

Warning

Contributed by Administrator
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When the sparring has to stop - a warning to genuine consumers!!!!

DOES the following story sound horribly familiar to readers?!

A couple from Northern Ireland has contacted Staffs. Gazette with a disturbing account regarding a locally-based company.

They purchased a spa from Staffordshire-located Trade Price Group, paying a deposit of £500 by debit-card on Tuesday, August 19th, 2008.

On Tuesday, September 2nd, they were asked to pay the balance of £4,094.87 (which they did via credit-card).

"The company, then, sent us a Sales Order Form from a company, known as Spa Serve: the payments were taken from our card by a company called HDI Enterprises," they wrote to us.

"We were somewhat confused: we were, however, assured that this was all the same company.

"The salesman (who, apparently, turned out to be partner in the business, Spa Serve) was incredibly helpful; nothing was too much trouble.

"He even sent us a link to a review centre that had excellent reviews on their products.

"After further enquiries, it is possible that this review centre may have some intimate connection with Spa Serve, as all the reviews were very positive!

"The website for both Spa Serve and Trade Price Group were excellent.

"Unfortunately, once we paid our money, the service and care afforded us disappeared!"

The couple was promised delivery of the spa within six-to-eight weeks of paying their deposit (one of the MANY untruths which were fed up them by the company/companies involved).

They, then, learnt that Staffordshire Trading Standards had received complaints about this company, and that there was an ongoing investigation into its practices.

Following further enquiries, the couple was informed that this company was in breach of the Consumer Protection (Distance Selling) Regulations 2000, and was advised that they had a right to cancel the order, owing to this breach.

They immediately rang their credit-card company and advised it of their predicament: it put into dispute their second payment of £4,094.87 (which was, eventually, refunded).

"We also wrote to Trade Price Group/Spa Serve/HDI Enterprises on Thursday, October 30th, cancelling our order and explaining our rights and reasoning for our decision: we asked for the return of our deposit of £500 within seven days.

"On Friday, October 31st, Spa Serve's general manager, replied, asking for the opportunity to offer us an alternative tub, with immediate delivery.

"On Monday, November 3rd, we replied to his letter by email and recorded-delivery, advising him, once again, of our cancellation, the reason for this and repeating our request for the return of our deposit."

"My husband and I are at our wits' end: this is money that we can ill-afford to lose.

"We are a small business and are reliant on my husband's pension: he suffers from a disc-disease, and I am crippled with arthritis!"

HAVE ANY READERS HAD TO ENDURE SIMILAR EXPERIENCES WITH THIS COMPANY?!!