

Consumer Alerts October 2023

Roofers pretending to be from the Council

A Preston resident contacted an online roofing business asking for a quote for a small repair. The Trader turned up, would not give a quote, wanting the householder to agree there and then to a larger job. The householder did not agree, said no and the trader left, only to receive a call from a withheld number ten minutes later informing him that the caller was from Preston Council and that he had to have the offered roofing work done as soon as possible, since his roof breached health and safety legislation.

This is a fraudulent attempt to scare the householder into agreeing to the job. The business was found online and listed many five-star reviews - please be wary if dealing with traders found online, who do not come recommended, reviews can be invented and locations hidden.

Roofers claiming rotten joists.

Beware being cold called by traders offering roofing work. A Burnley resident received a knock on their door by roofers and was told they were working in the area and had noticed a problem with the roof. After agreeing to the roof work the job escalated when the trader, having access to the attic, claimed the roof joists were rotten and needed replacing, charging the householder an extra £5,000 on an already overpriced job that may also have not been necessary.

Trading Standards advice is to always say no to cold callers. The Safetrader scheme can help you find a trader in

our area, contact 0303 333 1111 or go to www.safetrader.org.uk

Potential digital switchover scams

Between now and 2025 most telephone providers will be moving their customers from old analogue landlines over to new upgraded landline services using digital technology. The transition from analogue to digital technologies has created new opportunities for criminals to target vulnerable residents. Of particular concern are the users of healthcare telephony devices, which may need changing as part of the digital switchover. Criminals may use phishing emails, fake websites, or phone calls to trick residents into providing personal information, such as bank account details or passwords. Please be suspicious if contacted in this manner.

HMRC Scam

Action Fraud has raised awareness of a number of reports received from people who have been called by somebody purporting to be from HMRC.

The criminal says there has been a tax fraud allegation against the victim, and the victim has failed to respond to letters about it. They then tell the victim there's a warrant out for their arrest and put them through to a 'police officer' who appears to be calling from a Police station phone number.

The victim is then told that HMRC is working in conjunction with Amazon, and they must go to the Post Office to buy a number of £100 Amazon vouchers, then send the codes to the criminal.



Such scams can be reported by emailing phishing@hmrc.gov.uk, and also via [Action Fraud](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk), 0300 123 2040, www.actionfraud.police.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/