

## Warwickshire Trading Standards Scam Alerts and Recent Safety Campaign Information

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Good afternoon,

Please help us to spread these warning and safety information by forwarding this message on, featuring the information on a website or in a newsletter, or posting a link on social media.

The scam alerts can also be found at: <https://safeinwarwickshire.com/2021/05/14/census-21-text-scams-and-other-scam-warnings/>

### Free Gift Pop Ups Warning

Warwickshire residents have been caught out by scam computer pop ups offering free gifts. To receive their free gift, consumers are asked to input their credit or debit card details to pay for postage and packaging. £1 is usually taken immediately. However, what consumers don't realise to that they may have unwittingly signed up to a subscription service (for example for face creams or health supplements) and authorised a continuous payment authority. Later on larger amounts of money, usually close to £100 is taken and this continues on a monthly basis until the continuous payment authority is cancelled.

More about continuous payment authority: <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/recurring-payments/>

Continuous payment authority and subscription scams: <https://www.getsafeonline.org/shopping-banking/subscription-traps/>

### Recycling Banks – Know the Difference!

Recycling banks for clothing and shoes etc. often located in car parks or other public places are a common site and many people use them in the belief that their donations will always benefit charitable causes.

However, not all charity recycling banks are genuine. Scammers sometimes place bogus charity banks amongst genuine ones! These often appear to look like genuine charity recycling banks.

Residents are advised that if you want to ensure that your unwanted items will benefit a charity, read the information on the recycling bins first. Genuine charity bins will usually carry the name and registered number of the charity. You can look up a charity here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

Recycling banks are also operated by private businesses that collect for profit. These are usually marked with a business name and sometimes a limited company number. Some may be signed 'commercial recycling'.

### Scammers Turn from National Insurance Numbers to NHS Numbers in Telephone Scam

Scammers are now cold calling Warwickshire residents to tell them that their NHS number has been suspended, Warwickshire Trading Standards is warning. Recipients of these bogus recorded phone calls are encouraged to press a number to speak to someone to 'resolve the problem'. Victims are pressured in to handing over personal and financial information in order to obtain a new NHS number. The more a fraudster knows about you, the easier it is for them to commit identity theft and other frauds.

Never provide cold callers with any personal or financial information.

Help and advice on identity theft: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/a-z-of-fraud/identity-fraud-and-identity-theft>

### **'Met Police' Scam**

Warwickshire residents have reported receiving bogus phone calls from people claiming to be from the Met (or Metropolitan) Police. The callers claim that the resident's debit card has been used recently. These bogus callers then attempt to get the call recipient to reveal personal and financial information and may ask them to move their money to a 'safe' account that is really controlled by the scammer.

Bank transfer scams: <https://www.which.co.uk/consumer-rights/advice/what-to-do-if-you-re-the-victim-of-a-bank-transfer-app-scam-aED6A0I529rc>

### **Census 21 Text Scam**

Despite the Census having been completed, some people are still receiving bogus Census text messages. One reads: 'CENSUS: There is missing information from your Census application. Failure to update your details may result in a £1000 penalty'. A link then directs the recipient to a scam website.

Another text message states that the recipient has not completed and returned their CENSUS form. Again it threatens the recipient with a £1000 fine and directs them to click on a link in the text message to resolve the matter.

Always treat text messages with caution. Avoid clicking on links in text messages where at all possible. If you think a text message is genuine, visit the organisation or business website by typing the genuine web address in to the web browser.

The Government state on their website that now Census Day has passed, they are sending letters to everyone who hasn't returned their census. If you receive any sort of communication purporting to be from the census and are not sure if the letter, email or text is genuine or not, you can contact the census to check.

Census has advisers available to help you at the following times:

- Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm
- Saturday, 8am to 1pm

Telephone free: 0800 141 2021 (England)

Visit: <https://census.gov.uk/>

## **Safety Campaign Information**

### **Register my Appliance 'Safer in Seconds' Campaign**

Register my appliance is a public information safety campaign which encourages people to register their domestic appliances so manufacturers know where the products are in case a safety repair is ever needed.

- Never miss out on appliance recalls
- Be the first to know of any safety repairs or recalls
- Improve your after sales service

- Keep in touch with upgrade news

People can register 60+ brands of appliances of up to 12 years old at [www.registermyappliance.org.uk](http://www.registermyappliance.org.uk)

### **New Blind Cord Safety Campaign**

The Government is reminding people of the potential dangers of blind cords and loops to children and the steps they can take to reduce the risks.

Looped blind cords and chains can strangle children and young people. Although changes to standards for blinds in 2014 have led to improved product safety, products installed earlier may not have these safety features and millions of households could be affected.

New blinds with looped cords must have child safety devices installed at the point of manufacture or be sold with the blind.

### **Safety tips below to help make homes safer**

#### **1) Fit a tidy, tensioner or a cleat**

Tidies and tensioner should be firmly fixed to an adjoining surface to ensure that the cord or chain is permanently held tight. Cleats should be positioned out of children's reach on an adjacent surface that is at least 1.5 metres from the floor. After blind use, cords should be fastened up in a figure of eight making sure all the spare cord is secured on the cleat.

#### **2) Move furniture away from windows**

Children love to climb so keep furniture away from blinds. This includes cots, beds, highchairs, and play pens.

More help and advice: <https://www.rospa.com/campaigns-fundraising/current/blind-cord>

**To make a consumer complaint or for consumer help and advice, please contact the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.**

**For consumer or business help and advice, including details of our approved trader scheme, please visit our website: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards>**

**Sign up for regular scam alerts to your email inbox:**

**<https://mailchi.mp/warwickshire/scamawareness>**

**Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: <https://www.facebook.com/warwickshiretradingstandards>  
<https://twitter.com/WarksTSS>**

**If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please contact [simoncripwell@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:simoncripwell@warwickshire.gov.uk)**

Best Wishes

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Trading Standards Service**

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Warwick

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