

Consumer Alerts – May 2025

Beware cold callers offering tree services

The Service has received reports of cold callers knocking on doors offering tree services in the Wyre area. Be wary, often such cold callers will escalate an initially low price, cut down your favourite trees and shrubs with no care or skill and don't take away the cuttings.

Such doorstep callers often also use flyers offering their services, with inviting offers such as special rates for OAPs. Use caution, always employ know local trades people, ask friends and family for recommendations.

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.

Winter fuel allowance scam text

Beware receiving a text that looks as if it has come from the 'DWP' to say that the Winter Fuel Allowance of £200 to £300 cannot be paid because the resident has not completed the application. The text provides a deadline for the end of the month in which the text was sent, giving it a sense of urgency and urges the resident to click on the link to complete, otherwise the application will close.

Report scam texts by forwarding to 7726.

Scam banking fraud phone call

A Lancashire resident recently received a phone call from someone claiming to be from their bank, alleging they had identified fraudulent activity on their

account, someone was trying to use it to make high value Amazon purchases. As the call continued the scammer told the account holder to buy an Apple gift card for £400 and they would put £500 in their bank account – luckily the victim realised this was a scam and called a family member.

Often the scammers, pretending to be from your bank, will justify such requests for high value gift cards as a way of being able to trace the money, but later in the scam they will ask for the code from the gift card. The codes can be resold for cash.

Beware ticket fraud this summer

Action Fraud is urging people planning to buy tickets or attend this summer's events and concerts to stay vigilant to criminals. Only buy tickets from the venue's box office, official promoter or agent, or a well-known ticketing website.

Avoid paying for tickets by bank transfer, Credit card or payment services such as PayPal give you a better chance of recovering the money if you become a victim of fraud. Use a password you do not use for other accounts. Use 2 factor authentication if you can. Be wary of unsolicited emails, texts or adverts offering unbelievably good deals on tickets.

Is the vendor a member of STAR? If they are, the company has signed up to their governing standards.

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

