

15/09/2017

# ★ JOIN THE FIGHT ★

Suffolk Consumer Champion  
Weekly Bulletin

## This week's top features



### **Rogue Trader Pleads Guilty**

This week Richard Palmer of Hammond Auto Limited of Newmarket, pleaded guilty to 8 offences at Ipswich Crown Court.

Trading Standards started to investigate when a theme emerged with the complaints received; these generally involved consumers paying deposits or full

payment for vehicles which they never received. In March 2015 the forecourt was inspected by Suffolk Trading Standards and computers, mobile phones and documentation were seized. Complaints of the same nature continued and in July 2015 a warrant was obtained and exercised on Mr Palmer's home address where further evidence was seized.

It emerged that BEIS (The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy) were also investigating matters concerning Hammond Autos Ltd. Trading Standards continued to work jointly with BEIS who were pursuing offences in relation to obtaining credit and acting as a Company Director whilst an undischarged bankrupt.

Over 30 witness statements were obtained from consumers who paid Hammond Autos LTD deposits / full payments (between £200 - £2500) for vehicles, stretching back to contracts made in March 2013 and who have failed to receive the vehicle or a full refund. Total losses by consumers amount to over £30,000.

Richard Palmer will be sentenced on 9th October 2017.

A red rectangular poster with white text and graphics. The text reads: "If you've received a suspicious call or voicemail from 'HMRC' about a lawsuit being brought against you, this is a scam. Do not comply." Below the text is the URL "gov.uk/hmrc". To the right is a white circle containing a red lowercase letter 'i'. In the bottom right corner is the HM Revenue & Customs logo, which includes a crown icon and the text "HM Revenue & Customs".

If you've received a suspicious call or voicemail from 'HMRC' about a lawsuit being brought against you, this is a scam. Do not comply.

gov.uk/hmrc

HM Revenue & Customs

### **Scam HMRC Calls**

Received a call from 'HMRC' claiming a lawsuit is being brought against you?

This is a SCAM! Hang Up!

a number of residents have recently been contacted on the telephone by a caller claiming to be from HMRC (the tax office) stating that the person owed money in unpaid tax. Threats of arrest were then made if the outstanding amount was not

paid.

One Suffolk victim who reported the scam to Suffolk Police lost £1500 to the scammers.

**How to protect yourself:**

- HMRC will never use texts to tell you about a tax rebate or penalty or ever ask for payment in this way.
- Telephone numbers and text messages can easily be spoofed. You should never trust the number you see on your telephones display.
- If you receive a suspicious cold call, end it immediately.

Report [fraud and cyber crime](#) and receive a police crime reference number.

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**Storm Aileen**

Following any damage that may have been caused by Storm Aileen, Trading Standards is issuing a warning for people to beware of bogus cold callers.

Rogue traders use unusually stormy weather as a way of persuading people that they need work done on their property - such as repairing loose roof tiles or removing damaged trees.

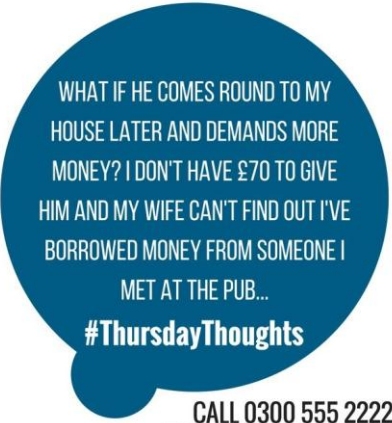
You can't tell a good trader from a bad one on the doorstep. Avoid buying from unexpected/unknown doorstep traders.

If you are looking for a Trading Standards approved and vetted trader, consider using [Checkatrade](#).

### **What to do if you suspect someone is a rogue trader?**

If you are concerned about a caller at the door or suspect that rogue doorstep traders or distraction burglars are operating in your community, contact Trading Standards via 03454 040506. If you believe a crime is in progress, please dial 999.

Remember, IF YOU'RE NOT SURE DON'T OPEN THE DOOR.



WHAT IF HE COMES ROUND TO MY HOUSE LATER AND DEMANDS MORE MONEY? I DON'T HAVE £70 TO GIVE HIM AND MY WIFE CAN'T FIND OUT I'VE BORROWED MONEY FROM SOMEONE I MET AT THE PUB...

**#ThursdayThoughts**

CALL 0300 555 2222  
TO REPORT A LOAN SHARK

**STOP LOAN SHARKS**  
Intervention . Support . Education

### **Top Tip**

If you're experiencing worrying thoughts over a loan shark, give the dedicated Trading Standards Loan Shark Investigation Team a call on 0300 555 2222.

They can help you!

[Product Recalls](#)

[Fraud and Scam Advice](#)

[Consumer Rights](#)

**Checkatrade.com**  
Where reputation matters



**TRADING  
STANDARDS**

**APPROVED**

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