

# Protecting the Public Purse

## Fraud Briefing 2014

Halton Borough Council



# Purpose of Fraud Briefing



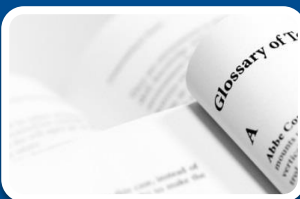
Provide an information source to support councillors in considering their council's fraud detection activities



Extend an opportunity for councillors to consider fraud detection performance, compared to similar local authorities



Give focus to discussing local and national fraud risks, reflect on local priorities and the proportionate responses needed



Be a catalyst for reviewing the council's current strategy, resources and capability for tackling fraud

# Understanding the bar charts

Outcomes for the first measure for your council are highlighted in yellow in the bar charts. The results of your comparator authorities are shown in the green bars.



Outcomes for the second measure for your council are highlighted as a green symbols above each bar. The results of your comparator authorities are shown in the white triangles.



A ‘\*’ symbol has been used on the horizontal axis to indicate your council.

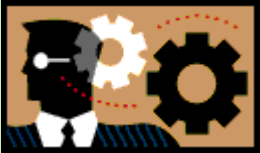
All data are drawn from council submissions on the Audit Commission’s annual fraud and corruption survey for the financial year 2013/14.

In some cases, council report they have detected fraud and do not report the number of cases and/or the value. For the purposes of this fraud briefing these ‘Not Recorded’ records are shown as Nil.

# Interpreting fraud detection results



Contextual and comparative information needed to interpret results



Detected fraud is indicative, not definitive, of counter fraud performance (*Prevention and deterrence should not be overlooked*)



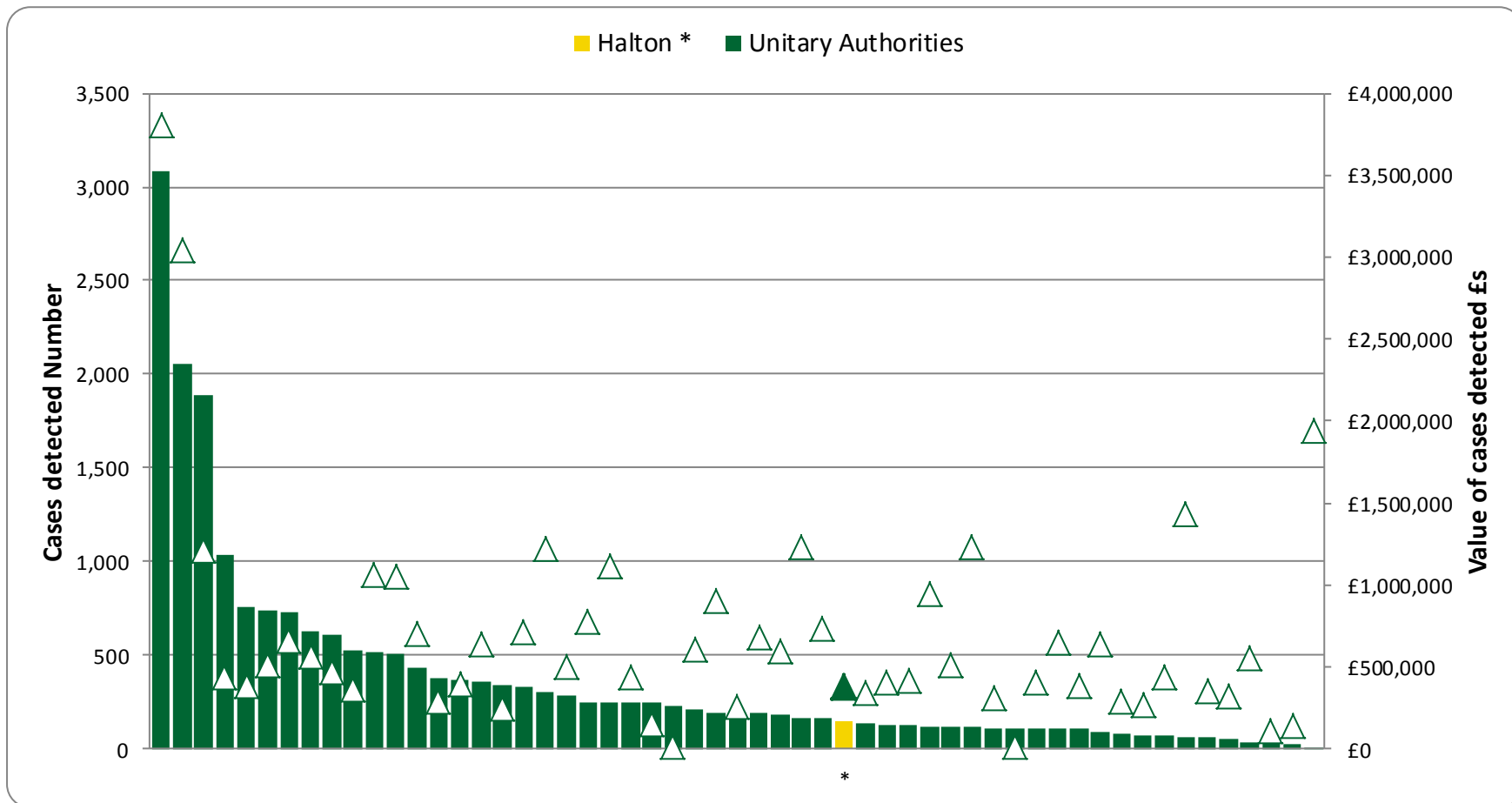
No fraud detected does not mean no fraud committed (*Fraud will always be attempted and even with the best prevention measures some will succeed*)



