

Crackdown on public sector fraud delivers over £7.5 billion of savings to the taxpayer

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The taxpayer will benefit from £7.53 billion in savings due to a crackdown on public sector fraud in the past year alone, new statistics today confirm.

- A landmark £7.53 billion has been protected for the public purse in the last financial year through aggressive fraud prevention and recovery.
- The savings secured are equivalent to the cost of employing an additional 230,000 nurses or repairing every pothole in the country.
- New measures include the launch of the Public Authorities Fraud Investigation and Enforcement Service to hunt down COVID-era losses and future fraud.

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Led by the Public Sector Fraud Authority, the government's Counter Fraud Function has delivered these huge savings through a relentless focus on prevention, recovery, and enforcement. By uniting specialists from every level of government, the Function works to identify and dismantle fraud right across the entire public sector.

Every pound lost to fraudsters is a pound taken away from our schools, our hospitals and our communities. These coordinated efforts ensure that every pound of public money is spent where it is needed most, rather than ending up in the pockets of fraudsters.

Through work with local authorities and innovative data-matching tools like the National Fraud Initiative (NFI), fraudulent claims have been able to be identified by comparing records across the public sector, benefitting local communities who have seen public funds returned to those in genuine need.

In Hillingdon Council, 15 council houses have been recovered in the past year alone, with over 100 fraudulent housing applications removed from the waiting list, ensuring that vital public services are back in the hands of law-abiding citizens.

The government is also intensifying its hunt for COVID-related fraud, with almost £400 million in savings delivered to date. This effort is being supported by the public, with the COVID Fraud Reporting Site receiving over 770 reports regarding potential fraud in pandemic spending, since launching in September.

Cabinet Office Minister Satvir Kaur said:

This government is making the biggest investment ever to tackle public sector fraud, and that investment is now delivering real results for the taxpayer. Every pound stolen by fraudsters is a pound taken away from our schools, our hospitals, and our communities.

By using better data and hiring more expert investigators, we are finding and stopping

fraud faster than ever before. We are relentless in our commitment to protect the public's money and ensure it is used to deliver the high-quality services that people across Britain rely on every day.

To further accelerate these efforts, the government is establishing the Public Authorities Fraud Investigation and Enforcement Service by 2026-27. This new service is recruiting highly skilled investigators specifically tasked with pursuing the recovery of fraud against the public sector.

These measures are part of our long-term commitment to reduce the estimated £55 billion to £81 billion lost annually to fraud and error across government, as we create a more productive and agile state.

Notes to editors:

- The Government Counter Fraud Function (GCFF) is one of the government's fourteen functions, groupings of professionals across government departments who align on a certain area of work. The GCFF ensures the effective management of counter fraud, bribery and corruption activity in government. It brings together public servants who work to find and tackle fraud, bribery, corruption and wider economic crime across government.
- The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is an exercise that matches electronic data within and between public and private sector bodies to prevent and detect fraud.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/crackdown-on-public-sector-fraud-delivers-over-75-billion-of-savings-to-the-taxpayer>