

COUNTER FRAUD ACTIVITY 2013/14

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 (as at 30/09/13)	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).	59%	30%	47%
Number of investigations completed	101	320	262

Caseload figures for the period are:

	As at 1/4/13	As at 30/09/13
Awaiting allocation	22	38
Under investigation	147	191

Summary of counter fraud activity:

Activity	Work completed or in progress
Data matching	<p>A total of 9,600 data matches have been received from the Audit Commission as part of the National Fraud Initiative. The council was recommended to prioritise the review of 2,000 of these matches by the Audit Commission and this work has now been completed. With the exception of 13 investigations, which are ongoing, the matches have resulted in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £11,000 in benefit overpayments being identified • 403 bus passes and 55 disabled blue badges being cancelled, following identification that the customer had died. <p>Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS) referrals continue to be investigated - the counter fraud team has received 305 HBMS referrals this year. HBMS referrals have resulted in 2 benefit fraud prosecutions and 2 sanctions to date in 2013/14.</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, 15 properties have been recovered since April. In addition, 8 properties were prevented from being let where the prospective tenants had provided fraudulent information in their housing applications. This is almost twice the number of properties recovered and four times the number of applications

Activity	Work completed or in progress
	<p>blocked than at this time last year. There are 48 current investigations in this area. In September 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 has received 10 referrals for internal frauds between 1st April and 30th September. Five cases are still under investigation. • Benefit fraud - 7 people have been prosecuted for benefit fraud offences and a further seven have received formal sanctions (cautions and administrative penalties). Benefits have been corrected in a further 14 cases. Over £20,000 has been recovered for the council since April from fraudulent and incorrect benefit payments. • Social care fraud – There are currently 11 ongoing investigations in this area and fraud awareness training is ongoing. • Parking fraud – Four cases of blue badge misuse have been referred to the team since April. • Council Tax fraud – there is one ongoing investigation in this area.