

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022

# RESPONSIBLE BUSINESSES WORKING TOGETHER TO STOP SCAMS AT SOURCE





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# Foreword from the Chair

## Ruth Evans writes:



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During this past year, Stop Scams UK has grown and matured, consolidating early work and developing new insights and methodologies that light the way ahead, showing just how valuable industry-led collaboration can be.

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Scams have become the new emergency. Too many of us receive unwanted emails, text messages and phone calls almost every single day from criminals seeking to steal our money. The experience can be devastating. It results in financial hardship and distress and even for some, loss of life.

Scams can harm anyone regardless of age, education or income. More than four in every ten recorded crimes in England and Wales is a fraud. Everyone is vulnerable. When scammers can't get into a platform or a device, they use technology to crack through another door to con the public and the economy.

Stop Scams UK was established almost three years ago to help stem this flood. Encouraged by regulators, we brought together leading responsible businesses from across banking, telecoms and technology to explore new ways of stopping scams at source. Today, we have a large, dynamic membership that works together on solutions that would not be possible acting alone. Our small staff team is highly committed and responsive, and government, regulators, and policymakers show close interest in what we do.

During this past year, Stop Scams UK has grown and matured, consolidating early work and developing new insights and methodologies that light the way ahead, showing just how valuable industry-led collaboration can be.

We are starting to unlock the potential of **cross-sector data sharing** as one of industry's most important approaches to tackling scams. Projects under way on voice matching and scam intelligence between our members are showing that technology can identify bad actors and yield rich information about how scammers operate. This is groundbreaking work that will ultimately beat them. We also take what we learn from these initiatives directly to policymakers and build consensus on changes to policy that industry needs.

We continue to develop our **159** phone service, a collaboration delivered by a partnership of our telecoms and banking members, which gives consumers a route back to safety if they are at risk of being scammed. More than 375,000 calls have been made to 159, even without mass consumer advertising. And our **Alliance Partnership** led by BT and TalkTalk with the Cyber Defence Alliance has blocked more than 50,000 malicious phishing URLs, preventing many thousands of scams.

These results have encouraged more companies to join. In the past few months Amazon, AnyDesk, Metro Bank, Monzo, TeamViewer, Tide and Visa have become members, joining the Co-operative Bank, Google, HSBC, Meta, Nationwide Building Society and others who were in at the start. A growing membership base positions us better to understand the impact of scams across platforms and services and to disrupt them before they cause harm.

The coming year will be about scale and growth in our pilot projects, introducing more innovations and delivering greater impact. We will continue talking to policymakers about a legislative and regulatory environment more conducive to action our members want to take. And we will step up work with international partners to seek a consistent response to scams across key jurisdictions.



“  
*The Stop Scams UK membership is full of incredible and dedicated individuals who are working hard, with the companies they represent, to forge effective cross-industry partnerships and harness evidence-based knowledge to improve and re-imagine fraud protection and prevention. This is real movement for change. Inspiring!*  
 ”

**DR ELISABETH CARTER**  
 Criminologist and Forensic Linguist  
 Kingston University

As Chair of Stop Scams UK, I have no doubt about the scale of the challenge. Our plans set out clear ambitions for the contribution we can make in the fight against scams. We are an agile organisation focused on delivery, one that punches above its weight. My aim is to see even greater impact from our members’ unique collaborations, delivering more tech-based solutions to stop scams at source and keep people safe.

We are well equipped to do this because we are fortunate in our partnerships and in our team. We have built strong relationships with key government departments, regulators

and policymakers and we work closely with civil society and consumer groups including Which?, Citizens Advice and the Fraud Advisory Panel. At the heart of this partnership approach is recognition that no single party can solve scams and frauds alone.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to our superb team led by Chief Executive Mark Tierney, to our Board and our Senior Independent Director Jonathan Quin, and to our members. It is your leadership, commitment and resources that are behind our achievements, and they will shape our work over the coming year.

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The coming year will be about scale and growth in our pilot projects, introducing more innovations and delivering greater impact.

