

Trading Standards Scams News

A round-up of the latest scams alerts



SUMMER 2026

Welcome to our Scams Newsletter

Welcome to the latest edition of the Leicestershire Trading Standards Service scams newsletter. Here you will find details of the latest scams and information about how to protect yourself and report a scam.

Will Writing Scams

Warning: Be Alert to Unregulated Will Writing Services

Leicestershire residents are being warned to be on their guard of companies offering cheap Will writing and other legal services.

These companies are often unregulated but may give the impression that they are run by qualified solicitors, giving a false sense of trust. They are known to advertise online on TV shopping channels or in shopping centres. Once a consumer has made an enquiry, a representative may arrange to visit them at home.

What to Watch Out For

During home visits, consumers have reported:

- Being pressured into purchasing more expensive wills
- Being encouraged to buy potentially unnecessary add-ons such as:
 - Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA)
 - Property Trusts
- Experiencing high-pressure sales tactics, confusion, and excessive charges

In some cases, promised documents were never received, or arrived after the 14-day cancellation period. This made it difficult to cancel agreements or contact the company.

🏠 ! Concerns About Property Trusts

Caution is advised regarding Property Trusts in particular. Some consumers were told these would protect their home from being used by the local authority to pay for future care home fees.

However, reports indicate:

- Homeowners later experienced difficulties selling their properties.
- Some companies charged fees of up to 2% of the estate.

✅ How to Protect Yourself

- ✓ **Check credentials** – ensure you are dealing with a regulated solicitor or legal professional. You can find one here 👉 [Find a Solicitor - The Law Society](#)
- ✓ **Avoid cold callers** – never hand over money, property deeds, or personal details to someone unexpected.
- ✓ **Be wary of pressure** – urgent deadlines or aggressive sales tactics are red flags.
- ✓ **Take your time** – legitimate professionals will never rush you into signing paperwork.



🚨 Report It

If you believe you've been targeted or are the victim of a scam:

- 🌐 Visit: [UK's Home for Reporting Cyber Crime & Fraud - Report Fraud](#)

Or

- 📞 Call: **0300 123 2040**

Fancy A Day Out?

The Surge in Fake ‘Days Out’ on social media – How to Spot Them and Stay Safe

Fraudsters are increasingly using professional-looking posts on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok to advertise non-existent events or heavily discounted tickets. Alongside the growth in legitimate promotions, there has been a worrying rise in fake or misleading adverts designed to scam consumers.

The posts often feature eye-catching images, convincing descriptions, and limited time offers to create a sense of urgency. In some cases, scammers impersonate well-known venues, brands, or even local attractions to gain trust and encourage quick purchases.



Key tactics include:

- **Eye-catching ads** featuring stunning destinations and low prices.
- **Fake business pages** with logos, reviews, and branding
- **Direct messaging** to collect payments quickly.
- **Limited time offers** to pressure people into booking without checking.

Once payment is sent, victims may receive no ticket or confirmation at all, fake tickets or itineraries, last-minute cancellations with no refund, or a trip that never existed.

Scam Warning Signs Checklist

Look out for these common red flags:

- ✓ Prices that seem too good to be true
- ✓ Messages claiming "limited tickets remaining" or countdown timers creating pressure to buy quickly
- ✓ Poor spelling, grammar or low-quality adverts
- ✓ Newly created social media pages with very few followers
- ✓ A lack of genuine, independent customer reviews

- ✓ Comments that seem repetitive or overly positive
- ✓ Requests to pay by bank transfer or unfamiliar payment methods
- ✓ Links that take you away from official websites
- ✓ Lack of contact details or booking information

How to Stay Safe

Before making a purchase:

- ✓ Visit the attraction's official website or social media pages to confirm the event is genuine.
- ✓ Search for independent reviews rather than relying on comments attached to the advert.
- ✓ Purchase tickets directly from reputable retailers or authorised sellers whenever possible.
- ✓ Use secure payment methods, such as a credit card, which may provide additional protection.
- ✓ Take a moment to research before clicking on links to make a purchase

Report Suspicious Adverts

If you come across a suspicious advert or believe you have been targeted by a scam:

- ◆ Report the advert to the social media platform.
 - ◆ Contact your bank or card provider if you have made a payment.
 - ◆ Report the incident to Report Fraud (details at the end of this newsletter)
 - ◆ Share information with friends and family to help prevent others from becoming victims.
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Community Engagement

