

COUNTER FRAUD ACTIVITY 2014/15

The table below shows the total numbers of fraud referrals received and summarises the outcomes of investigations completed to date. The indicators include the full range of counter fraud work undertaken.

	2013/14 (Actual: Full Yr)	2013/14 (Target: Full Yr)	2012/13 (Actual: Full Yr)
% of investigations completed which result in a successful outcome (for example benefit stopped or amended, sanctions, prosecutions, properties recovered, housing allocations blocked, management action taken).	55%	30%	47%
Number of investigations completed	239	320	262

Caseload figures for the period are:

	As at 1/4/14	As at 1/4/13
Awaiting allocation	40	38
Under investigation	157	125

Summary of counter fraud activity:

Activity	Work completed or in progress
Data matching	<p>Matches from the National Fraud Initiative's Council Tax exercise (1612 in total) are currently being addressed by the council tax department. The next National Fraud Initiative will begin in October when data is extracted from council systems and securely sent to the Audit Commission.</p> <p>A proactive data matching exercise identifying fraud solely within the Council Tax Support scheme is currently underway. 19 cases of suspected fraud have been identified of which 12 are currently under investigation.</p> <p>Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS) referrals continue to be investigated - the counter fraud team received 672 HBMS referrals in 2013/14. HBMS referrals resulted in 2 benefit fraud prosecutions and 4 sanctions.</p>
Fraud detection and investigation	<p>The service continues to promote the use of criminal investigation techniques and standards to robustly respond to any fraud perpetrated against the council. Activity to date includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing fraud – working in conjunction with housing officers, 35 properties were recovered in 2013/14. In addition, 14 properties were prevented from being let where the prospective tenants had provided false information in their housing applications (comparative figures for last year were 21 properties recovered and 2 applications blocked). Two people have been

Activity	Work completed or in progress
	<p>cautioned for falsely applying for housing. There are 50 current investigations in this area. In September 2013 the team launched a regional anti-housing fraud drive joining up with four housing associations and four other local authorities in North Yorkshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal fraud - the team received 20 referrals for internal frauds in 2013/14 of which 5 cases are still under investigation. • Benefit fraud - 16 people have been prosecuted for benefit fraud offences and a further 14 have received formal sanctions (cautions and administrative penalties). Benefits have been corrected in a further 34 cases. • Social Care fraud – There are currently 16 ongoing investigations in this area. The fraud team is working closely with a number of departments to identify, detect and deter fraud in this area. • Parking fraud – 12 cases of parking fraud (principally blue badge misuse) were referred to the team in 2013/14. One person was prosecuted, two people were cautioned and five people have received written warnings. There are eight cases currently under investigation. • Council Tax fraud – The team received 28 reports of council tax fraud in 2013/14 – principally false claims for single persons discount but also reports of other types of exemptions and business rate avoidance . There are 15 active investigations in this area.