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This report for the year to April 2023 reviews recent work and sets out plans for the future. **Data sharing** is at the heart of the endeavour, and we will continue to explore and build the potential for information exchanges across sectors to help stop scams at source.



# Scams have reached emergency levels

The UK is in the grip of a scams emergency. Fraud now represents 41% of all crime in England and Wales.<sup>1</sup> Almost £2,300 is lost to fraud and scams every minute, amounting to £1.2 billion in reported fraud.<sup>2</sup> While Authorised Push Payment fraud dropped slightly in 2022, the overall incidence of scams shows no sign of shifting from historic highs. Official trends data probably show only a fraction of the true picture, as we know that most scams are not even reported, let alone pursued.

Despite a growing political focus on tackling scams, they continue to cause UK consumers significant financial loss and lasting emotional harm. The value lost to fraud annually by UK businesses nearly doubled between 2007-2020 (up 88%).<sup>3</sup> Some estimates have put the cost of fraud to the UK economy at as much as £219 billion, with global losses of £4.37 trillion, almost twice UK GDP.<sup>4</sup>

Without decisive action by everyone with a stake in prevention, worse may yet be to come: The City of London Police has forecast fraud will increase between a quarter and 65% in the next five years.<sup>5</sup>

Scams have become ever more sophisticated, making use of the latest technologies.

Digital channels in particular are vulnerable to abuse by scammers. Over 43% of UK consumers reported that they have been targeted by phishing scams (impersonation scams initiated by email), 40% by smishing (impersonation scams initiated by text) and 28% by vishing (impersonation scams initiated by phone call).<sup>6</sup> These stark figures speak to how much more there is to do.

Technological innovation will help prevention – but it will also open up new opportunities to fraudsters. Generative AI, new forms of machine learning and deep fakes, each the subject of much media comment this year, will not only make it harder to detect scams, but present scammers with new ways to impersonate consumers and businesses.

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*Security Minister Tom Tugendhat has called fraud a “scourge”. Fraud is a threat to national security which demands close collaboration between the public and private sectors.*

*Information sharing is seen as an exception, not a norm, in the fight against fraud. That needs to change.*

”

**SIR CHARLES WALKER MP**



# The role of Stop Scams UK in combating scams



**Chief Executive  
Mark Tierney  
discusses a shared  
responsibility**

If Stop Scams UK did not already exist, someone would need to invent us. We were set up to stop the harm and loss caused by scams. We do so by bringing responsible businesses together to stop scams at source.

In a landscape of many agencies and initiatives fighting back against fraud and scams, we have a unique place and our set up gives us unique strengths. Our experience so far suggests they are indispensable:

- We represent three sectors
- We are sector-neutral
- We are led by industry through our members

The businesses in our membership recognise that individual efforts will never get to the heart of the problem. They feel a strong sense of shared responsibility and know they have power to break scammers' business models and put them out of business.

Our members drive the alchemy of Stop Scams UK. Together we set vision and strategies and deliver on commitments. It's a given that different businesses and sectors have their own goals and motivations, but a key value of Stop Scams UK is that, at our table, firms work together. This is how we

were able to launch 159 and to advertise it: telcos provided a consumer-facing phone service; banks handle the calls; and the tech sector has given 159 advertising inventory so we can build public awareness.

If every participant had taken only a narrow view of their own returns from 159, it would never have got off the ground – and yet now we believe it will be one of the most powerful tools for helping consumers protect themselves.

Through a unique collaboration, we're starting to deliver on Stop Scams UK's ambitions:

- **Prevention:** we build shared understanding and shared solutions
- **Protection:** we reduce the harm and loss caused by scams and fraud
- **Influence:** we press for changes that will make the legal, regulatory, political and technical landscape conducive to the work we need to do.





# Our membership in 2022

Stop Scams UK is a membership organisation of businesses from across banking, technology and telecoms.

