

JANUARY



*Carnation
January Birth
Flower*

CHAIR'S CHAT

Happy New Year.

At the AGM last month a new committee was elected. I am pleased to say that we have a couple of new members!

Chair	Trish Dewar
Secretary	Fred Frost
Treasurer	Jean Mole
Deputy Treasurer	Anna McKeever
2nd Treasurer	Irene Blanchard
Membership Secretary	Lynn Gale
Publicity	Gerald Boxer
Newsletter	Maggie Morrison
Speaker Secretary	Jean Mole
Webmaster	Jim Morrison
Front of House	Steve Evans
New Members Co-ordinator	Pat Bird

And finally our non-committee member – Groups Co-ordinator Mike Gibbons.

I was worried last September that we might not have a committee – in fact we might not have had Higham & Rushden u3a – so many thanks to all who have offered their services. I follow a Facebook page – Keeping Touch u3a – and there are a number of u3a's who have had to close.

I hope you are all enjoying whichever group you attend – each time I look at the list of groups from – A Little Aloud to Wine Appreciation I can't believe we offer such a wide range of choice considering we are 'just an average' size - 35 groups! There is always room for more – have you thought about starting a group? Would you like help in getting it started – just ask us (anyone on the committee).

Found this quote the other day –

“Knowledge isn't free – You have to pay attention” – so simple but true! I believe it reflects our strap line - Live, Laugh and Learn.

Trish
Chair

How about making a New Year's Resolution?

Resolve to have your membership card in your hand when you enter the building.

Our u3a has spent a considerable amount of money on a system which allows rapid registration of members attending but this only works smoothly if members swipe their cards as soon as they arrive at the desk.

Those of you who need to fumble in purses, wallets or pockets to find your cards, inconvenience other members in the queue behind you.

We need an accurate record of members who attend in case of an emergency. Your co-operation would be very much appreciated.

We have been notified of fraud being carried out on Booking.com customers and have attached a report from Action Fraud at the end of this newsletter. Please take the time to read it and protect yourself.

POSTAGE STAMPS

If you have any used postage stamps we can collect these for charity. Please remove them from the envelope and when you have a few hand them to any member of the committee who will ensure they are passed on. Also if you have any old stamp albums or collections gathering dust, they can be passed on for disposal. Please discuss with Pat Bird at one of the monthly meetings. Thank you.



insurance.)

(Special Events are now being booked through Lewis Harvey Events which is a company solely owned by Jean Mole. Please be aware that Jean's company has Public Liability Insurance, exactly the same as cover provided by u3a trips. Please note that neither cover includes travel or cancellation

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE EXCITING SPECIAL EVENTS LATER THIS YEAR. JEAN MOLE.



Dine At Home

I currently have some spaces for this month's Dine at Home supper, on Tuesday 21st January.

The menu is salmon and prawn cocktail/mushroom soup, chicken and leek pie/honey & garlic salmon, raspberry crunch/brownie and ice cream with chocolate sauce.

Cost is £15 to include a glass of wine and a cup of coffee.

Please contact me on 07736445658 or my email peterandjeanmole@btinternet.com to book your place and enjoy a convivial evening with friends.

Jean Mole



NEW – Guitar Group

The Tuesday Improvers Guitar Group has been at maximum capacity for some time. Consequently, a new Thursday group, 4 - 6 pm at The Windmill Club, Rushden, has just been started & is looking for new members who, preferably, have some experience of playing the guitar. You don't have to be able to read music, but a few chords under your belt would be a great start. We play mostly 60s & 70s pop/rock songs & attempt to sing along.

Please get in touch with Andrew on 07879 577433 or by email: vancouvercresswelljenny@gmail.com should you be interested.

Karin Wilkinson



Greetings Cards

Please note the next meeting is not until Wednesday 4th February because of the Christmas and New Year holidays. It is 10am – 12pm in the Leader's house. All materials will be provided for which there is a very small charge.

In December there were very few attendees, and we attempted some Quilling.

Please contact me at davewpratt@sky.com or 07899 695822 for details if you are interested in joining the group.

Tess Pratt



Computer Group:

We continue to meet in the Community Room at Waitrose, on the 1st & 3rd Saturday each month from 10:00 until 12:00. We cover Windows 10/11 and most office applications for all levels of computer knowledge and are happy to help Group Leaders with all aspects of Beacon. All welcome.