Councils who look for fraud, and look in the right way, will find fraud (*There is no such thing as a small fraud, just a fraud that has been detected early*)

# Total detected cases and value 2013/14 (Excludes Housing tenancy fraud)

## Halton



Halton detected 142 cases of fraud. The value of detected fraud was £376,136 #.

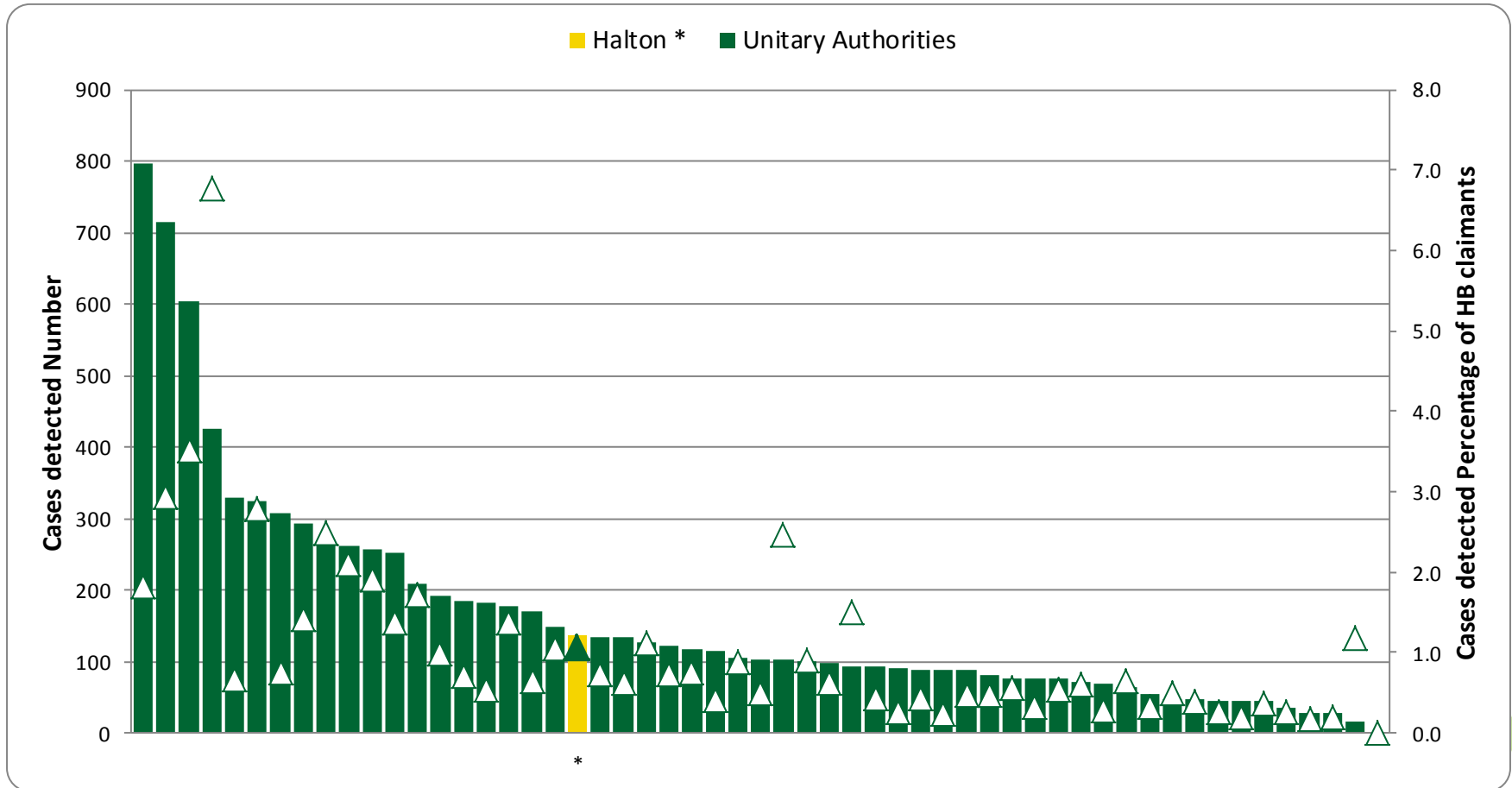
Average for other Unitary Authorities: 374 cases, valued at £699,834