Our purpose is to facilitate cross-sector collaboration between firms in those sectors most affected by the scams emergency. Many businesses find collaboration difficult. Regulation and legal considerations encourage competition within and between sectors. Privacy and data security considerations can also raise challenges for collaboration across sectors.

Our work programme is shaped, informed and driven by our members – businesses who want to do more and to move fast. We provide the resource, leadership and trusted space for our members to share problems, identify opportunities, overcome blockers, pilot and deliver replicable, scalable projects. By bringing the right people together and making the right connections, we encourage a holistic system-wide understanding of problems, creating the space for new solutions to scams to emerge and providing the resource for them to be realised.

At the time of writing, our membership includes: Amazon, AnyDesk, Barclays, BT, the Co-operative Bank, Gamma, Google, HSBC, Lloyds Banking Group, Meta, Metro Bank, Monzo, Nationwide Building Society, NatWest, Santander, Starling, TalkTalk, TeamViewer, Three, Tide, TSB and Visa.

“

We are at the sharp end – people are losing their dreams of retirement and confidence in the digital economy, which we all need for growth.

At Barclays we actively encourage collaboration and the sharing of intelligence across the sectors and Stop Scams UK is uniquely placed to drive core initiatives.

Being a member of Stop Scams UK has enabled us to collaborate with other organisations from across the banking, online and telco industries to help supercharge our efforts to stop fraud.

”

**SIAN MCINTYRE**  
 Managing Director, Life Moments, Engagement & Acquisition  
 Barclays

# How our work keeps people safe

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*I have no doubt that our customers are safer because of our membership and active engagement in Stop Scams UK. We've implemented lots of improvements to help our customers based on ideas from other members. Some of these require input from multiple members that simply could never have happened without a forum for members to meet and share ideas.*

”

**PHILIP MILTON**  
Public Policy Manager  
UK Industry  
Meta

Our strategy is built around three core areas of activity:

- 1. Prevention** We bring responsible firms together to stop scams at source. Projects include:
  - Reporting of information about scams from banks into tech companies.
  - Gathering scam intelligence by engaging directly with scammers, understanding how they operate and using that information to close down malicious accounts.
- 2. Protection** We help consumers protect themselves by providing a route back to safety.
  - 159: A way for consumers to cut short a scam-in-the-making by connecting directly with their bank when an unsolicited caller asks them about a financial matter.
- 3. Influence** We press for changes to the policy environment:
  - We look for future policy solutions and advocate for sensible and proportionate changes to law and guidance that will make a meaningful difference in the fight against fraud and scams.

Our approach is designed to promote a cycle of delivery and growth. From the learning that takes place through our pilot work, we deliver impact, communicate results, and attract new members.

Our membership has unique reach and capability. Across the UK it serves more than 95% of online searches; 90% of home email accounts; 70% of users of instant messaging; 80% of online ads; 97% of personal current bank accounts; 48% of home landlines; 40% of home broadband and 36% of UK mobile phone lines.



