

News story: Card surcharge ban means no more nasty surprises for shoppers

Hidden charges for paying with a debit or credit card will be banned from today (13 January), helping millions of UK consumers to avoid rip-off fees when spending their hard-earned money.

So-called 'surcharging' has become commonplace, particularly online, with many retailers hitting people with surprise charges just before they are about to make a purchase. Some retailers have been known to add charges which are far higher than it costs them to process a payment. It is estimated that surcharging cost Brits £166 million in 2015.

Today's ban means that it will be unlawful for retailers to charge additional fees when someone uses a particular credit or debit card, or other payment systems like PayPal, to make a purchase. This will ensure consumers can be confident that there won't be any nasty surprises, and they won't be penalised for wanting to pay in a particular way.

Economic Secretary to the Treasury, John Glen said:

It's completely unfair for someone to be hit by a hidden fee just before they are about to make a purchase, so by scrapping these rip-off charges we are helping to give power back to the consumer.

As we build a fairer society, this added transparency ensures buyers can make informed choices about how they spend their hard-earned money.

The new rules will be enforced by Trading Standards who will have the power to take civil enforcement action against traders who breach the regulations. It will also entitle customers to receive a refund of any unlawful surcharge they have paid and enable them, if necessary, to take legal action to recover any such surcharge.

The ban on credit and debit card surcharges is effective across the EU from Saturday 13th January 2018, and will apply to all purchases made where the banks of the consumer and retailer are within the EEA. In the vast majority of other circumstances surcharges are capped at the cost to the retailer for processing the payment. The UK Government took the decision to also include other payment methods such as PayPal in the ban to further protect consumers.

News story: Webinar – 17 April – How SMEs can supply through Crown Marketplace

Matt Denham is the man leading the build of the Crown Marketplace; a platform through which government is set to buy all its common goods and services, and which is being developed with an emphasis on making the procurement process SME friendly. In this webinar, Matt will outline the timetable for launch of the Crown Marketplace and how small businesses can best prepare to make the most of a multi million pound opportunity to sell to government.

Click [here](#) to register.

News story: Webinar – 14 March – Tips for selling to the public sector

Stephanie Staubach is Managing Director of TopMark Claims Management Ltd; a company that has successfully sold its claims solutions service into the public sector via contracts with national government and Local Authorities across the UK.

In this webinar, Stephanie will offer her secrets to success in selling to the public sector, including tips on how to look for opportunities and produce effective bids. Stephanie also sits on the government's SME Panel, representing the views of entrepreneurs when it comes to forming policy on ensuring central government spends £1 in every £3 with SMEs.

Click [here](#) to register.

Press release: Damehood: Sara Elizabeth Cockerill QC

The Queen has been pleased to approve that the honour of Damehood be conferred upon Sara Elizabeth Cockerill, Q.C. on her appointment as a Justice of the High Court.

Background information

Sara Cockerill, QC was called to the Bar in 1990, became a member of Essex Court Chambers on completion of pupillage in 1991 and took silk in 2011.

[Press release: Privy Council appointment: 12 January 2018](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]Sir Seamus Treacy will join her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council.