

SCAMS AWARENESS UPDATE

Older Persons Scams Awareness & Aftercare Project

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Read all about it!

Fraud news round-up

This month, we're taking a break from a featured scam to bring you a fraud news round-up - locally and further afield.

Fraud now accounts for more than a third of all crime in England and Wales, and every 40 seconds an older person becomes a victim of fraud. We're now more likely to become a victim of fraud than be burgled.

This makes us realise that we need to keep our personal information and finances as safe as our homes. And, just like we check our doors and windows regularly, these bulletins are a regular reminder to check that our information and money are secure.

Read on to see how you can help yourself, family, friends and communities remain resilient to fraud and how, sometimes, the fraudsters are brought to justice.

Remember, if you're aged 50+, live in the northern or eastern parts for Cheshire East and would like to talk more about your own situation and fraud, please contact our Scams Awareness & Aftercare Team on 01625 612958 or enquiries@ageukce.org.

LOCAL FRAUD NEWS ROUND-UP



Recommend a friend: We have great feedback from readers about how they feel safer and more secure because they are aware of scams and fraud, and how to avoid them.

If you've improved your confidence over the past two years by reading these bulletins, imagine how your friends could feel if they knew more too! Think of two of your friends that you would recommend a scams awareness session to. Encourage them to give us a call to arrange a conversation about keeping as safe from scams as you. The number to tell them is 01625 612958 or enquiries@ageukce.org

Follow-up from investment fraud bulletin: Our March bulletin highlighted how fraudsters use fake celebrity endorsements to make investments appear legitimate. Since then, the police have issued further warnings over emails about Bitcoin investments that falsely claim to be endorsed by Money Saving Expert Martin Lewis.



In just three days, Action Fraud received more than 1,000 reports of the fake emails. In reality, the fraudsters were only interested in directing people to a fake website to steal their personal and financial information. We hope the information we gave in our bulletin helped people avoid becoming a victim of fraud in this way.



Buy with Confidence scheme still a hit with readers : We often recommend using the [Buy with Confidence scheme](#) when looking for a trades person. This is the list of Trading Standards approved traders. Many of our readers have used the scheme. They have found it reassuring to know that traders listed have been vetted and, in the unlikely event of something not being quite right, there is a simple process to a solution.

You can search for Buy with Confidence online. If you don't have access to the internet, but want to use the scheme, why not pop to your local library, where they'll help you look it up.

Help for using the internet safely: Do you have a phone, tablet (e.g. iPad) laptop or computer? Would you like to use it to order your shopping, renew your library books, receive emails or look up information? Many of Cheshire East libraries can help you. They run an IT Buddy scheme. They match you up with a volunteer who can show you how to use your device safely to get online and use the internet for whatever you would like.



Contact your local library to see what's on offer.

Fraud convictions: We're often asked if fraudsters are ever caught and brought to justice. Here are details of some recent convictions...



Pension fraud conviction: A man and a lady in their 60s have been convicted of fraud for their part in a £13 million fraud. They have been sentenced to a total of more than 10 years.

Victims had initially answered an advert or text for a free pension review. The fraudsters persuaded them to transfer money to invest in overseas property.

The judge said "Each account that I have read is a story of a life ruined by your actions and you should both be ashamed."

You can read more on the [BBC website](#).

£1 million returned to more than 200 victims of fraud: The Serious Fraud Office will be returning money to over 200 victims of an investment fraud.

The fraudster was convicted of conning people out of around £70 million over 4 years. After his conviction, some of the money was returned to victims.

This year, a further £1 million has been seized from the fraudsters assets to return to over 200 victims.

Although this is no where near the total amount the victims lost, it demonstrates how law enforcement is working with its international partners, where it can, to return money to victims.

The full article can be read on the [Serious Fraud Office website](#).

Put your feet up to stay scam-savvy: As well as the information in this bulletin, there are several TV programmes which tell you more about fraud and how to avoid it:



[Scam Interceptors](#)
BBC iPlayer



[For Love or Money](#)
BBC iPlayer



[Rip Off Britain](#)
BBC iPlayer

Watching these can help you see the tactics fraudsters use and the lengths they'll go to, to get people to part with their money or information. Forewarned is forearmed!

Here are some recent frauds to look out for. Please share with family, friends and community.



BT loyalty bonus fraud

We've had a report that fraudsters are calling people, pretending to be

from BT. They are offering a bonus for being a loyal customer.

STOP, THINK and PROTECT by refusing any calls out of the blue, with offers too good to be true and not sharing your personal or bank details over the phone.

The fraudsters use sophisticated ways to get you to reveal information, so if you have given any details, contact your bank immediately.



Fake computer anti-virus fraud

Action Fraud received over 2,800 reports in just one week about fake emails

pretending to be from McAfee. The emails urge you to renew their anti-virus subscription, as "We have noticed a suspicious activity detected on your device".

If you click on the link, you're led to a fake website that steal your personal and financial information.

Remember to report suspicious emails by forwarding them to report@phishing.gov.uk



Personal alarm fraud

Another phone fraud reported to us recently is about emergency pendant/wrist alarms.

Fraudsters have been calling pretending to be from the NHS. They ask you how you are, how your feeling etc. then offer a free pendant alarm.

Many legitimate companies offer emergency alarms, but they are not free. Remember, if an offer is too good to be true, it usually it!



Council tax energy rebate fraud

The £150 council tax energy rebate has started to be paid to people.

Several local authorities across the UK have reported fraudsters impersonating them on the phone, asking for bank details to make the rebate.

Cheshire East Council tells you how the rebate will really be paid on their [website](#). Search for "council tax energy rebate" on their website. They will not call you out of the blue and ask for bank to give the rebate.

COMING NEXT TIME

- Current fraud alerts
- Courier Fraud

Though we don't like to see you leave, you can unsubscribe from these bulletins by emailing sally.wilson@ageukce.org

The Older Persons Scams Awareness & Aftercare Project is brought to you by