# Results 2022-23

## 159

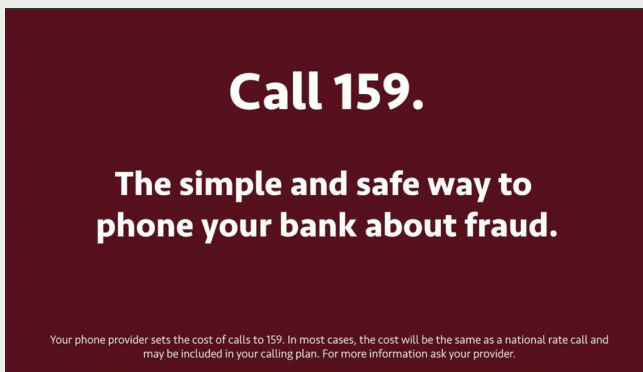
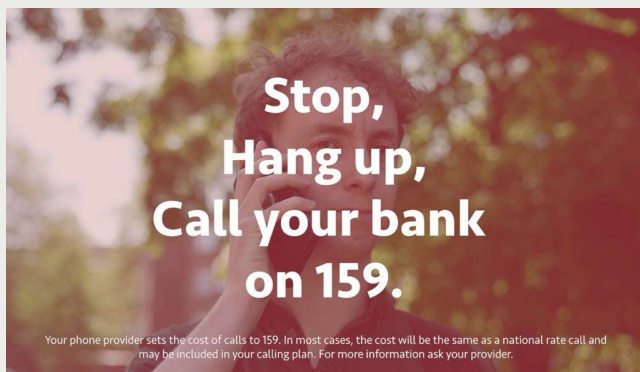
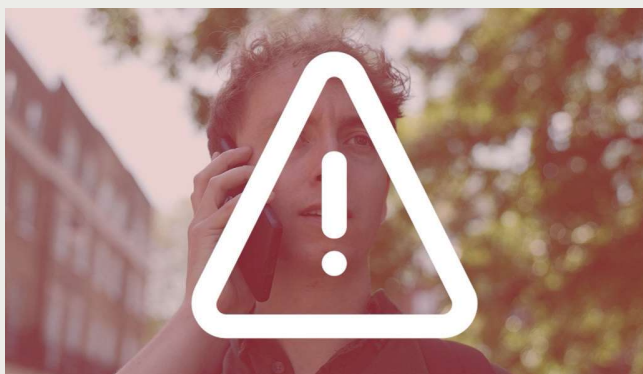
**159** is our first public-facing initiative. Intended for use by consumers, 159 provides an easy route back to safety when you get an unexpected phone call about a financial matter. Easy to remember, the short code number now connects customers of more than 97% of the UK's retail bank current accounts safely and directly with their bank. Unlike many long-form numbers, 159 cannot be spoofed or impersonated.

We launched 159 as a pilot to prove the concept's value. Looking ahead, we plan to develop it further, expanding the number of destinations serviced, and making a better customer experience. We will also ask Ofcom the communications regulator to consult on making 159 a mandatory "Type A" number, like 999, or 111. Read on for more about our ambitions for 159.

### 159: A Growing Success

159 plays a vital role in keeping people safe and it has not stood still. More than 375,000 calls have been made to it. It has been expanded three times to bring in new banking destinations, including TSB, Nationwide Building Society, the Co-operative Bank, HSBC, firstdirect, Metro Bank and Tide.

In summer 2023 we launched an advertising campaign on Google and YouTube.



“  
 We really welcome this work. Even just starting small we could achieve a massive change.  
 ”

**PAUL DAVIS**  
 Director of Fraud Prevention  
 TSB

## Data sharing

Our efforts this year have been shaped by two key enquiries: How can information be exchanged across sectors, and how do we realise the potential of these exchanges for arresting scams?

Our first steps toward what is rapidly become an ambitious **data sharing** programme built on research we commissioned from the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) into how data sharing could work on a cross-sector basis.

“Enabling Cross–Sector Data Sharing to Better Prevent and Detect Scams” was published in October 2022. It established the importance of thinking big but starting small, and addressing immediate, real-world issues rather than system-wide concerns which may appear to offer more benefit but can be too complicated to realise.

