

Welcome to the eighth edition of the Derbyshire County Council Scams Awareness Bulletin

June 2018 - Edition 8

This bulletin gives details of scams that our Trading Standards Department and other council staff have been made aware of in recent weeks. Please feel free to share this bulletin far and wide - you can send it to colleagues, family members or friends as it is a public bulletin.

Scams Awareness Month - June 2018

Last month was Scams Awareness Month. It gave us all the opportunity to play our part, act on scams, and help to fight back against scammers who cost people in the UK millions of pounds each year.

Citizens Advice have been promoting a campaign that focuses on 4 different groups:

- Young people (18-24). This group has seen a sharp rise in the number of victims over the last few years, and are some of the least likely to report a scam.
- Over 70s. They have a high level of detriment and are often targeted multiple times.
- Socially isolated. They're vulnerable to scams, and are also the hardest to reach on the topic.
- The 'life established' (45-60s). They're impacted by a range of scams and make up the largest group targeted.

You can follow Citizens Advice on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#), or visit their [website for general advice on scams](#).

Derbyshire Scam Watch

Derbyshire Scam Watch have also been active during Scams Awareness month. They've attended all sorts of events, including a successful information stand at Chesterfield Market on World Elder Abuse Day where they were joined by representatives from organisations including Adult Care, Derbyshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Derbyshire Constabulary, Trading Standards and the voluntary sector.

You can follow Scam Watch on [Facebook](#) for details of upcoming events. Their [website](#) has general advice about different types of scams and how to protect yourself.

Fake arrest warrants for tax issues

A number of Derbyshire residents have been contacted by fraudsters claiming that a warrant has been issued for their arrest.

The recorded message says that the British Government has issued an arrest warrant for tax issues. The message gives the option to speak to someone, at which point the caller is transferred.

Some of those targeted said that they have been transferred to an Indian or Pakistani sounding individual who has then tried to gain information from them.

OUR ADVICE

- If you receive a call of this nature, do not engage or speak to anyone.
- If you do speak to anyone relating to a call of this nature, **DO NOT** reveal any information – in particular bank details or any other personal information.

Make sure you report the crime to Action Fraud by calling 0300 123 2040 or by visiting https://actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud.

Friends Against Scams Online Training

Training for professionals

The National Trading Standards Scams Team (NTS Scams Team) have developed a new eLearning package that is designed to assist professionals and practitioners who will be interacting with victims of scams. This includes social workers, community nurses, volunteers and befrienders. The E-Learning will provide an understanding of the scale of the problem of scams, an insight into the behaviour of the criminals behind scams, an understanding of the legislation that can be used to support scam victims and to prosecute criminals behind scams, and practical advice on how best to support a victim of scams. You can find the [training on the Friends Against Scams website](#).

Training for everyone - Friends Against Scams

Friends Against Scams welcomes people from all walks of life to "Take a Stand Against Scams". If you'd like to be a Friend Against Scams you can complete the short [online training course](#), or attend a short awareness session in person.

Fake texts about your EE bill

There have been reports of fake text messages being sent that claim to be from EE which state that you haven't paid a bill. The link in the message leads to a phishing website designed to steal your EE account login details, as well as personal & financial information.

Don't be tricked into giving a fraudster access to your personal or financial details. Never automatically click on a link or attachment in an unexpected email or text.

For more information on how to stay secure online, visit www.cyberaware.gov.uk

Scams you've told us about

Bogus caller

A Derbyshire County Council client who lives in the High Peak has been tricked into giving money to a woman after she had convinced him she had previously been his carer and she had always liked him and wanted to get to know him better. The lady left after spending time talking to him and returned with shopping that had not been requested. He then felt obliged to pay her for the goods and gave her £20.00 for items that cost considerably less. The client's family have contacted the police.

Car Scams

Mr K: More and more cars are having "keyless entry" systems fitted. I am told it is relatively easy to buy gadgets that can overcome these and therefore car thieves can quite easily gain entry. My son had his new Range Rover taken from outside his house without anyone knowing until hours later.

Whenever we park outside a theatre, a cinema, a sports ground etc, thieves know we are going to be there at least a couple of hours. If we leave papers containing our address, a sat nav into which our home address is programmed and sometimes our house keys, it is easy for thieves to gain entry to our homes and know that there is little chance of being disturbed. I appreciate that many of you are well aware of these dangers and take the necessary precautions but a reminder is often useful.

