



POLICE CONNECT
Keeping you informed, keeping your community safe

Good afternoon,

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

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

Many thanks

PC Pete Davison
Community Engagement Officer - North Norfolk

Scam Alert – Facebook Messenger messages asking to use your PayPal account – 20 August 2020

There has been a surge of reports where the recipient has received messages through Facebook Messenger from friends or family requesting to use their PayPal account to receive funds from the sale of items on eBay. Overall, between 1 June and 31 July 2020 a total of 95 reports have been made to Action Fraud, which specifically mention that the item sold was a camera.

Messages are sent by fraudsters purporting to be friends or family stating that they have sold a camera on eBay but that they are unable to process the payment as they either do not have a PayPal account or because their PayPal account is not working. The request is that the message recipient receives the funds into their own Pay Pal account, then, after transferring it into their own bank account, they forward it onto an account controlled by the fraudster.

If the victim agrees the payment is transferred into their Pay Pal account but, after the money is transferred out, the initial transaction is reversed leaving the account in negative balance.

Multiple reports have also been received from victims stating that their Facebook Messenger accounts have been hacked and that these fraudulent messages have been sent to all their contacts on their behalf.

The total reported loss for these reports is £44,035.

Follow these steps to protect yourself:

- Verify financial requests – Be wary of unusual messages asking for assistance with financial transactions. Even if the message appears to be from someone you know and trust, you should check it's really them that sent the message by calling them or speaking with them in person
- Unusual financial requests – Never respond to any requests to send money, or have money transferred through your account, by someone you don't know and trust
- Secure your accounts – You can protect your important online accounts by using a strong separate password and, where available, turn on two-factor authentication (2FA)
- If you have made a payment – Inform your bank, or payment service provider, such as PayPal, as soon as possible. They can help you prevent any further losses. You should also monitor your bank statements regularly for any unusual activity

You can report scams received to us via our partners the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **freephone** 0808 223 1133.

Information Alert – Friends Against Scams, live online sessions – 19 August 2020

With scams remaining an ever-present issue, the recent rise in COVID-19 related scams has made it as important as ever to ensure as many people as possible are scam aware.

Friends Against Scams is a National Trading Standards Scams Team initiative which aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims by empowering everyone to take a stand against scams.

Friends Against Scams is designed to inspire action, highlight the scale of the problem, change the perceptions of why people fall for scams and make scams a community, regional and national topic.

Currently face to face Friends Against Scams training sessions are on hold due to COVID-19 but our colleagues at NatWest who are part of Friends Against Scams are now able to offer virtual training sessions to groups via Zoom.

If you are part of a community group in Norfolk who are meeting up virtually and would be interesting in receiving a Friends Against Scams training session, please contact any of the NatWest Norfolk Community Bankers, their contact details are:

- Lucy.Croft@natwest.com – 07711 763317
- Lisa.Auker@natwest.com – 07590 803131
- Amber.Osborn@natwest.com – 07866 892371

Rogue Trader Alert – Doorstep cold caller asking for internet provider details – 17 August 2020

We are warning residents following a report we have received today about a man cold calling properties in the NR2 area of Norwich who is requesting personal details and internet provider information.

The man is wearing ID, however the card is not visible and he declined to state his name or business details when asked by the resident.

Our advice to residents is:

- If someone cold calls at your property remember it is your doorstep so your decision whether you even answer the door, if you can check through a spy hole or look from a window to see who is there
- Think about your home security, make sure other doors to your property are locked before answering the front door
- If the person is offering services or trying to sell something, politely but confidently say you are not interested and close the door
- If the person is claiming to represent an authority, organisation or charity ask to see ID. If no ID is offered, the caller refuses to let you check it, or you can not verify it is genuine politely but confidently say you are not interested and close the door
- As the cold caller leaves, if you can safely gather information regarding their description or vehicle this information is very useful to us and the police when looking at cold calling incidents

You can report doorstep cold calling to us via our partners the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on **freephone 0808 223 1133** or to Norfolk Constabulary on **101**. In an emergency always dial **999**.

Why not consider setting up a No Cold Calling zone in your community? [Find out more about No Cold Calling Zones.](#)

If you would like one of our No Cold Calling door stickers contact us on 0344 800 8020.

Scam Alert – Telephone cold calls claiming to be from ‘Amazon’ – 14 August 2020

We are again warning residents to be on their guard for telephone cold calls claiming to be from ‘Amazon’.

In recent weeks we have received a number reports from residents who are receiving cold calls claiming to be from Amazon. Examples of these calls include:

- Cold calls where the caller claims to be from Amazon and states that a payment of £79 is due and ‘must be paid immediately’. The cold caller then attempts to get the call recipient to log into Amazon on their computer
- Recorded message calls claiming ‘your Amazon Prime subscription is about to expire, and a payment of £79 will be automatically taken’ the call then states you can ‘press 1 to cancel the payment’
- Recorded message calls claiming your Amazon account ‘is about to be cancelled unless you update your bank details’ the call then states you can ‘press 1 to speak to customer service’
- Recorded message calls making similar claims but referencing ‘Amazon Prime Video subscriptions’

Some residents have reported receiving multiple calls within a day delivering the same message but originating from different numbers.

In previous reports, where residents have interacted with recorded message calls, they have then been connected to a person who attempts to gather personal, account or financial details.

These calls are a scam and are not connected with Amazon in any way. If you receive this or a similar call our advice is do not interact with the call, do not give or confirm any information and hang up.

If you have received a telephone cold call which you believe to be a scam you can report it to us via our partners, the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on their **freephone number** 0808 223 1133.