

Keep Your Money Safe



Surrey Police and Sussex Police Fraud Newsletter

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Each month we see many incidents of fraudsters targeting our residents in an attempt to defraud them. We're working hard to prevent this and support vulnerable victims of fraud or scams. By following our tips and encouraging family, friends and colleagues to do so too, you can reduce the risk of becoming a victim.

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Detective Chief Inspector
Antony Leadbeater
Surrey Police &
Sussex Police
Economic Crime Unit

HORSHAM JEWELLER PREVENTS HIGH VALUE FRAUD

Sussex Police were notified of a fraud in action by a Horsham jewellers last week. An 82-year-old man had been instructed to purchase a Rolex watch costing around £40,000 after receiving a telephone call from a fake police officer.

They kept him on the phone for five hours, telling him they were investigating a fraud.

He was instructed to take a taxi to Horsham to buy the Rolex, and was told to take his landline off the hook and stay on his mobile phone connected to the scammers throughout. Thankfully, the staff at the jewellers were concerned this was a scam and called the police, who attended and confirmed this was the case.

Police have seen a rise in this change of modus operandi (MO) in courier fraud across both forces with more and more incidents where victims are being coerced into purchasing and handing over expensive jewellery and gold. Neighbourhood teams and police volunteers have been conducting visits to jewellers across the counties providing them with prompt cards and awareness literature relating to these type of calls. Officers also offered advice to challenge the customers and call suspicions into police at the time of the event, to assist in preventing the crimes and limiting the financial loss to the would-be victims.

Please remember, police will never ask you to withdraw or transfer money, hand over or purchase gold, jewellery or other expensive items.



ANOTHER FRAUDSTER BEHIND BARS....



A chimney sweep from East Sussex who admitted defrauding trusting customers out of nearly £30,000 has been jailed for 30 months.

Excellent teamwork from East Sussex police officers and staff secured an outstanding 20 charges against the serial fraudster who caused 19 victims, many of whom were vulnerable, to lose almost £30k collectively.

In April 2025, the suspect was charged with 19 offences of fraud by false representation and one fraudulent trading charge for a series of crimes which took place between November 2022 and February 2025.

The suspect would go on to plead guilty and was sentenced at Lewes Crown Court in June 2025.

Doorstep criminals and bogus tradespersons who prey on vulnerable people continue to operate across Surrey and Sussex with both forces being in the top five nationally for reports by victims, with the majority of the victims being elderly.

Surrey Police is currently working with Trading Standards, Crimestoppers, local councils and Age UK to deliver engagement events.

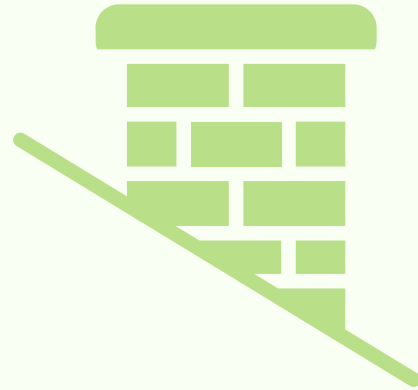
These focus on providing advice and support to the public around doorstep criminality and educating the public on how to avoid becoming a target.

TIPS

Try to avoid cash-only payments where possible as they carry a higher-level of risk and these transactions are rarely auditable.

Where possible, consider paying by credit card for additional consumer protections. Bank transfer offers the next greatest level of consumer protection due to reimbursement rules relating to fraud.

Do not pay all funds up front - staged payments should correspond with the progress of the work.



SHOUT OUT TO OUR SURREY POLICE VOLUNTEERS

Our team of 17 Fraud Prevention volunteers working across all boroughs in Surrey were this month recognised for their outstanding contribution to the residents of Surrey.

The team members were each awarded with the prestigious recognition of receiving a Chief's Commendation.

These were presented by Chief Constable Tim De Meyer at a ceremony at Loseley Park on Wednesday, 11 June.

PCC Lisa Townsend also showed her appreciation to the team of volunteers, attending an informal event at Caterham Police Station in May where she met with the volunteers and heard about all the great work they have been supporting.

The Commissioner said: "Those who serve with the Volunteer Fraud Prevention Programme make a significant difference to the lives of Surrey residents.

"I'd like to thank them for their tireless efforts to stop more people becoming victims."



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE FROM FRAUD FREE TAILORED EVENTS

If you or your organisation in Surrey or Sussex feels that you could benefit from having a free tailored fraud prevention in person engagement, please contact Surrey Police and Sussex Police directly on SussexandSurreyFraudPreventionEngagements@surrey.police.uk for further information.