

# Consumer Alerts – March 2026

## Warranty scam

Beware receiving a telesales call offering warranty cover on household appliances. A Lancashire householder initially agreed, but having second thoughts, cancelled the contract within the provided 14 day cooling off period, however, has since noticed direct debits from other warranty cover providers coming out of their bank account that were not agreed to.

Before agreeing to any warranty cover contract, have regard to the age and value of the product to be warrantied and check the terms and conditions. Report suspicious or fraudulent transactions to your bank. To reduce the number of telesales calls you receive register with the Telephone Preference Service, [www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk).

## Investment scam

A Lancashire resident lost £1,000 after sending money to a telephone cold caller who offered to invest their money for them. The resident was so convinced by the scam, they tried to send more money, but this was blocked by the bank. The persistent scammer, who called the resident over thirty times on just one day alone, has now vanished with the money.

This was a very professional scam, using an untraceable website and an offshore bank account. In the UK, almost all financial firms must be authorised or registered by the Financial Conduct Authority, be very cautious if dealing with a non UK business.

## Beware calls for mis-sold solar panels

Use caution if you receive an email or call claiming that you can claim compensation for mis-sold solar panels. While some homeowners may have been genuinely mis-sold solar panels, in some cases scammers may try to leverage this by offering fake legal services to fight your case for you in exchange for a fee. You'll typically be charged to initiate the service, then the scammer may follow up with additional 'legal costs'. The fraudsters then disappear. If you do choose to use a claims management company, check that it has the correct authorisation to offer these services by checking the FCA website [www.fca.org.uk](http://www.fca.org.uk)

## Scam fashion retailers using AI

Beware of scam fashion retailers using AI on their websites. The sites use AI to trick people into buying items that look nothing like the images advertised. In other cases, the sites look as if they are based in the UK but are in fact overseas, or the website is fake and the goods never arrive. Always pay by card or a secure payment platform and check the web address using a reputable URL checker such as [www.getsafeonline.org/checkwebsite](http://www.getsafeonline.org/checkwebsite)

**Trading Standards advice is to always say no to cold callers. 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 0808 223 1133.**

