# AI-powered Ask Silver tool targets sharp rise in parcel delivery scams



# Navigating the Rising Tide of Parcel Delivery Scams: A Technological Response

In an age where digital communication is ubiquitous, the prevalence of scams—particularly those masquerading as legitimate texts from trusted institutions—has reached alarming heights. The recent surge in parcel delivery scams exemplifies the disturbing trend. Victims receive messages purporting to be from recognised delivery services like Royal Mail, instructing them to follow malicious links to update their personal information to retrieve missed parcels. The response from AI scam-detection tool Ask Silver underscores the urgency of this issue: “The URL in the image you sent me is not part of the official Royal Mail Website, meaning it's likely a scam.”

According to reports, parcel delivery scams have not just found a niche; they have exploded in popularity, emerging as the fastest-growing scam category of 2024, as highlighted by NatWest. This sinister innovation in the world of fraud accounts for around one in three scam reports from the bank’s customers. As more people fall victim, the difficulty of distinguishing between genuine messages and scams has only increased.

Ask Silver, a free scam checker launched in October, offers a lifeline in this chaotic environment. Created by 32-year-old tech entrepreneur Alex Somervell and his business partner Jonny Pryn, Ask Silver enables users to communicate suspicious texts, emails, or websites via WhatsApp. Utilising advanced AI algorithms, the tool assesses whether these communications are genuine or fraudulent by checking against a database of known scams. Following a virtual submission, users receive rapid feedback, categorised as red, amber, or yellow flags based on the legitimacy of the content.

The importance of this service is emphasised by startling statistics; a study conducted by YouGov for Ask Silver reveals that nearly half of people remain unaware of where to report scams. More than simply detecting fraud, Ask Silver aims to empower consumers by providing them with actionable insights and direct lines of communication to relevant authorities. For instance, upon identifying a scam, users can opt to report it, allowing the tool to notify the appropriate parties promptly.

Metro Bank has emerged as a trailblazer in this initiative, becoming the first UK bank to partner with Ask Silver. Baz Thompson, Metro Bank’s fraud chief, notes the significance of providing customers with a tool that can help them assess the authenticity of suspicious communications quickly. He remarked, “Being able to offer a service where customers can know in minutes whether something is fraudulent provides an essential barrier to staying one step ahead of fraudsters.”

As scams evolve, so must our defences. Research indicates that, in the past year alone, 42% of British adults have been exposed to scams, with £570 million reported lost in the first half of 2024. This climate of unchecked fraud has made protective technologies a priority for banks seeking to safeguard their customers.

Moreover, the founders of Ask Silver are not only focused on individual protections; they are committed to combating fraud on a broader scale. Their goal is to stem the tide of illegitimate practices circulating within the system. By relaying valuable data about scam tactics back to financial institutions and authorities, they aspire to contribute to a collaborative effort against these crimes, ultimately enhancing safety across the digital landscape.

To optimise safety, vigilance remains essential. Consumers should always scrutinise unexpected messages, especially those requesting personal information under dubious pretences. Reporting scams promptly can pave the way for heightened awareness and prevention in the community. Individuals can report suspicious communications via dedicated channels, such as sending emails to report@phishing.gov.uk or messaging 7726 for fraudulent phone calls.

In summary, as scams become increasingly sophisticated, initiatives like Ask Silver represent a significant step forward in the fight against digital fraud. With the combined efforts of technology and proactive consumer behaviour, there remains hope for a safer online environment.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/beatthescammers/article-14648127/Got-suspicious-text-WhatsApp-number-tell-you-scam.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/scams-linked-to-parcel-deliveries-come-top-in-2023/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/beatthescammers/article-14648127/Got-suspicious-text-WhatsApp-number-tell-you-scam.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.natwestgroup.com/news-and-insights/news-room/press-releases/ai-and-data/2024/nov/fastest-growing-scams-of-2024-revealed.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.getsafeonline.org/asksilver/), [[6]](https://www.metrobankonline.co.uk/about-us/press-releases/news/metro-bank-launches-first-ai-scam-detection-tool--with-ask-silver/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/beatthescammers/article-14648127/Got-suspicious-text-WhatsApp-number-tell-you-scam.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.ask-silver.com/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[6]](https://www.metrobankonline.co.uk/about-us/press-releases/news/metro-bank-launches-first-ai-scam-detection-tool--with-ask-silver/), [[3]](https://www.getsafeonline.org/asksilver/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[4]](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/scams-linked-to-parcel-deliveries-come-top-in-2023/), [[7]](https://www.getsafeonline.org/personal/news-item/get-safe-online-partners-with-ask-silver-to-launch-a-new-scam-detector/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/beatthescammers/article-14648127/Got-suspicious-text-WhatsApp-number-tell-you-scam.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ask-silver.com/> - Ask Silver is a free, AI-powered scam detection tool accessible via WhatsApp. Users can upload screenshots of suspicious texts, emails, or websites, and the tool analyzes them to determine if they're safe or fraudulent. It provides instant feedback, including red flags and suggestions for next steps to stay safe. The service is designed to help individuals protect themselves from scams by leveraging artificial intelligence to identify potential threats quickly and efficiently.
3. <https://www.getsafeonline.org/asksilver/> - Get Safe Online has partnered with Ask Silver to offer a scam detection tool that integrates with WhatsApp. Users can submit screenshots of suspicious communications, and the AI analyzes them to indicate whether they're safe or a 'Red Flag.' The tool also suggests next steps to stay safe and allows users to report scams to authorities with a single tap. This collaboration aims to enhance online safety by providing a simple and effective way to identify and report scams.
4. <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/press-releases/scams-linked-to-parcel-deliveries-come-top-in-2023/> - Citizens Advice reports that parcel delivery scams are the most common type of scam faced by the public in 2023, with 49% of people targeted. Scammers impersonate delivery companies to obtain personal information or bank details. The charity urges individuals to report scams to help protect others and provides advice on recognizing and avoiding such scams, emphasizing the importance of vigilance and reporting suspicious activities to authorities.
5. <https://www.natwestgroup.com/news-and-insights/news-room/press-releases/ai-and-data/2024/nov/fastest-growing-scams-of-2024-revealed.html> - NatWest reveals that fake parcel delivery texts, social media marketplace scams, and AI-powered voice cloning are among the fastest-growing scams in 2024. The research indicates that 42% of British adults have been targeted by scams in the past 12 months, with £570 million reported stolen in the first half of 2024. The study highlights the evolving nature of scams and the need for increased awareness and protective measures against such fraudulent activities.
6. <https://www.metrobankonline.co.uk/about-us/press-releases/news/metro-bank-launches-first-ai-scam-detection-tool--with-ask-silver/> - Metro Bank has partnered with Ask Silver to launch the UK's first AI scam detection tool, allowing customers to instantly check if communications are fraudulent. Users can send photos or screenshots of suspicious emails, websites, letters, or leaflets via WhatsApp, and the AI analyzes them to determine if they're scams, providing suggestions for next steps to stay safe. This initiative aims to enhance customer protection against fraud and scams.
7. <https://www.getsafeonline.org/personal/news-item/get-safe-online-partners-with-ask-silver-to-launch-a-new-scam-detector/> - Get Safe Online has partnered with Ask Silver to launch a new AI-powered scam detection tool. Users can upload screenshots of suspicious texts, emails, or websites, and the AI analyzes them to indicate whether they're safe or a 'Red Flag,' also suggesting next steps to stay safe. The tool is designed to help individuals protect themselves from scams by providing instant feedback and facilitating reporting to authorities.