

Welcome to the  
National Trading Standards  
Scam Marshal newsletter  
December 2018



NATIONAL  
TRADING  
STANDARDS  
Scams Team

THE 12 SCAMS OF CHRISTMAS

- 1 - Subscription trap;** This scam offers a free gift or trial offer. If you pay postage and packaging to receive the 'gift' beware as you may, without realising it, set up a Continuous Payment Authority (CPA) allowing the company to take any amount out of your bank account at any time.
- 2- Bogus charities;** Fake charities prey on the victims sense of good will at this time of the year, and their marketing techniques can be very convincing. Make sure that the marketing you have received is genuine. If you aren't sure- don't take the risk.
- 3 - Pop-up shops;** Whilst pop-up shops tend to appear more online, sometimes, especially at Christmas time, pop-up shops will temporarily take over closed down high street stores, and often sell counterfeit and/or faulty items. Be cautious when shopping in these stores.
- 4 - HM Revenue & Customs;** Criminals phone unsuspecting members of the public and claim they have over/ under paid their tax. Beware - *never* give out your bank details and hang up the phone immediately.
- 5 - Bank scam;** Criminals phone members of the public and claim to be calling from their bank to report 'suspicious activity' on your account. If you receive a call like this hang up immediately and phone your bank on a number you know to be legitimate.
- 6- Metropolitan Police scam;** Similar to the bank scam, criminals phone members of the public claiming to be from the Metropolitan Police reporting 'suspicious bank activity' Hang up immediately, wait 15 minutes, or use another phone, and call 101.
- 7- E-greeting (online) cards;** Be careful when sending online greeting cards as they can contain malware which can find address books and bank details which are stored on your computer.
- 8 - Bogus gift cards;** Gift cards are ideal for that hard-to-buy for person, but be aware if you are buying these online, as gift cards are easy to illegitimately replicate and could cause embarrassment to your friends and family when they try and use your gift.... and they are fake.
- 9 - Seasonal travel scams;** Beware of these too good to be true seasonal travel offers. Criminals are waiting for you to click on their 'offer' links so they can start infecting your computer in hope of obtaining your bank details. Be sure to only use trusted online travel agents.
- 10 - Delivery scams;** With many gifts being sent via postal services at this time of year it isn't a surprise if you come home and there is a '*Sorry we missed you! Please call the number below to re-arrange delivery*' card waiting for you. However, be very careful to check it is genuine as fake delivery cards are being delivered by criminals and the phone number you are asked to call is a very high premium rate telephone number. You could run up a phone bill of hundreds of pounds waiting for someone who is never going to answer.
- 11 - Smishing;** Criminals use text messages pretending to be a bank requesting an **immediate** response or else your account will be locked. However, whilst some banks do send text messages to alert you of suspicious activity you should never respond by text. Contact your bank on a number you know is legitimate.
- 12 - Romance scams;** Only use well established and trusted dating websites. Do not click on links from someone you do not know or trust. Do not communicate with anyone you find on these sites away from the site as you could be putting yourself into a vulnerable position.

## UNWANTED PHONE CALLS?

We have created an unsolicited scam phone call log that we have included in this months pack.

As we work hard to close down mailings across the world, the criminals are evolving and are attempting to invade peoples homes via the telephone.

Our investigators are keen to help close down the access routes that these criminals are using to invade our homes and therefore would like as much information from our Scam Marshals as possible.

On the log, there is also some information on about how you can sign up to the Telephone Preference Service (TPS).

If you would like more of these logs then please include a note in your next mailing return.



## PEN PAL

We are still looking for people to join our Pen Pal scheme!

In this pack you have received a sign up form with more information about the scheme. If you would like to write to another Scam Marshal about anything you want then please complete the form and return to us in this months freepost mail bag, we can then match it with a Pal, and send it through to them!

## FRIENDS AGAINST SCAMS

Friends Against Scams is now two years old. In that time we have trained over 145,000 friends through our training, recruited over 100 FAS organisations, over 1000 SCAMchampions and over 300 Scam Marshals!

Our aim is to recruit *1 Million friends by 2020*, can you help?

If you haven't done the online training, please visit- [www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk](http://www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk) to complete the Scams awareness training and try and encourage your friends and family to complete it as well. Together we're stronger.



Is there anything else you would like to see in this Newsletter? Please feel free to give us some feedback, just pop it into your freepost envelope when you send in your scam mail.

For more information on the team and our initiatives please visit our website:

[www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk](http://www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk)

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