

From mountain to sea

Trading Standards

Doorstep Crime, Scams & Safety

Bulletin 5

Doorstep Crime & Scams

- The service has not received any reports of doorstep callers since the last bulletin but we would urge residents to remain vigilant and report any concerns to Trading Standards or Police Scotland.
- There are numerous Amazon scams in circulation that relate to 'prime membership, account hacking, the purchase of vouchers and the downloading of apps. All, if successfully executed can gain access to your personal/ banking information, Amazon account and your money.

A resident received a telephone call claiming to have news about a PPI claim owed to them by their bank. The caller asked the resident to purchase a quantity of Amazon vouchers from the local supermarket to pay fees to a deliveryman who would shortly be calling at their home. It should be noted that legitimate PPI companies do not operate in this way, neither does Amazon, payment of fees is never by voucher.

- We have received a number of reports relating to non-delivery of goods. This may be due to a delay caused by the Covid-19 crisis but it's also likely that due to the increase in on-line sales, some scammers have set up temporary websites to acquire some money in the short term. This has been seen before, often at Christmas, when pop-up or mirror sites appear selling hard to get hold of toys/ goods or offering them at cheaper prices but not delivering. The websites are then removed and the consumer unable to pursue a refund.
- 'Zoom' video conferencing has increased in popularity during lockdown but reports received nationally indicate that users working from home & individuals have been targeted by scammers. Fake voicemails asking the user to call a 'premium rate number' and emails with a link to an 'urgent' meeting have all been reported. Calling the premium rate number will result in excessive costs and clicking on the link takes the user to a fake log in page which if inputted renders the account and other information accessible to the scammer. Users should be suspicious of any voicemail



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or link that includes a redirection, particularly if unexpected. If in doubt ignore and delete it.

Safety

- The service continues to provide advice to local businesses who are producing hand sanitiser.

Contact

For urgent Trading Standards matters, contact Aberdeenshire Council's Trading Standards at 01467 537222. For non-urgent enquiries, please contact Consumer Advice Scotland at <https://www.consumeradvice.scot/> or on 0808 164 600.

Contact Police Scotland on 999 if you need urgent assistance or 101 for non-urgent matters.

For more information about scams please visit Friends Against Scams at <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/>

Please direct any media queries to news@aberdeenshire.gov.uk or 01467 538222 during office hours.