# Housing Benefit (HB) and Council Tax Benefit (CTB) 2013/14

## Total detected cases, and as a proportion of housing benefit caseload

### Halton



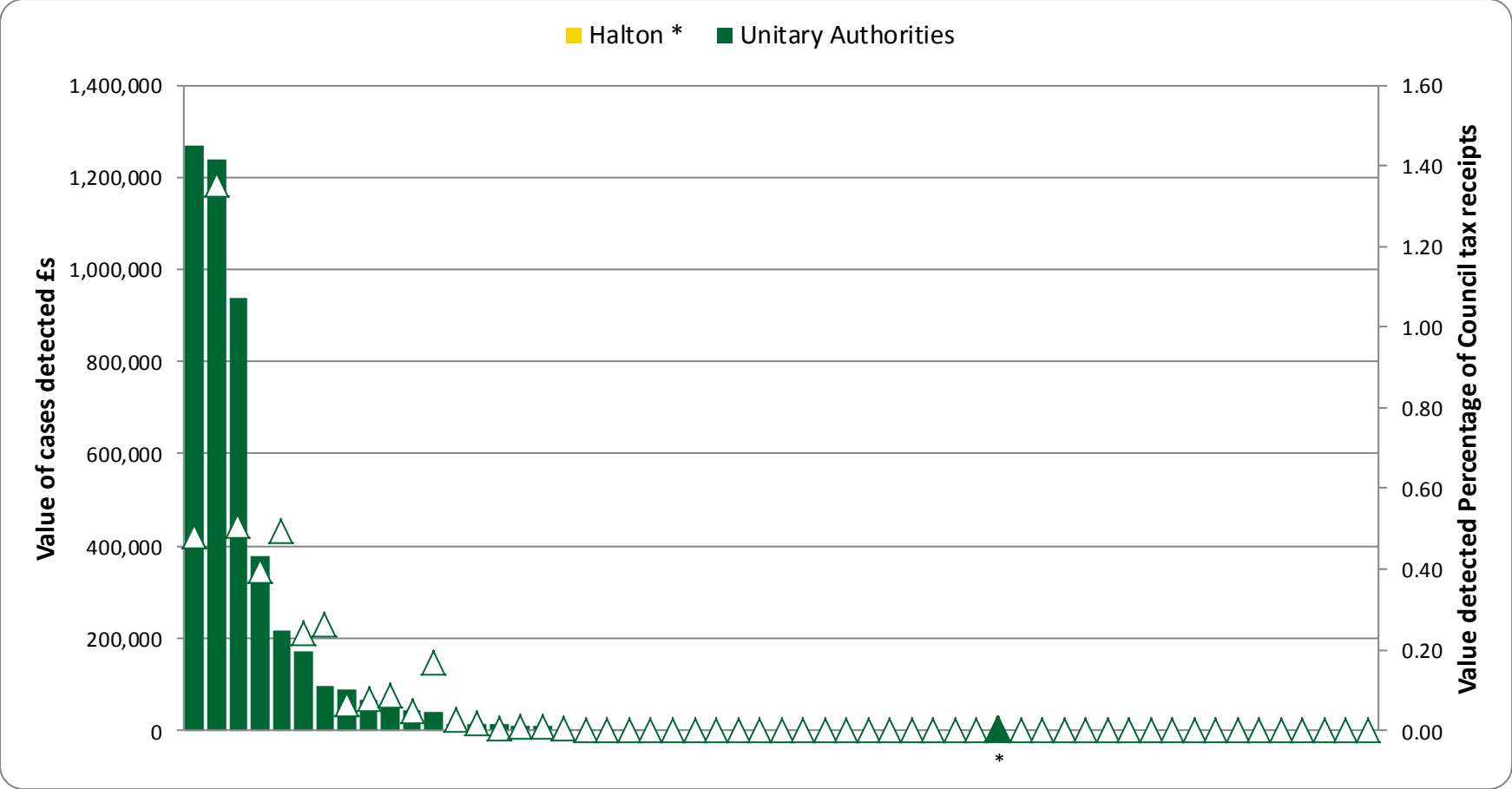
Halton detected 137 cases of this type of fraud. The value of detected fraud was £366,602.

Average for other Unitary Authorities: 163 cases, valued at £548,465

# Council tax discount fraud 2013/14

## Total detected value, and value as a proportion of council tax income

### Halton



Halton did not detect any cases of this type of fraud.  
Average for other Unitary Authorities: 173 cases, valued at £86,424



# Councils without housing stock 2013/14

## Housing tenancy fraud

4 per cent of social housing stock in London and 2 per cent outside London is subject to tenancy fraud

Second largest fraud loss to local government, £845 million

Combined with housing associations the total loss in England, £1.8 billion

The Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013: criminalises tenancy fraud

