

Consumer Alerts – July 2024

Bogus property repairers

Beware cold callers knocking on doors offering property repair work. An older resident agreed to a small external painting job for what initially seemed a reasonable price but quickly escalated to nearly £1000 for less than an hour's work. The traders revisited the Preston resident later the same day wanting more money and threatening to cause damage.

This resident was cold called, but the same trader also used flyers to generate business. Be very wary about contacting traders via flyers. Best advice is to always use known local trusted traders.

Trading Standards advice is to always say no to cold callers. The Safetrader scheme can help you find a trader in your area, contact 0303 333 1111 or go to www.safetrader.org.uk.

Mattress scam

Beware being caught off guard by mattress sellers in your area. A resident in the Fylde area came back from the shops to find a white van partially blocking their drive. The driver stated he had a Premier Inn mattress for sale, surplus to requirements. The £150 mattress was sealed but has since been found to not have appropriate flammability labelling and looks to be of poor quality.

Cold callers offering household goods

Reports of door knocking throughout Lancashire have been received. The sellers offer household goods such as tea towels, dish cloths and other

homewares. Often the sellers can make you feel uncomfortable or sorry for them. Never feel pressured to buy anything on your doorstep, the goods may be sold at inflated prices and be of poor quality.

Email voucher request scam

This hacking scam has recently been reported by two Lancashire residents. Beware receiving an email from a close friend or acquaintance that initially states "I'm unable to speak over the phone due to serious throat pain caused by laryngitis. Let me know if you receive this email." If a response is obtained the sender requests an e-gift card from Apple, Amazon, Apple Tesco, Sainsbury's or Morrisons be sent directly by email to a friend of theirs who is seriously ill. In one case the friend had liver cancer, in another case it was for a niece who had a type of blood cancer. This scam aims to prevent you ringing the person whose has been hacked and preys on recipients' kind natures. Unsuspecting recipients lost between £250 and £300.

Be suspicious of unusual, out of character email requests from people you know, double check the email address the email has been sent from.

Report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040 or via www.actionfraud.police.uk.

Scam emails can be reported via report@phishing.gov.uk.

For information on current scams see www.facebook.com/StanleyDards/.

Contact the Trading Standards Service via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 0808 223 1133.

