

Please find below the Latest Consumer Scam alerts from Norfolk Trading Standards.

To view full details and associated images please see the Trading Standards website, where you can also sign up to receive weekly email alerts >

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/business/trading-standards/scams/consumer-alerts>

IMPORTANT > Police will NEVER call and ask for your bank account details, bank card or credit card details or ask you to withdraw cash to hand over to couriers. If you get a call like this it's a SCAM, HANG UP and report it to Police.

Many thanks  
PC Pete Davison  
Community Engagement Officer – North Norfolk

## **Information Alert – Buying Online this Black Friday or Cyber Monday? Check out our top tips to stay safe – 26 November 2020**

With the Black Friday and Cyber Monday weekend fast approaching and many sites offering their deals already, check out our Top Tips for buying safely online:

- **Who are you buying from?**  
If you're buying from a website that you don't know or for the first time make sure you check them out, especially if they're claiming to have stock of this years 'must have items' that no one else has:
  - Does the site have full contact details?  
If it's just an email address be very wary
  - Look online, what is the site's reputation?  
What are other customers saying about them?  
Check feedback, if available, but remember it can be falsified
  - Have a good look at the site and its quality  
What is the copy like, are there spelling mistakes, do all the links on the pages work?
  - Are they offering eye catching prices or items not available anywhere else?  
What they're offering could be poor quality, unsafe, counterfeit or not even exist

If you're in any doubt, back out of the purchase

- **Is it just too good to be true?**  
Be very wary of links shared via social media to websites offering big name brands with huge discounts. Where is that link going to go and will your data be safe?  
Just clicking through to check it out could put your device in danger, make sure your antivirus and phone software is up to date so that you don't fall victim to any kind of malware that could be lying in wait.

- **Watch out for Scam emails**

With many people looking to shop for bargains across the Black Friday and Cyber Monday weekend scammers may also be using this period as an opportunity to send out fake email offers amongst the numerous ones from genuine companies. Take some extra time to check out emails before clicking on links or opening attachments, if you're not sure just delete it

- **How are you paying?**

When buying online, make sure you use a secure form of payment. Credit cards, debit card and secure payment sites like PayPal give you extra protection from fraud than other methods of payment.

Never pay for items by directly transferring money into an account unless it is someone you know and trust, as this offers very little protection.

Before entering any payment details online, ensure the link is secure:

- A padlock symbol should appear in your browser's address bar, make sure the padlock is not on the page itself
- The web address should begin '**https://...**' The 's' stands for secure
- In later versions of browsers, the address bar or name of the site will turn green

- **Out and about? Avoid purchasing on public wi-fi**

Public wi-fi can now be found in many locations and provides a convenient way to search online without using any of your data allowance. But connecting to that network means any personal data you send could be intercepted if the wi-fi connection is compromised.

If you're planning to buy something when away from home stay safe and use your data instead

- **When do you need it by?**

This is a very busy time of year for many online businesses. Make sure you check the delivery date for your order. If it's just an estimated date it could change, and you could end up waiting till after Christmas for your delivery

- **What if there is a problem?**

If you need to return anything, proof of purchase is very important. Keep all emails and receipts, electronic or otherwise.

Also when you receive items you have ordered online check them before wrapping them. This way you'll avoid disappointment on Christmas Day and can sort problems quickly with the supplier

Need more advice following an online purchase? Contact our partners the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **freephone 0808 223 1133**

## **Scam Alert – Telephone cold calls claiming to be from HMRC – 25 November 2020**

We continue to receive reports from Norfolk residents about telephone cold calls claiming to be from HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

Recent reports have included an automated recorded message call informing the call recipient that 'HMRC have issued a warrant for your arrest due to tax evasion'. These calls are appearing to come from a range of different 'spoofed' numbers.

More information about HMRC related phishing emails and bogus contact can be found on the [GOV.UK website](#).

We always advise to be very wary of any approach made by a telephone cold call. If you receive this type of call our advice is DO NOT interact with the call and HANG UP immediately.

You can report suspected scam telephone calls to us via our partners the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133

We recently talked about this type of scam on BBC Radio Norfolk with Chris Goreham. You can listen again for the next 29 days via [BBC Sounds website](#), with our section starting at 3:08:45.

## **Scam Alert – Telephone cold calls offering to stop telephone cold calls – 20 November 2020**

We are warning Norfolk residents to be aware of telephone cold calls stating they can help stop telephone cold calls after again receiving reports from residents recently.

We are aware that there are a number of companies who cold calling claiming to be able to offer this 'service' with some charging one-off fees and others charging ongoing monthly fees.

It is extremely unlikely that any 'service' of this type can legitimately claim to be able to stop cold calls, so any money paid is unlikely to achieve any benefit.

We always advise **never** to buy items or agree to ongoing services when approached by a telephone cold call.

If you have responded to one of these cold calls, which you now believe may not have been genuine or the company is taking an ongoing monthly payment and you need further advice contact our partners the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **freephone 0808 223 1133** or via the [Citizens Advice online reporting form](#).

## **Rogue Trader Alert – Doorstep Cold Caller offering 'gardening work' – 23 November 2020**

We are warning residents to be on their guard following a cold calling incident in the Necton area.

During the reported incident a male cold called at a property and offering to undertake garden work. The resident declined the offer and reported the incident to us.

We always advise:

- **Never** deal with cold callers looking to undertake work on or around your property
- **Never** agree to have work done by somebody who is 'just passing' or take their word that it needs to be done at all
- **Never** allow a cold caller access to your home, roof or garden even if they are offering to do tasks for a small fee or free
- **Never** pay for work before it is completed
- When looking to have work done on or around your property **only** deal with reputable companies you have researched and chosen yourself and have obtained a written quotation from before commencing the work

It is possible this doorstep cold caller could move on to other areas around Norfolk.

If you see cold callers operating in Norfolk please contact us through our partners the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **0808 223 1133** or Norfolk Constabulary via **101**. If you feel intimidated or are concerned for vulnerable neighbours call **999**.

Looking for a Trader you can Trust? Try a Norfolk Trusted Trader. To search our directory and read feedback from their customers visit [www.norfolk.gov.uk/trustedtrader](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/trustedtrader).

To manage your contact details, additional information and subscriptions, please login through the [member portal](#).