Further information from Jim or Maggie Morrison, Group Leaders.



W.A.L.T: Would Anyone Like To:

Find some company foranything you fancy doing, but don't want to do it alone. Find some information or advice onanything you want to know about. Find someone to take away.....anything you don't need (but someone else might).

The new look W.A.L.T group is a bit of an amalgamation of social media, recycling, & a companionship group, & with 70+ members, you stand a good chance of some responses from your fellow group members.

Don't worry if you are hesitant about using email - we have a very successful Buddy system in place to ensure no one is excluded because of technology.

For more information either contact the group leaders, Janet, & Ken, via the website, or see us at the main u3a meeting.

Janet Embling & Ken Chambers, Group Leaders



Ten Pin Bowling:

If you would like to know more about this group or advise us of your interest, please get in touch via the website Contact page, or contact: Group Leaders – Alan Collinson, Martin Cromwell, or Alan Nixon



Scrabble

We meet on alternate Tuesdays @ 2:00 pm in the Waitrose Community Room for friendly matches to keep our brains operational.

For details contact John Ellingham on 07833 017855



Golf:

Following a review of the group members, emails were sent out to determine the actual playing courses with details of the required number of holes to be played and frequency.

If you have an interest in joining the group, contact the leader: Hensley 01933 805547 or via the website contacts.



Rock & Blues Group:

Our next meeting is at 14.00 hours on 30th January at the leader's house. Continuing through the alphabet, the topic is the letter "P". The group recently had a very pleasant meal out at the Bodrum Restaurant in Burton Latimer.

Currently the group is full.

Jim Morrison



MMFC (Monday Morning Football Chat).

We meet on Mondays in Waitrose Cafe at 10am. New members always welcome.

Just turn up or contact me on 01933 631531.Mike Gibbons



Country Dancing:

We meet at Hensman Hall Chichele St. Higham Ferrers on alternate Mondays from 14:15 – 15:45. We welcome new members. Dances to suit everyone of all ages, even those with two left feet. All dances are walked through, nothing complicated. Some dances are very gentle, and one can sit out if one wishes. Why not come for a taste.

First timers are free. Our group is very friendly, and we always help anyone who is struggling. Please ring me for details George 01933 622827.



Wine Appreciation:

Happy New Year to you all. Christmas was a do it yourself month, so there was no tasting in December.

If you would like to join us we meet on the 4th Thursday of the month at 2pm in my house.

Please phone me for more information 01933 356784

Steve



Canasta

I'm hoping to restart the canasta group in March. It will probably be on a Thursday morning from 10 till 12 am. at my house.

If you're interested, please email me on

peterandjeanmole@btinternet.com.

Jean Mole



Handicrafts

The next meeting of the Handicrafts Group is on Thursday, 23rd January, 2pm at Rushden Bowls Club.

This session will be Diamond Painting, which is so relaxing. This time we are decorating feathers that can be made into bookmarks. All materials will be provided, and the cost will be £1 for materials and £2 towards the hire of the room. Kathy and Jenny look forward to welcoming you back and new members are always welcome if you fancy trying us out.

Jenny



History Group

The group met on Thursday 2nd January when the talk was on the history of Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol and its effect on Victorian life.

The trips for next year will be

- 1 Bury St Edmunds
- 2 Oxburgh Hall Suffolk National Trust
- 3 Whitwick Manor Wolverhampton National Trust
- 4 Hampton Court

I will try to finalise details this month. Contact Brian Turner on 07812514456 or brianitatu@gmail.com if you have any queries.

Brian Turner



Bookmarks Again:

Book Worms by Lucy Mangan

The Bookmarks Again Group were able to indulge in a post festivities wander down memory lane, regardless of having read the books discussed or being deprived of that opportunity. We envied the very kind father who returned home each week with a new volume for Lucy to read and to keep. She was fortunate in being able to keep them and she has whole series of certain authors still in her possession, on her groaning bookshelves. Meanwhile she tries to choose some of them and instil into her young son the same passions, via his bedtime story, with varying success.

Reading about her particular enjoyment of Eric Carle's Very Hungry Caterpillar we could recall the joy of the holes in the page and its voracious appetite. Similarly she looked at other startling stories such as The Gruffalo or Where The Wild Things Are. The author having researched the early history of Children's Literature which was full of moral tales where unruly children who committed misdemeanours or failed to behave met a sticky end for their transgressions, was able to show how both society and parenting had changed.

