

# Scam Marshal Newsletter

January 2024

Total Scam Marshals across the UK: 2,603



**NATIONAL  
TRADING  
STANDARDS**

Scams Team

## Greetings readers and welcome to this January Newsletter.

### Unwinding the Web of fraud: Protecting Yourself in the Digital Age.

In a world dominated by technology and connectivity, fraud has evolved into sophisticated schemes that prey on unsuspecting individuals across the globe. From phishing emails to fake investment opportunities, the landscape of fraud is vast and ever-changing. Understanding the mechanisms behind fraud is crucial for protecting ourselves in today's world.

One common form of fraud is phishing, where criminals use deceptive emails, messages, or websites to trick individuals into revealing sensitive information such as passwords or credit card details. These phishing attempts often appear legitimate, imitating official communications from banks, government agencies, or respected companies. To prevent becoming a target of phishing, it is essential to verify the authenticity of messages and never click on suspicious links.

Another growing concern is online shopping fraud, where criminals create fake e-commerce websites to attract customers with appealing deals on popular products. These scams often result in individuals paying for goods that never arrive, leaving victims without a possible course of action. To reduce the risk of online shopping fraud, consumers should only use trusted websites, read reviews, and be vigilant of deals that seem too good to be true.

Investment fraud has also become more widespread in the digital age. Criminals use effective tactics to convince individuals to invest in non-existent or fraudulent opportunities. Red flags include promises of guaranteed high returns, pressure to invest quickly, and requests for payment through unusual methods. Before making any investment, individuals should conduct in-depth research, seek professional advice, and remain mistrustful of unrealistic promises.

In the ever-evolving landscape of fraud, awareness and informed decision-making serve as powerful tools. By staying informed about the latest tactics employed by criminals and adopting take-charge measures, individuals can navigate the digital world more safely, minimising the risk of being targeted by these deceptive practices.



**Return address: FREEPOST, NTSST, MAIL MARSHALS**

**Scam Marshals!** When sending in your scam mail, please remember to keep the letter/s in their original envelope and write the date it was received as it can help with our investigations! Thank You!

## Cybersecurity terms you need to know.

**E-commerce:** E-commerce (electronic commerce) is the buying and selling of goods and services, or the transmitting of funds or data, over an electronic network such as the internet.

**Clickjacking:** When someone is deceived into clicking on one element on a webpage instead of their intended target. The attacker exploits this by using the victim's click for malicious purposes, such as activating their webcam, installing malware, or gaining access to online accounts.

**Firewall:** Any technology, be it software or hardware, used to keep intruders out from your computer.



### **What is Mail Fraud?**

Mail fraud is a deceitful practice that exploits traditional postal services and has evolved into a persistent threat. Criminals use cunning techniques to deceive people into divulging personal information or sending money. These deceptions often prey on individuals' trust, exploiting their desire for financial gain. As technology advances, criminals adapt, employing sophisticated tactics to create convincing, yet deceitful, postal correspondence. Vigilance and awareness are crucial to prevent these schemes.

### **Year-End Highlights: A Snapshot of 2023**

As we say goodbye to a busy year, let's look at some interesting numbers that sum up the last twelve months.

**Number of Friends:** With a significant increase of +40,395, our social network now boasts an impressive total of **1,131,280** friends.

**Scam Marshals:** The ranks of our vigilant scam marshals have surged, reaching a total of **2,603**

**Scam Mail Received:** Our brilliant Scam Marshals intercepted **1,960** scam mail, highlighting ongoing challenges from deceptive online activities.

**Action Fraud – 0300 123 2040 – [www.Actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.Actionfraud.police.uk)**

**Police Scotland – 101 (from within Scotland) - [www.scotland.police.uk](http://www.scotland.police.uk)**

**Citizens Advice – 0808 223 1133 – [www.citizensdvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensdvice.org.uk)**

**Citizens Advice Scotland - 0800 028 1456 - [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)**

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