🚨 Trading Standards out & about

In association with GoLearn! Leicestershire, over 70 staff and learners took part in scams awareness sessions becoming 'Friends Against Scams' and receiving pin badges as recognition. Discussions

included information about doorstep, telephone, online and postal scams with easy-read

handouts and an accessible video. These sessions were led by our Scams Officer, Zina and included lots of useful tips to help stay safe from scams. Zina had this to say about the sessions:



'It was a pleasure to work with staff and learners at the GoLearn! Leicestershire Adult Learning Service. The groups were very engaging and proactive in learning about scams, fraud, and doorstep crime, which was delivered through the Friends Against Scams initiative. This was also a safe space for learners to share stories and experiences, which helps to break down the stigma of being a scam victim.'

👥 Carers' Week

Carers Week is an annual campaign that aims to increase awareness of caring, to highlight the challenges faced by unpaid carers, and celebrate the invaluable contribution they make to families and communities across the UK. It also encourages those who may not recognise themselves as carers to

identify their role and access the support and information available to them. The theme for **Carers Week 2026** was "**Building Carer Friendly Communities.**"



This theme focused on the positive and lasting impact that supportive communities can have on the lives of carers.



Carer-friendly communities are places, services, organisations, and community groups where unpaid carers are recognised, understood, and valued. It was a pleasure to support this event at which we had lots of positive conversations and provided advice and information to carers and their families around fraud and doorstep crime.

🚨 Summer Doorstep Crime Warning 🚨

As the weather warms up, rogue traders and doorstep criminals often become more active. Be cautious of anyone offering unsolicited home repairs, gardening work, or cleaning services. Never agree to work on the spot, pay cash up front, or feel pressured into making a quick decision.

Remember:

- Always use reputable traders.
- Check identification before opening the door.
- Do not let unexpected callers into your home.
- If in doubt, keep the door closed and seek advice from a trusted friend or family member.

If you are concerned about a suspicious caller, report it to Trading Standards via Citizens Advice on **0808 223 1133** or contact the police if you feel threatened.

Understanding Banking Fraud

Learn how to protect yourself.

Banking fraud happens when criminals use your personal information such as passwords and bank details, to access your account and steal money. They often use clever tactics called “social engineering” to trick you into sharing sensitive information, such as login details and passcodes.

Fraudsters often pretend to be trusted organisations, for example, your bank, HMRC, or broadband provider, to gain your confidence. The stolen details are then used to access your account and make an unauthorised payment. They may also try to gain access to your bank account through ‘remote access’ where they persuade you to give them control of your computer.

Banking fraud can happen across several channels:

-  Internet banking
-  Telephone banking
-  Mobile banking apps

How to Protect Yourself

-  Only provide organisations that you trust and have given consent to with your personal or financial details.
-  Check your bank statements regularly and report any unfamiliar transactions immediately to your bank.
-  Be cautious of suspicious or unexpected pop-ups during online banking sessions.
-  Treat unsolicited contact with suspicion—always verify by contacting the organisation directly using official contact details you know are genuine.
-  Remember - just because someone knows your personal information, it doesn't mean they are genuine.
-  Review and enable the security features offered by your bank to keep your account safe.

Head to the Take Five website to learn how you can protect yourself  
<https://www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>

Finally....

⚙️ Useful tools and resources:

- Check if something might be a scam 🖱️ www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- Check if a telephone number might be a scam 🖱️ www.who-called.co.uk

If you would like to report a scam, or you have been a victim of fraud, you can get in touch with the following organisations:

- Report Fraud 🖱️ www.reportfraud.police.uk or call on ☎️ 0300 123 2040 to report fraud and cyber-crime.
- Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline 🖱️ ☎️ 0808 223 1133 for further advice and next steps.
- If you think fraudsters may have obtained your money, contact your bank immediately using the contact details on the back of your card or bank statement.
- To keep up to date with the latest scams advice & information, you can join over 2700 followers on the Leicestershire Trading Standards Service Facebook page 🖱️ www.facebook.com/leicstradingstandards



Leicestershire Trading Standards Service

Email: tradingstandards@leics.gov.uk Facebook/LeicsTradingStandards



Find out how to stay ahead of
scams at gov.uk/stopthinkfraud >>

