

Consumer Alerts – January 2022

Covid scams

A reminder about the 2 current scams doing the rounds in relation to Covid:

Beware of Covid Pass Fraud where criminals send an email, a text message or contact you by phone pretending to be from the NHS offering fake vaccine certificates. The fake vaccine certificates have also been found for sale online and on social media.

The NHS Covid Pass is free. Please note the NHS will never ask for payment or financial details and will never issue fines or penalties in relation to your Covid Pass.

The NHS Covid Pass is available via the NHS App, the NHS website or by calling 119.

Beware of Omicron variant PCR test phishing emails. The scam message states 'apply now to avoid restrictions' and is headed up with the NHS logo. One version of the email asks you to click on a link to order your Omicron PCR test, another version gives you a button to click labelled 'Get it now'.

Be suspicious of emails received that offer such tests and forward them to report@phishing.gov.uk

Information on how to get a PCR test if you have Covid symptoms can be found at [Get a free PCR test to check if you have coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) or by calling 119.

Cold callers selling household items.

Residents are warned to be on their guard after a young man claiming to be an ex-

convict cold-called in the Poulton area and sold a lady a £20 cat grooming mitt, saying that he needed the money for a room. He then asked to use the toilet and went into her house.

Please do not deal with cold callers - giving money to the homeless is best done via charities who will ensure your money is spent on those in need. Please do not let strangers into your house, if you feel threatened, call 999.

Doorstep callers offering glass replacement.

Beware cold calling sales people in the Nelson area offering to replace the glass in your windows. In one instance the householder was advised the glass needed to be changed, believe they were over charged despite the price allegedly being discounted. The work is still not complete and the householder now believes the work did not need doing in the first place.

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

Postcode lottery scam telephone call

Beware of a call advising you have won the postcode lottery. A Lancashire resident received such a phone call, the caller stated the winnings amounted to a free holiday, free consumer vouchers from various supermarkets and an arbitrary sum of £289. The resident was then asked for the details from his cheque book, the sort code and account number and advised once these were given he would receive a phone call in

30 mins to confirm the winnings had been transferred to him. The caller had a foreign accent and the resident could hear voices in the background having identical conversations, and realised it was a scam.

This scam can target you even if you haven't entered a lottery. Similar lotteries tend to be by subscription, paying a monthly amount via your bank and any winnings will automatically be paid to you via the payment means you used to enter in the first place.

Scam at Motorway Junction

A motorist at the Carnforth Motorway Junction was flagged down on his approach to the Junction by a distressed man who asked if he could borrow some money for petrol as he had lost his credit cards and needed to get to London. The man was of very smart appearance and his car was in good condition. Wanting to help, on agreeing, the man then raised the amount to £100. Luckily the motorist only gave £20.

The same thing happened again a few weeks later, but this time at the Lancaster motorway junction.

Beware of such approaches. Report concerns to the Police. Do not give money or personal details to strangers.

Scammer requesting train ticket money

Again in Carnforth a report has been received of a man entering a local shop and asking for £20 loan for a train ticket to London. The man sounded very plausible explaining he had lost his wallet and credit cards. Luckily neither the shop keeper or customers gave the man any money.

Beware of such requests where people prey on the generous nature of local residents who may be tempted to help. Again report any incidents to the Police.

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

Further information about current scams can be found on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/StanleyDards/