

Welcome to the National Trading Standards (NTS) Scam Marshal Newsletter: January 2021

Total Scam Marshals across the UK: 1,750



NATIONAL
TRADING
STANDARDS

Scams Team



Happy New Year

Dear Scam Marshals,

Wishing you all a very happy New Year, as we enter 2021 and with the vaccine for coronavirus being rolled out in the UK, we are all hoping that this year will mark the end of the COVID-19 and we can all go back to living the lives that we enjoyed.

Throughout 2020, the team received thousands of scam letters from yourselves and thousands more during December, our Scamnsety month. The team are currently filtering through all the mail that has been sent in and passing it on to our investigations team.

Early indications show that there is an influx of inheritance scams coming into the country. Typically, a mailing will come in on one side of A4 paper claiming to be from a banker in a far-flung country (usually Hong Kong or China) saying that they are in control of a bank account of a recently deceased person who just so happens to have the same surname as the recipient. They are not asking for money straight away but rather that the recipient contacts them through sending an email to confirm interest.

Once the recipient has emailed the supposed banker, the scam starts and efforts are made to secure vital personal and banking information, 'administration' and 'banking' fees are introduced. If you receive one of these letters, please **DO NOT RESPOND** and forward it into the Scam Marshal team at the freepost address at the bottom of this newsletter



SCAMNESTY
2020

You will not be asked to pay for the COVID-19 Vaccine

Criminals have already started targeting consumers with vaccine related scams. Consumers are being contacted through a text messages, emails and phone calls claiming to be from the NHS or their local GP surgery asking you them register for the vaccine and too (you guessed it) make a payment for the vaccine.

Coronavirus is being used as a pretext to lure vulnerable consumers into parting with money and vital personal information with the Local Government Association reporting a 40% increase in reported scams since the start of the pandemic

THE VACCINE IS FREE and if you are asked to make a payment for it, report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040, you can forward suspicious text messages to 7726 and emails to report@phishing.gov.uk

NHS: You have recently been given access to apply for your NHS vaccine. For further information and to apply, proceed via: <https://nhs.uk-apply.com/?=19vacc>.

www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals

FREEPOST
NTSST
MAIL MARSHALS

Scam Marshals scoops the Tackling Economic Crime Awards

It is with great pride that we would like to announce that you and all the Scam Marshals won the coveted 'Outstanding Prevention Initiative' award on December 9th 2020. We were up against some stiff competition from North Yorkshire and Mersey Side Police, Cheshire Constabulary, Lloyds Banking Group, Government Counter Fraud Function (GCFF) and west Yorkshire Trading Standards who all do great work in helping to prevent financial harm to consumers in the UK.

The initiative would not work without you and we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your hard work in helping to spread the anti-scam message throughout your communities, this award just goes to show how important you are.

We are hoping to increase our numbers this year so if you know someone who would be a great Scam Marshal and wants to take a stand against scams then please ask them to register on the Friends Against Scams website or to write into the freepost address, we can protect more people from scams in 2021!



2020 – the Stats

Here are some figures from the National Trading Standards Scams Team to cover what was achieved in 2020:

329 New Scam Marshals

Over 2,000 items of scam mail received (not including Dec 20)

Over 400,000 people have completed the Friends Against Scams awareness session

189 Businesses signed up to Business Against Scams employing 117,629 employees

1,747 Call blockers installed in consumers' homes, these will block over 2 million scam and nuisance calls after years

Through investigations, the NTS Scams Team have prevented 10,069,130 items of scam mail reaching consumers homes saving £82,965,830 of losses since 2016

Through the Friends Against Scams awareness program the team have saved £34,750,471 of consumer harm since 2016

961,724 scam victims identified since 2012

For more information on the team and our initiatives, please visit our website.

If you would like to withdraw from the Scam Marshal scheme, please write to the address at the bottom of each page.

www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk/ScamMarshals

**FREEPOST
NTSST
MAIL MARSHALS**