

# Scam Marshal Newsletter

October 2023

Total Scam Marshals across the UK: 2,549

## ADDRESS BOX



**NATIONAL  
TRADING  
STANDARDS**

Scams Team

## Greetings readers and welcome to this October Newsletter.

Earlier this year the government published its fraud strategy and we wanted to share some of the information with you. It signifies that the government is now taking the increasing threat of fraud and scams seriously, recognising the significant harm it poses to individuals. To save you the effort, our team at Friends Against Scams has examined the report and extracted the key points that we believe you should know.

The UK is a highly appealing target. According to estimates 70% of fraud and scams either originates from foreign sources or involves an international element. Individuals and businesses in the UK are particularly attractive to criminals due to our relatively high levels of wealth, the widespread use of the English language, our rapid adoption of online technologies, and the speed and efficiency of our payment systems.

In the year ending December 2022, fraud and scams targeting individuals in England and Wales amounted to a staggering £6.8 billion.

### So, what is the government doing about it, I hear you ask?

They have set up a three-pronged plan with the aim of cutting fraud by 10% by the end of this Parliament.

**Pursue fraudsters:** The government is allocating £100 million to improve the criminal justice system and the law enforcement agencies. A new **National Fraud Squad** will be established with a primary focus on investigating and disrupting criminals who target both businesses and individuals.

**Block fraud:** The government will initiate efforts to address fraud and scams at its roots, ensuring that every aspect of the system is able to combat it effectively. An appointed Anti-Fraud Member of Parliament will spearhead these efforts.

**Empower people:** Public messaging will be improved and updated across government agencies as well as non-profit organisations and industry. Special attention will be given to equipping teachers to transmit essential anti-fraud and online security skills to young people through new educational initiatives. Additionally, a dedicated police network will be established to reinforce public safety and security.

The UK will also host a global fraud summit in 2024, with the Home Secretary serving as the chair.

**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!

## Bank Fraud – What is it?

This is when criminals aim to get your personal sensitive information, such as usernames, passwords, PIN number or credit card details by pretending to be from your bank.

They would usually do this by cold calling saying that there is a problem with your bank account. They may imply a sense of urgency or an immediate risk to your account.

Remember banks will never ask for your PIN number or any passwords over the phone or email. Neither will they ask you to carry out 'test' transactions online. Banks will only provide services through their official banking apps.

If you've lost money or have been hacked as a result of responding to a call, you should report it.

In England, Wales or Northern Ireland, report it to Action Fraud online or by calling **0300 123 2040**.

In Scotland, report to Police Scotland by calling **101**.



## Housing Association Home Repair Scams

We are starting to get reports of fake companies committing home repair scams. These companies operate by cold calling, posting leaflets and taking to social media. They will claim to be calling from 'Repairs Team', 'The Housing Maintenance Department', or even 'working on behalf of your local authority'. When asked, they will refuse to provide a genuine company name and any callback number provided will be a false number.

Once engaged in conversation the criminals will try to get as much information about your home and the repairs required along with who your housing association is.

If you receive a call like this, you should hang up and report it to your housing association.

The **National Trading Standards** Scams Teams investigators would also like to hear from you so if you have received a call like this then please get in touch by calling 01323 416444 or by emailing [scamsteamadmin@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:scamsteamadmin@surreycc.gov.uk) .

**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)**