



Welcome to the first edition of the Advice for Consumers 'Update Me' newsletter – a newsletter from Hertfordshire County Council's Trading Standards Team.

Need to find a reliable trader?



WORKING TOGETHER IN HERTFORDSHIRE

If you're looking for a reliable trader we can help. We've joined forces with the Which? Trusted Trader scheme to help Hertfordshire residents find traders they can trust.

Hertfordshire traders joining the scheme are assessed by Which? and Hertfordshire trading standards officers – including face-to-face interviews, financial checks, and Trading Standards checks – so you can be confident they're reliable, trustworthy and up to the job.

Find out more about the scheme and search for a reliable trader at

<http://trustedtraders.which.co.uk>

Stay safe this Halloween

If you're buying Halloween costumes for your children this year, make sure they have the CE mark on the label and take care around naked flames.

Last year we tested costumes on sale in Hertfordshire for fire safety and the results were shocking, with some burning within 40 seconds and melting off the hanger into molten clumps.

See the dramatic results of our testing at <https://youtu.be/mDxoOzMPt7k>

Top tips to avoid rogue traders

1. Say no to doorstep callers. Do not buy goods or services at the door.
2. If you are considering having work done, always shop around first and get at least three quotes.
3. You can search for a Hertfordshire Trading Standards Approved Trader on the

[Which?TrustedTraderswebsite](#) or by calling Trading Standards.

4. Honest businesses agree pricing beforehand, including VAT. There's no evidence without a written contract.
5. Avoid paying cash in hand. It's better to pay by bank transfer or cheque, as these can be traced.
6. If you think you or a vulnerable relative or neighbour has become the victim of a rogue trader, report it straight away on 03454 04 05 06.

See how rogue traders operate and how we can help at <https://youtu.be/aChv9V2Lw0w>

Be a ScamSmart investor

Did you know that £1.2bn is lost to investment scams in the UK every year? A recent study by the Financial Conduct Authority revealed the increasing risk of retirees being scammed via investment fraud. Low interest rates were cited as a key driver as investors seek higher returns. Over 65s with savings in excess of £10,000 are three and a half times as likely to fall victim to investment fraud.

If you've been contacted out of the blue about an investment opportunity make sure you check the [FinancialConductAuthorityWarningList](#) and get impartial advice before you hand over any money.

Find out about the warning signs at www.fca.org.uk/ScamSmart

