# Falkirk shed builder jailed for defrauding nearly 70 customers of £100,000



## Falkirk Shed Swindler Jailed After Defrauding Customers

Alistair Baxter, a 42-year-old man from Falkirk, has been sentenced to three years and four months in prison for a significant fraud operation that deceived nearly 70 individuals out of more than £100,000. The sentence, handed down at Stirling Sheriff Court, follows Baxter’s admission of guilt to multiple counts of fraud stemming from his promise to build sheds and summer houses for his customers.

Victims, including a 68-year-old woman, paid large deposits, believing that they would receive quality construction services. One victim, who deposited £4,150 for a summerhouse in June 2022, later paid an additional £1,800 after being told that work would only commence upon full payment. Disastrously, Baxter failed to provide any services or refund the payments made. Another victim, aged 74, found herself in a similar predicament, left without her deposit for a summerhouse after being falsely assured that her money had been returned.

The fraudulent behaviour exhibited by Baxter is not an isolated occurrence. Across the UK, various cases demonstrate a troubling pattern of financial exploitation. For example, in 2016, Alan Yeomans was sentenced to six and a half years for multiple fraud offences, including money laundering, which involved disguising his luxurious lifestyle while claiming bankruptcy. Yeomans, whose fraudulent activities extended over several years, illustrates how financial deception can entrap both the gullible and the unsuspecting.

Similarly, the practice of defrauding individuals through elaborate schemes is commonplace, with some criminals like Alan Dykes resorting to extreme measures, such as concealing a valuable vintage car to obtain loans under false pretences. Dykes was sentenced to one year in prison for perjury after it was revealed he had misled authorities regarding the ownership of the vehicle.

Baxter’s actions, as highlighted by Helen Nisbet, Procurator Fiscal for Tayside, Central and Fife, represent a profound breach of trust. She pointed out the significant emotional and financial toll taken on victims, remarking, “This was a clear case of deception… an appalling course of behaviour.”

In addition to financial fraud, several distressing cases have emerged regarding severe abuse in similar scenarios. For instance, in 2007, three individuals were imprisoned for the confinement and assault of a vulnerable man, showcasing the darker potential outcomes of trust breaches. Furthermore, the exploitation of vulnerable individuals in modern slavery cases, such as Peter Swailes’ conviction for conspiring to exploit a man living in a garden shed for decades, highlights a disturbing aspect of societal failure that often accompanies financial deceit.

Baxter’s sentencing not only provides justice for his victims but serves as a stark reminder of the lasting impact of fraud on individuals and communities. It raises awareness about the intricate web of deception that characterises many fraud cases across the UK, urging potential victims to exercise caution and vigilance in their financial dealings.

The outcome of this case, therefore, is not merely a legal matter—it represents a critical step towards restoring trust and accountability within the community. As prosecutors and law enforcement continue to tackle fraud, its pervasive nature remains an ongoing concern, reflecting broader societal issues that necessitate continued public discourse and action.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25144569.falkirk-shed-swindler-alistair-baxter-jailed-100k-fraud/?ref=rss)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-derbyshire-36834378), [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-dorset-21879047)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25144569.falkirk-shed-swindler-alistair-baxter-jailed-100k-fraud/?ref=rss), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/jun/22/three-jailed-sainsburys-potato-scam)
* Paragraph 4 – [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2007/jul/09/ukcrime.helencarter), [[6]](https://apnews.com/article/europe-9c4850e43a51b10ab48332a82fe9d9b9)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25144569.falkirk-shed-swindler-alistair-baxter-jailed-100k-fraud/?ref=rss)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/25144569.falkirk-shed-swindler-alistair-baxter-jailed-100k-fraud/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-derbyshire-36834378> - In 2016, Alan Yeomans, a Derbyshire businessman, was sentenced to six and a half years in prison for multiple offenses, including money laundering and drug production. Yeomans had declared bankruptcy, claiming to own minimal assets, but investigators discovered his six-bedroom mansion, Shedley Manor, which he had disguised as a farm shed. The property contained fine art, antiques, and a hidden cannabis cultivation room. The case highlighted the extent of Yeomans' fraudulent activities and his efforts to conceal his wealth. ([bbc.com](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-derbyshire-36834378?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-dorset-21879047> - In 2013, Alan Dykes was jailed for one year after being convicted of perjury and perverting the course of justice. Dykes had fraudulently obtained £45,000 in hire-purchase loans for a vintage Jaguar XK120, which he concealed in a chicken shed to prevent its confiscation. During his trial, it was revealed that Dykes had owned the car since 1995 and had made false statements to police about its ownership. The Jaguar was subsequently ordered to be auctioned. ([bbc.co.uk](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-21879047?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/jun/22/three-jailed-sainsburys-potato-scam> - In 2012, three individuals were jailed for a £9 million scam involving overcharging Sainsbury's for potatoes. Andrew Behagg and David Baxter, former directors at the supplier Greenvale, bribed Sainsbury's potato buyer John Maylam to secure lucrative contracts. The overcharged funds were used to create a 'fund' that paid for the bribes. All three were convicted of corruption and related charges, with sentences ranging from four years to 30 months. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/jun/22/three-jailed-sainsburys-potato-scam?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2007/jul/09/ukcrime.helencarter> - In 2007, three individuals were sentenced to prison for the abuse and confinement of Kevin Davies, an epileptic man, in a locked garden shed for four months. The victim was subjected to repeated assaults, including beatings and burnings, and was fed on scraps. He was found dead in the kitchen of the perpetrators' home in September 2006. The case highlighted the severe abuse and neglect suffered by the victim. ([theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2007/jul/09/ukcrime.helencarter?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://apnews.com/article/europe-9c4850e43a51b10ab48332a82fe9d9b9> - In 2018, Peter Swailes, 56, pleaded guilty to conspiring to exploit a vulnerable man who had been living in a garden shed for 40 years. The victim, now in his early 60s, had been working on farms for minimal pay and was found living in the shed without light or heat. Swailes' father had also been charged in connection with the exploitation. The case shed light on long-term labor exploitation and modern slavery. ([apnews.com](https://apnews.com/article/europe-9c4850e43a51b10ab48332a82fe9d9b9?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.digitalspy.com/fun/a491780/man-banned-from-garden-shed-as-part-of-bail-conditions/> - In 2013, a man was banned from entering his garden shed as part of his bail conditions after being arrested for growing cannabis. The individual expressed defiance, stating that he could continue his activities elsewhere, such as in his attic or cupboard. The judge criticized his attitude towards the court and the probation service, emphasizing the seriousness of the offense and the conditions imposed. The case highlighted the challenges in enforcing bail conditions and deterring criminal behavior. ([digitalspy.com](https://www.digitalspy.com/fun/a491780/man-banned-from-garden-shed-as-part-of-bail-conditions/?utm_source=openai))