.

Derbyshire County Council is ploughing £83,000 into enforcing trading standards laws that protect consumers from illegal tobacco sales.

Illicit tobacco is either counterfeit or a genuine product smuggled into the country without duty paid.

Experts believe its lower price encourages people who might otherwise be put off by the costs to smoke more.

The amount of illegal tobacco found

by Derbyshire trading standards officers has increased in recent years and officers have seized tobacco worth an estimated £500,000 this year.

Council cabinet member for health and communities Dave Allen said: "We're doing more than ever to discourage people from taking up smoking and help smokers to kick the habit.

"But all this is completely undermined by those who flout the law and entice people to smoke by selling tax-free tobacco.

"People who do not smoke can expect to live longer and in better health.

"That's why we are investing in smoking prevention and offer full support to help smokers quit."

The availability of cheap illegal cigarettes has also been found to threaten legitimate retailers, who have reported losses of up to £3,000 a week due to competition from illicit tobacco dealers.

Councillor Allen added: "When these criminal enterprises spring up, local shops are unfairly hit in the pocket.

"We're grateful to all the members of the public who stand up for local business and report illegal sales."

Metal detectorists find buried treasure

By Joey Severn

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A PAIR of metal detectorists have dug up a treasure from the Ashbourne landscape.

Tim Corser and friend Peter Jones, of Hulland Ward, were searching in the area when they found the small silver dress fastener.

The find came as a surprise to the pair as Mr Corser said they were expecting to only find "odds and sods" on the dig.

The 66-year-old, of Coronation Road, Stanley Village, said: "We didn't really think we would find much, just odds and sods like Georgian coins.

"It is very small and the workmanship on it is amazing.

"How they managed to do it without the magnifying glasses and modern tools that we have is incredible. I have no idea how they did it."

Previously the pair found an elaborate 16th-century gold perfume bottle stopper in South Derbyshire. That piece fea-

tured 16 rubies believed to be from Goa or Sri Lanka.

The latest piece has now been declared treasure by assistant deputy coroner Paul McCandless at a hearing at Derby and South Derbyshire Coroner's Court.

All finds of gold and silver objects more than 300 years old have a legal obligation to report such items under the Treasure Act 1996.

If an inquest decides they are treasure they become the property of the Crown, but the finders are paid the full market value, which is determined by an adjudication panel. The money is paid equally to the finder and landowner.

The location of the site is being kept under wraps, but is one of many the pair regularly detect in.

Mr Corser said: "Peter does a lot of the research more than I do but it certainly pays off. However, you never know about who has walked over it before and what you may find."

Mr Corser started detecting when he was in his early twenties and has been

all over the world following his passion.

He said: "I have detected in the US and Australia and also in the Mediterranean.

"It is amazing what you find when you are in the shallows.

"When I was in Spain I have found all manner of things, including a man's wedding band.

"It was inscribed with the date and the initials and when I found it, it was just a month after they got married.

"I have tried to find some of the people who have lost things, but once they are in the sea it has gone."



JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Found anything valuable in the Ashbourne area?

Have a story to tell about your metal detector?

LEAVE COMMENTS ONLINE AT:

ashbournenewstelegraph.co.uk

News Telegraph office swamped with used stamps

A NEWS Telegraph appeal for used stamps to raise money for leukaemia charities has resulted in a huge response.

As part of our 'Take Five Minutes' appeal, prompted by our editor's wife, Katherine Sinfield, being diagnosed with leukaemia, we asked readers to send in used stamps – and hundreds have arrived at our Market Place office.

Editor Stephen Sinfield said: "We are thrilled with the response to our stamp appeal. We wanted a way in which we could raise money for leukaemia charities without it costing anybody anything and used stamps was the obvious answer. This appeal has exceeded our expectations.

"Both Leukaemia Care and Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research will benefit from these stamp donations.

"Please keep them coming – the charities need your help every day while people just the same as my wife are diagnosed with this truly destructive blood cancer every day of every week."



INUNDATED... customer service advisor Karen Fearn with some of the stamps.

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