Reading at night to children and grandchildren we know how they love rhyme and repetition often craving the familiar.

Some members recalled the benefit they had of access to a sympathetic Library service which enabled us to read a wide variety of books.

Lucy Mangan has a comprehensive review of books for Primary readers. As a secondary school pupil I had moved on from mainly teenage books, such as The Chalet Girls Series or Mallory Towers about Boarding schools, as they seemed a far cry from my experience. Young Adult Fiction has developed for this age group with authors such as Jacqueline Wilson dealing with challenging topics. The Bookworm covers a wide ranging topic which, with certain books, Lucy draws you in to past happy memories.

Ann Kemp



Garden Group:

We start with our speakers in February and welcome everyone back after the Christmas Festivities. We have a fun packed selection of gardens planned for our visits during the summer months.

We look forward to seeing all our existing members and welcome new members.

If you would like to join the garden group then please speak to one of the leaders at the monthly Monday meeting.

Happy New Year to you all

Lorraine, Lyn, Marlene



Sunday Lunch Group:

Members new to u3a are especially welcome but be aware with our existing group members we have limited spaces. No deposit required.

Forthcoming dates are the last Sunday of each month, and you can find them on the Beacon calendar.

Inquiries to Linda Walker. 07384 601603.



Non-Fiction Book Group

New members very welcome. We meet on the 4th Monday of the month 10:30-12:00.at the leaders' home. Details on the beacon calendar.

Are you a non-Fiction reader? Are you interested in Travel, History, Biographies etc. Members would need to commit to obtaining copies. listening as a talking book or reading on Kindle. Our book choices are varied. Recently we have read biographies,diaries , travel, & history, both newly published & from past years. We meet at the leaders' home in Rushden to discuss our choice of book & choose another.

More information from Linda & Chris Walker:

SOME HILARIOUS EXAM QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Q1 In which battle did Napoleon die?
His last battle
- Q2. Where was the Declaration of Independence signed?
At the bottom of the page
- Q3. The Mississippi River flows in which state?
Liquid
- Q4. What is the main reason for divorce?
Marriage
- Q5. What is the main reason for failure?
Exams
- Q6. What can you never eat for breakfast?
Lunch & dinner
- Q7. If you throw a red stone into the blue sea, what will it become?
Wet
- Q8. How can a man go eight days without sleeping?
No problem, he sleeps at night.
- Q9. If you had three apples and four oranges in one hand and four apples and three oranges in other hand, what would you have?
Very large hands
- Q10. How can you drop a raw egg onto a concrete floor without cracking it?
Any way you want, concrete floors are very hard to crack.

GROUP LEADER CONTACT DETAILS –

In accordance with GDPR we don't publish contact details for group leaders on a publicly available website or newsletter. There is a contact form on the website which can be used to email group leaders & u3a officers.

If you wish to telephone a group leader you will need to log into Beacon at <https://www.u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=118&sc=LUDE>. You will need to create a password the first time you use the members' portal & full instructions are available on our u3a website.

Clicking on the Higham & Rushden u3a groups link opens a page listing all our current groups & gives telephone numbers for each leader.