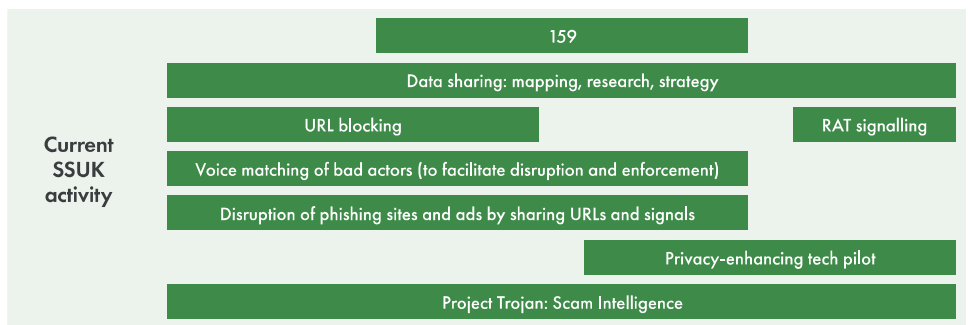
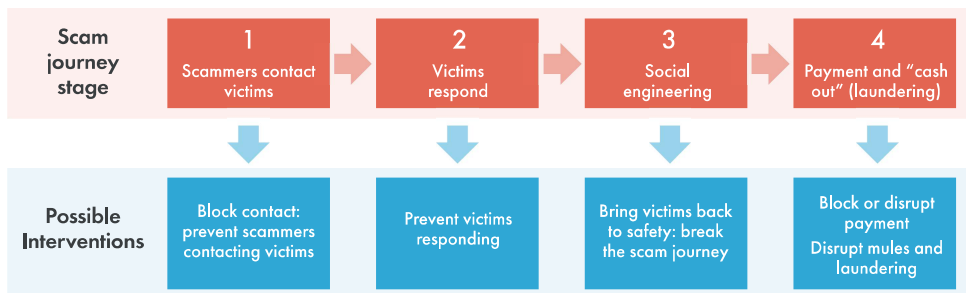
Taking these two principles, we started data-sharing initiatives that seek to understand:

- What forms of data sharing will be most useful in stopping scams
- Whether that data exists in usable, shareable forms
- How that data could be shared, both in terms of quick wins as well as long-term solutions
- Regulatory and legal considerations.

## Data sharing projects

Our data sharing work has focused on small pilots and initiatives. Their aims may seem modest but they are designed to meet the complexity of the issues. Pilots seek first to understand issues and remove barriers to data sharing – cultural, behavioural or regulatory. They then aim to test concepts, drawing lessons from what has been seen in

## Projects and pilots across the scam journey



those first stages. What we learn then goes into scaling initiatives and replicating them – all the while focusing attention on where the harm is most acute.

### Understanding data sharing’s potential

Ideas that have emerged through our technical discussions have led to approaches that will help us grasp the potential of data sharing.

- **Case studies:** Our members share data with each other to understand what they each hold and how it can be applied in specific scam incidents. They review what has happened, and what data is needed for an intervention.
- **Reporting:** Enabling timely and actionable reporting of scam data from banks into tech and telecoms companies will be the main focus of this core strand of data sharing. Members tell us that important insight on scam incidents is only rarely reported to platforms and, when it reaches them, it’s no longer timely or usable. This means tech companies find it challenging to identify fraudulent content on social media and to quantify its extent or impact.

Members are working to understand how a reporting mechanism could deliver for individual sectors, looking at what stands in the way of speedily developing an approach like this, including how compatible and usable the data is. We are now at a point where we can accelerate this work.

### Testing and developing concepts

- **Alliance:** URL blocking work through the Alliance Partnership led by BT, TalkTalk and the Cyber Defence Alliance develops apace. This proof of concept has trialled an extra layer of protection to prevent consumers from inadvertently accessing phishing domains. The service has now blocked over 50,000 harmful domains.

Alliance partners share malicious domain data feeds, particularly fake banking URLs, which are then blocked at the DNS domain level, protecting customers across both mobile and fixed networks. Speed is its unique feature – domains are blocked in a matter of minutes. This work is backed by comprehensive legal guidance from decoded.legal that sets out how organisations can block malicious domains and share that information in a way that fully complies with GDPR and the wider regulatory framework.

- **Scam Intelligence:** We have launched an ambitious pilot project to talk to scammers through email and by phone, to understand how each stage of the scam journey works, and the platforms and tactics they use. The data revealed is recorded and shared in actionable form with participants, leading not just to a better understanding of scam types and the tactics of individual scammers but also to the closing of bad actor accounts.

### Report with RUSI into data sharing

Stop Scams UK worked with the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) to look into what was stopping companies sharing data. The report we launched at the UK Parliament in October 2022 threw light on how cultural and perceptual factors prevent companies even considering sharing information with others.

