Police are appealing for witnesses after a man was conned out of cash in Newcastle.

Police received a report on Tuesday, November 29, saying a man had called at the house of a 24-year-old student at Rothbury Terrace in Heaton at 6pm on Friday, November 25.

The suspect claimed to be from an energy company canvassing in the area and once inside persuaded the man to pay a £115 account set up fee in cash.

The victim handed over the money but once the man had left called his landlord and the energy company and later police to report the incident. Enquiries showed no canvassers from the energy company had been in the area, nor do they do business in this way.

The suspect is described as white, aged around 30 years old, about 6ft 2ins tall of stocky build with brown/red hair and a pale complexion. He was carrying a laptop.

Police are now warning others to be vigilant. Neighbourhood Sergeant Claire Lawson said: "In this case the man has asked for money for a bill which he has confused the victim into thinking that he needs to pay. Genuine companies would not cold call in this way and ask for payment of a bill at the doorstep.

"Callers from canvassers would also be willing to wait outside a locked door while the occupant checked their validity with the company involved to ensure they were genuine.

"Generally, people should not allow people they don't know into their homes, nor should they ever hand over money to anyone who cold calls at their address.

"We're making enquiries into this incident and would ask anyone with information to get in touch with us as soon as possible."

Anyone with information is asked to contact police on 03456 043 043 ext 69191, or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.