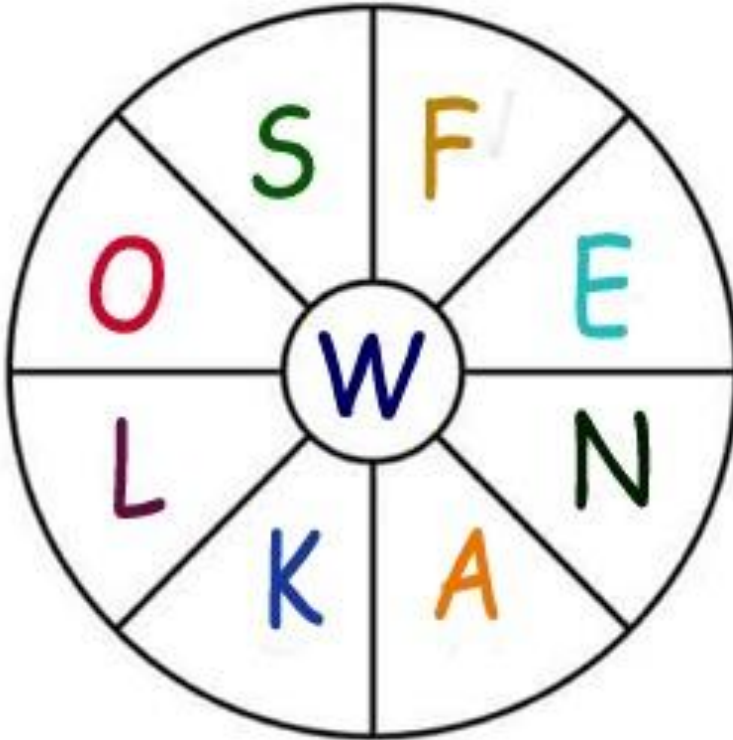


GROUP DETAILS	VENUE	DAY/TIME
<i>There may be waiting lists for some of the groups but if you are interested please contact the relevant group via the contact form on the website to be added & the group leader should contact you.</i>		
Check the group calendar on the website for further details		
A Little Aloud	Leader's home	2 nd & 4 th Wednesday at Leaders' home 10.00 – 10.
Art for Fun	Waitrose Community Room	Alternate Mondays 14.00-1600
Badminton Beginners & Improvers	Pemberton Centre	Wednesday 14.00-15.00
Intermediate Badminton	Pemberton centre, Rushden.	Every Tuesday, 10.00 to 11.00. £2.50 per session
Badminton for fun	Pemberton Centre	Tuesday 09.00-10.00 & Friday 12.00-13.00
Bookmarks Again	Waitrose Community Room	1st Monday of the month*
Canasta	Leader's Home	STARTING MARCH Date & time to be confirmed
Card Making	Leader's Home	1 st Wednesday/month.10-12 am
Computing	Waitrose Community Room	10-12am 1 st & 3 rd Saturday every month
Country Dancing	Hensman Hall Chichele St. NN10	Alternate Mondays 2 00-3.30pm
Cycling multi-Groups	Rushden Lakes	Every Monday 10.30 (Apr-Nov)
Digital Photography A	Rushden Hall	2 nd & 4 th Wed 10.00 to 12.00
Driving	On the Road	By request
Garden	Rushden Hall	2 nd Thursday 10.30-12.30
Guitar Improvers	Rushden Windmill Club	Tuesday 4pm
Continued		

GROUP DETAILS	VENUE	DAY/TIME
History Group	Rushden Masonic Hall	1 st Thursday each month 14:00
Home Dining	Various	Three times per Month varying days
Knit & Natter	Leader's Home	Alternate Mon 10.00-12.00
Mahjong for fun	Waitrose Community Room	Alternate Mondays 14.30-16.30
MMFC	Waitrose Cafe	Weekly Mondays 10am – 11am
Non-Fiction Books	Leader's Home	4th Monday 10.30-12.00
Play Reading	To be advised	1st Tuesday 13.15-14.15
Rock & Blues Appreciation	Leader's Home	Last Thursday of the month 2-4pm
Scrabble	Waitrose Community Room	2-4pm Alternate Tuesdays
Singing for Fun	Rushden Hall, Hall Park	Alternate Thu 14.00-16.00
Special Events	Various	Various (see website for details)
Sunday Lunch	Various	Resuming 24 March 2024
Table Tennis	Pemberton Centre	Wed 13.00-14.00
Ten Pin Bowling	Hollywood Bowl, W'boro	Alternate Friday 1100-1300
Ukulele	Rushden Transport Club	13.30-15.30 Every Monday
Video Editing	Leader's Home	2nd & 4th Tues 10.00-12.00
W.A.L.T.	Various	Various (see website for details)
Wine & Dine	Various	Various (see website for details)
Wine Appreciation	Leader's Home	Check calendar for information.

WORD WHEEL

Create as many words as possible of four letters or more using the given letters only once but always including the middle letter. Don't use proper names or plurals. There is one nine-letter word. The score to beat is 30 but 26 is very good and 22 is also good.



Anew
Askew
Awoke
Awoken
Fawn
Flaw
Flew
Flown
Flow
Fowl
Knew
Know

Lawn
News
Sawn
Sewn
Skew
Slew
Slow
Sown
Snow
Snowflake
Swale
Swan

Swank
Wake
Waken
Wale
Walk
Wane
Weak
Weal
Wean
Woke
Woken
Wolf

u3a MONTHLY MEETINGS

Please note there is a small charge for non-members. Details can be found on our website or call 01933 522934 for further information.