The report made recommendations for business and for policymakers about how to remove and work around these barriers. It stressed the importance of starting with small exchanges of a few data points to build confidence and scaling up later based on findings from the first attempts.

Speaking at the launch event, Simon Fell MP said: “This report provides a real roadmap to where we should be going. This is what constituents talk to us about, though they may not understand data sharing and why it matters. This is

why getting data sharing up the policy agenda matters.”





- **Remote Access:** This project leverages the technical expertise and system knowledge of AnyDesk and TeamViewer to alert banks if a customer has a live remote access session open. This knowledge helps banks protect customers from being scammed by a third party taking illicit control of a device. The project is in its earliest stages and we look forward to reporting on its findings in months to come.
- **Voice matching:** In this ground-breaking project led by BT, recordings of phone calls made by scammers to banks – either to gather intelligence or take over an account – are assessed and matched using Nuance Voice Biometric technology. The project aims to map, disrupt, and ultimately break criminal business models, which use phone channels to “phish” for information.

One potential outcome is the creation of a system to alert call agents to a scammer on the line. The ultimate ambition is to pool this intelligence to create an industry-wide watchlist.

## Payment Disruption Pilot

Stop Scams UK’s banking and telecoms members worked with Microsoft’s UK Digital Crimes Unit to see if they could share intelligence that might disrupt the flow of money to criminals.

The pilot explored what type of information partners would need to share if they wanted to identify “bad actors” or fraudulent activity within their systems. Microsoft worked with banks HSBC UK, Lloyds Banking Group and NatWest and telecoms operators BT, Gamma and TalkTalk.

“We proved that tech, telcos and banks can share data when it comes to fraud, scams and crime,” said Microsoft’s EMEA Lead Investigative Analyst Caroline Canina. “We showed we can break down barriers, proving the value of collaboration.

What we found could equally apply to other scam types such as ransomware or business email compromise.”

Microsoft gave Stop Scams UK members information extracted from customers’ reports including fraudulent company names, emails and phone numbers, and the types and amounts of payments they made. NatWest matched bad actors with 14 reports; TalkTalk found matches on their networks in all domains and blocked 16 phone numbers; Gamma identified two suspicious phone numbers.

Microsoft found that data matching across sectors helped it confirm quickly that suspicious data related to bad actors. It could close its own enquiries faster and potentially pursue them in law.





“

*This is a coalition of the willing – we need incentives for the less willing. And once you’ve shared the information, we need to be sure we have the ability to act, e.g. to pause payments.*

”

**BRIAN DILLEY**  
BD Consulting

## Policy and Communications

Our ambition is to change the policy framework to remove barriers to effective action and make it easier for firms to prevent fraud and scams. Our strategic engagement with senior policymakers has influenced debate and started to drive visible change. An ambitious programme of events has included a summit with Governor of the Bank of England Andrew Bailey and Roundtable discussions with political and industry leaders. We have published research and policy papers, secured articles highlighting our technical initiatives, and engaged with consumers through media and broadcast coverage that has raised awareness of 159.

We are making the case for long-term change to the legislative and regulatory environment and focusing on building consensus around key policy changes. Stop Scams UK has sought to establish itself as a fresh and distinct voice that is useful and constructive to government and other policymakers in finding solutions to complex problems.

In communications we continue to build presence, generating our own content and driving engagement with key stakeholder and B2B audiences. Recent success has included broadsheet coverage of our Scam Intelligence work and our response to the government Fraud Strategy, and significant media mentions including broadcast promotion of 159 as a key means of keeping consumers safe.

# Plans for 2024 and beyond

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Collective endeavours at Stop Scams UK's table show it is possible to prevent scams and fraud. As we light the way ahead we can see ever more clearly what needs to be done to keep people and business safe from the enormous harm they cause.

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The landscape is changing. In May 2023 the UK government published its long-awaited Fraud Strategy, meeting the seriousness of the threat from fraud and scams with new emphasis on collaboration and coordination between public and private sectors. A government role of Anti-Fraud Champion was also created to promote greater industry action and coordination of government efforts.

Stop Scams UK has a unique place in this new drive to deliver on the ambitions of the Fraud Strategy in 2024. Our main focus will be on seeing benefits from data sharing, while developing and scaling up pilots and projects, including those on scam intelligence and remote access.

Our accelerated data sharing work will also look at the viability of Privacy Enhancing Technologies as a way of promoting cross-sector data sharing. It will make recommendations on where such innovation can be most effectively used.

## Putting more firepower into R&D on data sharing

We will progress with new urgency our work on reporting scam data from banks into tech and telecoms companies. This is where we think Stop Scams UK can really make a difference, delivering on key ambitions in both the Fraud Strategy and the Online Fraud Charter between industry and government.

We have launched an accelerated data sharing project supported by funding from the Home Office to be delivered in 2024 which will explore how barriers to data sharing can be overcome faster. Key elements of this work to generate understanding of who does what, and how existing initiatives can be optimised include:

- Mapping the data sharing landscape as it impacts our three core sectors
- Undertaking research on where data sharing can be optimised and extended to yield most value
- Commissioning legal guidance to make clear how firms can share data across sectors in compliance with privacy law and other regulatory obligations.

## 159

We will put 159 on a sustainable commercial and legal footing. More banks and other organisations want to join and our priority is to upgrade its technology to Intelligent Voice Response (IVR) so that more bank brands can be reached via 159 and to offer customers an improved experience.

Capturing more information from what people say when they call 159 will give us greater understanding of emerging threats and scam journeys. Stop Scams UK will explore how data generated through the service could be shared with regulators and others including the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC). We seek in all our work to feed into wider initiatives that keep citizens safe.

## URL blocking

We will formalise governance around the Alliance URL Blocking partnership and extend it to other members, so that many more malicious domains can be taken down at pace. As the work develops, we will connect with the NCSC and others so the value of Alliance, and the learning from it, is built into emerging proposals for a national URL blocking share and defend hub.



# A Roadmap for the Future

## Influence

We will build on influence and reputation we have begun to earn in the field to ensure that a new government takes note of scam blocking proposals that are emerging from Stop Scams UK's work, and builds them into its plans. We will host events in the coming year that continue to grow coalitions of support across industry and with other stakeholders, and we will explore ideas for policy reform including around the coming challenges of AI, with partner agencies.

We will share developments and celebrate successes with the media and continue to raise awareness of 159 through press and broadcast publications. In 2024 we will build on our growing online presence with unique editorial content and insight.

## International coordination

Scams do not recognise borders. Initiatives to tackle the scams emergency will need global coordination combining common approaches and a shared framework. Advances in technology such as AI make this work even more pressing.

Stop Scams UK plays a key role in driving international coordination, both through the global footprint of many of its members, and building on discussions already underway with the United States Federal Trade Commission, the Southern African Fraud Prevention Service and the Australian National Anti-Scams Centre.

We will accelerate this work to help shape a common approach for how industry in key jurisdictions successfully carries out collaboration.

Over the last year, Stop Scams UK has seen real progress in understanding the potential of data sharing and in coming up with practical approaches to the exchange of information across sectors.

Our initiatives are trialling new technologies and proving the value of concepts. Everything that is being learned provides a firm footing for future initiatives. As our ambition grows, we will welcome to our organisation yet more responsible businesses who share a sense of collective responsibility to stop scams.

Looking ahead, we will focus on scaling up our work and making a demonstrable and lasting impact in tackling the scams emergency. We are proving that collaboration across sectors, including with government, policymakers and civil society groups, is a most powerful route to success.

Collective endeavours at Stop Scams UK's table show it is possible to prevent scams and fraud. As we light the way ahead we can see ever more clearly what needs to be done to keep people and business safe from the enormous harm they cause.



# Some media coverage



## Scam alert as vital secure phone line can 'cut off' banking fraud

EXCLUSIVE: The 159 phone service helps protect a person from being taken in by hoax calls from scammers pretending to be from their bank.



## Big tech and banks conspire in new scheme to combat fraud

An alliance of banks, tech companies and telecoms groups are set to pilot a new scheme to collect information on scammers as attempts to tackle the UK's fraud epidemic step up a notch.

The new group, Stop Scams UK, has members including the UK's largest incumbent banks, challenger banks, telecoms providers and big tech firms. The alliance will collect information on scammers using phone numbers and email addresses provided by its members.



United Kingdom

## Banks, Big Tech seek clearer guidance on combating scams

By Huw Jones

October 20, 2022 3:11 PM GMT+1 · Updated 10 months ago

Banks have already improved defences against scams, but a report from industry body Stop Scams UK and the Royal United Services Institute on Thursday said complex guidelines and processes around privacy law make it difficult for companies to share data to stop fraud.



The company said it was now launching a "dedicated fraud phone line for all members to contact us if they believe they have been, or are at risk of, becoming victims of fraud."

"We have also applied to join Stop Scams UK, so that our members can use the 159 Stop Scams number to alert us if they suspect that they are being targeted by scammers."




### FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ... THE ANTI-FRAUD HELPLINE

- 1 If there's something strange about that 9 per cent guaranteed investment bond you're going to put money into, who should you call? No, not 999. Not even 101. You need 159.
- 2 The banking and telecoms industries have faced ever-increasing losses to authorised push payment fraud, where victims are tricked into sending money directly to a scammer. Losses hit £243 million last year. Finally launched a hotline last year. If you think you are talking to a fraudster, hang up, dial 159 and be put through to your bank.
- 3 Originally, and judiciously, you could not speak to every bank because there are only nine digits on a keypad and all were taken. HSBC, Nationwide and TSB were not involved because too many wanted to join and priority was given to founding members of the Stop Scams group.
- 4 Fortunately the technological impasse has since been resolved. A set of banks, including Barclays, Halifax and Lloyds, is now accessed via the number one button and another set is reached via the number two button.
- 5 Co-op Bank, Nationwide and TSB joined the service in April and from Tuesday it will expand further with HSBC, First Direct and Metro Bank. Stop Scams UK said the line has been a success since its launch last September. It has been called 160,000 times.



According to UK Finance, fraud losses in 2021 totalled £1.3 billion with £1.4 billion in attempted fraud prevented. That's just reported fraud – Stop Scams UK tell me the real figure is probably closer to £4 billion



## CONSUMER

### More banks join anti-scam service

HSBC UK, First Direct and Metro Bank have become the latest firms to join an anti-scam service that allows people to quickly reach their bank when they receive a suspicious or fraudulent phone call. Called 159, the scheme is operated by Stop Scams UK. A number of other UK banks are already part of it.



Financial fraud + Add to myFT

## Banking, tech and telecoms groups combine to gather intelligence on scammers

Cross-industry body announces pilot after companies warn UK fraud strategy is too weak to tackle problem



The project is being launched in England and Wales by Stop Scams UK and comes as the country faces an 'epidemic of fraud' that cost UK consumers £1.2bn last year © FT montage, Dreamstime

## Acknowledgements

© Stop Scams UK 2023

Written by Simon Miller.

Edited by Hester Abrams.

Designed by Rob Brown.

## Endnotes

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1. Office of National Statistics "Crime Survey for England and Wales year ending December 2022" 27/04/2023
  2. UK Finance, "Annual Fraud Report 2023" 10/05/2023
  3. CROWE Consulting, "Annual Fraud Indicator 2023" 14/06/2023
  4. CROWE Consulting, "Annual Fraud Indicator" 14/06/2023
  5. Fraud Act 2006 and Digital Fraud Committee "Fighting Fraud: Breaking the Chain" 12/11/2022
  6. TransUnion, "Omnichannel state of fraud 2023" Report, 06/04/2023



[stopscamsuk.org.uk](https://stopscamsuk.org.uk)