Local Romance Scam Victim

An elderly man from Derbyshire, who was scammed out of £6,000, has spoken of the devastating impact romance fraud has had on his life. The man, who is in his 80s and from Chesterfield, said he contemplated taking his own life after a con artist racked up a £6,000 debt on his credit card. The victim was targeted on an online

dating site and spoke to a woman he believed was genuinely looking for love. Read more on the [Matlock mercury website](#).

Have you heard about a phone, postal, email or doorstep scam that's been happening locally? Or maybe you've come across an online scam or a copycat website?

Let us know so we can share the scam in the next Scam Bulletin to warn others.

Email adultcare.info@derbyshire.gov.uk

This bulletin will be sent out periodically based on demand. We can't guarantee to publish all the information you send in, but we'll try and make sure to get the message across.

Courier fraud

Fraudsters are contacting victims by telephone and purporting to be a police officer or bank official. To substantiate this claim, the caller might be able to confirm some easily obtainable basic details about the victim such as their full name and address. They may also offer a telephone number for the victim to call to check that they are genuine; this number is not genuine and simply redirects to the fraudster who pretends to be a different person. After some trust has been established, the fraudster will then, for example, suggest;

- That some money has been removed from a victim's bank account and staff at their local bank branch are responsible.
- Suspects have already been arrested but the "police" need money for evidence.
- A business such as a jewellers or currency exchange is operating fraudulently and they require assistance to help secure evidence.

Victims are then asked to cooperate in an investigation by attending their bank and withdrawing money, withdrawing foreign currency from an exchange or purchasing an expensive item to hand over to a courier for examination who will also be a fraudster. Again, to reassure the victim, a safe word might be communicated to the victim so the courier appears genuine.

At the time of handover, unsuspecting victims are promised the money they've handed over or spent will be reimbursed but in reality there is no further contact and the money is never seen again.

Your bank or the police will never:

- Phone and ask you for your PIN or full banking password.
- Ask you to withdraw money to hand over to them for safe-keeping, or send someone to your home to collect cash, your PIN number, cards or cheque books.

Don't assume an email or phone call is authentic - Just because someone knows your basic details (such as your name and address or even your mother's maiden name), it doesn't mean they are genuine. Be mindful of who you trust – criminals may try and trick you by telling you that you've been a victim of fraud

Stay in control - If something feels wrong then it is usually right to question it. Have the confidence to refuse unusual requests for personal or financial information.

For more information about how to protect yourself online, visit

www.cyberaware.gov.uk and <https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>

Facebook act to protect users against Bitcoin fraud

Facebook has banned advertising for Bitcoin following a wave of complaints about the number of crypto-currency scams being promoted through the site.

A recent crypto-currency promotion on Facebook featured an unauthorised photo of Virgin entrepreneur Richard Branson and encouraged users to click through to a fake news website in order to win “free Bitcoins”.

It is not known how many Facebook users have been stung by fake crypto-currency offers, but Action Fraud recently revealed that the number of crimes officially linked to Bitcoin tripled last year to nearly a thousand. The typical amount lost by victims was £13,500.

Facebook said its ban will cover all adverts for “financial products and services that are frequently associated with misleading or deceptive promotional practices”, with crypto-currencies and binary options cited as the main offenders. [Find out more](#)

Reporting scams and getting advice

Get advice from Citizens Advice Consumer Service, tel: 03454 04 05 06 or visit: www.adviceguide.org.uk.

Report scams and suspected scams to [Action Fraud](#) or tel: 0300 123 2040.

Send potential postal scams with a covering letter to Royal Mail at FREEPOST Scam Mail, email: scam.mail@royalmail.com or tel: 03456 113 413.

Report unsolicited marketing calls to the [Information Commissioner's Office](#) or tel: 0303 123 1113.

Register phone numbers with the [Telephone Preference Service](#) or tel: 0845 070 0707.

The [Mailing Preference Service \(MPS\)](#) is free and can help reduce unsolicited mail by calling 0845 703 4599.

Contact the Age UK Derby and Derbyshire Information and Advice Line on tel: 01773 768240. Age UK also have a [downloadable guide](#) on recognising and dealing with all kinds of scams.

[Derbyshire Scamwatch](#) is a project funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Derbyshire. The aim is to raise awareness, particularly amongst older residents, of the potential harmful effects of mass-marketing, internet, doorstep and telephone scams and to provide one-to-one advice and support where potential scam/fraud victims are identified.

Tell a trusted friend, relative or neighbour.