If you, or a friend, have experience as a speaker at other groups on topics which you think would be of interest to our members then please contact the Speaker Secretary.

2025		
20 th Jan	Vince Eager	What Time's the Midnight Buffet?
17 th Feb	Steve Dimmer	Hercule Poirot
17 th Mar	Sweet FA	Musical Trio with Clever Ditties
14 th Apr	Home Instead	Dementia
19 th May	Roger Brown	Various Talks
16 th Jun	Nick Cosgriff	Jail Tales from a Prison Chaplain
21 st Jul	Stephen & Viv	Race Around the World
18 th Aug	Graham Short	Hand of Genius (Micro Engraver)
15 th Sept	Paul Barwick	Eddie Chapman Double Agent
20 th Oct	Dr Nick Barrett	Various on Family History
17 th Nov	TBA	
AGM		
GROUP LEADERS PLEASE SAVE THE DATE AND ENSURE NO ACTIVITIES OR GROUP MEETINGS CLASH WITH THE AGM		
8TH Dec	AGM	SINGING FOR FUN



EDITORIAL:

If you are starting the new year full of good intentions to eat well, you might want to consider the humble “beans on toast”. If whole wheat bread is used for the toast, it provides complete proteins, fibre, complex carbohydrates, and some vitamins and minerals. So, it's a healthy dinner, also, cheap and easy to make. Adding grated cheese to the beans and having a glass of orange juice will make it more nutritious.

If you pair the best quality beans with whole- or multi- grain bread, healthy butter or spread you will be surprised to learn the following:

Nutritional Benefits of Baked Beans on Toast.

1. **Protein and Fibre:** Baked beans are a good source of plant-based protein and dietary fibre, which can help with digestion and keep you feeling full.
2. **Whole Grains:** If you use whole grain or whole wheat bread, you'll get additional fibre and nutrients compared to white bread.
3. **Vitamins and Minerals:** Beans are rich in vitamins and minerals, including iron, magnesium, and B vitamins.



Not only is the 25th January 2025 a special night for Scots’ lovers of Robert Burns when Haggis, Neeps, Tatties and Whisky will be on the menu, as well as Cranachan and poetry for that’s day on which we Scots celebrate the birth of the Bard, but.....

.... a spectacular event in the night sky will light up the heavens also on the 25th January 2025. Observers will be excited to know that Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn will appear within a similar celestial line. This is a very rare event and all 8 planets only line up approximately every 396 billion years, as It is not possible for all the planets to ever be fully aligned..



Sometimes cosmologists and scientists will speak of planetary alignment, and when they do this they don’t speak about 100% alignment but rather refer to a state where all the planets of our solar system appear to be in the same rough position in our night sky (the same 180-degree wide pane of sky). However, if I am not too full of Uisge-beatha I will be looking skywards.



Easy Herbs to Grow in Water on your Kitchen Windowsill

Here is how to start: Select fresh, healthy stems around 4 to 6 inches long from mature plants. Remove leaves from the bottom half of each stem. Place cuttings in a glass or jar filled with fresh water. Ensure stems are submerged, with leaves above the water level to prevent rotting. Change the water every few days to avoid bacterial growth & to keep the herbs healthy. Place jars somewhere light, such as a windowsill or kitchen counter & wait for rooting. After 1/2 weeks you should start seeing roots forming.

1. **Basil** is one of the easiest herbs to root in water. Simply place cuttings in water near a bright window as it loves the sun. Change the water every few days, & within a week, you'll notice new roots forming

2. **Coriander**: Take fresh cuttings & place stems in water. Change water every few days to maintain freshness. It may take a bit longer to root than basil, but patience will reward you with a continuous supply of fresh leaves.

3. **Parsley** is another easy-to-grow herb similar to Coriander. Place fresh stems in water, ensuring the lower half is submerged. Like other herbs, it's essential to change the water frequently to prevent bacteria forming.

4. **Mint** is one of the most prolific herbs to grow in water. Its fresh scent & flavour make it perfect for teas, desserts, & savoury dishes. Cut a few sprigs & place them in water. It will grow rapidly in water & can easily be transferred to soil later if you wish to cultivate a larger plant.

