

From mountain to sea

# Trading Standards

## Doorstep Crime, Scams & Safety

### Bulletin 4

#### Doorstep Crime & Scams

- 'Shut Out Scammers' concludes on 26<sup>th</sup> June. This year the focus has been on doorstep crime. We have seen a reduction in the number of reports relating to doorstep calling during lockdown but as restrictions have eased these have started to increase. We expect a further increase in reports when the travel restriction is removed in Scotland.
- Reports have been received of doorstep callers in Peterhead offering for sale potted plants left over from a local job. Business vehicles offering services typically associated with doorstep calling contracts have also been seen operating in the Westhill and Newtonhill areas.
- Residents are reminded that they are under no obligation to engage with doorstep callers and if a 'No Cold Calling' sign is displayed at a property the caller is committing an offence if they ignore it. Concerns should be reported to Trading Standards or Police Scotland.
- We would like to emphasise that social distancing rules also apply to doorstep callers. If a doorstep caller is not adhering to these rules or does not have sufficient hygiene measures in place, then they should be reported to Trading Standards.
- When reporting doorstep crime or concerns about doorstep callers, try to remember key details about the trader such as business names, addresses, names, age, accents, descriptions, vehicle type, registrations and signage. Keep all original paperwork, leaflets and brochures.
- Amazon scams remain prolific. One resident received numerous calls from an individual purporting to be from Amazon who sought payment for goods to permit delivery. Payment is made at the time of sale, so no follow up call should be required. Others reports involve automated calls that redirect recipients to an individual who requests bank/card details to pay for Amazon Prime and a downloadable app, neither of which is normal Amazon procedure.



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- There have been numerous national reports of scams involving Contact Tracing. These vary from requesting bank/card details to pay for Covid-19 testing kits to simply phishing for personal details and other information. Genuine Contact Tracing staff will ask questions but will never ask for bank details, PIN numbers, or payment of any sort, including for a testing kit.
- There has been a notable increase in the demand for puppies and kittens during lockdown. New and dedicated websites have been created to meet demand and reports received nationally identify significant price increases, additional costs for insurance and delivery and failure to provide the puppy or kitten. Residents are advised to make proper checks to ensure they are buying from a reputable breeder and not a scammer or puppy farm.

### **Safety**

- We continue to receive reports of non-complaint PPE and hand sanitisers available for sale in Aberdeenshire and through social media platforms. Poorly labelled products can indicate other safety issues so it is important that concerns are reported to Trading Standards.

### **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](mailto:news@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or 01467 538222 during office hours.