

Scam Marshal Newsletter

November 2023

Total Scam Marshals across the UK: 2,572

ADDRESS BOX



NATIONAL
TRADING
STANDARDS

Scams Team

Greetings readers and welcome to this November Newsletter.

With dropping temperatures and high energy prices, criminals are shamelessly exploiting the money worries of households.

While household energy bills have decreased from their record highs in 2022, the average bill still exceeds the winter 2021/22 levels by over 50%, a consequence of the ongoing cost of living crisis. This has led many households to endure colder living conditions, while others have sought ways to enhance their energy efficiency.

With the approach of colder months, opportunistic criminals are ready to exploit the prevalent financial concerns through various scams. Learn how these criminals are targeting individuals and how to shield yourself from becoming a victim of their crimes.

Ofgem Impostors: Shameless criminals are posing as the energy regulator Ofgem and falsely offering free boilers. Typically, victims receive unsolicited phone calls, emails, text messages, or doorstep visits from individuals claiming to represent Ofgem. These impostors ask for the victims' bank details. They use cover stories, such as helping with switching to a cheaper energy provider or offering grants or free new boilers and other energy efficiency upgrades for homes. It is essential not to share your personal or bank details without verifying the legitimacy of the request.

Solar Scammers: Some households with solar panels have been approached by companies offering a free check of their installation. These companies may pressure you into buying maintenance contracts or expensive repairs. If you find yourself in this situation, ask how the company obtained your contact details and whether they have your consent to contact you. Before signing any contract with a new company, do your research, get multiple quotes, and thoroughly review websites and customer reviews.



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.

Virus: A virus is a type of malicious software that can alter, damage, or delete data on a computer or device. It can also spread to other systems, often through harmless methods like email. In rare cases, a virus can even harm a computer's hardware.

Phishing: Phishing is a cyber-attack technique in which an attacker, often posing as a legitimate company, attempts to deceive individuals into revealing sensitive information, such as login credentials, personal information, or financial details. This type of attack typically occurs through electronic communication methods such as email, text messages, or messaging.

Email Spoofing: Email spoofing involves forging the sender's email address to make it appear as if an email is coming from a trusted or legitimate source. This is often used in phishing attacks, where the attacker attempts to trick the recipient into revealing sensitive information or clicking on malicious links.



Each and Every Story is Important.

Behind the numbers and news about fraud, there are real people and families whose experiences are often overlooked or dismissed. Victims of fraud often feel ashamed and are afraid to report it to the police or share their ordeal with loved ones, leaving them to cope with the aftermath on their own.

Similar to how society sometimes responds to victims of intimate partner violence, fraud victims face undue levels of blame and shame. People may ask, "How could you be deceived?" or "Why didn't you see it coming?" This kind of response, which many of us have been guilty of at some point, intensifies feelings of shame, making the impact of fraud even more emotionally and psychologically damaging.

The statistics make it clear that there is a scam out there for everyone. While each victim's experience is unique, **every story deserves understanding and support.**

Action Fraud – 0300 123 2040 – www.Actionfraud.police.uk

Police Scotland – 101 (from within Scotland) - www.scotland.police.uk

Citizens Advice – 0808 223 1133 – www.citizensdvice.org.uk

Citizens Advice Scotland - 0800 028 1456 - www.cas.org.uk

www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk