

## Consumer Alerts – February 2023

### **Beware cold callers offering driveway work**

Beware being cold called by traders offering driveway work. In one case a central Lancashire resident agreed to their drive being cleaned and resealed. On returning from the bank with cash the trader claimed the work was finished and left with the money. It was later found out that the trader had not applied any sealant and that water had been poured over the drive to give it an instant 'wet look'.

### **Roofing Scam**

A South Lancashire resident was cold called and agreed to one half of their roof being retiled. The job soon escalated to include the other half of the roof. Money was paid, over £5000, and shortly after the householder experienced leaks via the roof. On inspection no work has taken place on one side of the roof, the other side the tiles have been removed and then put back.

Always do your own research to find a reputable trader, ask for recommendations from family and friends and use known local tradespeople.

**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](http://www.safetrader.org.uk)**

### **Beware Amazon scam telephone call**

A Lancashire resident was landed with a bill of almost £3000 after receiving a phone call purporting to be from Amazon and claiming their account had been hacked.

The victim was asked to log into their Amazon account to find an iPhone they had not ordered, in their basket. When typing in a search as requested by the scammer, there was an error message. The shopper was then asked to download Amazon to their desktop and allow the caller access, then to log into Paypal and provide One Time Passwords.

The resident's identity was stolen by the scammers. Please do not allow yourself to be caught off-guard, be suspicious, even if something seems to ring true - for example, an error message in the place where the caller says it should be.

### **Scam flight booking email.**

Residents are warned about scam emails that appear to come from genuine airlines- but with small differences in the email addresses when the detail is checked. They target consumers through unsolicited phishing emails, deceptive advertising, and fake websites- then vanish and become uncontactable when they have your money.

One recent scam resulted in a loss of £1470 paid on airline tickets by a Lancashire consumer. The scammers request admin fees or claim flights have been cancelled and demand rebooking fees (not something a genuine airline would do), sometimes followed by requests for yet more money to secure the ticket.

Be wary of heavily discounted ticket offers or last-minute deals from traders you have not dealt with before- check the genuine website independently.

### **Beware online subscription traps**

Online shoppers are asked to be on the alert after a Lancashire shopper inadvertently agreed to a membership plan when purchasing goods. Sometimes websites can provide attractive discounted prices for shoppers, but you may not realise you are agreeing to a monthly subscription until you see payments coming out of your bank account.

Goods sometimes sold in this way can include leisure/ sportswear, jewellery and cosmetic products. Always check the terms and conditions, websites should always make any subscription requirements very clear to shoppers. If you have signed up, legitimate websites should let you cancel the subscription at any time.

**Suspicious phishing emails can be forwarded to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)**

**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/](https://www.facebook.com/StanleyDards/)**