

[Primary Authority helps Acorn safeguard its business reputation](#)

Ageing Society creating new demands for products – 1 of the 4 Grand Challenges identified in the UK's Industrial Strategy

The UK population is ageing, as it is across the industrialised world. The prospect of longer lives is requiring people to plan their careers and retirement differently. Ageing populations are creating new demands for technologies, products and services, including new care technologies, new housing models and innovative savings products for retirement. Acorn Mobility Services is a good example of a commercial operation that is both capitalising on and serving the demands of this growing sector. Its products help older citizens to lead independent, fulfilled lives and can help some to continue to contribute to society. This helps to create an economy which works for everyone, regardless of age.

Primary Authority scheme supporting the UK's Industrial Strategy

Schemes such as the Primary Authority and frameworks such as Better Business for All continue to help make regulation work more effectively across important sectors in our economy such as the Ageing Society sector. The advice provided by Wakefield Council helps protect consumers at the same time as safeguarding business reputations and keeping regulatory costs to a minimum, enabling businesses like Acorn Mobility Services to grow.

There is a Primary Authority partnership between Acorn Mobility Services and West Yorkshire Trading Standards (WYTS deliver the Trading Standards function on behalf of Wakefield Council). Having a single and trusted point of contact able to provide expert advice and guidance is of immense benefit to the business as it continues to develop and grow.

Primary Authority Award

In 2016 Acorn Mobility Services was 'Highly Commended' in the national Primary Authority Awards, becoming the first company in the mobility equipment sector to receive such an accolade.

The company's UK Customer Service Manager, Catherine Beecroft, said:

Customer satisfaction, being fair and transparent, is central to our business ethos. Working in partnership with West Yorkshire Trading Standards helps us to act out our business ethos. WYTS

really understand our business DNA. Acorn always strives to conduct business within regulations and remain compliant and it's nice to know there's always a helping hand to offer impartial advice and guidance.

Primary Authority helping to develop effective customer services

The business was keen to use its partnership with WYTS to develop its complaints handling and customer services standards. Thanks to training and guidance from WYTS, the team at the business better understand how the Consumer Rights Act 2015 affects their work. This has helped the business avoid problems related to how it markets its products. The business can be more confident that it is compliant and can focus its resources more effectively.

Helping to improve complaints handling

The Primary Authority partnership with WYTS helps the business to identify any areas of concern and improve its procedures in order to avoid future risk. The primary authority supports the business by informing it of any calls made to Citizens Advice about the business' products and services. This enables the company to nip potential problems in the bud. WYTS also writes to consumers requesting permission to forward their details so the company can investigate any issues.

Results

In addition to developing more effective customer services and complaint handling processes, Primary Authority support for the business has helped the organisation to reduce the number of complaints it receives and remain compliant. This Trading Standards support has helped the business to put more resource into developing its ambitions and growth of its operations.

About Acorn Mobility Services

Yorkshire-based Acorn Mobility Services Limited develops and designs some of the world's best-selling stairlift ranges. With factories in the UK and worldwide distribution centres, this family-owned business sells more than 70,000 stairlifts worldwide each year making it a major British export success story.