



Campaigns

£750

The maximum compensation consumers in Scotland can claim under the small claims process
SCOTTISH CAMPAIGN MANIFESTO 2007

Our Scottish campaigning arm delivers its manifesto

Northern highlights



Making a difference to consumers, Julia Clarke of our Scottish office

SCOTLAND

In the run-up to elections to the Scottish Parliament in May, our campaigning arm in Scotland, which lobbies on behalf of Scottish consumers, outlines some of the key issues that need to be tackled.

Showing our teeth

Increased funding for NHS dentistry and better access to NHS dentists have long been high on the Scottish campaign agenda. We're calling for an increase in the number of patients regularly accessing NHS dental treatment and for patients to receive the free dental check-ups they have been promised.

Redressing the balance

Under the small claims system, Scottish consumers can claim a maximum of just £750 if things go wrong with goods or services they've bought. This paltry limit has not changed for 15 years. We want it raised to £5,000, in line with England and Wales. We also want Scottish consumers to have more choice to shop around for legal advice, as is happening in England and Wales. We'll continue our fight to redress the balance on both issues.

Sending a weighty message

With more than a third of children in Scotland overweight, it's vital that we address the issue of obesity.

Linking fun activities and sports to foods that are high in fat, sugar or salt (McDonald's appears as a sponsor on the Scottish Football Association website, for instance) sends messages that are confusing and mixed. We say it's time to get to grips with such anomalies and to take more control over how food is promoted to our children, both inside and outside school.

Driving up standards

Consumers have the right to know that food outlets they eat or shop in are safe. So we were delighted when Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Fife, Perth and Renfrewshire local authorities agreed to publish information about hygiene inspections of food outlets, thus protecting public health and driving up standards in food premises. We hope the pilot leads to a nationwide scheme.

Packing a punch

Homebuyers urgently need better information upfront before they bid for a house. Purchasers' information packs will provide this and eradicate the problem of money being wasted on multiple surveys – unlike with home information packs in England and Wales, a compulsory survey will be part of the pack. We're urging Scottish MSPs to support our call for their introduction.

SCOTTISH OFFICE

The first five years of our campaigning work

■ **2002** We set up office in January, in Edinburgh. Our aim is to strengthen our work with the newly formed Scottish Parliament and to establish contact with Scottish MSPs, to ensure consumers have a strong voice. We identify four key areas to campaign on: food, health, housing and legal services.

■ **2002** The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act is passed. We welcome this strong piece of legislation, which allows everyone access to information on schools, health services and planning held by government and public bodies.

■ **2004** An inquiry into the cultivation of GM maize is blocked by a single vote in the Scottish Parliament, despite public support for further investigation.

■ **2004** Two successes. The government allocates an extra £295m to NHS dentistry over three years. And the amount of compensation Scottish consumers can claim if they receive inadequate professional service from a solicitor is raised from £1,000 to £5,000, to match the rest of Britain.

■ **2006** We campaign for a new independent Scottish Legal Complaints Commission, after consumers express dissatisfaction with the existing process.

For more about our work in Scotland and all our campaigning activities, go to www.which.co.uk/campaigns

MONEY OFF DISHWASHERS

Great savings with Hughes Direct

This March Hughes Direct is offering Which? members exclusive discounts on selected dishwasher models featured in this month's report (p50). To find out more details about these member-

only discounts offer log on to www.hughesdirect.co.uk/which or call **0845 678 0084**.

This offer is valid until 30 April 2007 and is subject to availability.

Each month Which? members can take advantage of the competitive deals offered by Hughes Direct. All goods are guaranteed to be a minimum of 10 per cent below high-street prices published in Which? product reports (even taking into account delivery

charges). If you find the same product cheaper elsewhere (including delivery) within seven days of purchase, Hughes Direct promises to refund 110 per cent of the difference. Call now or go online to see how much you can save.