5. **Rosemary**, known for its aromatic, woody scent, can also be grown in water. Although it takes a bit longer to root, it's worth the wait. Snip a few sprigs, remove lower leaves & place stems in water & you'll eventually see roots develop. Rosemary thrives best in indirect sunlight, & once it has rooted, you can keep it in water or transplant it into soil.



6. **Chives** are another great herb to grow in water. Place cuttings in water & watch them regrow. They can be harvested frequently, making them an ideal herb for regular use in the kitchen.

Tips: Use clear glass containers which allow you to monitor root growth & detect any issues, such as cloudy water or mould. Plus, they let sunlight reach the roots, aiding growth. Once strong roots have developed, you can add a small amount of diluted liquid fertilizer to provide additional nutrients. However, don't overdo it, as herbs typically don't need much fertilization in water. Be mindful when harvesting your herbs. Trim only what you need to ensure the plant continues to grow & thrive.

TWO SUDOKU PUZZLES TO SOLVE

	2				4	3		
9				2				8
			6		9		5	
								1
	7	2	5		3	6	8	
6								
	8		2		5			
1				9				3
		9	8				6	

4		6		2				
	8		4				9	3
3				8	5			2
7		9						8
	5			7			4	
6						7		1
9			2	4				5
2	6					3	7	4
				3		1		9

Booking.com users targeted with scam messages

Those using the platform Booking.com to book their holidays or accommodation are being warned they could be targeted with emails or messages requesting payments from hotels who have had their account taken over by fraudsters. Between June 2023 & September 2024, Action Fraud received 532 reports from individuals, with a total of £370,000 lost

Insight from Action Fraud reports suggests individuals were defrauded after receiving unexpected messages & emails from a Booking.com account belonging to a hotel with which they had a reservation, which had been taken over by a criminal. Using this account, they send -app messages, emails, & WhatsApp messages to customers, deceiving them into making payment and/or requesting credit card details.

The specific account takeovers are likely to be the result of a targeted phishing attack against the hotel or accommodation provider, & not Booking.com's backend system or infrastructure.

Adam Mercer, Deputy Head of Action Fraud, said:

"With more than 500 reports made to Action Fraud, those who have booked a holiday on the Booking.com platform should stay alert to any unexpected emails or messages from a hotel using the Booking.com platform, as their account could have been taken over by a criminal.

"If you receive an unexpected request from a hotel's account you booked with using Booking.com, asking for bank details or credit card details, it could be a fraudster trying to trick you into parting with your money. Contact Booking.com or the organisation directly if you're unsure.

"Remember to report any suspicious emails by forwarding them to report@phishing.gov.uk, or if you receive a fraudulent text message, you can forward it to 7726.

How can you protect yourself? Booking.com & Action Fraud are providing the following advice on how to spot signs of fraud & protect your Booking.com account:

- No legitimate Booking.com transaction will ever require a customer to provide credit card details by phone, email, or text message (including WhatsApp).
- Sometimes a hotel provider will manage their own payments & may reach out to request payment information, like credit card details – before providing any information, always verify the authenticity of communication between yourself & the hotel's account.
- If you receive any urgent payment requests that require immediate attention, like a booking cancellation, immediately reach out to the Booking.com Customer Service team via the details on the official Booking.com website and/or app to confirm before proceeding.
- Any payment requests that do not match the information in the original booking confirmation should also be double checked & confirmed with Booking.com Customer Service before proceeding.
- Any messages purporting to be from Booking.com that contain instructions to follow links and/or open/download files should be treated with caution.
- If you have any doubts about a message, contact Booking.com directly. Don't use the numbers or address in the suspicious message & use the details from their official website.

For more information about how to protect your Booking.com account, please visit:

<https://www.booking.com/trust-and-safety/travellers.en-gb.html>.

If you receive any suspicious emails or text messages, report them by forwarding emails to: report@phishing.gov.uk, or texts to 7726.

Find out how to protect yourself from fraud: <https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk>.

If you've lost money or provided financial information as a result of any phishing scam, notify your bank immediately & report it to Action Fraud at <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/report-phishing> or by calling 0300 123 2040. In Scotland, call Police Scotland on 101.

(If you found this information useful, please share it with friends, family & colleagues.)