

# ★ JOIN THE FIGHT ★

Suffolk Consumer Champion

## Weekly Bulletin



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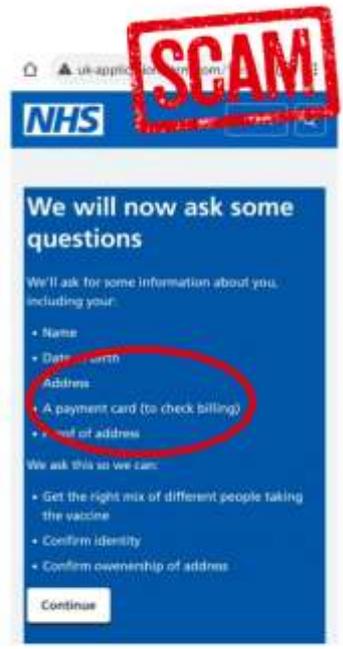
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Forward

### This week's top features

NHS: We have identified that you are eligible to apply for your vaccine. For more information and to apply, follow here: [uk-application-form.com](https://uk-application-form.com)



We are hearing further reports across the Country of people being contacted out of the blue with offers of a coronavirus vaccination.

Most recently reports have been of a text message that purports to be from the NHS, which contains a link that takes you to a website that looks very similar in design to that of the genuine NHS website. The website is bogus, and asks you to provide a banking card to make a payment.

There have also been reports of elderly residents receiving a call to advise that their vaccination would be carried out at their home, and that the caller required their name, address and also financial details to pay for the vaccine.

Other reports relate to a recorded voice message on the telephone and the recipient is required to respond by pressing 1 when receiving the call. They are then asked to give personal information, as well as financial details to book their vaccination.

**THESE ARE SCAMS.**

Criminals are exploiting the current situation to attempt to steal personal details and your money.

The NHS is currently offering the COVID-19 vaccine to people most at risk from coronavirus. These people will be contacted by the NHS.

**NO PAYMENT IS REQUIRED FOR THE VACCINE.**

There has been a surge worldwide of vaccine related phishing email scams. We expect to see an increase in these.

Phishing emails seen have contained malicious files that installed malware, or links to bogus websites to obtain the victim's information.

Protect yourself from vaccine-themed phishing campaigns by checking the email addresses on incoming messages and be alert to hyperlinks that contain misspelled domain names; be aware of highly emotive language designed to manipulate you; do not supply login credentials or personal information in response to an email; monitor key financial accounts regularly; and keep software and apps updated.

Report all scams to us via Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

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In the rush to get a New Year's bargain, it's easy to forget that this is a popular time for criminals. Make sure any websites you're purchasing from are authentic by carefully checking the address is spelled correctly.

Criminals can set up convincing websites with spelled addresses very similar to the authentic one, so it's important you #TakeFive and access the website you're purchasing from by typing it into your web browser, instead of clicking on links.

Remember: If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

If you think you've fallen for a scam, contact your bank immediately on a number you know to be correct such as the one listed on the back of your debit/credit card and report it to Action Fraud online at [actionfraud.police.uk](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by calling 0300 123 2040, or to Trading Standards by calling 0808 223 1133.

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### DOOR TO DOOR SALES ARE NOT ALLOWED!

In the past few days we have received three reports of traders going door to door in Beccles, Haverhill and Woodbridge, offering home improvement and cleaning services.

Tier 4 and lockdown restrictions mean that door to door sales are not permitted, and sales activities should be carried out remotely (such as by phone, online, or mail).

If you are approached at the door and are not expecting a caller, our advice is not to answer.

Report all doorstep sellers to us via 0808 223 1133, or to Suffolk Police by dialling 101 or online here <https://www.suffolk.police.uk/contact-us/report-something>

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# **BUSINESS SUPPORT HELPLINE**

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## **0800 998 1098**

During these unprecedented times, it's more important than ever that you and your businesses can get to the right support as quickly as possible.

That's where the government Business Support Helpline comes in.

Speak to one of their advisers today for free, impartial business support.

Your business can get advice and financial help from government-backed schemes. Get financial support if your business is affected by coronavirus (COVID-19). You can also get:

- help with tax
- regional help with exporting
- advice on writing a business plan
- advice on new rules following the end of the Brexit transition

You can contact the government's Business Support Helpline for free advice via:

Email: [enquiries@businesssupporthelpline.org](mailto:enquiries@businesssupporthelpline.org)

Telephone: 0800 998 1098

You can also find free support, advice and sources of finance through [New Anglia Growth Hub](#).



### How can I protect myself from postal scams?

- Contact the [Mailing Preference Service](#) to have your name taken off direct mailing lists in the UK (this won't cover mail that is unaddressed or from overseas).
- Put a 'no junk mail' sign on your door. You can make this sign yourself or buy one online.
- If you receive something you think may be a scam, don't respond, and throw it away. You can join the [Scam Marshal scheme](#) that encourages you to send them your scam mail so they can help catch the scammers.
- You can avoid being added to mailing lists which scammers sometimes get hold of. When you register to vote, tick the box to opt out of the 'edited register' (also known as the 'open register') as this can be used to send unsolicited marketing mail.
- Always check the credentials of any company or legal professional you're unsure about.

- If you have received or are receiving something that looks like scam mail, talk about it with someone you trust, such as a friend or family member, or call us via Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

Although many people feel embarrassed about falling for a scam, there's nothing to be ashamed of. Many people fall victim to scams, and fraudsters have a range of techniques to trick people and are trying new scams all the time.

If you think you have given a scammer your financial details, contact your bank immediately.

Report the scam to us via 0808 223 1133.

Contact [Victim Support](#) if a scam has made you feel anxious, fearful or guilty. They provide emotional and practical help to victims of crimes and scams.

## Wash your hands of coronavirus scams!

Friends Against Scams aims to protect and prevent people from becoming victims of scams.

**STOP. Be aware of people offering or selling:**

- Virus testing kits
- Vaccines or miracle cures – there is currently no vaccine or cure.
- Overpriced or fake goods to protect yourself from coronavirus such as anti-bacterial products.
- Shopping or medication collection services.
- Home decontamination services.

**CHALLENGE. Question communications and encourage others to do the same.**

- Don't be rushed into making a decision. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Only purchase goods and services from legitimate retailers and take a moment to think before parting with money or personal information.
- Don't assume everyone is genuine. It's okay to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you. If in doubt, speak to someone you trust.
- If someone claims to represent a charity, ask them for ID. Be suspicious of requests for money up front. If someone attempts to pressurise you into accepting a service they are unlikely to be genuine. Check with family and friends before accepting offers of help if you are unsure.



**PROTECT. Contact:**

If you think you have been scammed, contact your bank first.  
For advice on scams, call the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on  
**0808 223 11 33.**

To report a scam, call Action Fraud on **0300 123 2040.**

**NATIONAL TRADING STANDARDS**

Scams Team

To learn more about different types of scams, visit: [www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk](http://www.FriendsAgainstScams.org.uk)

Be a good Friend, help to protect your family, friends and neighbours from scams.

**Read it. Share it. Prevent it.**

#ScamAware  
#Coronavirus

**Product Recalls**

**Fraud and Scam Advice**

**Consumer Rights**

**Friends Against Scams**

**Become a Consumer Champion**

**Become a Business Champion**

**If you need advice, or want to report a scam or rogue trader,  
call us via 0808 223 1133.**