

Scam Marshal Newsletter

December 2023

Scam Marshals across the UK: 2,602



**NATIONAL
TRADING
STANDARDS**

Scams Team

Greetings readers and welcome to this December Newsletter.

In early November, the National Trading Standards Scams Team hosted the Global Anti-Fraud and Enforcement Network conference in the somewhat overcast city of Brighton. Despite the less-than-ideal weather, the conference proved to be a triumph. This annual event has been alternating between North America and Europe for several years, and this year marked a milestone with the highest number of participants ever recorded.

Traditionally, countries like the USA, UK, Canada, Malaysia, and the Netherlands have consistently dispatched representatives from governmental and security entities. However, this year saw a noteworthy expansion, with Sweden, Belgium, and Ghana also sending delegates.

The conference featured compelling presentations from esteemed organisations such as Interpol, the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Home Office, and various private companies. The noteworthy aspect here is the heartening trend of more countries acknowledging the severity of fraud and actively creating disruptive strategies to combat it.

The conference highlighted a collective determination to tackle fraud, not only through law enforcement but also through collaborative efforts, information sharing, and new strategies. As countries increasingly recognise the global nature of the threat, the conference served as a testament to the growing international unity in the fight against fraud.



Return address: FREEPOST, NTSST, MAIL MARSHALS

Scam Marshals! When sending in your scam mail, please remember to keep the letter/s in their original envelope and write the date it was received as it can help with our investigations! Thank You!

Cybersecurity terms you need to know.

Authentication: The process of identifying a user's identity, making sure that they can have access to the system and/or files. This can be accomplished either by a password, face scan, or fingerprint scan, sometimes even a combination of the above.

QR Code: Is a digital link that when you scan with a smartphone, it quickly directs you to a specific website, or piece of information. This makes it convenient for quickly accessing websites, making payments, or sharing information.

Encryption: Coding used to protect your information from hackers. Imagine it as the secret code for sending spy messages.



Water suppliers warn of scam letters.

Scam letters are circulating impersonating water supply companies. These letters inform you that you're eligible for a reduced bill or free water. The letters include a link to a copycat water supplier website and a QR code. Water companies say they will never ask for personal or financial details, access to your online account, direct payments, or pressure you to make an urgent decision.

Online scams increase ahead of Christmas.

Purchase fraud, where you are deceived into paying for an item or service that doesn't exist, is up by 35%, according to data from TSB. Criminals create fake social media listings and websites that offer fake bargain deals to defraud unsuspecting online shoppers.

Please stay vigilant while shopping online during the holiday season. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all of us here at the National Trading Standards Scams Team.



Action Fraud – 0300 123 2040 – www.Actionfraud.police.uk

Police Scotland – 101 (from within Scotland) - www.scotland.police.uk

Citizens Advice – 0808 223 1133 – www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Citizens Advice Scotland - 0800 028 1456 - www.cas.org.uk

www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk