

## September 2018

### Consumer Alerts

#### 'Working next door'

Three men driving a white van, scruffily dressed, approached a householder in Longridge saying they were carrying out work to the driveway next door and repairs were needed to pipework that went under both drives. It would cost a lot more for United utilities to repair and had to be done. On being challenged the rogue traders said they would get the council to ring. The householder then received a call allegedly from the council. Throughout, the traders pushed for £1300, the householder refused.

We have received information from the Normoss and Poulton areas regarding two men with Irish accents who enter back gardens without permission of the householder, try the back door and walk in through open back doors, saying they are working in the area and have assessed the work that needs doing in the garden. One retired lady was told that she would have to pay £2000, again she refused.

#### Beware homewares sellers.

We have had reports from the Helmshore, Rossendale area about doorstep sellers, consisting of groups of teenagers dropped off by a van in the morning and collected later on in the day. They are claiming to be ex-offenders from the North East and are selling general homewares such as dishcloths and dusters for small sums. When asked they say they are on work experience. While nothing negative is known about these sellers, householders may be sympathetic, and doorstep sales are legal, best advice is to say no.

#### Facebook rented house scam

A rented house was recently advertised on Facebook by a selling page unrelated to either the real landlord or the letting agent. Photos cut and pasted from the genuine letting agent's site were used in the advert. Following a query from a prospective tenant, detailed texts about the house were sent by the scammer. The aim of the post appears to be to obtain a deposit transfer from interested tenants. Fortunately, in this case the prospective tenant did some internet checks and spoke to the real landlord and letting agent before sending the requested money.

#### Beware telesales for health pills

Unsolicited telephone calls are being received from companies selling pills which they then send by post. One elderly customer had received frequent calls from at least 4 different suppliers over a few months which had resulted in £3,300 spent on his debit card. Most of the products come with a 30 day return policy- but arrive after the 30 days on the enclosed paperwork has expired- when the companies are contacted they refuse to accept returns due to the time delay.

**The Safetrader scheme can help you find a trader in your area, contact 0303 333 1111 or go to [www.safetrader.org.uk](http://www.safetrader.org.uk)**

**Contact the Trading Standards Service via the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06**

