



**Solihull**  
METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Shipshape

The Register of Solihull  
Improvement Professionals

*A Guide  
for Consumers*

A Trading Standards Scheme for Home  
Improvement Professionals to  
demonstrate their commitment  
to fair, professional and  
honest trade



## What is 'Shipshape'?

Shipshape is the register of Solihull Home Improvement Professionals. Solihull Council's Trading Standards Service operates the register. Its aim is to give consumers a list of traders they can rely on. It also gives legitimate businesses the opportunity to show they are committed to providing a good service for their customers.

## How can I get a copy of the Shipshape register?

You can obtain a copy of the list by calling Trading Standards on 0845 330 3313 or texting TS Solihull (plus msg) to 60003.

If you have access to the web the most up to date list appears at [www.solihull.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/tradingstandards)



## How do I know they will be reliable?

Businesses must apply to join the scheme. Before being registered members must meet certain minimum standards, these are assessed by Trading Standards. The business must also make a commitment to fair, professional and honest trade.

## What is Solihull Council's role?

Solihull Council's Trading Standards Officers check to make sure the business meets the minimum standards. The Council makes available the register of traders that are members of the scheme. **Please note that inclusion on the register does not mean they are 'approved' by the Council.** We will investigate complaints made about 'Shipshape' members. If it is found they have failed to meet the minimum standards of the scheme we will consider removing them the register.

## How do I go about selecting a home improvement professional?

We know finding a builder, plumber roofer or driveway contractor you can rely on can be a headache. 'Shipshape' will take the guesswork out of employing a home improvement professional. To make sure you get the results you want we ask that you still follow our top tips before starting any work.



## Top Tips

- Be clear about the work you want carried out - write out a specification
- Work out a what money you have to spend on the project
- Use 'Shipshape' to identify a minimum of 3 traders that could do the work
- Get quotations from all of them - the cheapest isn't always the best
- Good traders are usually in demand - you may have to wait while they finish another job
- Talk to the trader about what you expect - obtain a written schedule of work before the job starts
- Discuss with the trader when the job will start and how long it will take
- Discuss any problems with the trader as they arise

## What if something goes wrong?

We know that occasionally home improvement jobs can go wrong. We cannot guarantee the odd 'hiccup will not happen, even with one of the Shipshape members. However, we hope that scheme members will do all they reasonably can to ensure things are put right. Shipshape members must be committed to providing a good level of customer service.

If something has gone wrong, and there has been a breakdown in communication between you and the scheme member, please contact us and we will endeavour to resolve the matter when the complaint is justified. We cannot guarantee that every complaint will be resolved to your satisfaction. In the event that your complaint cannot be resolved you may be advised to pursue a claim through the civil courts.



## Tell us what you think of Shipshape

Shipshape is a new scheme. We are keen to find out what you think of it and your experience of employing members of the scheme.

We may send you a questionnaire to find out about your experience of using the scheme. If there is anything you want to tell us about the scheme or any Shipshape member please contact us.

To obtain copies of the  
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or Text TS Solihull (plus message)  
to 60003

or visit our website  
[www.solihull.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/tradingstandards)

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