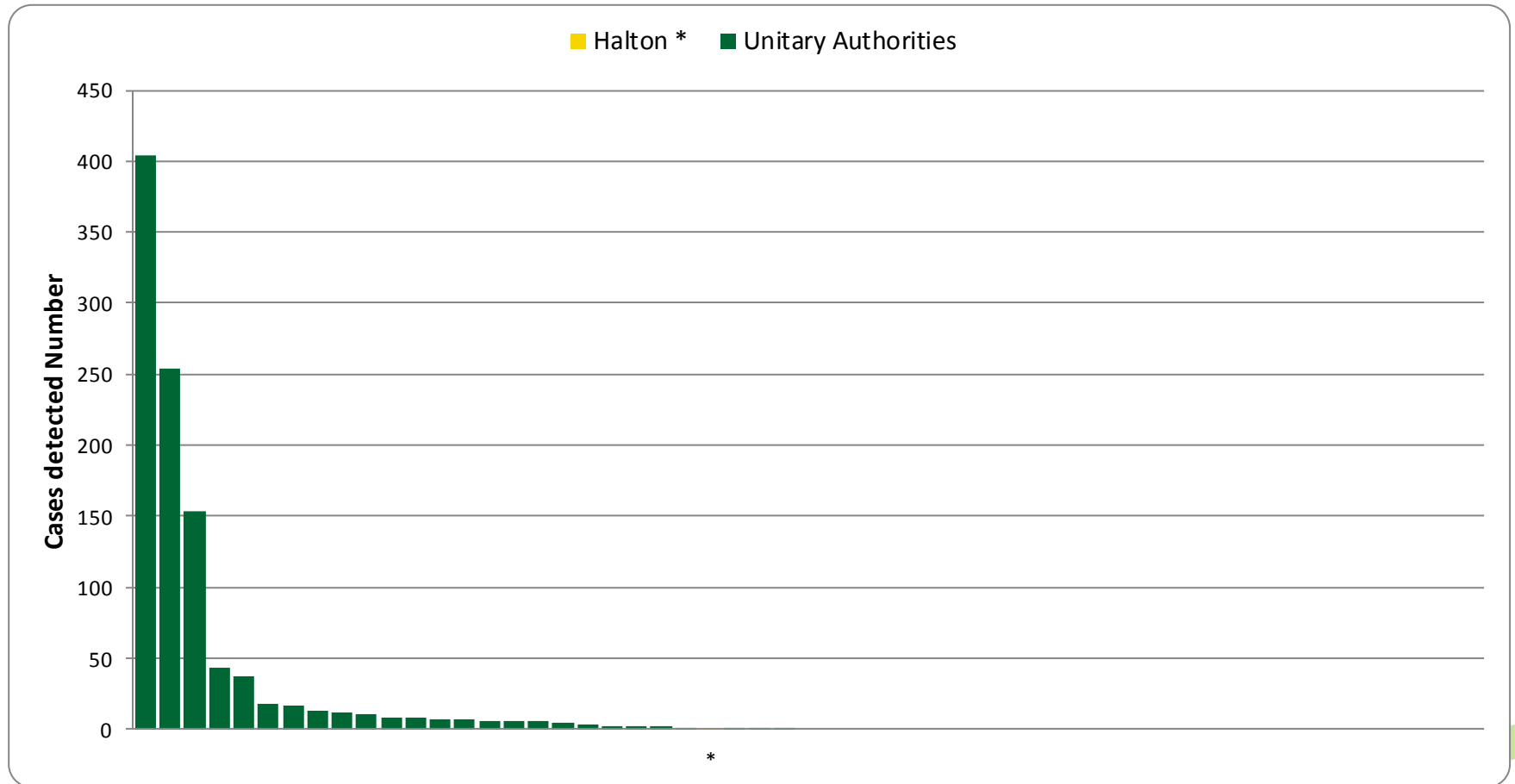
Councils have powers to investigate and prosecute tenancy fraudsters on behalf of housing associations

**Should you be using this legislation and powers to work in partnership with local housing associations?**



# Disabled parking (Blue Badge) fraud 2013/14

## Halton



Halton detected 1 case of this type of fraud.  
Average for other Unitary Authorities: 19 cases

## Other frauds 2013/14

### Halton

Procurement: Halton did not detect any cases of this type of fraud.  
Total for other Unitary Authorities: 25 cases, valued at £832,190

Insurance: Halton did not detect any cases of this type of fraud.  
Total for other Unitary Authorities: 34 cases, valued at £988,636

Social care: Halton detected 1 case of this type of fraud. The value of detected fraud was £9,534.  
Total for other Unitary Authorities: 46 cases, valued at £721,845

Internal: Halton detected 4 cases of this type of fraud. The value of detected fraud was £1,023.  
Total for other Unitary Authorities: 316 cases, valued at £1,029,475

*Correctly recording fraud levels is a central element in assessing fraud risk.  
It is best practice to record the financial value of each detected case*

# Questions elected members and decision makers may wish to ask

**Post SFIS**

**Local priorities**

**Partnerships**

**Using information and data**

Are our remaining counter-fraud resources and skill sets adequate after our benefit fraud investigators have left to join SFIS?

Are local priorities reflected in our approach to countering fraud?

Have we considered counter-fraud partnership working?

Are we satisfied that we will have access to comparative information and data to inform our counter-fraud decision making in the future?

# Any questions?

