

Update from the Force Crime Prevention Team

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## Subscription Scams

More than 20 million UK adults have signed up to a subscription without realising it, and of these, 4.7 million are still paying for a subscription they didn't ask for, according to new figures released by National Trading Standards. The data reveals the widespread impact of so-called 'silent scams' that involve low value but high-volume thefts.

Silent scams can include 'subscription traps', where consumers are automatically signed up to regular payments after making a single purchase or agreeing to a free trial, as well as one-off purchases based on misleading information where the item is of poor quality and not as expected. Due to their relatively low value, these payments often go unnoticed, unchallenged and unreported. We encourage people to report all scams, no matter the amount.

You can report a scam to Report Fraud:  0300 123 2040  <https://www.reportfraud.police.uk/>

Read the full story on the National Trading Standards Website [here](#).

## NATIONAL TRADING STANDARDS

Protecting Consumers  
Safeguarding Businesses

## Winter Driving Advice



Cold winter mornings are a familiar challenge for UK drivers. Frosted windscreens can tempt even experienced motorists into bad habits that risk fines, damage to vehicles, or serious collisions. Knowing the correct way to clear your windscreen - and how to drive safely once you're on the road - is essential during winter months.



Do stay with your vehicle while it defrosts



Don't pour boiling or hot water on the windscreen



Don't drive with partially cleared windows

[Click here](#) to read a practical guide to the do's and don'ts of clearing frosted windscreens and driving in winter conditions from the Older Driver's Forum.

## Driver Skills 60+ Scheme

Hampshire County Council (HCC) operate a driving appraisal scheme for Hampshire residents called the 'Driver Skills Scheme 60+'.



Driver Skills  
Scheme 60+

The appraisal takes place from the person's home using their own car and is delivered by specially selected and trained Driving Standards Agency (DSA) Approved Driving Instructors (ADI) who have a good understanding of the needs of experienced drivers. [Click here](#) to find out more.

## Coercive Control is a form of Domestic Abuse

It's been 10 years since controlling and coercive behaviour offences were introduced under the Serious Crime Act 2015.

This was an important development in supporting those effected by emotional forms of domestic abuse.

### What is coercive control?

Coercive control is a form of domestic abuse where somebody you are personally connected to displays a pattern of behaviour which causes you to feel controlled, dependent on them, isolated from others, and scared.



### What could this look like in a relationship?

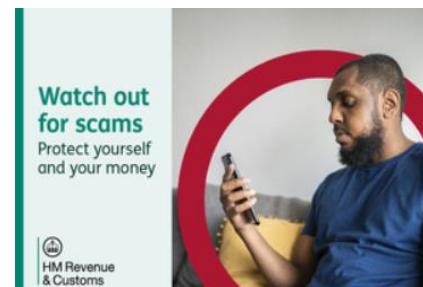
- Constantly putting you down by calling you names and making you feel worthless
- Not allowing you to see your family and friends when you would like to
- Threatening to spread false information if you do not act they way they would like
- Having control of your finances and not letting you be independent
- Controlling what you are allowed to wear
- Monitoring your location at all times and not allowing you to go to certain places / leave the house without them
- Depriving you of basic needs such as food or care
- Monitoring how you spend your time
- Tracking what you do online or on your phone
- Threatening to hurt people close to you

### What to do if your relationship looks like this?

- Report to Police via 101, or 999 if you are in immediate risk of harm
- Reach out to [partner agencies](#) who will be able to give you safety advice
- Tell a family member or friend what you are experiencing

## Self-Assessment Scam

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has issued a warning after more than 4,800 Self-Assessment scams have been reported since February 2025. Scammers use persuasive and threatening tactics to target people when they are more likely to receive correspondence from HMRC. They send fake tax demands or attempt to pressurise people to hand over personal information.



HMRC has taken swift action to close down nearly 25,000 fake websites and phone numbers in the last 10 months. HMRC will never:

- leave voicemails threatening legal action or arrest
- ask for personal or financial information via text message or email
- contact customers by email, text, or phone to inform them about a refund

Anyone who receives suspicious communication from HMRC can forward emails to [phishing@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:phishing@hmrc.gov.uk), and SMS messages to 60599.

Click on the link to find out more about how to [report scam activity](#) to HMRC.